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## EDWARD SAPIR, 1884-1939

How shall we approach Sapir in an introductory lecture?<sup>1</sup> There is really no need nowadays for an introduction to this important anthropological linguist. The student has all the materials readily to hand, or so it would seem. There is first of all his original famous work, entitled *Language*, published in 1921 (referred to by his memorialists quite frequently as his *only* real book, as opposed to papers and monographs). Then there is that compendious work of piety, the *Selected Writings*, collected by David G. Mandelbaum (1949).<sup>2</sup> Its 617 pages largely fill the gap between his 'real book' and his life's output - although even this volume does not contain the exhaustively complete works. Then there is the centenary volume, *Edward Sapir: Appraisals of his Life and Work*, edited by Konrad Koerner of the University of Ottawa and published recently (1984). This latter is what in English Departments would be called the 'Critical Heritage'. It contains nine obituaries and memorials, dated 1939-52, reviews, mostly early, of *Language* (1921) and of the monograph *Time Perspective in Aboriginal American Culture* (1916), several reviews of the *Selected Writings* (1949), and finally various re-reappraisals dated 1956-1980. One begins to expect the centennial volume to be reappraised in the centennial volume by some version of the Russellian paradox! We may add to all of this a small paperback of selections from the *Selected Writings* (Mandelbaum 1956), the early memorial volume edited by Spier and others in 1941, and many more. There is,

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<sup>1</sup> Delivered in the series *General Linguistics* for the Sub-Faculty of Linguistics, Oxford University, May 1987.

<sup>2</sup> All the papers of Sapir's mentioned below are to be found in this volume.

therefore (as I said), no special need for an introductory lecture. This man is the very stuff of Introductions, you may well think! One is best employed in a gathering like this in presenting a personal view (yet another one) which will bring out points which are not immediately apparent to the reader of the critical apparatus: the 'dogs which did not bark in the night', perhaps.

Let us begin with this fact. In 1971 I referred in writing to Saussure's rejection of the view of language as a mere labelling device. Soon afterwards, I received a letter from Professor C. Voegelin of Yale, asking, in all seriousness, whether Saussure was a misprint for Sapir. I must confess to having been slightly taken aback. I repeated my reference to the *Cours* (Saussure 1922: 34, *une nomenclature*), but I could not help being somewhat impressed that the Atlantic was wide enough then for Sapir to be more salient than Saussure on this point. My own view at the time was quite other. In Saussure's systematics the rejection of any 'nomenclature' view is quite basic to the development of his whole later argument (such as we have it). Even if Sapir had said it, it was to me then as if I had referred to Newton's falling apple and someone had seriously asked if this was a slip of the tongue or pen for William Tell!

The personal stature of Sapir in the United States and especially at Yale has, then, to be taken as an important fact. In Voegelin's sketch of 1952, in the centennial volume, he refers to his 'brightness' among the 'giants' of American anthropology ('with a brightness we associate with youth and poetry and innocence' - Voegelin, in Koerner 1984: 33). Kroeber, the great American anthropologist (1876-1960) and pupil of Boas, made an even more remarkable statement in 1959, within a year of his own death. Comparing Sapir directly with Boas, he said:

I have always felt that Boas was an extraordinary person for his dynamism, for the energy, intellectual and ethical, which he could and did develop, for the output of his work, his range of interests, and so on. But I asked myself when I was doing one of the obituaries on him whether he was by the ordinary understanding of the term a genius or not. And I came to the conclusion that while he was a great man, he lacked the quality of genius of the sort that Sapir did exemplify.

He added:

Edward Sapir, I should say, is the only man that I have known at all well, in my life, whom I should unreservedly class as a genius (in Koerner 1984: 131).

Sapir was an almost exact contemporary of the anthropologist Malinowski. Both were born in the same year (1884). Sapir died in 1939, Malinowski in 1942, both still at the height of their powers. Both were foreign-born incomers to the countries they made their own (the United States and England respectively).

Sapir was born in Lauenberg in Germany, Malinowski in Krakow, Austrian Poland. Sapir was, however, a very young immigrant (only 5 years old) compared with the 26-year-old Malinowski. In other respects their backgrounds were also different, and yet there is another, more intellectual, aspect of their biographies which they share, as we shall see in a moment. Sapir's family was Jewish and lived in New York, where his father was a synagogue cantor. These factors combined in his first choice of university (Columbia) and of academic subjects ('Germanics' and 'Semitics'). On his graduation in 1904 he had already moved beyond these towards the Amerindian languages and his anthropological future. Nonetheless, his philological training was of the first importance in his theoretical development, while to the end of his life he continued to make important contributions to Semitic and Judæo-Germanic linguistics. In pursuit of his new specialism, however, he joined the staff of the University of California in 1907-1908, where he worked on the language of the Yana Indians. Then at the University of Pennsylvania he studied the Paiute language. He received his Doctorate at his home university of Columbia in 1909.

In 1910 a totally new and formative period began, lasting until 1925. He went to Ottawa as Chief of a new Division of Anthropology of the Geological Survey of the Canadian National Museum. He married and had three children. During this time he studied many Amerindian peoples and their languages, and he became well known for his contributions on the Nootka of Vancouver Island, the Athapascan languages, and many more. By 1925, however, his wife had died, and he came back to the United States and to the University of Chicago. The memorialists speak of Sapir's intellectual frustration during this period. The milieu of the Survey was not a conventionally academic one, but the experiences and the intellectual problems were new. This sort of enforced retirement to think in action reminds one rather of a feature of the biographies of a number of outstanding innovators in various disciplines of the period.

A digression on this point may be in order here. Three scholars of the Modernist period (see Ardener 1985) share in their development the interesting feature that each, after an early partial success in conventional terms, spent some years in a practical milieu, during which their ideas and speculations were able to acquire a new kind of focus outside the purely academic mainstream. Freud, after the cocaine debacle, spent nearly a decade out of the public eye, before the publication of *The Interpretation of Dreams*. Einstein's years at the Zurich Patent Office are famous for the history of his work on relativity. Nearer in status and discipline to the subject of this lecture is (once again) Malinowski who, after embarking on what was essentially an extension of the Melanesian survey work of his teacher Seligman, stayed for a complex of reasons on the single island of Kiriwina in the Trobriands. There his experience led him to a series of academic innovations, which resulted in his virtual refoundation of the British School of Anthropology. There is something very similar in its atmosphere about Sapir's long period with the Canadian Geological Survey. It was indeed after eleven years with that body that the work appeared

which established his new reputation. If there are such parallels, however, certain differences in the results of this productive isolation for Sapir's branch of his discipline, compared with the obvious effects of the other thinkers on theirs, will require consideration later.

Preston, in a valuable discussion, says that during the Ottawa years Sapir experienced a clear change in direction, away from his 'Boasian' orientation. He says:

He was twenty-six years old and had recently received his PhD when he obtained, apparently to his surprise, an offer from the director of the Geological Survey, on Boas' recommendation. Evidently Boas got him the job as a research position from which Sapir could get to the task of collecting 'salvage' data on the Indians of Canada. Boas had by that time three other students located in museum research positions - Kroeber at Berkeley, Speck in Philadelphia, and Lowie at the American Museum in New York.... It has been speculated that Ottawa was also in part a kind of exile; Sapir was such an intensely brilliant colleague that Boas found comfort for himself in keeping Sapir at a distance. In any event, Ottawa did become an exile, a place where intellectual isolation and personal difficulties threw Sapir very much on his own personal resources. The result was a period of great productivity, followed by a period marked more by profound rethinking than by research activity (in Koerner 1984: 179).

A strange refraction of Sapir's analytical mind is revealed in a poem he wrote at the time. Perhaps the discomfort of his mentors was justified:

You sit before me as we talk  
Calmly and unafraid.  
Calmly and unafraid  
I sink my net into your soul,  
That flows before me like a limpid stream.

I draw forth many lovely things  
That you had thought were hid;  
I draw forth many ugly things  
That you had thought were pure,  
That you had never thought to hide.<sup>3</sup>

His famous book *Language* (1921) was a product of this period, and it was recognised immediately as fresh in its approach, and written in an excellent style. The volume exemplifies a particular combination of the skills of Indo-European historical linguistics, and of a general European background, with an encyclopaedic control of Amerindian languages. The effect of this union of skills was

<sup>3</sup> Cited in Koerner 1984: 181.

*publicly* to turn exotic languages into tools of general scholarship. Some of his later papers combine materials from Amerindian and Indo-European studies - and at their most technical, too, for example, his 1938 paper 'Glottalized Continuants in Navaho, Nootka and Kwakiutl (with a note on I.E.)'. Sapir wrote important papers on Tokharian (its relation to Tibetan, for instance) and Hittite (e.g. 1936). His appreciation of Hittite laryngeals was illumined by his awareness of Amerindian phonologies. From the time of *Language* onwards this particular 'world-wide' linguistic scholarship became a characteristic feature of American anthropological linguistics. We take it for granted (or did - for it has begun to wither a little of late). It is a feature of Bloomfield's great contribution (also called *Language*) of 1933. It is in Swadesh, Greenberg, Pike and many others. Yet Sapir was taken *by them* to be the model for them all.

The main explicit theoretical points that people remember from *Language* concern the notion of *drift* as the motor of linguistic change. Drift is the name that Sapir gave to a kind of pattern dynamic that drove languages of common genetic origin when separated to continue to change in parallel ways. This is a typical Sapir quasi-theory - 'quasi' because it is almost impossible to make precise. There are quantities of illustrative cases that can be cited, however. One might be the independent development in south-western Irish Gaelic and in north-western Scottish Gaelic of a diphthong before velar nasals and laterals (e.g. *ann/auN/* 'in it'; *geall/g'auL/* 'promise', where /L/ and /N/ are velarized phonemes). These changes occur, therefore, at the opposite and long-separated ends of the Gaelic realm (O'Rahilly 1972: 50-1, 122). Similar discussions have occurred, from time to time, in the context of the relationships between English at various early dates and Old Saxon, on the one hand, and Frisian on the other. For Sapir, however, the notion of drift developed (as later papers hint) from the problem of applying the historical methods derived from the analysis of texts of various dates to orally living material. He says somewhere (about establishing stages of a common language) that Common West Germanic cannot be 'reconstructed' with the phonemes /hl/ and /hr/ by utilizing the modern West Germanic languages alone, as those languages have 'lost' (that is, show no trace of) /h/ in combinations of that sort. Faced only with languages still living today, we should, therefore, be permitted by the rules to restore /r/, /l/ only. When West Germanic *was* 'Common', argues Sapir, all the Western Germanic languages must have had such forms: the common absence is a post-separation phenomenon. They all lost the missing phonemes later, by linguistic drift. Sapir developed this view because of a genuine problem in setting up fixed intermediate stages in reconstructing the earlier interrelationships of Amerindian languages, using standard historical linguistic methods. Restored stages cannot be regularly and consistently fixed to specific linguistic features. Nowadays this has a modern ring. A Celticist recently declared that when we refer to Common Celtic we may be referring to a period of several thousand years. To unpack the meaning of such non-Brugmannian heresies would need a full consideration of wherein

lies the historicity of 'historical reconstruction' (cf. Ardener 1971b), but for our immediate purposes it is sufficient to note that experience of Amerindian 'reconstruction', without historical documents, reflected upon in Ottawa, contributed to Sapir's own early insight.

*Language* is also marked by a concern for linguistic typology and for classifying previously inadequately analysed language groups. The Sapir reclassification of Amerindian languages was bold and has been subsequently built upon. Its methods certainly inspired Greenberg in his own reclassification of African languages in the 1950s (Greenberg 1955 and subsequent publications). That classification does not resemble the close-knit, densely documented classification of, for example, the Indo-European languages, backed by regular tables of sound changes. The classification of Niger-Kordofanian, in which the Bantu family found itself redefined as a greatly swollen subset, is much looser, more statistical - with a Heisenbergian element of uncertainty. Sapir had a very strong influence here.

All very good, but possibly not riveting for a non-specialist? In fact it is quite misleading to look in Sapir's writings merely for technicalities - he is deeply informative on these - or for an orderly theory. Nothing can be set up in the way of an organised exposition of a theory of language along the lines of, say, Jakobson or Saussure. Yet among his contemporaries it is clear that 'Sapirism' was a total cast of mind. We saw how Professor Voegelin couldn't (or didn't) accord certain priorities to Saussure over Sapir.

In this connection, Bloomfield's review of Sapir's *Language*, in 1922, a year after its publication, is also of interest:

Dr. Sapir in almost every instance favors those views which I, for one, believe to be in accord with our best knowledge of speech and of the ways of man.... As Dr. Sapir gives no bibliography, one cannot say how much of his agreement with scholars who have expressed similar views is a matter of independent approach. For instance...the author develops what he justly calls an 'important conception', - the 'inner' or 'ideal' phonetic system of a language: it is exactly the concept of *distinctive features* developed by the school of Sweet, Passy, and Daniel Jones....

(Bloomfield fails to mention the clear terminological echoes of the *innere Sprachform* of von Humboldt.)

The same concept was developed (independently, I think) by Franz Boas (Handbook of American Indian Languages...) and by de Saussure (Cours de Linguistique Générale [Paris 1916]). It is a question of no scientific moment, to be sure, but of some external interest, whether Dr. Sapir had at hand, for instance, this last book, which gives a theoretic foundation to the newer trend of linguistic study (Bloomfield 1922, in Koerner 1984: 47).



A question, we may think, of *some* 'scientific moment'. It is interesting that there were really two routes to the 'discovery' of the phoneme (to which Bloomfield was referring): through the vaguely German inner forms of language, and through precise phonetic analysis. Bloomfield lumps together both approaches, but there is no doubt that he himself belongs more with the latter and Sapir with the former. In my own view, however, the important point is that the day of the new synchronic systematics had dawned, and from now on the contribution of Sapir would appear intuitive and unorganized in comparison. The discourse of Sapir takes for granted a holistic view of language. It was an irony that the Chomskian purity squads, in their heyday years after his death, dubbed him *mentalistic*, and thus allowed him into the pantheon of the Cartesian predecessors of transformationalism, a movement with which surely Sapir would have had little sympathy. As a final word about *Language* before we leave it, there is no doubt that it suffered from the appearance only a year later of the vastly successful second edition of Saussure (so often reprinted). As we have already mentioned, Bloomfield's own *Language* (surely the title must have been a deliberate if not a provocative echo?) appeared in 1933 and almost immediately ushered in the American phase of structuralism; which, because of its immense vogue, to some extent obscured Sapir, who would in six years be dead - on the very eve of that war which strengthened (through the famous military crash courses) the general awareness of the contribution of what for long was thought of as '*Bloomfieldian* structuralism'. It is quite clear, of course, that that school - characterized as 'objectivist', 'anti-mentalist', and which proposed 'discovery procedures', based on the concept of an infinite corpus of observable data - certainly does not belong in the same theoretical world as Sapir's. Nevertheless, his work was not totally overwhelmed, as we have seen. The American school never lost its respect for his cast of mind.

Let us look at the nature of that cast of mind.

He had, first of all, a broad view of the idea of culture. He explicitly included in it 'higher culture', such as literature and poetry. As we have seen, he aspired to verse himself. Furthermore, he included mental phenomena (his so-called 'mentalism'), as is illustrated by papers such as 'Cultural Anthropology and Psychiatry' (1932), writing in terms that Evans-Pritchard (who recommended Sapir as reading) might in part have used:

The true locus of culture is in the interactions of specific individuals and, on the subjective side, in the world of meanings which each one of these individuals may unconsciously abstract for himself from his participation in these interactions (in Mandelbaum 1949: 515).

In 1934, we have, as a development of this, his famous article on 'Symbolism' in the *Encyclopaedia of the Social Sciences*, much

leaned on by Victor Turner (1964: 30ff; 1967). He distinguishes there between 'referential symbols' (including 'oral speech, writing, the telegraphic code', etc.), and 'condensation symbols' ('a highly condensed form of substitutive behaviour for direct expression, allowing for the ready release of emotional tension in conscious or unconscious form'). He notes, however, that language, although at one level referential, has deep condensation roots. This point was lost subsequently, when the rise of communication/information theory tended to overstress the aspect of language as a 'code'.

In an interesting article in *Psychiatry* in 1938, called 'Why Cultural Anthropology needs the Psychiatrist', he refers to being rather shocked when, reading J.O. Dorsey's *Omaha Sociology*, he would find an account of a cultural practice, followed by some such phrase as 'Two Crows [an Omaha informant] denies it' (the title now of a recent thorough treatment of the Omaha by Dr R.H. Barnes [1984]). It was, says Sapir, as though Dorsey

had not squarely met the challenge of his source material and given the kind of data that we, as respectable anthropologists, could live on. It was as though he 'passed the buck' to the reader, expecting him by some miracle of cultural insight to segregate truth from error. We see now that Dorsey was ahead of his age.... The truth of the matter is that if we think long enough about Two Crows and his persistent denials, we shall have to admit that in some sense Two Crows is never wrong.... The fact that this rebel, Two Crows, can in turn bend others to his own view of fact or theory or to his own preference in action shows that his divergence from custom had, from the very beginning, the essential possibility of culturalized behaviour (in Mandelbaum 1949: 567, 572).

It is not surprising that the linguists did not see in this much more than 'mentalism' at this time. What we have here is a perception that wherever human beings are, total consistent systems cannot be. There would be four decades of structural and transformational theory to get through before the idea of language as a total system began to come under general attack. As for the anthropologists - among them the idea of consistency in social systems had almost as long a life.

Perhaps one of the great puzzles about Sapir is why he should have been remembered by most linguists and anthropologists today for something known as the 'Sapir-Whorf hypothesis'. I have often discussed this matter from Whorf's point of view (Ardener 1971a, 1982), and the question of attribution has considerable complexity. I have repeatedly argued that the hypothesis as commonly summarized (that language determines the view of reality) does not really square with Whorf's views, and that the extreme relativism implied was a product of his professional colleagues' interpretations and his own occasionally hasty phraseology in semi-popular writings. It is the more surprising that Sapir should have been made, as it were, to take the prior responsibility for what was to become a

rather controversial thesis. It seems likely that the 'Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis' received its public baptism from Harry Hoijer's contribution (of the same title) to a conference of 1953 in Chicago, which led to a major review of these ideas, published under his editorship as *Language and Culture*, in 1954. In that volume, Hockett ('The Whorfian Theses') and Fearing (the 'Conceptions of Benjamin Whorf') refer only to Whorf in their titles, and the rest, save Hoijer, refer only to Whorf in their papers. In the 'Discussions', which form half of the book, all save Hoijer refer to the 'Whorf hypothesis' or the like, and by the end so does he ('the Whorf hypothesis', p. 263). Hoijer's own 'Preface' confirms the matter (1954: ix) with its references to 'the Whorf hypothesis and its problems', and to 'what Whorf [*not Sapir*] actually said'. The Hoijer volume remains one of the best discussions of Whorf. At the time, it was widely perceived as a major attack on 'the hypothesis'. In fact, it is still required reading on the wider problems, which are still with us.

To return to Sapir's possible role in all this, there is, of course, a famous citation of Sapir by Whorf, as we shall see in a moment, and Whorf also refers respectfully to his studies with Sapir. However, Whorf describes important hypotheses on the subject that he developed before he met Sapir, which are very much his own and in his very recognisable mental style - particularly those linking the materiality of action with linguistic conceptualisation. It is as if, when Whorf's approach had its main post-war impact, which came after a posthumous publication (1952), it was important to some that Sapir's role should be given priority and his name provide a certain professional respectability to it. I am not aware that he himself ever declared anything so scientifically grand as a 'hypothesis'. The Whorf-like passage, quoted *by* Whorf, is from Sapir's paper, 'The Status of Linguistics as a Science', published in 1929, having begun life as a public address the year before:

Language is a guide 'to social reality'. Though language is not ordinarily thought of as of essential interest to the students of social science, it powerfully conditions all our thinking about social problems and processes. Human beings do not live in the objective world alone, nor alone in the world of social activity as ordinarily understood, but are very much at the mercy of the particular language which has become the medium of expression for their society. It is quite an illusion to imagine that one adjusts to reality essentially without the use of language and that language is merely an incidental means of solving specific problems of communication or reflection. The fact of the matter is that the 'real world' is to a large extent unconsciously built up on the language habits of the group. No two languages are ever sufficiently similar to be considered as representing the same social reality. The worlds in which different societies live are distinct worlds, not merely the same world with different labels attached (in Mandelbaum 1949: 162).

Some large claims are certainly made in this paragraph, which is, however, one among many in a somewhat discursive paper covering the relationships between language and human life. Furthermore, there is another passage (Whorf-like in a slightly different way) in an earlier paper of 1924, with which it is not entirely consistent:

It would be absurd to say that Kant's 'Critique of Pure Reason' could be rendered forthwith into the unfamiliar accents of Eskimo or Hottentot, and yet it would be absurd in but a secondary degree. What is really meant is that the culture of these primitive folk has not advanced to the point where it is of interest to them to form abstract conceptions of a philosophical order. But it is not absurd to say that there is nothing in the formal peculiarities of Hottentot or of Eskimo which would obscure the clarity or hide the depth of Kant's thought - indeed, it may be suspected that the highly synthetic and periodic structure of Eskimo would more easily bear the weight of Kant's terminology than his native German.

(Whorf might have written that last clause.)

Further, to move to a more positive vantage point, it is not absurd to say that both Hottentot and Eskimo possess all the formal apparatus that is required to serve as a matrix for the expression of Kant's thought. If these languages have not the requisite Kantian vocabulary, it is not the languages that are to be blamed but the Eskimo and the Hottentots themselves. The languages as such are quite hospitable to the addition of a philosophical load to their lexical stock-in-trade (in Mandelbaum 1949: 154).

Now all that may be true or false, but it is quite conventionally universalistic in tone. The subject is Whorfian but the conclusions are somewhat different. On the other hand, later in the same paper (*ibid.*: 157), he is quite aware that 'innocent linguistic categories may take on the formidable appearance of cosmic absolutes', and he speaks of language producing 'spurious entities'. On the whole, Sapir's lack of formal theorizing makes it difficult to see him as a caricature Sapir-Whorfian. Nevertheless, much that is sound in discussions of the relations between language, thought and reality is to be found in his writings.

How shall we evaluate Sapir? There is no doubt that his concern with what he kept seeing as *Psychology of Culture* diverted his energies in the later years. Unlike Malinowski, with whom he has points in common, he did not locate his insights in either a general theory of language or in a general theory of society. Sapir died in 1939. His widow has written: 'Edward died with the feeling that he had an important point to make that he hadn't managed to get across' (see Koerner 1984: 192). There *was* a failure of sorts. His perception of the links between life and language were taken too literally as a matter of linguistics alone. It is

not surprising, as we have said, that Sapir should have found his 'important point' eluding him, when it is realized that both anthropology and linguistics were at the height of their modernistic, scientizing obsessions. In addition, his best insights require a knowledge of historical linguistics which is rare in general anthropologists. The path into psychology was trodden not only by him, but (of course) by Benedict, Mead, Bateson, Nadel, Fortes and many others (including Audrey Richards). The then available psychologies were, however, either too individual, too positivistic, too culturally loaded, or too totalitarian in their claims (psychoanalysis managed to be all these at once!) for this to be other than a blind alley. It has taken most of the post-war period for anthropology itself to work through the Mind/Society/Language relationship - the seventeen years of this Journal (*JASO*) alone probably provide sufficient illustration of that!

The case of Sapir is a good illustration of the way that an apparently successful professional life can be lived with powerful intellectual winds against it. Even if we recognise certain intuitions of Sapir's that are now more subtle than we first thought, the appropriation of Sapir by the 'Sapir-Whorf' discussion makes it very difficult to put him forward as the ancestor of *post-Whorfian* discussions, especially when we note the largely *ad hoc* nature of many of Sapir's views. One thing is certain: both he and Whorf have suffered from misinterpretations of quite serious, though not identical kinds. Let us remember, however, that they, like Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, 'did make love to this appointment'. They accepted conventional ways out, oversimplified, went with the grain of their times, and perhaps they could not always even remember what they had originally wished to say. They would not be the first, nor the last, to fall into these traps! Sapir had, and still has, great exemplary value in this and other ways - especially for humanists. Without his memory, certainly American anthropological linguistics (and much anthropology of language in general) would not have so sturdily weathered (as it did) the mortal storm of Chomsky's transformational formalism that left so much else in ruins for a generation.

## EDWIN ARDENER

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## NATIONALISM: SOME METHODOLOGICAL ISSUES

### 1: *The Resilience of Nationalism*

At the beginning of the *Communist Manifesto*, Marx and Engels invoked the spectre of communism and predicted that it would haunt Europe until the final victory of the proletariat. But blinded by their own discovery, they failed to see the importance of an emerging and even more threatening political force: nationalism. A century and two score years later, it is not easy to decide which of these two *idées-forces*, to use Fouillée's felicitous expression, had the upper hand in European as well as in world affairs. There is little doubt, though, that nationalism has been, and still is, probably the most important political force of modern times. And yet it has been poorly understood and theorized by the different social scientific traditions. A long time after Vico wrote in his *The New Science*

that this world of nations has certainly been made by men, and its guise must therefore be found within the modifications of our human mind. And history cannot be more certain when he who creates things also narrates them (1975: 62-3),

we do not agree as to what a nation is, or what we mean by national identity, or how we account for nationalist movements.

In the period immediately following the Second World War it was thought, somewhat optimistically, that the end of nationalism was in sight. E.H. Carr could refer with confidence to 'the aftermath of the age of nationalism' (1968: 74), while pioneers in the study of nationalism such as Hans Kohn (1944) and Carlton Hayes (1960) emphasised its transient character, abhorred its effects and hoped

for a more universalistic attitude.

All in vain, because the obscure forces of nationalism prevailed over the enlightened wishful thinking of internationalists and cosmopolitans alike. In its relentless motion, nationalism spread like wildfire into the colonial world and triggered off the struggles for national liberation in what was starting to be known as the Third World. The process of decolonization, with the ensuing attempts at state-building and nation-building, could only be ignored by social scientists at their own scholarly peril. And yet, although these events generated a fair amount of literature in the 1950s and 1960s [of which Balandier (1955), Geertz (1963), Deutsch and Folz (1963), Kedourie (1960), Worsley (1964) and Wallerstein (1966) are the best-known representatives], it was considered that Third World nationalisms were the last jolts of a monster which had ravaged the world for over 150 years, but which was now moribund. But nationalisms were part of the inevitable process of modernization that had spread from Western Europe to other parts of the world, admittedly in an uneven way. In the final instance, these nationalisms could be dealt with within the framework of an evolutionary theory.

It is not surprising, then, that the spate of nationalisms against the state that have shattered the political fabric of the Western world in the last twenty years should have caught most social scientists theoretically unprepared. They had been working under the assumption that the modern industrialized societies of Western Europe were nationally well integrated, that is, they were proper nation states. Social scientists were in fact the perfect example of double false consciousness. First, they mistook what was actually state ideology for empirical reality; secondly, they believed, against a growing amount of evidence, that after a long process of nation-building Western European states were nationally well integrated. The existence within each European country of what were perceived at the time as regional differences and even strong identities were in no way felt as a challenge to the basic loyalty that the citizen felt for the nation state. Furthermore, it was believed that with the development of the EEC even the Europe of the *patries* would fade away in a not too distant future.

We could say, paraphrasing Durkheim, that social phenomena have a life of their own, independent of the opinions and desires of social scientists and politicians. The resilience shown by nationalism over a long period should have alerted social scientists to the importance of the phenomenon. But it is a fact that most nineteenth-century and twentieth-century social scientists not only ignored or misunderstood the nature of nationalism, but also underestimated its force.

It may be argued that nationalism, as the scourge of modern times, is not there to be talked about but to be uprooted as a most dangerous evil. And yet the nation still has a role to play in the foreseeable future, because, as Mazzini puts it, 'the individual is too weak and mankind too vast' (1972: 59). Of course, for those who confuse Herder with Hitler and the nation with the state all this might be anathema. In any case, even if one were to agree that nationalism is a pathological phenomenon, it would



still be the case that it is *terra incognita* for the social scientist and hence worthy of being explained.

The recent wave of nationalisms against the state in Western Europe has been a source of political destabilization which in different degrees has affected nearly all countries. The radical way in which a significant percentage of the population of Northern Ireland reject British rule may be comparable only to the militant stand adopted by ETA supporters in their struggle for an independent Basque state, but the phenomenon is much more general, if not always so virulent. The Welsh and the Scots in the United Kingdom, Catalans, Galicians and Andalusians in Spain, Friulians and other *Grenzeleute* in Italy, Walloons and Flemings in Belgium, and even the peripheral nationalities of the French state plus the Corsicans - all try to preserve a sense of national identity and rightly believe that this can only be achieved in the framework of a state that provides them with a substantial degree of political autonomy. In West Germany the federal system has, to a great extent, pre-empted the possible emergence of peripheral nationalisms, but the *Nationalefrage* has persisted more or less consciously in the mind of most people in so far as they have not accepted the *de jure* partition of Germany into two states.

## 2. Classical Sociology and the Nation

The reasons for the inability of social scientists to come to terms with the national question have their origins in the cosmopolitanism of the Enlightenment, but they find their specific roots in the intellectual traditions of the recognised nineteenth-century founding parents of the social disciplines. The underlying political philosophies of the social scientific projects of the nineteenth century were based on either liberal or socialist conceptions of the world. No matter how different these conceptions might be, liberalism and socialism are both universalistic in nature, and hence they consider nationalism as a transient phenomenon. Only conservative and romantic thinkers perceived, in all its uncontrollable turbulence, the force of nationalism in history, but they were not interested in explaining its origins, character and development, but rather in asserting its eternal reality.

There is a consensus today that contemporary social theory stems from the confluence of three major streams of thought: Marx, Durkheim and Weber. This is not to deny the importance of thinkers like Comte, Spencer, Tocqueville, Tönnies, Simmel, Freud and others whose ideas have found a way into mainstream sociology, nor is there any suggestion that a synthesis has emerged incorporating Marx, Durkheim and Weber into a single theoretical framework. Their sociological styles are irreconcilable, both at the methodological and at the theoretical levels, though partial syntheses have been shown to be possible and fruitful. In fact, the

greatest challenge of contemporary sociology is precisely to convince its practitioners that progress will only come as a result of abandoning their recalcitrant feudal-like positions and joining in a common enterprise. But without a commonly agreed theoretical charter all attempts to transcend the present state of affairs, no matter how well intentioned, are bound to fail.

It is an idle occupation to look for a theory of nationalism among the founders of the social sciences. At best, Marx, Durkheim and Weber made occasional remarks on the nation, but on the strength of these elements it is extremely difficult, if not altogether impossible, to build up a theory of nationalism.

The founders of historical materialism were certainly aware of the nationalist phenomenon. As politically committed young intellectuals, Marx and Engels lived through the troublesome 1840s - a period in which nationalist struggles ravaged the European arena. In their formative years, then, they had to confront the nationalist demands of a variety of European peoples. To understand their attitude towards nationalism it is essential to know that they subordinated the survival of nations to the progressive march of history: some peoples were fossils from a long gone past and were therefore objectively counterrevolutionary. These reactionary nations had to be sacrificed on the altar of the mightier national states. In the articles written by Marx and Engels for the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung* (1848-49), the national question was often present as part of the political scenario, but there was no attempt to explain the phenomenon except perhaps in terms of crude stereotypes of national character. It is obvious that for Marx and Engels the nation was not a central category of social existence, but rather a transitory institution created by the bourgeoisie - hence the passage in the *Communist Manifesto* to the effect that the 'proletariat has no fatherland'.

At the turn of the century, the vindication of the rights of nations changed the political panorama to the extent that to the Marxists of the Second International the national question was central to their political agenda. However, it was only within the Austro-Marxian tradition that a serious attempt was made to come to terms with the theoretical problems of the nation. Otto Bauer's *Die Nationalitätenfrage und die Sozialdemokratie* (1907) presented a theory of nationalism based on the idea of national character and of national culture, though he also used the dubious idea that nations have a historical destiny to fulfil. A much better-known and more influential contribution from this period is, of course, Stalin's *Marxism and the National Question* (1913). In his definition of the nation, Stalin required the simultaneous coalescence of four elements (language, territory, economic life and psychic formation) in a historically constituted community of culture. As for Lenin, he adopted a more flexible definition of the nation, and although he was in favour, like most Marxists, of the creation of large political units, he endorsed the principle of the self-determination of oppressed nations, at least in theory.

As a whole the Marxist tradition has been extremely suspicious of nationalism, though for tactical reasons it has often made use of national sentiments to achieve socialist objectives. In any

case, within Marxist theory the nation is not a significant concept that can help to explain the dynamics of modern history. I would tend to agree with Tom Nairn's sweeping statement that the 'theory of nationalism represents Marxism's great historical failure' (1977: 329). The extraordinary developments of the 1960s and 1970s in which socialist countries have fought bitterly against each other along nationalist lines have opened the eyes of some Marxists (Horace Davis, 1978; Benjamin Anderson, 1983) to the reality that, at least at present, national interests are, in the final analysis, more important than socialist internationalism. Whether this is the beginning, within Marxism, of a genuine interest in the theory of nationalism remains to be seen.

Emile Durkheim's silence on the national question is quite intriguing, considering that in his formative period, in the 1880s, he was asking the same question that Renan formulated in 1882 - *Qu'est-ce qu'une nation?* In his early writings, mostly in the form of long book reviews, Durkheim made an inventory of a number of authors (Fauillée, Schäffle, Tönnies, Gumplowitz) who had contributed to the study of how national consciousness was created and maintained. The concepts that Durkheim evolved over this period - especially *conscience collective* and *représentation collective* - cried out to be applied to the study of national consciousness in contemporary societies. But towards the late 1890s Durkheim operated a double shift, which led him to an increasing concern with primitive societies and to the *refoulement*, to use B. Lacroix's expression, of the political sphere. The result was that the two basic concepts mentioned above were never put to the test for the study of modern nations.

We have to wait until the publication of a wartime pamphlet - *L'Allemagne au dessus de tout* (1915) - to find Durkheim expressing an interest in the theory of the nation. The work was basically a tract against Treitschke and other German theorists who had deified the state and were objective accomplices of the expansionist policies of Kaiser Wilhelm. In opposition to Treitschke, Durkheim praised the German tradition of the *Volksgeist* (Savigny, Lazarus, Steinthal) because in their conception of the nation they took into account the impersonal forces of history (myths, legends, etc.). In other words, they assumed that a nation had a 'soul', a character which was independent of the will of the state. It is somewhat surprising, then, that when Durkheim proposed a definition of the nation - as a 'human group whose members, either for ethnic or simply for historical reasons, want to live under the same laws and constitute the same state' (1915: 40) - he was unable to distinguish clearly between nation and state. Could this oversight be a reflection of Durkheim's role as one of the committed ideologists of the Third Republic?

The First World War, with the collapse of socialist internationalism and the rallying of the working-class parties to the interests of their respective national states, was undoubtedly the catalyst that compelled many social scientists to think about the nation. Within the Durkheimian school, this led to a number of discontinued and failed attempts to incorporate the nation into sociological theory. In 1920 to 1921 Marcel Mauss started to

write a monograph on the nation, which he never completed. From the scattered fragments that are extant (Mauss 1969, Vol. 3), we can conclude that his standpoint was no different from that of Durkheim, in that he never solved the antinomy between state and nation. The problem with Durkheim and Mauss is that they had the French historical experience of a national state too much at heart to pay enough attention to alternative conceptions. Another Durkheimian, Maurice Halbwachs, although not directly concerned with articulating a theory of the nation, was nonetheless interested in the study of one of the key elements in any definition of the nation: the idea of collective memory. His work, however, had limited diffusion, and his refined conceptual tools were applied to a variety of groups (family, class, etc.), but not to the nation (Halbwachs 1925, 1950).

Wolfgang Mommsen's *Max Weber und die deutsche Politik* (1959) empirically established for liberal and democratic ears the unpalatable truth that Weber was not only a German nationalist, but that for him the national state was the 'ultimate value'; in other words, that in the final instance, the interests of the national state should prevail over any other interests. Although in *Economy and Society* Weber defined the nation as a community of sentiment based on some objective common factor (language, traditions, customs, social structure, history, race, etc.) and the belief that this factor generated values which were worth preserving against encroachment by other communities, he insisted in creating an indissoluble bond between nation and state. To all practical purposes the nation, that is, the cultural values of a community, could only be preserved in the framework of a purpose-built state. On the other hand, Weber knew very well that the modern state could not achieve its aims exclusively by brute force. The loyalty of the individual to the state depended on the existence of a national sentiment, hence the centrality of the equation 'nation equals state'.

There is little doubt that Weber's understanding of the nation was far superior to that of Marx or Durkheim. For one thing, he was well aware that national sentiments were not the creation of the rising bourgeoisie, but that they were actually rooted in the population of a country as a whole. Because *Kultur* was the distinctive feature of a national community, Weber was very interested in the question of its preservation, transmission and change. In this context he considered crucial the role played by the intellectuals in creating a literary culture. It is unfortunate that Weber did not write, as he had actually planned to do, a history of the national state.

### 3. Theories of Nationalism

In the last few years there has been an exponential growth of the literature on nationalism. Any attempt to take an inventory and systematize it is a daunting task. Even fifteen years ago,

Anthony D. Smith's survey of the main theories and studies on nationalism (1971, 1973) included an impressive list of books and articles.

A somewhat cavalier way of disposing of the problem is to assume that, as a phenomenon, nationalism is theoretically intractable due to the heterogeneity of what is supposed to be explained. How can we compare ideas, processes and groups that have appeared in different historical or social contexts (Zubaida 1978)? Whether this point of view is a remnant of the golden age of Althusserian scholasticism, with its fastidious insistence on the impossibility of constructing certain theoretical objects, or an attempt to emulate the Lévi-Straussian idea that certain theoretical realities are just the illusory products of certain ways of thinking (Lévi-Strauss 1962: 149), the question is in any case worth considering. There is always the danger, though, that if this methodological prescription is applied too rigidly we could lose sight of even the core of the nationalist phenomenon.

Most studies of nationalism, whether by historians, political scientists or sociologists, are basically descriptive and narrative in type. The enormous quantity of writings on nationalism seems to dissolve into rather superficial and colourful statements. It looks as if a great number of these studies have been undertaken with a sense of expediency, as a response to urgent political needs. Not surprisingly, they are theoretically jejune. Most of these studies fail the minimum standards required to fulfil the Durkheimian criterion of using well-established facts. What this amounts to is that we cannot make a scientific inventory of the social facts of nationalism, for the simple reason that we lack the basic building blocks: good monographic studies of individual nations. That most of these studies are also theoretically thin is also to be expected. At best, nationalist theories play the old labelling and typological game. But placing often ambiguous facts in differently coloured boxes is no substitute for a fully fledged theoretical pursuit.

Some social scientists have tried to construct a theory of nationalism on the basis of the comparative method *à la* Frazer, a temptation to which sociologists have been particularly vulnerable (Smith 1981). Anthropologists, having been immunised by the Malinowskian vaccine, have been less prone to forget the first functionalist commandment: ye shall not pluck out isolated facts from a variety of historical and social contexts and compare them.

Of the general theories of nationalism, that of Ernest Gellner (1984) is by far the most widely praised and accepted. Gellner's powerful argument rests on pinning down the appearance of nationalism to the transition from agrarian to industrial society. The two models of society that Gellner uses - Agraria and Industria - are extremely abstract. But the facts of nationalism are too complex to be accounted for by a formalistic and simplistic model of the process of modernization that ignores history. It is precisely because Gellner's theory is ahistorical that it is so difficult to see whether it works or not. However, by pinpointing the precise role of language and culture, as well as education, in the development of nationalism, Gellner has probably made a lasting

contribution to the study of state-generated nationalism; it is up to historically minded sociologists to test his provocative hypotheses.

There are at least four different ways of conceiving the nation, from which derive four major explanatory frameworks: essentialism, economism, culturalism and eclecticism. The essentialist conception, originating in Herder and in Romanticism in general, assumes that nations are natural, organic, quasi-eternal entities created by God in time immemorial. Each nation is characterised by the existence of a peculiar language, a culture and a specific character (national character). As a spiritual reality, a nation has a specific contribution to make to the design that the divinity has installed for mankind. The idea that every nation has been chosen by God to perform a specific role in human history can easily be secularized, hence the appearance of ideas such as 'manifest destiny' or 'common historical destiny'. Furthermore, the essentialist vision of the nation emphasises the ideational and emotive aspects of *communitas*, but it tends to exclude economic, social and political dimensions and fails to perceive the intrinsic historicity of the nation.

The starting point for the economic conception of the nation is the assumption that national consciousness is fundamentally a type of false consciousness. In other words, that underneath the idea of the nation lie economic interests. The fact that by its own ambiguity the nationalist discourse can be used to justify or hide economic exploitation, as well as political power and cultural supremacy, is not a sufficient reason to reduce nationalism to the ideology of the ascending bourgeoisie. Economism is an extremely popular form of explanation, and as such it is favoured by Marxists and non-Marxists alike. In the modern literature this explanatory framework appears in different guises, but in the final analysis their common denominator is that they deny the specific character of the national fact.

Culturalism seems to stand as the polar opposite to economism. In fact, both are variants of a conception of society which assumes that the part can explain the whole. By focusing on culture as the key to nationalism, an array of historians and sociologists of modernity (including Kohn, Hayes, Kedourie, Gellner, etc.) have undoubtedly located a crucial factor in the development of nationalism in the last two centuries: there is a need for some sort of cultural identity at a time of rapid economic and social change, with its concomitant effects of alienation and anomie. Whether the nation also satisfies the psychological need for belonging or whether it embodies a sacred character borrowed from religion is a matter for discussion. In any case, culturalism envisages nationalism as a ready-made response to the requirements of modernization. By ignoring the long-term genesis of nationalism and its multifarious phenomenal appearances, culturalism privileges a particular moment, no matter how important, of its existence.

Eclectic explanatory frameworks are the result of the disenchantment with unidimensional, factor theories of nationalism. They follow, on the whole, the palaeofunctionalist argument that

a social precipitate originates as the result of a combination of interacting elements. The candidates for such combinations, as well as the specific weight attributed to each of them, will vary from author to author, but we can be certain of encountering geographic, economic, cultural, religious, historical and linguistic factors. Eclectic approaches are as unobjectionable as they are uninteresting. The idea that society consists of interrelated parts was a revolutionary innovation, but it belongs in the annals of the contributions made by the *philosophes* of the Enlightenment to the social sciences. Today, the minimum programme of functionalism is a pure sociological truism, and it should not be metamorphosed into a theoretical framework. The point of view adopted here, that of the concrete totality, transcends this eclectic empiricism by conceiving of society as a 'structural, evolving, self-forming social whole' (Kosik 1976: 18). The social totality is not constituted by facts; rather, the latter can only be comprehended from the standpoint of the whole.

#### 4. *The Genesis and Development of Nationalism in Western Europe*

The fact that Western Europe was the birthplace and the *lieu classique* of nationalism justifies my standpoint that any theory of nationalism should start by trying to account for the emergence and development of nationalism in this area. Only when we are clear about the meaning of nationalism in Western Europe can we hope to come to terms with its 'diffusion' to other parts of the world.

It is my contention that a regional (Western European) theory of nationalism should provide us with the following answers:

- a) An understanding of the subjective feelings or sentiments of ethnic and national identity, along with the concomitant elements of consciousness. This is the task of an anthropological theory *sensu stricto*.
- b) An account of the genesis and evolution of the idea of the nation and of national identity and consciousness in the Middle Ages and in early modern Western Europe. This is the task of a history of mentalities.
- c) A spatio-temporal explanation of the varying structures (ideologies and movements) of nationalisms in the modern period. This is the task of a structural history.

Anthropological theories of ethnicity have suggested either that ethnic identity is the result of a primordialist affiliation (Shils 1957; Geertz 1963; Francis 1976) or that it is highly malleable and subjective, and hence at the mercy of power games (Barth 1969). Primordialist perspectives stem from extending to a wide population the belief that they descend from a common ancestor and the idea that this generates a sense of identity and of solidarity. In the instrumentalist point of view the emphasis is on the idea that identity is not given or fixed but varies in time

and according to circumstances. Ethnicity is the way in which human groups perceive reality. For a group to survive, what matters is not cultural or biological continuity but the maintenance of ethnic boundaries. Both approaches, instrumentalism and primordialism, have their own partisans and have proven fruitful, if only partially, in a variety of empirical studies. In recent times, sociobiologists have put forward the idea that the resilience of ethnic identity is rooted in the biology of nepotism - this term is understood as the procedure used by human beings to maximize their reproductive capacity (Van den Berghe 1981). This position is compatible with the idea that ethnicity may be subjected to rapid fluctuations in response to the environment. Social scientists are rightly suspicious about sociobiology, but is there biological 'reductionism' in stating that ethnicity rests in the shared belief of common ancestry?

There are serious problems in explaining the transition from ethnic to national identity, but they are partly due to the lack of in-depth historical studies on how the transformation occurred. Attempts to correlate the appearance of national sentiments with the development of capitalism, which many social scientists make, are incompatible with the fact that nations pre-exist capitalism. Soviet scholars have introduced an intermediary stage between tribe and nation, that of *narodnost*, but this only compounds the problem. John Armstrong's pathbreaking *Nations before Nationalism* (1982) considers modern nationalism as part of a long cycle of ethnic consciousness. From a different standpoint, Anthony Smith (1981) has also made a significant contribution to the understanding of this matter. But it is only the perspective of the *longue durée* which will allow us to find a way out of the blind alley in which our obsession with the modernity of nationalism has placed us. There is no miraculous appearance of the nation at the time of the French Revolution, but a long process of evolution starting in the Middle Ages.

It has been said *ad nauseam* that nations and nationalism, as we understand them today, did not exist in the Middle Ages. This is a mere truism. But to abandon for this reason any search into the processes of how nations were formed and how national sentiment developed is tantamount to sociological suicide.

The history of mentalities, in so far as it combines a variety of approaches to the study of modes of thinking, perceiving and feeling, focuses on the old Durkheimian problem of how collective representations are both a social discourse and socially generated. As a phenomenon of the *longue durée*, national consciousness is well open to the kind of scrutiny operated by historians of mentalities.

It should be clear by now that, within the field of comparative and historical sociology, my approach could be labelled structural history, were it not for the amphibology of this expression. This is an area in which we truly stand on the shoulders of contemporary giants (*Annales* historians, Barrington Moore, Charles Tilly, etc.). The work of Immanuel Wallerstein (1974, 1979) on the origins, structure and evolution of the world system



should receive special attention in so far as it is the most recent attempt to put forward a general theory of the social sciences. As such, it is a necessary starting point for any further historical and comparative endeavour. It is unfortunate, however, that Wallerstein has failed to conceptualize the nation - which he considers part of the cultural dimension of the modern world system. Furthermore, in so far as he defines national consciousness as a cultural assertion in the political arena to defend economic interests, it is clear that he cannot account for the phenomenon of nationalism except in a reductionist way. These strictures notwithstanding, a non-dogmatic and cautious use of Wallerstein's world-system theory can be a valuable tool for assessing the functional and historical verisimilitude of a given hypothesis.

The fact that Western Europe is a relatively homogeneous area, where at the same time some of the key variables for the explanation of nationalism (particularly religion, level of economic development, ethnic potential, type and timing of state formation, etc.) change from country to country, permits us to use a methodology of limited and controlled comparisons, hence avoiding the pitfalls of Frazerian comparativism.

In the modern sense of the term, national consciousness has existed only since the French Revolution. The purpose of any study in this area must be to map out the different constraints that have shaped the nationalist discourse in Western Europe into what it finally came to be: the ideology of mass movements. My theoretical assumption is that nationalism is a privileged semantic field which encapsulates the structure and dynamics of modern Western Europe in general and of each specific country in particular. The problem is how to interrogate this discourse, how to uncover the rules of its formation, how to assess its effects on society. A serious epistemological obstacle to achieving these objectives is what I would call the sociological myth of the nation state, i.e. the belief that because the nation state happens to be the paramount ideology of the modern state it must necessarily correspond to a sociological reality.

The kind of structural history that I propose here does not seek to superimpose models on reality - rather it envisages history as a result of a complex dialectical process in which no a priori primacy is given to any factor. We attend to the unfolding of the social totality in history and follow its meanderings from one place to another, from one period to the next. However, once ideas and institutions have appeared in history they acquire a life of their own, and under certain conditions, to be empirically investigated, they have a perdurable effect in society. Structural history is not in a position to explain all that happened, and why it happened. Many areas of social life, particularly in the sphere of nationalism, are the result of historical events which are difficult to predict (wars, invasions, annexations, etc.) and may always remain impervious to our queries. On the other hand, and as Barrington Moore put it, there is also much to be learned from trying to explain why something did not occur.

In conclusion, I envisage nationalism as a sort of geological

formation in so far as different layers of ideological material are deposited over time, but with the difference that past ideologies set constraints on present ones and that the latter may modify the former. The end product is an apparently motionless, but in fact continuously changing discursive formation propelled by the articulation of discursive and extra-discursive practices. This conception is perfectly compatible with the Gramscian notion of cultural hegemony, with the caveat that it is the very idea of nation as a *Gemeinschaft* that is the stake of the ideological struggles (Bourdieu 1982: 16). Finally, and paraphrasing Marx, one could say that nations make history but not in circumstances of their own choice, because the past lingers on in the present - in other words, that the way in which the past is perceived by a community plays a key role in determining the formation of a nationalist ideology and in developing a national consciousness. Now, as I have briefly shown, there are certain structural constraints that shape the ways in which people look at the past.

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## MAX WEBER'S THEORY OF CHARISMA AND ITS APPLICABILITY TO ANTHROPOLOGICAL RESEARCH

'Man is at times seized with a panic as in the helplessness of a dream, by a gale of movement, wildly lashing out like an animal that has got into the incomprehensible mechanism of a net.'

Robert Musil, 'The Man Without Qualities'

### 1. *Charisma and Modern Man*

This essay is devoted to a presentation and critique of one part of Weber's enormous bulk of work, his theory of charisma. By also trying to assess in what respects this theory can be made use of in anthropological research, I implicitly raise the question whether the restraint of most British social anthropologists in consulting and applying the ideas of one of the giants of sociological thought is wholly justified.

The nature of modern, rationalized society and the ambiguous position of man within it form the unifying theme of Weber's sociology; most of his studies, however remote their topics seem to be, are related to it. Weber's theory of charisma, too, can only be understood against the background of his sociological analysis and politico-moral critique of modern, rationalized society and of his concern with the position of the individual within it, topics which will be discussed in this section.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Weber's remarks on rationality and the process of rationalization are scattered throughout his works, and he never summarized or systematized his ideas on this point. Hence, as far as my account of rationality is concerned, I am more dependent on commentaries than in other parts of this paper. Discussions of Weber's ideas on the matter can be found in, among others, Löwith (1930), Schluchter (1981) and Brubaker (1984), to whose work I am especially indebted.

Weber's view of rationality and rationalization in modern social orders represents an important break with the ideas of many 'enlightened' writers. Throughout his writings Weber argues that the occidental, modern type of rationality is not the only kind of rationality. He thus refutes the notion of a single, substantive rationality. Religion - and this is a further break with the dominant ideas of his time - is not an expression of the irrational as such, but has its own characteristic rationality. Moreover, in his *Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* (1971a, first published in German in 1904-06) Weber argues that the Western kind of rationality originates in and develops from religious roots (on these points, see Küenzlen 1980: 32-40).

In *Economy and Society* (1968, first published in German in 1921) Weber identifies two ideal types of rational action, which are set in opposition to non-rational behaviour, i.e. to action which is carried out spontaneously and instinctively on an affectual and/or traditional basis. The two ways in which rational social action may be oriented are described as follows:

- (1) *instrumentally rational (zweckrational)*, that is, determined by expectations as to the behavior of objects in the environment and of other human beings; these expectations are used as 'conditions' or 'means' for the attainment of the actor's own rationally pursued and calculated ends;
- (2) *value-rational (wertrational)*, that is, determined by a conscious belief in the value for its own sake of some ethical, aesthetic, religious, or other form of behavior, independently of its prospects of success... (Weber 1968: 24-5).<sup>2</sup>

Rationality in Weber's writings is, as Brubaker (1984: 35) points out, a 'relational' concept, because a thing is rational or irrational only from a certain point of view. Applying the distinction between value-rational and instrumentally rational action, it can be said that *Wertrationalität* is rationality from the point of view of a certain belief, or of the value that is given to the end(s). An action is value-rational if it is considered to be consistent with the belief, and if there is a logical relation between action and belief. *Zweckrationalität* is rationality from the point of view of a given means-end relationship. An action is instrumentally rational if it is an efficacious means to a certain end (cf. Brubaker 1984: 35-6).

Weber, as a protagonist of *verstehende* (interpretative) sociology, is primarily interested in the subjective meaning of individual action. Both value-rational and instrumentally rational action are defined from the subjective point of view of the

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<sup>2</sup> The boundary between traditional and affectual behaviour, on the one hand, and the various kinds of rational behaviour on the other is not considered a rigid one, and there are transitions which Weber discusses in the pages following the citation (1968: 24-6).

actor (see Weber 1971a: 194, n.9; also Kalberg 1980: 1155). This purely subjective rationality is distinguished from objectively correct rationality. Only instrumentally rational action can be objectively correct, if the perceived appropriateness of the means to a given end is also actual appropriateness (cf. Brubaker 1984: 54). There are, however, limits to objective rationality which are not set by the limitations of scientific knowledge alone but which are given by the fact that there exist different and conflicting cultural values in the world. As the rationality of science is purely instrumental, it is incapable of defining *Wert-rationalität*, or of yielding the value of an end, or of arbitrating between conflicting values. In this context Weber speaks of a 'clash' of 'ultimate *Weltanschauungen*' (Weber 1970: 117) and, as these cannot be reconciled by scientific means, of 'the ethical irrationality of the world' (ibid.: 122; also p. 148).<sup>3</sup>

If 'rationality' in Weber's sociology is a multi-vocal, systematically ambiguous and relational concept, the process of rationalization which shaped the rationality of modern Western societies (and still does) is equally not seen as a single, gradual and continuous process. Weber holds that there are several distinct though interrelated processes in the different spheres of social life. Although these processes have different historical sources, proceed in various directions and at different rates, there are nevertheless common characteristic strands.

One such strand is the increase of specialized technical knowledge, or *Fachwissen*, as Weber calls it. This specialized knowledge is concerned with means-ends relations, that is, with the results of certain actions in the physical and social environment; it thus belongs to the field of instrumental rationality. During the process of rationalization in Western societies, this *Fachwissen* gradually achieved growing social importance; step by step, the cultivated man was displaced by the expert, the *Fach-mensch* (cf. Weber 1968: 998-1002). The increase of specialized knowledge and the enhancement of its social importance further led, if we follow Weber, to the 'disenchantment of the world' (*Entzauberung der Welt*), i.e. to a substitution of magico-religious views of the world by scientific ones. This disenchantment resulted in the belief that the world, from the cosmos to the minutest detail of everyday life, can be explained and mastered scientifically by technical means and calculation (cf. Brubaker 1984: 32). Another characteristic and common strand of the various processes of rationalization in the different spheres of social life Weber sees in the depersonalization of social relationships, or, as he calls it alternatively, 'the general tendency to impersonality' (1968: 294). This process led to an 'objectification of the power structure' (ibid.: 601), which Weber sees to have come into being especially in the spheres of economy,

<sup>3</sup> Such points of view lead Weber's critics to speak of his 'nihilism' (cf., for example, Aron 1971: 200). Löwith shows the connection of this nihilism with Weber's concern with individual dignity and freedom (1930: 12).

politics and administration (cf. *ibid.*: 600). Weber further holds that the progress of specialized knowledge and technical efficiency, as well as the coming to the fore of impersonal, formal rules, led to greater calculability and control of man and nature (cf. Brubaker 1984: 30-5). Finally, it is perhaps one of Weber's most influential achievements to have shown that as an essential addition to, and as a decisive impetus for, the 'external' rationalization in the spheres of science, law, technology, administration, economy, etc., there took place another, an 'inner' rationalization of individuals: an **inner reorganization** and rationalization of the personality which was pushed forward and created by development in the spheres of religion and ethics. Weber's ideas on this matter, expressed mainly in his *Protestant Ethic*, are well known and need not be reiterated here.

The results of rationalization in modern Western society are for Weber highly problematical from the point of view of individual freedom and dignity. Modern capitalist economic action, for instance, is regarded as the paradigm of instrumentally rational action (cf. Weber 1968: 82-5). But the process of rationalization in the economic sphere resulted, according to Weber, in 'the tremendous cosmos of the modern economic order' and in 'the iron cage of capitalism' (Weber 1971a: 181; cf. also *ibid.*: 54-5).<sup>4</sup> Modern administration, another sphere of social life which attracts much of Weber's interest, is essentially bureaucratic administration. Its efficiency and calculability is high compared with other forms of administration, because it is to a great degree based on specialized, technical knowledge (cf. Weber 1968: 973-6). The bureaucrat is guided by abstract and formal rules, and he acts in a spirit of impersonality. His loyalty is not to a person, but to 'the impersonal and functional purposes' of his office (cf. *ibid.*: 959). But again, bureaucratic administration (despite or because of its efficiency and impersonality) presents for Weber an immense threat to the individual in modern social orders. It does not only guarantee technical efficiency but also means 'dehumanization' (cf. *ibid.*: 975); and it leads to the power and control of the bureaucrats over those who are administered (cf. *ibid.*: 225). Finally, Weber's critical and ambiguous attitude towards the ethics of modern *Berufsmenschentum* or professionalism and 'the spirit of capitalism' (both originating, according to Weber, in the Puritan ethos) is neatly expressed in his formula: 'The Puritan wanted to work in a calling; we are forced to do so' (1971a: 181).

Weber's great concern with individual dignity and freedom within the modern social order of objectified and petrified rationality reveals a strong moral impetus in his writings, which indicates that the concept of charisma is not the 'value-free' sociological construct which Weber presents it as being. It is loaded with immense moral significance, and it can only be understood against the background of Weber's analysis of modern capit-

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<sup>4</sup> For Weber's statements on capitalism, see 1971a: 17-24, 181-2; see also Eldridge 1971: 63-5.

alist society and of his idea of man within it. One must see clearly that the concepts of charisma and bureaucracy are used dialectically in Weber's thought and stand in constant tension one to another, and that the emergence of a charismatic individual is seen by Weber as a chance to stop (at least temporarily) the bureaucratization of life (see Eldridge 1971: 68).

In this context it is revealing to investigate how Weber envisages the intellectual in modern society, on the one hand, and the prophet (the charismatic individual *par excellence* in Weber's writings) on the other. Another point, which I shall follow up in the final paragraphs of this section, is the elective affinity to be discerned in Weber's thought between his notion of the moral personality and his view of the prophet.

The intellectual, to start with, is characterised as follows:

It is the intellectual who conceives of the 'world' as a problem of meaning. As intellectualism suppresses belief in magic, the world's processes become disenchanting, lose their magical significance, and henceforth simply 'are' and 'happen' but no longer signify anything. As a consequence, there is a growing demand that the world and the total pattern of life be subject to an order that is significant and meaningful (Weber 1968: 506).

The role of the prophet is differently envisaged:

...prophetic revelation involves for both the prophet himself and for his followers...a unified view of the world derived from a consciously integrated meaningful attitude toward life. To the prophet, both the life of man and the world, both social and cosmic events, have a certain systematic and coherent meaning, to which man's conduct must be oriented if it is to bring salvation, and after which it must be patterned in an integrally meaningful manner (ibid.: 450).

Hence both the prophet and the intellectual are concerned with the meaning of the world; both charisma and reason, moreover, in Weber's view may be value-creating and revolutionary forces (cf. ibid.: 245). But the modern intellectual, pressed by his scientific view of the world, conceives the world as a *problem* of meaning, whereas the prophet reveals the world as 'a meaningful totality' (ibid.: 450). The charismatic individual, as seen here personified in the prophet, could indeed be the meaning-providing person for whom 'growing demand' arises as a consequence of the process of intellectualization.

The moral personality of modern society, according to Weber, is someone who ought to be constantly guided by reason. However, no matter whether this rational behaviour is of the instrumentally rational kind or of the value-rational kind, a moral personality in Weber's view always has to commit himself to certain central and ultimate values about which he organizes his life. The choice of, and between, these ultimate values or *Weltanschauungen*, as I have mentioned, cannot in the end be guided by objectively ration-



al, scientific means and therefore is fundamentally irrational. Weber now demands that the moral personality, despite acting rationally (and in particular, objectively rationally), does not shirk his responsibility to make these irrational choices concerning the fundamental values and demands also that he thereby creates the meaning of his life. The consciously and deliberately undertaken choice of values, or the will of the individual to choose values, as well as his capacity to turn them into purposes and translate them into teleological-rational action, form the essence of the moral personality (cf. Weber 1975: 191-2). The concept of the prophet (which Weber models predominantly on the ancient Hebrew prophets) bears great similarities with his notion of the moral personality, as the prophet is also presented as one who consciously and systematically guides his action on the basis of deliberately made choices of ultimate values; he forges his *Weltanschauung* into purposes and into action aimed at achieving certain goals or ends (cf. Weber 1968: 450; also Brubaker 1984: 63).

What are the interrelations between the prophet/charismatic individual and the process of rationalization, interrelations which also indicate Weber's view of the moral personality's situation and, one might say, dilemma, in modern rationalized society? The prophet is considered to be the bearer of a normative order and in this capacity plays a crucial role in the clash of ultimate values. A charismatic figure who creates new value orientations necessarily deepens and intensifies the value conflict; his new *Weltanschauung* clashes with the old one. The chance of a charismatic figure to become effective and to be the instigator of a process whereby one social and normative order is replaced by a new one is, according to Weber, in a certain dialectical tension with the process of rationalization. By forging his values into purposes and by translating them into teleological-rational action, the charismatic individual is part of the process of rationalization and may instigate it. However, the process of rationalization makes it increasingly difficult for charismatic personalities to arise and to create and establish new values. The prophet, therefore, paradoxically and ironically instigates a process which more and more prevents charisma from becoming effective. Weber holds that the irresistible force of rational discipline eradicates personal charisma (cf. Weber 1968: 1149). 'The waning of charisma', he further claims, 'generally indicates the diminishing importance of individual action' (ibid.: 1148); and here is the link to his concern with the status of the moral personality in modern social orders. The decrease in the chance of a charismatic individual becoming effective indicates for Weber the increasingly problematical position of the moral personality in modern society.

## 2. *The Pure Types of Domination and the Extraordinary Quality of Charisma*

Weber distinguishes between three 'pure' types of legitimate authority:

The validity of the claims to legitimacy may be based on:

1. Rational grounds - resting on a belief in the legality of enacted rules and the right of those elevated to authority under such rules to issue commands (legal authority).
2. Traditional grounds - resting on an established belief in the sanctity of immemorial traditions and the legitimacy of those exercising authority under them (traditional authority); or finally,
3. Charismatic grounds - resting on devotion to the exceptional sanctity, heroism or exemplary character of an individual person, and of the normative patterns or order revealed or ordained by him (charismatic authority) (ibid.: 215).

Weber expressly mentions that ruling organizations (*Herrschaftsverbände*) which belong to one or other of these types are very exceptional and that in concrete reality one normally finds mixtures of these pure types of domination (cf. ibid.: 262-6; also pp. 946-8). The three ideal types of legitimate domination and their concomitant motives of compliance or obedience are to a certain degree congruent with the ideal types of social action. Instrumentally rational action is dominant in the rational type of authority; affectual action is the basis of charismatic authority, and the parallels between traditional action and traditional domination are self-evident. Only value-rational action does not serve as a basis for a type of domination, and it seems to be regarded as underlying all types (cf. also Weber ibid.: 33-6).

What are the most striking similarities and differences between these types of domination? One distinction is that between legal authority and its formal, impersonal character, on the one side, and traditional and charismatic authority, which are both 'personalistic' types of domination, on the other. In the case of legal authority, obedience is owed to the legally established impersonal order and to the commands of its representatives within the scope of the authority of their offices. In the case of traditional authority, obedience is owed to the chief in a traditionally sanctioned position of authority. The charismatically qualified leader, finally, is obeyed 'by virtue of personal trust in his revelation, his heroism or exemplary qualities' (ibid.: 216). The main distinction between charismatic authority and the two other types of domination is that, at least in its genuine form, charismatic authority is extraordinary (*außeralltäglich*), whereas traditional and rational dominations are everyday, routine forms of domination (cf. ibid.: 1111-12).

Weber borrowed the term 'charisma' from early Christian theology. Expressions such as 'the gift of grace', 'spiritual gift', or the Gnostic *pneuma* belong to the semantic field of the term. Weber removed this religiously oriented concept from its histori-

cal and religious context and transformed it into a more generally applicable sociological ideal type which is characterized by its extraordinary quality rather than by its magico-religious quality. Charisma is then defined as

...a certain quality of an individual personality by virtue of which he is considered extraordinary and treated as endowed with supernatural, superhuman, or at least specifically exceptional powers or qualities. These are such as are not accessible to the ordinary person, but are regarded as of divine origin or as exemplary, and on the basis of them the individual concerned is treated as a leader (ibid.: 241).

What exactly this quality is, and how it can be judged, depends on how it is regarded by those subject to charismatic authority. The specific content of the charismatic quality does not enter Weber's definition and usage of the concept. What is important is the formal structure of the social relationship between charismatic leader and followers, and the nature of the command-obedience structure (cf. ibid.: 242).

The command-obedience structure of charismatic authority has to be investigated further. The legitimacy of charismatic authority, to repeat, is strictly personal and emotional; it is based on the followers' affectual belief in the extraordinary qualities of the charismatic individual. 'It is recognition on the part of those subject to authority', Weber writes, 'which is decisive for the validity of charisma' (ibid.). The only basis of legitimacy for charismatic authority is 'personal charisma as long as it is proved; that is, as long as it receives recognition' (ibid.: 244). Charismatic qualities, then, are not taken for granted. They need to be proved, and the gifts of grace may well desert the charismatic individual. Weber, therefore, stresses that 'if proof and success elude the leader for long, if he appears deserted by his god or his magical or heroic powers, above all, if his leadership fails to benefit his followers, it is likely that charismatic authority will disappear' (ibid.: 242).

Another important characteristic of the command-obedience structure is a certain ambivalence in the nature of the recognition of the charismatic qualities, an ambivalence which is marked by the two poles of freedom and duty. Weber writes:

...recognition is freely given and guaranteed by what is held to be a proof, originally always a miracle, and consists in devotion to the corresponding revelation, hero worship, or absolute trust in the leader. But where charisma is genuine, it is not this which is the basis of the claim to legitimacy. This basis lies rather in the conception that it is the duty of those subject to charismatic authority to recognize its genuineness and to act accordingly. Psychologically this recognition is a matter of complete personal devotion to the possessor of the quality, arising out of enthusiasm, or of despair and hope (ibid.).

The charismatic community in its genuine type is a relatively unstable group. It seems, on the one side, that it becomes the more stable the more this freely given recognition is also regarded as a duty. On the other side, the freedom of those subject to charismatic authority to recognise the extraordinary qualities may come to the fore. Charismatic domination is then being transformed in a democratic direction:

The basically authoritarian principle of charismatic legitimation may be subject to an anti-authoritarian interpretation, for the validity of charismatic authority rests entirely on recognition by the ruled, on 'proof' before their eyes. To be sure, this recognition of a charismatically qualified, and hence legitimate, person is treated as a duty. But when the charismatic organization undergoes progressive rationalization, it is readily possible that, instead of recognition being treated as a consequence of legitimacy, it is treated as the basis of legitimacy: *democratic legitimacy* (ibid.: 266-7).

### 3. *The Routinization and Transformation of Charismatic Domination*

Weber puts great emphasis on the extraordinariness on charisma. The hunger for charismatic leadership arises in times of political, economic, psychic, religious, ethical, or other kinds of distress. Charismatic rulership arises from, as Weber puts it, 'collective excitement produced by extraordinary events' (ibid.: 1121). Charisma, moreover, is regarded by Weber as 'the great revolutionary force' in history, especially in traditionalist, pre-rationalist periods (cf. ibid.: 245, 1115-17); as such it is sharply opposed to the everyday routine of traditional and rational types of domination. Charisma is especially hostile and foreign to economic considerations. 'It disdains and repudiates', as Weber writes, 'economic exploitation of the gifts of grace as a source of income' (ibid.: 244; cf. pp. 1113-14, 1119-20).

Weber holds that charismatic domination in this extraordinary and genuine type can only exist in *natu nascendi*. It cannot remain stable and last for long unless it is rationalized and/or traditionalized (cf. ibid.: 246). 'When the tide that lifted a charismatically led group out of everyday life flows back into the channels of workaday routines', Weber says, 'at least the "pure" form of charismatic domination will wane and turn into an "institution"' (ibid.: 1121). In Weber's view, therefore, genuine charismatic authority vanishes soon after it appears, or it is transformed into routinized forms of charismatic domination and, finally, into everyday forms of domination. Charismatic domination, then, can only exist as an institution or organization if it is routinized, and if it is lastly transformed into its very opposite, namely into an everyday form of domination. On one side of the process of the routinization or *Veralltäglichung* (literally,

'every-day-ification') of genuine charisma, at its starting point when charismatic leadership arises, charismatic domination does not really exist as a political organization or institution. 'The purer charismatic authority in our sense is', as Weber puts it, 'the less can it be understood as an organization in the usual sense' (ibid.: 1119). On the other side, at the end of process, routinized forms of charismatic domination could hardly be called 'charismatic' any longer, as traditional and rational elements have come to prevail.

The principal motives underlying the routinization of charisma are, according to Weber, 'the ideal and also material interests of the followers in the continuation and the continual reactivation of the community' (ibid.: 246), interests which are even stronger where the administrative staff of a charismatic community are concerned (cf. ibid.). Elsewhere, Weber writes:

One of the decisive motives underlying all cases of the routinization of charisma is naturally the striving for security. This means legitimization, on the one hand, of positions of authority and social prestige, on the other hand, of the economic advantages enjoyed by the followers and sympathizers of the leader (ibid.: 252).

Two aspects are of fundamental importance for the transformation of charismatic domination into an everyday and perennial phenomenon: the alteration of its anti-economic character and the adaptation of the administrative staff to everyday conditions. Both processes are linked. It is only in the beginning, Weber claims, that followers and disciples of a charismatic leader have purely idealistic motives. The great majority of them 'will in the long run "make their living" out of their "calling" in a material sense as well' (ibid.: 249). The routinization of charisma is therefore accompanied by the appropriation of economic advantages by the charismatic followers (cf. ibid.: 249-51). As it is not possible to live on booty for long, nor on contributions, gifts or any other kind of extraordinary sources of income alone, some form of fiscal organisation which guarantees regular income has to be established (cf. ibid.: 251). For this reason, Weber asserts, 'it is necessary for the administrative staff and all its administrative practices to be adapted to everyday economic conditions' (ibid.: 252).

A crucial point at which the followers' interest in transforming charismatic authority into a perennial institution becomes most acute and obvious is the death (or disappearance) of the charismatic leader. Weber pays great attention to the ways in which the problem of succession can be met and solved, as these ways in his view indicate how the personal charisma is traditionalized or routinized, and as they therefore are of great importance for the subsequent social relationships of the charismatic community (cf. ibid.: 246, 1123).

Weber distinguishes between three main different ways: designation, hereditary charisma, and charisma of office. In the case of designation, it is believed that either the charismatic leader

himself is qualified to designate his successor, which is often done in the form of adoption (cf. *ibid.*: 247, 1124-5); or else the charismatically qualified staff designates the successor. The approval of the designated successor by the ruled is indispensable, to be sure. We find, then, 'the right of prior election' (*Vorwahlrecht*) for the administrative staff, and the subsequent popular acclamation by the ruled. Originally, a majority principle is not possible. Voters have to aim at unanimity, as only one person can be the right successor. The majority principle may, however, come to prevail, and charismatic domination may then be transformed into a democratic electoral system (cf. *ibid.*: 266-71, 1125-31). In the case of hereditary charisma (*Erbcharisma*), charisma is regarded as a quality of the blood and may be transferred through blood ties. Charisma then belongs to a house or a lineage within which it is hereditary. Hereditary charisma does not always ensure unambiguously the identification of the right successor, as many heirs may exist. One possible implementation is 'the belief in the charisma of primogeniture' (*ibid.*: 1137). If this is not the case, hereditary charisma has to be implemented by other forms of finding a successor (cf. *ibid.*: 248, 1136-8). In the case of charisma of office (*Amtscharisma*), charisma is regarded as an objective, transferable entity, dissociated from persons, which can be transmitted by artificial, magical or ritual means, such as coronation, anointing, laying-on of hands, etc. Charisma, then, does not belong to an individual but is charisma of office. This conception may result in the strict separation between the charisma of office and the worthiness of the incumbent (cf. *ibid.*: 248-9).

The various ways in which the problem of succession is met indicate different kinds of routinization of genuine charisma. Whereas designation does not necessarily affect the strictly personal charisma of the individual, hereditary charisma and charisma of office lead to the 'depersonalization of charisma' (*ibid.*: 1135), and in both cases personal charisma may be totally absent. Charisma of office especially may transform genuine charisma into 'a qualification that is inherent in everybody who has become a member of the office hierarchy through a magic act...' (*ibid.*: 1141).

#### 4. *Charismatic Kingship*

In pre-monarchical times the possessors of charismatic qualities were, according to Weber, responsible for the relief of extraordinary (external and internal) distress in a community. The medicine man, the leader of war or hunting parties, the rain-maker and the magician are some such charismatic figures. There may be as many bearers of charisma as there are kinds of distress. Side by side with these extraordinary persons who become important in extraordinary times, Weber sees the chieftain of peacetime. He may be a dual figure who has functions both in extraordinary times

and in peacetime. But more often the chieftain of the hunt and war stands beside that of peace, who has essentially economic, hence everyday, functions (cf. *ibid.*: 1142).

The predecessors of kings were, according to Weber, the holders of extraordinary powers rather than the holders of peacetime functions. 'Everywhere', Weber writes, 'the king is primarily a warlord. Kingship originates in charismatic heroism' (*ibid.*: 1141). Where war and hunt are absent, a charismatic sorcerer may achieve similar powers, especially when natural calamities are frequent. Thus, what is important in Weber's conception of the emergence of kingship is that it arises out of extraordinary, originally magical or religious sources, and most frequently, out of war. The charisma of the warlord depends upon success or failure in raids, feuds, or wars. However, for the warlord to become a permanent figure and king, there must be a 'chronic state of war and a comprehensive military organization' (*ibid.*: 1142; cf. also p. 1134).

Charismatic kingship in Weber's sociology is presented as a routinized and institutionalized form of charismatic domination. The royal power, and the strata which are privileged by its rule, have already stabilized and secured their economic and social positions by transforming the purely charismatic grounds of authority in rational and/or traditional directions. Nevertheless, genuine charisma, or better the *idea* of genuine charisma, may still be of great importance in routinized forms of charismatic domination, since it may be used to legitimate the existing social and property order. Weber holds that 'the very quality of genuine charisma as an extraordinary, supernatural and divine force makes it a suitable source of legitimate authority for the successors of the charismatic hero' (*ibid.*: 1147). Thus, after its routinization, the ideology of genuine charisma remains important and advantageous for the ruler and for those whose power and property depend on the continuation of his rule.

In such a situation, in which genuine and personal charisma is ascribed to a ruler for legitimating purposes, it may be that the ruler's legitimacy is not clearly identifiable and that it requires an additional charismatic power. There may then develop a charismatic staff organization which controls the ruler and restricts his activities. It is in this context that Weber discusses the killing of the God-King.

Insofar as he [the ruler who is a divine incarnation] does not prove himself through his own deeds, his very claim must be confirmed by the experts in matters divine. Hence divine rulers are peculiarly subject to confinement by the groups which have the greatest material and ideal stakes in their legitimacy, the court officials and the priests; this confinement may result in permanent palace arrest and even in the killing of the God-King when he comes of age, so that he cannot compromise his divinity or emancipate himself from tutelage. In general, the very fact that the charismatic ruler carries such a heavy burden of responsibility in relation to the ruled tends to

create an urgent need for some form of control over him (ibid.: 1147).

Weber further points out that because of his exalted charismatic qualities, the ruler is often forced to abstain from administrative or governmental functions, that is, from spheres of social action where things can easily go wrong and are likely to dissatisfy the ruled (cf. ibid.: 1147-8); he thus gives a reason why the divine king should reign but not govern.

With the notion of 'charismatic kingship' Weber's discussion of the routinization of charisma concludes. Charismatic kingship is presented as a permanent political institution, but it is still seen as a charismatically legitimated institution. In order to bring out the methodological importance of the notion of charismatic kingship, I must outline the problematical position which the notion occupies in Weber's theory of charisma as a whole.

It is by the very definition of charisma as an extraordinary, anti-institutional force that charismatic domination cannot exist in its pure form as a political institution. If an anti-institutional charismatic outburst becomes institutionalized, it also transforms into a routinized, somehow corrupt form of charismatic domination, and finally into its opposite, namely into an everyday form of domination. This (deliberate) ambiguity of the concept of 'charismatic domination' is especially evident in Weber's combination of the terms 'charisma' and 'kingship', and it may lead to two misguided assumptions. First, it might be held that the concept of charismatic domination denotes a psychological rather than a sociological or historical phenomenon. This assertion could be supported by the fact that Weber frequently uses the vocabulary of psychology or social psychology in connection with his discussion of charisma. The second assumption might be that Weber's theory of charisma and its routinization has evolutionary implications and that it could be headlined by a phrase such as 'From Charisma to Bureaucracy'; and that this is a historical development which is congruent with the more general process of rationalization. This assertion could be supported by the fact that in the case of charismatic kingship especially, Weber tends to speak in terms of origin and evolution.

However, Weber's concept of 'charismatic domination' is neither meant as a psychological concept nor as the starting point of evolution. In order to show that for Weber 'charismatic kingship' (the methodologically important case to prove that charismatic authority may exist as a political institution) is a matter of (social-and-historical) fact, one has to show what he regards as distinctive of routinized charismatic political institutions as opposed to traditional and rational ones. I must clarify further how the concept of charisma in Weber's sociology is connected with the notion of historical development.

The distinctive criteria of charismatically legitimated political institutions have to be found at the borderline where charismatic domination turns into traditional or rational domination. Weber (in connection with the depersonalization and routinization of charisma as hereditary and office charisma) maintains that 'we



are justified in still speaking of charisma in this impersonal sense only because there always remains an extraordinary quality which is not accessible to everyone and which typically overshadows the charismatic subjects' (ibid.: 1135). The peculiar nature of the command-obedience structure of charismatic authority, let us recall, is characterised by the fact that charisma has to be recognised as an extraordinary quality by the followers. At this point Weber's remarks on 'the divine right of kings' are crucially important. In his opinion, the genuine meaning of the divine right of kings implies that they may be rejected with scorn if their rule fails to bring well-being to their subjects. His prime historical example for these *Verschmäherkönige* (as he calls them) are the early Chinese emperors. They were forced to accuse themselves publicly of sins and insufficiencies in cases of floods, droughts, or other kinds of distress suffered by their subjects. They even faced death as a kind of expiatory sacrifice (cf. ibid.: 242-3, 114-15). Hence, no matter to what degree and in which direction a certain kind of genuine charismatic domination has been routinized and depersonalized, as long as the holder of political power is regarded by his subjects as the bearer of extraordinary qualities which they could not possess, and as long as the loss of these qualities would threaten and even end his rule (and possibly his life), one is justified in speaking of charismatic domination in connection with political institutions.

With regard to the relationship between charisma and historical development, one finds that Weber's philosophy of history is not free of the evolutionistic ideas of his time. Gerth and Mills (1970: 51) point out that the notion of rationalization especially bears the strong imprint of the philosophy of the Enlightenment, with its view of a steady and unilinear progress of moral man and of technique, a progress instigated by reason.

The concept of charisma is linked with historical development and thus with the process of rationalization in various ways. To start with, genuine charisma is presented as a typical irrational force. The charismatic type of domination is linked with emotional and affectual types of social action. Moreover, there is, according to Weber, a negative correlation between charisma and rational discipline: the more rational discipline prevails, the less charismatic and individual action is possible. Is charismatic domination, then, the irrational starting point of the process of rationalization? Hardly. Weber himself points out that 'charismatic domination is by no means limited to primitive stages of development' (1968: 1133) and that 'the three basic types of domination cannot be placed in a single evolutionary line' (ibid.). He is thus far from propagating a unilinear evolution from charisma to bureaucracy which would be congruent with the process of routinization of genuine charismatic domination. Charismatic breakthroughs are for Weber recurrent historical phenomena possible under all historical conditions. They disturb, and temporarily bring to a halt, the steady and unilinear process of rationalization. Once the initial phase of charismatic domination is over, genuine charisma tends to recede before the powers of tradition and rational association, and the process of routinization is set

in motion. Charismatic breakthroughs and the development outlined then constitute a recurrent diachronic episode within history.

##### 5. *Charismatic Domination and Kaiser Wilhelm II*

Weber repeatedly argues that political and scientific statements (including sociological ones) have to be strictly separated. In this section I attempt to illustrate that this claim is not always an easy one to fulfil by discussing how Weber's political views, especially his critique concerning Imperial Germany, find their expression and reflection in his theory of charisma. In order to do so, a brief outline of Weber's political standpoint has to be given first.

Weber throughout his life was passionately interested in politics. The basis of his political judgements was the National Liberalism of his father. But he never committed himself to the National Liberal Party, and in the 1880s, as the result of the political events in Germany under the Bismarck regime and of the party putting up with them, he moved away from National Liberalism and from his father's political position. Due to influences from his mother's family and friends, Weber became aware of 'the social question' and turned towards a more progressive 'social liberalism' which acknowledged the obligation and responsibility of the powerful state to take care of the weaker and poorer strata of society.

Characteristic of Weber's political standpoint are, in many respects, his evaluations of first Bismarck's and then Kaiser Wilhelm II's policies. An account of Weber's position as regards Bismarck is given by his wife Marianne:

Weber's judgement of him was in the same vein in those early years as it was thirty years later: admiring recognition of his incomparable political genius and his policy that aimed at Germany's power and unity, but also a rejection of uncritical devotion and deification (Marianne Weber 1975: 118).

Weber criticised Bismarck's anti-socialist law, the so-called *Sozialistengesetz*, the establishment and extension of which were supported by the National Liberal Party. Weber disapproved of the *Sozialistengesetz*, because for him it was an expression of the fading of old individualistic libertarian ideas in the National Liberal Party. Marianne Weber writes:

Weber always judged political events on the basis of one thing to which he clung all his life: *Intellectual freedom* was to him the greatest good, and under no circumstances was he prepared to consider even interests of political power as more important and attainable for the individual. Not for reasons of political expediency, but only in the name of *conscience* does a man have the right to oppose the conscientiously held different beliefs of others (ibid.: 120).

More than anything else, Weber disapproved of Bismarck's intolerance towards independently minded political leaders, and of the fact that he surrounded himself with docile bureaucrats and minions instead. Weber, however, did not blame Bismarck alone for this but also the nation which willingly submitted to his rule.

In 1888, Emperor Wilhelm I died, and his successor Friedrich III, in whom the liberals had some hope, died after only three months on the throne. When Wilhelm II mounted the throne, Weber was immediately sceptical. He especially abhorred the feudal and ecclesiastical inclinations of the Kaiser and he came to regard the preservation of Bismarck's power as the only effective counterbalance to Wilhelm II's reactionary tendencies. When in 1891 Bismarck fell, Weber thought that the only merit of the Kaiser was that 'he does not please any faction' (*ibid.*: 121). One year later Wilhelm II's policies led Weber to the following judgement:

The most unfavorable opinions of him keep gaining ground. He evidently treats politics only from the point of view of an ingenious lieutenant. No one will deny that he vigorously does his duty in the sense of service. But the wrongheadedness that prevails in between times and the uncanny consciousness of power which animates him have brought such an unprecedented disorganization to the highest places that it is bound to have an effect upon the administration as a whole. [...] We are currently escaping diplomatically truly serious situations as if by miracle. But there can be no doubt that European politics are no longer directed from Berlin (Marianne Weber 1975: 123).

This negative judgement of the Kaiser 'remained', as Marianne Weber points out, 'definitive and was only strengthened by subsequent events' (*ibid.*: 123). The political blunders and diplomatic failures of the Kaiser in the pre-World War One decade especially were considered with great concern by Weber and confirmed him in his view. Weber held that it was mainly due to the policies of the Kaiser that Germany became diplomatically isolated during this period. Again, he did not blame only Wilhelm II, but also the leading parliamentary parties and the German nation as a whole for allowing him to continue (*cf. ibid.*: 399-400). He writes in a letter to Naumann - a member of parliament and a friend of his - that 'we are being "isolated" because that man rules us in that fashion and we tolerate it and put a good face on it' (*ibid.*). In 1908, Wilhelm II's diplomacy and policy in connection with the Balkan crisis resulted in strong demands by politicians for safeguards against the Kaiser's 'personal regime'. Delegates of the parliament proposed constitutional changes in the direction of a parliamentary regime, and Weber joined in (*cf. ibid.*: 404).

Bismarck, then, was regarded by Weber as an eminent politician whose greatest mistake was that he did not tolerate other independently minded politicians, and who therefore paved the way for the 'personal regime' of Wilhelm II, a 'political dilettante' surrounded by the same willing tools and docile bureaucrats. Besides his National Liberalism, his ultimate value of a nationally powerful

state, and his high esteem for individual liberty and social responsibility, Weber thus came to see changes in the political structure in a parliamentary and democratic direction as absolutely necessary. This was not so much the case for the sake of democracy as a value in itself, but rather because Weber thought that such a political system would bring forth strong, independent, and one may say, charismatic political figures. These were essential, in his opinion, to check the exalted powers of the politically docile bureaucrats and to restrict the actions of an incompetent head of state (on these points see also Gerth and Mills 1970: 37-8; Marianne Weber 1975: 653).

In order show that, and how, Weber's political critique of Wilhelmine Germany is reflected in his theory of charisma, two aspects of this theory have to be recalled: first, Weber's view that kingship arises out of charismatic sources, especially from the position of a warlord; and secondly, the elective affinity which Weber saw between charisma and democracy.

Weber's notion of the origin of kingship in charismatic extraordinary warlords, developed at a time of great concern with Kaiser Wilhelm II's political and military blunders before and during World War One, is the mythical revival of the charismatic origin and basis of kingship for present-day purposes. It represents the critique of a king who did not, in Weber's opinion, come up to what one would expect from the incumbent of such an extraordinary office and who, Weber wished, would go, or whom he wanted at least to be strictly controlled. One may say that Wilhelm II's rule was of the traditional type and that hints at his invalid charismatic basis are misplaced. However, the Kaiser himself repeatedly covered his political and military failures behind the ideology of 'the divine right of kings', and he demanded loyalty by virtue of this right. Weber, in parts of his political sociology, seems to be showing those who claim charismatic legitimacy, or who use 'the divine right of kings' for legitimizing purposes, what charismatic domination implies: strict control of the charismatic leader in order to safeguard his charismatic legitimacy, and deposition or death if the gifts of grace have deserted him. Take the following statement, where Weber is eager to show the genuine meaning of charisma and of the divine right of kings:

It is clear that this very serious meaning of genuine charisma is radically different from the convenient pretensions of the present 'divine right of kings' which harks back to the 'inscrutable' will of the Lord, 'to whom alone the monarch is responsible'. The very opposite is true of the genuinely charismatic ruler, who is responsible to the ruled - responsible, that is, to prove that he himself is indeed the master willed by God (Weber 1968: 1114).

Elsewhere, in the context of a discussion of the genuine meaning of *Gottesgnadentum*, Weber points out that 'even the old Germanic kings were sometimes rejected with scorn' (ibid.: 242); and Wilhelm II in his eyes ought to be rejected with scorn by the people. When Weber writes that 'a people that never decided to

show a monarch the door or at least to impose major curbs upon him sentences itself to political tutelage' (Marianne Weber 1975: 404), this indicates that he also blamed the German nation for allowing itself to be ruled by a dilettante.

It ought to be made clear that Weber was not against monarchism, but against bad monarchs operating under a sham constitutionalism. Weber's ideas about parliamentary monarchism are expressed in his section on 'the charismatic legitimation of the existing order' (1968: 1146-48), in which he discusses the 'exalted' position of the God-King, his sacrificial death and, at length, his being controlled and kept apart from politics and administration. The historical paradigm for the restriction of a king's activities is the Oriental caliph, whose legitimate authority urgently required the traditional position of Grand Vizier; for without the Vizier the caliph could be made responsible for troubles and his charismatic authority endangered. This oriental example leads Weber to contemplate the position of the parliamentary monarch, whose political functions are envisaged as follows:

He formally limits the power struggle of the politicians by definitely occupying the highest position in the state. From a purely political viewpoint, this essentially negative function, which depends on the mere existence of a legitimate king, is perhaps in practice the most important one. In more positive terms, this function indicates in the most typical case that the king can take an active part in government only by virtue of his personal capacities or his social influence (*Kingdom of Influence*), not simply by virtue of rights (*Kingdom of Prerogative*)... (ibid.: 1148).

These seemingly value-free comments on the political position of a parliamentary monarch are, in fact, a spiteful comparison between Wilhelm II and his British royal contemporaries, Edward VII and George V (cf. also Marianne Weber 1975: 405).

If in the above passage Weber puts the monarch in his proper place, I now have to consider Weber's ideas concerning parliamentarism. Thus I have reached the second point at which Weber's political critique of Wilhelmine Germany can be found to be strongly expressed in his theory of charismatic domination: the links between charisma and democracy, with its principle of election.

It has been mentioned above that according to Weber, one way of meeting the problem of the succession of a charismatic leader is to choose the successor by designation. This designation can be undertaken by the charismatic leader himself or by the charismatic followers. Only the latter option interests us here. It can be of two distinct, though interrelated kinds. It is either designation of the successor by the most powerful retainers, who may then gain the constant right of prior election; or it is based on public acclamation by all the followers. If the right of prior election is emphasised, this may lead to the traditional and oligarchic privileges of the voter. The coming to the fore of the principle of public acclamation by all the followers may lead to

the legalized and regular election of the ruler by the whole community of the ruled, in which case charismatic rule is transformed in a democratic direction and may finally evolve into a fully developed democratic representative system. The personally legitimated charismatic leader is no longer a leader by the grace of God, but by the grace of those who are formally free to elect him (cf. Weber 1968: 267).

Weber's view of democracy is a *zweckrational* one. He considers democracy as a political system which could further the coming into power of strong political leaders under legal domination, leaders whom he regards as alone being capable of checking the exalted powers of the bureaucrats. The great importance which Weber gives to the role of charismatic political leadership in a representative government under legal domination finds its expression in his charisma theory in a peculiar way: Weber is concerned with one aspect of the process of routinization more than with any other. This what he calls '*die herrschaftsfremde Umdeutung des Charisma*' (Weber 1976a: 155), which Roth and Wittich translate as 'the transformation of charisma in a democratic direction' (Weber 1968: 266). This cognitive preference in his sociological analysis for one aspect could well be said to be rooted in a political claim of Weber's which can be epitomized by the reverse of the phrase cited above: Weber demanded a transformation of Germany's 'democracy' in a charismatic direction. I place inverted commas around 'democracy' because I take the term to mean the kind of democracy which Weber experienced and criticised in the Germany of his time. It may be recalled that Weber also demanded the transformation of Germany's sham parliamentarism in a democratic direction. But he did so only - bearing in mind his instrumentally rational view of democracy - because he thought that democratic election may bring forth charismatic politicians and hence push parliamentarism in a charismatic direction.

With regard to the command-obedience relationship which Weber hoped for in Wilhelmine Germany, the following can be said. Weber wanted a shift in Imperial Germany away from obedience owed to the person of the Kaiser by virtue of his sanctified traditional position; he also wanted a shift away from obedience owed to the bureaucrats by virtue of an impersonal formal legality. He demanded a shift away from these kinds of obedience towards a kind of obedience owed to the person of the charismatic politician by virtue of personal trust in him expressed by his followers in elections. In this point, again, resemblances between Weber's political standpoint and his sociological analysis of the command-obedience relationship under charismatic domination can be found. And again, the political change which Weber hoped for is a reversal of the change in the command-obedience relationship during the process of routinization of charismatic domination. Recognition of charismatic qualities, as we have seen, is ambivalent. It is both freely given and a matter of duty, with the latter being dominant in genuine forms of charismatic domination. With the transformation of charisma in a legal and democratic direction, the free will of the ruled to recognize the leader's qualities and to choose him becomes dominant. The reversal of this sociological analysis in Weber's political claims is to be found as follows:

Weber's idea of democracy first acknowledges the right and freedom of the community to choose its political leader. But after this first step, once the political leader has been recognized and confirmed in an election, he may treat this freely given trust in him as a duty on behalf of the ruled to follow him.

## 6. Conclusions

The rather restrained use British social anthropologists have made of Weber's ideas is, I suppose, partly due to the fact that much of his discussion takes place on a high level of abstraction. This may have resulted in the impression that Weber's investigations are not rooted in ethnographical and historical data as the works of anthropologists are, an impression which is not justified. If one looks, for example, at Weber's studies of the world's major religions (see, for instance, Weber 1951 and 1976b, both first published in 1920), one cannot but admire (considering the enormous scope of the intellectual enterprise) Weber's great knowledge and careful handling of the then available relevant data. It is through the thorough investigation of data of manifold cultural and historical origins that Weber arrives at his more theoretically minded and abstractly formulated conclusions, as, for example, in his so-called 'small sociology of religion' (see 1968: Ch. V). The fact that Weber is ultimately interested in the formulation of rather abstract and universally valid conclusions, rather than in the understanding and interpretation of particular societies as such should not, I think, put anthropologists off from consulting his works. However, the main task anthropologists face, in my opinion, is less one of developing and updating Weber's theories than one of critically assessing them and of considering their heuristic value and applicability in anthropological research. My final remarks will attempt to do so with regard to the discussed theory of charisma.

Weber took the term 'charisma' out of its historical setting of the early Christian Church (as seen by Rudolph Sohm in 1892).<sup>5</sup> He thereby detached the concept from its original, predominantly magico-religious context and, by putting the emphasis on the extraordinariness of charisma instead, created (or intended to create) a generally applicable sociological ideal type. This stress on the vague notion of extraordinariness is, in the end, not really convincing, as it leads to an over-generalization which diminishes the accuracy and heuristic value of the concept when used in political sociology or anthropology. It is useful, I think (in accordance with Speer 1978: 49-50), to restrict the use of the concept of charismatic domination to historical situations in which there arise political leaders to whom magico-religious

<sup>5</sup> The many similarities between Sohm's notion of charisma and Weber's are discussed by Speer 1978: 43-6.

powers are ascribed, if these powers are regarded and presented as the basis of their claims to legitimate domination. Charismatic domination, then, is to be seen as a historical ideal type which applies, not to all kinds of extraordinary leadership qualities, but only to leadership which is religiously or magically legitimated.

I propose further to regard Weber's types of domination, not so much as types of political institutions, but rather as typical orientations or tendencies of actions which sustain social aggregates. Weber is less interested in the analysis of the structural characteristics of collectivities than in the analysis of 'meaningful' individual and social actions which are distinctive of certain collectivities. Hence it is not surprising to find that Weber, for example, speaks of *Vergemeinschaftung* and *Vergesellschaftung* instead of *Gemeinschaft* and *Gesellschaft*. Bendix points to this fact:

One corollary of this starting point was Weber's tendency to treat all concepts of collectivities or larger social aggregates as convenient labels for tendencies of action. Wherever possible, he avoided nouns, and hence the 'fallacy of misplaced concreteness' (Whitehead), by using verbs or 'active nouns', though there is no English equivalent for the latter. This approach even applied to the two terms used in the title, *Wirtschaft* and *Gesellschaft*. Instead of using the term 'economy', Weber entitled a major part of his book *Basic Sociological Categories of Economizing Activities (Soziologische Grundkategorien des Wirtschaftens)*. And instead of 'society', the text speaks of 'societal tendencies of action' (*Vergesellschaftung*) (Bendix 1977: 476; cf. *ibid.*: 470-8).

The concept of charismatic domination, in particular, refers to social actions and to their change in orientation during the process of routinization rather than to the fixed structural characteristics of political institutions.

Moreover, the greatest part of Weber's interests lies, not in an analysis of the nature of the bond between charismatic leader and followers and of the typical orientation of action under such a domination, but in an analysis of the routinization and transformation of charismatic authority. This emphasis, as well as the very ambiguity of the concept of charismatic domination (i.e. that a charismatic community in its beginning could hardly be called a political organization, and that at the end of its routinization it could hardly be called charismatic) makes charismatic domination a flexible and useful conceptual tool in historical studies.

These specifications, to make a final point, allow the application of Weber's ideas, not only to revolutionary charismatic uprisings and movements, but also to action in stable situations, a point which was emphasised especially by Shils (1965) and Eisenstadt (1977). The latter writes:



Perhaps the most important missing link in this whole area was the lack of systematic exploration of the nature of the charismatic orientation and bond as a distinct type of social action. It is only when it is fully recognized that this bond is not something abnormal that the differences between the more extreme and the more routine expressions of charisma can be more fully recognized and systematically studied (1977: xxiv-xxv).

It is with these specifications and restrictions that I consider Weber's theory of charisma to be thought-provoking and of some heuristic value in anthropological research, no matter whether it is more theoretically or more ethnographically oriented.

## BURKHARD SCHNEPEL

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# REVIEW ARTICLE

## MAUSS AND THE TORTOISE'S PREDICAMENT

MICHAEL CARRITHERS, STEVEN COLLINS and STEVEN LUKES (eds.), *The Category of the Person: Anthropology, Philosophy, History*, Cambridge etc.: Cambridge University Press 1985. ix, 301pp., Index. £27.50 / £9.95.

ANTHONY J. MARSELLIA, GEORGE DEVOS and FRANCIS L.K. HSU (eds.), *Culture and Self: Asian and Western Perspectives*, New York and London: Tavistock Publications 1985. xi, 307pp., Index, Figures. £8.95.

The focal text of the volume edited by Carrithers, Collins and Lukes is a new translation of Marcel Mauss's Huxley Memorial Lecture of 1938, which has become known as his 'essay on the person' ('A Category of the Human Mind: the Notion of Person; the Notion of Self'). Informal discussion of the essay led to the planning of a series of seminars in 1980 at Wolfson College, Oxford, exploring its relevance in a range of different academic fields. The series provoked wide interest, and the present volume, whose main title *The Category of the Person* deliberately echoes Mauss, was subsequently planned upon the basis of the papers given. The new (and very fine) translation of Mauss's essay is by W.D. Halls, and a careful contextual exegesis and appreciation is contributed by N.J. Allen. The rest of the papers follow (ten in all), and endeavour, if unevenly, to place themselves in relation to Mauss's argument; which is, in a few words, that the idea of the person/self as it is taken for granted by 'us' today is a uniquely modern European phenomenon within the long social history of law and morality.

To clarify what follows let me immediately anticipate my

conclusion. I believe that Mauss has insufficiently distinguished between the domain of law on the one hand, and that of morality on the other: in seeking to specify a *category* of selfhood, and in distinguishing this quest from a consideration of such fields as language, psychology, and experience, Mauss has bracketed together 'law and morality' as the conjoined framework within which that category has developed. But I would suggest that a clearer focus on the essential question is gained if we distinguish the field of jural definition from that of morality; this distinction may well be starker in the 'modern' context than in pre-modern circumstances, but it is not unique to the modern era, nor to 'the West'. If it is accepted that the jural and the moral domains may very generally be separable, then we can certainly agree that the *category of the person/self* is absent from pre-modern forms of 'the law'. At the same time we may recognize as generally present a range of inter-translatable notions of the person which do not derive from law in any sense, but which may testify on another level to the presence of concepts of moral agency and thus to a socially relevant 'category of selfhood'. Many systems of law, and their formal comparison, get on very well without 'our' notion of the person; but the comparative study of morality disappears, as a project, if personal agency in non-modern societies is supposed to be subsumed entirely within their systems of jural definition.

While Mauss's view on the evolution of the notion of person dominates discussion in the 'Oxford' volume, his essay is nowhere mentioned in the American collection with the main title *Culture and Self* edited by Marsella, DeVos and Hsu - neither by editors, nor by contributors. It could be argued, as many of the contributors to this collection might well do, that Mauss's approach to the topic is irrelevant, mistaken or outdated. But equally, the lack of reference to Mauss's essay (or the position it represents) could be taken as indirect evidence confirming the essence of his thesis: that the very enterprise of comparing cross-culturally the subjective understanding of 'self' can only spring from peculiarly modern, and thus in themselves culturally specific, assumptions about 'the person'. I shall return to this point.

There are some very interesting papers in *Culture and Self*, which clearly speak to an eager audience. The editors write in their Preface:

The self has returned! After almost seven decades, there has been a resurgence of interest in the concept of self.... Today, social scientists, philosophers, and even theoretical physicists are increasingly invoking the self as an explanatory concept for understanding complex human behavior. The present volume is a contribution to the renaissance of interest in the self.

The topic itself is not presented as problematic by these editors, who take a straightforward, common-sense approach to 'selves' elsewhere. Among the nine chapters are a few on general themes, one of the most interesting being by M. Brewster Smith on 'The

Metaphorical Basis of Selfhood', as well as case studies from India, Japan, and China, some by Asian authors. Psychology, rather than social anthropology or philosophy (let alone the law), is the touchstone throughout. While this book could be said to be speaking to questions of morality in important ways, it does not claim to be dealing with the legal or historical domain and could not be represented as exploring the 'category' of personhood in Mauss's essentially jural sense.

It is obviously, if ironically, true that our renewed interest in Mauss's essay is a sign of movement in the British academic world parallel to the American enthusiasm evident in *Culture and Self*, a movement towards subjective awareness in the humane disciplines, and perhaps particularly within the fieldwork-oriented practice of social anthropology. But given its conservative orientation towards jural definitions, how far does the essay speak to the current concerns of a modern student interested in intersubjectivity, reflexivity, the rights of persons in distant places and the cross-cultural experience of self? And how far should it?

I would suggest that in many respects Mauss's essay is dated, his interpretations one-sided, and the importance of his formal argument mainly of historical interest. In representing the social history of the concept of the person as a gradual evolution, traceable in the documentary and ethnographic record, Mauss is offering an optimistic and rationalist view of fundamental progress in human affairs. In its tracing of a continuous line of growth in intellectual sophistication and liberal institutions, the essay belongs very firmly to the pre-war world. There is no recognition of the rougher side of history, politics or the law in Mauss's account. Thus, for example, he mentions the Declaration of the Rights of Man, as a part of the unfolding of the modern idea of the person as a self, alongside the growth in philosophical claims for linking the category 'person' with self-consciousness as a principle. But he fails to note that the Declaration was born out of extreme political struggle. And whereas he mentions sectarian movements of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries in contributing to modern notions of individual liberty and conscience, the historical circumstances of their 'contribution' remain in the background. Mauss nowhere mentions the French Revolution, and nor do any of the contributors to the 'Oxford' volume, which is strange, since 'history' is one of the fields supposedly covered by this book.

The contributors to the volume do not sufficiently criticize that implied theory of historical development, as the evolution of ideas in themselves, which lies behind Mauss's account. In the words of the new translation:

From a simple masquerade to the mask, from a 'role' (*personnage*) to a 'person' (*personne*), to a name, to an individual; from the latter to a being possessing metaphysical and moral value; from a moral consciousness to a sacred being; from the latter to a fundamental form of thought and action - the course is accomplished.

And even though the future is unclear, and without vigilance (it is implied) the idea of the person might disappear (its moral strength already questioned):

Let us say that social anthropology, sociology, history - all teach us to perceive how human thought 'moves on' (Meyerson). Slowly does it succeed in expressing itself, through time, through societies, their contacts and metamorphoses, along pathways that seem most perilous. Let us labour to demonstrate how we must become aware of ourselves, in order to perfect our thought and to express it better. (pp. 22-3)

Mauss thus enjoins the citizen of the present, beneficiary of the modern regard paid to the active, conscious self, to take part in the historical process towards perfection; to safeguard, indeed, that very idea of the person which the modern liberal age has produced. Here perhaps is something for the modern student to grasp, the student who has set aside intellectual history and gone into the field to grapple with the problems of personhood at first hand. Out there, the novice ethnographer encounters those flesh-and-blood informants who not only provide notes for the field diary but personal dilemmas for their observer. In this kind of encounter the ethnographer may find his or her notion of person and self extended, and in this recognition lies a peculiarly modern challenge. But at the same time the pragmatics of human interaction have always included encounters which fell outside the expectations of role or *personnage*; and there has always been, in one form or another in every society, the potential extension of moral relationship to strangers, non-kin and non-citizens. These aspects of a common human predicament (to adapt Steven Collins's use of this term in his essay here) are not merely the product of modern liberalism. Nowhere, I suggest, could a formal account of roles and *personnages* be a complete account of personhood; what Victor Turner characterized as *communitas* must also be explored.

Perhaps one of the harshest indictments of a social history, or a social anthropology, which bases itself on the orthodoxies of jurial definition in the study of personhood is the figure of the slave who finds a voice. Alex Haley's *Roots* is not alone in evoking the muffled voices of past non-*personae*; there are many variants of the book title chosen by one Salim Wilson (alias 'Hatashil Masha Kathish'), *I Was a Slave* (n.d., c. 1939), in which the author describes his childhood in Dinkaland, his subsequent capture, and then release from slavery into the service of the Anglican church. The genre of autobiography here offers a means of redressing a denial of selfhood even when the circumstances of the world prevented the author from ever returning to his original home, to the society which had given him his sense of personhood in the first place. A slave may generally be categorized as a non-person, but of course only within what is sometimes benignly known as his or her 'host society'; that authoritative definition is imposed by circumstances of such dominant power that it can only rarely be contested on its own ground. And yet where such challenges have occurred, they have given rise to the formulation

of new freedoms (as has followed every slave revolt or even every rising of oppressed peoples), and to the extension of 'personhood' to include new perceptions of self. But Mauss pays little attention to the tension between flesh-and-blood human beings and the conservative character of political-jural boundaries and definitions: even though such tensions have often contributed to the 'evolution' of the ideas which he explores.

The *Année Sociologique* was engaged in a quest for the forms of primeval society, and though conscious that history had everywhere eroded those forms (perhaps particularly in Africa, for which reason their use of African ethnography is very slight), they did not have in focus the periods and processes of upheaval and rapid change out of which so many 'modern' ideas (such as the integrity and autonomy of the individual) have sprung. Change was seen as a gradual unfolding, a long-term development, of 'society as a whole', not of the antithetical clash of system with system, or of systems with forces external to themselves. Allen writes of the Durkheimian vision of primeval society as a dance, a masquerade of forms; he does, however, worry slightly about those who do not have a part in this dance, who do not, presumably, have a mask to wear, and thus do not occupy clearly defined roles:

Members of a clan are not necessarily *personnages*. This may be because they have had to retire owing to old age or because they are female or too young. It would seem that some clan members otherwise qualified could not be *personnages* because there would not be enough names to go round.... Nor is it clear whether people who are not *personnages* are 'non-persons' in the same sense as the outsiders to the society or as Roman slaves. I suppose not, and this implies the possibility of gradations of personhood. (p. 33)

This all sounds familiar to a modern ear; perhaps there were recognizable predicaments for individual human beings in archaic society as there are in modern times for the contemporary liberal conscience. But their voices are usually silent. Those liable to be left out of the masked dance do not often figure in the ethnographic record; indeed what ethnography, except that of our own day, would attempt to elicit their views?

There are three areas of discussion missing from Mauss's essay which today's student might expect to find. First, there are no people as such, no named individuals (apart from classic ethnographers and philosophers); second, no regard is paid to the power structures within which and through which 'categories' have existence; and third, the field of *experience* of the self in relation to others is not treated comparatively. These areas of concern, however, and quite properly, pervade many of the papers in the 'Oxford' volume; and the field of comparative personal experience is the dominating theme of the American collection. Having specified, rather crudely, these 'omissions' from Mauss, let me consider them in turn, drawing upon contributions to the two volumes under review (though I cannot here cover all the

essays, nor treat them fully).

First, Mauss's essay lacks reference to individuals, as case studies, as witnesses, as subjects or objects of study: it is uninhabited. Iris Murdoch has suggested that a moral philosophy should be inhabited; and we might say the same for a comparative anthropology. 'Notions' or 'categories' can be communicated to the ethnographer only through the medium of human encounter, through the specific words, actions, and full-length accounts by and about real people. This point is made boldly in different ways by contributors to the 'Oxford' volume - for example by Mark Elvin for China:

To imply that the Chinese in classical and medieval times did not make the human actor (*pers one*) 'a complete entity independent of any other except God' does not do justice either to the radical individualism of Yang Ju, or to the sense of personal isolation expressed by the poet Chiu Yuan. ... For thinkers like Luh Shianqshan (thirteenth century) and Wang Yangming (sixteenth century), the mind of the individual was not unlike Mauss's conception of the self in the Western Enlightenment. (p. 156)

Alexis Sanderson makes analogous points for Hindu India, and Godfrey Lienhardt for Africa. Like other contributors seeking selfhood in textual expression outside modern Europe, A. Momigliano is most forthright in his use of Greek biography and autobiography. With that rich tradition of heroes, and of lesser but still warm-blooded people, the recognizable person/self cannot be declared absent from the ancient Greek world; and yet Mauss, as Momigliano points out, fails to mention the Greeks in his essay. Nor does he refer to material of this kind in his discussion of any other people or civilization.

The second element missing from Mauss's study is a consideration of authority and power, especially in the making of effective definitions of persons as political or legal entities. To label some foreign, female or immature human being as a non-person, a clan as a person, or twins as a single person, is itself an exercise in the extension of power over others through the use of jural categories. Not only is the field of power in this and other senses omitted from the description of masked Kwakiutl dances and so on, but even from much of the discussion of modern European history. Here one would point, however, to the reintroduction of this theme in various of the 'Oxford' contributions, in particular in Louis Dumont's historical essay on the Christian beginnings of modern individualism. The modern in-worldly individual is presented as developing quite specifically within political transformations of the relations between Church and secular society.

Michael Carrithers in his 'An Alternative Social History of the Self' draws a very helpful distinction between the *pers one* oriented to a given collectivity, and the *moi* oriented to a field of like selves:



That the *personne* has a social and legal history is no surprise, for social and legal history are precisely what make any particular example of the *personne* itself and nothing else.... An individual human being may be subjected to an alien notion of the *personne*, as are black South Africans.... The political community to which one belongs may not be one's moral or religious community. (p. 236)

Carrithers attempts to disentangle a narrative history of the *moi* from that of the *personne*; and clearly finds this distinction present wherever it is seriously looked for. Questions of the comparative dimension of the experiencing self then naturally follow; questions of the kind Mauss does not treat.

This field of inner experience, the 'psychological' aspect of the person, is deliberately left aside at the start of the essay. Several contributors to the 'Oxford' volume note this with reservation; and note also (most explicitly in the case of Michael Carrithers) that Mauss reintroduces as definitive the inner psychological aspect of persons exclusively in the context of modern Europe. Given that Mauss's essay would have been prepared before the publication of any of Evans-Pritchard's monographs, which set new standards in field observation, it might be claimed that the ethnographic evidence then did not allow the kind of comparative treatment that a modern reader might expect of the representation of the human being as an experiencing and evaluating subject. But this field, now known as 'ethno-psychology', was not entirely neglected even at that time. The evidence available to us today is, however, much more sophisticated than that of half a century ago, and in this field it is much less easy to perceive an evolutionary story-line.

The volume *Culture and Self* provides us with rich material in this sphere, including several 'indigenous anthropologists' from Asia writing both as academics and informants on the non-Western self. Particularly valuable, at least to the non-specialist, are the essays by Agehananda Bharati on 'The Self in Hindu Thought and Action', and Godwin C. Chu on 'The Changing Concept of Self in Contemporary China'. While esoteric and difficult in many ways, these presentations are of a kind a Western reader need not find impenetrable. Frank Johnson's analysis of 'The Western Concept of Self' reminds us of how many dimensions the Western self itself may be found to have; by contrast, Mauss's view is very simple.

The American volume nevertheless fails to grasp the central difficulty of the relation between inner or experiential, and outer or jural, formulations of personhood. But the most helpful of the essays in the 'Oxford' collection do seize upon this problem. Steven Collins's lucid and illuminating essay moves towards a formulation of the general, and even universal *predicaments* in which we find ourselves; one of them being the experience of self as more than a biological given, a sense of self being completed only within a social context. Hence, he suggests, we find everywhere theories of self as 'body-plus ...' and a potential distinction between public character and private consciousness,

while the latter is itself formed within a social milieu (p. 74).

Godfrey Lienhardt's *leitmotif* is also that of the incompleteness of any public definition of the person/self. With reference mainly to Africa (a continent which scarcely makes an appearance in Mauss's essay, or indeed in his wider writings) Lienhardt sketches the complexities of cultural representations of the inner person and subjective experience. He quotes the West African tale of the king who offered a prize for the best dancer at a gathering of the animals. To the surprise and displeasure of the crowd, the king gave the prize not to the graceful giraffe, nor to the agile leopard or the leaping gazelle, but to the awkward tortoise. The king claimed an exclusive right to judge the dancing, for he was providing the feast and the prize: "And so it is that I award the prize to the tortoise ... for it is only I who can see the dance of the tortoise: his dance is entirely inside him". Lienhardt comments:

For those who tell this tale, the success of the slow, un-  
gainly tortoise is an extreme example of the deceptiveness  
of outward appearances, though the moral is not that hidden  
intellectual agility is preferred, as such, to physical dis-  
parity: both are parts of the dance. The tortoise too, now  
public and exposed, now withdrawn and hidden, is a fitting  
and subtle image for the self. (p. 143)

The most penetrating of the essays in *The Category of the Person* go well beyond what that phrase might be taken to mean in its simpler sense, and acknowledge the predicament of inner and outer which Lienhardt's tortoise embodies. They all encompass in discussion that notion of experienced selfhood in which 'I' am linked to others by the discriminations I make between myself and others like me: that is, I distinguish myself as one in a field of other moral points of reference. In this field, 'I' exist in relation to some 'Thou', or a number of 'They', thought of as being like me in some essential way. At this level there may be present, as a social fact, a conception of personhood distinct from categories at the jural level. To discuss the morality of human encounter need not reduce one to the discussion of pan-human biological givens. But Mauss does not touch this problem at all. Throughout his essay there runs a sharp, characteristically Durkheimian, distinction: that is, a distinction between the self thought of as a unit, and the wider society thought of also as a unit, albeit an encompassing one. The person/self is thus defined by discrimination, not from others of a like order, but from a structured, ordering whole which alone gives it what jural-cum-moral existence it may have: a species of citizenship.

Perhaps our more modern - even post-modern? - view of real persons potentially everywhere is itself a product of Mauss's profounder sociological insight; perhaps in asking the sort of questions that Carrithers does in his '*moi* theories' and Collins in his 'body plus ...', we are projecting our modern notions

unjustifiably into the conditions of archaic and non-Western social life. Here, the straightforward approach of many contributors to *Culture and Self* would be culpable naïvety; and while I am not suggesting that they should stand accused in this way, it is necessary to accept that a book of this kind could not have been produced except as a result of the social history of the modern West. The modern Western 'I' is a new and local creation: but it changes more rapidly than we can easily make allowances for. It was a late nineteenth-century view of relations between peoples of the world which ultimately underlay Mauss's view of persons, and this has now been largely displaced. The events of the last half century, revealing Europe as a less secure home of liberal individualism, and former imperial territories as politically capable in ways which would not have been thought possible even in the 1930s, have surely made Mauss's views a matter of history in themselves. Meanwhile a humbler comparison of self with self becomes possible across the world.

One tiny slip in the 'Oxford' volume I will mention as it touches on a sensitive point: in the newly translated text of Mauss, reference is made to 'the Ashanti Ntoro' as though this were the name of some tribal collectivity (p. 12). But *ntoro* is an Ashanti term for an individually received spirit passed on through the father, thus differentiating the inner nature of persons who are otherwise members of a common matrilineage with shared bodily substance. The tendency to erase individuality, and the spiritual distinctiveness of persons, in the writing of ethnography about 'other peoples', is still with us.

WENDY JAMES

## ANTHROPOLOGY IN THE MUSEUM

### *Introduction*

Three years ago the Pitt Rivers Museum in Oxford celebrated its hundredth anniversary, an occasion marked by *JASO* with a Special Issue (Volume XIV, no. 2) and the publication of *The General's Gift: A Celebration of the Pitt Rivers Museum Centenary 1884-1984* [*JASO* Occasional Papers no. 4]. Last year saw the opening of the Balfour Building, the first stage of the new Pitt Rivers Museum, named after its benefactor, the son of the Museum's first curator. The Balfour Building has provided limited but much-needed additional space for the display of the Pitt Rivers collections. The new space is given over to two exhibitions, one devoted to musical instruments and the other to hunter-gatherer material. To mark this important development in Oxford anthropology these exhibitions are reviewed here (see below pp. 64-7 and 67-9) by Margaret Birley and P.L. Carter, specialist museum curatorial staff with first-hand experience of organising such displays.

Exhibitions of ethnographic material, such as those reviewed below, have many possible purposes, publics to reach, and demands to fulfil, as well as presenting rather different problems to their organisers from those faced by anthropologists when writing academic articles and books. An exhibition such as *Making Light Work* at the Pitt Rivers Museum develops an aspect of the Museum's permanent collection and the use made of it by a contemporary artist. The account of the exhibition given here (pp. 60-3) by the exhibition's organiser, Linda Cheetham, throws light on the way in which such a display comes about, as a concept and in practice, and on the way in which ideas are reflected in and thrown up by it. The same might be said of *Lost Magic Kingdoms and Six*

*Paper Moons from Nahuatl*, at the Museum of Mankind, and of Linda Cheetham's review of it here (pp. 75-6). *Lost Magic Kingdoms* is far from being a conventional ethnographic exhibition. Indeed it has been criticised elsewhere for not being sufficiently informative about 'other cultures'. It may be that a greater degree of sophistication concerning the treatment of the material products of 'other cultures' is required for an appreciation of the approach of Paolozzi, and the Museum of Mankind, than one can expect from the lay public who are now used to 'ethnographic' exhibitions.

In his account of *Between Ghandara and the Silk Roads: Rock-carvings along the Karakorum Highway* (pp. 69-73) one of the exhibition's organisers, Peter Parkes, discusses some of the problems involved in presenting not only 5,000 years of artistic expression from this area of Central Asia, but also the history of its exploration and discovery. He stresses the importance for anthropologists working in this area of appreciating the long term continuities in cultural traditions which the exhibition makes clear. It may well be that such cultural continuities can be more readily realised when presented in a visual display than in purely literary narrative form.

*Madagascar: Island of the Ancestors*, however, might be regarded as an example of the museum equivalent of the ethnographic monograph. It is in response to such exhibitions, perhaps, that the non-museum anthropologist has most to offer, acting as critic with regard to accuracy of fact and validity of interpretation in his or her area of expertise. Karen Middleton's review here (pp. 73-4) is of this type. Such exhibitions have to appeal to a wide range of publics and are subject to rather different constraints than those on the writer of a monograph. It is clear that there are a variety of criteria by which they can be judged. But as important features of the public face of anthropology all exhibitions of ethnographic material should be of concern to the anthropological community as a whole, and *JASO* will continue to take note of this important part of the anthropological enterprise from time to time.

The hundredth anniversary of the Pitt Rivers Museum and the opening of the new building are timely reminders of the historically variable importance within anthropology of museums and the study of material culture. The third volume of the *History of Anthropology* reviewed here (pp. 77-9) traces some of that history, including the role of Pitt Rivers and his Museum, and also points to what some authorities see as a coming, if not already arrived, renaissance in the importance of museums and the study of material culture in British and American anthropology generally. Such a renaissance is seen as the result of a number of factors including the suitability of material culture for analysis using structuralist methods, the difficulties of arranging overseas fieldwork and the consequent search for materials on which to work closer to hand, as well as the growing realisation on the part of trained or training - but unemployed - anthropologists of the possibilities for employment in museums. The

publication last year of an interim report of a survey of ethnographic collections in the British Isles, with tabulated information and comments on ethnographic holdings in hundreds of museums and other institutions, has drawn attention to the vast wealth of mostly unresearched material only waiting for anthropologists to go and study it.<sup>1</sup>

In a recent interview, Malcolm McLeod, speaking from inside the museum world as Keeper of Ethnography at the British Museum (Museum of Mankind), has stated that, at least as far as the Museum of Mankind itself is concerned, 'No longer can one separate museum work and anthropology, the two are closely interconnected'.<sup>2</sup> Whatever may be the case with the Museum of Mankind in particular, in general museums and the study of material culture, in spite of the predicted renaissance, are far from being reintegrated with the rest of anthropology. But as anthropology, wherever it is practised, becomes more and more subject to financial constraints, it is more important than ever for all institutions concerned with the subject to encourage the crossing of such boundaries as still exist to create a stronger base for the continued survival and growth of the study and presentation of other cultures.

JEREMY COOTE

1

MAKING LIGHT WORK:  
AN EXHIBITION OF LAMPS AND LIGHTING  
AT THE PITT RIVERS MUSEUM, OXFORD

Artificial light is taken so much for granted in our society that it is rarely written, or even thought, about. The length of our days no longer depends on the rising and setting of the sun. But through anthropology and archaeology we have all been in touch with people whose days are, or were, so governed; and it was only a few generations ago that the inventions of gas and electric lighting brought dramatic changes to our own lifestyle.

The Pitt Rivers Museum has a huge lighting collection,

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<sup>1</sup> Yvonne Schumann (ed.), *Museum Ethnographers' Group Survey of Ethnographic Collections in the United Kingdom, Eire and the Channel Islands: Interim Report* [MEG Occasional Paper no. 2], Hull: MEG (Centre for South East Asian Studies), 1986; two vols.

<sup>2</sup> Gustaaf Houtman, 'Interview with Malcolm McLeod', *Anthropology Today*, Vol. 3, no. 3 (June 1987), pp. 4-8.

particularly enriched by Henry Balfour's 1939 bequest, and a further bequest by F.W. Robins, author of *The History of the Lamp* (1939). Few items from the collection had ever been on display, but an excuse to bring them out of storage was provided in 1986 by the appearance of Margaret O'Rorke, an Oxford potter. Margaret had long been fascinated by the treasures of the Pitt Rivers Museum, and her speciality is translucent porcelain lamps. It soon became apparent that an unusual exhibition could be produced by juxtaposing her pieces with museum specimens.

The result was *Making Light Work* a global exhibition of lamps and lighting taken mainly from the Pitt Rivers collections, but incorporating Margaret O'Rorke's latest work. The influence of one culture on another can be seen in O'Rorke's stoneware oil lamps, which are thrown, but directly derived from ancient Roman moulded specimens. A warm atmosphere is created by the soft muted light of her porcelain lamps, compensating for the regrettable fact that the museum specimens cannot, of course, be lit.

The exhibition is divided into a general section on the development of lighting (oil lamps, candles, tinder boxes, matches) followed by cases on 'Light for the Home', 'Light for Work', 'Travelling Light' and 'Light for Worship'. A section entitled 'Making Light' leads into Margaret O'Rorke's part of the exhibition.

The Pitt Rivers Museum was intended by its founder to illustrate the evolution of forms. Thus the General would have placed the stone lamp and the shell lamp at the beginning of his sequence, and proceeded to the pottery saucer lamp, the two-tier cruicse, the closed-in classical lamp, the Arab spout lamp, and so on. Today the fascination of the collection lies in the fact that while all these forms can be seen in the exhibition, they turn evolution on its head. Thus a lamp made from a hollow lump of unworked flint filled with animal fat was used, not by Palaeolithic Man, but by an Oxfordshire baker in the 1890s. The shell lamp, known from Ancient Mesopotamia, was used quite recently by the Ainu people of Japan. Anything that will hold fat or oil and a wick can effectively become a lamp.

'Light for the Home' includes an ancient Inuit lamp from the Thule Culture (Fig. 1). The stone lamp was the focal point of the Inuit household, used not only for lighting but for heating, cooking, crafts and drying clothes. It was the property and responsibility of the woman, and would eventually be buried with her. Alongside this piece are a 'buckie' whelk-shell lamp from Orkney, a rushlight clip from Sussex and a South African lamp improvised from an old Brasso tin (Fig. 2).

Domestic lighting with oil lamps, candles or rushlights could be a messy and smelly business. Oil and grease would drip on the floor, particularly from rushlights which left a trail of greasy droplets as they burned. Lamps and candles tended to smoke unless they were regularly trimmed. In wealthier homes lighting was left to the servants, who lit the lamps, trimmed the wicks and cleaned up the mess. In ancient Rome slaves were expected to wash the lamp black off the statues after banquets.

Another problem was the fire hazard of lighting based on

naked flames, and the expense of fuel was also a consideration. It is interesting to contemplate that most of the oils and fats used as lighting fuels are also edible. The choice between internal and external fat consumption must often have been dictated by economic circumstances.

'Light for Work' features devices used by those whose occupation demanded that they work indoors or in dark places. Various miner's lamps are shown, including a 'steel mill' used in eighteenth-century European coal mines. This, worked all day by an unfortunate boy, created a shower of sparks which was (wrongly) assumed to be safer than a naked flame in the presence of inflammable gases. A highlight of this case is a pair of gun-flint knapper's candles from the Brandon flint mines in Suffolk (Fig. 3). The candles are marked with flint chips which fell out every hour as the wick burned down, and were used to measure the three hours' work after each day's tea-break.

'Travelling Light' shows a variety of European lanterns and travelling candlesticks from the nineteenth century. One of the latter (Fig. 4) has pins for fastening to the lapel or the seat of a railway carriage, thus enabling the passenger to read. One wonders how often a traveller dozed off over his evening paper and woke to find himself and the carriage ablaze.

Light as a divine gift and symbol of life itself, has always been significant in religion. 'Light for Worship' features lamps, candles and tapers from churches, temples, mosques, synagogues and shrines. An Ashanti pottery lamp (Fig. 5) takes the form of a fertility figurine. A 'lotus' lamp from India is particularly striking: the brass and copper petals of the lotus bud unscrew to reveal the lamp within.

'Making Light' concentrates on the diversity of materials used for illumination. Some of the more unusual are the stormy petrel with a wick down its throat, burned as a candle in the Shetland Islands, and the candlefish treated in a similar way on the north-west coast of America. There are Italian lamps made from snail shells, a Chinese lantern made from an inflated fish-skin (Fig. 6), and a string of waxy candle-nuts from Bali. Brazilian and Mexican Indians are said to have tied fireflies to their hands and feet on night excursions.

Copies of paintings and prints have been used as illustrative material. The work of Georges de la Tour is particularly evocative and includes perfect representations of tallow candles and a float-wick lamp. Also included are modern Japanese prints of street and temple lighting by Yoshida, Kasamatsu and Ito, as well as two interior scenes by Van Gogh. A series of recent photographs shows Margaret O'Rorke at work in her studio.

This exhibition breaks new ground for the Pitt Rivers by bringing the work of a present-day craftswoman into the Museum. This has helped to heighten the sense of contrast so often felt by visitors: of the old with the new, the past with the present, the familiar with the exotic; and, of course, in this instance, of light with darkness.

LINDA CHEETHAM  
(Illustrations by KOZO HIDA)



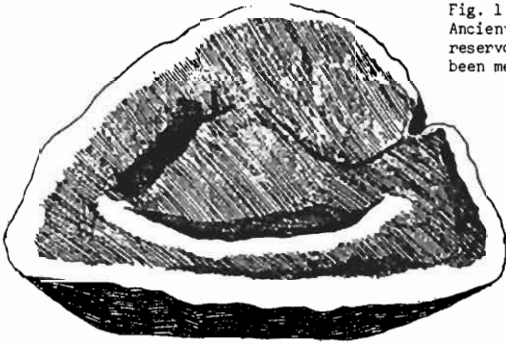


Fig. 1 CANADA - BAFFIN LAND - INUIT - THULE CULTURE  
Ancient stone lamp with a ridge dividing the fuel  
reservoir from the wick channel. The fuel would have  
been melted seal or whale blubber, the wick dried moss

Fig. 3 ENGLAND - SUFFOLK - BRANDON  
Time candles used by gun-flint knappers.  
It is claimed that the flint knappers  
did not wear watches for fear of damage  
by flying flint chips

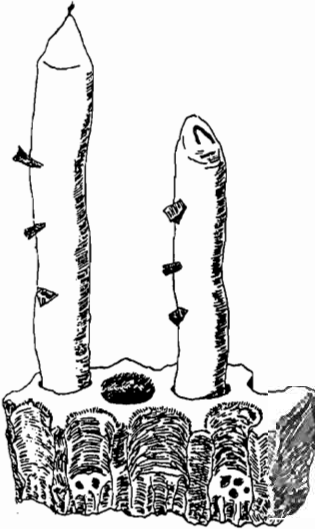


Fig. 2 SOUTH AFRICA  
- BACKVELD  
Oil lamp improvised  
from a Brasso  
container



Fig. 4 ENGLAND  
Patent nickel candle-holder with  
hinged lid/reflector and pins for  
hooking into the lapel or the  
cushions of a railway carriage



Fig. 6 CHINA  
Lantern made from an  
inflated fish skin

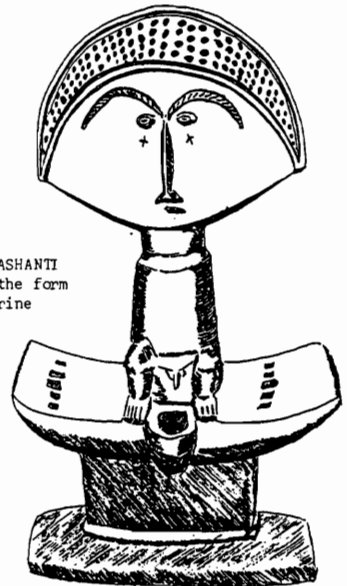


Fig. 5 GHANA - ASHANTI  
Pottery lamp in the form  
of a female figurine

MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS:  
 AN EXHIBITION AT THE BALFOUR BUILDING,  
 PITT RIVERS MUSEUM, OXFORD

'What I want is the money for building an annexe to the museum so that I may have a whole room for music.'<sup>1</sup> It was in 1907 that Henry Balfour, curator of the Pitt Rivers Museum from 1891 until 1939, expressed this wish for the future. A substantial legacy was left to the Museum by his son, Lewis Balfour, in 1974, making it possible for an extension to the Museum, the Balfour Building, to be constructed in the Banbury Road. This bequest also provided for a new exhibition of the musical instrument collection, but all the running costs of a gallery and the purchase of a complete sound system had to be financed before such an enterprise could be viable. In today's unpredictable financial climate, which even professional organisers of charitable appeals find inclement, the achievement of raising the necessary capital and thereby post-humously fulfilling Balfour's wish is a credit to everyone involved in the project. The highly successful display in the new music gallery was opened in June 1986 in the Balfour Building.

The founder of the Museum, General Lane Fox Pitt Rivers, who presented his collection to the University of Oxford in 1884, stipulated that it must be displayed by type of object rather than by geographical region. Henry Balfour, under whose curatorship the Museum's musical instrument collection expanded from 300 to over 4,000 specimens, used the system devised by Victor Charles Mahillon, curator of the Museum of the Brussels Conservatoire, for the classification of this section of the collection. In Mahillon's system any musical instrument belongs to one of four groups, depending on the nature of its vibrating body, which may consist of the sonorous material from which it is made, a stretched membrane, a stretched string, or a vibrating column of air. In 1914 Erich M. von Hornbostel and Curt Sachs published the *Systematik der Musikinstrumente* which, while utilising Mahillon's principle of classification and four categories of musical instruments - idiophones (autophones in Mahillon's terminology),

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<sup>1</sup> Henry Balfour, unpublished letter to Mrs Crosby-Brown, April 1907. I am grateful to Dr H el ene La Rue for providing this quotation. For more information on the Pitt Rivers Museum's musical collections see H el ene La Rue, 'The "Natural History" of a Musical Instrument Collection' in B.A.L. Cranstone and Steven Seidenberg (eds.), *The General's Gift: A Celebration of the Centenary of the Pitt Rivers Museum, 1884-1984* [JASO Occasional Papers No. 4], Oxford: JASO 1984, pp. 36-40.

membranophones, chordophones and aerophones - is in other respects a revision and development of his work, resulting in the comprehensive system which is widely used today. These authorities also incorporated the Dewey decimal system into their scheme.

In the new music gallery, sound-producing instruments dating from the Upper Paleolithic to the present day are arranged in accordance with the divisions of the Hornbostel and Sachs system, which generates a display that is truly cross-cultural, in the tradition established by the Museum's founder. A Hungarian *citera* plucked with goose-quills, and seventeenth-century Italian virginals, which once belonged to Canon Galpin, are found in the fretted box-zithers section. Among the specimens representing lip-activated wind instruments (the Hornbostel and Sachs nomenclature is 'trumpets') are an early nineteenth-century English serpent, a Swedish shepherdess's cow-horn, and an example from Guyana made of a jaguar's skull.

The sound-generating components of aerophone reeds are examined in display panels showing single, double and free reeds. Presumably for the sake of consistency with the Hornbostel and Sachs system, the 'plucked drums' from India, which are 'special kinds of monochord harps', are associated with the membranophones section, while the text describing this category of instrument states that 'as the string is the part plucked by the player and therefore it is its vibrations which are the most crucial, it can be placed in the chordophone group'.<sup>2</sup>

While the gallery was being planned, a survey of over three hundred of the Museum's visitors was carried out to ascertain the colours that might be associated with the sounds of the four different groups of instruments. The majority of the participants in this experiment visualised the sound of membranophones as red, idiophones as yellow, chordophones as green, and aerophones as blue. These four colours have been used to dramatic effect as lively backgrounds to the cases. Dark and light brown occur throughout the cases and these colours have also been used on display panels which, like the wooden dowelling supporting the exhibits, are among the features that are both decorative and functional in this attractive design by John Todd. A vivid contrast of colours is also frequently provided by the instruments themselves; the gaudiness of the blue feathers attached to the top of a mouth organ from Assam is enhanced by their close proximity to the red dome of an English whistling kettle - another free-reed instrument.

The lighting is maintained at the optimum level for conservation purposes but is bright enough to reveal the intricacies of the instruments' designs; here, the quality of the carving in one of the rarities of the collection, an Austral Islands drum of a type that was obsolescent by the 1820s, can clearly be seen. Natural daylight illuminates the display through skylights; its fluctuations are monitored by a computer that operates shutters

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<sup>2</sup> See: L.E.R. Picken, 'The "plucked" drums: *gopi yantra* and *ananda lahari*', *Music Asiatica* 3 (1981), pp. 29-33.

which can be opened or closed over the windows to maintain a constant lux level inside the gallery. The temperature and humidity levels inside the cases are also recorded on a computer. The system of environmental control was devised by Gary Thompson.

The historical importance of the displays in the Pitt Rivers Museum has long been recognised; for the visitor, however, the fascination of seeing such a quantity of items in each showcase is mitigated by the frustration of being unable to view each object clearly, as a result of the proximity of so many of its neighbours. In the new gallery the wealth and diversity of the collections is represented by over a thousand instruments in a display which allows for maximum visibility but is also economical of space.

Most of the Museum's specimens were collected during the course of fieldwork undertaken by anthropologists, who have provided the extensive details found in the display texts, describing the location and date of the instruments' acquisition, and their manufacture and playing technique. The texts in the new gallery, like those in its parent Museum, are informative and full of scholarly gems:

Ariston Organette. This instrument was introduced in 1876 by Paul Elmlion of Leipzig, Germany. In 1895 this was billed in America as 'the latest musical wonder', with the proud boast that it contained 'twenty-four full-sized organ reeds'.

As well as the texts, photographs from the Pitt Rivers archive also enhance the displays in the new gallery. Many of them were taken in the field by anthropologists who collected musical instruments for the Museum, and they show them being played in their cultural context. Besides devising the arrangement and textual interpretation of the display, the Assistant Curator, Dr Hélène La Rue, who has worked with the collections for more than ten years, has contributed to the success of many other aspects of the exhibition.

There are four polygonal bays which break up the rectangular lines of the showcase modules spanning the length of the room; these are to be used for temporary exhibitions of objects from the collections. At the time of writing these bays house displays on the theme 'Music Fit for the Gods'. Material accumulated by four anthropologists working in four different cultures is used to demonstrate the association of music and religion in Nyoro ritual, *Wayang Siam* puppet theatre, Japanese pilgrimage, and Tibetan temple drama.

There is provision for temporary exhibitions of audio-visual material in the form of a booth which incorporates several sets of headphones and two screens on which images of slides are projected. Up till the time of writing there have been four slide-tape programmes of life and music in the Gambia, the Balkans, Japan and China. The world of sound may also be explored in the main body of the gallery. By means of a short-wave radio system it is possible for the visitor to hear, through cordless headphones, appealing examples of the music relevant to the

instruments in the cases. A number of the extracts complement the collections by demonstrating the sound of instruments outside the scope of the exhibition.

In the music gallery the heritage of the didactic displays of the Pitt Rivers Museum is enhanced by the new dimensions provided by the technological resources, design and conservation expertise of the 1980s. Two hours give scarcely enough time for the casual visitor to view the exhibition in this gallery alone without taking into account the display of material in the rest of the Balfour Building. May we hope that the Museum's opening hours will be extended in the future?

MARGARET BIRLEY

3

HUNTER GATHERERS: PAST AND PRESENT  
AN EXHIBITION AT THE BALFOUR BUILDING,  
PITT RIVERS MUSEUM, OXFORD

Historically a distinction has been drawn between university, national and provincial museums, this distinction being based on differing function as much as upon different methods of funding. In the past this has resulted in the application of different criteria for critical comment when dealing with differing types of museum. In this egalitarian age should we continue to apply differing standards or should the same criteria of criticism apply to the British Museum, the Pitt Rivers Museum and the Oxford County Museum? Is the history of the development plans for the Pitt Rivers Museum relevant to a review of the new galleries in the Balfour Building in Banbury Road? Why, indeed, are the new displays in Banbury Road and not in the original buildings in Parks Road?

The two new galleries are part of the first phase of a new Pitt Rivers Museum projected for the Banbury Road site. The display *Hunter Gatherer Cultures, from the Earliest Archaeological Evidence to the Present Day* now occupies the first gallery of the new buildings and covers some 140 square metres of floor space. The proposed new building when completed is expected to contain about 7,500 square metres of floor area.

The hunter-gatherer gallery contains thirteen cases, of which five deal with prehistoric groups, five with modern groups and two with topics common to both the living and the dead. An introductory case is headed 'When did it all happen?'

The biggest problem this reviewer had was to find the connecting link between the thirteen cases, elegant as they are on first impression. A gallery plan and more prominent case-headings would

be helpful. The first case is particularly congested. The juxtaposition of outline drawings of artefacts, pictures of the machinery of radio carbon dating, photographs of pollen grains and a generalised diagram of the divisions of Plio Pleistocene time based on the oxygen isotope curves will be a shade indigestible for the Oxford public, even if comprehensible to university students.

The relevance of the opening paragraph should now be apparent. Is this exhibition primarily aimed at the public or the student population of Oxford? By the standards used in 1987 to assess displays aimed at the public it would be easy to criticise it on a number of counts. As a teaching display for students it is useful and the overall presentation is both elegant and refreshingly gimmick-free. The five cases dealing with prehistoric hunter-gatherers that follow the introductory case do form an informative and coherent group. The large number of stone artefacts contained in them are perhaps inevitable in a teaching museum that has from its foundation emphasised the place of artefactual typology!

The value of the prehistoric cases rests on the world perspective presented in five adjacent units, each dealing with a discrete parcel of prehistoric time - 3.5 to 1.4 million years, 1.4 to 0.5 million years, 0.5 million to 140 thousand years, 140 to 40 thousand years and 40 to 10 thousand years. Each unit contains a map showing the extent of the inhabited world, a selection of the appropriate stone tools and, where the evidence is available, casts of the associated skeletal remains. The choice of material clearly demonstrates the richness of the Pitt Rivers collections and the ingenuity of the curatorial staff in obtaining casts of material to fill in the inevitable gaps. Not all casts on display are clearly marked and descriptive text is somewhat sparse, but the forthcoming guide will be a welcome source of additional information for the serious visitor.

Following the prehistoric hunter-gatherer display are five cases showing modern non-agricultural groups from the Arctic and Africa. The difference in presentation and content between the living and the dead is very marked - not only does artefact density per case drop dramatically but the style of presentation is more akin to a public than a university museum. The supporting photographic material is both relevant and technically excellent. Each case forms a complete 'story' and together they complement each other. The groups represented are the San of the Kalahari, the Mbuti of the Western Congo rain forest, the Hadza of Tanzania, the Wandorobo of Kenya, and the Inuit of Greenland.

The final case in the exhibition, entitled 'The Search for Animal Protein', is most successful in effectively bringing together the two apparently disparate halves of the gallery. The choice of photographs is particularly good and the attention drawn to procurement methods other than hunting graphically illustrates the food quest of the hunter-gatherer. The photograph of mired hippopotami in a dry water hole brings home very forcibly the large amounts of animal protein that were not infrequently available.

To display the entire spectrum of hunter-gatherer activities

in the compass of thirteen cases in one small gallery is a virtually impossible task. The Pitt Rivers is to be congratulated on the successful solution of a problem made the more difficult by the limited budget that was available. For some of us there are perhaps too many stone artefacts in the prehistory cases and not enough emphasis on prehistoric art, both rupestral and mobiliary, but this view should not be allowed to distract from a generally successful first gallery in the new building.

P.L. CARTER

4

BETWEEN GANDHARA AND THE SILK ROADS:  
AN EXHIBITION AT THE PITT RIVERS MUSEUM, OXFORD

*Between Gandhara and the Silk Roads: Prehistoric and Buddhist Rockcarvings along the Karakorum Highway* is the full title of an exhibition to be held at the Pitt Rivers Museum during this Summer (1987). The exhibition marks a quite novel departure for the Pitt Rivers, being the first display of material entirely from outside its own collections. It documents one of the most important recent discoveries in Central Asian prehistory: some 3,000 inscriptions in Sanskrit and many other ancient languages, and over 20,000 figurative engravings, many of which are of outstanding artistic significance, spanning a period of more than five millenia.

Although accompanied by a display of Gandharan Buddhist sculptures, on loan from the Ashmolean Museum in Oxford, the essentially photographic nature of this exhibition of rock-carvings poses problems of dramatic presentation within a museum environment. These we have tried to overcome by specifically exploiting its two-dimensional pictorial display to present a coherent narrative tapestry of regional archaeology in the Karakorum. But an initial necessity was simply to present the topography and exploration history of a little-known part of the world.

The Karakorum region of northern Pakistan comprises a large mountain tract on the western extremity of the Himalayas, much of which only became accessible to exploration in the late 1970s. The completion of the Karakorum Highway, linking the subcontinent with southwest China, opened up the entire length of Indus Kohistan, previously marked on the maps as 'unexplored tribal territory' and known to surrounding Pukhtuns simply as *Yaghestan*, the 'Land of Anarchy'. The ethnography of Indus Kohistan is still mainly restricted to a short report by Fredrik Barth, based

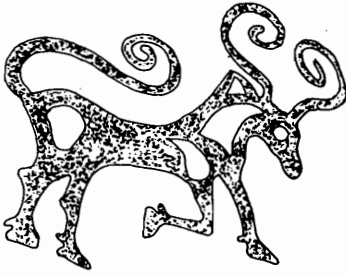
upon a pioneering three-week expedition there during his main fieldwork in Swat in the summer of 1954. However, important archaeological remains were already anticipated in reports of early Buddhist rockcarvings discovered by the great Central Asian explorer, Sir Aurel Stein, shortly before his death in the 1940s. Aurel Stein was, indeed, the first outsider to penetrate this inhospitable territory in modern times in the course of a brief survey of the upper Indus in 1942, and his posthumously published account of its rockcarvings clearly foreshadows the remarkable discoveries that were to be made by Karl Jettmar's German-Pakistani team some thirty years later. An introductory section of the exhibition outlines the background of Aurel Stein's archaeological work in the Karakorum, illustrated with diaries, photographs and personal papers relating to the rockcarvings (obtained on loan from the Stein Collection held in the Bodleian Library, Oxford); and this is matched by a concluding section that documents the contemporary research work of Professor Jettmar's interdisciplinary team at Heidelberg.

The main exhibits consist of sixty large colour photographs of the most visually striking rockcarvings, arranged in broadly chronological order from the third millennium B.C. to the twelfth century A.D. As the title of the exhibition indicates, its main focus is on the significance of the Karakorum in the early history and transmission of Central Asian Buddhism, and also upon its crucial geographical position as a major trading post on the ancient 'Silk Roads' linking China and South Asia with the Mediterranean (between the first and eighth centuries A.D.).

Evidence of wide-ranging trading connections can be clearly demonstrated by juxtaposing the iconography of the rockcarvings with figures characteristic of early Achaemenid, Sogdian and Gandharan art. But the interpretation of such historical connections, particularly where attested in inscriptions (in Middle Persian, Parthian, Sogdian, Chinese, even Hebrew; and with Sanskrit inscriptions in Kharoshthi, Brahmi and proto-Sharada scripts) does require the use of quite detailed explanatory captions. The main problem here was to find a balance between a predominantly visual display - of material that without sufficient explanation might be too easily dismissed as obscure 'graffiti' - and detailed historical analysis, whose proper textual treatment necessarily falls outside the scope of an exhibition designed for ambulant viewers. We hope to have coped with this problem by providing a number of specialized and self-sufficient 'sub-displays' of thematic interpretations (on Indian epigraphy, Sogdian trade in Central Asia, Gandharan Buddhist art) which may be viewed more or less independently of the main narrative theme of the rockcarvings themselves.

This narrative scheme concentrates on the repeated historical role of the Karakorum as a critical 'reservoir region' in the cultural transmission of major civilizations in northern India and Central Asia. The prehistoric animal art of Achaemenid Iran and of the Scythians, for example, has a remarkable continuity in these rockcarvings, extending to a period many centuries later than attested elsewhere; and this cultural archaism may account





a) Kneeling animal



b) Warrior in West Iranian dress sacrificing a goat (6th century B.C.).

Fig. 1 Achaemenid Art in the Karakorum

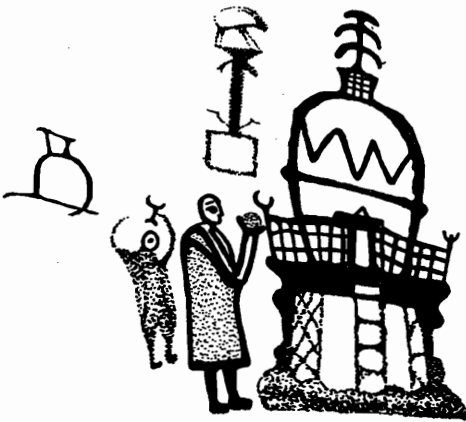


Fig. 2 Buddhist Rockcarvings

a) A rare representation of early Buddhist worship before a domed stupa and cult pillar (1st century A.D.);

b) Narrative picture of the 'body offering' of the Bodhisatva Shibi, related in Jataka legends to have offered his own flesh (shown weighed in scales) to save the life of a dove (held in his lap).



for otherwise enigmatic echoes of early Iranian art in the nearby Gandharan civilization of the first to fifth centuries A.D. The Karakorum again appears to have played a significant role in the transmission of Indian art and civilization between the fifth and eighth centuries: when the old cultural centres of Gandhara (in Swat and the Kabul basin) were overthrown by tribal 'Hephthalite' hordes, resulting in a retreat of religious and artistic schools to remoter mountain areas, as witnessed in many fine late Gandharan Buddhist engravings. The broad aesthetic narrative of cultural influences depicted in these rockcarvings therefore challenges many conventional notions of 'centre' and 'periphery' in our understanding of the complex historical interaction of Central Asian civilizations.

Apart from unfolding an unprecedented 'Visitor's Book' of foreign trade, pilgrimage and colonization dating from prehistoric times, the exhibition also tries to interpret the indigenous society and beliefs of the local population of the Karakorum (so far as these may be reasonably reconstructed from mainly iconic evidence). Here, despite the presence of many foreign religions, one finds evidence of a distinctive 'local cult' associated with mountain spirits and the veneration of wild animals of the mountains, which may be traced from as early as the Bronze Age to historical times, even now persisting in folk traditions underlying Islam in this region. For ethnographers of the pre-Islamic cultures of the Hindu Kush and Karakorum, this material offers invaluable evidence of long-term continuities in cultural traditions about whose history we were hitherto ignorant: particularly for the understanding of the religious symbolism of the Kafir and Dardic speakers of this region, here linking up with Jettmar's massive comparative survey of Hindu Kush religions, as well as the work of social anthropologists such as Schuyler Jones and the present author. Particularly instructive for archaeologists and anthropologists concerned with religious symbolism and its indigenous exegesis is the manner in which this 'local cult' clearly interacted with foreign religious traditions: where such Buddhist symbols as the stupa and wheel of doctrine for example, become successively re interpreted and deformed as 'mountain icons' or as demonic 'giants', even now recurring in the religious iconography of the Kalasha Kafirs of Chitral.

In assembling this multi-faceted exhibition, we have therefore tried to combine a broadly narrative exposition (of successive Central Asian civilizations and artistic influences) with a more specific and localized historical-ethnographic interpretation of the region. Archaeological evidence is of course notoriously prone to reckless over-interpretation, particularly in terms of those 'grand historical narratives' deplored by Jean-François Lyotard: the 'rise and fall' of great civilizations, or indeed stirring stories of European exploration in such remote regions. While necessarily relying upon such narrative devices, this exhibition equally addresses more complex issues that should be pertinent to social anthropologists. These concern continuities and transformations within a localized mountain community,

from the privileged perspective of some five thousand years of its continuous artistic expression.

PETER PARKES

*Between Gandhara and the Silk Roads* can be seen at the Pitt Rivers Museum, Oxford until 26th September 1987.

5

MADAGASCAR: ISLAND OF THE ANCESTORS  
AN EXHIBITION AT THE MUSEUM OF MANKIND, LONDON

How could one *not* welcome the opening of a major exhibition on Madagascar? Madagascar is so little known and, save for one occasion in Neuchâtel (Switzerland) in 1973, has not before been the subject of an exhibition in Europe. There are many interesting objects collected together here and certain sections are highly atmospheric. The diorama of an east coast forest village, sand strewn with wooden toys, is particularly popular with old Malagasy hands; and the reconstructed Zafimaniry house, with its carved wood-panels and its ordered interior, is also pleasing. One notes, indeed, that another reviewer has been so moved as to write that 'Madagascar blooms in Burlington House like an orchid in Harrods'.

According to its organisers, the exhibition has two themes: the diverse ancestry of the Malagasy and the concern of all Malagasy with the ancestors. I am not sure that the two belong together, but, in any case, this exhibition includes almost everything else besides: from natural history, divination and basketry, to musical instruments, the contribution of missionaries, and the development of kingdoms. Finding that Madagascar is so little known, the organisers seem to have been unable to resist the temptation to try to introduce all.

My own feeling is that this is an extraordinarily broad canvas to try to paint for any society and all the more so for an island as vast and diverse as *le petit continent*. It is no wonder, then, that important cultural variation is sometimes overlooked and that themes are not always fully developed. One regrets, for example, that the principle of spatial orientation is not developed for any other context than the 'typical Malagasy house' (falsely so, as it happens, for the far south). One also wonders how much the visitor will learn of the Merina kingdom, one of the most fascinating in sub-Saharan Africa.

The obligation to place material artefacts in their cultural

context must also on occasion inevitably break down through the sheer extent of the undertaking. Thus, a fine display of funerary cloth would seem to require rather more exegesis than four snapshots of the *famadihana* (the rewrapping of corpses) if it is not to fall prey to window-shoppers.

I must also point out that the object masquerading as a 'Mahafale tomb' is not a 'faithful reconstruction'. The construction and decoration of tombs in the south is always subject to a principle of proportion: a tomb worthy of funerary sculpture (*aloalo*) would be between thirty and fifty metres square; the child's tomb displayed here normally would not belong in the cemetery proper. Regrettably there is nothing to indicate that liberties have been taken.

Above all it is the attempt to construct a Malagasy composite by juxtaposing elements taken from the divers ethnic groups that is so fascinating. A boat from the Vezo, a house from the Zafimaniry, a village from the Betsimisaraka and a tomb from the Mahafale: it reminds one of nothing so much as the game of 'Animal Consequences'. The resemblance and diversity that one finds in Madagascar is most certainly a problem but I am not convinced that this is the way to tackle it.

Overall one suspects that this exhibition is not intended to be taken entirely seriously. The ante-room is given over to the display of posters and brochures promoting tourism on behalf of Air Madagascar, one of its sponsors (which is in itself a disturbing sign of contemporary pressures upon British museums), and perhaps it is as tourists that we are supposed to view it. Certainly the two 'emblematic' Travellers' Palms, that incongruously flank the 'Mahafale tomb', might well have escaped from a fun park, and the emphasis elsewhere is definitely upon the primitive and the paradisaical. Several notices are careful to say that everything has been collected in the last decade but museums may be as guilty as anthropologists of the sin of omission. I am sure that Air Madagascar will see a return upon its investment and one hopes that a few visitors will be persuaded to look a little deeper.

The accompanying book, which is not an exhibition catalogue but more in the way of a general introduction to Malagasy history and culture, is actually rather better at dealing with such diversity of theme.\* Written at short notice under somewhat trying circumstances, its author must be congratulated upon his competent and even-handed synthesis. Careful to avoid both the grosser generalisations and the conjecture that have ensnared so many others, Dr Mack still manages to have some useful things to say. No comparable work in the English language exists and I am happy to recommend it to the non-specialist reader. A nice selection of illustrations accompanies the text.

KAREN MIDDLETON

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\* JOHN MACK, *Madagascar: Island of the Ancestors*, London: British Museum Publications for the Trustees of the British Museum 1986. 93pp., Bibliography, Index, Maps, Figures, Plates. £6.50.

LOST MAGIC KINGDOMS  
AND SIX PAPER MOONS FROM NAHUATL:  
AN EXHIBITION AT THE MUSEUM OF MANKIND, LONDON

The artist Eduardo Paolozzi has, perhaps in harmony with the aims of the symposium 'Making Exhibitions of Ourselves : Limits of Objectivity in the Representation of Other Cultures' (held at the British Museum early last year), willingly and truthfully made an exhibition of himself in *Lost Magic Kingdoms*. The result is a highly personal statement, which is the visitor is free to interpret in an equally personal way. What follows is one visitor's reaction to this statement.

Paolozzi has chosen to exhibit, from the Museum of Mankind's collections, specimens which have fascinated and influenced him over the years. Juxtaposed with these items are examples of Paolozzi's own sculpture and a number of other objects which it would be difficult to classify either as ethnographic specimens or as art.

For the visitor interested in the ethnographic specimens (or for that matter, the Paolozzi sculptures) with regard to their age, provenance, purpose or cultural significance, this is not a satisfactory exhibition. Descriptions of the specimens are restricted to half a dozen words at most, and the sculptures are entirely unlabelled. For those in doubt as to which are which, the Museum's specimens are numbered, though the visitor seeking a key to these numbers may on occasion search in vain. This is primarily an art exhibition, and must be viewed as such.

The impact of materials is immediately apparent. Nothing in the exhibition is touchable, but the range of textures brings an itch to the fingertips. Without it being specifically stated, one becomes aware of the origin, use and reuse of different substances. Paolozzi's particular theme is the recycling of waste for creative purposes. He admires the African who makes a toy aeroplane out of old tin cans, and the Mexican who recycles paper to produce papier-mâché figures for the Day of the Dead. A fine example of the principle is an old light bulb restyled as an oil-lamp from Kumase, Ghana. Many of Paolozzi's own sculptures are conglomerations of scrap paper, wood, cloth and metal.

The idea of the creation of art pervades the exhibition. Sometimes, as in a display of woodworking tools and related carvings, Paolozzi emphasises the act of craftsmanship. Tools are displayed with model hands: the plaster mannequin variety as well as a carved example from Easter Island. Not only the carvings but also the tools were hand-made, and an adze from the North

West Coast of America is in its own way as beautiful as a finished sculpture. Another display examines the versatility of clay, the material of death's heads from modern Mexico and musical instruments from ancient Peru.

Music is a recurrent theme, with a splendid Sudanese lyre forming a centrepiece of the exhibition. This specimen, adorned with coins, beads, bells, cloth and cowrie shells, also demonstrates the versatility of materials. Juxtaposed with it is a Paolozzi creation: a stringless wooden guitar/cassette-player with Coca-Cola can trim. In a neighbouring case is a wooden radio from Cameroon. An exhibition appealing so directly to the senses might have benefited from the use of musical effects as an extra dimension.

The significance of the title of the exhibition becomes apparent gradually, though the six paper moons (Paolozzi papier-mâché sculptures of the Aztec goddess Coyolxauhqui) had been reduced to two by the time of writing. The loss of the 'Magic Kingdoms' of Africa, Polynesia and America, now radically altered by contact with the 'civilizing' influence of Europeans (represented by the old school tie, smashed wing mirrors and bits of radio and camera) is emphasised by an all-pervasive preoccupation with death. Mexican Day of the Dead figures abound throughout the exhibition; Solomon Islands and Tiv skulls are also on display, as well as a New Ireland *malanggan* with its funerary connotations. Many of Paolozzi's sculptures are based on skulls and skeletons, and a liberal sprinkling of plastic flies lends a general atmosphere of decay.

Nevertheless the theme of renaissance is juxtaposed with that of death, and two additions to the exhibition are Paolozzi sculptures of women giving birth. A corpse laid out in evening dress wears a grinning comic mask: two plastic crickets copulate nearby while a rainbow-striped umbrella gives a sign of promise. The recycled detritus of one culture becomes the art of another, and the exhibition itself is dynamic as pieces are added and subtracted over time. The Day of the Dead is an occasion of celebration: all is not lost.

LINDA CHEETHAM

Both *Lost Magic Kingdoms* and *Madagascar: Island of the Ancestors* can be seen at the Museum of Mankind throughout 1987.

## THE MUSEUM IN THE HISTORY OF ANTHROPOLOGY

The ten essays in this third volume of the *History of Anthropology* are more disparate in focus and content than its title might suggest.\* Five are concerned with the 'Museum Era', four of these being about museums, but of the other five, two are general (an introductory essay and an afterword), one deals with trends in the history of archaeology, another with the ethnic art market in the Southwestern United States and another with the preservation of Quebec's cultural heritage. In the introductory essay the anonymous author, presumably George Stocking, the volume's editor, discusses the two 'enterprises' of the book. The first and most obvious of these is, as is implied in the second half of its title, the history of anthropological museums and of museums in anthropology. The second, as is implied in the first half of the title, is 'a more generalized, metahistorical, philosophical, or theoretical consideration of the two defining categories (or category relationships) of human existence' (p. 3), that is, objects and others. This latter enterprise is only clearly evident in James Clifford's afterword, though it could be argued that all the other essays and indeed all anthropological essays ever written are concerned with such a general enterprise. To try too hard to see these essays as forming a whole would lead to ignoring the value of each individual essay.

The first five essays are concerned with the 'Museum Era' in anthropology. The 1840s to 1890 had previously been proposed as the museum era in anthropology, but as the anonymous author of the introductory essay argues, the period from 1866 (the date of the founding of the Peabody Museum) to the 1920s is more obviously a museum era. Museum anthropology developed in the late nineteenth century and was 'stranded in an institutional, methodological, and theoretical backwater' (p. 8) by the rise of fieldwork and functionalism (the subjects of the two previous volumes in this series). William Chapman presents material concerning Pitt Rivers and the Oxford museum of the same name ('Arranging Ethnology: A.H. L.F. Pitt Rivers and the Typological Tradition'), material already familiar to readers of *JASO* (see Vol. XIV, no. 2, pp. 181-202). Curtis Hinsley presents similar material concerning the Peabody Museum ('From Shell-Heaps to Stelae: Early Anthropology at the Peabody Museum'). Both these papers focus on the individuals involved, especially Pitt Rivers and Frederick Putnam, but also

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\* GEORGE STOCKING (ed.), *Objects and Others: Essays on Museums and Material Culture* [History of Anthropology 3], Madison and London: The University of Wisconsin Press 1985. viii, 248pp., Index, Plates. No price given.

consider matters such as class (for example the Boston 'Brahmins'), finance, institutional and personal negotiations, as well as ideas and ideologies, and their effect on the establishment and development, or otherwise, of anthropological museums. Ira Jacknis's essay ('Franz Boas and Exhibits: On the Limitations of the Museum Method in Anthropology') also focuses on one individual, but one more central to the history of social and cultural anthropology and one eventually critical of the 'museum method'.

On a different tack Stocking ('Philanthropoids and Vanishing Cultures: Rockefeller Funding and the End of the Museum Era in Anglo-American Anthropology') discusses the funding of anthropology in the inter-war years and argues that by flowing with the intellectual tide, away from traditional historical and museum-based concerns towards fieldwork and functionalism, such funding swelled the tide, so helping to bring an end to the museum era. The tide may well have been overwhelming anyway - it is difficult to imagine the RAI maintaining its dominant status in the face of the rise of the LSE - but the Rockefeller funding clearly had a reinforcing effect.

Elizabeth Williams' paper ('Art and Artifact at the Trocadero: *Ars Americana* and the Primitivist Revolution') can be seen as a counterpoint to the artist-centred studies of recent years concerning the 'discovery' of non-Western art in early twentieth-century Paris. Her account discusses the other side of the 'beauty/instruction' conflict and the part played by museum curators, such as Hamy and Verneau, in the establishment institutions. Though they were presumably no more unimaginative than their American and British counterparts, having lost the argument over pre-Columbian art to Van Gogh and Gauguin, and the more general argument over non-Western art to Matisse, Picasso *et al*, they do now appear most unenlightened figures.

All five essays make use of documentary and archival materials. They all discuss the role of individuals involved in the development and stagnation of anthropological museums, giving some consideration to matters of class, academic and institutional politics and money. Only Jacknis, however, indicates something of what a sociology or anthropology of the museum might be, arguing that 'a museum display is the product of collaborative labour performed within a particular social system' made up of various social roles - patron, trustee, curator, visitor etc. - and that Boas's tasks as curator 'were largely defined by the expectations others had of his role and he of theirs' (p. 83). While there is nothing particularly profound here it represents one of the few attempts in these essays to say anything sociological. More of such an approach would be welcome, for the history of anthropology should surely not merely concentrate on individuals and ideas but be a truly anthropological and sociological history.

Of the other five papers Bruce Trigger's ('Writing the History of Archaeology: A survey of Trends') is presumably one of the 'miscellaneous studies' which the *History of Anthropology* includes in each volume, studies relevant to the history of anthropology but not to the subject of any particular volume.



Edwin Wade's paper ('The Ethnic Art Market in the American South-West, 1880-1980') is an admirable contribution to the growing literature on 'tourist' art, giving an account of the different interests and attitudes of the various groups - Indians, traders, philanthropists, railway companies - involved in the production and promotion of Indian arts and the way in which the 'authenticity' of such arts is negotiated.

The most unusual and interesting contribution to the volume is by Richard Handler ('On Having a Culture: Nationalism and the Preservation of Québec's *Patrimoine*'). Handler considers the notion of cultural property and in particular sixty years of legislation regarding the preservation of heritage in the Canadian province of Quebec. The categorisation of what is to be regarded as 'cultural property' is revealed as contentious though there seems to be some general unconscious agreement that it is objects which best symbolize culture. Handler's account is admirably anthropological and though his discussion concerns a specific time and place it is so close to home that it can be seen as a radical debunking of much Western thinking about objects and culture.

The collection is topped and tailed by two reflective essays: an introduction and James Clifford's afterword ('Objects and Selves'). In the introduction a rather confusing definitional excursus (discussing seven 'dimensions' of objects in museums) is followed by a general discussion of the museum era and some suggestions as to why material studies might return to a more central position in anthropology.

Clifford's afterword is more radical in tone. Taking James Fenton's poem *The Pitt-Rivers Museum, Oxford* - the hyphen is Fenton's - as a thread with which to find his way out of the museum method maze, Clifford explores our Western notions concerning other peoples' objects. He complains about our possessiveness, our passion for classification, and the way in which we use other peoples' objects, as well as our own, to define ourselves. Non-Western objects, he argues:

'belong' nowhere having been torn from their social contexts of production and reception, given value in systems of meaning whose primary function is to confirm the knowledge and taste of a possessive Western subjectivity. (p. 244)

Clifford's solution is to refetishise these objects, allowing them again to disconcert our classifications and us. (It is difficult to see who would be able to achieve this, apart from the most reflexive of us; Clifford presumably, and perhaps Eduardo Paolozzi, whose current exhibition, *Lost Magic Kingdoms*, can be seen in this light [see above pp. 75-6]). Through museum display and the involvement of the 'owners', that is, the descendants of their producers, of objects in their exhibition, we should also try to maintain our awareness of the power relations which objects may come to represent. And we should also not forget the history of collection and recontextualization: we should not redisplay the Pitt Rivers collections along more 'modern' lines but maintain its

evolutionistic arrangement so as to remind us of our former classifications and of the fact that our present classifications are probably just as arbitrary and ignorant.

The third volume of the *History of Anthropology* will probably be referred to as, and remembered as, the one on museums. It is, however, the more radical papers by Handler and Clifford, with their critique of modern Western categories, which should have more lasting effect. If nothing else they reflect a new trend in thinking about what we can and should do with objects, a thinking which would have cultural products extend us rather than reassure us. The dustjacket (and p. 82) of *Objects and Others* features a photograph of a life-group exhibit of Kwakiutl: life-like, other, ethnic and dead; on page 99 is featured a photograph of Boas looking rather mad, arms outstretched, squatting in a hunched-up position, demonstrating for his model-makers the pose of the *hamatsa* initiate in the Kwakiutl life-group. Both images are powerful illustrations of what museums can do to and for people. The history of the museum in anthropology has still to be written.

JEREMY COOTE

## BOOK REVIEWS

DAVID PARKIN (ed.), *The Anthropology of Evil*, Oxford and New York: Basil Blackwell 1985. iv, 280pp., Index. £22.50.

This volume is the product of a number of symposia and seminars held at the School of Oriental and African Studies, London. It collects together thirteen essays reporting on various societies and historical periods but, with the exceptions of the essays by Pocock and Macfarlane - who treat English society in provocatively different fashions, there is little thematic progression or interrelation between the articles. While it is evident that the contributors are familiar with each other's work, the superficial cross-referencing of obvious points of agreement does not in itself solve the volume's problem of welding diversely conceived and executed studies into a coherent perspective on evil. This task is shouldered instead by the editor, David Parkin.

In the introduction the study of evil is situated within a putatively 'new' anthropology of morality which, we are advised, is different from the old Durkheimian project. This merely showed how morals create a cohesiveness which allows societies to function smoothly and perpetuate themselves, rather than disintegrate. Parkin asserts that 'social anthropologists have not focused much attention on morality as a field of cultural presuppositions informing and creating, rather than supporting, social relations between groups and persons' (p. 4). In other words, he proposes turning Durkheim back to front; placing the moral before the social. Yet once it is remarked that 'the moral and the social are embedded in each other' (p. 4), one wonders what real difference such an approach could make.

The 'new' anthropology of morality seeks to focus on the individual rather than the collective. It studies individual judgements in the face of moral quandaries rather than concentrating on static descriptions of a society's values. Clearly this orientation does not *replace* Durkheim's conception of values as collective representations, rather it complements it and promotes a welcome degree of attention to performance and negotiation. This perspective stands to reveal more about process, choice and thus change, than the Durkheimian model. The danger is that in its wish to foreground the individual, the new anthropology of morality may merely be calibrating the Protestant-ness of other cultures. And it is surprising to see David Pocock, Dumont's ex-collaborator and translator of Durkheim's essay 'Value Judgements and Judgements of Reality', advancing these notions most strongly (see his 'The Ethnography of Morals' in *The International Journal of Moral and Social Studies*, Vol. I, no. 1, (1986), pp. 3-20).

Parkin's introduction reflects the volume's general

perplexity; rich in insights and suggestive ideas yet lacking any consolidated approach or formulation of its object. Perhaps this is an inevitable consequence of the manner in which the problem has been posed. In itself evil has no essence, as Hobart endeavours to show. It is contextual and pragmatic. Where evil crystallizes into a definite assertion as it does in Christian theology or among ruling groups in Bali, this should not be taken as an immutable essence but rather as a reflection of social relations and the distribution of power. Dominant or ascendant groups are always ready with a definition of evil as a means of labelling and subjugating opposed factions. Indeed, the relation between power and assignments/perceptions of evil should have received more attention as a factor uniting the various studies.

Such an alignment may be remarked in Lionel Caplan's study of disaffected urban Protestants in South India. Fire and brimstone Pentecostalism has been on the rise among these people as a means of coping with their recent economic demise. Protestantism is largely devoid of emphasis on demons working evil on people from without, substituting an interiorized picture of guilt and personal responsibility which was unsatisfactory, in these city dwellers' eyes, as an explanation of their plight. Whether Pentecostalism will confer any economic improvement remains to be seen, but it does provide them, at least ideologically and/or symbolically, with the power to assert that they are on the right way, and that Hindus and ecumenical Christians (many of whom stand above them socially) are no better than demon worshippers.

Southwold remarks that monotheism is a much richer medium for radical evil than polytheism, where evil tends to appear in a weaker form. Thus there is debate as to whether or not radical evil exists in south Asia, while its existence in the Mediterranean is indisputable. The more decisively and singularly lines of power are drawn, the more purified the notions of good and evil which emerge. In this vein Pocock's superb essay begins by noting that the *Oxford English Dictionary* considers the word 'evil', used adjectivally, to be virtually obsolete. He disputes this, not by arguing that the word is frequently heard, but rather by asserting that it is current and important as a pole of moral thought. Evil is excess, beyond the limits of human ethics and often imaged as monstrous. It does not just draw meaning from within the moral system, it transcends the system altogether; it is the total unconcern for morality. Why then does this term have no frequency of use in English? One reason is the rise of individualism and attendant relativism from the late Middle Ages and particularly through the early modern period.

Macfarlane, in his piece, further offers the rise of capitalism as a factor; the convertibility of everything into monetary terms as the absolute leveller of values. We end with the modern situation where there is no constant, defining ethical locus. The European monarchies have slipped in importance or been erased altogether, and in their place stand constitutions which loosely prescribe liberty and equality for all. Concomitantly there is a loss of willingness among the populace to judge events in absolute terms, for to do so would be to violate the boundaries of the self

and assert that one controls the full moral code. Thus the word 'bad' has been substituted, in most contexts, for 'evil'.

*The Anthropology of Evil* follows many of the leads and concerns of the earlier volume edited by Professor Parkin, *Semantic Anthropology* (1982). Each of the contributors grapples with indigenous terminology on the way to grasping the moral orientation of the people under study. Each then tries, with varying degrees of success, to translate this picture into Western terms. The volume could have been improved as a whole if Western religious and theological notions of evil had been expounded at greater length. Some of the authors make use of Ricoeur's study of evil in Christianity, and some refer directly to Augustine, Aquinas or other theologians, but the exposition of evil in the Western theological tradition should have been more clearly developed and not left to chance. Taylor's chapter covers some of the ground but could have been longer and more thorough. If Western presuppositions and cultural heritage regarding evil had been more rigorously exposed and agreed upon as a starting point, then the results of the various investigations presented in *The Anthropology of Evil* might have achieved a greater degree of comparability.

CHARLES STEWART

MARC AUGÉ, *The Anthropological Circle: Symbol, Function, History* (transl. Martin Thom)[Cambridge Studies in Social Anthropology, 37; gen. ed. Jack Goody], Cambridge etc.: Cambridge University Press / Paris: Editions de la Maison des Sciences de l'Homme 1982 [1979]. vii, 123pp, Index. £12.50.

Augé's project is derived from the philosophy of science. His is not another addition to the literature on the history of anthropological theory but a reduction of various practices to certain paradigmatic tendencies which are then demonstrated to have functioned in what have been largely mutually exclusive spaces. Indeed, more than this, Augé suggests that the terms of the various problematics that anthropology has taken to constitute its subject have been phrased in such a way as to make the purposes of the discipline fundamentally incompatible. Thus he states, 'The problem with anthropologists is not so much one of knowing if they do or do not agree, but more one of understanding if they are speaking of the same thing or not' (p. 1). The endeavour to penetrate a simple, chronological and cumulative history of the growth of the subject, and to explain the latter-day fragmentation of it by reference to inherent fractures derived from particular and exclusive concerns developed at its birth, is justified on intellectual and moral grounds.

Augé notes that the increasing fragmentation in method has coincided with the discipline's wider recognition. He attributes this wider following to the sense that western societies have that they have lost qualities of some intrinsic importance which can only be recovered by recourse to the 'primitive'. Philosophers expropriate from anthropology 'evidence' to substantiate definite positions, and in certain instances succeed not only in criticising the West for an alienation defined by the presence of a state apparatus, but also in disfiguring indigenous cultures by a presumptive analysis which deduces its absence and prescribes a qualitatively better life to them as being the result. The introduction of the existential qualifications 'authentic', or 'in-authentic', to a society introduce valuations which prise open and exaggerate existing fractures in Western consciousness and misrepresent and posit a qualitative break between what are said to be two types of society which the academic dichotomy anthropology / sociology anticipates.

Augé's essay, which shows ample discontinuities (a mere 115 pages of text, excluding notes, devoted to such a potentially huge subject), revolves around the twin poles of methodological discontinuity and incompatibility, and moral crisis. Considering the first of these, Augé isolates four basic paradigms which have served to impulse practices, each with distinct effects. These paradigms have clustered anthropological discourse according to their concern with one of two basic questions bearing on semantics and function. He thus repeats the often cited distinction between approaches such as 'culturalist', 'psychoanalytical' and 'structuralist' - which attempt to reveal the 'meaning' of an institution, and those that stem from the Durkheimian tradition, and which not only include 'functionalism', but also its extension as represented by Gluckman and Turner. Here, the terms of the non-institutional world are used to explain the institutional. Thus function is explained by its reduction. For Augé, unlike others, both of these approaches are necessary and neither is reducible to the terms of the other.

Morgan, Tylor, Durkheim and Malinowski are taken as exemplars of the four modes through which anthropological discourse has set certain patterns. The schema involves a contrast between structure and function, and evolution and culture. By considering the dominant movement of the practices of these authors he plots the divergencies and contrasts in the construction of their object. This is not to suppose that other tendencies have not revealed themselves in the particular corpus - merely that those represented are the dominant ones. These figurative paradigms clearly bring out the object as it is variously constituted, and if one accepts the position of Augé that the condition of any discipline is that the subject corresponds to the object then it is undeniable that the discipline is in crisis. It is not sufficient to argue that Augé has not given enough consideration to the authors involved or to the traditions which are reduced to the terms of each paradigm - though this is an open question: any digression in the constitution of the subject is potentially dangerous and holds

pertinent repercussions for the designation of the object itself. This is not something that can be easily be denied.

It is on reflection of the discord between subject and object that Augé introduces the claim of history as a means of increasing the awareness of the subject about its incorporation within historical process (as well as that of its object), and therefore of its own determination. Intellectual crisis leaves the subject, and consequently the object, open to misrepresentation and to an ensuing moral crisis about the relation between them.

The moral crisis has been precipitated by preoccupation with difference. Augé considers that the practice of anthropology, by respecting every culture as unique and irreducible, ignores processes by which change proceeds and alienates one society from another. Further, as is obviously implied, given the preceding arguments on determination between subject and object, part of the resulting uniqueness attributed to a society is generally provided by the method. Thus, at another level, societies are alienated from one another by method. The tendency is seen as its most pernicious when the practice inflicts qualitative distinctions between western and indigenous societies, and it is to this that Augé traces the most virulent of moral dilemmas.

Distinctions between western and indigenous societies based on literacy, the character of the state apparatus, historicity, or the opposition between personal and impersonal relations, are conceived as detrimental. Clearly a gloss so general in its characterisation has been created which cuts across the emphasis of difference as it is upheld on an intra-cultural level to reformulate an abstract opposition at the level of western society and the 'other'. The conditions upon which sociology and social anthropology are predicated, therefore revolve around an arbitrary distinction of object.

For Augé, the implications of this practice are exemplified in Tempels' *La Philosophie bantoue*. Tempels was able to expropriate something of the method of anthropology and its findings in constructing an 'indigenous' philosophy which he claimed to be particular to Black Africa. Augé opines that Tempels' abstract generalisations, which impute rather than discover native values, serve not as a contribution to a specific African identity, but as a gloss for the bad conscience of colonial administrators and missionaries. Tempels readily admits that his work is meant to reveal the presence of certain strands of Christian thought, and chart their later submersion in a preoccupation with fetishism, and advises that the task of the missionary is to be concerned with the development of these original tendencies within the cultural tradition which gave rise to them. According to Augé, 'missionary anthropology' and its attendant literature 'invents the myth of a society enjoying total unanimity and solidarity in order to set up recipes for modified forms of development' (p. 84). He finds the remarkable feat of these authors to have been their ability to discover a 'philosophy', the existence of which is unknown even to its supposed originators.

Philosophy is popularly envisaged as necessary in any definition of ethnic identity, but Augé, quoting Hountondji, refutes

this and insists that what is often served as philosophy is better regarded as 'practical ideology'.

Just as anthropological knowledge has been exploited by those institutions which have wanted to widen their hegemony, so it has proven itself susceptible to exploitation by leftist critics both by their reductive approach to it, and by their abstracting indigenous societies as heirs to some ideal equilibrium which we in the West are denied. Augé writes (p. 91):

Ethnographic description and phantasy have never been mingled in so cavalier a manner as in the last three or four years, and never have philosophers treated such materials so casually. All and sundry, with great confidence and with a subtly arrogant condescension, scan other peoples' ethnographies (done by others, speaking of others) and decide upon meanings.

Anthropological discourse itself becomes polarised by the uses to which it is put by non-anthropologists, some of which are confused and then reintegrated into the discipline, causing an accentuated fragmentation. The polarisation in the use of discourse leads directly to moral panics and the related debate on partiality and commitment.

In this context, Augé distinguishes between the critical and committed aspects of 'revolutionary anthropology'. As regards the first, it is beyond question that anthropologists should exercise a critical faculty, both in respect to political practices that affect groups with which they are familiar, and in response to the use of skewed anthropological categories. However, the success of this critical prerogative is contingent upon the theoretical and methodological maturity of the subject. A historical perspective is almost always necessary to ensure the validity of such criticism.

The call for a committed anthropology is more problematic, and would endanger the professional practice becoming circumscribed into an ideological discourse. The practice of anthropology can perhaps be of revolutionary import, but to restrict it to the needs and manipulations of any particular group is to deny it access to its object in the same way as scientific or 'missionary' anthropology can produce similar effects: 'Anthropological theorisation is not a guide to action, a theory of revolutionary or counter-revolutionary practice' (p. 98). That 'anthropology has only to be true to be subversive' Augé readily concedes, but he hastily interjects that the converse does not automatically follow.

It is perhaps surprising that Augé, in such a limited space, succeeds not only in bringing a tentative order to the plethora of often contradictory anthropological approaches but also in deriving from them ethical questions inherent in their practices: a consideration of which is necessary for a mature and professional discipline. The explanation of moral dilemma and crisis of purpose by attributing them to their integration in specifically fragmented anthropological discourses contained in a wider



intellectual / pseudo-intellectual field, makes Augé's book an original contribution to the philosophy of method.

ANTHONY SHELTON

MICHAEL W. YOUNG, *The Magicians of Manumana: Living Myth in Kalauna*, Berkeley etc.: University of California Press 1983. x, 299pp., Glossary, Plates, Bibliography, Index. £19.95.

This is really rather a brilliant book that succeeds in being both a piece of innovative anthropology and a work of art, though in both cases it does so in an unpretentious way. The book is concerned with the relationship between myth, identity and action in Kalauna, a village on Goodenough Island. Michael Young shows how a consciousness of myth is interwoven within the development of peoples' lives and how it acts on concepts of self to the extent that self at times participates in myth. He presents the life histories of a set of Kalauna elders, people of different personalities and structural positions within the society, and shows how the myths relate to the dynamics of the elders' relationships, as well as how their political action can be seen to merge with mythic discourse. The innovative anthropology grows out of Young's excellent long term fieldwork on Goodenough which has given him the background ethnography, and the depth in time, to attempt such an ambitious study linking cultural process with individual consciousness. Indeed the revision of some of his earlier ideas is clearly in part the result of unpredictable developments in Kalauna life and politics that emerged during the later periods of his research and that required a new interpretative framework.

The writing is superb, in particular in the chapters on myth and life history. The myths themselves are quite engrossing, at times almost shockingly so, and the lightness of Young's interpretation leaves them free to act on the reader. The concluding chapter is perhaps the least satisfactory, but perhaps this is because, inevitably, it required a different style of writing. The contours were less moulded by aesthetic considerations than were those of the preceding chapters, for here Young the anthropologist had to play the dominant role in showing how the individuals' myth-integrated life-histories articulated with Kalauna social process and organisation. The analysis here is fairly mainstream symbolic anthropology, relating Kalauna myths to contradictory features and opposed tendencies in Kalauna life.

Overall I felt I had been reading an anthropological classic which not only merits rereading but which will provide new enjoyment on each occasion.

HOWARD MORPHY

DOMINIQUE CASAJUS, *Peau d'âne et autres contes Touaregs* (with a Preface by Geneviève Calame-Griaule), Paris: L'Harmattan 1985. vii, 167pp., Bibliography, Illustrations. No price given.

*JASO* readers will be familiar with the work of Dominique Casajus through his publications in the *Journal* during his period of research in Oxford in the early 1980s. Complementing much of his previous work, the present book is primarily a collection of Tuareg folk tales which he recorded during fieldwork initiated in 1976 among the Kel Ferwan of Niger. The nine tales presented here are introduced by him with notes on transcription, orthography and stylistic detail together with a general commentary on Tuareg oral literature. The texts themselves are fully annotated. He presents a clear and concise account of these tales in parallel French translation alongside the original Tuareg texts, and his annotations explain aspects of translation and points of ethnography which might otherwise remain obscure to those unfamiliar with Tuareg custom.

With an element of modesty, Casajus claims that the primary reason for selecting these particular tales was their beauty - a quality which probably few readers would deny. However, this claim belies his analysis of these tales, in comparison with other forms of Tuareg oral tradition, and the common theme he highlights running throughout the collection. As he points out (p. 2), most previous collections of Tuareg oral literature largely comprise comic and moral tales, animal fables or semi-historical texts; but they pay insufficient attention to aspects of the literature concerned with kinship relationships. Neither of the two indigenous terms *emäy* or *eni* specifically distinguishes tales in which these relationships form the primary subject. (The former denotes tales of possibly real but very ancient events or perhaps fictitious tales embodying a teaching applicable to everyday life, while the latter refers to works of pure fiction conveying no moral at all.) He concludes that the Tuareg seem to lack a term to define this type of text, although *de facto* they appear to constitute some sort of genre. Tales involving kinship relations can be compared with the content of certain parts of a cycle of recitals dealing with a culture hero, Aliguran; but apart from these points of comparison this heroic cycle (epic or extended heroic narrative perhaps) falls into a category of oral literature distinct from that which is presented in this book ('*les contes*'). Five out of the nine texts deal with the relationship between brother and sister, and two deal with a young girl mistreated by her master or her father. The last two are tales of a group of brothers, in one case, and a group of jealous young girls in the other. The jinn feature in five of the tales, and they often abscond with or hold captive one of the characters of the story.

These tales are also distinguished from other forms of oral recital by their performance. The recitor must render them with care and without error lest he or she be cut short by the audience. These renditions, whose form is fixed, include narrated as

well as sung passages; and these latter frequently embody key themes of the tale or act as mnemonics for those who wish to request a particular favourite. Few reciters feel themselves capable of performing them, the author says, even if they know the story-line, whereas every adult and some children know at least two or three animal or comic tales, and can recite large parts of the heroic cycle.

All this does not amount to a definitive typology of Tuareg oral traditions, as is pointed out, but it does suggest that the choice of tales in the collection, according to Tuareg conventions, is not totally arbitrary.

Many of the analytical and comparative points raised by Casajus are reminiscent of a style of presentation exemplified, for example, by G. Calame-Griaule's text-based analyses, which are often set into a framework drawing on cross-cultural themes and motifs from other folk literatures. Indeed, in her Preface to this book, she points out a number of such comparative motifs. Casajus draws on this tradition of analysis in addition to trying to treat the themes as specifically Tuareg. He suggests two issues in the presentation of the texts: a comparison with variants collected among neighbouring societies; and a comparison with famous tales belonging to '*la littérature internationale*' (p. 3). Moreover, the choice of the title of this book - *Peau d'âne* - emphasises one of these underlying themes of comparison. Here, however, it is a brother's incestuous marriage to his sister which leads her to flee the homestead rather than, in the French version, the king's amorous intentions towards his daughter which prompt her to leave. These and other differences between the two tales suggest perhaps something of greater anthropological moment than certain apparent similarities (cf. Thomas Mann's *The Holy Sinner* for that matter); and it might be suggested that these differences are not insignificant when considered in the socio-cultural contexts from which they are taken.

Dominique Casajus' purpose from the outset was to present a collection of Tuareg tales; and this collection, together with his commentary, is a valuable addition to the corpus of African oral literature. Elsewhere he has published thorough analytical ethnography which relates Tuareg concepts and rituals to the role and meaning of their oral literature. It would be greedy to ask for such a treatment here. He has given us a set of highly readable texts and some excellent annotations to them. This reviewer looks forward with anticipation, stirred by the quality of this collection, to the publication of his more detailed work at present being prepared.

ROY DILLEY

RICHARD J. GOY, *Chioggia and the Villages of the Venetian Lagoon: Studies in Urban History*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1985. xvii, 312pp., Appendices, Bibliography, Index, Plates. £37.50 / \$54.50.

Social and demographic history, as well as the recognition of the relevance of history to anthropological work, have become so well established over recent years that Evans-Pritchard's expressed concern over the divergence of interest between anthropologists and historians, as well as his view that neither discipline could fully exist without the other, now seems almost an anachronism.

Among others, architectural and urban historians of European cities have recently turned their attention to underprivileged or peripheral areas - now appropriately defined with the linguistic term 'vernacular' - which had previously been ignored, since historians generally concerned themselves with the monumental and artistically distinguished parts of cities. At the same time descriptions of building styles and of the use of space, both inside and outside the house, by semioticians have led to a better understanding of social and family customs, cultural traditions and hierarchies. In practical terms, and more specifically in the Italian context, such work is also related to a new determination on the part of planners (unfortunately rather belated) to satisfy people's cultural needs, as well as their simple need for shelter. Thus an expression like *spazio antropizzato*, which may read like a pretentious adoption of sociological jargon by architectural planners, is, in fact, meant to signal respect for both man and environment. In particular, historical cities are no more to be regarded only as collections of architectural objects of greater or lesser distinction, but are to be treated as products of long-standing processes of adaptation, while knowledge of their history is considered essential to their continued life.

Goy's book is thus a welcome addition to a vast but repetitive and rigidly biased literature. His general thesis is that 'there are common patterns of development in all of these islands from the tiny hamlet of Torcello to the great fishing port of Chioggia and to the lagoonal metropolis, Venice itself'. That point, as well as the contrast between 'cluster' and 'long' village structures, which he sees as a basis for understanding the topography of Venetian streets and canals, is explored and illustrated to the full through his (unavoidably repetitive) analysis of no less than seventeen neighbourhoods in and near Venice.

On the basis of municipal documents, Goy reconstructs their different curves of development: thus, while their origins in the high Middle Ages are all rather indefinite, as are those of Venice itself, we learn that Torcello, which by the ninth century was the most important centre in the lagoon, had already begun to decline by the fourteenth, because of silting and malaria. About Chioggia, the best documented of all the communities, we learn that by the thirteenth century it enjoyed a well developed and autonomous communal life, which revolved around a Major and a Minor Council modelled on those of Venice, and with a Governor appointed by the

Doge. We learn that the *Commune* 'owned' most of the land and fishing enclosures, that it was responsible for the upkeep of canals and waterways, saltpans and lagoons, shores, bridges and quays, and that building controls concerning both style and safety had been enforced since the thirteenth century. Properties were customarily sold by public auction from the steps of the communal palace and, after the destruction of Chioggia by the Genoese in the 1379-1380 war, policies for rebuilding the city gave absolute priority to the Piazza, the main street and the centre, while peripheral areas, like the long seashore village of Sottomarina, were left in a state of almost total abandonment for two subsequent centuries.

While each neighbourhood history is intrinsically interesting, Goy's reading of Venetian street life seems blithely to confuse the past with the present; for example, about the *campi*, i.e. 'open squares originally equivalent to the English village green' which are described as the 'focal point for a parish-community', he writes, 'at the most abstract level, they epitomize the identity of the community itself ... just as Piazza San Marco epitomizes the institution of the Venetian State and its Government'. Here, sadly, Goy's description, although it is unequivocally in the present tense, reads about one hundred years out of date, and an uninformed reader would never know that there is no Venetian State any more, and that 'civic rituals' today are mostly organized by the Tourist Office, so that the *campi* are often the setting of activities, which mainly concern occasional visitors and which are sometimes regarded by inhabitants as a disturbance and a nuisance.

What is more, even if we consider Venice as it may have been in its past as a city state, the *campi* could not, at any time, have been 'smaller versions of St Mark's Square', for, precisely by virtue of its being a focus of Venetian unity, St Mark's was essentially different from, and not just a larger version of, other squares, given that parish and neighbourhood loyalties, skilfully pitted against one another in complementary opposition, were different in essence and not just in degree from feelings of nationality and of loyalty to the State.

Moreover, as I learnt during fieldwork, experience of neighbourhoods and parishes as 'villages' in Venice's historical centre is not a very frequent one these days, since the choice of places for outdoor sociability is usually based on far more complex criteria than those of parish and neighbourhood, and preferences vary greatly with age, sex and personal interests. Today very few women sit by their door to thread beads, knit or embroider, while a likely basis for choosing an outdoor place where they may meet a friend is usually the existence of a congenial café, sometimes quite outside their residential area. In other words, far more articulate and complex networks than those based on neighbourhood ties usually determine where and with whom people will enjoy the outdoors in Venice.

On the other hand, contrary to Goy's statement about Chioggia, as well as Burano, that 'because of its highly linear form ... [the Piazza] renders secondary spaces superfluous ... although

there are minor courtyards', observation clearly shows that, particularly in Burano, the Piazza is certainly not the only nor the main focus of sociability, since even more active centres of social life are the neighbourhood courtyards and *calli*, where people, and especially women, do habitually sit by their doorsteps.

Indeed, use of space in Burano is sexually polarized in ways far more visible than in Venice: men are seen in the Piazza much more frequently than their wives and daughters; when women take a stroll through the main street and Piazza on holidays and Sundays, they do so with their husbands, or with a friend, and conversation is usually more formal and reserved than in the neighbourhood. In Burano, then, contrary to Venice, people do frequently interact in their neighbourhood *campi*, and even in some narrow backstreet and *corte*. Characteristically, bits of street space are 'domesticated' and privatized by the placing of flower pots, household objects and chairs; and it is then such spaces which generally act as filters between public and private spheres.

Goy is generally on safer ground when he describes urban development, for his sociology is, at best, rather naïve; key notions like 'ownership', 'bourgeoisie' and 'social class' are used very loosely and they thus confuse and irritate the reader, while the notion of 'clan' is liberally applied to social groups or families bearing the same name, but with no hint whatsoever of any ties, either of a genealogical or of a solidary nature. His book thus clearly points to ways in which research on the urban history of remote or peripheral areas could be further developed through interdisciplinary collaboration.

For anyone interested in the history of Venice and of its 'vernacular' areas, however, Goy's work is an essential starting point and we certainly must be thankful for the originality of his enterprise and for his diligence and perseverance in the collection of vast manuscript materials.

LIDIA SCIAMA

A.D.C. HYLAND and AHMED AL-SHAHI (eds.), *The Arab House: Proceedings of the Colloquium held in the University of Newcastle upon Tyne, 15/16 March 1984*, Newcastle upon Tyne: Centre for Architectural Research and Development Overseas 1986. v., 100pp., Plates, Figures. £5.00.

Until recently there was little serious attention given to the vernacular architecture of the world outside of Europe and the United States. Even now, relative to the diversity of building types and the cultures that have generated them, the number of works is still limited. But the position is changing, and to the growing bookshelf are added several on Arab architecture. These include, for instance, J. Warren and I. Fethi, *Traditional Houses in Baghdad*; R.B. Serjeant and R. Lewcock, *San'a': An Arabian*

*Islamic City*; F. Varanda, *Art of Building in the Yemen*; P. Costa and E. Vicario, *Yemen: Land of Builders*; S.M. Khan, *Jeddah Old Houses*; K. Talib, *Shelter in Saudi Arabia*; and monographs on Kuwait, Cairo and other cities, together with climatic and environmental collections on architecture and planning in the Middle East. Several of these works have European or American authors, but increasingly there are books appearing by Arab authors, though their interest and concern has not always been early enough to forestall the wholesale destruction of traditional buildings, such as that taking place in Baghdad at the present time.

It is almost inevitable that these works concentrate on the more spectacular examples; the Yemen, for instance, is conspicuously represented because the decorated tower houses are both notable and photogenic. Peasant building receives far less attention. This is partly because its conservation appears less urgent, partly because it makes for less visually attractive presentation. Most of the books mentioned above are lavish in their format, often with liberal use of colour plates. This is not to suggest that they are not serious and substantial; by any standards, Serjeant and Lewcock's *San'a'* is a remarkable work of scholarship and architectural analysis, for instance. But it does indicate the prevalence of the 'great buildings' concept which lies behind western conventional architectural criticism and history, and the perception of the building as art object which arises from it. It is reasonable to question whether this is an appropriate approach to the architecture of other cultures.

A collection of papers presented at a colloquium held in Newcastle in 1984 and published as *The Arab House* suggests some alternative directions for the study of the architecture of the Arab world. It is an unglamorous product with its text typed and its illustrations either line drawings and diagrams or rather grey photographic half-tones. But this austerity strips the subject of superficial gloss and allows the writers to concentrate on a variety of issues: 'Any consideration of the Arab house ... must cover a widely distributed range of environmental situations with which built form is intimately related to geocultural as much as geophysical space and socio-economic considerations,' summarises Roy Gazzard in one of the opening discursive papers by Mohammed Makiya and himself. In general the contributors concentrate more on these aspects within the house than within the urban context, an exception being a case study of housing in Tunis by Richard Lawless. Functional aspects of Arab houses, particularly as to the courtyard, are dealt with in rather abbreviated note form by Magdi Noor, whose own technical research is cited as an example in Miles Danby's thoughtful discussion of microclimatic aspects and their bearing on housing in the future.

To anthropologists these essential considerations may be less their concern than the social factors, which are carefully outlined in Ahmed Al-Shahi's consideration of kinship relations and the values associated with the house, an issue taken up specifically in the context of Baghdad courtyard houses by Subhi Al-Azzawi and pursued somewhat relentlessly in Tarek Shalaby's study of the

temporal, social and behavioural dimensions of space use within the dwelling. These and other papers illustrate the growing awareness of the many factors bearing upon both traditional housing and future housing policy in specific cultural contexts. A subsequent colloquium on the Arab city would be welcome.

PAUL OLIVER

ANGELA HOBART, *Balinese Shadow Play Figures: Their Social and Ritual Significance* [British Museum Occasional Paper no. 49], London: British Museum Publications 1985. vi., 59pp., Appendix, Maps, Figures, Plates. No price given.

This fairly lengthy Occasional Paper is based on two periods of field research in 1970-2 and 1980, totalling three years, and is a preliminary study for a book. About a third of the study consists of 58 finely delineated figures, some of them by a puppet maker, I Wayan Raos, renowned for his skill and knowledge in the area of Gianyar, where Dr Hobart carried out her field research; and of eleven photographs, taken by Mark Hobart, himself a Balinese specialist, the quality of the reproduction of some of which unfortunately fails to do justice to the quality of the rest of the study. Two maps, listed in the 'Contents', were apparently not bound into the present review copy. The rest of the Paper consists mainly of text which is clearly, authoritatively, and unpretentiously informative, and which deals more or less summarily with the history and repertoire of Balinese shadow plays, the social contexts in which they are performed, who performs them, who makes the figures and how, and the types and the features of the figures. References are few though apposite, but do not include Hedi Hinzler's *Bima Swarga in Balinese Wayang* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff 1981), as the essay was composed before its appearance. Doubtless, Dr Hobart's projected book will take account of Hinzler's study and of other work published since the Paper was composed. It is to be hoped, also, that figures, eventually appearing in the book, which show details of matters such as Figure 1 (p. 5) 'Spatial layout for night performance', will be oriented by some indication of the cardinal directions, without which such figures as this, which is not so oriented, lose much of their interest.

The main interest of Dr Hobart's study, from your reviewer's point of view, lies in its emphasis of the order which pervades the Balinese shadow play and which is in consonance (as one would expect) with the order which other aspects of Balinese life evince. Such an emphasis is not only timely (for there is a deplorable trend in recent writings about the Balinese which either ignores or polemically casts aside this order or claims that discerning



such an order is akin to teaching Balinese dogs how to bark in correct Balinese fashion); it is also faithful to Balinese collective representations. Dr Hobart's focus is not this order itself, so that it is quite understandable that her study does not go very far into it. Her study, though, shows clearly that dichotomy (and other modes of classification by division) is a fundamental principle of this order. Alternation, which is a dynamic expression of this principle of order, Dr Hobart points out (p. 15), is evinced in the painting of puppets as it is evinced, with other periodic modes, in other aspects of Balinese life. It is only to be regretted that, in this connection, more detail is not provided for the reader about this procedure.

Symmetry and asymmetry are not systematically employed as part of the analytical vocabulary of the study, but, still, the study and especially the figures are a rich source of information for someone who does so employ them.

For anyone who is concerned with the shadow play comparatively - and 'the shadow play exists or has existed from China in the east to Morocco and western Europe in the West' (p.2) - or for anyone more narrowly interested in the Balinese, whether on Bali or on Lombok to its east, Dr Hobart's paper is a most useful source of data. It does not much detract from it that references in the text are given only by year; nor that at at least one point, there appears to be a tension with what Dr Hobart suggests at another place in the text; nor that her theorising is at best simply unnecessary and distracting. The central core of the piece consists of social facts which are often new. In these lies the value of *Balinese Shadow Play Figures*, which is considerable. The reviewer looks forward to the appearance of Dr Hobart's extended study of the matters which she handles so ably here.

ANDREW DUFF-COOPER

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EMRYS LLOYD PETERS  
1916 - 1987

I

By the death earlier this year of Emrys Lloyd Peters, we have lost an inimitable teacher, colleague and friend.\* I knew him for over forty years, during which many of my friendships have subtly changed their character. For me, not the least of Emrys's virtues was that throughout our whole friendship, he remained so consistently the same. He was consistent in the small things which inspire affection, like his fondness for tweed caps, costly (to use his word) silk ties, and sausages; for his (or rather, Stella's) garden, and, I will add, for getting his own way. And he was consistent in the large things which inspire something more than affection: a shrewdness of judgment, firmness of principle, generosity of spirit, high good humour and, when the time called for them, exemplary courage and fortitude.

It is ironical in its way that it is I who should be here to memorialize Emrys, since he was convinced, sometimes maddeningly, that his memory was much fuller and more accurate than my own. His creative imagination certainly made my own memories more memorable; that imagination, together with his gifts of persuasion, enabled him to impose upon his friends (and those few who were not) such personal qualities as he thought best for them. Even now, I have a sense of being subject to his correction. As Henry Stanley said of David Livingstone, no one knew better how to make people think well of themselves.

Emrys did not give his friendship by instalments. When I first met him, with Stella, in his rooms in Downing College, Cambridge, on a cold autumn day in 1945, as we toasted ourselves by their fire, I soon realized that I was not there merely to make polite acquaintance. I was already being assimilated to (what we later learnt to call) a 'domestic group'. For the familial spirit of hearth and home was exceptionally strong in him. Many of us have felt its warmth, and it went wherever Emrys and Stella went. The deep feeling for family and community, nurtured in Merthyr Tydfil, informed his intimate understanding of the Bedouin of Cyrenaica and the villagers and townsfolk of the Lebanon. Few have treated more sensitively than Emrys the complex affections, obligations, and compulsions, of kinship.

I conclude, as I hope he might have wished, by acknowledging the unfailing pleasure of his company. He of course took his

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\* Text of an address delivered at a Memorial Meeting for Professor Peters held at the University of Manchester on 10th March 1987.

subject and his professional duties very seriously; and always under his humour there was a powerful strain of religious *gravitas*. But from our first meeting until our last in December 1986, there was never an occasion without intelligent laughter. When we first met, we had both very recently been demobilized, an experience which left us, and others of our generation, light-hearted and somewhat light-headed. That at least may explain why we found ourselves in such a comical and academically eccentric subject as 'Arch. & Anth.' was in the Cambridge of that time. Emrys always had a genius for extracting amusement, often hilarity, from the most intractable anthropological material, from anthropometry to zoomorphism; and we were fortunate too to be taught by Glyn Daniel and Evans-Pritchard, professionally very distinguished, but the least solemn or self-important of mentors. It was the best of apprenticeships to 'Arch. & Anth.'. Now, when academic life has become so earnest, insecure and harassing, we shall miss Emrys all the more, for the lightness of touch with which he imparted his learning, his wisdom in university affairs, and his calm strength of academic purpose. The Department of Social Anthropology here in Manchester owes much of its reputation to his leadership and choice of colleagues, as he would have been the first to say also of his predecessor, Max Gluckman. He gave something of great value to all who knew him, and I thank his successor, Marilyn Strathern, as well as Paul Baxter, Anthony Cohen and others who helped her, for gathering us together here today to express our admiration and gratitude for his life and work.

GODFREY LIENHARDT

II

I knew Emrys for rather fewer years than others who are speaking this afternoon.\* We did not meet until 1972, a mere fifteen years ago. I can be certain about that date since I am sure that if I had met Emrys before I would not have forgotten it, and I can recall our first meeting with some clarity. It was when I joined the Social Anthropology Committee of what was then the SSRC. We served together on that committee for two years, and in that time he taught me a great deal. He was a good committee man. He kept quiet except when it was essential to stress some point, and then he spoke with a great economy of words. He refrained from repeating what had already been said, and whilst he

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\* Text of an address delivered at a Memorial Meeting for Professor Peters held at the University of Manchester on 10th March 1987.

was keen that any item got a proper airing he could see no point in not completing business expeditiously. He had no time for humbug and a sharp nose for the research proposal with over-padded expenses. Early on I supported Emrys on some issue, I cannot now recall just what, and after that he looked upon me as an ally. He often got my support, but not always and he would not have expected to. In due course Emrys moved on to the Social Studies subcommittee of the UGC, and I became chairman of the SSRC Social Anthropology Committee. This was the period when the storm clouds were gathering, and I think we both found it helpful to have the other to confer with as retrenchment began to bite. Few people have appreciated just what an important part Emrys played in protecting social anthropology during the first round of university cuts at the beginning of this decade.

That was one aspect of Emrys, and the one I got to know first. I now wish to refer to a rather different Emrys; the relaxed Emrys. He loved Oxford and needed very little excuse, or no excuse at all, to visit it. He would often spend the night there before one of his numerous meetings in London, and was frequently there for social or academic occasions, sometimes with Stella, sometimes alone. These visits invariably had their convivial side. There was nothing Emrys liked more than sitting in the Horse and Jockey or the bar of Wolfson College, surrounded by colleagues, friends and postgraduates, often, it must be admitted, of the prettier, female sort. These gatherings gave him the opportunity to rehearse his large repertoire of stories about anthropologists. The stories were not always completely free of hyperbole, nor perhaps of scurrility, but then few stories are not improved by the addition of such ingredients. However, Emrys was careful never to give offence, and I have heard him alter a story to suit different audiences, obviously with this in mind. I am not going to tell an Emrys story this afternoon; it is not the proper occasion. But there will be many such occasions, and Emrys will be with us when they are told.

By chance, earlier this week I was reading a chapter of a D.Phil. student's thesis. It was on marriage with the FBD, a topic to which Emrys made an important contribution. The student's discussion inevitably, and correctly, included a consideration of Emrys's work. The point here, and it is the last I wish to make, is that a scholar's life does not end with his death; his ideas take on a life of their own and sustain the memory of him. I expect the memory of Emrys to be with us for a very long time.

PETER RIVIERE

PROFESSOR E.L. PETERS  
AND THE OXFORD UNIVERSITY ANTHROPOLOGICAL SOCIETY

As the two addresses above show very clearly, Professor Peters was a good friend to Oxford anthropology and Oxford anthropologists. He received his D.Phil. from Oxford in 1951 for his thesis on 'The Sociology of the Bedouin of Cyrenaica', and he maintained his contacts with Oxford ever after.

He had taken up residence in Oxford in Michaelmas 1947 (he was a member of Lincoln College) and is remembered as a regular attender, with his wife Stella, at Anthropological Society meetings. The records are incomplete and the date of his joining the Society is not recorded - he joined again in 1980 after attending a meeting of the Society on one of his frequent visits to Oxford.

His fieldwork took him away from Oxford for 1948 and from September 1949 to mid-December 1950, and it seems that he was never in Oxford long enough to serve on the Society's committee. His name did, however, come up regularly at committee meetings as a suggested speaker for the following term - on at least three occasions in the early 1950s alone. But it was not until the Society's 729th meeting, on Tuesday 2nd December 1980, that he was to address it. His title was 'The Paucity of Ritual among Pastoralists', and that is about all that is recorded in the minutes, apart from a note in pencil to the effect that the Secretary would complete the record on his return from the field. The Secretary never did complete the record and without a memory with Emrys's skill, he will not attempt to do so now. A letter in the files, from Emrys to the then President, Professor Beattie, accepting the invitation to speak, reminds us that his argument was that the paucity is alleged rather than factual and that the problem of paucity is misdirected.

Emrys took an active interest in the fortunes of *JASO*, contributing a review of the second volume of Babikr Bedri's *Memoirs* (to Volume XIV, no. 1), and he was preparing two more reviews before his final illness. The editors once sent him a complimentary copy of an issue it was thought would interest him. He responded by taking out a subscription and saying how he had enjoyed reading the issue 'including the odd soporific bits'. As many students who came to enjoy and look forward to his conversation on his visits to Oxford would agree, we enjoyed listening to him - and there were never any soporific bits.

JEREMY COOTE  
Former Secretary, OJAS

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# JASO

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## EDWIN ARDENER

21 September 1927 - 4 July 1987

Edwin Ardener died suddenly, peacefully, on 4th July 1987. It came to us all as a shock. *JASO*, in particular, has lost its Editorial Adviser, who was not only the person principally responsible for founding this Journal eighteen years ago but who remained throughout deeply concerned for its welfare, its profile and indeed its commitment to publish.

During the past weeks memories of his wit, insight and sense of purpose have crowded into our minds; and we heard on October 31st the Memorial Address at the University Church here in Oxford, which well conveyed our deep sense of loss. We therefore begin this issue of the Journal with the publication of this Address, together with some of the appreciations of Edwin's accomplishments that we have received over this summer. One of these is from a colleague, one from a former student, and one from a group of anthropologists overseas to whom Edwin gave strong encouragement. It is our sad duty to praise the departed; we do so here with an awareness of the various sides of his anthropological persona, as well as our own strong sense of debt to his support throughout the years.

Edwin repeatedly chose *JASO* as the vehicle for articulating his ideas. Several seminal articles of his were first published in these pages, for instance his often-quoted 'Language, Ethnicity and Population', which first appeared here in 1972. The Journal was founded in the heady days prior to the publication, in *Man*, of 'The New Anthropology and Its Critics' (1971), and he felt - rightly - that the group of research students around him deserved wider recognition for the advances in the field that were being made at that time. *JASO* has changed a good deal since then, as has the 'Anthropological Society of Oxford' that the Journal was deemed to reflect. It has remained in close contact with its student roots, but at the same time it has not attempted to retain the stencil-duplicated samizdat-like quality of those early days. Edwin accepted these changes, and for example gladly encouraged the launching of the Occasional Papers series five years ago. There is a sadness symbolising however a certain completeness, that Edwin's last published work was a paper on Edward Sapir that he offered to *JASO* and that was in fact in press on the day he died, as readers of our last issue will recall. We had looked forward, of course, to publishing in two years from now his evaluation of the Journal on its first twenty years - but those who

wish to follow through Edwin's conception of the aims and purpose of *JASO* will unfortunately have now to content themselves with the statement on its first ten years, which we published in 1980.

We had looked forward, indeed, to many more years of collaboration with him; *JASO* will now sorely miss his wise counsel, his encouragement, his anthropological learning and sense of direction. In due course we hope to publish a memorial volume that will collect together more of the work of those anthropologists who came under Edwin's influence; but in the meantime we are grateful to those contributors whose notices about Edwin that appear below both jointly and severally stand in tribute to his life's work. A select bibliography has also been included, and can be found on pp. 121-3 below.

To Shirley Ardener, who for many years kindly took upon herself much of the administrative burden of looking after the *Journal*, we offer our condolences.

The Editors

1

MEMORIAL ADDRESS

We are here today to commemorate the life of Edwin Ardener.\* The feeling we all share of sadness at his sudden and too early death is combined with admiration and respect for his achievements and the very real sense of the permanence of his influence in so many fields. Edwin was a person of vision, who showed a willingness to look beyond immediate aims. All of us who knew Edwin benefited from his selflessness, his kindness and his guidance. I still remember vividly the welcome he gave me, on my own arrival as a Fellow at St John's, and the pains he took to help a newcomer to feel at home. This concern for the needs and welfare of others was evident in all his actions, and extended beyond individuals to the institutions of which he was a part.

Edwin Ardener's academic reputation is as a distinguished social anthropologist. His interests, which developed while he was still at school, in philology, archaeology and comparative religion first led to his desire to study anthropology. As he learnt more of the subject, he became determined to study at the London School of Economics in Malinowski's former department.

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\* Text of the Memorial Address delivered at the Memorial Service for Edwin Ardener, held at the University Church of St Mary the Virgin, Oxford, on 31 October 1987.

When he entered in 1945, he was the only undergraduate to specialise in social anthropology and most of his companions were graduates. He soon developed that breadth of interests which was so characteristic of him and which was to enrich his later contributions to social anthropology, and which came to underlie his support for the inter-disciplinary degree in Human Sciences at Oxford.

After graduating, Edwin was awarded a Colonial Social Science Research Council Fellowship, and began his long and fruitful association with Africa. After a brief research mission in Eastern Nigeria, he was appointed as a Research Fellow of the West African (later the Nigerian) Institute of Social and Economic Research. It was through this Institute, set up as part of a colonial strategy to study the ethnicity, social, economic and political structures of Nigerian communities, that he became involved with Cameroon. His special responsibility was to undertake anthropological research on the coastal peoples of Cameroon and the plantations. His investigations covered an extensive region and depth of time, and involved not only his own discipline but also demographic studies, ethnography and history. He and Shirley Ardener became well-known and well-respected members of Cameroonian communities, all the more so because of their fluency with local languages. Indeed they were treated as full members of local cults. Edwin spent more than ten years in Cameroon and after he came to Oxford, he and Shirley maintained their links with annual visits. During this long association with Cameroon, Edwin endeared himself to many Cameroonians in all walks of life. When he began his academic career, Cameroon was a virgin field for research and he made full use of the opportunity. Edwin was conscious of the fact that Europeans had a limited stay in Africa and at a time when few had thought of it, he encouraged local intellectuals to take up research as a profession. He is remembered by many friends in Africa not only for his academic achievements but for his many personal qualities. They speak and write of him as one of the very few Englishmen who fully integrated himself among Cameroonians with a sense of humanity, free from racial or class bigotry. At a time of conflicting political views on the future of Cameroon, Edwin's writings, through their force and evident sincerity, attracted respectability and credibility on all sides. His reputation is secure as one of the fathers of modern academic studies in Cameroon.

In 1960 Edwin Ardener was appointed to an Oppenheimer Studentship, attached to Queen Elizabeth House at Oxford, and was invited by Professor Evans-Pritchard and his colleagues to join the Institute of Social Anthropology. In 1963 he was appointed to a University Lectureship in Social Anthropology. Although Edwin continued to maintain his personal and academic links with Africa and African studies, his interests and inspiration became increasingly focused on regions closer to home and he was responsible for a distinguished group of students turning their attention to areas of north-western Europe. He introduced into social anthropology the findings and methods of a variety of neighbouring disciplines, in particular those of demography, history, linguistics, genetics and animal ethology. Much of his own later work was

directed towards the derivation of an empirical approach in which full account could be taken of the semantic as well as the statistical nature of the social world. The Association of Social Anthropologists' conference on 'Social Anthropology and Language', which he convened in 1969, secured the place of linguistic concerns in British social anthropology. He fostered academic and personal links and exchanges with Eastern Europe and I know how greatly he valued the opportunities to visit Eastern Europe, particularly his invitation to Poland in 1984 for the Malinowski Centennial Symposium. With Shirley Ardener he introduced into social anthropology a concern with cross-cultural research on women. The results of this work provide one example among many of the fruits of their academic partnership, expressed in joint scholarship and in the inspiration that has resulted from their joint teaching.

Many professional organizations and scholarly bodies benefited from Edwin's energy and farsightedness. He was chairman of the Association of Social Anthropologists of the Commonwealth from 1981 to 1985, and was a regular attender, with Shirley, of the annual ASA meetings. I know how much he enjoyed the sense of occasion both in the open conference hall and in the closed committee room. In Oxford he quickly established himself as one of the leading members of the Institute of Social Anthropology, helping to maintain it as a first-rank department with a world-wide reputation. He played an important part in the administration of the Institute and in the sub-Faculty of Anthropology, as Chairman of the Management Committee of the Institute and as a member of the Board of the Faculty of Anthropology and Geography. He was keenly involved in the discussions concerning the reorganization of the units within the sub-Faculty of Anthropology and warmly welcomed the proposals, now under consideration, for the establishment of a more integrated structure for anthropology at Oxford.

The inauguration, in 1970, of the Honour School of Human Sciences was the result of many years of planning, and Edwin played a major part in its formulation, and ensured the fullest contribution of social anthropology to the degree. The proposal to establish the degree was a controversial one. In spite of the support of Council it was initially opposed in Congregation and the first use of a postal vote was needed to enable the wider view to prevail. The degree is a bold and imaginative attempt to combine the approaches of the natural and the social sciences to the study of human beings, and Human Sciences has always depended on the involvement of people willing to combine their subject specializations with a commitment to the aims of an inter-disciplinary course. Few people have contributed more than Edwin. In part this was through the structural apparatus of Committees, Faculty Boards, Examinations, but even more through his personal commitment to the undergraduate community in Human Sciences. He was Chairman of the interviewing panel established to allocate the university quota places for entry. Many generations of applicants will remember the combination of gentleness and discernment which he showed in his questions, and his eagerness to ensure an awareness of the importance of social anthropology without wishing to see that subject dominate the school, notwithstanding what he

sometimes saw as a strange fascination with 'furry mammals' on the part of his biological colleagues. It was through our joint involvement in Human Sciences that I came to know Edwin well. His teaching insisted on intellectual rigour and professionalism. To the newcomer his remarks in tutorials and discussion often seemed perplexing, even impenetrable, but in many students, particularly the best, he awakened a fascination with the discipline of social anthropology and made Human Sciences an important introduction to graduate studies in anthropology. He saw Human Sciences as a major focus for the different interests of social, cultural and biological anthropologists and he took particular pride in the reference, in the University's reply to the UGC on planning for the late 1980s, to the value the University attaches to interdisciplinary activity, and which cites as one example, the Human Sciences degree - a reference based on his submission to the University while Chairman of the Standing Committee for Human Sciences.

Edwin was elected to a Fellowship at St John's in 1969 and began an association which he deeply valued and to which he and Shirley contributed so greatly. Edwin was a marvellous college man - to any social gathering he brought a mixture of wit and erudition few could match. At college meetings his interventions were not frequent. When they were made they were courteous but trenchant. They combined a use of metaphor and an obliqueness which made them all the more memorable and effective. Edwin undertook his duties as Vice-President with a fine sense of occasion and responsibility. He particularly enjoyed his appointment as Steward of Common Room and he is remembered by many visitors for the trouble he took to inform himself about them and to integrate them into the life of the common room. He was in many ways the keeper of the college conscience, and believed very strongly in college as an organic educational, corporate and symbolic unit. He endeared himself to his undergraduates, and I see him now as he sat after a dinner for our pupils, cigar in hand (perhaps still wearing the galoshes of which he was so fond, doing duty as patent leather evening shoes), entertaining us with his stories and witticisms.

In addition to his participation in academic life and scholarship, Edwin always maintained his links with the wider community in which he lived. His home in Jericho became a focus for support and action directed towards the needs of the community. Edwin was at once a well-loved member, in the fullest sense, of the community in which he lived, and a natural champion of local needs. He believed in anticipation rather than reaction, an approach which made him for many years a most effective Chairman of the Jericho Residents' Association. He was able both to communicate with the less articulate of his constituents and to deal effectively with the professional bureaucracy of town planners, often less conscious than he of the strength and feeling of local communities, and the need to support and preserve them.

There is inevitably a poignant sense of abruptness and incompleteness in the ending of Edwin Ardener's life. In my last conversation with him I was conscious of his many plans for the

future, of his active concerns in the numerous fields in which he was involved. A generation of graduate students benefited from his inspiration and teaching, and they will carry on where he left off, not only in their own work, but in the further publication and exposition of his own contributions. And to us all he remains an example as a man of great charity; we remember his wisdom and his guidance, with respect and with gratitude.

A.J. BOYCE

2

#### OBITUARY NOTICE

Edwin William Ardener was born on 21 September 1927. After an adolescence spent in wartime England, Edwin went to the LSE in October 1945, to study anthropology in Malinowski's former department. He was the first student of the post-war intake to the department to specialise in social anthropology, and was alone in this status until joined by Wilfred Whiteley a year later. In London, he came into contact with many of the senior figures of the subject - Raymond Firth, Audrey Richards, Edmund Leach, Daryll Forde. He was, beginning in 1945 at the age of eighteen, one of the very youngest of the post-war recruitment to the anthropological profession. Many of his colleagues were some years older, having had their training postponed or interrupted by the war. Some significance can, perhaps, be attached to this in considering later developments in his thinking. When the 'post-war consensus' of British social anthropology began to fragment in the 1960s, Edwin was less committed to that consensus, merely as a fact of biography, than many of his older colleagues.

After graduating in 1948, Edwin went to Nigeria, thus beginning a lifelong involvement with West Africa. He spent two and a half years carrying out fieldwork in Nigeria, among the Ibo. Following this, in 1952, he became a research fellow (later senior research fellow) of the West African (later Nigerian) Institute of Social and Economic Research. This appointment took him to Cameroon, where he spent nearly all of the next eleven years. He was involved in a variety of research projects, which often reflected concerns of government and administration, and had strong empirical and demographic components. Much of this work he carried out in collaboration with other anthropologists, particularly with his wife Shirley. From this work, a variety of reports and publications appeared, prominent among them being *Plantation and Village Life in the Cameroons* (1960), written with Shirley



Ardener and W. Warmington, and *Divorce and Fertility* (1962b).\*

Over such a long period of involvement with Cameroon, Edwin had contacts and interests in many aspects of its life. His works on the history, politics and ethnography of Cameroon are recognised to be of the first importance by indigenous scholars and students of the area. His interest in language found a variety of published expressions: see, for example, his introduction and commentary to J. Clarke's *Specimens of Dialects* of 1848 (1972c). Some of his most characteristic and interesting work on Cameroon brings together historical, linguistic, political, demographic and 'ethnic' material, in studies which have little respect for the conventional boundaries of academic life, for example: 'The Nature of the Reunification of Cameroon' (1967); 'Documentary and Linguistic Evidence for the Rise of the Trading Polities between Rio del Rey and Cameroons, 1500-1650' (1968); 'Witchcraft, Economics, and the Continuity of Belief' (1970b); 'Language, Ethnicity and Population' (1972a); and 'Social Anthropology and Population' (1974).

A major achievement of the Ardeners in Cameroon was the establishment and organisation, by invitation of the government of what was then West Cameroon, of the West Cameroon archives. Edwin and Shirley gathered together an abundant chaos of material from previous periods, and organised and preserved it for the use of later scholars and students. They also planned the administration, staffing and housing of the archives. The Archive Office was officially opened during Edwin's last visit to Cameroon in 1969. Edwin was also Adviser on Antiquities to the West Cameroon Government, and established and edited a small series of government publications relating to West Cameroon, one of which he wrote, entitled *Historical Notes on the Scheduled Monuments of West Cameroon* (1965).†

In 1963 Edwin took up a lectureship in social anthropology in Oxford, at the invitation of Evans-Pritchard, then Professor. He returned to the Cameroons, however, for the three months of the long vacation, every summer (with the exception of 1967) until his last visit in 1969. In this year, he became a supernumerary fellow of St John's College, Oxford, and he held both college fellowship and university lectureship until his death. He was 36 when he came to the appointment as lecturer in Oxford, and the intellectual upheavals of the 1960s were pending. It has been noted that Edwin was too young to be fully a part of what he later came to call 'the post-war consensus' (and, indeed, he spent most of the consensual period in the Cameroons). He was, however, too old to be entirely swept along by 1960s' enthusiasms. Certainly, he became closely associated, in works like 'The New Anthropology and Its Critics' (1971a) and *Social Anthropology and Language* (1971b) with a modern critique of earlier thought and practice.

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\* Details of works cited can be found in the Select Bibliography of Edwin Ardener's work at pp. 121-3 below.

† Edwin Ardener's achievements as a pioneer in Cameroon studies have been usefully set out in an obituary notice by Martin Z. Njeuma in *West Africa* (no. 3660, 5 October 1987, pp. 1963-5).

His was never an uncritical enthusiasm, however. His Oxford appointment occurred just before the decade of the Robbins expansion in higher education. Many of those coming to university appointments, in all subjects, in this period, were relatively young, and their experience of living was entirely post-war. These people *were* of an age to be swept up by the '60s (indeed, they were one of its most characteristic, and finally most enduring, features). They were also able to think, or at least to *feel*, that the opinions and ambitions of the '60s were entirely new and unambiguously virtuous. Edwin was not of this group, however, and within the intellectual history of social anthropology he looked both ways, ready to criticise what he considered to be the unreflective empiricism of the past, but always concerned to stress the virtues of the past tradition - its ambition for, and pursuit of, empirical rigour. You could not, he would say, criticise empiricism, without having made a determined effort to be empirical. He was, in this sense, slightly 'out of phase' with the dominant wave-patterns of intellectual and demographic life in social anthropology. This may account, to some degree at least, for what seems to have been a common feeling in the profession, that Edwin was difficult to keep up with, and nearly impossible to catch.

Edwin had been interested, even as a schoolboy, in subjects that led him to anthropology - in the history of society, religion and language. The subtle and erudite pleasure in the social life of words, one of the most striking features of the man, seems to have been present from very early days. In the course of field-work, Edwin had pursued this interest in linguistics, and in all the associated symbolism of social life. He had, however, also attempted, in the course of demographic research, to put to work formal and statistical processes in the analysis of social phenomena. He retained throughout his life a serious interest in the use of formal models in social analysis. These two approaches to the social, from demography and from linguistics, were not obviously compatible, at least in their common social anthropological forms. Demography was a matter of objective measurement, of head counts and statistical analyses. Language, on the contrary, came into social anthropology associated with an interest in symbolism, ritual and subjective ideas. It was Edwin's achievement to have reconciled the apparently objective, mensurational approaches to society (those associated with demography) with approaches that concerned the human and social capacity for definition evident in language. Measurement and definition were not, in his formulation, alternative procedures. They were, rather, simultaneous features of entities of the kind that we call social. These ideas, difficult of expression as they are, he pursued in his main series of theoretical papers, for example, apart from those already cited: 'Some Outstanding Problems in the Analysis of Events' (1978); 'The Voice of Prophecy: Further Problems in the Analysis of Events' (1975b); and 'Social Anthropology, Language and Reality' (1982). These papers in part arose from, and fed back into, the lectures that he gave every year in Oxford. These lectures provided an ever-developing series of reflections on theoretical issues in social anthropology. Edwin's oral deliveries, in these

and other lectures and seminars, in discussion and conversation, were often of the very highest quality, both challenging and entertaining. They were not, however, fully represented in his published work, a fact of which he was aware. He was not an enthusiastic publisher of his own work, preferring to keep his own papers 'provisional', and taking much more pleasure in the publications of his students that he did in his own. A collection of his major recent papers was in preparation at the time of his death, and this will shortly appear, containing more than one previously unpublished paper. A collection of his African papers is also in preparation, and this too will include substantial papers not previously published.

In 1972, he published a piece entitled 'Belief and the Problem of Women' (1972b). This was in the mainstream of his work, but it came to assume something rather like an independent life. Along with a subsequent piece, 'The "Problem" Revisited' (1975a), it helped to crystallise an interest in previously neglected areas, in 'muted groups'. Both in relation to concern about the place of women in anthropology (as objects, subjects, and so on), and in relation to the broader intellectual context of the 1970s, these papers represented ideas whose time had come. In consequence, a large body of valuable work has followed from the impetus provided by Edwin and Shirley Ardener in this area, for example, the two volumes edited by Shirley Ardener, *Perceiving Women* (London: Malaby Press 1975) and *Defining Females* (London: Croom Helm 1978).

In the last dozen or so years, some of Edwin's students, following a general trend in British social anthropology, had begun to turn their attention to European material. Edwin had a mature interest in questions concerning the relationship between 'history' and 'ethnicity' in the African context. He had also established a long-running seminar series in Oxford in which this relationship was explored. He had a long-standing interest in the Indo-European languages, and in the demographic and ethnographic questions inevitably raised by a study of the history of these languages. He had made a particular study of Welsh. All these interests and enthusiasms made him well-prepared for the shift of interest to Europe. He had recently begun making regular field-trips to the Outer Hebrides, in furtherance of his Celtic interests. Unfortunately, only one of his papers, "'Remote Areas": Some Theoretical Considerations' (1987), expresses the Hebridean connection. The fruits of these aspects of his thinking are manifest rather in the works of others, and in the ASA conference of 1987 on 'History and Ethnicity', which owed its inspiration, in part at least, to him.

Some found Edwin's conversation and story-telling baffling, and sometimes they were. It is true that he did not give away the key to a good story until the very last line, and that he took pleasure in the suspense. Similarly, some have found his written work difficult to understand, and complained of obscurity. There is less justification for this. Obscurities there doubtless are, as in all truly original writing. Edwin's prose was, however, for the most part, both concentrated and luminous. At the same time, he was not necessarily concerned to make things easy for the

reader. He did not repeat himself, or say the same thing over again in different ways, in different paragraphs, different articles, and different books. His published works were not a great weight of paper, but he could make a terse article do where others might produce a book and say less. He was also dealing with difficult matters, and always attempting to advance, clearly and self-consciously, on his previous work. His prose was sometimes taxing, certainly, but this should not be mistaken for obscurity. It was, rather, the result of an unusual combination of originality, density of argument, and economy of expression.

Edwin fought the corner for social anthropology, both in the University and in the country, recognising that if the interests of the profession were not fought by those involved in it, they would be fought by no one. The job was not always a pleasant or a rewarding one, and its victories tended to be unglamorous and unsung. In various capacities in the Oxford Institute of Social Anthropology, in the ASA, on SSRC committees, on the executive committee of ALSISS (the Association of Learned Societies in the Social Sciences), and in connection with the Human Sciences degree in Oxford, he brought insight, wit and commitment to the professional life and interests of social anthropology. His achievement in establishing social anthropology as a major part of the Human Sciences undergraduate degree, making it for the first time a subject seriously available in Oxford at this level, may well prove to be of particular and lasting significance.

This Journal, *JASO*, has had Edwin as its 'editorial adviser' from its first issue in 1970. As Edwin noted, in a decennial note to *JASO* (1980), his advisership was more often than not entirely nominal, and the editors went their own way. The Journal, however, exemplifies an important aspect of Edwin's approach to the subject. He liked life, and the life of the intellect, however they manifested themselves. He encouraged all forms of writing and inquiry, and never suppressed or discouraged enthusiasm in the interests of conformity or safety. He gave people room to be what they would be, and the larger it was, the better he was pleased. He was no exponent of weary sophistication or of the tepid half-smile, and no stranger to the joys of hilarity. He often took as much pleasure in approaches that were gloriously off-target, or determinedly idiosyncratic, as he did in the subtle and fastidiously correct. He laid down no party line, and excluded no lines of enquiry. If *JASO* has imitated him in these qualities, this can only have served to open it to variety and enthusiasm.

Edwin had a great deal still to write and to say. Many of those that knew him well, perhaps, feel that his written work did not capture the essence of their relationship to him, or the essence of what he communicated to them. He had a twenty-year involvement in fieldwork in West Africa. He was intimately acquainted with Cameroon society at all levels. He knew the concerns of government and administration, and the life of the village and plantation. He had long experience of the empirical rigours of demographic research, and the conceptual rigours of inquiry into language and symbolism. He was at ease in historical and structural linguistics. He knew the skills of classical

social anthropology, and at the same time took a great part in the last period of significant modernization of the subject as can be seen in his 'Social Anthropology and the Decline of Modernism' (1985). He was perennially interested in currents of thought among those that he called 'the thinking classes', in their politics, literature, literary criticism and morality. He was widely read in the history and philology of the British Isles, with a particular interest in its Celtic elements. He took active part in debate with biologists and ethologists about the nature of human society. Social anthropology, by its nature, often produces unusual and interesting combinations of knowledge and experience among those who practise it. By any standards, however, the combination of erudition, and conceptual and empirical expertise, that Edwin brought to his thought and writings, was rare and thrilling. If we add to these a truly original mind, a fast-moving and unconventional intellect, a happy wit, and a fundamental kindness, then the loss is grave indeed. Edwin died, suddenly and unexpectedly, on 4 July 1987, at the age of 59. To all those associated with him, people and institutions, he is truly irreplaceable.

MALCOLM CHAPMAN

3

EDWIN ARDENER

Mine is perhaps a curious perspective: to claim to know something of the feel of Edwin Ardener's work and to have talked about it with him a little, but not really to have known the man himself as much as I would have liked nor that of his main working context, the Oxford Institute of Social Anthropology. This view from afar therefore both qualifies and justifies what I have to say: it is limited by ignorance of the most intimate cut and thrust of debate at the Institute and of the personalities involved, but it is also un beholden to such institutional interests and characters.

Like many, perhaps, I had been puzzled at the apparent hiatus in thinking between Ardener's early work during his period of some years as a research fellow of the Nigerian Institute of Social and Economic Research and that dating from, say, his Malinowski Lecture of 1970 (1971a).<sup>\*</sup> His work on Cameroonian plantations,

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<sup>\*</sup> Details of works cited can be found in the Select Bibliography of Edwin Ardener's work at pp. 121-3 below.

carried out in the mid-1950s and published with Shirley Ardener and others in 1960, is for the most part a report on the problems of labour supply and migration, complete with recommendations to the Cameroonian Development Corporation. The practical element is apparent also in the book on the Bakweri of Cameroon, on the subject of divorce and fertility (1962b). The many years spent in a relatively small area of West Africa, mainly among the Nigerian Ibo and the Cameroonian Bakweri, produced not the voluminous ethnographies-for-their-own-sake additionally typical of many other government-sponsored anthropologists of the time, but work which clearly had an applied aspect. But by 1970 and 1971, with the Malinowski Lecture (1971a) and the introduction to *Social Anthropology and Language* (1971c), the prose had taken on a life and character of its own, not always easy to follow but with thought-provoking assertions which could serve no immediate utilitarian purpose. Thereafter followed the papers on themes which became widely known and discussed: ethnicity, population, and language dialects as conceptual space (1971d; 1972a; 1974), women as an example of muted social categories (1972b; 1975a), social events and the classification of reality (1975b; 1978; 1982; 1985), social anthropology as a disciplinary genre in its own right (1985), the merging of geographical and conceptual topography (1987), and many others.

Ardener had himself talked of the epistemological break which came with Lévi-Strauss and structuralism, and the change in his own work seems to have come with that more than through Evans-Pritchard's own concern with the patterning of conceptual systems, though this is clearly an influence on which Institute members may be more able to comment. Certainly Ardener's distinction between paradigmatic and syntagmatic structures had echoes of Lévi-Strauss's approach to myth as much as it did of de Saussure, though at the same time Ardener did have considerable knowledge of linguistic work arising out of this tradition and of the Prague School.

Ardener was perhaps the first to admit that the distinction between p- and s-structures became a little heavy once it had been digested, and it was a relief when he would use instead such notions as 'template' or 'replication' (1970b), or 'language shadow' (1978), to refer to the idea of underlying or p-structure. But he did give the structuralist distinction between surface (narrative) and deep (grammar) structures a locus in everyday behaviour rather than in exalted mythology. And this is where we can see the link between Ardener's early and later periods.

In the final chapter of his co-authored book on Cameroonian plantations (1960), he talks about the connection in Bakweri beliefs between witchcraft and personal wealth: when poverty strikes, those who are wealthy must be the witches who drain the resources of others. They are assumed to be the *nyongo* zombies who consume the corpses of those they kill. They can be identified by the fact that only their huts have expensive tin roofs. Further empirical associations are made in this way by the Bakweri under adverse economic conditions.

The image of this that Ardener conveyed was of conceptual,

linguistic, and behavioural connections which had no enduring quality but which were captured moments, so to speak, with the mob 'howling' outside the tin-roofed huts of frightened old men (1970b). We were offered also the image of the space occupied over time by chairs around a table, each describing innumerable and unrepeated arcs yet all constituting a recognizable structure (1971a). It was a quite different kind of underlying structure from the more universalistic and enduring one of Lévi-Strauss's myths. It was brought into being by a conjunction of events and therefore not predictable, yet suggested inevitable interpretation. Whether or not distant links with Foucault, the later Barthes, or Lacan were involved, it is interesting to note that Ardener did declare, at the ASA decennial conference held at Oxford in 1973, that social anthropology had entered its post-structuralist phase.

The 1970 analysis of the *nyongo* beliefs appeared in the ASA book on witchcraft but, as its title indicates, it is really a commentary on how to look at other peoples' economic systems. The Bakweri 'think' witchcraft where we might 'think' economics. For Ardener the paper linked his interest in the 'hard facts' of livelihood and their recognition and mis-recognition in language and events. It was an interest which was to recur in, for instance, the claim that 'materiality' is not dependent on a sharp separation of the physical and conceptual-linguistic but is both at the same time, a 'simultaneity' (1982: 11): for example, to understand an ethnic group is not to isolate a set of people from their identity and call them the distinctive stuff of which ethnicity is made, but to regard them as one and the same thing. Other Oxford colleagues were also engaged in attempts at what we now call analytical deconstruction, and while Ardener's successive efforts to show that the material (i.e. interactive), social, and linguistic are our own analytical part-glosses on reality, which we therefore distort, are swiftly becoming commonplace, they were quite novel at the time in the empirical forms in which he presented them.

The common empirical thread has increasingly been a semantic concept, i.e. a word or phrase used in an expected context. This is evident on the levels of the vocabulary of the 'other' - for example *nyongo* (1970b) or *ji aka* (1982) - and on that of our own everyday language - for example 'tribe' (1972a) or 'remote areas' (1987). The task was to 'unpack' such terms and find along which unexpected paths they lead. As well as discovering that to talk of 'language' was to talk also of 'population' and then of 'ethnicity', with neither being a privileged term, the exercise (it would be against the spirit to call it a methodology) dissolved such traditional distinctions as 'relativism' and 'universalism' (1982): that is to say, ideas are connected if you trace their associations long enough, even across cultures, for we are always engaged in a sifting process of translation, retaining that which seems to fit our own categories; therefore concepts in this way can be either found everywhere or particular to one society or a designated type of society.

Does this mean that all reality is fiction? Here, Ardener might say that reality is a constant flight either into zones of

thinking-acting for which there are no words to define and constrain (the dream-world of unarticulated images) or into those which are hyper-articulate and which claim that all existence is verbal (the literal and statistical profiles by which we are nowadays constituted by authority). Perhaps reality is in this sense a life of constant escape and movement rather than pre-existing forces which direct and constrain. But it is a question which Ardener opened up rather than definitively addressed. It could have gone the way of phenomenology or existentialism but was pursued through language.

While Ardener's work is clearly deconstructivist (a term he would refrain from using if possible, though it does occur), critics might claim that it suffers from the general problem of deconstructionism, namely the inability to go beyond issues of meaning and the creation of social categories and discuss those of power. This may be, however, to take a somewhat 1960s view of power as to do with the capacity of individuals to influence people and events, a view which unquestioningly assumed that human agents and the institutions they worked through were to a large degree self-determining. A modern position might prefer to regard power more broadly as the knock-on effect of events, so-identified, on each other. Identifying a region as including people who are henceforth to be known as the Bakweri or 'traditional' Shetlanders may indeed be the act of a single person, but it is also a phase in the making of a history of a region and of its relationship to those who name it.

Agency and power are here inscribed in an indeterminate and subtle manner. That said, it is interesting to speculate that, had Ardener begun re-writing, so to speak, in the epistemological atmosphere of the 1980s rather than the late '60s, more dynamic components of Whorfism might have been sought. Certainly throughout Ardener's work there is an abiding interest in humans as classifiers of themselves and not just of their society and environment. While that interest clearly looked back at structuralism and modernism as benchmarks by which to gauge a future to be less agonized by positivistic questions of 'good theory' (1985), it still hinted at age-old problems of dominance and suppression, though this is not what Ardener's critics would say. His characterization of women as muted categories could, after all, be regarded as a political statement, a suggestion to which he acceded with some pleasure. Similarly, his description of the creation of tribally named 'hollow categories' into which peoples had to be fitted (1972a) was a short step from asking who authorized the hollow categories and why. It also questioned the so-called objectivity of measured populations, who did not after all exist as such before they were classified as worthy of measurement. But he would not have used that conventional political vocabulary, and while these problems of authorization and entitlement, like Foucault's 'governmentality', seem to me to have been left unattended, it was precisely this remarkable capacity to use his own creative language to look at the language creations of others, that makes Ardener's work so valuable. He did not, as far as I know, use the word 'reflexivity' to describe aspects of his work



until very late (1987: 39), and he acknowledged that the term had now become fashionable. Yet, in the sense used early on by the linguist M.A.K. Halliday, it meant not simply how we reflect on ourselves and our work, but rather how language uses language to reflect on itself (e.g. 'This sentence is six words long.'). By analogy this is perhaps a fair summary of Ardener's approach: to express through our ethnographic accounts issues of human definition which, being 'the linguistic in the social' (1978: 301), oblige us to question our own tendency in language to separate the linguistic from the social, the general from the particular, the material from the ideological, the statistical from the unmeasurable, and of course the human from the non-human. The foundations for the project have been well laid and recent ethnographic studies are all the better for it.

DAVID PARKIN

4

#### EDWIN ARDENER AND POLISH SOCIAL ANTHROPOLOGY

The news of the death of Edwin Ardener has shocked us here in the Department of Social Anthropology at Cracow. It was a sorrowful blow to us, all the greater for being unexpected. When the news first came, we realised that we had lost a friend and a scholar whom we all held in esteem for his knowledge, achievements and unique personality. It was only six months ago that we spent a week together in the snow-bound mountain town of Rabka discussing issues in social anthropology. We discussed themes of mutual interest, planned further contacts, and established the date of the next meeting for 1988, fully expecting that it would be in the autumn under the golden leaves of Rabka again.

Edwin's special attitude towards us and the relations we enjoyed with him went far beyond the contacts usual among scholars. As it often happens, everything began as routine cooperation. He was president of the Association of Social Anthropologists when the centenary of Malinowski's birth was approaching. Malinowski's alma mater wanted to commemorate that anniversary, and we approached Edwin to invite him as one of the honoured guests of the Jagiellonian University on that occasion. He came to Cracow and read a magnificent address on behalf of British anthropologists. There were, however, some latent aspects of his visit to Poland. His personality and attitude, his *esprit*, found their vent in endless discussions about Poland in Malinowski's time and nowadays, about science and its meaning for humanity, about social

anthropology - all full of wit so characteristic of him. Before that we had known him only from his publications, but now, during a week of discussions and informal meetings, we came to know him as a scholar whose deep ideas were fascinating and with a sense of humour and an exceptional talent of observation and analysis of events happening around him.

At that event we were talking a great deal about the need for further collaboration between Polish and British anthropologists since only one of us had established contacts with Cambridge and London. Such conversations, quite frequent, often remain only words and wishful thinking. But Edwin Ardener, as it soon became clear, took them seriously. When the following year we started to think of another meeting, that time not the celebration of the memory of a founding father but a working seminar, Edwin accepted our invitation, offered his strong support and gave our plans wide publicity. Then the idea was born of having regular informal anthropological gatherings in the mountains at the foot of the Tatras, which had played so specific a role in Polish culture and which shaped some features of Malinowski's personality. We called them the Podhale School of Anthropology, and Edwin was a regular participant at those meetings. Whether playing the role of speaker or chairman of a session, or taking part in a private, informal meeting, he gave all such occasions a special character owing to the uniqueness of his personality. We all knew that we could always count on him and that we had a true friend in him.

Our contacts with Edwin Ardener were not limited to his participation in our conference in Poland. He actively supported the Oxford Hospitality Scheme for Polish Scholars, and it was mainly due to his efforts and goodwill that in two years two persons from our anthropological team had a chance to visit St John's College, of which he was a Fellow. There is no doubt that in spite of the excellent organization of the scheme and the great kindness of all our Oxford hosts, for us those stays would not have been what they were if we had not known Edwin Ardener. From the beginning he looked after us with exceptional hospitality and warmth, he introduced us to Oxford academic customs and rituals, helped in contacts with people, in participation in seminars, in presenting and publishing our work. He was doing much more than could have been expected even from a friend. We know that he was also very kind to other Poles, non-anthropologists, who visited Oxford. His interests in our country, a deep and true understanding of its culture, history, past and present problems, were thus expressed in action. On every occasion he showed these feelings which we acknowledged with delight.

Edwin Ardener was the *spiritus movens* of the contacts we have with British anthropologists and which are so important to us. He inspired some of our work, such as that on cultural identity in modern societies, and on history and mythology. It might be said that he was an eye-witness of the development of Polish social anthropology almost from the beginning, since the first university department was founded in Cracow only seven years ago. Last winter it was agreed to offer him honorary membership of the department,

and when he was leaving in the frosty morning, none of us thought that we were then seeing him for the last time.

ZDZISŁAW MACH  
ANDRZEJ K. PALUCH

5

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## SHENG: SOME PRELIMINARY INVESTIGATIONS INTO A RECENTLY EMERGED NAIROBI STREET LANGUAGE

### I

Over the last thirty or forty years, a street language has been developing in Nairobi, the capital of Kenya. It has come to be known by many as 'Sheng', although not all its speakers are aware of the term. My interest in this language was initially aroused in the summer of 1985 while I was in Nairobi carrying out research for my M.Litt. thesis on local 'parking boys' or street urchins - a recent urban phenomenon in Kenya. It has been suggested that the term 'Sheng' has been coined from a combination of the letters 's' and 'h' in Swahili, and the 'eng' of English (Sheng 1985).

'Parking boy' is a common term for boys ('parking girls' also exist), aged roughly between five and sixteen, who come from slum areas, are not in school, and who usually earn themselves a living in more than one way. However, they are distinctly recognizable and identified by their parking business, which involves both directing motorists, for a fee or tip, into empty parking spaces, and watching over parked cars, in return for which the driver either pays or else risks damage to his car. These children number several hundred, although no one knows exactly how many there are, and they typically form small gangs comprised of not more than about twenty members each. One sees them in the centre of Nairobi in groups of between three and, say, eight members. The gangs are territorial and in the majority of cases have a leader,

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I wish to thank Mr J. Arensen, Dr W. James, Dr N.J. Allen, Mr S. Raychaudhury and Miss F. Taraporewala for their helpful suggestions and comments. I also acknowledge the invaluable assistance of Maina wa Mwangi in identifying the roots of some Sheng words. The transcription is in IPA.

who is normally the oldest and biggest boy in the group.

This kind of organization is flexible and relatively unsophisticated, lacking, in most instances, any adult control, and exhibiting, to a small extent only, the control of children over other children. My own investigations suggest, for example, that there is certainly no general pattern whereby children do *not* keep their own earnings, despite some evidence that the contrary sometimes occurs. We may think of the parking-boy phenomenon as being located towards the more unsophisticated end of a continuum, the other end of which is represented by highly organized and sophisticated street gangs, such as those found in New York and in a number of other large American, European and Indian cities.

Parking boys, I suggest, have their own 'sub-culture', one aspect of which is their use of Sheng. There appear to be three dominant modes of communication among them - Sheng, Kikuyu and Swahili. Swahili, however, does not seem to be used as much as Sheng and Kikuyu. Most of the boys belong to the Kikuyu, the host people of Nairobi, and speak the language. Those who are not Kikuyu have learnt it in order to be assimilated into the world of parking boys. Most parking boys have at some stage been to school - some have obtained a minimum level of education, and others have had to leave school for various reasons, at a relatively more advanced level, usually that of primary school.

Whiteley claims that the importance of taking language diversity into consideration has been realized in anthropology only since the 1950s. In his paper on multilingualism (1971) he illustrates the kind of neglect that prevailed prior to this with the example of Mitchell writing about a gossip network without actually specifying the language spoken. The importance of taking an anthropological approach which relies, in part, on linguistic data, is stressed by both Whiteley and Tonkin (1971: 147). Certainly, a study of language reveals much about the society in question. I aim to show how this might apply in the case of Sheng.

The rest of this paper focuses on what may be gleaned from the speculative history of the language in terms of its emergence and development to date. In the last section I present some selected examples of Sheng vocabulary, obtained from a number of the parking boys themselves. Wherever possible, I attempt to identify the linguistic components of the words.

## II

In 1985, an article appeared in *The Standard* newspaper on the emergence of Sheng in Nairobi some thirty to forty years ago (Sheng 1985). It has since stimulated more journalistic interest in Sheng and, in recent months, several more newspaper articles have been written about it. Through their presentation and discussion of certain Sheng terms, these articles may, to some extent, be providing and determining the standardization of what does not



appear to be a standardized mode of communication.

One of the questions that must be asked concerns the nature of this street language: is it an argot, a slang, a pidgin, a creole or what?

According to one sociolinguistic definition, a pidgin is a language defined in terms of its supposed history - "a reduced" version of a "source" or "base" language' (quoted in Tonkin 1971: 129). There is not necessarily only one 'base' language, and pidgin speakers do not necessarily know the 'base' language or languages themselves. Such pidgins have emerged and developed among culturally and linguistically diverse peoples as a means of communication between them (*ibid.*).

Although this article does not undertake to explore the controversy surrounding the classifications of 'pidgins' and 'creoles', it is nevertheless important to mention it. In so far as the debate concerns the distinction between them, the argument proposed by Tonkin, that pidgins and creoles lie along the same continuum, seems more convincing than the linguists' view that they are linguistically distinct. Tonkin argues, furthermore, that creoles, according to LePage's definition, do not exist in multilingual situations, a creole being:

the second stage of development [which] occurs when the 'pidgin' becomes so widely used that it is a more valuable instrument than the mother-tongues; parents then use it to their children, the children grow up speaking 'pidgin' as their first language. (LePage quoted by Tonkin 1971: 131)

This latter argument, if applied to the Nairobi situation, seems plausible, in view of my later discussion of the various language spheres existing in Nairobi, which suggests that there is no evidence of creolization happening as a general phenomenon. Nor is it likely to reach this stage; first, because Sheng is not introduced to children in the home but at a later stage of life; and secondly, because Swahili and English are both taught in schools and are used widely in the city.

Nor is it likely that Sheng is a pidgin either. Pidgins are characteristically associated with contexts of trade and other practical business in which it is essential for the participating parties - of diverse cultural and linguistic origins - to be able to communicate with one another. Pidgins have developed as compromise languages in these situations in response to the need for a common language and are indispensable to the parties concerned. By contrast, it is not essential for people to speak Sheng, and for this reason it may not be described as a classic pidgin.<sup>1</sup>

In Kenya, whereas the 'true' or 'correct' Swahili is that spoken at the coast, the interior is characterized by the existence of many corrupted forms of the language. Sheng may be regarded as the most recent of these forms - as yet another development in the language ferment of the interior.

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<sup>1</sup> I am grateful to Wendy James for this suggestion.

Despite this sociological distinction between Sheng and classic pidgins, it is useful, nonetheless, to compare them as hybrid forms of communication. In order to do so, Sheng will be compared with pidgins in West Africa.

Sheng is 'moulded within the Kiswahili and English syntactical framework' (Sheng 1985), and as well as being a mixture of Kiswahili and English, it has contributions from the languages of the major ethnic groups of its speakers - for example, Luo, Luhya and Kamba, as well as Kikuyu. It also has a number of words with origins as diverse as Hindi, American westerns, and karate and breakdance films - all of which are highly popular with young people in Nairobi. Sheng in fact does seem to be associated mainly with young people, i.e. children and young adults, although not exclusively so. It also appears to be associated more with people engaged in the informal sector than with those engaged in formal sector occupations. It is a creative, spontaneous, and fast-evolving language, which varies according to situation and speaker within the city of Nairobi.

Interestingly, the way in which Sheng has emerged in Kenya seems to be the exact opposite of what has happened with pidgins in West Africa which have a comparatively longer history. While the emergence of both is associated with European contact, in the West African case pidgins have spread inland from the coast, whereas in Kenya, Sheng has emerged inland and has really remained a Nairobi phenomenon. However, it is interesting to consider here what is happening in the other large urban centres in Kenya, namely Mombasa, on the coast, Nakuru, in the Rift Valley, and Kisumu, an important port on Lake Victoria. Sheng has not become widespread in any of these towns, despite the fact that many Nairobi residents are able to take advantage of the good transport system, consisting largely of *matatu* services (privately owned taxi-vans), and so maintain links with their relatives and friends living in rural and other urban areas. However, to a small extent, Sheng is transported outside Nairobi, some of the main agents being the *matatu* operators themselves (*manambas*). In fact *manamba* is itself a Sheng word, derived from the Swahili prefix *ma-* and the English word 'number', which originally referred to the number of the service.

Why, then, has Sheng not become widespread in these other towns? In the case of Mombasa and the coast generally, Kiswahili is the dominant language, with English used in addition. There is here a certain language clarity that is lacking in Nairobi - a city culturally and linguistically far more diverse. Nakuru is an ethnically heterogeneous town, but the majority are Kikuyu, and either Kikuyu or Kiswahili is spoken. In Kisumu, again ethnically heterogeneous, Luo form the dominant group, and Luo and Kiswahili are the main languages used. Nairobi, however, is in a class all of its own, being both much larger and more cosmopolitan than the other towns and thus not under the linguistic dominance of any one group.<sup>2</sup> These features, I believe, hold the key to

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<sup>2</sup> In 1980, for instance, Nairobi's population had far exceeded a

this question, for such conditions are suitable for the emergence of hybrid languages.

Why, and amongst whom, did Sheng emerge in Nairobi? Despite the fact that the historical evidence is very limited, it is possible to say a number of things about the emergence of this street language, and to raise a number of questions.

Several factors have contributed towards the development of Sheng. We begin by going back some forty years to pre-independence Kenya. This was a time of very rapid growth for Nairobi as many migrants came to the city to search for jobs. This ethnically heterogeneous population of workers came to live side-by-side with each other in Nairobi's Eastlands, in areas which today are large slums containing almost half of Nairobi's population. Examples of such locations are Buru Buru, Kariobangi, Jericho, Majengo, Kaloleni, Mathare Valley, Muthurwa, Bahati and Lumumba. It is possible that the children of these workers first started to create Sheng, for while their parents remained linguistically, culturally and associationally Kikuyu, Luo etc., they had been born or brought into a completely new and different environment, characterized by multilingualism and the beginnings of a particular kind of class formation.

Three languages, operating on three different levels, may be identified in the Eastlands. The first is the 'mother' or ethnic tongue, used within domestic and ethnic units; the second is Kiswahili, used outside these spheres; and the third is English, taught in schools in addition to Swahili and carrying greater status as the colonial tongue. It is no wonder, then, that a hybrid language comprised of components from all these levels emerged in Nairobi's Eastlands, the need for a common language being an important underlying impetus. It is important to stress that not all members of these diverse language groups could communicate with one another in Kiswahili or English if they did not speak the same vernacular.

It has also been suggested that an important contributory factor in the emergence of Sheng is the lack of clarity in Kenya's language policy, whereby Swahili is used for national purposes and English for official purposes (Sheng 1985). It is argued that this goes back to the British strategy of 'divide and rule' and their resistance to homogeneity, especially where language was concerned. The result of this was the use of two languages - English, with its status and utilitarian value on the one hand, and Kiswahili, with its connotations of social inclusiveness, brotherhood, solidarity, neutrality and lower status on the other (Parkin 1974). It is, in fact, only very recently that the Kenyan President, Daniel Arap Moi, has decreed that Swahili be made examinable in schools. Sheng, therefore, seems to have emerged partly as a result of the ambiguity concerning the status of Swahili and of the freedom it offers to its speakers to borrow and adapt words from other languages.

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million, and while that of Mombasa was almost half a million, Kisumu's was only 124,000, and Nakuru's just under 80,000 (Ominde 1984: 63).

In her paper on West African pidgins, Tonkin (1971) points to the need for a common language through which African and European - in this case, initially Portuguese - could communicate with one another as an important factor in their emergence. This does not appear to have been the case in Nairobi, however. Rather, in Kenya a Swahili 'dialect' known as *Kisettla* emerged amongst British settlers, who, in one view, did not want to speak correct Swahili. An example of *Kisettla* is the sign *mbwa kali* which was, and still is, often placed on the drive gates of British homes. This is a warning meaning 'fierce dog', which ought to read *mbwa mkali*. The settlers are seen by many Africans as having bastardized the Swahili language deliberately so as not to have to lower themselves to the level of the 'natives'. Thus, the development of Sheng is not rooted in *Kisettla* Swahili, despite the fact that English is incorporated.

### III

It is clear, therefore, that a combination of factors have contributed to the emergence of Sheng. Its subsequent development and spread are the next foci of this paper.

It is possible that Sheng was being used as early as the beginnings of the 1950s. It became more pronounced however, in the early 1970s, but was not really recognized until even more recently. Initially, as mentioned earlier, it was associated with a particular socio-economic group consisting of migrant labourers, as well as Kikuyu ex-Mau Mau detainees and their relations, school drop-outs and the like. Within the socio-economic structure of the society, these people were at the lower end of the hierarchy. However, since then the use of Sheng has filtered upwards, and its association is no longer limited to one specific section of the population. The functions or uses it serves have also diversified. It is important to bear in mind that this has happened alongside a massive increase in the size of Nairobi, the population of which, over the period 1969-80, increased at the rate of 7% per annum, that is, from 509,000 to 1,098,000 inhabitants (Ominde 1984: 63).

The use of Sheng has spread beyond the Eastlands to become a street language used widely in the city by many Africans engaged in the informal sector, including shoe-shine boys, curio-sellers, hawkers and parking boys, to name but a few. In addition, it has become a fashionable or 'hip' language among many of the more well-to-do youth of Nairobi. For example, Sheng, or a local version of it, is spoken by many children attending some of the private and most prestigious schools in Nairobi. These children come from either middle-class or elite backgrounds. It may be that speaking and creating Sheng is part of being 'clever' and shows also that one is really 'in' on what is happening. Sheng is even used by some university students in certain situations, for example, at football practice.

Not only has the development of the language involved a spread geographically and socially, but the language itself has been continually changing and evolving as an increasing number of words from an increasing number of language reservoirs have been adapted and incorporated. No single form of Sheng has emerged out of this; rather, there are many versions, which vary according to area, situation and speaker. For instance, the version spoken by parking boys is different from that spoken by schoolchildren from relatively well-off families. The type of Sheng spoken by the former group is, by contrast, highly specialized. There are, for example, a relatively large number of terms for 'police', 'marihuana', 'prostitute', 'cigarette' and so forth, which would not be found in the latter case. Clearly, such words have more relevance in the life of a parking boy, and in this respect Sheng has the features of an argot. Despite such variation, however, there does seem to be a certain amount of standardization. For instance, the term /mu:deusi:/ is understood by all Sheng speakers to mean 'rich person'.

A further recent development is the popularization of Sheng. Kenyan writers such as Thomas Okare have incorporated the use of Sheng in their works. It is possible, indeed likely, that in future Kenyan literature will take the path already paved by many West African writers, for instance, who have long made use of pidgins in their writing.

In this paper, a number of comparisons have been drawn between Kenyan and West African material. Sheng and West African pidgins have both emerged within the context of European contact, though this happened much earlier in West Africa; for while Sheng is probably not more than forty years old, pidgin Portuguese emerged some time around 1440 in West Africa, and pidgin English some 200 years later (Tonkin 1971: 132). Many similarities concerning the emergence and subsequent development of pidgin exist in these regions, but there are also differences in the particular historical circumstances and events that have affected them. It is, however, important to note that pidgins have also emerged in situations without European influence. Tonkin claims that this area has been neglected and cites two examples. The first is 'Town Bemba', a Copperbelt pidgin based on CiBemba which is spoken among equals. In so far as it is a marker identifying the modern townsman, it is similar to Sheng. Sango, a pidgin of the Central African Republic, is Tonkin's second example. According to Samarin, Sango is spoken by the 'man who has just left the bush but has not enough education to speak French' (quoted in Tonkin 1971: 132). Tonkin argues that in both cases speakers are using pidgin as part of their attempt to join a group.

What this paper has not yet dealt with is the use of pidgin or street language as part of gang 'sub-culture', except to indicate that as far as Sheng is concerned the parking boys' use of it appears to be relatively specialized. For them, it also serves specific functions related to the necessities and hazards of their particular life-style. For example, parking boys find Sheng useful for warning one another of approaching police. By continually inventing new terms for 'police' as the police find out the old

ones, effective warning is enabled. In addition, the use made of Sheng by the parking boys as a group is relatively intensive, to the extent that it is often the only language spoken for hours on end. It appears that Sheng is being used to the extent that in the future it might become their 'mother' tongue. However, whether this will occur will depend, for one thing, on the level of education such children in future years will have had prior to becoming parking boys. The phenomenon of street children is in fact very closely linked to certain problems of the educational system, which cause, for one thing, a large drop-out rate from schools. This has become recognized as a serious problem, as more and more of Nairobi's youth have joined the officially unemployed, and as crime rates in the city have risen. Whether or not Sheng will become a 'mother' tongue might also depend on whether the future offspring of parking boys and girls hear Sheng used extensively in the home.

Presented below are some of the Sheng terms collected from a number of parking boys during my field trip to Nairobi in 1985. The extent to which their Sheng deviates from that used by other speakers of Sheng is a question that needs investigation, but my guess, and there is some evidence to support it, is that while there is a certain amount of overlap, there is always a certain amount that is exclusively parking boy Sheng. Moreover, there also appears to be some variation among the parking boys themselves in their use of Sheng.

#### IV

I now turn to some examples of the kind of Sheng spoken by the parking boys with whom I became acquainted in Nairobi. The words were obtained by asking my twenty informants to give me as many words as possible in the language they normally use amongst themselves. I offered them no assistance whatsoever, but waited for what was offered, unprompted, to me.

Out of this emerged a collection of words from which it is possible, to a certain extent, to construct a reasonable sketch of the kind of street life led by parking boys. I suggest also that it is possible to regard terms for which there are several words in Sheng, such as 'policeman', 'marihuana', 'prostitute', 'cigarettes' and others, as indicative of the things that have a prominent role in their lives.

I have roughly classified these Sheng words according to their meaning and possible origin, in terms of verbs, food and drink, and clothing.

Some of the most prominent features to note are the following: the way in which terms are coined from components of different languages; the fact that a number of terms are often English words pronounced with a heavy emphasis, frequently on the last syllable; onomatopœic words; the host of synonyms for certain things, and what these things are; the use of certain altered

Kikuyu elements which really have no meaning and have been attached to a noun to form a Sheng word; and finally, the way in which the creators of Sheng have condensed what are sometimes fairly complex meanings or phenomena into a single term.

Verbs include /ku:seti:/, 'to put', derived from the English 'to set' and the Swahili verb prefix *ku-*; and /ku:safair/, 'to live' or 'survive', derived from the English 'to survive' and the same Swahili prefix. Then there is the rather impolite term /njukwoti:na:/, 'to pester', derived from the Kikuyu *nyukwa* for 'mother', and *tina*, also Kikuyu, meaning 'backside'. /ɔku:ku:/ is Sheng for 'to beat' and is onomatopoeic. The verb 'to boast' is /ku:dzi:du:/, derived from the first part of Swahili *kujifanya*, 'to be vain' and the English word 'do', which is in fact a literal translation of *-fanya*. /kəuhəmi:fa:/ is Sheng for 'to steal' and is derived from the Swahili *kuhamisha*, 'to move'. /kɔma:rəu/ is 'to arrest', quite possibly derived from the Swahili verb *kamata*, with the same meaning.

There are also a number of examples associated with food and drink. For instance, there is /ju:gei/, obviously derived from 'sugar', but with emphasis on the final syllable. Sheng for 'chips' is /dzi:va:/, a word which may be derived from the name of the Jivanjee Gardens, close to which the first fish-and-chips shops in the city existed.<sup>3</sup> /ma:rɔti:/ means 'tea-leaves', the first two syllables being simply a Kikuyu intensifier. /tʃəm/ is Sheng for *chang'aa*, an illegal local brew and possibly also the root of the term. There are, and indeed have been, many names for this brew - for instance it used to be referred to as 'CX3, the petrol that takes you miles'; another term is *machosi ya simba* meaning, in Swahili, 'tears of the lion', which possibly identifies the strength of the lion with that of the brew, which is indeed very potent.

In the clothes category, /kəusi:/ is Sheng for 'shorts'. It is derived from the Swahili, *kikosi*, for 'a group of military', who, years ago in Kenya, wore shorts as part of their uniform. For 'long trousers', the boys would say /lɔŋgi:/, which has an obvious English derivation. However, one may also refer to trousers as /beri:/, originally from the 'bell' in 'bell-bottoms'. ('l' and 'r' are interchangeable in a number of Kenyan languages, including Kikuyu.)

As for synonyms, /si:nja:/, /mɛdanzɛi/ and /sɔŋji:/ are some of the Sheng words for 'policeman'. Of these words only the root of /si:nja:/, which clearly derives from the English term 'senior', is known to me. There are also many words in Sheng for 'marihuana' or *bhang*, as it is most commonly known; among them /i:təuni:/, /gu:f/, /kaija:/, /zaijɔn/ and /pi:wa:/. /zaijɔn/ may be derived from the song 'Zion Train', by the reggae singer Bob Marley. /kaija:/ is Jamaican slang for 'grass' or marihuana. Although the derivation of the term /pi:wa:/ is unknown to me, it actually means '*bhang* when you see treble'.<sup>4</sup> There are also various words

<sup>3</sup> Personal communication from Maina wa Mwangi.

<sup>4</sup> Personal communication from Maina wa Mwangi.

for 'cigarettes'. They are sometimes referred to as /fegi:/, from the English slang 'fag'; or, alternatively, they may be called /ori:dzi:nb rɔsta:/, from the name of one of the cheapest brands of local cigarettes, 'Original Rooster', very strong filterless cigarettes which are often smoked by the parking boys. /sponjei/ and /spɔ:ti:/ are both Sheng terms derived from the name of yet another brand, 'Sportsman'. 'Sweet Menthol' cigarettes are referred to as /esi:/. /ngpti:ra:/ means 'cigarette butt', and derives from the Kikuyu, *ngwatira*, which means 'hold this little thing for me'.

/mbɔki:jəu/ is Sheng for 'prostitute'. This is derived from Kikuyu *mwomboko*, and refers to a Kikuyu circumcision dance. In fact, *-mboko* refers to the action of 'grinding one's hips', and hence the Sheng term means 'the one who grinds her hips'.<sup>5</sup> /kæri:ɔtəu/ and /i:gənja:/ also mean 'prostitute', but their derivation is unknown to me.

Two words that are very much part of parking boy Sheng are /seidmi:ra:/ and /kɔtɔ/, which both mean 'side-mirror'. While the derivation of the former is obvious, /kɔtɔ/ is derived from the Kikuyu *gutū*, meaning 'ear'. Side-mirrors, along with hub-caps and headlights, are items that sometimes mysteriously disappear, and the culprits are often parking boys. These children are referred to as /tʃɔkɔ:ra:/ in Sheng, a term possibly derived from Kikuyu *mukora*, meaning 'thug', though the Sheng term is applied more specifically to parking boys, who are indeed regarded as little thugs or thieves by many members of the public. Alternatively, and most likely, it may derive from the Hindi term *chokkra*, which has a meaning ranging from 'boy' or 'little brat' to 'street urchin'.<sup>6</sup> It is likely that Indian traders have long employed street children as casual labour and have applied their own name to them.<sup>7</sup> These, then, are a few examples of the type of Sheng as spoken by parking boys in Nairobi. There is great scope for further investigation.

## V

At this juncture it is important to note some work carried out over a decade ago on 'language-switching' in Nairobi by David Parkin. In his paper (1974) Parkin discusses 'transactional conversations' in which 'bits' of different languages are transacted between the speakers in a 'language game'. This game is characterized by 'challenges, counter-challenges and concessions', usually made in jocular fashion. Hence, it is possible to an extent, argues Parkin, to resolve contradictions which may be inherent in the relationship between the speakers by virtue of their ethnic and/or status identity.

<sup>5</sup> Personal communication from Maina wa Mwangi.

<sup>6</sup> Personal communication from S. Raychaudhury and F. Taraporewala.

<sup>7</sup> I am grateful to Dr Wendy James for this suggestion.



The general context being referred to is one of ethnic and socio-economic diversity, and indeed, ethnic affiliation and personal socio-economic status are, says Parkin, the two basic principles of the language game. He argues that 'transactional conversations' have two possible effects: first, the various values associated with the languages employed are 'publicized'; and secondly, since such conversations require imagination and innovation, 'new contextual sets of "meaning"' are formed and are also 'publicized'.

Parkin's paper is undoubtedly relevant here. Bearing in mind that it was written over a decade ago, the following question suggests itself: might not the street language spoken in Nairobi today in fact comprise, at least in part, the so-called 'new contextual sets of "meaning"' which have developed over some years from these 'transactional conversations' as a result of the requisite inventiveness to which Parkin refers? If this is the case, it should follow that the kind of street language spoken amongst parking boys is more than just 'language-switching'. The latter involves the juxtaposition of whole words from different languages such that, depending on the linguistic ability and intentions of the speaker, a single sentence may, for example, contain a Kikuyu word or words, succeeded by a Luo word or words, which precede, perhaps, an English word, followed by a Swahili one. It may well be that 'language-switching' in this way is part of parking boy Sheng; however, to some extent, as we have seen the variety of forms they use is more sophisticated, involving, besides 'switching', the coining of new words and expressions out of 'bits' of words from different languages, the attribution of new meanings to old words, and more.

This paper has discussed, in broad terms, what is essentially a comparatively recent phenomenon in Nairobi. It has considered, on a superficial level, the emergence, development, uses, speakers and certain of the features of Sheng, as well as the various levels at which it may be studied. In addition, it has emphasised the importance of taking language into consideration when aiming at an ideal anthropological approach and has attempted to illustrate this, as well as the significance of linguistic data, through the example of the parking boys.

It is clear that many factors have contributed towards the development of Sheng. It has been born of a multilingual situation in the wider context of British colonialism, partly as a result of the need for a common language among linguistically diverse peoples, and partly because of a lack of clarity in language policy in Kenya. The outcome of this is an urban language which is a symbol for many Kenyans of their common identity as Nairobi city-dwellers. That Sheng is widespread in Nairobi but not in other major urban areas in Kenya may have to do with the fact that the ethnic diversity of the city is magnified by its much larger population, such that it is no longer under the linguistic dominance of the major ethnic group in the area. Sheng is a creative response, comprised of an *ad hoc* incorporation of elements from a large linguistic pool, to the ambiguities and innovative freedom

implicit in this particular multilingual situation.

MARY SPYROPOULOS

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## REVIEW ARTICLE

### STUDYING KINSHIP

ALAN BARNARD and ANTHONY GOOD, *Research Practices in the Study of Kinship*, London etc.: Academic Press 1984. xiv, 189pp., Indexes, Bibliography, Figures, Tables. £21.50/\$32.00.

Although a considerable amount of work on kinship is based on comparisons of already published ethnographic accounts, the raw material ultimately has to be collected through the usual fieldwork techniques of questioning and observation. The principal aim of this book is to introduce these techniques to new students in anthropology by presenting aims and approaches and outlining the chief practical problems that are likely to arise in the field. However, the authors are also keen to eschew 'mechanical procedures' and to show that such research cannot be carried out in ignorance of or isolation from broader theoretical questions. Hence we are offered neither a text-book nor a step-by-step 'instruction manual' but a comprehensive discussion of the problems of conducting fieldwork on the basis of theoretical questions relating to kinship - whether the latter are illuminating or, as is more usual, pose further questions of their own.

In fact, there is enough discussion of theoretical concerns for this book to provide the comprehensive, balanced and clearly written introduction to kinship that has been sorely needed and which might prevent a large proportion of anthropology students from regarding the topic as just a chore to be undertaken on their way to researching something they find more interesting. For the last twenty years or so this gap - at least in the English-speaking world - has been filled mainly by Robin Fox's *Kinship and Marriage* (1967), a useful and uncomplicated book, though one of use to a general rather than specialized readership. Indeed, its coverage was always limited, in addition it was flawed for many by the

early versions of ecological and biological determinism for which Fox has since become even more notorious, and it would anyway need updating to take account of more recent developments. The other 'authoritative' introduction mentioned by the authors is Dumont's highly acclaimed *Introduction à deux théories d'anthropologie sociale* (1971), though this was written specifically for a French readership and is unlikely to be translated in the near future. Other available introductions are either even more basic and limited than Fox, or else simply unreliable. Thus although the book demands some prior knowledge of its topic, for teaching purposes it is undoubtedly important, especially since its clarity and thoroughness surpass anything similar; yet it will also be invaluable as a guide to current theories and literature for established staff and researchers in the field.

While the book is reasonably well balanced in the attention it gives to the multitude of viewpoints present in kinship studies, it is certainly not neutral. *Contra* Leach and others, it takes an explicitly Popperian view of social anthropology as a science because of the testability of its hypotheses (p. x). The authors' view of the significance of kinship to anthropology resides in its importance in most of the societies anthropologists have traditionally studied; yet they also point out that it has a place even in those from which the latter most usually come. As a consequence, kinship 'lends itself to (and indeed *demande*) comparative study' (p. 2, original emphasis). Yet the importance they place on comparison does not lead them to expect universals - instead, 'in our view the more immediate concerns of anthropology lie with the *differences* between societies, not with...similarities between them' (*ibid.*, original emphasis).

Because of the complexities of comparison, Barnard and Good frequently invoke Needham's polythetic idea, and they apply throughout his distinction between the three levels of data - categories, rules and behaviour - first proposed in full in 1973. They also adopt, from this same article, Needham's revised statement as to the status of the vexed term 'prescription'. It would seem that Good has been the prime mover in introducing these ideas into the book, since he has used them far more in his own independent work than Barnard has in his. Be that as it may, this constitutes a degree of bias in the book and will strike many as making it more polemical than the authors claim. I will concentrate on these issues, taking each in turn.

Despite their evident interest in the polythetic idea, Barnard and Good make no attempt to construct such a model, except for their closing definition of kinship itself (pp. 187-8). In his own review of the book Scheffler (1985: 37-8) regards it as particularly strange that they should not do so for descent, especially since this was Needham's pioneering example of the approach. Although they do refer to it, the definition they adopt is that of Rivers (1924: 85-8), the essence of which is the separation of inheritance, succession, residence and authority from descent proper (with which these were and are often confused), which he defined

as membership of (or recruitment to - cf. Barnard and Good, p.71) groups only. There are some problems with this definition, chiefly, perhaps, the failure to distinguish mere *ad hoc* accretions of individuals from indigenously conceived units, and the explicit restriction of it to unilineal descent and descent groups. Nonetheless, he showed that with a little clarity of thought the concept of descent (unlike marriage, for example) could be given an adequate conventional classification without succumbing to what was Needham's basic complaint: the temptation to characterise and even compare whole societies according to one particular descent principle.<sup>1</sup>

In their discussion of Rivers' definition (pp. 68f.), Barnard and Good do not mention the exclusion of non-unilineal descent groups from it, and indeed they give less attention than they might have done to this principle of descent. This may again reflect the influence of Needham, who has suggested that 'cognatic societies constitute a negatively defined class' (1966: 29). Admittedly there was very little theory on such matters before the second half of the 1950s, and the boundaries of such units are apt to be indistinct and shifting, which means that they generally have a less concrete sense of identity than unilineal descent groups. But it would have been useful to have pointed out the often important distinction between ego-centred and ancestor-centred groups here, and the fact that whatever the practices of earlier generations, since Murdock (1949) and Freeman (1961) the term 'kindred' has progressively become restricted to the former.

Needham's distinction (1973) between the categorical, jural and behavioural levels of data and analysis, also adopted as a general principle throughout the book, was undoubtedly an advance on earlier, dichotomous distinctions, whether between terminology and social structure generally, or between ideology and behaviour. The further division of ideology into the categorical and jural is justifiable partly on empirical grounds and partly because the level of category is expressed less consciously than the other two (and is also the least labile): 'Whereas the individual terms which go to make up each system of classification are largely taken for granted and unexamined, the jural rules convey the explicitly recognized ideology of the people concerned' (Barnard and Good, p.13). Moreover, the people of any society are surely capable of realising that behaviour often deviates from the rules that supposedly govern it, and that both rules and behaviour may differ even more widely from one society to another. However, categories and systems of classification, usually closely bound up with a linguistic form of expression, define rather than enjoin or describe, and they are thus more rigid and less evadable than either rules or behaviour.

In the past, Good seems to have regarded this separation of levels as virtually absolute (e.g. 1981: 127), but there has apparently been some retreat from this position, and here it is accepted

<sup>1</sup> Scheffler regards Needham's definition as no more polythetic than Rivers', though this neglects the Penan example that follows it.

that 'they are not *wholly* independent of one another' (p.13, original emphasis). Indeed, 'we have distinguished them in terms of their inter-relationships as a structured set, rather than according to their content...' (p.14), this being just one instance of the book's 'concern with relationships rather than essences, and with structures rather than contents' (ibid.).

Connected with this question is the third major respect in which Barnard and Good follow Needham, namely in adopting his final definition of 'prescription' (1973) which, especially in its verbal form, was used unproblematically for decades by anthropologists of many different schools, until the controversies that erupted over its use in the 1960s, with Needham and also Lévi-Strauss very much at centre stage. This led eventually to Needham's attempt to resolve the confusion by suggesting that henceforward it should be restricted to the level of category (terminology, social classification) only and abandoned in respect of both rules and behaviour (similar arguments had already been offered in brief by Leach 1945: 59-60 and Löffler 1964: 225-6). Thus prescription was a matter of definition, not regulation, and at the opposite pole from a prescriptive system was not a 'preferential' one, but a 'non-prescriptive' one (though this did not negate the fact that 'any prescription is liable to preferential qualification', 1973: 175). Needham seems to have located prescription at the level of terminology because this best conveyed the sense of inevitability and definition characteristic of this level: prescriptive systems were, in his phrase, 'examples of absolutism' (p.179). However, as he himself realised, this choice could only be made at the cost of distorting the usual and accepted meaning of the term, which 'explicitly invokes rules rather than categories' (Barnard and Good, p.103). This discrepancy is especially apparent when prescription comes to be defined as being 'constituted by the regularity of a constant relation that articulates lines and categories' (Needham 1971: 32), i.e. not as an injunction but as a formal property of the terminology.

One can argue that these attempts to give prescription a more formal and rigorous meaning have led to a greater circumspection in its use generally - so much so that it seems to have undergone something of a decline in recent years, as with (by contamination, as it were) the simple verb 'prescribe'. For some, this may simply reflect acceptance of Needham's advice, but others may have been put on their guard by all the controversy the use of the term has created. For 'prescription' now implies acceptance of a particular theoretical approach, a sort of association that would have been unthinkable in the earlier decades of this century.<sup>2</sup> Certainly,

<sup>2</sup> In English-speaking anthropological circles this tends to mean those who have come under Needham's influence to some extent. In France, it means the influence of Lévi-Strauss for the most part, whose use of the term is still more problematic. One recent French ethnography (Bouez 1985) completely fails to understand Needham's position on this issue and makes no reference to the latter's 1973 article in discussing the difference between preference and prescription.

one can remove one potential source of criticism and misunderstanding today by simply avoiding it altogether.

It is therefore interesting to see Barnard and Good seeking to re-launch the term by accepting Needham's suggestions so wholeheartedly, and even expanding them, in the one section of the book (pp.95-103) where they openly admit to being 'both tendentious and polemical'. Like Needham, they define prescription as a purely terminological device for distinguishing marriageable from non-marriageable kin types, stressing that at the jural level this definition would inevitably appear tautological - and thus making something of a virtue out of one of Schneider's key criticisms (1965) of Needham's pre-1973 approach. They also emphasise the inevitable quality of prescription, in the sense that it 'structures rather than reflects' the more tangible aspects of the kinship system. This is especially true of its redefinition of the categories involved in 'wrong' marriages, which makes it '*not* a marriage rule, but a self-fulfilling prophecy' (p.102, original emphasis) - one which 'applies whatever happens', unlike rules,<sup>3</sup> which 'are *by definition* breakable' (p.166, original emphasis). Finally, Barnard and Good propose to discard the phrase 'prescriptive alliance' altogether, because 'the epithet "alliance" is best reserved for jural relationships', while the epithet 'prescriptive', following Needham, is, of course, ruled out also. It is clear, however, that Needham himself has certainly not abandoned the phrase but has continued to use it in his subsequent work. Because of the possibility of confusion, therefore, it needs stressing that his usage of 'prescriptive alliance' and 'prescriptive marriage' is mainly applied by him to terminology nowadays, despite the literal sense of the term.<sup>4</sup>

The authors are themselves not entirely free from inconsistency in this respect, since marriage is said to be 'prescribed' at certain points, and the phrase 'prescriptive marriage' also appears on one occasion, in saying that the Tamil terminology implies the

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<sup>3</sup> This is one respect in which it can be argued that rules and terminology come together, though in any conflict between them it is the latter, not the former, which imposes its interpretation on events. What is more, it conveys this interpretation to posterity, since such categorical redefinitions can amount to a realignment of alliance relationships for the future. For an alternative explanation of the connection between the two, see Allen 1986: 100.

<sup>4</sup> One of the clearer examples of this usage can be found in a very recent article, where Needham is referring to Leach's data on the Kachin: 'The relationship terminology, the structure of which is that of prescriptive matrilineal cross-cousin marriage, is constituted by five lines' (1986: 175). Needham admittedly identified 'prescriptive alliance' with terminology in his earlier article ('Prescriptive alliance systems...are indeed elementary structures - not of kinship, but of classification...', 1973:179), but this is still a point apt to be missed with those less familiar with his work.

existence of this purely jural phenomenon (p.55 - clearly Good here). Indeed, they can be accused of compounding the confusion further by describing both differential status at marriage (p.107) and 'a particular ideological view of descent' (p.77) as prescriptive. Such applications of the term outside the realm of affinal alliance, in which its use has already caused so much controversy, will surely increase rather than diminish confusion, especially in the minds of new students, though it is admittedly not unprecedented: Leach has described descent as more truly prescriptive than any rule of alliance, while Southwold has exploited the distinction between preference and prescription in relation to succession to office (1966); and Fortes sometimes (e.g. 1969) used the phrase 'the rule of prescriptive altruism' to refer to his earlier and better known 'axiom of amity'.

A final point is that any discussion of this controversy should mention the 'lineal' equations and distinctions that Needham sees as at least a precondition, if not a defining feature, of all prescriptive terminologies, as is evident from any of his analyses of them. This seems to derive from the use of 'line' and the confusing use of 'descent line' by Fortune, Radcliffe-Brown, Leach, etc. in discussing what are essentially terminological structures, *not* jural institutions. Barnard and Good barely allude to this point and do not adequately stress the distinction between the formal pattern of what Needham regards as a system of classification and descent groups existing as aggregates of individuals (which is also a distinction between the ego-centred and the ancestor-centred). It is also regrettable, in an introductory book that makes considerable use of Needham's ideas, that they neglect to warn readers that his employment of the term 'lineal' for equations which link parallel kin types with lineal ones and in opposition to cross kin (e.g. the  $\pm 1$  pattern of  $P=PssG(E) \neq PosG(E)$ ) conflicts with Lowie's earlier and better established use of it. This also occurs in respect of kinship terminology, but in a completely different, indeed quite opposite sense - i.e. for the 'English', non-prescriptive pattern represented by  $P \neq PG(E)$ . Needham's 'lineal' equations are, of course, Lowie's 'bifurcate merging' ones, i.e. those rather more generally known as classificatory. With Needham, 'lineal' refers to a particular type of equation rather than the pattern of a whole genealogical level or terminology, as befits his concern with principles of classification rather than typologies.

In view of the book's probable influence on new students, it will be interesting to see how far this advocacy of Needham's ideas eventually succeeds in spreading them more widely. But I do not wish to convey the impression that they dominate the whole book - they help form its overall framework and set its tone, but take up comparatively little of its content. Indeed, virtually no other approach or attitude that has commanded or might command general attention is overlooked. Apart from the introduction, there are



chapters on collecting genealogies and conducting censuses; descent; marriage and alliance; the economic, political and religious aspects of kinship; culturally specific ideas (including Western ones) about kinship; and two chapters on 'relationship terminologies'. Great attention is paid to stressing that kinship is a social, not a biological conception, and in pointing out the potential pitfalls of genealogies and genealogical ways of thinking generally in analysing certain aspects of kinship. The warnings are commendable ones, especially in an introductory book, even though one detects something of the fanaticism of the convert as regards the second point.<sup>5</sup> The problem has involved, though, not merely ethnocentrism or naivety but also the seductiveness of a definite expository convenience in choosing genealogical minima to represent a whole category. Even Dumont, whose approach is as remote from Scheffler-Lounsbury reductionism as it is possible to imagine, is prepared to take advantage of this.<sup>6</sup>

Inevitably there are some omissions from the very wide corpus of work that has been carried out on all aspects of kinship. Joanna Overing, in her own review of the book (*Man* XXI, p. 356), has already remarked on its limitations for South Americanists, and the coverage of the literature is oddly selective on occasion: for instance, only Lucy Mair is cited as having tried to distinguish bridewealth from brideprice, though others, above all Evans-Pritchard (e.g. 1931), deserve mention just as much. However, no book of this sort can be expected to cover everything or please everybody in every respect, and each commentator will respond differently. There is no doubt that the book can be read profitably by any anthropologist at whatever career stage - and whether already working on kinship or simply bewildered by it.

ROBERT PARKIN

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<sup>5</sup> 'One of us, at least, has been so recently emancipated from this particular relic of a natural science background, that the conceptual struggle involved is still vividly remembered' (p.8; possibly Good here, originally a student of chemistry).

<sup>6</sup> '...I speak of F and MB to introduce the real native major (or "most inclusive") categories which are more exactly rendered as "male consanguine of parents' generation" and "male affine of parent's generation"' (1983: 33); 'We suppose that the categories are well-enough known, in general, for each to be identified by our simply indicating a close relative who falls into it' (ibid.: 177).

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## COMMENTARY

### ASPECTS OF A YEAR IN JAPAN: AN ANTHROPOLOGICAL APPROACH

'Cherries, cuckoo,  
Moon, snow - soon  
The year vanishes.'

Sugiyama Sampū\*

#### *I. Preliminaries*

I should not normally consider writing such a piece as the present essay.<sup>1</sup> I was invited to do so, though, by one of the editors of *JASO*, and it would have been churlish to refuse. Furthermore, I

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\* Sugiyama (1647-1738) was born and lived in Edo, later renamed Tokyo, where he managed the family fish business which was patronised by the shogunal household. In the present essay, the Japanese practice of putting the family name first is followed. Japanese authors listed in the References, however, are given a comma after the family name, following Western practice. On the Japanese appreciation of the transient as noteworthy, beautiful, and also as a cause for sorrow, see, e.g., Valentine (1986: 118-19).

<sup>1</sup> I owe much to Ms Ursula Lytton (Rheinisch-Westfälisch-Technische Hochschule, Aachen, FRG, and a Visiting Scholar at Keio University), who has discussed the matters alluded to below with me at length. I also wish to acknowledge the instruction I have had, especially methodically, from *Exemplars* (Needham 1985), even though it is not

have now been living and working in Japan for a little more than a year,<sup>2</sup> and it is a pleasure to be able to acknowledge in print my gratitude and my debt to the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science (JSPS) for its beneficence in establishing the research fellowship to which it elected me for two years; to the British Academy for recommending me to the Society for appointment; to my referees in England for supporting my application for election to the post; and to Keio University and my co-host scientists there [Professors (Sensei) Minobe and Yamamoto] for providing me with, among much else, such congenial working conditions.

It was a relief, early in 1985, to be given the prospect and, later that year, the opportunity of getting out of the enervating political and intellectual climate of Mrs Thatcher's second administration; I owe this opportunity almost wholly to the people and the bodies I have mentioned, and I should not want it thought by them, nor by others, that any of what follows indicates anything other than a grateful recognition of that debt. In any case, to save possible embarrassment, names have generally been omitted; where they are used, except, of course, in references and in note 1, they are fictitious.

It could be argued that this past year constitutes a period of field research. The data which a social anthropologist (or comparativist [Needham 1981: 94]) collects during such a period he or she expects, and is generally expected, to publish. I should like the present essay, the second which I have written about Japan, to be considered such a report.<sup>3</sup>

Smith writes (1983: 48; cf. Bachnik 1986: 53 & n.2, 71) that 'most scholars who deal with Japanese society place at the center of their scheme of Japanese values something usually called a sense of hierarchy. Less thoroughly analysed is this sense of hierarchy in action.' The present essay does not get bogged down in the disputable concept 'hierarchy' (but see sect. VI, below); but it considers the ways in which a number of themes which appear to be characteristic of the Japanese form of life, though not exclusively so, are evinced in experiences I have had over the past year. These themes are of two kinds: conceptual and formal. Sections II to VIII consider the former; sections IX to XI address

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cited in the present study. This study was read in draft by Frank Hoff (Associate Professor of Asian Studies, University of Toronto) and by Joy Hendry (Lecturer in Anthropology and Contemporary Japanese Society, Oxford Polytechnic, and a Visiting Lecturer at Keio), to whom I am gratefully obliged for their comments and advice. Any errors remain my responsibility.

<sup>2</sup> I arrived in Japan at the end of August 1985; the present essay was written at the beginning of October 1986.

<sup>3</sup> The first (Duff-Cooper forthcoming, a) is a comparative study of the Balinese and the Japanese forms of life.

the latter; and section XII concludes the piece.<sup>4</sup>

The consideration of such themes is the normal task of the social anthropologist and as such requires no justification. The reader may care to bear in mind, though, that the situations in which these themes are discernible arose in spite of my deciding, from the start, to follow Confucius who, according to Tzu-Kung, when he was in a fresh country was 'cordial, frank, courteous, deferential' (cf. *Analects*, I.10) in his dealings with people there. I should have known that English, or Balinese, patterns of behaviour would not generally be appropriate in Japan;<sup>5</sup> but, after all, we advance our understanding of a form of life, when we are in the field, as much by the mistakes we make as in other ways, so that perhaps my failure to keep always in mind an elementary lesson of comparativism - that forms of life are relative - was not all to the bad.

## II. *Gaikokujin*

This word, colloquially *gaijin*, means literally 'foreign (*gai*) country (*okoku*) person (*jin*)', hence 'foreigner'. Miller writes (1982: 159) that 'the word *gaijin*...is never a compliment, but for that matter, it is not actually a put-down either; it is just the way you say foreigner in Japanese.' Contrasted with insiders (*nakama*), a foreigner is an outsider (*yosomono*). By Richie's account (1983: 104), *yosomono* implies 'distance, coolness, and a degree of scorn'; and while a Japanese person may have many co-insiders, so to say - the other members of his or her family, school, university, factory, office, city, county, prefecture, and ultimately all other Japanese people (see sect. X, below) - 'there is only one kind of *yosomono* and...he [or she] has only one quality: he is unwelcome.' On this account, and by association, in Japanese ideology foreigners are, at least, distant, scorned, and unwelcome.

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<sup>4</sup> The literature about these concepts and about the Japanese form of life generally is, of course, very large. So as not to clutter the text distractingly, references have been kept to the minimum. Smith's 'Bibliography' (1983: 153-68) is a most useful introduction to the literature about Japan in English.

<sup>5</sup> I carried out field research for about twenty-one months between 1979 and 1981 with Balinese people on Lombok, NTB, Indonesia. This work was funded by awards from the Emslie Horniman Anthropological Scholarship Fund of the RAI and by the Social Science Research Council of Great Britain, to which bodies I am most grateful for their support. On the Balinese of Lombok, see Duff-Cooper 1983 and the studies listed in the 'References' to Duff-Cooper 1986a. For the important role of the SSRC in furthering research on Southeast Asia in the 1960s and 1970s, see Carey 1986: 7.

A question which arises is, distant in what sense? It has been argued (Duff-Cooper forthcoming, a) that, rather as in the ideology of the Balinese on Lombok (Duff-Cooper 1986b, 1986c), 'distant' means distant ideologically and generally physically from a centre of reference, relative to some other class. Thus of two entities *a* and *b*, say, the entity which is located closer to the centre of reference is in that context pre-eminent. The greater the disparity in the standing of *a* and *b* relative to the centre, the greater the asymmetry of the relations that obtain between *a* and *b* (cf., e.g., Duff-Cooper 1985). The form that a centre of reference takes depends upon the context in question (see also sect. VI, below).

In Japan, one such centre is, of course, Tokyo; and another is probably constituted by the ultimate exercisers of the mystical and jural powers to which the Japanese are subject (at least in theory), viz. by the Emperor (Tennō) in his palace at the heart of Tokyo and the government, concentrated in the Diet.

It would require a long argument to make the point, but perhaps we can turn to an analogous line of thought: the leading Japanese political scientist and theorist, Maruyama Masao, suggests (1969: 12), most plausibly, that in the 'common-place' ill-treatment of their prisoners and others by the Japanese during the Pacific War, 'the problem of relative position was always involved: in fine, the perpetrator [of the ill-treatment] was conscious of the comparative proximity of himself and his victim to the ultimate value, that is, to the Emperor'; and in present-day Japan, the notion of closeness to or distance from a centre has a similar heuristic value. A foreigner, that is, to bring the argument up to date, can never overcome, except temporarily and sporadically, the distance which separates him or her from the centres which in various forms constitute the ideals of Japanese social life.<sup>6</sup> As Miller expresses it (1982: 215), the foreigner cannot, 'by definition as well as by universal social agreement, be an active participating member of any recognized shop-talk sector of society', i.e. can never become an insider.

*Yasamono* is cognate with *kemono* 'animal', but literally a thing (*mono*) covered with hair. An association is made by many Japanese of *kemono* with Caucasians: the image of a Caucasian with 'a tall, stout, hairy body and large hands and feet seems to evoke ...an association with... "strong sexuality" or "animality"...' (Wagatsuma 1967: 422; cf. p. 426).<sup>7</sup>

<sup>6</sup> A foreigner may be invited to take the place of the most important person present, i.e. in front of the central post (*daikokubashira*) of the *tokonoma* (cf., e.g., Moeran 1986: 235, Fig.1), at dinner, but the honour is, of course, only temporary and depends for its impact upon the fact that he or she should not be so seated. Generally, this position is occupied by the head of the household (*ie*), or by the oldest such head present at the gathering.

<sup>7</sup> 'Mono even when used in reference to other humans retains its original meaning of "thing"' (Richie 1983: 104).

Not only may such foreigners have beastly associations: 'Japanese ambivalence toward a large body and large limbs is reflected in some proverbs: "Wisdom cannot fill up too large a body" (Big body, little wit); "A fool has big feet" or "Seeds of prickly ash are tiny but peppery" (A small man is shrewd and wise)' (ibid.: 442 n.50; cf. sect. X, below).

As well as having associations with animality and with little wit, the Caucasian may also be held to have a skin which is "'ugly" in texture and quality, thus maintaining a Japanese skin supremacy...' (ibid.: 434). Furthermore, of course, many foreigners cannot speak Japanese and hence cannot communicate with the many Japanese people who, for one reason or another, find themselves unable to speak a foreign language; but then foreigners are not supposed to be able to speak Japanese: Miller indeed, goes so far as to suggest that 'a foreigner speaking Japanese amounts to the public performance of an unnatural act.... And such flaunting of the natural order can only result in natural retribution. Hence any sensible person shuns direct identification with such episodes, not to mention the foreigners who carry on in this outrageous fashion' (1982: 159). Generally, further, foreigners do not know the ways in which it is proper to behave in the complex world of Japanese social intercourse. In all these regards, and in others too, foreigners are 'not like others [sc. the Japanese]' (*jūminami*), but are peculiar and odd (*okashi*). Few Japanese want to be - or to be associated with what is considered - peculiar and odd, any more than they want to be outsiders: for outsiders are 'nothing at all' (Hendry 1984a: 117; cf. Nakane 1974: 128).<sup>8</sup>

None of this means that the Japanese are xenophobes, though, according to Suzuki Takao (1986); rather, they suffer from 'xenophygia' and wish only to flee from foreigners, or conversely to keep foreigners at a distance. Thus, at Keio, there are two blocks of rooms, somewhat isolated from the rooms of regular Keio academics, which are assigned to foreigners; foreigners are generally not allowed to teach, except under the supervision of a Japanese academic, unless they are teaching their native language, perhaps because it is feared that they will pollute the system, rather as Goodman's forthcoming work shows that returnee children are thought to do (cf. Wargo 1986);<sup>9</sup> and only very rarely are foreigners apprised of events and invited to functions which take place periodically, which Japanese academics are apprised of and

<sup>8</sup> At the place cited, Nakane writes: 'According to the Japanese sociological conception, ego and his family are situated at the center which is surrounded by the first category: people who meet each other every day. And then there is the second category: ['those whose background is fairly well-known' (ibid.: 124)]. One's sociological world terminates with this category. The rest [of the Japanese] don't matter. They may be for us an American or an Englishman.'

<sup>9</sup> Alluded to in Hendry (forthcoming). Roger Goodman is a Junior Research Fellow at the Nissan Institute of Japanese Studies, University of Oxford.

to which they are invited as a matter of course. But then, they are insiders, with whom other insiders cooperate and have fun, because they belong; foreigners, who are on the outside, are left out and in certain circumstances ostracised (cf. Hendry 1984a: 116).

But it is not always like this. My Japanese friend introduced me to his parents and other close relatives with whom we stayed over a period of nearly a month; he has taken pains to include me in his social life; while his friends go out of their way (as it seems to me) to impress upon me that they are my friends too. Some of my Japanese colleagues at Keio have invited me to teach (under their watchful eye), have read and commented upon my work, have encouraged me to take up the study of Japanese and of other aspects of Japanese life, have suggested that I try to stay on after my fellowship ends in August 1987, and in all manner of other ways have given the lie to the picture sketched above.

Yet this ambivalence is also consonant with the ambivalence of strangers and visitors in Japanese 'folk religion': 'While people belonging to the inside are classified into various categories, outsiders and strangers are undifferentiated. Therefore when they enter uchi (inside) space they are considered potentially dangerous, both in a physical and a mystical sense.... Nevertheless, strangers, visitors, and drift materials coming from far away or from the other world can bring good luck to people' (Yoshida 1981: 95). Whether strangers and visitors are associated with fear and danger (cf. Hendry 1984a: 116) or whether they bring good luck depends, like so much else in Japan, upon the context.<sup>10</sup>

### III. On

The original newspaper advertisement for the fellowship to which I was subsequently elected stipulated that applicants should have close relations with a Japanese academic and, in the nature of the case, that academic should preferably be a senior one. This stipulation is a reference to the *oyabun/kobun* relation, the kind of relation which should obtain between a teacher and his pupil, a master and his apprentice, a criminal and his accomplice, a section chief in an office or factory and his subordinates, and a landlord and a tenant.

Now, Yoshida reports (1981: 88) that 'in many northeastern [Japanese] villages strangers and outsiders are not permitted to settle without establishing fictive kinship relations with one of

<sup>10</sup> Yoshida also suggests, clearly rightly in this case, that 'strangers, visitors, and flotsam...are also the marginal, "liminal" figures or things which mediate between the world of uchi (inside) and the world of yoso (outside),...or between "this world" and the "other world".' However, 'the ambiguity of the Japanese attitude towards foreigners stems from a very basic set of cultural concepts similar in its essential structure to notions of "stranger" found in other cultures' (1981: 96, 97, *post*).



the prominent families of the village. The newcomers' status is then defined in terms of the pre-existing village social structure.' This is what Hendry calls (1984b: 132) "the fix", 'the way in which people and groups are fixed into various positions in [Japanese] society by means of language and ritual ... using ritual in the widest sense of the word'.

In Japan, the visiting card (*meishi*) gives, in the order in which it is read, the name of one's organisation, one's position in it, one's name and degree, and the address of the organisation, as well as (in many cases) one's office and home telephone numbers. Part of the ritual of meeting people is an exchange of cards, and such cards are an essential aspect of any business or professional person's position in Japanese life. One of the first things my host scientist, Yamamoto Sensei, took me to do was to order a box of *meishi*; another thing we did, consonant with my position in Japanese life, to which the cards attested, was to open a bank account with a smartish bank.

The *oyabun/kobun* relationship, which appears to have developed in the late feudal period (*circa* 1700), is an analogue of, among others, the emperor/subject and the parent/child, especially father/child, relationships.<sup>11</sup> An essential element of these relationships is *on*, what Doi calls (1974: 151) 'one's spiritual debt to an emperor and one's parents...'; more generally, '*on*' refers at once to 'a favor granted by A to B and to a resultant debt B owes to A' (Lebra 1974: 194).

I found myself involved in a number of these relationships: with the JSPS, as my employer; with my co-host scientists, especially Yamamoto Sensei, who is a social anthropologist; and with my landlord.

The JSPS, first, had done me the great favour of appointing me to a research fellowship - which at the initiative of my co-host scientists, especially Yamamoto Sensei and the then Dean of the Faculty of Letters, was advanced to a Visiting Lectureship at Keio - and were paying me; offered to pay a substantial sum for me to learn Japanese at a good language school; and had found me a delightful, large, furnished house to live in, for which the Society pays seven-eighths of the rent.

Naturally, I was most grateful for these gifts, and thought that by working hard at what I had proposed to work at when I applied for the post, I should in some measure be able to pay my debt. Things were not to be so simple, however.

It was agreed, within my first ten days in Japan, that I should take the next beginners' language course at the International Center of Keio University. Registration for this course had already closed. However, Yamamoto Sensei spoke to the Dean of the Faculty of Letters on my behalf, who wrote a personal letter to the Director of the International Center, asking that I be ad-

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<sup>11</sup> The suggestion that these relationships follow the 'model' of the family cannot be sustained if it implies that they were extended from the family to other social situations: 'ritual or fictitious kinship customs are known to have been practised since the beginning of Japan's history...' (Ishino 1953: 698).

mitted to the course. The Director agreed, the JSPS paid for registration and for the course - half the normal fee, as I was attached to Keio - and I was enrolled.

A week before the course began, the students were assembled, allotted their classes, and given the course books. The teacher presiding over our class (most of the members of which were not beginners, but had studied Japanese before) gave us our books, and said that as the course did not begin for another week, we could have a holiday until then. I used this period to complete an essay (Duff-Cooper 1986d) that I was writing on the Balinese. When the course began, though, it transpired that the teacher had been having a small joke at the students' expense - foreigners are, of course, notorious for taking holidays (cf. sect. X, below). What we really should have been doing during that week was learning one of the Japanese syllabaries and preparing the first lesson, as became clear when we were given dictation after some two hours studying Japanese (in my case). Language classes are cumulative; clearly I could not catch up, and in any case the amount of work which, it became clear, was required for the course meant that I should not be able to continue working on the Balinese form of life.<sup>12</sup> Add to that the fact that to get to class on time it was necessary to travel during the morning rush hour, it may be appreciated why I resolved at lunchtime on the first day to abandon the classes.

I wrote to the JSPS, with copies to the International Center and to Yamamoto Sensei, apologizing for leaving the course, but mentioning the matter of the teacher's joke (which I still consider highly irresponsible), and suggesting that perhaps the Center could refund the money which it had been paid by the JSPS (I would pay for the books).

In doing so, and at a stroke, I caused the JSPS, the Dean and Yamamoto Sensei to lose their faces (*menboku o ushinau*) and be ashamed (*menboku ai*) in the eyes of the International Center; and to make the Center and its teacher similarly without face (*menboku ga nai*) and embarrassed as regards the Society, the Dean and Yamamoto Sensei. That money was involved exacerbated all this. To put it mildly, no one was pleased. But there was a way out: I could apologize to all concerned and take the next course, and face would be restored all round. I was not, though, prepared to give up so much time to studying Japanese when I was not supposed (as I thought, but see below) to be working on Japan. I apologized to the JSPS and the others, but, having discussed the matter with Yamamoto Sensei, refused to take the course in as polite a

<sup>12</sup> It should be mentioned that one of the conditions of this Fellowship is that the holder should not concern himself with Japan; also that the *Handbook for Foreign Scholars 1986/7*, published by the Keio University International Center, now reads (p.25) that 'being intensive courses intended mainly for those students who wish to enter the graduate schools of our [*sic*] university, these [Japanese language courses provided by the Center] may not be suitable for scholars'.

way as I could. The Center agreed to refund some money to the JSPS, and I thought the matter was closed.

Some months later, I decided to move from the house which the Society had found me (which according to Yamamoto Sensai was 'incredible')<sup>13</sup> to a smaller, warmer flat closer to Keio. The reaction of my contact at the JSPS (let us call this person Ishikawa San) to the news and to the subsequent 'legal' arrangements was one which I understood as just bureaucratic pettiness, an aspect of the 'irrational or malicious conduct' which, Nakane suggests (1984: 128), 'is used [by some Japanese people] to spite others', i.e. one's 'enemies', people with whom one is involved in 'negative' interpersonal relationships. I had been told by Yamamoto Sensei that the Society was very bureaucratic, and I became more and more irritated by Ishikawa San's series of (what I took to be) pointless demands, designed to make life difficult; finally, I am afraid that I shouted at Ishikawa San down the phone. Now, as Ryan says (forthcoming), no matter where one does fieldwork, one can afford to stage an all-stops-out temper tantrum when one has carefully gauged its potential effects, but one never loses one's temper. How right he is. Within about a week of this outburst I had been summoned to the offices of the JSPS by a letter from Ishikawa San's section chief, which was at once reprimanding and threatening, to discuss my research and to make sure that my time in Japan proved beneficial for me and my future.

This hinged upon my relations with the Society, which Ishikawa San clearly thought needed rectifying, and with Yamamoto Sensei, whom I had known in England. I then considered, as I still do, both him and his wife and son friends of mine (but see sect. VI, below), and I like his work a lot. He had suggested that it might be a good idea if I tried to do some fieldwork in Japan, and he had obtained the informal agreement of Ishikawa San to it (see note 12). I was aware that it was thought by many senior anthropologists in Britain and elsewhere that doing fieldwork with at least two different peoples was good for an anthropologists' development, and I readily agreed; but I saw it as very much secondary to my work on the Balinese, about whom I had by then begun a monograph.

In Japan, university professors are of very high occupational status, ranking third after medical doctors and prefectural governors, who rank first and second respectively (Tsuji-mura 1972: 211, 213). In the traditional Japanese family, moreover, what a father suggested a child do, the latter generally did. So, when Yamamoto Sensei suggested I do fieldwork in Japan, this was more in the nature of a directive than a suggestion. Suzuki Takao writes (1976: 266) that 'We [Japanese], used to assimilation and dependency [*amae* (sect. XII, below)], expect to project ourselves onto the other, and expect him to empathise with us. We have great difficulty with the idea that so long as our addressee is not Japanese we can't expect to have our position understood without

<sup>13</sup> It is true that in terms of what most Japanese have in the way of accommodation in Tokyo and in other urban centres in Japan, I am very fortunate indeed.

strong self-assertion'. The converse is also true: I did not understand the intent of what Yamamoto Sensei was saying.

In both these areas, therefore, I thought that I was being loyal in return for the benevolence which the JSPS and Yamamoto Sensei had shown to me. But not only had I made them lose their faces, look small and demeaned; I had also, it turned out, not shown myself grateful for their favours, by choosing to leave the house (which subsequently I did not) and by not preparing myself for, and then doing, fieldwork in Japan.

This last has now been remedied by my enrolling for a course in Japanese, and by an all-too-brief visit to Tokunoshima, in the Amami Islands of the Japanese southwestern archipelago (Nansei Shotō). But just to show how difficult these matters are, even the enrolment for the language course was not altogether unproblematical. From my point of view it was convenient, and its being free meant that the JSPS could be saved further expenditure after I had (as Ishikawa San pointed out in a very curt letter) wasted a fairly large sum by dropping out of the Keio course. From the point of view of the JSPS, however, it seems that I had chosen to enrol with a rival organisation and had turned down the Society's gift of money for a course. In Britain, refusing a gift is generally not on; in Japan it is very impolite (*shitsurei na*) indeed. As Lebra points out, 'an on must be accepted with gratitude since it is an evidence of a giver's benevolence or generosity...'; to have one's offer of a favour refused means loss of face (1974: 194, 199).

In the circumstances, though, I think that it is not entirely out of place to note here that 'an important aspect of this type of duty [*giri* (see sect. V, below) with which *on* is closely bound up]...is that the person to whom it is owed has no right to demand that it be fulfilled. A failure to fulfill such a duty would incur great loss of face ... but it would involve equal loss of face were the expected recipient to point this [failure] out' (Hendry, forthcoming).

That one has a debt to a landlord for letting one somewhere to live is not an idea with which I am in sympathy, especially when it suggests, as in Japan, that it constitutes a debt which cannot be repayed by paying the rent and looking after the property in a normal way. However, my landlord here did not ask me for the usual deposit, partly non-returnable and equivalent to about three months rent, when I signed the contract with him. In my case, this would have amounted to about a thousand pounds sterling, and not to have to pay it (which I could not have done anyway) was a considerable gift.

My landlord and his wife also used to ask me to dine often at their house with friends of theirs, asked me out to concerts and the theatre, and at Christmas (the landlord's wife and children are Catholics) sent me a box of expensive presents. But I began to find these attentions onerous, because, of course, I became deeper and deeper in their debt in spite of my efforts to repay what I was given. Kindness was being forced on me (*shinset-su no oshiuri*), but this time the slight irritation caused by these unwelcome kindnesses (*arigata-meiwaku*) was a legitimate

reaction in Japan (cf. Suzuki, T. 1984: 168). Moreover, while my landlord's wife made what I took to be slightly pejorative remarks about me wanting to be independent, the Japanese equate 'the gained on to sold freedom', and take 'pride in being unbound by any on' (Lebra 1974: 197). While relations with Ishikawa San and the JSPS, therefore, deteriorated to the point where I dealt with another employee there for many months, and while I was treated in a way which appears to be a form of ostracism (*mura hachibu*)<sup>14</sup> by Yamamoto Sensei with whom, until very recently, I had had only very infrequent contact by letter for some months, especially following the episode alluded to in sect.V (below), relations with my landlord and his wife, who count me, as they have told me, as a friend of theirs, are now less stifling, but they have never reached the nadirs which relations with the JSPS and with Yamamoto Sensei reached.

It is noteworthy, to conclude this section, that in this latter connection outsiders are associated with, among other things, quarrels (*kenka*), and that the opposite of cooperation is ostracism (Hendry 1984a: 116).

#### IV. *Tatemae* and *Honne*

These words apply respectively to what might be said to be surface phenomena and to what lies beneath, to 'surface reality' and 'inner feelings', to 'ideal' and 'actual' (cf. Koschmann 1974: 99). It should be noted, though, that 'honne (as inner reality) is no more "real" than *tatemae* (as surface or appearance) for the Japanese. Both *tatemae* and *honne* are considered equally "real", as are all expressions of *omote* [form, formality, difference from everydayness] and *ura* [content, informality, everydayness]' (Bachnik 1986: 67).

It has already been said that one of the conditions of the post which I hold is that the work should have nothing to do with the systematic study of Japan. Informally, however, not only was I wanted to study Japan, but I was reprimanded by the JSPS for not doing what, apparently, I was not supposed to do; and Yamamoto Sensei was 'dissatisfied' with me in spite of me working at what I had proposed to work at.

Anyone who considers working in Japan or with Japanese people should be aware of this distinction between *tatemae* and *honne*: it appears to pervade Japanese life. The legal system, for instance, appears in practice to diverge in many regards from what formally one would expect to be the case (cf. e.g., Hendry forthcoming, Ch. 12); and in spite of Japan appearing to be a democracy, one influential commentator writes, not altogether without reason to be sure, that

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<sup>14</sup> Relations are reduced to the barest minimum (*hachibu*, i.e. one eighth) of those that normally obtain.

we mistake the open, democratic forms of government and politics in Japan for the substance of Japanese life and culture, both of which continue to impress me as being ultimately and eminently totalitarian to their core.... Perhaps the paradox of a compelling mythical fixation [of the uniqueness of the Japanese and their form of life] managing to flourish in the midst of an ostensibly democratic society is, after all, only apparent, not real, because the society is actually not essentially democratic (Miller 1982: xi).

That is, political and other kinds of power are often exercised more by unelected bureaucrats than by ministers and other elected politicians or other kinds of professional - an example, of course, of the *tatemae/honne* distinction.

Behaviour which is *tatemae* (including what one says and how one says it) is, of course, dependent upon the context in which one is involved; and a sign of social maturity in Japan is one's ability to behave in the ways demanded of one by convention in the various contexts in which one is implicated. That is, one should be able to adopt various masks (cf., e.g., Kumon 1982: 23), and it is one of these which one loses when one loses face.

What is *honne* is generally kept under wraps. However, on the various occasions when one is socialising with one's closest associates - one's fellow students, club members, colleagues, etc. - one's *honne* thoughts may be revealed. Anything said and done while one is drunk is supposed to be forgiven, but it is not necessarily forgotten (cf. Moeran 1986: 240-1).

In my case, when talking about our respective first periods of fieldwork with a young Japanese social anthropologist, who had taken his doctorate under a leading British social anthropologist at one of Britain's most prestigious universities, I remarked that one of the best ways of finding out about a form of life was to have a close relationship with a native of the society. I said (of course) that the feasibility of doing so depended, like almost everything else to do with field research, upon the society in question, and upon its collective representations; but that I had been fortunate to find such a relationship on Lombok (it had, indeed, been encouraged by various otherwise uninterested people where I lived), and that I was looking forward to doing so in Japan.

The reaction of my interlocutor made it plain that I should not be saying such things to him. They were, as it now seems to me, part of those actual as opposed to ideal aspects of our work which are not to be discussed publicly with a near-stranger. However, when I also said that not only did I not like singing in public in *karaoke* bars but also that, unlike many Japanese, I was not generally prepared to do so, even at the risk of being thought strange and peculiar (*hen na*), as against those who were having fun and contributing to the fun of others, he said that he also felt and behaved in the same ways. Yet, on another occasion, when I was with him and some of his colleagues, my reply to a question on this topic from one of the latter along those lines was not well received. I was, I think, allowing what should have been

*tatemae* to be overly tinged with *honne*, and was, of course, again branding myself as unlike others. It is a question, though, how far one should go in following the injunction that, as Aquinas put it, 'He who associates with others should in general conform to their way of living'. Like much else, it seems, each case must be decided as it comes. In this case, I did not much want to be a quasi-insider; had I, it would have been necessary to sing.

#### V. *Giri* and *Ninjo*

Yamamoto Sensei and his more advanced students were going to carry out field research in a somewhat isolated rural community for about a week, and I was asked to go along. I was sceptical, to be frank, about the value of such an outing, but it was an opportunity to get closer to the students, to see how a Japanese anthropologist conducted fieldwork, and to see another part of the country; an interpreter had been arranged to accompany me; and anyway, I could not refuse - indeed, I was looking forward to going. A couple of days after we would have got back to Tokyo, a friend of mine would arrive to stay for a week, *en route* from Australia to China. Then the dates of the trip were changed, and clashed with those of my friend's visit. He was coming to see me, he could not change his itinerary, and I could not leave Tokyo a day after he arrived. Clearly I could not make the trip. I told Yamamoto Sensei so. A few weeks before we should have gone, one of the students told me [and Ms Lytton (see n.1), who was also to go] that there were not enough hotel rooms where we were going, so that we could not go. I rang the interpreter to tell her. I then received a sharp phone call from Yamamoto Sensei, whom the interpreter had contacted, saying that he had been 'embarrassed' by my not going. I told him that apparently there were not enough hotel rooms, which appeared to pacify him.

Here, *giri* (one's duty) is pitted against *ninjo* (one's private predispositions). The former should take precedence over the latter, and, indeed, in the episode just recorded Yamamoto Sensei clearly assumed that in spite of what I had said I would not allow the visit of a friend to interfere with my 'duty' to go along with him and his students.

Japanese tend to do so: on three occasions, friends whom we had invited for dinner at our house have telephoned, often as little as half-an-hour before they were due to arrive, to say that they had to go on working and could not therefore come; and once, as I was leaving to go to dinner at a friend's place, he called me to say he had to work and that therefore he was postponing the meeting.

This prevalence of *giri* has parallels with attitudes prevalent in Japan before the War: an excerpt from the *Shimin no Michi* [*The Way of the Subject*], compiled and distributed by the Ministry of Education in 1941, for instance, has it that

it is unforgiveable to consider private life as the realm of individual freedom where we can do as we like, outside the purview of the state. A meal at the table or a suit of clothes, none is ours alone, nor are we purely in a personal capacity when at play or asleep. All is related to the concerns of the state. Even in our private lives we should be devoted to the emperor [who manifested a perfect identity between self and nation] and never lose our attitude of service to him (cf. Matsumoto 1978: 48).

One should, that is, sacrifice the self in service to the public (*messhi hōkō*); and my not putting my duty before my private interests (*jinzoku no shi*) was analogous to not fulfilling the dictates of *chū* (loyalty to the emperor) and of *kō* (filial piety). By not going on the trip I was, of course, like an employee refusing to work late because he had a (private) dinner engagement, defending the value of my personal rights and interests.

This pitting of the value of the private sphere against commitment to public value is an aspect of 'my-homism', which is 'a symbol of one way to protect their [young Japanese people's] individuality and personal integrity' (Tada 1978: 211). But such concepts, especially that of the individual as an independent entity equal to other individuals, run counter to 'traditional' Japanese values (Kawashima 1967: 274). Not only that, they run counter to the corporate interest 'to raise productivity by means of a hardworking labor force committed to larger profits for the company' (Tada 1978: 211). No wonder, then, that 'around 1963 or 1964 a fierce campaign was launched to brand my-homism a disgrace. The issue was discussed at a cabinet meeting, at which certain ministers [of the same party as that of the present administration] indignantly asserted that my-homism is harmful to the development of concern for public good and public interest, national defense, and love of country' (ibid.).

Similarly, in a 'traditional' Japanese family (*ie*) the main concern was to ensure the continuation and the prosperity of the *ie*. This meant, essentially, that there be an inheritor, which was contingent on marriage and a child or on adoption. One's personal feelings had to be subordinated to this end, and marriages (or adoptions) contracted for the good of the *ie*. A modern equivalent of this attitude is the view that a private relationship is only worth entering and sustaining if it enhances one's career (as I was advised by a very senior Professor at Keio when once I sought his advice); and the view that foreigners who live with a Japanese person - especially Caucasians who study Japan - do so because it enhances their *work*. Of course, it may do so, but it is to impute to foreigners what appear to be the instrumental rather than the expressive motives of most Japanese marriages to suggest that this is *the* reason for such relationships. The fact, further, that 'if anyone appears to act out of self-interest, rather than with human feeling [*ninjo*, affection] they would be subject to informal sanctions of disapproval' (Hendry, forthcoming) appears to be just another way of saying that duty should be pre-eminent. Suzuki Takao remarks (1984: 168) that 'the Japanese



themselves call their culture...*omoiyari no bunka*, lit., "consideration". This consideration appears to mean that one should put one's duty before one's private interests, that one should, therefore, fall in with what one's superiors require of one. For clearly, in the episodes recorded, the interests of those superiors' inferiors are not taken into consideration. To the contrary, they are ignored.<sup>15</sup> Further, given that the Japanese also call theirs a 'guessing culture' (*sasshi no bunka*) (ibid.) - i.e. one should anticipate the needs and feelings of others, and especially of one's superiors on the above account - it is no surprise that foreigners, at the beginning of their close contact with Japanese people, fail adequately to anticipate (guess) and to take into account those interests, and thus find themselves in more or less serious conflict with those people.

To conclude this section, Koschmann suggests (1974: 103) that 'in modern [Japanese] society...*giri/ninjo* thinking is considered anachronistic', i.e. to smack of pre-War feudalism. I suggest, on the basis of my experience, that this is another example of the *tatemae/honne* distinction addressed above (sect. IV): publicly, 'duty' is dismissed as old fashioned; privately, the pre-eminence of 'duty' over everything else is still accorded its traditional place in Japanese ideology.

## VI. *Kankei, Tsukiai*

Irokawa has it (1978: 250) that 'to persist in the fatalistic notion that Japan is a country of vertical relationships is to admit blindness'. Yet Yamamoto Sensei told me without qualification that Japan is a hierarchical society while Hendry (forthcoming, Conclusion) suggests that both 'hierarchy' and 'equality' [what Irokawa clearly thinks is the opposite of 'vertical' (cf. 1978: 255)] are among the principles which order Japanese society.

These apparently conflicting statements do not appear to mean much more than that any Japanese person is implicated in relationships (*kankei* or *tsukiai*) in which he or she is, to use the cant terms, superior to some people, equal to others, and inferior to yet others.

This social fact is hardly startling though it makes the point that Japanese society, like the Balinese form of life (e.g. Duff-Cooper 1985, 1986e) or Manggarai society (e.g. Needham 1980a, especially pp. 75-8), for instance, reveals different aspects depending upon the point of view adopted. Yet the words 'superior', 'equal' and 'inferior' are hardly informative, and as in other cases where these terms are employed, they require 'filling-in' by

<sup>15</sup> It should not be overlooked that the inferior here implicated is an outsider. The question of whose interests are to be taken into account is different, i.e. more reciprocal, when the inferior(s) is (are) aspects of the same insider group as the superior(s) in question.

the very social facts which they are supposed to explicate before they acquire significant meaning; and when they are filled in, so to say, they probably become redundant. Not only that: such a return to social facts, although in consonance with the Japanese emphasis upon 'doing' and 'practice' in their relationships (Bachnik 1986: 50, 51), is precisely what analysis attempts to escape, so that comparison with other forms of life becomes more feasible.

The notion of a 'centre of reference' avoids these difficulties - as an artificial monothetically defined class it permits cross-cultural comparison - yet 'centres' are extensively polythetic and as such are amenable to the kind of analysis to which 'myth' and 'witchcraft' have been put, i.e. in terms of constituent elements and the patterns into which, kaleidoscope-like, they fall.

In the case of the Japanese form of social life, the centre appears to be an appropriate heuristic - and ideological and physical - distance from or closeness to a centre, relative to other entities, a way of creating more order among the multifarious social facts which constitute Japanese life.

Closeness to a centre is generally concomitant, in Japan, with relative age and with sex. Of two males or two females, *a* and *b*, of whom *a* is the older, *a* is closer ideologically and physically to the centre in question. Of two people, one male (*a*) who is younger than a female (*b*), *a* may be closer to the centre than *b*, but generally not vice versa. Where *b* is older than *a*, then *b* is likely to be closer to the centre.

These relations may be described in terms of degrees of asymmetry (see sect. XII, below), though the details have yet to be worked out. In my case, however, it may explain why my answer to the question of a student - 'Have you any friends in Japan?' 'Yes, Yamamoto Sensei is a friend of mine' - was met with disbelief: our standing relative to one another was so asymmetrical that it could not be. After all, the student was an insider and hence closer to the centre (in this case, Yamamoto Sensei himself) of the group, and not a friend of his, so how could an outsider be?

It might also explain why sometimes students displayed a forwardness and what might be, rather pompously, I know, called impertinence in their relations with me, while also attending my lectures and appearing to be interested in and instructed by them: my standing relative to Yamamoto Sensei was far closer than theirs by the criterion of academic qualifications and position; yet I had only just arrived and was meant to stay only two years. Permanency, i.e. gradually approximating the centre, is an aspect of relationships such as the teacher/pupil relation. Without that permanency, standing is a sham. A person whose standing is such can expect the treatment just alluded to, not the respectful attention, albeit laced with the fun appropriate to a group of insiders, which is given to someone who can reasonably expect to constitute a centre himself one day.

VII. *Omote* and *Ura*

More than once, Yamamoto Sensei made the point that I had entered Japan by way of its backside (*ura*), so to say, while a very senior British social anthropologist who had visited Japan earlier that year had entered it at the front (*omote*). This was a reference to him being expensively lodged and entertained, to him visiting Kyoto and the shrine at Ise - like the *kamidana* given over to Amerterasu, the Sun Goddess, and . . . ancestor of the Emperor - lecturing, and spending his one free day at the National Museum in Ueno (Tokyo). For my part, although I spent nearly every day working at Keio, I found my relaxation, and then only from time to time, in bars in Shinjuku's *sakariba* district, where one finds 'akachōchin (red lantern pubs), cabarets, bars, discos, no pantsu kissa (literally, "no-pants [on the waitresses] coffee-shops"), pachinko parlours, cinemas, strip shows, and many other kinds of places' (Linhart 1986: 198).

Yamamoto Sensei, who said that he felt responsible for my welfare in Japan, advised me to stay away from these places, though they are not dangerous so long as one does not behave foolishly. These facts are in consonance with front being to back as the formal is to the informal, as the sacred (*hare*) is to the profane (*ke*), and as the public (*oyake-goto*) is to the private (*watakushi-goto*). However, they do not appear to be consonant with 'outside' being associated with danger (*abunai*), the inside, with security (*anshin*). Yet such oppositions are, of course, context-dependent, and it is likely that, in this case, the formality of the British professor's visit to Japan is more plausibly associated with security, especially as he was generally accompanied, as I understand, by a group of Japanese professors who for the occasion of his visit constituted a group of insiders, and my visits to Shinjuku *ni-chamē* with danger, especially as I generally went unaccompanied.

My real mistake, here, was to make public what I should have kept to myself: Yamamoto Sensei later warned me that to keep something secret, one should confide in nobody. For a group of insiders, that is, there is no such thing as speaking in confidence with just one or two.

VIII. *Uchi* and *Soto*

We have come across the inside (*uchi*)/outside (*soto*) dyad frequently, so that little need be said about it here. One aspect of the distinction is that one should not, in Japan, bring disputes which properly belong inside to public (outside) notice (cf., e.g., Kawashima 1963: 45). People who do so are likely to be cast as outsiders themselves, and to be subjected to ostracism by their co-insiders. It is therefore very much to be hoped that, by writing this piece, I am not committing one more blunder in relations with Yamamoto Sensei, the JSPS, and others to whom I am indebted in Japan and elsewhere.

If I am, though, doubtless a mediator will come to the rescue, as in the past a very senior professor at Keio has mediated between Yamamoto Sensei and me; and as Yamamoto Sensei has mediated between the JSPS and Ishikawa San and me.

In the former case, the mediator first listened to my version of the problem, as I had approached him to act as a go-between; he explained this to Yamamoto Sensei, who then put his own views of the matter, which our mediator then put to me. He then made sure that Yamamoto Sensei and I were invited to a Keio end-of-year party, held in an old part of the University used only for ceremonial occasions, where we could re-establish cordial relations. This place might be thought an example of *en*, where intermediation and transition in general take place. It is fitting too that our mediator should have been senior even to Yamamoto Sensei (at Keio, at least) (and Yamamoto Sensei to Ishikawa San and me): 'just as mediation is valued, so are the mediators - persons, things or places - which embody the liminality: they relate to a level which is felt [by the Japanese] to be superior to the level of the particular terms which are connected through them' (Berque 1986: 106).

### IX. *Opposition*

This relation within dyads - the constituent terms of which may of course be composed of either a single entity or of several entities, or of one of each kind - may be rendered in Japanese by *hanko*. The constituent terms may be called *hantai*, opposites. Kumon suggests (1982: 9) that 'Japanese tend to see these dualistic components of the world [such as good and bad, form and content, whole and parts, and so on] as being complementary, not conflicting'.

The relation of opposition, however, obtaining within a dyad does not entail that the two constituent terms of the dyad conflict with one another. The four Balinese estates (*varna*), for instance, are variously related one to another dyadically (e.g. Duff-Cooper 1984), and they may be said to be opposed one to another in various contexts. But they do not conflict: to the contrary, although members of the different estates naturally come into conflict from time to time. Kumon, that is, confuses the formal relation 'opposition' and the more substantive, sociological notion 'conflict'.<sup>16</sup> In Japan, until the end of the Pacific War in 1945, at least, the Emperor and his subjects were opposed. This does not mean that they were in conflict, although there was, of course, conflict between individuals and groups of individuals and the state. It means, rather, that the Emperor and his subjects constituted a dichotomous unity, Japan. Under one aspect, as subjects of the Emperor, all the Japanese were 'equal' (cf., e.g., Kuno 1978: 63).

These days, other criteria render all Japanese people 'equal', that is to say, opposed (as a class) to all other peoples: they

<sup>16</sup> Kumon is in good company when he confuses the substantive and the formal: Louis Dumont does so (Needham 1986: 166-8), and so does R.H. Barnes (Duff-Cooper 1986a: 221-2, n.20).

speak the same language (especially), are diligent and perseverant (as opposed to foreigners, who are idolent and give up easily), are concerned with detail (as opposed to foreigners, whose work, in this regard at least, is shoddy); and the unique homogeneity which is claimed for Japanese society (*tan-itsu minzoku*) renders the Japanese as a people unique (and, according to Mr Nakasone, the Prime Minister, more intelligent than more heterogeneous societies such as the United States - e.g. Wargo 1986; cf. sect. II, above). In these and many other ways, 'We Japanese' (as the phrase usually goes in English) are not only different from but superior to all other peoples. Of course, this self-asserted superiority is not new: Kitabake Chikafusa (1293-1354), a Shintoist, wrote long ago that 'Our Great Nippon is a Divine Nation. Our Divine Ancestors founded it; the Sun Goddess [Amerterasu, still honoured at Ise and in the *kamidana* (altar) to which many households give a prime place in the 'first' room of the house] let her descendants rule over it for a long time. This is unique to Our Nation; no other nation has the like of it. This is the reason why Our Nation is called "Divine Nation!"' (1925: 585); and the Japanese ultranationalism of the 1930s and 1940s was based on such a view.

In my case, this opposition of an entity against all others, and the attributed pre-eminence of the one over the many, has been evinced in three main ways. First, only graduates of Keio University may become tenured teachers there. All others must be Visiting. Every effort is made, that is, not to disturb the cultural homogeneity which is taken by members of Keio, especially those who teach there, to be better in every regard than that of other institutions, even the most distinguished. Of course, there is internal debate at Keio about the University and its future, but that debate is premised on the pre-eminence of Keio.

The second way in which this opposition has been evinced is in Yamamoto Sensei's derogation of the work of any social anthropologist or sociologist who does not belong to the group of anthropologists, consisting of his past and present students, of which he is the centre. Of course, there are a few prominent scholars in Britain, France, The Netherlands and the United States with whom Yamamoto Sensei is allied. But their very exclusivity makes the point clearer. Only 'we', of whom I am under this aspect a grateful honorary member, are doing work which is up to date, scholarly and imaginative, and which advances the subject. I draw no conclusions about the merits of this position, but simply point it out.

The third way is the distinction between males and females. Hendry alludes (1981: 21) to the 'basic inferiority' of women in Japan, and Yamamoto Sensei concurs with this view. In Honshū, at least, this inferiority is in accord with women's impurity relative to men.

Yet, there is expectably a problem here with 'inferiority' for example, at a party which Yamamoto Sensei's students and colleagues had at my house in December last year, the women mostly arrived first, with food and flowers, to arrange the tables and so on. The men arrived later with gifts of alcohol and other things

such as a calligraphic scroll and a small wooden chest of drawers. The men were seated at the top of the room, closest to the *daiko-kubashira* (above), the women at the lower end of the room, near the doors. As the party drew to a close, the women left first, in groups, while the men stayed on, leaving later or staying overnight.

Again, I was told that teaching women made one effete, but teaching men, strong-minded - a view which accords with Nakasone's publicly expressed opinion that Japanese women do not listen to his speeches when they are aired on television, but only pay attention to the colour of his tie (Suzuki, K. 1986); and, of course, with the general association of masculinity with what is hard and femininity with what is soft, among other things (e.g. Needham 1980b: 89-91).

A similar attitude is evinced by Japanese (male) academics' attitudes to Ms Lytton (see n.1). They find her pleasing company, but as she says with evident reason, they do not address to her the kinds of questions about her work which they address to me, nor in general do conversations with her have the same tone as they do with me.

There is clearly a distinction made between men and women in Japan, who are opposed as classes one to another. Women are generally inferior to men by virtue of the pre-eminence of the various aspects of Japanese life with which men are associated, i.e. residually. In any case, in the important areas of child-rearing and house-keeping, women are pre-eminent (Hendry 1986).

#### X. *Reversal*

This operation may be called *modoki* in Japanese, and it is evinced in various aspects of Japanese life (e.g. Yoshida 1986; Matsunaga 1986). In my case, when I was arranging to move to the new apartment alluded to above (sect. II), I had to get various documents from the owner of the apartment, so that the JSPS could pay the rent. I was asked, finally, to get evidence that the rent being asked for the apartment was 'fair', i.e. comparable with rents being asked for similar apartments in similar areas of Tokyo. When I protested that such evidence could not be got, on the ground that generally apartments in Japan are let unfurnished whereas mine was to be furnished, Ishikawa San at the JSPS was intransigent. I remonstrated that getting such evidence would be time-wasting, and that as I knew that the apartment was cheap after only a few months in Tokyo and as Yamamoto Sensei also thought so, Ishikawa San, a native of Tokyo, must also do so - all to no avail. When I mentioned all this to the (Japanese) owner of the flat, she offered to telephone the JSPS; her words, to the same effect as mine, were immediately accepted by Ishikawa San, even though she and the owner of the flat had had no contact prior to this telephone conversation, on the ground that I had misunderstood what Ishikawa San was asking for - only expectably, it might be thought, as a foreigner of little wit (I had not, in fact, misunderstood at all). I take

this to be a reversal, and one which is symbolic of many of the matters alluded to above.

Another form of reversal is that evinced by the behaviour of my friend whenever we go out: inside the house, he is bright, talkative, and attentive (one might say affectionate) generally. When we leave the house, he becomes comparatively sullen, quiet and distant; and in other ways his behaviour outside appears to be the reverse of his behaviour inside.

This reversal, which at first I found hard to understand and a little distressing, is, though, entirely in accord with the distinctions inside/outside and *tatema/honne* which have been adverted to. It is also in consonance with what Hendry calls 'the ritual associated with stepping across the threshold of the house', and with the 'behaviour change' of a mother which indicates to a child when a member of the outside world has 'provoked a public face inside the house...' (1984a: 109). These two reversals may be assimilable to Needham's fifth type of reversal (1983: 116).

#### XI. *Analogy and Homology*

Neither of these modes of relation can be experienced in the ways in which the concepts addressed in sections II-VIII can be experienced. These concepts are dyadic, and the constituent terms of the dyads are opposed. Although this characterisation of the relation that obtains between the constituent terms of each dyad is hardly precise enough, at this degree of precision, three things are apparent: first, that the dyads are analogues of other dyads which have not been discussed in the present essay, but which are evinced in aspects of Japanese life, such as right and left and east and west (cf. Duff-Cooper forthcoming, a); secondly, that formally speaking, therefore, the relation of analogy makes these dyads unitary; and thirdly, that the terms on each 'side' of each dyad - i.e. the pre-eminent terms and the other terms - are therefore homologues. These sets of homologues *may* be related one to another by sporadic resemblance, that is, polythetically.

#### XII. *Concluding Remarks*

The present essay has not considered a number of matters to which it could have been directed. These omissions do not result solely from limitations of space: *amae*, dependence (e.g. Doi 1974), for instance, is a notion which is important in the analysis of Japanese thought and behaviour, but to have written about in relation to the life of my friend and I would have meant discussing matters which are too private to be given a public airing.

Exchanges, also, have not been considered. This topic, as concerns Japan, has been alluded to elsewhere (Duff-Cooper, op. cit.) and requires a study of its own.

Again, alternation and other modes of periodicity are not ad-

dressed: they do not appear to have been evinced so far in my experience of Japan, although alternation, at least, is discernible, for example, in aspects of archery (*kyudō*).

More elaborate modes of partition than dichotomy are also ignored; the comments made about alternation and other periodic modes, however, go *mutatis mutandis* for these modes too.

Symmetry and degrees of asymmetry, although indispensable analytically to the social anthropologist, have not generally been drawn upon either. There is no doubt that, as was only expectable, these modes of relation are evinced by aspects of Japanese life (cf., e.g., Valentine 1986: *passim*), but it would be to blunt the analytical precision of these notions to invoke them simply to describe, for instance, such relationships as father/son, teacher/pupil and emperor/subject.

Relative ideological distance from a centre can be gauged more precisely than what 'symmetrical' or 'asymmetrical' convey (e.g. Duff-Cooper 1985). In Japan, it may be that exchanges made on marriage are the key to establishing a basis for this operation. That such exchanges may play this role is not because alliance by intermarriage is the paradigm of the exchange system, as in systems of prescriptive alliance under one aspect at least (e.g. Needham 1986: 168), but because 'the degree of closeness of each household in the village [in Kyushu where Hendry worked] is... illustrated by the amount of money given in gifts at such a time [as marriage], and by who receives what gifts in return' (Hendry 1981: 187-8), and because 'marriage...plays a structural role in this society which [we] shall, for want of a better word, call pivotal' (*ibid.*: 229).

'Pivotal' is perhaps a little too mechanical for use in sociological analysis, but it appears to mean 'of central importance to the working of the society' or something along these lines. Given that this is so, then the close study of the exchanges which occur at such times as marriage and death are likely to be valuable in the analysis of other aspects of Japanese society.

As for matters which have been addressed, the themes elicited fall into two kinds - conceptual and formal. The former are particular to the form of Japanese social life when the full range of their meanings is taken into account. But, even so, many of the dyads evinced - outside/inside, front/back, male/female, them/us - are familiar. The latter, too, are evinced by forms of life which are distributed globally. On both these counts, therefore, and under these aspects, it is clear that the Japanese form of life is not (expectably enough) unique.

It is perhaps clear, though, especially from what has been said earlier in the present section, that in my view much remains to be done in the analysis of Japanese social life. To say as much is not to disparage what has been achieved; to the contrary, what remains to be done could not have been located without that earlier work. I look forward to working on these matters with the criticisms and advice of Yamamoto Sensei and others, who are not only members of Japanese society but are also very distinguished students of it. I have profited greatly from my association with them this past year and will doubtless do so over this coming year.



I have also, for the past year, been handsomely paid to continue working at anthropology, have had work (1986c, 1986e; 1986f; forthcoming, a) accepted for publication in Japanese journals, and have been led by various people to feel that, after all, I am not quite the pariah that I had come to think. If it is true that this relationship with Japan has not, like those of nearly all other foreigners with whom I have discussed the matter, always been entirely happy, it is also the case that no relationship anywhere is likely to be entirely so. Far, far better that than to have had no relationship at all.

## ANDREW DUFF-COOPER

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# OXFORD RESEARCH IN SOCIAL ANTHROPOLOGY

ABSTRACTS OF THESES IN SOCIAL ANTHROPOLOGY  
FOR WHICH HIGHER DEGREES WERE AWARDED  
BY THE UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD IN 1986

Compiled by Helen Lambert

## 1. William KAVANAGH

La Nava de San Miguel: A Social Anthropological Study of a Spanish Mountain Village. D.Phil. (D69164/86)

This thesis, based on extensive fieldwork (from 1978 to 1985) at La Nava de San Miguel, a village in the province of Avila in central Spain, attempts to demonstrate six main points:

1. That the continued vitality of the village as a community is based on the economic factors of possession of large summer and autumn pastures near the village, transhumance to winter pastures

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*Editors' Note:* The research theses in social anthropology listed here are all those for which higher degrees were awarded by the University of Oxford during the calendar year 1986. The text of the abstract is as supplied by the author in the copy of the thesis held in the University's Bodleian Library. Those wishing to consult a particular thesis should apply to the Bodleian or to the British Library Lending Division (BLLD), which should be able to supply microfilm copies or reprints on request (the BLLD reference number of each thesis has been given here after the title).

JASO hopes to publish each year, in the Trinity Term issue, a set of abstracts for Oxford theses that were accepted during the previous calendar year. Readers interested in an earlier period may wish to consult Jonathan Webber, *Register of Theses in Social Anthropology Accepted for Higher Degrees at British Universities*, published in London by the RAI in 1983; it covers the years 1975-1980 and contains abstracts of 103 Oxford theses accepted during these six years.

We should like to thank Mrs S. Surman of the Bodleian Library for her help.

over the mountains in Extremadura, the cattle market at nearby El Barco de Avila, and virtual self-subsistence, all of which enable the villagers to maintain themselves as cattle raisers; and to the strength of: a) the village ideal of co-operation embodied in the use of the common known as the 'Sierra de Socios', the transhumant groups and the systems organized by the 'torno'; and b) the village ideal of mutual assistance shown at hay-making, pig-killing, and other aspects of daily life in the village.

2. That all co-operative institutions *inside* the village are organized by the principle of the 'torno', by which rights and obligations to these co-operative institutions rotate cyclically ('like a wheel which turns endlessly') and the village itself is conceived of by its inhabitants as essentially having no beginning and no end.

3. That the co-operative institution *outside* the village (the transhumant group which goes to the winter pastures in Extremadura) is not organized by the 'torno', since the villagers are members of the transhumant groups as individuals, free to change from one group to another, and decisions made by these groups are not controlled by the village as a community.

4. That the villagers conceptually divide the village and the surrounding territory into the 'realm of the men' (apart from the bar, *outside* the village) and the 'realm of the women' (*inside* the village).

5. That the people of La Nava conceptualize the world as consisting essentially of two parts: the complementary halves of themselves (their village and their region) and the land across the mountains to the south of them, Extremadura. The villagers radically contrast their village - regarded as cold, dark, and lacking in fertility - with the warmth, sun, and fertility of Extremadura.

6. That unlike affairs in the village organized to ensure continuity and equity by the principle of the 'torno' and following a movement of rotation, all relations with Extremadura are considered to move up and down in a lineal direction to ensure fertility and life when these are lacking in the village.

The thesis consists of four chapters: Chapter I looks at the physical situation, climatic conditions, historical background, and other introductory information; Chapter II examines the socio-economic institutions of the village - the 'Sierra de Socios', the systems of 'tornos' for herding the goats, irrigating the fields, etc.; Chapter III deals with the annual cycle of transhumance to and from Extremadura; and Chapter IV examines the 'world-view' of the villagers of La Nava - especially the symbolic aspects of this - and, in particular, the perception they have of their own identity in relation to Extremadura.

2. Joachim J.M. KNUF

Amulets as Tokens of Communication: A Comparative Analysis.

D.Phil. (D/69171/86)

Whereas in the past discussions of amulets have emphasized their 'magic' character, the present thesis explores the employment of amuletic tokens as tangible means in a special form of ritualized communication: it relates them to verbal and nonverbal forms of communication and explores the paradigmatic relationships obtaining between these modes from the point of view of pragmatics.

Chapter 1 lays out the etymological background of the study, traces some of the cogent arguments advanced in the anthropology of religion, and proceeds to accommodate the employment of amulets in a general theory of communication.

Chapter 2 studies the various semiogenetic processes by which material objects are transformed into significant tokens for communicative interaction: objects chosen for amulets are usually intrinsically or relationally salient in respect of time, place, and events. As they are material symbols, signification is also a production process, and hence its various stages and the principal modes of employment are discussed.

Chapter 3 supplies the necessary situational concretization of communicative behaviour employing amulets, discussing external determinants such as time, place, and the social categories of interactors involved; both chapters arrange the ethnographic evidence not by historical or typological, i.e. semantic standards but in an original, pragmatic fashion thus allowing an intercultural comparison of tokens based on an analysis of problem-solving behaviour.

Chapter 4 looks at the use of amulets from a proxemic point of view, compares it to other behavioural options in this field and develops from this basis the mechanical requirements to which amulets essentially answer; this chapter also addresses the paradigmatic nature of amulets and some marginal forms of communication.

Chapter 5 finally studies the paradigmatic nature of forms of nonverbal communication, gestures, of verbal communication, and of the use of amuletic tokens in detail. The various semiotic and behavioural options pursued in the use of amulets as tokens for communication are then in conclusion related to questions of communicative and cognitive style.

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## 3. C.D.F. MOSSE

Caste, Christianity and Hinduism: A Study of Social Organisation and Religion in Rural Ramnad. D.Phil. (D/74218/87)

Fieldwork in a mixed Hindu-Catholic village in Ramanathapuram (Ramnad) District of Tamil Nadu, south India, together with archival research, has involved investigation into three closely inter-related subjects: firstly, the nature of the regional social and religious institutions of Ramnad, and in particular the relation between caste and religion in the context of religious pluralism; secondly, the structure of a religiously plural multi-caste untouchable community, the changing position of the different untouchable castes within the village caste hierarchy, and their strategies for status striving - including the significance of alternative religious identities to this; thirdly, the manner in which Christianity, especially Roman Catholicism introduced into the area by Jesuit missionaries in the 17th and 18th centuries, has become embedded in the indigenous social and religious order of the region.

The regional model of caste identified, is one in which notions of service, rights and caste honour, rather than ritual purity and impurity, have a central place. Religious institutions, especially the annual festivals of Hindu deities and Catholic saints, have an important place in the articulation of this model of caste. In this connection the history of caste conflict at one Catholic shrine from the 1850s to the 1980s is examined in detail. The significance of this ritual context for the status striving of one untouchable caste in the village is analysed.

Although the conceptual model of caste is more Hocartian than Dumontian, complementarities such as the opposition of purity and impurity nonetheless provide the basic structure of the social order and the formal structure of life-crisis rituals. The organisation of the Hindu village pantheon and the Catholic cult of saints is also informed by a set of complementary relations between superior and inferior aspects of divinity.

The ethnographic material thus raises two overlapping issues. Firstly, what is the relationship between the structural form of society and the conceptual model interpreting local social relations for the actors themselves? What, also, is the relation between pan-Indian social categories, on the one hand, and regional and historically specific caste hierarchies, on the other? The second issue concerns the existence of structural continuities in the ordering of the social and religious world of Hindus and Christians in the village, and considers the relationship between the universal ideas and values of Christianity as a world religion, and the Indian social and cultural matrix in which it is rooted. A model which draws on the indigenous spatial categories of the 'village' and the 'forest' is proposed to account for both continuity and discontinuity in the relation of Christianity to Hindu society in Ramnad, and some fundamental changes in this relationship are observed.



4. H.M. RADLEY

Economic Marginalization and the Ethnic Consciousness of the Green Mong (Moob Ntsuab) of Northwestern Thailand. D.Phil. (D/74226/87)

In this thesis I describe the apparently incompatible changes between the ideologies of egalitarianism and hierarchy which characterizes Mong thought and action. The so-called oscillation between autocratic and democratic social philosophies has been widely observed among the hill peoples of Southeast Asia. I do not believe that it is possible to understand these social formations by constructing a-priori structural models. Most hill peoples are highly marginalized and their consciousness reflects this. It is to the history of Mong's social relations that we must look to gain an understanding of their ideology.

The thesis is divided into two sections, The World of Light and The World of Darkness. The division follows the Mong distinction between the material world of human beings and the metaphysical spirit world. In the first section I give a comprehensive account of Mong history and a description of the economies of three villages in Thailand. By examining the long history of contact with the Chinese state and the changing economic relations with the lowland world, I hope to establish the framework for the Mong's world vision. In the second section of the thesis I describe the Mong spirit world through ancestor ceremonies, the funeral epic, myths, and the rituals of shamanism. I suggest that the distinction between the communalism of the extended family, with its associated lineage ceremonies, and the individualism of the shaman, with his sorties into the hierarchical spirit world, provides the categories for the shifts between the desire for the egalitarianism of the lineage, and the desire for the hierarchy of kingship.

The two worlds of the Mong are complementary and, I will argue that at times of crisis, the concept of the spirit world is transformed from that of a metaphysical world into an extension of the lowland world and state. Messianic uprisings proclaiming a Mong kingdom should not be viewed as the aberrations of primitive peoples, but as the awakening of their understanding of exploitation based on ethnic and linguistic divisions, and a historical lack of territory. The shift from a retreat into the subsistence ethic of the lineage and extended peasant family, in which the Mong regard themselves as losers and a perennial minority, to the visions of a Mong kingdom have only occurred when Mong society has been dislocated by civil war and social turmoil. Finally, I will argue that ethnic identity is not something which can be viewed in isolation from the wider pattern of social relations, and I compare the ethnic consciousness of the Mong to the class consciousness of capitalist societies.

...

## 5. Jonathan SPENCER

Tenna: Peasant, State and Nation in the Making of a Sinhalese Rural Community. D.Phil. (D/74241/87)

The thesis is an enquiry into the experience of social and economic change in a rural Sinhalese community in eastern Ratnapura District, Sabaragamuwa Province, Sri Lanka and is based on anthropological fieldwork and archival research carried out in Sri Lanka between 1981 and 1984. The first part describes changes in the local economy between 1815 and 1982; the second is a description of politics and religion in 1982; the third is an analysis of the moral effect of social change and the causes of rural politicization and Buddhist nationalism. Part One is largely historical and concerned with change in the material environment; after an introduction to the area, there are chapters on the colonial state and the local elite, and the growth of state involvement in the village economy. It is argued that the indigenous landed aristocracy was largely a colonial creation, but its wealth came from new resources like tea-estates and newly-irrigated paddy-fields; colonial policy did not create a landless rural proletariat in this area - rather investment in irrigation works meant that there was, until the 1950s, an excess of paddy land in a notoriously unhealthy district. Details of changes in land tenure and tenancy relations from the early nineteenth century until the 1980s are discussed. Since the eradication of malaria in the 1940s the population of the area has grown with an influx of informal migrant squatters who have benefited from easy access to former Crown land. The final chapter of the first part describes the ways in which the village now supports itself, and contrasts the social implications of new activities like gemming and cash-cropping with swidden and paddy-farming. The second part describes a cycle of Buddhist temple rituals, interpreted as a deliberate attempt to recreate a moral community using the idiom of contemporary Sinhalese Buddhist nationalism. This is contrasted with an account of the Presidential election of October 1982, and its divisive impact on the community. The third part starts with evidence on change in the moral values of everyday life; it is argued that there is a growing gap between public *politesse* and private fears, between the way people think the world is and the way they think it ought to be; at the same time assumptions about inequality and morality are shown to have undergone a considerable change in recent years. The conclusion assesses the high degree of politicization in Sri Lankan rural areas and the tenacious hold of nationalist ideology; it is argued that the two are interdependent, reflecting both the long history of state involvement in the local economy, and the cultural pressures induced by recent changes. In particular the appeal of nationalism is seen to reside in its capacity to subordinate otherwise incoherent events and the threatened chaos of rapid change to an encompassing narrative of national destiny.

WHY ARE PIGS  
(AND SOME OTHER ANIMALS)  
NOT MILKED?

The pig is an important domestic animal in many parts of the world and in some areas it is the sole mammalian livestock species, yet nowhere does it appear to have been milked. The reasons for this have been of interest to both the present authors, from their different points of view, and they have also been briefly addressed by Marvin Harris in a recent publication (1986: 150-1). This short note considers why this valuable resource, and two others of less apparent value, have not been exploited - a byway of ethnography which may perhaps be of interest also to prehistoric archaeologists and agricultural scientists.

The milking of animals for human consumption seems to have been unknown in pre-Columbian America. In the Old World it is widely practised in environments ranging from tropical to sub-arctic, but it is absent from much of Africa and the greater part of Southeast and East Asia, though it seems to have occurred there locally and sporadically. Simoons has pointed out that in Southeast Asia, as a result of Hindu and Buddhist influences, and in China, following its conquest by pastoral peoples, there have been periods of milk usage, at least for ritual purposes; but these episodes began early in the Christian era and declined after the eleventh and fourteenth centuries respectively. The areas in which milk and milk products are not used or are used only rarely correspond closely with those in which adults are lactose malabsorbers (Simoons 1980: 83-6).

Except the pig, all the Old World domestic animals that seem to have real potential as milkers have in fact been milked. They are all herbivores and mostly hoofed, the main animals milked coming from the ruminant Sub-order and particularly the Bovidae (see Table 1). Many peoples, both settled and nomadic, milk sheep and goats. Among agriculturalists, animals of the cattle group

Table 1

## MILKING AND POTENTIAL MILKING SPECIES AMONG LIVESTOCK

Order:	Artiodactyls (even-toed)
Sub-order:	Ruminanta, Family Bovidae - <i>Bos</i> cattle Bali cattle ( <i>banteng</i> ) <sup>1</sup> gayal (mithan) yak Asiatic (water) buffalo
	<i>Caprini</i> goat sheep
	Family Cervidae - reindeer
Sub-order:	Tylopoda, Family Camelidae - camels
Sub-order:	Suiformes, Family Suidae - pig <sup>2</sup>
Order:	Perissodactyls, Family Equidae - horses (odd-toed) ass <sup>3</sup>
Order:	Proboscoidea Family Elephantidae - elephants <sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Not usually milked; milk production low.

<sup>2</sup> Not milked.

<sup>3</sup> Not regularly milked, probably because better milking species available.

<sup>4</sup> Not milked, but not truly domestic, since no control of breeding.

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tend to be the most important suppliers. Nomadic pastoralists obtain milk also from reindeer, camels and horses and for some it is (at least seasonally) the main source of nutrition. It is consumed principally as butter, cheese, yoghurt and other products, in which forms it can be stored (Ryder 1983a).

Two other less promising candidates are the elephant and the dog. The practical difficulties of milking elephants and their long gestation period present problems too obvious to need elaboration, and the peoples who keep them have other, more easily milked, species. In the case of the dog the small size of most

indigenous breeds and its multiple teats probably provide sufficient explanation. It would have been necessary to maintain a large number to provide a supply of milk. Milking and management would have needed the cooperation of a number of people; confinement and control would have been difficult; in most circumstances they could not forage for themselves; and although dogs (as in Polynesia) can be fed a mainly or wholly vegetarian diet (Titcomb 1969: 9, 25, and *passim*), feeding so many animals to obtain a scanty supply of milk and some meat would probably have been uneconomic.

Most pig-keepers have alternative sources of milk, but in Oceania the pig and the dog were the only domesticated mammals. Since the dog can be regarded as unsuitable for the reasons just suggested, speculation focuses on the pig, which in any case was the only domestic mammal available on some islands. Because of their bulk, pigs might be expected to provide a useful quantity of milk; though not amenable to being driven, they are relatively easily confined and controlled; and they are adaptable as to diet and will forage for themselves.

There are several possible reasons why pigs are not milked: unsuitability of the milk for human consumption; lactose intolerance; failure to observe or to appreciate the possibility; unwillingness due to religious prohibition or simple distaste; and practical difficulties in obtaining the milk.

The first of these can be dismissed. Although, unlike the species which are milked, the pig is omnivorous, its milk is acceptable and is more nutritious than cow's milk (H.B. Parry, personal communication 1979). Lactose intolerance is related to the non-use of milk generally, not only of pig's milk. It seems to be an effect rather than a cause, since the condition is almost certainly not hereditary (Ryder 1983b: 725).

The third reason - lack of appreciation of the possibility - cannot be the reason for the non-milking of pigs in the Old World as a whole, where the milking of other species was widely practised; but it could have been an important, even the decisive, factor in Oceania. In recent times western New Guinea has had considerable contact with the eastern islands of Indonesia, and Indonesian influence has led, for example, to the introduction of iron-working (Kamma and Kooijman 1973). The peoples of eastern Indonesia had potential milking animals, but they rarely or never milked them; whether this has always been so is not known. The Lapita people, who were ancestral to the Polynesians, arrived in the western Pacific in the second millennium BC (Bellwood 1978: 244). It is therefore possible that before they left their Southeast Asian homeland they were in contact with milking peoples, but this too is not known. It is also possible that they possessed the milking trait and lost it in the course of their migrations, as they lost the craft of pottery. So both Melanesians and Polynesians had the pig, and they may possibly in the past have had contact with milkers; but even were the pig a suitable animal for milking, isolation from milkers would perhaps provide sufficient explanation for their failure to do so.

The fourth possibility - prohibition or distaste - also seems unlikely as a decisive factor in the Old World as a whole. Distaste for milking *any* animal is often expressed by non-milkers, who give a variety of reasons (Simoons 1980: 84), but this does not explain why those peoples who milk make an exception of the pig. In Judaism and Islam the pig is regarded as ritually unclean. The basis for this religious taboo is almost certainly not disgust at their scavenging proclivities or their habit of wallowing in mud to reduce body temperature. Neither is it that they are hosts to the parasitic worm *Trichinella spiralis*, which can be transmitted to man: the link is unlikely to have been recognised, and in any case the danger to man from the worm (which is killed by adequate cooking) was not recognised in Europe until 1860 (Douglas 1978: 30). As long ago as 1952 Coon (1952: 346) suggested that this religious prohibition of pork among Middle Eastern nomads is more likely to have an ecological explanation. Pigs are unattractive to them because they are not easily driven and do not adapt well to the hot, dry conditions. Unlike other livestock, pigs supply little more than flesh, and since pigs can compete with man for food they may threaten the whole subsistence economy (Harris 1976, 1978, 1986), whereas sheep and goats survive on the little food available in the austere environment and provide a wide range of products (Ryder 1983b: 195). Mary Douglas's view, however, is that (to summarize) the Israelites, at least, considered as ritually unclean animals which did not fall clearly within certain categories, the pig being anomalous because it is cloven-hoofed but does not chew the cud; and she also points out that there is in Leviticus no reference to the pig's scavenging habits (1978: 54-7). Later (1972: 78-9), she also suggested that the pig symbolized prohibited exogamy, since it was eaten by neighbouring peoples, intermarriage with whom was forbidden to Israelites.

Whichever reason or combination of reasons provides the explanation, in Southeast and East Asia, where their meat is widely used, such feelings of distaste for pigs are only usual in Muslim areas. In Melanesia in general, and in New Guinea especially, pigs are regarded with affection and treated as family pets until the time comes for their slaughter. Indeed, in New Guinea they are sometimes suckled by women (as were puppies in Polynesia). Their great importance in ceremonial and social life, especially in New Guinea and Vanuatu, has been extensively recorded (e.g. Brown 1978; Layard 1942; Rappaport 1984).

It therefore seems likely that the main reason for the failure to exploit fully the possibilities of the pig is simply the difficulty of doing so. The practical problems are considerable. Pigs lactate lying down, but this is not an insuperable obstacle, because they can be roped to keep them standing. A greater problem is that, as in the dog, the pig has many teats (16-20), which are small and difficult to grip (English, personal communication 1979). But the most important and probably decisive factor is that sows do not 'let down' their milk readily, even to their own young. This happens hourly throughout the twenty-four hours in spells of only about thirty seconds duration. During this short period all the

udder segments would need to be emptied, which would require a number of milkers. Cattle and sheep, by contrast, 'let down' their milk less frequently but for longer periods, and each of their fewer teats provides a much higher proportion of the yield.

Understanding of these difficulties has come from the considerable interest in the composition of sow's milk in connection with studies of pig nutrition (e.g. Colenbrander *et al.* 1967). Not until knowledge of the hormone oxytocin involved in milk 'let down' was obtained was it possible to ease the milking process by injections of the hormone, but even then teams of milkers were required and only one litre of milk was obtained at a milking (R. Braude, personal communication 1983; Braude *et al.* 1947). Later, several types of milking machine were developed for sows, solely for nutritional studies (e.g. Lodge 1957).

It may be that for Oceanic peoples, isolated from milkers by the non-milking parts of Asia, lack of appreciation of the possibility of milking would in any case have explained its absence. However, for the greater part of the Old World the answer to an apparently complicated question seems to be simple: a species difference in the ease of milk 'let down'. A difficulty that today can be overcome (and then only experimentally) by hormonal injections and milking machines would have provided a major deterrent to technologically less advanced peoples, particularly where other animals were available which could be milked more readily.<sup>1</sup>

B.A.L. CRANSTONE  
M.L. RYDER

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<sup>1</sup> In addition to those mentioned in the text and references, we wish to thank the many pig specialists with whom we have discussed this question, particularly G.R.H. Bishop OBE, A.J. Webb and I. Will of the former Animal Breeding Research Organisation, Edinburgh, and A. Landon of the Meat and Livestock Commission.

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## BOOK REVIEWS

BRYAN S. TURNER, *The Body and Society: Explorations in Social Theory*, Oxford: Basil Blackwell 1984. viii, 251pp., References, Index. £16.00.

*The Body and Society* by Professor Bryan Turner of Flinders University, Adelaide is a complex and paradoxical book. It is a pity that Turner has been unable to incorporate some of the anthropological material into his analysis. He makes only minimal use of the work of Mary Douglas, for example, and does not refer to the extensive literature on sexuality that began with Malinowski's work in the Trobriands and which has continued to expand.

Those familiar with Professor Turner's earlier work will know that his concern with the body arises from his interest in Weberian rationality, religion and the work of Michel Foucault. In *The Body and Society* Turner seeks to flesh out the materialist claims first made in *Religion and Social Theory* (1983) and to explore the parallels between the human body and the body politic. This book contains three separate arguments spread across ten chapters, each of which refers to some aspect of the body. The first argument concerns the failure of sociology to acknowledge the crucial role of bodies in power structures; the second is an argument concerning the nature, role and demise of patriarchy; while the third is a lengthy discussion of the body as an object of rational knowledge as expressed through the illnesses of women's bodies. The first argument is well made. That dealing with patriarchy, however, is flawed and leads in turn to difficulties in the demonstration of the application of knowledge to women's bodies.

Turner begins with the assumption that all societies confront four major tasks, all of which are mediated through the social structuring of the body. He presents a fourfold matrix of reproduction, regulation, restraint and representation that is intended to allow consideration of the intersections between bodies and the social structures within which they are embedded. In the West, Turner argues, these four issues presuppose an opposition between desire and reason, an opposition which articulates with the public:private and male:female dichotomies on which society is based. Furthermore, Turner argues that a 'materialist theory of the body has to provide the linkage between the discipline of the body and the regulation of population in terms of the institutional connections between family, property and patriarchy' (p. 35), and that a materialist sociology must explain 'how certain polarities are enforced through the institutions of sex, family and patriarchy' (p. 41). This book is intended as a contribution towards such a sociology. Because he considers that 'the sociology of the body turns out to be crucially a sociological study of the

control of sexuality, specifically female sexuality by men exercising patriarchal power' (p. 115), it is important to understand Turner's notion of patriarchy. I focus on this part of his argument because it is central and because the form it takes leads to the production of a text which is itself gendered politically.

Turner considers patriarchy to be a form of household structure particularly consonant with feudalism and early capitalism, but one that has been undermined by capitalism through the destruction of the 'traditional' family. By defining patriarchy as a male-headed household which functions to transmit private property to other males, it follows logically that changes in household structure or changes in patterns of property transmission will result in the transformation, if not the destruction, of patriarchy. This leads Turner to the conclusion that the subordination of women to men today is due to a body of law that has been disconnected from its material base. Such an argument assumes that patriarchy is synonymous with female subordination.

A distinction between sexuality and gender is critical to a sociology of the body and to an understanding of the difference between patriarchy and a gender hierarchy in which males are dominant. Gender hierarchy has not been satisfactorily derived from institutional structures, patriarchal or otherwise, but appears more likely to be their cause. For patriarchy is only one form of a gender hierarchy, and its removal will not necessarily alter that hierarchy itself.

One of the difficulties of this book is that the reader is required to cope with so much disparate material, much of it garnered from the author's earlier excursions into capitalism and ideologies. But once the central argument can be sifted from the extended commentaries on political, sociological, religious and philosophical texts, the purpose of the commentaries becomes clearer. Their purpose and often baffling critical stance is to support the argument that the demise of patriarchy has largely liberated women, and that post-modern capitalism has also relegated many equally subordinate men to the domestic sphere of female powerlessness. This latter argument denies the specificity of male domination.

Turner believes that although women today remain second-class citizens and suffer 'everyday sexism and petty discrimination ... they also have much of the legal, political and ideological machinery by which that discrimination can be successfully challenged'. Although men still receive preferential treatment, although women are badly treated in the courts when they challenge men, although women are still the victims of male violence, Turner considers men are actually outflanked by feminist appeals to male, patriarchal ideology, that is, individualism. Women still experience sexism, but this is 'an interpersonal strategy of dominance' (p. 154). The reduction of institutional and symbolic domination to individual practice obscures the processes of sexism and precludes the possibility of sociological analysis.

This form of argument leads to the suggestion that just as capitalism breaks down patriarchy at the centre, it reconstitutes it at the periphery. The use of militant Islam to illustrate this

point is as misleading as it is objectionable, and arises from the approach to Islam found in *Religion and Social Theory*. Patriarchy, defined in the way it is here, lends itself to just such misleading generalizations, a fault which Turner is able to perceive in some feminist works, but not in his own.

This understanding of patriarchy also leads to difficulties when used to interpret women's diseases. Although Turner begins by noting a relationship between patriarchy and anorexia, he develops his argument in such a way as to refute the connection. He suggests instead that the illness is a female rebellion against the dominating mother.

The argument on anorexia has two features. First there is a denial of the institutional structures of male dominance, and then a focus on the domineering mother who creates a daughterly body disciplined nigh unto death. Even in Turner's own scenario, it is not just the mother forcing the daughter to eat, but the mother backed up by, and subordinate to, the father. This section of Turner's argument reproduces the ideology of the nurturing and devouring mother of much medicine and psychiatry. But if as he suggests, anorexia, like other 'women's complaints', is part of the political struggle against the dichotomies of reason:desire, public:private, body:self and female:male, then the struggle can be against the mother only in the most immediate sense, and must instead be against those symbolic categories by which a gender hierarchy is constructed and practised. The struggle takes this form not because the mother is domineering, but because the family is 'close'; because some contemporary families are particularly successful in reproducing the symbolic categories of gender hierarchy.

There is then, considerable confusion and slippage in the argument being presented, and as the argument is embedded in the present politics of gender, it is one which deserves scrutiny. Here we have a distinguished sociologist assuring women that the institutional structures of their oppression are now largely defunct, or soon will be. Women are assured that the oppression that they continue to experience is simply a male reaction to their loss of real power; and they are reminded that they are not the only oppressed individuals in society. Few women would be so ready to make such an argument, particularly as earlier feminist legislative gains are being steadily eroded. It is here that the particular potency, the seductive quality of Foucault's thought is of value, for he describes the discourses of power, discourses which speak through people and which aim to dominate through the sex/power nexus, regardless of institutional structures, patriarchal or otherwise.

But how, precisely? This question Turner's book cannot answer. And the reason it cannot answer is because it cannot do other than locate gender hierarchy within patriarchy, within a particular form of household unit. The conflation of gender hierarchy and patriarchy produces the conclusion that male dominance is transformed if not ended, a conclusion meant to reassure liberal humanistic men that they are no longer oppressive and women that they are on the way to power.

These arguments are intensely reactionary. In the section on patriarchy, the body, important though it is, is hardly considered. When the body does appear, the female body that is, it is hysterical and agoraphobic in its protests against male power. But if patriarchy is now only residual, why is it that women's bodies increasingly protest and break down? The strain of freedom perhaps?

Despite several perceptive comments on social change, cosmetics, diet and witchcraft *The Body and Society* is a disappointing book. While it establishes the absence of the body from certain sociological traditions, even the parameters of the absence are not usefully described. The overall theoretical framework remains resolutely functionalist and vulgarly Marxist. The sociology of the body, however, has yet to be written.

JULIE MARCUS

FELICITAS GOODMAN, JEANNETTE H. HENNEY and ESTHER PRESSEL, *Trance, Healing and Hallucination: Three Field Studies in Religious Experience*, Malabar, Florida: Robert E. Krieger 1982. xxiii, 364pp., Appendix, Bibliography, Index, Maps, Illustrations. \$74.50.

Few readers would immediately assume that a book entitled *Trance, Healing and Hallucination* had anything to do with Christianity. However, that is just what we find here. All the field studies in this volume were conducted among Christian communities in three 'developing countries' of the New World - the island of St. Vincent in the southern Caribbean, the Yucatan peninsula of Mexico, and the Brazilian city of São Paulo. And, taken together, they allow us to appreciate more clearly how Christianity - largely through the doctrine of the Holy Spirit - can lend itself to the expression of ecstatic, or, at least, dramatic states of trance and possession.

The studies, which focus quite specifically on the description and analysis of 'possession trance' states as observed in various syncretic Christian churches, movements and cults, were undertaken as part of a large research project on the cross-cultural study of dissociational states. Based at Ohio State University and funded for a period of five years (1963-1968) by the American National Institute of Mental Health, it was headed by the anthropologist Dr Erika Bourguignon. In a foreword to the book Bourguignon notes that she and her co-researchers had intended the entire project to be a comprehensive study of 'possession trance' and that they hoped to resolve some of the existing questions about the degree of normalcy or pathology of such states. The project itself largely defined the subject of 'possession trance'; as they use the term, it designates those dissociational states

which informants themselves state are the result of possession by spirits.

The project was conducted in two phases. The first, a review of the ethnographic literature (1100 societies in all), eventually produced a statistical analysis of possession and trance in 488 societies. In the sample, by far the majority (90%) have one or more ritualized altered states of consciousness; three quarters have some belief in spirit possession; and in just over half actual possession/trance occurs. The team analysing the source material concluded that a refinement of the terms 'possession' and 'trance' was essential because native informants attributed spirit possession to a wide variety of behaviours apart from trance: possession by a spirit might just as well be evidenced in mediumship, glossolalia and somnambulism, and in some societies spirit possession is not exhibited by a trance state at all. Besides, in those societies where trance is found, it is not a uniform phenomenon in any event, a fact which led the researchers to designate sub-categories of trance behaviour, such as 'dissociation', 'hallucination' and 'obsessive ideas'. In addition, they found that the specific types of possession behaviour they had isolated required even further subdivisions, so that by the end of their study they had distinguished, for example, eight types of glossolalia.

This sort of preoccupation with the construction of categories seems to have influenced the ethnographies that grew out of the project and constituted its second phase. Certainly, a tendency to microscopic description and analysis of behaviours is evident in the monographs contained in this book. The students seem to have remained well under the spirit, if not the letter, of a sort of 'law of categories' so that what we read are exceptionally detailed studies of altered states of consciousness in a language that strives for technical precision but which, unfortunately, often remains obscure.

Nonetheless the accounts are certainly worth examining. All the ethnographers convey well the character of the ecstatic behaviours they observed and all appear sensitive to the linguistic subtleties of such religious rituals. Henney captures the special vocabulary and turn of phrase of St Vincentian English; Pressel's command of Portuguese is evident in her careful attention to key words used by the São Paulo cultists; and Goodman's analysis of Mayan Christian glossolalia testifies to her linguistic skills. Moreover, the data are fascinating in their own right.

The first contribution, by Jeanette H. Henney, focuses on the trance behaviours of two fundamentalist groups in St Vincent - the Spiritual Baptist Church, whose members are known as 'Shakers' (in Trinidad, 'Shouters'), and a Dutch-based healing cult called 'Streams of Power'. Many of the Shakers voluntarily undergo a highly structured, several-day deprivation ritual called 'mourning' in order to achieve exotic visions. In their routine religious meetings, participants regularly enter advanced states of trance. The moral status of all members is the subject of open inquiry, and reprimands, including physical punishment, are not uncommon. By comparison, the Streams of Power services are convivial, if

somewhat placid, affairs. Though they are essentially thaumaturgic - 'laying on of hands' and glossolalia occur at every meeting - they are routinized, far less moralistic, and appear to be more an occasion for sociability, even social mobility, than religiosity.

Henney provides a brief history of the Spiritual Baptist Church in the West Indies, comparing Shakerism with other syncretic cults of the region, and then turns to a detailed account of the ritual of mourning and the progress of a Shaker meeting. Her report is at such a level of thick description that we know the colour of the headbands worn by Mother B. and Sister W. when they went to mourn; and we know almost everything about the behaviours and the appearance of Mother Q., Sister W. and Leader M. when they enter dissociative states. But we have no idea who they are, what might be their place in the community, nor, indeed, anything about the social dimension of their lives and religious activities. Her account is informative, but without context, and thus raises far more questions than it answers.

This descriptive bias does have some rewards. For anyone interested in the complex symbols and pictographs used in other West Indian trance cults (Haitian voodoo, for example), Henney's Appendix is of interest. Here she has carefully reproduced some of the fascinating chalk-drawn floor designs made for a Shaker mourning ritual. But unfortunately she appears uninterested in exploring their meaning, despite the fact that both the symbols and their native interpretations contain a wealth of information on how this West Indian community has appropriated and creatively incorporated Christian mythology.

The second contributor, Esther Pressel, worked in São Paulo, Brazil, on the Umbanda, one of three religious movements attractive to the upwardly mobile, educated, Brazilian middle class. Together with Pentecostalism and a sedate mediumistic cult founded by a French 'spiritist', Allen Kardec, Umbanda is a major source of concern for the Roman Catholic Church. Umbanda is considered particularly threatening for two reasons: Afro-Brazilian and Amerindian 'fetishes' are central to its belief and practice; and large numbers of Europeans have embraced the cult, so that at the time of this research its membership was fully one half Euro-Brazilian.

Pressel describes briefly, but well, the setting of Umbanda by outlining the social structure of São Paulo city. In her discussion of ritual and belief she identifies the various types of spirits that operate in the cult and places them within the larger framework of Afro-Brazilian cults, noting that a theory of supernatural fluids underlies Umbanda notions of disease and ill health. Her description of a typical cult centre and healing ritual emphasises the special role of the cult leaders whose personality decisively affects the ethos of each centre. Unlike the other authors in this volume, Pressel attempts an analysis of both the psychological and ideological implications of spirit possession. Thus, in her discussion of the biographies of several cult members recognized as the children of specific spirits, she searches for correspondences between the character of the spirits as codified by the cult and the expectations of their human offspring. Finally,

because she has bothered to familiarize herself with the anthropological literature on the many Afro-Brazilian cults (such as Candomblé and Macumba), her description of Umbanda emerges as more than just a compilation of exotic behaviours. We see it in the light of the complex relationships between religion, class and ethnicity that typify Brazilian society.

The third study, by Esther Goodman, covers a five year period (1969-1974) and focuses on one specific event, a religious upheaval, as she calls it, among a fundamentalist Protestant community in Mexico. In the Mayan community where this upheaval occurred, the Pentecostal Movement (known in Mexico as the Apostolic Church) is fairly recent. Evangelization of a community begins with the conversion of an often peripheral individual whom Goodman calls 'the innovator'. The innovator is crucial in the propagation of this religion because conversion spreads almost exclusively along kinship lines. In fact, her treatment of proselytization is one of the more interesting and important contributions in this book: kinship charts detail the spread of Pentecostalism and provide evidence for the reality and vitality of the so-called 'great family', a Mayan kinship unit which most ethnographers had assumed was dead (Redfield declared it unviable in 1941).

The Apostolic Church is fundamentally messianic, moralistic and scornful of this world. On conversion, Apostolics 'leave the world' and actively cultivate possession by the Holy Ghost. Glossolalia is 'a seal of approval' by the Spirit, and not to have entered trance jeopardizes one's chances of heaven. The events surrounding the June 1970 upheaval are indeed fascinating. Normal and anticipated visitations of the Holy Spirit were accompanied by the most extraordinary hallucinations, hysteria and unmanageable trance behaviour. An atmosphere of utter panic reigned as Church members, fearful of 'the coming of the Messiah', made concerted, even aggressive attempts to convert and baptize non-members. Within three months the upheaval subsided, and by early 1971 the entire event was reinterpreted as having been caused by demon possession.

Goodman calls this event a millenary movement, and, finding the theories of Wallace, Labarre, Aberle and others deficient, offers her own framework for the analysis of such religious phenomena. Not surprisingly, possession trance itself figures prominently. She isolates 'culture change' and 'supernatural premises' as major factors, but stresses that their interaction must be observed in light of the peculiar and special role that trance plays in validating a community's interpretation of itself. In her analysis, trance emerges as a phenomenon *sui generis*.

The virtues of specific, problem-oriented research of the sort presented in this volume lie in the accumulation of copious data. However, as pursued by the field-workers whose reports we have considered, this has been at the expense of the larger framework. Because we are told so little about the social institutions of the various communities and the overall patterns of social interaction of their members, religious events appear more spontaneous and arbitrary than they really are. Besides, in focusing on detailed descriptions of trance behaviours without at the same

time inquiring into their content, these accounts fail to explore the meanings that such altered states of consciousness have for their participants. Surely there is more to possession and trance than meets the eye.

Though this volume might not satisfy all the expectations of the social anthropologist, it is still useful and informative. For the student of comparative religion, it provides a remarkable testimony to the variability within Christianity and the dangers inherent in defining a religion solely in terms of its official creeds. These popular or 'little tradition' expressions contain valuable insights into the malleability of doctrine and the creative power of myth and symbol. For those with more theoretical interests, it provides data relevant to the still problematic issue of 'church', 'sect' and 'cult' as sociological categories. And for the anthropologist concerned with New World ethnography, in particular with the implications of colonialism, it is an equally valuable source of information. It indicates the ways in which several colonized peoples have sought to integrate the socioeconomic and political implications of their dependent status into frameworks that include both their religious beliefs and institutions and those of the colonizers. In short, this book is perhaps worth reading more for the rich ethnographic data it provides on religious syncretism than for its attempt to make sense of trance, healing and hallucination.

LYNN TESKEY

TAI-LI HU, *My Mother-In-Law's Village: Rural Industrialization and Change in Taiwan* [Monograph Series B, no. 13], Taipei: Institute of Ethnology, Academia Sinica 1984. vi, 234pp., Index, Bibliography, Glossary, Plates. No price given.

Tai-Li Hu's *My Mother-In-Law's Village* is sub-titled *Rural Industrialization and Change in Taiwan* and the book itself evidences the same dichotomy as its title. Frankly anecdotal, *My Mother-In-Law's Village* alternates between the anthropologist's sympathetic description of the village into which she married - even including a short story as an appendix - and an examination of the changes which have followed the industrialization of rural Taiwan's villages. Hu herself notes that the approach is an unusual one, quoting her supervisor Professor Burton Pasternak, who encouraged her to write 'a manuscript that is at once empirically sound and informative and also personal and intimate' (from the acknowledgements).

The book does succeed in being 'empirically sound and informative' but is, contrary to its billing, rather lacking in the 'personal and intimate'. That is, Hu's analysis of how Taiwanese



agricultural villages have made the move to home industries is well done. She provides the reader with good ethnographic data on Liu Ts'o, the village in which she worked, including chapters on history, agricultural development, industrialization, the family and religion; while her final chapter, entitled 'On a New Horizon, Implications and Discussion', uses data gathered from her visits to other Taiwanese villages. These villages, all previously studied by anthropologists, provide interesting points of comparison with Liu Ts'o; and by using the information from the earlier studies, Hu gives the reader an excellent survey of change and industrialization in rural Taiwan.

Yet what might be the most fascinating portion of her book, the dilemma of being both an 'outsider' (anthropologist) and 'insider' (daughter-in-law), as well as being originally a 'mainlander' (a Mandarin speaker) while raised in Taipei City, is never more than mentioned. Although Hu refers to these problems in her introduction and tells us that 'doing fieldwork in Liu Ts'o provides an opportunity to know my countrymen who live in an environment exotic to me, and to seek my own cultural identity' (p. 12), she never returns to the issue. The reader never learns of any particular problems confronting the researcher who is *totally* part of the community while also writing about it, nor of how the role of daughter-in-law helped or hampered her research.

Thus *My Mother-In-Law's Village* is an informative description of the alternative ways in which industrialization can take place - away from urban areas and incorporated in the traditional Chinese household - and how industrialization has affected Taiwanese villages. Yet the potentially most interesting aspect of Hu's research, herself, is neglected. Perhaps Tai-Li Hu's interest in creative writing, as evidenced by her short-story appendix, will lead to a book on the subject which could be titled: 'the anthropologist as daughter-in-law'.

D.P. MARTINEZ

MARIE-CLAUDE MAHIAS, *Délivrance et convivialité: le système culinaire des Jaina*, Paris: Editions de la Maison des Sciences de l'Homme 1985. 288pp., Appendices, Bibliography, Glossaries, Plates. 175FF.

Those who have wondered about the scope and possibilities of the 'anthropology of food' could do much worse than start with Mahias' lucid and up-to-date ethnography, which is based on two years' fieldwork with the Digambara Jains of Delhi. The Jains were a good choice: generally ignored by ethnographers until very recently, they are, even by comparison with Indians generally, notably particular, not to say pernickety, on matters of food.

The writer sees the culinary system, *la cuisine* for short, as a social phenomenon in a full sense, a locus of relations between principles of social organisation, forms of thought, and technical activities; she pointedly avoids including anything so ethnocentric as a recipe. Having introduced the Jains (typically urban and mercantile) and Jainism (a religious tradition with a history as long as Buddhism's), she describes the types of permitted food purchased in the bazaar, and the numerous unconditional and voluntary prohibitions; the kitchen and what goes on in it; consumption, with all the special rules bearing on life-cycle and other rituals; and modes of classification such as (to use English terms) crude/refined, hot/cold, light/heavy.

Apart from anthropologists of food and Jainologists, the book, though not specifically addressed to them, could well interest those concerned with women's studies (Jain women, incidentally, usually receive more education than their menfolk). It also has much to offer to students of India in general. A significant proportion of the ethnography applies to Hindu cuisine as well, and the complex relationship with the majority religious tradition recalls the position of other minorities. Like Indian Christians, Jains claim not to recognise caste, but in practice do so willy-nilly. They worship Lakṣmī at the Divālī festival and call on Brahman priests for weddings and horoscopes and even, in some areas, to serve as temple priests. Thus 'Hindu-centrism' seemed to the ethnographer a more insidious problem than ethnocentrism. Nevertheless the Jain sense of separate identity is sharp. The domestic fire is not sacred, nor do ancestors receive worship.

From a more general theoretical point of view there is much to savour. I enjoyed the careful discussion of the semantics of culinary vocabulary, the distinction between the textual-religious justification for not eating after dark and the anecdotic-magical one, the linking of the village/forest and the sacrifice/non-violence oppositions, and the double level of symbolism whereby, for instance, yellow bits of coconut stand for a lamp which in turn stands for the dissipation of psychic darkness. Only one question niggled me: did Mahias enjoy the food?

N.J. ALLEN

ROBERT B. EDGERTON, *Rules, Exceptions, and Social Order*, Berkeley, Los Angeles and London: University of California Press 1985. ix, 260pp., Notes, References, Indexes. £23.50.

In every society there are social rules which are flexible. A flexible social rule is a rule accompanied by a rule for breaking it. Rules for breaking the rules stipulate when and why violations of the rules which they accompany are legitimate. If a

rule is violated on legitimate grounds, the transgressor is exempted from punishment. Edgerton is deeply puzzled by the fact that every society has such flexible rules. He firmly believes that social chaos and anarchy would reign if there were no social rules regulating social life. For him, the human need for social rules is contradicted by the ubiquity of flexible rules. His book is all about the two questions which, according to him, emanate from this paradox. First, if social rules are necessary to avoid social anarchy, why then does every society have rules which allow for legitimate exceptions being made to them? Secondly, do rules for breaking the rules promote social chaos by stipulating that certain violations of certain social rules are justified?

Edgerton claims that the answer to the first question lies in the fact that two types of factor operate in every society: factors that press for rule-flexibility and factors that press for rule-inflexibility. A factor of the first type is 'status'. In every society persons who have a specific social status - the status of 'stranger' for example - are exempted from punishment if they break certain rules precisely because of their status. A factor of the second type is 'perception of danger'. In time of danger - wartime for instance - every society forces its members to keep themselves strictly to some of its rules - the rule not to help the enemy for example. According to Edgerton, the universal co-activity of both types of factor generates and explains the universal co-presence of flexible and inflexible rules. As to the second question, Edgerton is convinced that rules for breaking the rules do not form a threat to the establishment and maintenance of social order. On the contrary, since they stipulate the reasons a person can and cannot legitimately invoke to justify his breaking a rule - i.e. to claim exemption from punishment for doing so - they establish social control over rule-breaking behaviour. Consequently, they promote social order.

I find most of what Edgerton has to say quite unconvincing, but for reasons of length, I will concentrate on one point only. There is something very strange about Edgerton's paradox: at first sight, there seems to be no ground at all for claiming that there is one. Flexible rules are surely still rules, so why claim that they contradict the human need for social rules? Edgerton can only do so if he assumes not only that man needs social rules, but also that he needs inflexible rules. Apparently he does so assume since it is not the ubiquity of inflexible rules but the ubiquity of flexible rules which puzzles him. Now it is one thing to claim that man needs rules but quite another to claim that he needs inflexible rules. The second does not follow naturally from the first. Since it is the second claim which brings Edgerton to detect this paradox, the first thing he should do is to make clear that he makes this second assumption and justify it. The bewildering fact is that he does not, apparently because he finds it evident that saying that man needs rules is the same as saying that man needs inflexible rules. Bizarre evidence!

Edgerton makes abundant use of ethnographic data to illustrate and support his argument, and for that he deserves praise.

It is therefore the more unfortunate that his argument is based on a logical flaw.

ALDO MARTIN

JOHN EDWARDS, *Language, Society and Identity*, Oxford etc.: Basil Blackwell in association with André Deutsch 1985. x, 170pp., Appendix, Notes, References, Index. £25.00/£8.95.

Though language, society and identity is a trendy triad in today's social science, Edwards' is the first multidisciplinary attempt to survey this academic zone. He early admits that he hasn't the teeth for 'the mammoth task' of constructing a theory of language and ethnic-group relations. Instead he summarizes what has been said and then deduces what can now be said. Edwards takes an avowedly 'middle-of-the-road' approach. He does not eschew 'extremism' - whether 'irrational nationalist' or 'impassioned ethnic' - he simply attempts to value what their proponents and enemies have said. The side he takes is that of 'academic commentator' concerned that most people get what they want in an atmosphere tolerant of cultural diversity.

Early theorists of nationalism (e.g. Fichte, Herder) thought language an almost sacred component of their political programmes. But one of Edwards' main points, suitably bolstered by a weight of evidence, is that there is no necessary link between language and identity. Ethnic and nationalist groups can maintain an identity despite loss of their particular languages. Indeed, Edwards demonstrates that, despite attempts at revival, dead languages stay dead. (Hebrew is an easily explained exception.) Speakers of a 'minority' language usually want their children to speak in the 'majority' language, not because of external pressure, but out of pragmatic self-interest. People tend to learn new languages because of economic factors. So attempts to revive a mother-tongue merely by obligating schoolchildren to learn it (the Irish case) are bound to fail. As is the case for many other 'minority' languages, Irish is now effectively a symbolic language rather than a communicative one. It is valued because of Irish nationalism, not because a few old people still speak it in isolated corners of the Atlantic coast.

Edwards argues that there has not been an ethnic revival in the USA, rather a persistence of ethnicity which is now more visible because of the dominant group's tolerance. This persistent ethnicity is often based on symbolic markers, i.e. ones which do not hinder socially mobile members of the ethnic group from changing social class. A group may change the content of its ethnicity, but it maintains a boundary defining the difference between group members and others. Edwards counsels that since

administrative attempts to prop up aspects of ethnic culture fail unless they enjoy popular support among members of the ethnic group, multicultural programmes in schools should end. For him, the only possible successful courses are leaving the incitation to group members themselves and ensuring that schools teach a more fundamental, diffuse multiculturalism - schoolchildren should learn core skills, as before, plus a tolerant regard and understanding of other cultures.

Edwards draws on information from historical, sociological, linguistic, educational, and psychological sources. But it is his chapter on the social psychological approach to language and identity which highlights his ignorance of anthropology. For, while bemoaning the 'artificial' nature of social psychological experiments, yet stressing the worth of research into 'subjective perceptions', he seems unaware that anthropology can contribute, with its studies of how communities of people use, live and manipulate language and identity. Further, Edwards defines ethnic identity as allegiance to a group with which one has ancestral links. But we already know that these links can be more imagined than real: an Andalusian, for instance, can become 'Basque' and be regarded as one by all if he/she consistently acts as a radical Basque nationalist.

Despite his occasional chatty tone ('I must say that I find Gellner's position a compelling one'), it is worth anthropologists reading Edwards' wide survey if they wish to ensure that the grand generalizations they might wish to make about nationalism and ethnicity cannot be refuted by a few exceptions they have overlooked. One point Edwards has overlooked is that if it is correct that groups change their mother tongue for reasons of pragmatic self-interest, then English will become the dominant language in all parts of the globe where capitalism rules. Basque nationalists have already begun to call English language schools centres of 'linguistic imperialism'.

JEREMY MACCLANCY

JEAN-FRANÇOIS LYOTARD, *The Post-Modern Condition: A Report on Knowledge* [transl. G. Bennington and B. Massumi], Manchester: Manchester University Press 1984. 110pp. No price given.

The central problem in the present work concerns the process of legitimation of knowledge and the status of the ascription of 'truth value' to a statement. The problematic nature of legitimation has become one of the central concerns of much of French thought since the eclipse of structuralism and is shared by such writers as Bourdieu and the ex-members of the group *Socialism ou Barbarie*; it was also a preoccupation of Frankfurt critical

theory, whose major exponent Habermas, is the subject of an implicit critique in the present work. Lyotard contends that the modernist period legitimated the truth value of scientific statement by recourse to meta narratives. Manipulated by the state and other active agencies, they provided 'epics' by which scientific and technological projects could be justified. By stipulating goals, the success of the project could be gauged by reference to the achievement of the aspirations of the epic. Meta narrative masqueraded as possessing a similar objective status to scientific investigation. Meta narrative thus established the programme of scientific enquiry and scientific enquiry measured its success in relation to the programme. In consequence meta narrative legitimated scientific investigation and the results of such investigation were teleologically referred back to legitimate the meta narrative. The result was to produce the culturisation of nature and the naturalisation of culture as has been well argued and documented by such writers as Baudrillard, Bourdieu, Castoriadis and Sahlins.

Lyotard argues that the misrecognition of scientific knowledge and meta narrative as corresponding to a similar natural epistemology is effected by the preoccupation with structure over strategy. Texts are not composed of identical epistemes. The statements which constitute a text contain complex and dissimilar values. He identified denotative, interrogative, evaluative and prescriptive statements (p. 16). While scientific enquiry is properly made of denotative statements, meta narrative is composed by the domination of the others (p. 25). Since meta narrative prefaces scientific enquiry, not only is scientific knowledge guaranteed by a discourse external to it, but according to tenets which are not confirmed by its methodological protocols and which fail to comply with the requirements of an objective standard demanded by the scientific practice. Given the different epistemological statuses of meta narrative and scientific knowledge, Lyotard refutes any special status being given to the latter, while at the same time denying that any principles held by it can be used to evaluate meta narratives. It is not enough to reverse the equation and begin from nature to analyse culture, since nature will also be a problematic quality. Scientific knowledge, therefore, he concludes, is only a special type of meta narrative which concerns itself (paraphrasing Medawar) with telling stories (p. 60).

Lyotard's position is, of course, not entirely original. His concern with the strategic manipulations of language as being more important in the generation of contingent meaning than structure was the subject of Volosinov's critique of Saussure in his *Marxism and the Philosophy of Language* (1930), and it is a short path which leads to the linguistic philosophy of Wittgenstein, which echoes so strongly through much of Lyotard's text. It is worthy of note that the relationship between Soviet formalism and Wittgensteinian philosophy has found cogent expression in social anthropology, in the works of Rodney Needham, who has done more than anyone to establish a postmodernist anthropology, if by postmodernism we mean, in Lyotard's words, an attitude of incredulity towards texts (p. xxiv). A further influence on Lyotard is the

work of Gaston Bachelard, particularly on his view that knowledge is constantly under the threat of deflection by what he calls a tendency towards 'reverie'. Since Lyotard does not accept Bachelard's confidence in the ability to isolate a pure knowledge by successive critical cleansing of the results of scientific enquiry, he sees these critical encroachments as being goals in themselves which motivate the mutations of knowledge without necessarily making it more objective. (Interestingly, in a recent review, Ivan Karp has drawn a parallel between Needham's *Against the Tranquility of Axioms* (1983) and Bachelard's *La poétique de la rêverie* (1960). Both comparativist and philosopher agree on the importance of the critical reading of the text, but with Needham showing much more interest in the latent strategies and active uses of value-laden words in the production of different effects by the ethnographic text.)

Finally, it is perhaps not surprising that in accepting the fall of 'unconditional' objective knowledge, both Lyotard and Needham have limited their aspirations so as not to provide any grand systems nor establish a method of investigation. Instead, in accordance with postmodernist edicts, they have contented themselves with the consideration of how best alienated man might be made to feel at home in an alienating world.

ANTHONY SHELTON

PIETER VAN DE VELDE (ed.), *Prehistoric Indonesia: A Reader* [Verhandelingen van het Koninklijk Instituut voor Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde 104], Dordrecht and Cinnaminson: Foris 1984. vii, 383pp., Maps, Tables, Figures, Plates, Bibliography, Index. No price given.

Van de Velde writes that with the exception of Java, Kalimantan (Borneo) and some of the eastern islands, 'the whole of Indonesian prehistory is still unexplored'. These circumstances are hardly propitious ones for producing a 'reader', which implies a collection of standard works on the topic. They help to account, though, for the editor's ambivalence toward his selection. All of the articles, none of which is by Van de Velde, have been published previously. Except for two, all have appeared during or since 1975. The oldest is a translation of the summary of Heine-Geldern's classic statement (1932) of his theory of a series of migrations of Austronesian and Austro-Asiatic peoples through Southeast Asia during the neolithic. The second, a speculative gallop through the prehistory of Borneo by Tom Harrison, was published in 1970, the year which the editor says marked both the first appearance of non-colonial Indonesian archaeological studies and the international revival of archaeology as the 'new

archaeology'.

Van de Velde's intention is to bury the legacy of colonial archaeology, characterized, as he says, by 'fragmentarily described excavations, plundered sites, displaced and haphazard museum collections and, most conspicuously, a number of Grand Southeast Asian Prehistory Schemes'. How do things stand today? For one thing, the editor writes that two articles in the present book, Solheim's 'Reflections on the New Data of Southeast Asian Prehistory' (1975) and Blust's attempt by linguistic means to reconstruct the cultural inventory of prehistoric Austronesian societies (1976), are just as out-dated as Heine-Geldern's work. Soejono's description of the Archaeological Service of the Republic of Indonesia details a pattern of an inadequately trained and insufficiently numerous staff turning exclusively to administrative chores and neglecting field excavations, documentation and scientific publication. Glover, author of the two reports of actual excavations reprinted here, concludes his study of 'Bird Cave' in South Sulawesi by lamenting the inadequacy of his data and recommending that a younger generation complete the half-finished excavation. Things seem not to have changed substantially since the colonial period.

The editor argues that migrations and diffusion are vectors of transmission, not causes of change. If today Indonesian cultures are greatly varied, so must they have been in prehistory also. The categories of European prehistory are inapplicable to Southeast Asia. The Hoabinhian adaptation, according to Solheim the only culture of truly Southeast Asian origin (northern Vietnam and elsewhere) and placed by Hayden at between 40000 and 8/6000 B.P., is a 'technocomplex', i.e. a common means of adjustment to changing conditions producing a polythetic family of artefact types. Furthermore, innovations need not always be explained by origination outside the island area. Glover therefore suffers criticism for attributing archaeological changes in finds from Timor and Sulawesi to the arrival of neolithic farmers, possibly Austronesian speaking, around 5000 B.P. According to Van de Velde, they may well have resulted instead from indigenous neolithization.

Nevertheless, the big questions are still 'Where did the Austronesians and their predecessors come from?', 'Where did they go and when?', and 'Why did they do so?'. Behind these questions are some extraordinary facts. *Homo Erectus* was living on Java around two million years ago. Finds of flake tools from the Pleistocene associated with a fossil elephant (*Stegodon*) have been claimed for Sulawesi, Flores and Timor. Remains of agricultural activity in the highlands of New Guinea date to 9000 B.P. The oldest settlement recorded in Australia dates to 35000 B.P. Despite sea-level drops that connected Java and Borneo to the mainland during the late Pleistocene, the strait between Bali and Lombok was never bridged during the Pleistocene, so that any travel to the east required boats or rafts. New Guinea and Australia, which are thought to have been inhabited for 50,000 years, could only have been reached by crossing many kilometres of open sea.

The coverage of this book extends from Mainland Southeast Asia through the islands to New Guinea and Australia, with mention of Polynesia. Many of the articles are important and each has its



merits, but the only thing uniting them is that they have been selected by the editor. They fit poorly under the rubric 'Indonesia', a term which is just as inapt to designate an archaeological area as it is to name a field of anthropological study. The two translations are to be commended and the inclusion of the ten articles taken from journals can be justified. The remaining four, however, are easily available elsewhere. Smith and Watson's Introduction to *Early South East Asia* and the two papers from *Sunda and Sahul* derive from Southeast Asian archaeological collections that are more important than this one.

R.H. BARNES

MARY ANNE KENWORTHY, ELEANOR M. KING, MARY ELIZABETH RUWELL and TRUDY VAN HOUTEN, *Preserving Field Records: Archival Techniques for Archaeologists and Anthropologists*, Philadelphia: The University Museum, University of Pennsylvania 1985. x, 95pp., Illustrations, Bibliography. No price given.

The intentions of this little volume are admirable, but whether any practical good will come of it remains to be seen. One hopes it will have the circulation it deserves. The authors aim to explain the basic requirements and processes in the preservation of records before they ever reach the archive repository. This crucial question is seldom addressed, either by scholars creating the record or by archivists. Yet I know from bitter experience the dismal physical state of many fieldwork records after thirty or forty years of totally inadequate care and poor storage. Archive conservation is an extremely complex field, and it is essential that one understands exactly the dangers of a given set of conditions and precisely what one is doing in attempting to remedy the situation - the damage caused by misplaced good intentions can be devastating and irreversible. Therefore the authors guide through this minefield the conscientious fieldworker who wishes unique information to be preserved for future generations of scholars.

The necessarily vast amount of information crammed into each chapter makes for rather indigestible reading, and one fears that this will deter all but the most determined. However, each chapter is prefaced by a series of recommendations (which are amplified and explained in the following text), and these at least should be required reading for anyone seriously involved in the collection of unique data. A chapter is devoted to each of the various media which make up the record: paper, photographs, film and video, sound recordings, machine-readable records etc. The chapter on machine-readable records, which have an extremely limited life, is particularly useful, for it gives an excellent

'state-of-the-art' resumé of a set of problems to which the archive profession is only just beginning to address itself. Given the amount of research data now being processed by computer, the position is becoming increasingly serious.

The key to the successful preservation of records, awareness and long-term planning, is stressed throughout. Ideally, the likely historical or archival importance of a project should be assessed at its inception, the choice of materials for both recording and storage being made accordingly and written into the budget. A programme should be developed to cope with initial preservation in the field, often under extremely difficult local conditions (but even then careful choice of materials, e.g. acid-free notebooks, will greatly improve the long-term survival of the record): then long-term strategy for the preservation of material on return from the field, particularly in the form of correct storage and adequate documentation, should be planned. In my experience, trouble often occurs at this stage. Whilst in the field, preservation - getting the data home for analysis - is surely everyone's preoccupation. Once home the data spends thirty years being stored on top of central heating pipes, mended with sellotape, flooded with coffee and so on.

One of the weaknesses of the book is that while it makes an excellent statement of the ideal, it assumes a sizeable level of funding and institutional back-up which in practice is quite simply not available in many cases, especially at an individual level. But maybe on reflection, the weakness is in Britain's awareness of the long-term archival value of unique anthropological records which lags far behind that of many other countries - a situation surely mirrored in the dire state of funding for both field research and specialist archive collections in this country.

ELIZABETH EDWARDS

ROSS MOUER and YOSHIO SUGIMOTO, *Images of Japanese Society: A Study in the Structure of Social Reality* [Japanese Studies; gen. ed.: Yoshio Sugimoto], London etc.: KPI 1986. xxxii, 432pp., Appendix, Notes, References, Index. £30.00.

The publication of this book and the recent *JASO Occasional Paper Interpreting Japanese Society* (1986) provides students of Japan with an up-to-date picture of one of the most significant contemporary debates in Japanese studies. At the same time, they provide an excellent example of just how much anthropologists and sociologists can differ in their approach and the varying effect of their methodologies on the study of other societies. At times, the lines drawn between the two disciplines appear almost

uncrossable, but my conclusion after reading both books is that there is much for anthropologists and sociologists to learn from each other. The debate engendered by accounts such as these will, one hopes, enrich the subject as a whole and not result in retreat into sullen solipsism.

Certainly, neither side can claim that their work is ignored by the other. The first two pieces in the *JASO* volume are a discussion of the arguments of Sugimoto and Mouer, whose ideas are also introduced in two other papers. For their part, Sugimoto and Mouer concentrate much of their attack on anthropology in general and the better-known anthropologists of Japan in particular. Indeed, few outside their own group of thinkers escape their censure: the interpretations of Chie Nakane, Ruth Benedict, Ezra Vogel, Edwin Reishauer, Doi Takeo and Ronald Dore (the bulk of any Western bookshop's Japanese shelf) are put under the spotlight and rejected.

Sugimoto and Mouer's argument centres around two axes: the concepts of holism and scientism. Studies of Japan, and in particular those carried out by anthropologists, with their holistic approach, present Japan 'as though it emerges from a single cultural mould' (p. 10), which Sugimoto and Mouer title the 'Consensus or Group Model' which explicitly emphasises the 'uniqueness of specific traits among the Japanese as major determinants of Japanese behaviour' (p. 11). This description of Japan they perceive as 'an ideology ... and that as such it represents an example of how the Japanese elite controls or manipulates the rest of society' (p. 15). Authors of such works are, therefore, by implication either the dupes or the stooges of this elite. Anthropologists, by definition, are especially guilty of such acts. Or rather, by the definition Sugimoto and Mouer choose to apply, since their view of anthropology is old-fashioned to say the least. They decide to follow the usage of a certain Stephen Cotgrove (who he?), who in 1967 apparently wrote that 'holism' was 'an approach which emphasizes the influence of the whole (society as an organic, though abstract, entity) over the parts (individuals) who make up society ... [and] has come to be known as *functionalism*' (p. 22). As a description of anthropology in the 1940s, this might have been reasonable, but to tar the subject with the same brush today is to ignore everything that has been achieved since Evans-Pritchard. Hendry, in the *JASO* volume, points out this distinction between functionalism and structuralism, and shows why the search for underlying structural patterns should not be confused with static and functional ideologies.

Because of their emphasis on scientism, though, it is doubtful whether Sugimoto and Mouer would accept Hendry's argument. Ethnography is dubbed as 'Anecdotism and Episodism' (p. 131), and they question the feasibility of genuine anthropological methodology: 'Without a more careful assessment of how the situation is affected by the presence of a foreign observer ... it is difficult to evaluate accurately data obtained by methods such as participant observation and interviewing' (p. 167); unless, significantly, those findings agree with their own view of Japanese society, such as the discovery of poverty in contemporary Tokyo. As is often

the case with sociologists, they appear to equate 'objectivity' with 'scientific'. They feel happier with quantifiable data such as statistics and graphs than with qualitative material, but a closer examination of just a single example leaves one uneasy about such an approach. A comparative study of popular disturbances in four countries, which according to the authors demonstrates high levels of conflict in Japan, leaves unanswered many questions about the definition and reporting of violence in each country and also singularly fails to explain the simple fact that a Japanese woman walking the streets of Tokyo at night has few of the fears and inhibitions of her French, German or Australian counterparts in Paris, Berlin or Sydney. The fact that even minor acts of violence, which would be ignored as everyday in other countries, are in Japan reported widely is evidence of the shock such incidents evoke and not of their frequency.

There are, in my opinion, several further weaknesses in Sugimoto and Mauer's book. First of all, they demand that others eschew all a priori theorising, yet they engage in it extensively themselves in their search for aspects of social control and conflict in Japanese society. Secondly, they at times appear to present a rather simplistic Marxist conspiracy theory whereby the 'elite' in Japan are hoodwinking the rest of the country for their own purposes. Such theories rarely stand up to close historical examination. At the very least there must be a certain amount of public complicity and, therefore, it is faintly ludicrous to appear to suggest that the Japanese themselves do not know the difference between the official version (*tatema*) and the reality (*honme*) of life in Japan, and that they do not talk to foreigners about this distinction. The authors are absolutely correct that there is great variation in Japan and considerable dissatisfaction with the way the society works, but it is *because* of this that any sensitive foreigner who learns the language should not have problems discovering these different versions of social reality. Finally, some of the evidence which the authors use appears slightly inconsistent. For example, Whiting's book is criticised as a simplistic explanation of Japan in terms of paradoxes (p. 39), when in fact it is a very sophisticated study of the way baseball is played in both Japan and America and actually fulfils the three demands the authors make of such studies on p. 359. On the other hand, Wilkinson, who is cited apparently approvingly several times, surely fits squarely into their definition of an author in the *nihonjinron* mould which they are attacking.

The editing of their book is not, unfortunately, as good as it could be. The problem is perhaps compounded by the fact that one of the authors - Sugimoto - is also the General Editor of the series in which this book appears. Much of the book has already appeared among the 53 examples of their own work the authors cite, and it is frequently repetitive. The index and bibliography are not well cross-referenced, and the book badly needs a glossary to help non-specialist readers. Perhaps most unfortunately, on the flyleaf we are told in bold capitals that the authors are jointly responsible for a work entitled 'NIHOJIN WAS NIHONTEKI'. This is the equivalent to being told that a leading anthropologist of

French society has written 'LES FRANDEIS SONT FRANÇAIS'.

It is to be hoped that these minor problems have been rectified in time for a second edition, since Sugimoto and Mouer do have some important points to make. As they say, researchers have tended to ignore the importance of class and conflict and to emphasize homogeneity and consensus in their work on Japan, and there is a genuine need to redress the balance of the hundreds of often superficial books produced every year, both inside and outside Japan, which attempt to explain the 'Japanese Miracle' in terms of uniqueness and the lack of self. I think that it is slightly unfair, though, to blame anthropology as a discipline for the perpetuation of these myths. Though anthropologists of Japan are likely to be put off, therefore, by some of Sugimoto and Mouer's more abrasive generalizations, I hope that they will discover that the book does provide them, at the very least, with an excellent sounding board for their ideas and forces them to reflect on many of their methodological and theoretical assumptions. On the other hand, I hope that some of the arguments and reports contained in the *JASO* volume will enable those of Sugimoto and Mouer's way of thinking to re-examine some of their own out-dated ideas about anthropology and prevent them ignoring the great contribution anthropology can make to Japanese studies.

ROGER GOODMAN

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EQUILIBRIUM AND EXCHANGE:  
THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LAND AND BODY  
IN ANDEAN RELIGION

I

For the inhabitants of the austere Andean region to survive and prosper, they had both to maintain a careful equilibrium between themselves and their environment and to practise exchange among communities living at different altitudes with access to different resources. The Incas, for example, who had the task of maintaining, controlling and uniting approximately six million subjects over 4,300 kilometres, imposed strict regulations concerning land use and instituted an extensive system of exchange of goods and services throughout their empire.

Andean religion displays a similar concern for equilibrium and exchange. It postulates a universe held in balance by the opposing forces of existence and non-existence (*mana cajmanta caj*), one which strives for the consolidation of matter and the other for its disintegration. When the destructive force predominates the result is chaos and the world is sundered by earthquakes, hurricanes and the like (Oblitas Poblete 1963: 31, 50). Complete consolidation, however, is not desirable either, for, as we shall see with regard to our topic of land and body, the maintenance of certain basic distinctions is fundamental to an ordered cosmos. Andean religion must set forth these distinctions and keep them in balance, while at the same time providing for a means of exchange among them.

II

The cosmogony recorded by Pedro Sarmiento de Gamboa in 1572 describes the primordial relationship between land and body according to Andean

tradition. Put succinctly, it consists of the following stages:

Viracocha created a world without light. He then modelled a race of disproportionate giants, but decided they were too large and instead formed humans after his own size.

These first humans lived in the dark world. After a time the vices of pride and cupidity were born among them, and they broke the law Viracocha had given them to live by.

Some of these first humans were then changed into stone, some were swallowed by the earth and some by the sea. Viracocha caused all the created world to be covered by a flood.

When the earth dried, Viracocha went to the island of Titi-caca. There he ordered the sun, moon and stars to go to the sky and give light to the world. One of the three men he had preserved to act as his servants was disobedient, and Viracocha had him bound and thrown into the lake.

Viracocha moved on to Tiahuanaco where he sculpted and drew on stones the people of all the nations he planned to create. This done, he ordered his two remaining servants to commit their names and places of appearance to memory.

Each of the three then took a different route - one servant to the west, one to the east, and Viracocha down the middle. As they went they called out the people from the earth, named them, and commanded them to populate the land.

At one point the people revolted against Viracocha, who appeared a stranger by his ways and clothes. Viracocha then brought down fire from the sky to burn the site, whereupon the people repented and he put out the fire.

When Viracocha reached the coast he spoke to the peoples of what would take place in the future and then disappeared with his two servants walking over the sea (Urbano 1981: 9-13).

This cosmogony tells us that human bodies are modelled after that of Viracocha, the Creator. This alone is the proper size for humans; the original sculpted giants must be discarded as disproportionate. The human body, with its perfect form, can now be used as a measure of other things. The standard measurement for land among the Incas, for instance, was a unit based on the length of a human body (Rowe 1946: 323-4). Space is thus humanized.

Although humans have the same form as Viracocha, however, they are evidently not of the same substance, for while Viracocha and his divinized assistants (who in other versions are gods) can walk over the sea, humans are tied to the earth. This is particularly significant in that Andeans see the body as a material reflection of the spirit (Oblitas Poblete 1963: 29; Bastien 1978: 43). The link to the earth, therefore, is one which involves the whole person.

Earth is the primordial matter of creation, the first thing called into existence by Viracocha. The human prototypes of the completed world are created in stone before they exist in flesh. In Bernabe Cobo's version of 1653, it is made clear that these original models are buried in the earth, from which they later surface as human beings. The sites from which they emerged then become sacred shrines for their descendants (Urbano 1981: 31).

Cobo's version relates that the various forms of dress of the different nations were painted on the models, thus becoming an integral part of their bodily existence (*ibid.*). This emphasis on proper dress suggests that the Incas had religious as well as practical reasons for insisting that the peoples of each nation under their rule wear their characteristic apparel, no matter where in the empire they might find themselves. In the early seventeenth century the native chronicler, Felipe Guaman Poma de Ayala, continued to express this concern, admonishing Indians and Spaniards alike not to dishonour themselves by forsaking their traditional dress (1980 II: 732-3).

Likewise, the cosmogony tells us that different peoples are created to inhabit specific places, and the Incan law prohibiting travel within the empire without special permission can be seen as reflecting this divine decree, as well as facilitating government and the maintenance of a balanced population.<sup>1</sup>

Everything has its place and its function in the complex, highly organized system instituted by Viracocha. That human co-operation in upholding this system is necessary is evidenced by the fact that humans are able to disobey the will of the Creator and destabilize the cosmos. The three instances of violation of the divine plan which occur in the cosmogony all have drastic physical consequences. In the first two cases the transgressors are reintegrated into the land, either through earth or water. In the last case heavenly fire devastates the land, but the transgressors - who, unlike the first humans, have the light of the sky to guide them in their actions - are saved through their repentance. Human moral conduct, therefore, affects the physical order of the universe, and the order of the universe shapes human conduct.

The cosmos made by Viracocha consists of two basic, separately created parts: the earth, which is characterized by darkness, chaos and procreativity; and the sky, which manifests light, structure and spirituality. Between them is the surface of the earth, the middle ground through which exchange is possible. In Quechua these three levels are commonly referred to as *Hanan Pacha* or Upper World, *Cay Pacha* or This World, and *Ucu Pacha* or Interior World.

The upright human body, living on the earth's surface, can communicate with both heaven and earth, acting as a mediator between them, an axis through which power can flow. The body itself serves as a model for the cosmos: the upper half is equivalent to the sky and therefore to structure, while the lower half equals the earth and therefore chaos. The middle section, containing the heart, lungs and digestive system, circulates energy to the rest of the body, integrating it into a dynamic whole.

Poma de Ayala's illustration of the act of creation (1980 III: 853), ostensibly depicting the Christian account of creation but in

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<sup>1</sup> Of course, one can interpret such myths as legitimating as well as influencing Incan law; however, attachment to one's native land and dress has deep religious significance throughout the Andes, as testified to by observers from the time of the Conquest to the present day.

fact thoroughly Andean in its conceptualization, shows God standing on earth with his head in the sky, placing the sun with his right hand and the moon with his left. This illustration, as well as depicting the body as a model for the cosmos, reminds us that creation takes place through the medium of the body of the Creator, giving the human body - modelled on that of the Creator - a dual role as both created and creator, subject to and manipulator of the cosmic forces.

### III

There is a pan-Andean tradition of several ages preceding the present one, reputed by various chroniclers to last a thousand years each (Zuidema 1964: 227-35). In the middle, and particularly at the end of each age, great changes take place and the world is disordered and remade. This period of upheaval is known as a *pachacuti* or world reversal. Poma de Ayala, in fact, translates a term analogous to *pachacuti*, *pacha ticra*, as 'that which turns the world on its head' (ibid. I: 174).<sup>2</sup>

The *pachacuti* is a period of sacred and highly dangerous fluidity between land and body during which humans emerge from the natural world and can also return to it. An Andean term for the human being, 'animated earth' (Garcilaso de la Vega 1966: 84), indicates how close the relationship between land and body is, and therefore the care which must be taken to maintain the two distinct and balanced.

Two related myths describe the transformation which takes place at the opening of the age of the Incas. One recounts how four brothers and their sisters-wives come out into the world through a cave called Pacaritambo or House of Production. The first one to come out levels hills with his slingshot, whereupon his brothers send him back to the cave and wall him in. Two more of his brothers turn into stone, one in order to become a shrine on the summit of Huanacauri (Rainbow) Hill to the south of Cuzco, and the other to serve as a landmark. The fourth brother, Manco Capac, remains with his wife and those of his brothers, and it is he who founds the capital city of Cuzco and the Incan dynasty (Urbano 1981: 35-95).

The other myth, presented here in an abbreviation of the version given by Inca Garcilaso de la Vega in 1609, is more sophisticated.

In the old times people lived like wild beasts, knowing nothing of religion, government, towns, agriculture, clothes, or

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<sup>2</sup> The same process of disintegration and restructuring which occurs in the *pachacuti* takes place on a human scale when lightning turns a person into a diviner: 'The first charge is believed to kill him, the second reduces his body to small pieces and the third reassembles his body' (Sharon 1978: 77).

having separate wives.

The Sun sent a son and daughter of his and the Moon, called Manco Capac and Mama Ocllo Huaco, to bring civilization to the peoples of the earth. He gave his two children a golden staff, bidding them to set up their court at the site where it would sink into the ground at a single thrust.

When Manco Capac and Mama Ocllo reached Huanacauri Hill the staff sank in with one thrust and disappeared into the earth, whereupon they determined to establish their dwelling in the valley below.

Manco Capac then went north and Mama Ocllo south, telling the savages they met of their divine mission and bringing them back to the valley, where they built the city of Cuzco.

Those peoples brought by the king formed Hanan or Upper Cuzco, and those by the queen, Hurin or Lower Cuzco. As the city was populated, Manco Capac taught the men agriculture, and Mama Ocllo instructed the women in domestic duties. Nothing which pertains to human life was omitted in their instruction.

Impressed by these benefits, great numbers of people settled in Cuzco and the Inca soon had an army at his disposal for the purposes both of defense and conquest (1966: 40-6).

In the first myth dealing with the origin of the Incas we see the interchange of land and body characteristic of periods of restructuring. In the second myth we are told that prior to the arrival of the Incas, the people lived in a state of savagery, virtually indistinguishable from nature. The first Incas here come not from the earth but from the sky, and therefore from mind and structure. Their mission is to bring the peoples of the earth out of the chaos of their natural condition into a state of divinely sanctioned order. In order to do this they must teach the people how to enter into a correct relationship with nature; specifically, to practise agriculture, to live in towns (i.e. to have settled, communal existence), to wear clothes and to regulate their sexuality. Elsewhere in Garcilaso's history we learn that the Inca bade his subjects to turn from the worship of things of the earth to that of the Sun.<sup>3</sup> A civilized person is one who transcends the earth and participates in the structure of the sky. A savage is one who is identified with the earth and therefore unable to interact with both levels of the cosmos or serve as a mediator between them.

The aversion Andeans feel for disorder and excess can be seen in their dislike of the jungle<sup>4</sup> and in the simplicity and symmetry of monumental Incan architecture, in which every stone is perfectly fitted. The brother who shows immoderate force by recklessly leveling hills in the myth must be returned to the earth so as not to

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<sup>3</sup> 'Let them notice the difference that existed between the splendour and beauty of the Sun and the filth and ugliness of the toad, lizard, frog and other vermin they regarded as gods' (ibid.: 68).

<sup>4</sup> The Incas deemed the jungle to be inhabited by monstrous beasts and humans so brutish they mate with animals (Cieza de Leon 1959: 257-8).

endanger the stability of the world.

At this point it should be noted that there exists a third class of persons in the Andes. Martín de Murua wrote of these in 1590:

The Incas had some doctors or philosophical diviners called *Guacacue* who went around naked in isolated, gloomy places of the region ... and walking alone in the deserts without rest or tranquility they dedicated themselves to divination or philosophy. From sunrise to sunset they looked at the solar disk with great firmness.... They said that in that fiery disk they saw and attained great secrets.... All day they stood on the burning sands without feeling pain; and they also suffered with patience the cold and the snow.... Their sustenance was very easy, they did not pursue what sagacity, covetousness, and appetite look for in all elements - only what the earth produced without being mistreated by iron (Sharon 1978: 92).

These diviners have characteristics in common with the savages: they don't wear clothes, they don't live in towns, and they don't practise agriculture. Their purpose in this, however, is not to participate in the chaos and sensuality of the earth, but rather to detach themselves from it. One of the purported abilities of these diviners, in fact, is to sever the yoke of the body to the land and witness what is happening in remote places (*ibid.*: 112-7). Diviners are revered when they are associated with the upper, spiritual half of the cosmos, but they can also have a destabilising effect and so are potentially dangerous (*ibid.*: 23).

Returning to the myth of the origin of the Incas presented by Garcilaso, the golden staff given to Manco Capac and Mama Ocllo by the Sun symbolizes the divine power of the male sky, which fertilizes the female earth at a receptive point. The staff sinks into the ground connecting the three layers of the cosmos and establishing Cuzco as a chosen site of intercourse between heaven and earth. (The association of the rainbow with Huanacauri Hill in Cuzco is another sign of divine election.) This union is accomplished through the medium of the Inca, who is thenceforth the pre-eminent mediator of cosmic exchange and order.<sup>5</sup>

José Arguedas has recorded a contemporary Andean legend which displays similarities with this myth. In his account the *wachaq*, who belong to an age before that of the savages, enter into the heart of the mountain through its vein of water to find the water's source. In order to do so they must wear golden helmets and gold and silver clothes. When they come out they give the people fertile lands (1975: 51-3).

The meaning of the word *wachaq* is 'fornicator'. Arguedas finds this signification irrelevant to the legend (*ibid.*: 51), but it would seem to refer to the union of the sky - represented by the

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<sup>5</sup> A post-conquest Andean drama describes the Inca as the one who 'makes the mountains speak and sets the world in motion with his breath' (Wachtel 1977: 40).

gold and silver clothes - with the earth, accomplished once again through the medium of the human body.

In Garcilaso's myth we see the marked male / female dualism which is characteristic of Andean culture. Those peoples gathered by Manco Capac form Upper Cuzco - equated with male, sky and structure - while those Mama Ocllo gathers form Lower Cuzco - female, earth and chaos. Garcilaso writes of this division into upper and lower, which has a physical basis in the landscape as well as a symbolic meaning:

They were to be as the right side and the left side in any question of precedence of place and office, since those of the upper town had been gathered by the men and those of the lower by the women (1966: 45).

Right and left in Andean culture are in fact equated with male and female, superior and inferior. The attribution of inferior status to women and earth can be interpreted as an attempt to counter-balance their dynamic vitality and control their reproductive powers (Turner 1984: 115). This domination becomes more explicit in the imperial context. Garcilaso, for instance, describing the rituals carried out by the Incas at ploughing time, writes:

The songs they recited in praise of the Sun and their kings were all based on the meaning of the word *halli*, which means triumph over the earth, which they ploughed and disembowelled so that it should give fruit (1966: 244).

Verticality and transcendence of the earth characterizes men; while women are considered to be horizontal, parallel to the earth (Bouysse-Cassagne 1986: 215; Bastien 1978: 89). Women, therefore, are less suited than men to act as mediators between the cosmic levels.

#### IV

The myth of the origin of the Incas presented by Garcilaso, aside from expressing basic Andean beliefs, was a useful means of indoctrination and conquest for the Incas, who could appeal to their divine mission as reason for their domination. The chronicler José de Acosta comments on this that when the Incas made war on other nations they justified it by saying that all peoples owed them allegiance for having 'renewed the world' and for having 'revealed the true religion and cult of the sky' (Urbano 1981: 91). In other words, it was their restructuring of the cosmos which endowed the Incas with their right to rule.

It was with the ninth Inca, Pachacuti, that the area controlled by the Incas began to reach imperial proportions. This Inca's reign opened with a *pachacuti* or world reversal which Cabello Valboa in 1586 placed half a millennium after the founding of

Cuzco by Manco Capac (Zuidema 1964: 229). The new era was inaugurated by Inca Pachacuti's victory over the rebellious Chancas (a Central Andean people), who were on the verge of capturing Cuzco and overthrowing the Incan kingdom. Tradition states that during the battle the stones of the field turned into warriors to fight on the side of the Inca, and then changed back into stone again (Garcilaso 1966: 280). The battle won, Pachacuti set about rearranging the physical and spiritual landscape of his kingdom.

In 1653 Bernabé Cobo wrote of this Inca:

He injected order and reason into everything; eliminated and added rites and ceremonies; made the religious cult more extensive ... enlarged and embellished the temples with magnificent structures, income, and a great number of priests and ministers; reformed the calendar; divided the year into twelve months; giving each one its name; and designated the solemn fiestas and sacrifices to be held each month.... He was no less careful and diligent in matters pertaining to the temporal welfare of the republic; he gave his vassals a method of working the fields and taking advantage of the lands that were so rough and uneven as to be useless and unfruitful; he ordered that rough hillsides be terraced and that ditches be made from the rivers to irrigate them. In short, nothing was overlooked by him in which he did not impose all good order and harmony; for this reason he was given the name of Pachacuti, which means 'change of time or of the world' (1979: 133).

Here again we see the characteristic process of the *pachacuti*: a state of cosmic disorder in which land and body are interchangeable (i.e. the stones which become warriors) followed by the instauration of a new cosmic order.

Prior to the decisive battle with the Chancas, Pachacuti (or in other accounts his father), while alone in the countryside, had a vision of Viracocha, who promises him divine aid in his endeavours on behalf of the empire. On a leash held by Viracocha is an animal, a symbol of the barbaric nations the Inca is to subjugate and civilize.

A few of the nations subjugated by the Incas were, however, too closely allied to the earth to be fully civilized. Garcilaso writes of a group of them that were conquered by Pachacuti's son, Tupac Yupanqui:

They lived like wild beasts scattered about the countryside, and it was consequently more difficult to instruct them and reduce them to a civilized way of life than to merely subdue them.... The Incas established storehouses for their armies and lodgings for their king along the royal highways; but they did not build temples to the Sun or houses for the chosen virgins [the habitual means of the Incas of leaving their religious impress on the land] because of the primitive and barbarous character of the inhabitants (1966: 489).

The fate of those subjects who refused Incan rule and civilization



or, in other words, who refused to realize their full human potential through participation in the body of the empire, was reintegration with the land. In this regard Garcilaso notes that the captives of the Battle of Chancas were warned to either be good vassals or be 'swallowed up alive' by the earth (ibid.: 283).

V

Controlling and integrating the diverse ethnic groups of the empire was, in fact, an enormous task for the Incas, and reordering their subjects' relationship to the land formed an essential part of this endeavour. Andean religion provided several useful metaphors in this regard. If humans are animated earth, then land can be seen as a still human. The territory of the Incan Empire was thus conceptualized in terms of a body. The four major divisions of the body, upper, lower, left and right, were used to divide the empire into four zones, giving it its name Tahuantinsuyu or Four Quarters (Chinchasuyu, Antisuyu, Contisuyu, Collasuyu). At the centre was the capital, Cuzco, concentrating and circulating power throughout the whole. Garcilaso writes that

[The Incas] took as their central point the city of Cuzco, which in the private language of the Incas means 'the navel of the world'. The semblance of the navel is a good one, for all Peru is long and narrow like a human body and the city is almost in the middle (ibid.: 93).

As navel, Cuzco is in the centre both of the vertical body of the cosmos and the horizontal body of the land. It provides an umbilical cord between heaven and earth and it is the site at which civilization is created and spread outward.

The organization of the empire was to a large extent an extrapolation of the organization of Cuzco. The capital was organized in the form of a puma, with the temple situated in the puma's navel, mediating between the upper and lower sections of the town. The four quarters of Cuzco contained representatives of all the peoples of the empire. According to Garcilaso, this arrangement was established by the first Inca:

[Manco Capac] ordered that the savages he had subjugated should be settled according to their places of origin.... If a chief's province was to the right of his neighbour's, he built his house to the right; if it was to the left, he built it to the left, and if behind, he built his house behind. The result of this arrangement was that anyone who contemplated the wards and the dwellings of the numerous and varied tribes who had settled in them beheld the whole empire at once, as if looking in a looking glass or a cosmographic plan (1966: 422).

Radiating out from the centre of Cuzco were a number of

imaginary lines of power, called *ceques*, on which were situated major *huacas*, holy objects and shrines. These *ceques*, grouped together in threes, were associated with different social groups among which they served to regulate marriage (Zuidema 1964).

At the same time Cuzco was divided into four quarters by four streets in the form of a cross. Outside the city these streets became the four highways of the empire. During the annual rite of purification or *citua* evil and disease would be symbolically passed on from runner to waiting runner along these roads until a river was reached which would carry the misfortune out of the body of empire (Garcilaso 1966: 413-7).<sup>6</sup>

We find this quadripartition once again in the *mesa* (table) used by the Andean diviner, which is transformed into a microcosm by four diagonal lines crossing at its axis (Sharon 1978: 55). The *mesa* is also separated into two basic fields, that of evil and the underworld situated to the left, and that of good and heaven to the right, with representative power objects located on each. Between the two, mediating and balancing them, is the middle field, the human world. Eduardo Calderón Palomino, the diviner studied in the 1970s by Douglas Sharon, says of this middle field, 'that is the place where one has to put all, all, all his perseverance so that everything remains well controlled' (ibid.: 64). By controlling the flow of power in the microcosmos of the *mesa* the diviner is able to influence the macrocosmos, just as through Cuzco the Incas were able to influence all of Tahuantinsuyu.

The Incas gave order, meaning and integrity to their empire by applying the symbol of the body to the land and also by redistributing the bodies of their subjects over the land. Girls were brought to Cuzco from all parts of the empire to become wives of nobles and nuns, the heirs to the provinces under Incan rule were brought to Cuzco to be educated, and the principal movable *huacas* of all the ethnic groups were brought to Cuzco to be placed in the temple under the care of representatives from their peoples. By doing this the Incas strove to reorient their subjects from their local ceremonial centres towards Cuzco as centre of the cosmos.

Each town in the empire had the same upper / lower division as Cuzco. This was done, according to Cobo, to promote competition between the two halves and prevent them from uniting against Incan rule (1979: 195-6). Settlers, called *mitimaes*, were sent to newly incorporated lands in order to teach the natives and keep them in check. The greatest redistribution of bodies occurred with those subjects who were called to work for a period of time on a public project or to serve in the army (a tour of duty known as *mita*). This was a fundamental means of establishing a system of reciprocity among the peoples of Tahuantinsuyu and between the Inca and his subjects, and of creating a sense of common purpose.

Although the Incas imposed a common religion, law and language on their subjects, their aim was balanced diversity within a whole

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<sup>6</sup> In Andean medicine, to pass one's hand or a power object in the form of a cross over a patient's body disperses the illness to the four winds (Rosenberg 1939: 66-8).

rather than uniformity. Cobo writes of the *mitimaes* (who were required to retain their own form of dress):

As long as these *mitimaes* were loyal to the [Incan] governors, if the natives rebelled, soon they would be reduced to obeying the Inca, and if the *mitimaes* made a disturbance and started an uprising, they would be repressed and punished by the natives; and thus, by means of this resolution ... the king kept his states secure from rebellion (1979: 190).

This form of social organization was given consistency and meaning through the application of the body metaphor. The peoples of Tahuantinsuyu formed the separate but integrated parts of a body, at the head of which was the Inca, directing all the members according to a divine will.

It should be understood, however, that these metaphors, while expressions of belief, did not and were not expected to correspond strictly to physical or social reality, nor was the existence of discrepancies among them precluded. The resulting 'breathing spaces' or gaps in the structure allowed to some extent for the idiosyncrasy of historical circumstances and personal experience.

The body metaphor for land and society, extended by the Incas to include their whole empire, continues to have relevance in the Andes. An account given by an inhabitant of the Central Peruvian Andes in 1971 reads as follows:

God the powerful, of the Sky and of the Sea, travelled through the world, the body of Mama Pacha [Mother Earth]. He created us by taking us from the hair, the mouth, from the eyes, from the perspiration of our Mother Earth....

Peru begins in Lake Titicaca, which is the sex of our Mother Earth, and ends in Quito, which is her forehead. They say that Lima is her mouth and Cuzco her beating heart. Her veins are rivers. But Mama Pacha extends further and goes very far. Her right hand is Spain, perhaps (Ortiz Rescaniere 1973: 239).

While the earth as a whole is female, the elevated parts of the landscape are usually male. The Quechua word for mountain, *urco*, is in fact also the word for male. Mountains are often conceptualized as human or animal bodies with heads, chests and legs (Bastien 1978: 189). The basic social unit of the Andes, the *ayllu* (literally 'penis'), a form of kin group holding land in common, is both a body and a mountain, with the founding ancestor at the head (ibid.: xxiv).

In his study of a contemporary *ayllu* in the Bolivian Andes, Joseph Bastien examined how the body metaphor was applied to three communities living at the low, middle and high levels of a mountain, and to the mountain itself (1978). It was the task of the diviner who lived in the middle community, the heart and bowels of the body, to circulate life and energy throughout the levels (ibid.: 46). Through ritual, a system of exchange is established with the mountain and the peoples living on it, and a balanced, integrated world ensured (ibid.: xxiv). Bastien writes:

The Andean symbolic system is not the explanatory model of the anthropologist but the people's own metaphor of society. It is an analogous process by which a people understand themselves in terms of their land (ibid.: 197).

## VI

To conclude our examination of the relationship between land and body in Andean religion, we will look briefly at how this relationship was effected by the Spanish conquest.

The eleventh Inca, Huayna Capac, had premonitions of the end of the empire, earthquakes and tidal waves disturbed the land and fearsome comets appeared in the sky. There was also a prophecy that the age of the Incas was coming to its close and that the next Inca would be the last (Garcilaso 1966: 573-5). The empire was certainly under a strain. The bodies of the Incan rulers were mummified after death and treated as if still alive, retaining all their personal lands and property. This created an ever-increasing demand for new land, a quest sanctioned by the divine mission of the Incas to disseminate civilization. New land to conquer was becoming scarce, however, and too distant from the government to govern conveniently. Prompted in part by these tensions, two sons of Huayana Capac, Huascar and Atahualpa, fought each other for the succession, devastating the empire in the process (Conrad and Demarest 1984: 84-151).

It was just after Atahualpa's victory in 1532 that the Spanish penetrated Tahuantinsuyu, captured the new Inca, and executed him. An Andean lament for Atahualpa's death proclaims that 'the earth refused to swallow up the Inca's dead body, rocks and precipices trembled and intoned funereal chants ... and time itself was reduced to the twinkling of an eye' (Wachtel 1977: 31). Without their head, the Incan subjects were immobilized.

A puppet Inca, Manco, another son of Huayna Capac, was set up by the Spanish, who showed their contempt for him by snuffing out candles in his face, urinating on him, and raping his wives before his eyes (ibid.: 170). Cuzco was replaced by Lima as the capital, and new political and religious divisions broke up the body of the empire.<sup>7</sup> The Spanish burned the royal mummies, destroyed *huacas*, and said that the Andean gods were not gods at all, but devils, and that only *they* possessed the true religion.

It was a *pachacuti*, a disintegration and reordering of the cosmos. Poma de Ayala, who as a native Andean experienced the effects of this change, refers to the new situation as a 'reversed world' (1980 II: 380). Viceroy Toledo (1569-1581), in charge of much of the turnover, was called by the Andeans the second Inca

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<sup>7</sup> A modern Andean tradition tells us that 'when the Inca could no longer do anything, Jesus Christ struck Mother Earth and cut her neck. Then he had churches built' (Ortiz Rescaniere 1973: 243).

Pachacuti (Garcilaso 1966: 396).

In 1536 Manco escaped from the Spanish and established a rebel Incan state in the mountains. In the years that followed a millenarian movement arose among the native populace. Andean preachers proclaimed that when the Spanish arrived, the Christian god had conquered the native gods, but now the Christian god was completing his cycle and the native gods would once again reign (Wachtel 1977: 160). According to this popular belief, the spirits of the *huacas* had left their rocks and dwelling places and become incarnate in their followers. Only those faithful to the cult of the *huacas* would be received into the New Empire, those who had betrayed their religion by accepting Christian baptism 'would become wandering spirits, head down and feet in air' (ibid.: 181).

In 1571 an expedition organised by Viceroy Toledo captured the ruler of the neo-Incan state, Tupac Amarú, Manco's son, and brought him to Cuzco where he was executed. A Spanish observer wrote:

The Inca's head was fixed on a pikestaff close to the scaffold. Each day it became more beautiful.... At night the Indians came out to worship him, until one morning, at dawn, Juan de la Sierra, standing by chance at his window, saw the idolatry of the people. The viceroy was informed. He ordered the head to be buried, with the body, in a chapel in the cathedral (ibid.: 184).

It was the end of the Incan state and of the millenarian movement. Nonetheless, the hope for the return of the Inca and the Empire survived. In recent years many versions of this tradition, expressing the inability of the sundered body to order the world and the longing for its reintegration, have been collected. We will quote from three:

They say that only the head of Inkarrí [a contraction of Inca and *rey*, king] exists. It's growing downwards, they say its growing down to the feet. Then Inkarrí will come back, when his body is complete. He hasn't come back yet (Arguedas 1975: 40).

They say he's in Cuzco now. We don't know who could have taken him to Cuzco. They say they took his head, only his head. And they say his hair is growing, his body is growing underneath. When it has reconstituted itself, perhaps it will be the Day of Judgement... (ibid.: 41).

It was God [the Catholic one] who ordered the troops of the king-state to capture and decapitate Inkarrí.... The head of Inkarrí is in the Palace [of Government] of Lima and it's still alive. But it has no power because it's separated from its body.... If the head of the god is freed and reintegrates with its body, it can once again confront the Catholic god and do battle with him. But if he is unable to reconstitute himself and recover his supernatural power, perhaps we will all die (ibid.: 178).

The decapitated head which remains alive is Andean sacred structure, and the body which must grow and reunite itself with its head before the land can be reclaimed and order restored is the Andean peoples themselves.

## CONSTANCE CLASSEN

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## PATRILATERAL CROSS-COUSIN MARRIAGE AMONG THE PARAIYARS OF SOUTH INDIA

Before introducing the ethnographic data, this article will first of all aim at showing how a marriage rule works in practice. We shall then see, following Needham (1962: 115), that patrilateral cross-cousin marriage entails a weakening of structural groups and prevents the constitution of corporate units: 'Since it has no systematic character and does not produce an organic type of solidarity, a society based upon it is always in a precarious position (ibid.: 7). Furthermore, patrilateral marriages cannot exist alone: matrilateral unions are combined with them, even if these are considered by Paraiyars as a secondary preference.

Secondly, this article will attempt to show that even if a society with patrilateral cross-cousin marriage favours the repetition of previous marriages, it is not completely averse to the 'multiplication' of new alliances, i.e. the search for new matrimonial partners. Dumont (1966: 106) has shown that North India, which forbids cross-cousin marriage, is nevertheless not totally opposed to the repetition of marriages. Conversely, it is here possible to argue that South Indian castes, though encouraging the repetition of former marriages, do not reject the search for new ones. The theoretical situation is far too ideal. It supposes that every man has one son and one daughter, and that every young man has a preferential cousin of about the same age. It also postulates that all relatives are on good terms and never quarrel, that children never express their views about their marriages and always accept their parents' opinion. To forget all this means, as pointed out by Bourdieu (1980: 59), that one confuses the 'official view' of an institution with its 'practical existence'.

*The Paraiyars of Valghira Manickam*

Before proceeding with the analysis, it will be useful to say something about the Paraiyars among whom fieldwork was conducted in 1981.

Valghira Manickam is a village near the small town of Devakottai (Ramanad District), 100 km. east of Madurai, Tamil Nadu. The village is populated by three untouchable communities. The Catholic Paraiyars, numbering about 450 individuals, form the largest community in the village, followed by the Hindu Paraiyars (about 130), and finally the Hindu Pallars (about 120), who live in a separate hamlet and will not be dealt with here.

Among the Paraiyars, there is little difference between Hindus and Catholics. The two communities do not intermarry (though sexual ties occur) but friendships between them are very common, people address each other by kinship terms, they live in the same streets, eat each other's food etc. On the other hand, their relationship with the Pallars, who are traditionally held to be superior, is strained. They try to avoid each other, do not accept food from each other, and quarrel at times. There are no economic or political relations between Pallars and Paraiyars, and therefore their relationship is one of mere neighbourhood. Pallars tend to feel superior and call the Paraiyar hamlet *cēri* (or untouchable quarter), but the Paraiyars claim not to accept this superiority (Delière 1985).

Economically, the Paraiyars are poor. Most of them are landless. The main occupations of the villagers are brick-making and coolie work. Valghira Manickam, being a rather recent settlement, is not attached to any high-caste village, and people work in different places, including Devakottai town. In spite of their very limited needs, people usually find it difficult to make ends meet, and malnutrition, disease and a very high rate of child mortality are the natural consequences of their economic hardship (Delière 1983: 702).

The Paraiyars are the largest untouchable community in Tamil Nadu. Although they say they can marry any Paraiyar from their own religion, the Paraiyars of Valghira Manickam seek brides in a very limited area. The Christians - perhaps surprisingly - appear to be much more conservative than their Hindu brothers. While many Hindus have left the village to seek new occupations elsewhere, the Christians stick to their old ones, and socially they follow the traditional institutions much more closely than the Hindus. As we shall see later, they conform much more, for instance to the rule of cross-cousin marriage, and do not venture very far to seek brides. My sample of the Hindu community was too limited to draw any general conclusions. Nevertheless, whereas Hindus try to marry in many different villages, this was not the case for the Christians, whose marriage circle does not extend beyond ten villages within a radius of 10 miles of their village: 82% of Catholic marriages take place between 5 villages, 91% between 8 villages, and nearly half within the village itself.

*Why Marry a Cousin?*

The Paraiyars explain the practice of cross-cousin marriage through the importance of reciprocity: a girl 'given' must be 'returned'. However, one can also see that the Paraiyars tend to marry their cousins because they belong to a cultural area (South India) in which cross-cousin marriage is a widespread rule. The Paraiyars did not create the institution for themselves: they practise it because their fathers and forefathers did so. At the same time, each marriage provides an opportunity not to follow the rule, but to take a bride from some unrelated family. Thus, if the rule is still followed it is because they still see some advantage in it - otherwise they would abandon the institution, as many castes of Tamil Nadu have already done (Dumont 1975: 34). It is precisely these advantages - which are more than rationalisations - that can be examined here. It is true, as Good points out (1981: 110), that there is a terminological basis to cross-cousin marriage. Yet I am tempted to say that kinship terminology only defines the categories in which a boy or a girl must (should) marry; it does not really designate the actual partner, whereas for the Paraiyars, cross-cousin marriage is a prescription of particular brides.

Reciprocity appears to be the theoretical justification for cross-cousin marriage among the Paraiyars: if I give a daughter to my relative's son, I am short of a girl, and he must return me one in the next generation. This is only theoretical because in practice people do not really calculate the number of girls, and as we shall see, they will even give several girls to one family without receiving any in return.

The importance of family ties and the desire to maintain a close relationship with one's relatives is an essential reason for marrying cousins. Alliance here seems to be even more fundamental than reciprocity. For example, if I give my sister to X in marriage, she will always keep in contact with my family thereafter; she will come back to my house. In order to keep this relationship with my family alive, she will also wish to give her daughter to my own son. In this case, there is clear reciprocity between the two families, but if she has a son and no daughter, she will insist on taking my daughter for her son: the alliance will then be reinforced at the expense of reciprocity. Quarrels between a husband and his wife frequently occur at the time of their children's marriages: the mother wants to marry them to her side, the father to his side. In other words, patrilateral marriages are not automatic and are always rivalled by matrilateral possibilities.

A Paraiyar thus feels more at ease with members of his own family. This is by no means a purely psychological explanation of cross-cousin marriage but only the individual, pragmatic aspect of the theory of alliance. An old man put it in these terms:

Suppose my daughter is married to my sister's son, and I pay a visit to her. I reach their house but there is nobody home; the door is locked. But since it is my own sister's house, I can go in, take some food and feel at home. On the other hand, if my daughter is married to a stranger, in the same situation,

I have to wait outside their house for their return. I cannot go in, otherwise my daughter would be insulted by her in-laws: they would say that her father only came here to steal food, that he wants to spoil them, that he does not respect them etc. For this reason, it is better to marry close relatives.

The danger of marrying outside the family is that of going into the unknown and losing some relative: if I do not give my daughter to her cousin, the latter's family will be vexed, and I will be more isolated. The question now is to know in which case and how the rule is followed among the Paraiyars. Is it automatic or compulsory? What does the rule prescribe exactly?

### *The Rule of Marriage*

Among the Paraiyars, filiation and inheritance are patrilineal, residence is virilocal. Tamil kinship vocabulary divides relatives into consanguines and allies (Dumont 1957: 273-81). The terminological structure is thus consistent with the marriage rule, i.e. it defines the categories of permitted and forbidden spouses. However, among the Paraiyars, the rule of marriage does much more than just define a broad category into which one must or must not marry; for the Paraiyars, it designates an actual partner for one's son or daughter. In other words, and more practically, when asked about his son's marriage, a villager will explain that his son must marry this particular girl ('there, the girl you see down the street'), most often his real FZD or MBD, and not just any *attai makal*.

Thus in spite of inconsistencies the terminological structure and the marriage rule fit together. Various authors have given a complete list of kinship terms (see Dumont 1975; Beck 1972; Good 1981; Scheffler 1984 etc), and we can content ourselves with a table of the main Tamil terms (see Table 1).

Table 1: Main Tamil Kinship Terms

		consanguines	affines
generation + 1	M	<i>appa, aiya</i>	<i>māman</i>
	F	<i>atta</i>	<i>attai</i>
generation 0	older than Ego	M	<i>annan</i>
			<i>accā</i>
	younger than Ego	M	<i>tambi</i>
			<i>maccūnan (ms)</i> <i>kulendan (ws)</i>
generation -1	F	<i>tankaci</i>	<i>kulundiya</i>
	M	<i>makam</i>	<i>marumakān</i>
	F	<i>makal</i>	<i>marumakal</i>

M = male; F = female; ms = man speaking; ws = woman speaking

The rule of marriage forbids any marriage with members of one's father's section, the *Pankali*, whereas it gives 'cross-cousins' as desirable spouses. For a boy, the ideal form of marriage is to marry his *attai makal* or FZD. The perfect application of this rule, as stressed above, is quite impossible.

In reality, we find more complicated situations, as shown in Figure 1. From this it is clear that A and B have exchanged women by combining patrilineal and matrilineal unions. So a2 married his MBD, a3 married his FZD (who is also his MBD), b1 married his FZD and b2 his MBD; b1 and b2 have both taken a woman from A (the latter's sister and daughter respectively) but a1 has not yet received anything from them. Actually, a1 has only one young son, who is still too young to get married, and consequently he has not yet been able to take a girl from family B. So far, B has given three women to A, who has returned only two. Equilibrium might be established later on.

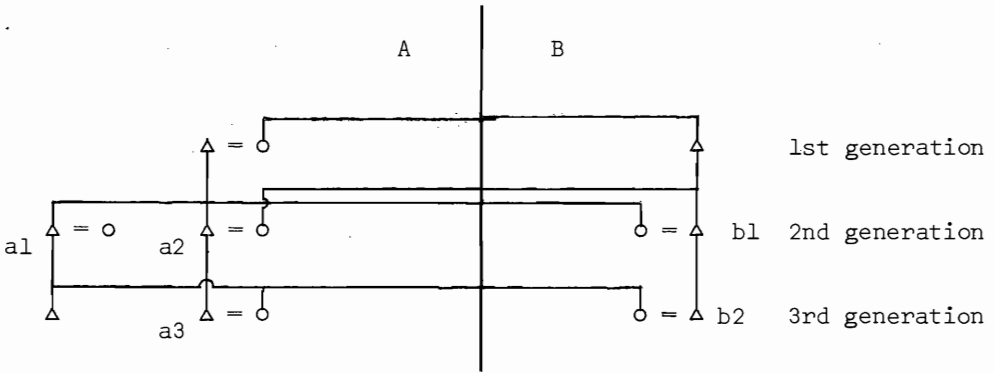


Figure 1: Exchange of women between two families of Valghira Manickam

This example also shows clearly that matrilineal unions coexist with patrilineal ones. When asked about the first preference, a Paraiyar will always state that a boy should marry his *attai makal* (FZD), but he will also add that if this union is not possible he may always marry his *mama makāl* (MBD). Numerous unions testify to this double choice, as is clear from Table 2. The sample of Hindu marriages is admittedly rather small, but it seems to me that they are nevertheless less attached to preferential unions than the Catholics. Columns 1 and 2 indicate marriages with first cousins whereas column 3 includes marriages with second cousins. Marriages with more distant relatives or with strangers are given in column 4, which still includes some preferential unions. For Hindus, preferential unions only comprise 24% of the marriages whereas 48% of recent Christian marriages were in accordance with the patrilineal preference (columns 1, 2, 3). These figures are much higher than those given by Ghurye (1969: 262), who considered that only 17% of Tamil marriages respected the rule of preferential union, and they

Table 2: Types of marriage in the communities of Valghira Manickam

	1	2	3	4	5
	FZD	MBD	Second degree	Distant relative	Total
Catholics	24	15	7	50	96
Hindus	1	4	2	22	29
Total	25	19	9	72	125

are also higher than those collected by Beck (1972: 253) or Good (1981: 117).

Furthermore, Table 2 shows that the application of the first preference (marriage with FZD) is rather feeble, since its occurrence is hardly superior to that of the matrilateral form. One is reminded here of Needham's point that a system based upon patrilateral marriage is practically impossible (1962: 115). Similarly, Dumont has pointed out that South Indian castes which practise patrilateral unions inevitably have matrilateral unions as well. Needham has rightly noticed that in a patrilateral system, FZD would be equivalent to MMBDD and would thus be a matrilateral cousin also. This holds true among the Paraiyars since as we shall see most relatives are bilateral.

Needham goes on to show that patrilateral marriage entails a structural weakness by preventing the constitution of corporate groups, since a lineage is both wife-giver and wife-taker *vis-à-vis* the same partner. As Lévi-Strauss puts it, patrilateral marriages involve at each generation a reversal of all 'cycles' (1958: 135), whereas the matrilateral system supposes a global structure of society (1967: 320). The so-called 'system of generalized exchange' which results from matrilateral cross-cousin marriage encourages anisogamy, i.e. status differentiation within a homogenous society (Deliège 1980: 44). Therefore, patrilateral marriages fit in better with an absence of authority and social hierarchy: here, one family cannot permanently be inferior to another, since alliances are returned in every generation. This seems to be particularly true of the Paraiyars of Valghira Manickam, who know of no form of internal authority or social differentiation. They are incapable of extended solidarity, and corporate groups do not exist among them. Jealousy, rivalry and quarrels are constant. It would not be exaggerating to say that the Paraiyars are totally averse to any form of internal authority and internal hierarchy (Deliège 1988).

It appears that a strict application of the marriage rule is impossible. In many cases, the preferential spouse is not available: some people have no children or only sons, too great an age difference may separate cousins, etc. If FZD is not available, then MBD is the second-best choice for a boy's marriage. Besides

the latter's mother has probably insisted for many years on marrying him to her brother's daughter, for she is always keen to keep close contact with her own relatives. Even if FZD is a possible spouse, the boy's mother will try to influence her husband. On the other hand, this insistence is not always necessary, since the 'confusion' resulting from a patrilineal system always involves some sort of 'bilaterality' of relatives: in other words, a man is often related to his wife through both his father's side and his mother's side. Thus it is not uncommon for a man to marry a (classificatory) sister or daughter. This is the case with the marriage of Gnanamuttu, as shown in Figure 2.

Figure 2: Relationship between Gnanamuttu and his wife on his mother's side



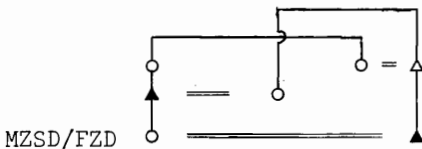
Gnanamuttu's wife is the daughter of a classificatory brother (MZS) and she is therefore a 'daughter' to Gnanamuttu. From this point of view, she is forbidden to him, but on his father's side, she is acceptable, as shown in Figure 3.

Figure 3: Relationship between Gnanamuttu and his wife on his father's side



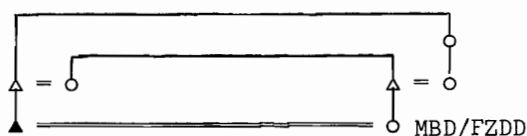
According to this figure, Gnanamuttu's wife is his FZD and thus his preferential spouse. Both situations are represented in Figure 4, which shows clearly the bilaterality of Gnanamuttu's marriage.

Figure 4: Bilateral relationship between Gnanamuttu and his wife



Similar cases occur very frequently in Valghira Manickam, since the kinship ties resulting from preferential unions are extremely confused. Another example is given in Figure 5.

Figure 5: Bilateral relationship between Arockyam and his wife



Arockyam's wife is thus his *māma makal* (MBD) on his mother's side but also *makal* (daughter) on his father's side. Arockyam's mother-in-law would therefore be his ideal wife (FZD), but she is too old for him. He took her daughter, who was also his MBD and was thus acceptable. We can say, therefore, that for the Paraiyars, there is no essential difference between a matrilateral and a patrilateral relative. It is often possible to rationalize a marriage with MBD by pointing out that she is also a patrilateral relative.

The question now arises whether or not it is compulsory to marry a cousin. On this matter, the Paraiyars are contradictory: 'we are obliged to marry a close relative, but if we like, we may also marry someone else'. This could hardly be more confused, but I pointed out that in particular circumstances, some insisted upon the fact that such a union is absolutely compulsory, whereas others saw it as facultative. The Paraiyars are no great theoreticians, and one should always consider their answers according to the context in which they are made.

First of all, one must note that the Paraiyars have few means of enforcing social sanctions. Their lack of unity prevents them from punishing someone who does not follow a rule. Even inter-caste marriages - though not frequent - do not lead to ostracism. The only possible sanction in the case of a 'wrong' marriage is to cut off all family ties. Here also the punishment is limited, since the society is so divided that one always finds allies, even within the family. However, if, for example, parents accept the elopement of their daughter with some boy, they will become enemies of her mother's brother, who would normally be entitled to take her for his son. Paraiyar society as such does not sanction this sort of thing; only individuals quarrel or 'create problems'. Therefore, only the force of tradition or the will to preserve family ties still induce the Paraiyars to marry their cousins.

We know that patrilateral cross-cousin marriage does not suppose a general arrangement of society but merely unites pairs of families. In the first generation, the first family stands as wife-giver but it will become wife-taker in the next. A girl given must be returned, but among the Paraiyars, once this exchange has been carried out the obligation to give (or to take) becomes less severe. This is what Sebastian tells us:



I took my wife from a family in Naivayal village. I gave my eldest daughter back to my wife's brother's son. Now I have done my duty, I can give my other daughters to other people.

Reciprocity, then, supposes at least one exchange. Once a girl received has been returned, it is no longer compulsory (or it is 'less compulsory' the Paraiyars would say) to keep matrimonial ties with that family. No doubt a man normally likes to continue the relationship, and his relatives may be vexed if he does not do so, but it is not compulsory. On the other hand, the Paraiyars insist upon the fact that if a girl is given to a particular family, she *must* be returned in the next generation; the *māma* of the girl will be allowed to come and fetch her if he wishes, because having given his sister, he must receive a girl back for his son. The maternal uncle has some means of obtaining his rights. He is always required to arrange the marriage of his niece; but if the latter is promised to someone else, he may spread the word that the girl is his, and the girl's parents will find it difficult to marry her because other people will be afraid of the maternal uncle's wrath. Furthermore, if her parents want to arrange a marriage without him, people will wonder why he is not there and suspect that something is 'wrong' with her. I know of maternal uncles who were afraid that their niece would be married to a stranger and so they took their sister's daughter to their house when the girl was only 8 or 9 years old; she lived in the family and married the son of the household when she had come of age. If the maternal uncle really wants his sister's daughter for his son, it will be difficult to refuse him. Not only will ties with him be cut but it will be hard to find another spouse for the girl. This case is, however, extreme; in many cases, if the girl's parents do not want to arrange a preferential union the maternal uncle will accept their choice, even if he feels bitter about it ('Is my son not good enough for their daughter?').

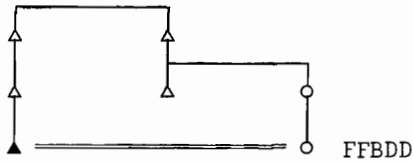
The fact that cross-cousin marriage also has to be arranged - with less difficulty, it is true - also shows that it is by no means automatic and that some free choice is left to the parents and the youth.

### *Multiplication of Alliances*

Cross-cousin marriage is therefore compulsory only in specific circumstances. Sometimes it is impossible when, for example, there is no suitable groom for a bride, or when a couple has no children. In other words, it means that in certain circumstances, the Paraiyars wish or have to seek brides among non-related people.

It fairly frequently happens that there is no suitable relative for a boy or girl. The Paraiyars are then obliged to find someone else and thereby create new links. If a boy is much younger than his *attai makal* and *māma makal*, the latter will be married by the time he reaches a reasonable age. Of course, he will still marry someone who is related to him, because kinship ties are very complex,

Figure 6: Relationship between Rayappan and his wife



but the Paraiyars do not really consider these unions as preferential: only the first cousin and to a lesser extent the second cousin are considered preferential mates. Other relatives are considered *anniyar* or 'distant relatives, relatives whom we do not know' (see Table 2, column 4). In such cases, they say: 'My wife and I are Paraiyar and thus related but I do not know how: she is *anniyar*'. The relationship between Rayappan and his wife as shown in Figure 6 is, for example, too remote to be considered preferential.

Rayappan's wife's mother is his father's sister and his wife is thus a sort of FZD (in fact FFBDD), but the marriage between Rayappan and his wife was not conceived as preferential. 'She is *attai makal* to me, but not a real one', the husband explained. Thus their marriage was not arranged by their parents as a preferential one; having decided on the marriage, it happened that they had a suitable relationship.

The rule of preferential marriage itself is not totally opposed to the search for new alliances. This is clear from the case of large families: one arranges a marriage on the father's side, another on the mother's side, and for the marriages of other children one seeks 'new relatives'. This situation combines the advantages of preserving the old alliances with those of creating new ties. Therefore, a father will rarely give two girls to the same family, i.e. to two 'brothers' (even classificatory). Although it would be theoretically acceptable, it very rarely happens. I was only able to collect one instance, which was explained by the physical handicap of a man who was unable to find a wife; he was then given a preferential cousin, even though his brother was married to his wife's elder sister. In such cases the second union does not bring anything to the alliance between the two families, for this has already been reinforced through the first union. It is thus better to marry the girl elsewhere, for example on her father's side or to a stranger. This is how a Hindu father explained his situation. His wife comes from Kotakutti village, and he has already married two of his daughters: the eldest had to be returned to her mother's village, and she then married her MBS. In order to reinforce the relationship with his own family, the father gave his second daughter to his sister's son. For his third daughter, he will seek outside the family in order to have new relatives.

In this way a man extends his family network and becomes more powerful. If we ask a Paraiyar whether his wife is related to him when she is not, he will often say, 'Before our marriage, her family was not related to me, but now they have all become my relatives'.

In some cases, a man may not be willing to arrange a preferential union for his children. This may entail a dispute with his relatives, but not always. It may happen that both families agree to marry the children to 'distant relatives', although there is often some resentment in such cases. A good example of this was given to me by a young man who refused to marry his *attai makal* because she was more educated than him. The parents then say, 'How can we marry them if they do not want to?' If the couple are not well matched, another solution will be sought. The relationship between the two families may grow colder: 'Do they think my daughter is not good enough for their boy?', 'What do they think they are?', the girl's father may say. If things get worse, relations may even be cut, but this is not always the case.

Sometimes both parties agree not to follow the preferential rule, but generally speaking, there must be some justification for doing so (as in the above case), otherwise it will lead to a dispute between them. This shows that other things being equal, cross-cousin marriage tends to be compulsory.

Nevertheless, this does not take the young people's opinions into account. In fact, the Paraiyars never marry their children without their consent. If the boy does not like the girl (and vice versa), they will not be married. Even when a girl must absolutely be returned, the marriage will not take place if the boy and girl are strongly opposed to it. 'Such marriages inevitably lead to failure,' the Paraiyars comment. This of course means that love marriages are commonly accepted by the Paraiyars. 'We can do nothing about it,' they say; 'if a boy has a girl "in his head", we do not have the power to prevent their marriage'.

A young Paraiyar will soon earn as much as his father and thus becomes economically independent (Mandelbaum 1970 I: 48). If the parents do not want to marry him to the girl he likes, he will simply elope with her and settle down in a separate hut. A Paraiyar does not need much money to start a family. Cases of elopement are numerous in the village, and people can even give the names of those who are likely to elope soon. When a boy and a girl like each other, there is little opposition: if they wish to marry, they simply run away for two or three days and say that they have asked a priest to bless them. The parents may be quite angry for some time but their wrath does not last. They soon forgive their children and accept the new couple. This might not be true of the girl's *māma* (MB), who had perhaps arranged some other marriage for his niece. He cannot accept the new union, for he 'has lost his dignity' by promising the girl to another family. It then sometimes follows that relations with him will be cut for ever.

These love marriages are very frequent. I was able to discover more than 30 cases in the village itself, in both the previous and the present generation. There must be more, because some are disguised as arranged or even preferential unions. Love marriages are less prestigious than arranged marriages, but they are nevertheless commonly accepted, and this lack of 'prestige' has little consequence apart from a reluctance to admit that one's marriage was a love marriage. Most people think that love cannot be opposed, and everybody has at least one close relative who was married in such a

way. This clearly shows that a society which on the one hand prescribes a partner through a positive marriage rule may at the same time leave some freedom to its members in the choice of spouse. These two apparently contradictory aspects nevertheless coexist, and and both occur very frequently. Strangely enough, they are even reconciled in the few cases where young men have eloped with their preferential cousins, though their families did not get on well together.

A system of matrilateral cross-cousin marriage, with its global arrangement of society and its 'aristocratic consequences' (Lévi-Strauss 1967: 487), would probably be less tolerant towards the free choice of partners. In such a system, marriage may soon become a question of status, whereas this is not the case for patrilateral marriages, which encourage isogamous unions. Similarly, love marriages do not involve status considerations, since they are guided solely by the mutual attraction between the young couple. This shows that both types of marriage may be less contradictory than appears at first sight.

There are other institutions which favour the multiplication of alliances. For example, a widower or a widow may remarry a stranger. Or, if husband and wife do not get on well together, they may easily separate and live with someone else. However, it should also be pointed out that the search for new partners is limited to the traditional 'marriage circle' at least in practice. The Christian Paraiyars do not venture very far in search of brides. Very recently attempts have been made to extend the range, but they are still exceptions. The Hindu Paraiyars marry at a slightly greater distance, and consequently cross-cousin marriage is less widespread among them, at least in the village studied. This limitation again reduces the apparent contradiction between the search for new alliances and preferential unions, since one does not run away with any girl, but only with those within the marriage circle. Furthermore, the immense majority of love marriages unite people of the same community: one falls in love with Catholic Paraiyars. In this circle, even a non-related person is *anniyar* or a 'distant relative'. Families who try to go outside the marriage circle are those who are unable to find a suitable partner or those who ask for large dowries. These cases are still so rare that we must wait for future research before drawing any conclusions. Meanwhile, it appears that there is no contradiction between the repetition of alliances through cross-cousin marriage (patrilateral) and the search for new partners within a definite area. One always marries some sort of relative anyway, and one rarely goes into the unknown; yet, in spite of the rule of cross-cousin marriage, one sometimes prefers to marry a girl who is not the prescribed spouse.

### *Conclusions*

Patrilateral cross-cousin marriage as experienced by the Paraiyars fits only imperfectly with the theoretical model. It can hardly be practised without matrilateral forms nor can it be described as a

pure form of repetition of previous alliances. It is always accomplished by a search for new marriage partners, though only within a restricted area. On the other hand, one must recognise that patrilineal cross-cousin marriage favours isogamous marriages and therefore prevents the formation of status differentiation through marital unions. This fits in particularly with the internal structure of Paraiyar social organization at Valghira Manickam. Here, there is no leadership, no authority, no hierarchized units and little social sanction. This social equality - which is, however, not characterised by a positive rule - contrasts with the hierarchical division of caste society.

Christian Paraiyars tend to be more traditional than the Hindus. Their exclusion from the lists of Scheduled Castes has kept them outside the mainstream of Harijan or untouchable movements. They are less tempted to seek brides from other regions, although no formal rule prevents them from doing so. Yet they have little contact with other Paraiyars and lack the strong Harijan consciousness. This might partly explain the differences which we have observed between Hindu and Catholic Paraiyars.

The importance of love marriage and the absence of internal hierarchy point to a basic difference between high and low castes. While this difference is by no means absolute (see Moffatt 1979), low-caste institutions do not always follow the high-caste model. We have seen that among the Paraiyars of Valghira Manickam, patrilineal cross-cousin marriage reinforces the absence of authority and status differentiation. The absence of dowry fits in better with isogamy (see Tambiah 1973), and this trend is also reflected in the readiness of the Paraiyars to settle apart from their parents soon after the wedding.

The financial question which lies at the heart of many Indian marriages nowadays is not a decisive factor for the Paraiyars. Marriage is not for them a means of increasing the financial status of the family, and they are still guided by questions of traditional alliances and even mutual attraction. Materially, a young man and his wife are able to manage as well (or as poorly) as their parents. Only the few Paraiyar who have studied hesitate before marrying because, being jobless, they are not able to maintain a family unless they also become coolies. This is often what they have to do anyway after a few years of idleness. Among the Paraiyars, the people who have taken advantage of modern opportunities to obtain a salaried job (municipal scavengers, white collar workers etc), are still too few to form a separate class by marrying among themselves. If economic conditions change drastically, some change can be expected in matrimonial institutions as well. In the meantime, cross-cousin marriage will remain a lively institution.

ROBERT DELIÈGE

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## COMMENTARY

### TOWARD AN ANTHROPOLOGY OF EXPLOITATION

The development of Guatemalan society, like that of several other Indo-American states, has been unequal, and the integration of the state into nationhood has been precarious as a result of discrimination against the indigenous half of the population and their socio-cultural hermeticism within the values of their own historical traditions (Torres Rivas 1971). These traditions cannot be said to have developed independently of the colonial and neo-colonial relations that exist between the two populations, and they bear the imprint of their imperfect and forced integration into the national system of production.

The formation and evolution of indigenous ideological systems from the colonial period to the present and their articulation to metropolitan structures which reproduce exploitative relations between the centre and periphery is the central problem in the work of the first series of authors to be discussed. The second section examines a recent work by Bossen (see below p. 241) which is concerned with the effects of socio-economic integration and dislocation on gender relations at different junctures within Guatemalan society. Both types of study are important in understanding the relationship between the state and indigenous communities - which during the 1970s and the early 1980s was heavily repressive - and in demonstrating the political relevance of anthropology and its responsibility towards the people it studies.

The indigenous population of Guatemala has been displaced from the rich coastal lands that bound the Pacific Ocean and the south-east of the country, and concentrated in the western highlands and the North Transversal strip, the 'new frontier', which has progressively changed from representing an underpopulated land reserve where untitled peasants could be given rights to land without threatening the large estates elsewhere, to being the 'land of the Generals',

where the military have claimed huge tracts because of their mineral wealth and for cattle-farming, and where genocidal violence has characterised their relations with the newly settled population.

The western highlands contrast markedly with other parts of Guatemala due to the presence of a large indigenous population concentrated on small subsistence plots or *minifundias* and the minority presence of *ladinos* (people of mixed Indian/Spanish blood). According to Torres Rivas, it is the structural relation between the *minifundias* and the large *fincas* (capitalist landholdings) or *latidundias* (landed estates) of the coastal plains that regulates the labour market, by encouraging conditions which force the indigenous populations to migrate annually to work on a temporary basis at the coast while maintaining themselves throughout the remainder of the year by subsistence activities in the highlands. At the same time the *fincas*, which are administered as capitalist enterprises integrated into the world market, maintain a considerably smaller permanent semi-skilled work-force whose treatment is different from that given to the migrants. The indigenous displacement from land and the vociferous and erratic demand for labour within rural areas has stimulated the growth of urban centres. According to Rojas Lima (1967) there was a 9% increase in the total proportion of the population living within urban areas between 1950 and 1964, which, in terms of actual numbers, indexed to the growth of the population as a whole, represented an increase from 696,458 to 1,433,020. Urban growth has been influenced by the exponential increase in the size of the population, which stood at 2,790,868 inhabitants in 1950, exceeded four million in 1964, and is at present approximately seven million. Increasing scarcity of land and the near-paralysis of government efforts to colonize the Peten and the North Transversal Strip have led to a further movement towards the capital, where the landless peasantry have been transformed into an industrial labour reserve living in *ciudades perdidos* (slums, literally 'lost cities').

These processes, which have created a peculiar geography of misery by the distribution, separation and concentration of population according to the integration of the region with the centres of capitalist production, are what has made Guatemala such an appropriate area for the work of Warren (1978) and Hawkins (1984) on the (trans)formation of ethnic identity and Bossen's study (see below, p. 241) of the effects of particular economic conditions and the growth of the economic dependence of the family on gender relations.

However, these conditions were hardly reflected in the early history of anthropological research, which was dominated by local community studies. This tradition has seriously distorted our view of indigenous communities by ignoring their integration into a regional market and a national economic political and administrative organisation, disregarding the effects of colonial and later history on their development and separating out the indigenous from the Ladino aspects of their social and cultural life. At the level of ideology, indigenous concepts of cultural relations were confused by adherence to the Tylorian view that culture was constituted by behavioural patterns rather than structured sets of symbols (Hawkins 1984: 4; Hewitt 1984: 20).



1. *Regional History, International Relations and the Establishment of Ethnic Identity*

A careful concern of many of these earlier researchers was to document the persistence of survivals of religious, ritual and social beliefs and institutions from pre-conquest times, with the intention of increasing the comprehensiveness of our knowledge of the pre-Hispanic civilizations which inhabited the area. Monographs such as *The Year-Bearers People* by La Farge and Byers (1931), La Farge's *Santa Eulalia* (1947), Bunzel's *Chichicastenago* (1952) and Oaks's *The Two Crosses of Todos Santos* (1951) emphasised continuities over disjunctures by insulating indigenous ideas and practices from those of non-Indians and outside institutions. Their exclusive interest in the indigenous elements of the culture resulted in the projection of their isolationist perspective through colonial history to minimize the effect of Catholic proselytisation. Spanish colonial history was largely disregarded in the interest of establishing the persistence of authentic native religions which were either described as pure and untainted or as folk derivations of orthodox Catholicism where saints were merely substituted for pre-Hispanic deities. Religion itself was seen as concerned only with the 'other worldly' and its ideological role in social reproduction was not considered.

A number of more recent studies have begun to reverse this trend by focusing attention on the construction of the indigenous world-view during the colonial period and its subsequent reformulations. What has come to be emphasised is no longer the continuity of Indian history (and with it the inviolability of the category of the 'Indian') but the imposition of religious structures on Indian communities by the non-Indian elite and their arbitration, negotiation and encapsulation by Indian populations. The extrapolation of these ideological structures has provided a rich source of primary data which, with historical archives, have stimulated discussion of the problems of class, ethnic and gender relations and returned the problem of exploitation to its central position.

Three of the most fruitful points to have been developed by recent writers were first raised by Friedlander (1975) in her study of Hueyapan in Mexico. She argued that Indian identity is a response to colonial society and described the ways in which the indigenous population had constructed cultural forms which rationally and coherently expressed the terms of their subordination to the dominant society. She noted that ethnic identity was not an ahistorical category but one capable of changing, even though this may be independent of concomitant transformations in the group's socio-economic position in society.

These points have been taken up by Warren (1978) in her study of the Guatemalan village of San Andrés Semetabaj. She confirms the atomisation of Indian communities and argues that the separation between Indian and Ladinos is effected in indigenous cultural categories whose terms do not necessarily correspond to social and economic divisions within the local or regional society. In San Andrés the indigenous belief system juxtaposes the work of the Devil with the plantations and city and their Ladino overseers

while the Indian political and ritual organisation and the village subsistence economy and its members are associated with the law of God and the saints. Warren (1973: 48-9) argues that one of the Indian responses to subordination is to acknowledge the presence and power of Ladinos but to ignore their relevance in indigenous affairs in the belief that if the Devil, and the works associated with him, are treated with respect, they need not fear their intervention.

The construction of Indian identity by the indigenous population through this separatist and bipolar view of social relations, which is buttressed by the political and ritual organisation necessary for its reproduction, was constructed from outside the community and is a product of colonial Catholic religion. In this argument, contemporary Indian identity has a non-Indian origin.

In contrast and opposition to the traditional religious beliefs of the community the recent influence of Catholic Action, and orthodox religious movement, has succeeded in attracting a substantial following which has eroded the political base of former Indian institutions. Underlying Catholic Action is an ideology whose central contention is allegiance to God and a distinction between the spiritual and material world which is reconciled in the authority of the former over the latter. Catholic Action has questioned the separatist thought underlying the ideology of the traditionalists by identifying it as a manifestation of the same phenomenon which gives rise to the Ladinos' racism. Traditionalists and converts to Catholic Action each adhere to a particular idea of Indian ethnic identity which, Warren argues, is neither related to changes in their socio-economic position nor to a decline in the consciousness of being Indian. In contrast to many earlier writers, she seems to see traditionalists as stubborn defenders of an identity imposed on them during the colonial period, while those members of Catholic Action are more aggressive and assertive of an identity which emerges from their contemporary struggles. As a solution, the organisation emphasises religion over ethnic identity and encourages the integration of Indians into universalistic institutions which it believes ought to function under spiritual law.

Falla (1978) has traced the political implications of religious conversion (which are largely absent from Warren's study) in the community of San Antonio Hotenango and draws conclusions which are of relevance to understanding terrorism in the country as a whole. The separatist attitude of the Indian traditionalists to the Ladinos underlines the symbiosis between the two segments of the population which works to the advantage of the latter. This has resulted in Indians giving support to reactionary political parties which legislate against them. Warren and Falla both note that the members of Catholic Action are active in secular institutions and more likely to support welfare and reform issues. The connection between the dissolution of the traditional block and the ruling Ladino elite, and the rise of class-based local organisations and reform movements in the late 1970s and early 1980s, still has to be documented, as does the relationship between the politicization of large segments of the indigenous population, the emergence of a radical theology and the organisation of guerrilla activity

during the same period. Falla's hypothesis - that secularisation and the fragmentation of the base of traditionalist authority within communities produced a power vacuum which was conducive to the violence which later decimated many communities - needs to be examined in the light of subsequent history.

Recent critics of the school of anthropological thought which treated Indian communities as separate from their Ladino neighbours and unconnected to regional and metropolitan economic and administrative organisations have not sufficiently acknowledged the dominance of the type of view examined by Warren within traditionalist Indian thought. Whereas Warren presents ideology as determining social forms, Hawkins (1984) presents social and economic forms as decisive conditions of ideology. Hawkins's argument that the indigenous world-view of the inhabitants of San Marcos and San Pedro Sacatepéquez juxtaposes a repertoire of images which define Indian identity as the inverse of that used to characterize Ladinos rests on a synthesis which is articulated by an outside observer.

His discussion of colonial history produces germane comparisons between the Spanish treatment of the Moors after the reconquest of the Iberian Peninsula and that of the Indians in the New World: both had their movements restricted and were unable to change their residence; they shared in the policy of enforcing endogamy within the community while prohibiting access to Spanish females but tolerating men having sexual relations with non-Spanish women; both were forcefully converted to Christianity but were marginalized and insulated from metropolitan thought; and both were seen as enthusiastic agricultural workers providing a reserve of labour. Hawkins (1984: 39), in supporting the view that the conquest of America was the continuation of the Medieval reconquest of the Iberian Peninsula, locates the origin of the Indian corporate community in Spanish colonial policy and finds the source of its collective representations in the inversion of the dominant ideological categories of the governing elite.

Although the historical perspective is important in the understanding of Guatemalan society, Hawkins's insistence on the dominance of post-conquest history merely reverses the prejudices of a particularist historical determinism and substitutes a modernist interpretation for a classical one. There is no analysis of the encounter between the two conceptual systems, and discussion of their relations remains inscribed within deterministic discourse.

The atomisation of indigenous communities and the preferential treatment given to certain of their aspects over others in the anthropological literature continues to make any general picture of their articulation with regional and metropolitan Guatemalan society difficult to secure and an interpretation of exploitation and state terrorism an onerous task.

The works discussed so far have been concerned with the first problem we mentioned, that concerning the debate between the ethnic and class determinants of Indian identity and the problem of ideological reproduction. Bossen's *The Redivision of Labour\** is

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\* L.H. BOSSEN, *The Redivision of Labour: Women and Economic Choice in Four Guatemalan Communities*, Albany: SUNY Press 1984. xi, 370 pp., References, Index, Plates. £40.00 / £14.40.

another example of the new approach which relates communities to national institutions and the processes they engender. Her work raises issues in the second set of problems relating to ethnic division, class and gender as principles of stratification.

## 2. *The International Division of Labour and the Transformation of Gender Relations*

Bossen has concentrated on areas already well documented in other respects to provide historical depth and complement social structural data. The unequal pattern of development in Central America, resulting in a dependent articulation of specific community types to the metropolitan centre (Gonzalez Casanova 1968), has concentrated each socio-economic group within a particular geography. Bossen studied peasant gender-articulation in the northern highland province of Huehuetenango, the subliminal proletariat in a *ciudad perdida* in Guatemala City, the proletarianized work-force in a large *fincas* in the southern lowlands and the new affluent middle class in a community within the capital.

Taken together, her comparison between genders at each of these vertical junctures takes us away from the community to its articulation with other districts and the national society, a relation that has escaped most analyses of Mesoamerican communities.

Bossen rightly contends that the position of women within the class structure is not necessarily consistent with that of the men to whom they are married, as is often assumed. Their integration into a mode of production is differential, and dependent upon the pattern of social relations necessitated by the productive process. This unequal integration explains the sometimes different awareness and understanding held by women of the conditions of their life and of the world.

In each of the four communities, Bossen describes gender relations by reference to structural integrations within different grades of Guatemalan society. She uses three criteria: the sexual division of labour, the distribution of rewards, and the control of strategic resources.

Toj Nam, in the predominantly indigenous state of Huehuetenango, has a largely young population (53% under 18) with a high illiteracy rate (89%); 92% of its inhabitants are of Mam origin. The traditional marginalized conditions of the indigenous population in relation to their subsistence activities on the land (discussed previously) prevail here and lead to Mam seasonal migrations to the coastal *fincas*. Bossen estimates that the average size of land-holdings is enough to supply only one-third of a family's subsistence needs, perhaps less, a generalization that could be applied to much of the highland area; the dependence on plantation work is high.

In the subsistence sphere, men and women dedicate themselves to different areas of work but complement each other's efforts. Together, they form an interdependent unit with clearly defined spheres of responsibility. Interestingly, it was found that men, when they were away from the coast and forced by circumstance to

duplicate the work of their absent wives, would do so in different forms, thus making their incursion into the female sphere of labour distinct, and separating them from it. The absence of traditional prohibitions denying female participation in plantation labour complements the rough equality between the sexes in the traditional division of labour (25% of labour is female). Within the community women assume particular importance through their role in the biological reproduction of the family. As Lewis (1961) demonstrated, the economic fortunes of a marginalized family depend on the number of children reared and the support they dedicate to the family as an economic unit. Family size is a basic resource which is dependent on the female, the importance of which is held in high esteem by the male and leads him to distribute control of resources equitably between himself and his wife. Bossen suggests that it is not *gender* about which conflicts are most pronounced but *generations*, anticipated in the subordination of the younger members of the family to senior heads of households.

The payment of brideprice to the parents of a girl in marriage is not interpreted as an economic transaction, but as one which indicates the social value of the girl. It is a repayment to her family for the debts she has incurred during her upbringing and offsets the lost value that might have been realised through her labour in the domestic sphere, or in weaving for the external market. The view that interprets brideprice as a firm commitment which binds the female to the husband is considered impermissible. In a society which does not prohibit sexual activity before marriage, the female continues to maintain her value as a means of providing family labour through her reproductive capacity. If treated badly by the male, she is free to take this service elsewhere and to establish a new household. Bossen argues that the female's ability to produce children complements the male's ability to acquire land which provides the economic bases for the family's survival. Their mutual dependence ensures equality in the distribution of activities and their small rewards.

The situation between the sexes changes considerably when the indigenous peasantry become transformed into full-time proletarianized workers through their greater integration into the relations of the national and international economy. The situation of workers in El Cañaveral, a large sugar-cane plantation, illustrates well how the external conditions of capitalist production modify changes in gender relations. The corporation employs only 6% women, markedly discriminating between the sexes and obscuring the woman's role in unpaid domestic labour to maintain her husband as a salaried labourer. Because of her restriction in the labour market she is made dependent on her husband. In the context of their economic integration her reproductive role is minimal, assisted by the company clinic, disseminating the idea of birth control, thus further increasing her dependence on, and arbitrary treatment by, her husband.

A large reserve of women in the towns and those working in interstitial positions in the plantation create a demand for salaried men who are willing to support them at a minimal economic level. This causes competition between women for men, and generates

hostility among them. In this environment women endure perceived inequalities and injustices in their relations with men to a degree unimaginable in traditional rural communities. 20% of women in El Cañaveral are divorced and 44% of households include stepchildren from previous marriages.

San Lorenzo is a marginalized *barrio* of Guatemala City where four-fifths of the houses have only one room, more than half are without sanitary facilities, half have electricity and 90% are without running water. Unlike the proletariat of El Cañaveral, the inhabitants of such communities are only marginally integrated into a capitalist division of labour and provide a huge labour reserve, who survive principally through their activities in the interstitial areas of the economy. Within this economy of poverty and uncertainty, 83-88% of women participate in sales and service activities while men are predominantly concentrated in craft industries. Their differential integration into the material economy prejudices the women, who between 1974 and 1975 earned on average 35% less for their work than the US\$53-60 brought home by their husbands each month. This made an average total income of US\$73-81 per household per month and established interdependence between the sexes. The contribution of a woman is crucial and grants her relative independence from the wishes of her husband. There is an accepted division of labour on the basis of gender, which equates women with domestic activity and men with the improvement and maintenance of the home. However, because of lack of formal ownership the squatter community must organise to protect itself from the predations of an arbitrary national government, and the organisation of this has been assumed by inter-*barrio* associations of women. Their political activity in this sphere compensates in part for their unequal incorporation into formal organisations. Restrictions on their social activities are inconsistent with their political role in defending the community and their economic position as wage-earners. This loosens their dependence on men, allowing them to ignore male interjections and to establish for themselves a relatively high level of social autonomy without rifts emerging.

These marginalized or proletarianized communities are compared with an urban middle-class community where the inhabitants have undergone the greatest assimilation into the capitalist economy and its corresponding division of labour. Women are discouraged from work, and where they do work they receive only 43% of the average male wage. Continuity of employment is restricted to men, while the sexual division of labour results in women interrupting their careers before childbirth and confines them to the home. Unlike Toj Nam and San Lorenzo, liaisons are formalised by marriage, which together with the high value placed on the virginity of the bride, gives the family status. The control of pre-marital and post-marital female sex is considerably relaxed in the case of the male, who is given differential preferability in law. The removal of women from productive and educational achievements exaggerates the importance of motherhood. However, the tensions generated by women's lack of fulfilment in the productive and educational spheres, their dependence on a male income and the existence of a dual system of morality creates the familiar tensions characteristic of an

occupational structure which transmits Western gender stereotypes. Bossen concludes that it is not a cultural tradition, not even that of *machismo*, which has conditioned socio-economic inequalities, but rather the reverse. By first attending to the relative equality based on complementarity and interdependence of the male / female dyad in the community that is the most structurally distant from the metropolitan centre, she has convincingly demonstrated that inequality between the sexes is an index of the family unit's integration into the world capitalist system of production and consumption. Female dependency increases with the family unit's greater participation in the capitalist system.

However, the comparisons she most often draws are those between the traditional community and the proletarian economy, and between the marginal community and the middle-class estate of the capital. A comparison of the dyads traditional community / marginalized urban community and plantation / middle-class community would have more clearly tied changes in gender relations to proletarianization and the growth of the middle class, determined by the increasing integration of the population into a world capitalist mode of production. The rural, traditional community and the urban, marginal community are characterized by marginal, structural integration and by the subjection of their economies to the fluctuation of demand occasioned by the dominant mode of production. The relations between these two pairs is one of internal colonization, which is perhaps obscured because of insufficient attention being devoted to the encapsulation of gender by class. This further affects, in the case of the rural proletariat and urban middle class, the apparent dominance of gender over class as a means of stratification where the hierarchical dyad of male / female transcends conflict between classes. Undoubtedly male dominates female in these instances, but at another level, represented most dramatically in Guatemala by the terror of the state, it is a landed oligarchy and ascendant industrial bourgeoisie which exploits both men and women of the subordinate classes.

Unfortunately, and as is common in most sociological interpretations, ethnicity is also depreciated. While Bossen employs objective criteria in her definition of gender relations and socio-economic indexes of structural integration, ethnic differences and affiliation is marked by subjective criteria, such as language and costume. Thus relations within the indigenous community and between ethnicities are not defined by their integration into a mode of production, as is class, but by ascriptive cultural traits. This results in the strange paradox that while it is the men in Toj Nam who dominate the political and religious offices which reproduce the cultural identity of their subordinate community, a higher rate of monolingualism and the use of indigenous dress among women cause the latter to appear more 'Indian' than the former. Once the ethnic dimension is considered as sociologically pertinent, one cannot but wonder at the existence of ideological contentions within the community which operate to structure gender differences. Bossen's extensive use of concepts based on economic rationality may well be correct in this instance, but they cannot be assumed when comparing different ethnic groups who identify with different cultural traditions.

*Conclusion*

The works discussed here are critical of earlier works and mark a disjuncture in the history of anthropological perspectives on Guatemala. Without exception they emphasise the historical determination of Indian identity and interpret its imposition by a dominant elite as the means by which it reproduces the set of exploitative relations established by the Spanish. Bossen, Falla and Hawkins further emphasise the importance of the role of national and international forces in the contemporary development of rural communities.

However, there are important differences between the authors, not only in the focus of their studies, but also in the emphasis they give to ideological or socio-economic determination within history. Both Bossen and Hawkins read the cultural indexes of ethnic identity from secondary sources and on the whole prefer a materialist interpretation. Warren, on the other hand, is more concerned to extrapolate cultural indexes from the indigenous view and to use a historical model to interpret change. Regardless of the general problems of causality and the different emphases on emic and etic approaches, all these texts portray a picture of Guatemala's Indian population that differs from those of many earlier works and is more relevant to understanding its position within a hostile international division of labour, where the fundamental contradiction seems to be not so much between Indians and non-Indians as between different classes belonging to distinct and dislocated historical periods.

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## SECOND FIELDWORK

We are planning to devote a section of a forthcoming issue of *JASO* to the topic of second fieldwork. We envisage that contributors will draw on personal experience to discuss general questions such as the advantages and disadvantages of doing fieldwork, after a passage of time, in the same or a similar area, or in a different area for comparative purposes, and so on.

Anyone wishing to contribute to this special section should write in the first instance and as soon as possible to The Editors, *JASO*, 51 Banbury Road, Oxford, OX2 6PE.

## COMMENTARY

### DREAMTIME

Hans Peter Duerr's *Dreamtime* could best be described as the sort of book that Carlos Castaneda might have written if he were a German philosopher.\* In the Introduction Duerr mentions an encounter he had in 1963 at the Greyhound bus station in Albuquerque, New Mexico. There he met a Tewa *yerbatero* and asked him where he could find out about Hopi snake dances:

The Indian looked at me for a while, then he smiled and said that if I wanted to find out about the dances in the kivas, then the best place at a pueblo for that was the University of California at the Pueblo of Our Lady of the Angels [i.e. Los Angeles]....

This is the reason why this book is less a record of the experiences I might have gained in the kivas, at the 'navel of the world', that about what I discovered in the library at Los Angeles and other unhappy places. (pp. x-xi)

Anyone familiar with Castaneda's work could not fail to miss this allusion to Castaneda's first meeting with Don Juan as described in *The Teachings of Don Juan* (Castaneda 1968). Duerr identifies himself with Castaneda, jousts and quibbles with him throughout the book and even tries to usurp the master's authority in certain passages such as the one where he claims, on the basis of his own experimentation with *datura*, that Castaneda's reports of the drug's

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I thank Burkhard Schnepel for discussing Duerr's work with me.

\* HANS PETER DUERR, *Dreamtime: Concerning the Boundary between Wilderness and Civilization* (transl. Felicitas Goodman), Oxford: Basil Blackwell 1985 [1978]. xi, 370pp., Bibliography, Index, Plates.

effects are inaccurate.<sup>1</sup>

One obvious difference between Duerr and Castaneda is that the latter felt free to incorporate the work of others without any sort of citation.<sup>2</sup> Duerr, by contrast, lets nothing pass without a footnote. The section of notes to *Dreamtime* is almost three times as long as the text itself. For good measure this is followed by 86 pages of bibliography. At first I thought this was a tongue-in-cheek jibe at the reader or perhaps at pedantic academic colleagues. In the end they are no joke. Such a critical apparatus takes considerable time to compile, and indeed this mode of presentation had already been utilised in his earlier work *Ni Dieu - ni mètre* (1974) (text 58pp., notes 111pp., bibliography 45pp.) and has been repeated later in *Sedna* (see below) (text 261pp., notes 165pp., bibliography 68pp.). Duerr is definitely serious, although he takes after Nietzsche (whom he ranks just above Wittgenstein as his favourite philosopher) in embracing philosophy as a 'gay science'.

The example of Castaneda's enquiry into the analytical world of the Yaqui Indians, into their 'separate reality', is crucial as a forerunner to Duerr's work. His thesis in *Dreamtime* is that simple (he calls them 'archaic') societies had or still possess - in those parts of the world today where they continue to exist - elaborate conceptions of spirits, ancestors, or of gods existing *beyond* their own world. Examples would be the Australian aboriginal sense of 'the dreaming', whence the book's title, or the notion of the spirit world in shamanic societies. Not only do these supernatural realms exist in a timeless and archetypal dimension beyond everyday reality, but the societies upholding them possess numerous means, and an avid concern, for experiencing and communicating with this dream world. Furthermore, it is precisely this contact with the beyond and the wisdom gained through it which inform the here and now and provide people with an understanding of themselves:

The fence or hedge, separating the domain of the wilderness from that of culture, was not an insurmountable boundary to the archaic mind. At certain times this fence was, in fact, torn down. Those who wanted to live *consciously* within the fence, had to leave the enclosure at least once in their lives. They had to roam the forest as wolves, as 'savages'. To put it in more modern terms, they had to experience the wilderness, their *animal nature*, within themselves. For their 'cultural nature' was only one side of their being which by destiny was inextricably bound to their animal *fylgja* ['hide'], visible only to him who stepped across the dividing line, entrusting himself to his 'second sight'. (p. 64)

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<sup>1</sup> For more details on the Duerr / Castaneda relationship - the two actually met in 1982 - one may now consult Seger-Coulborn's (1983) essay on this topic in the collection of studies devoted to *Dreamtime* edited by Gehlen and Wolf (1983).

<sup>2</sup> On his expropriation of Herrigel's *Zen in the Art of Archery* (1953) see Needham's convincing documentation in *Exemplars* (1985).

This contrasts with the predicament of modern man. In industrial societies such as those of Europe or North America, the other side of the fence is denied all reality and is treated rather as a projection of our own psyches or as a misperception. Modern societies have increasingly colonized the wilderness and claimed it as part of civilization. According to Duerr, this whole tendency undermines our ability to understand ourselves. We lack perspective. Our thought is fragmentary, while that of archaic societies is holistic.

The title of the final chapter of *Dreamtime*, 'Road Bilong Science', is Duerr's own elaboration on an Australian aborigine saying ('White man got no dreaming / Him go 'nother way / White man he go different / Him got road bilong himself'). Here he states what could be taken as the summation of his argument:

In contrast to our own culture, the societies possessing what we called 'archaic' cultures have a much clearer idea about the fact that we can *be* only what we are if at the same time we are also what we are *not* and that we can only know who we are if we experience our boundaries and, as Hegel would put it, if we cross over them. (p. 125)

In this light we may comprehend the appeal which *Dreamtime* has held for 'freaks' and the so-called '*alternativer*'. I first encountered the name of Hans Peter Duerr in 1979, on a remote beach in Greece. A couple of disaffected Germans - self-confirmed 'freaks' - spoke enthusiastically of his new book *Traumzeit (Dreamtime)*. In their eyes it clearly amounted to far more than just a cross-cultural survey of shamanic practices, witchcraft beliefs and rituals involving mind-altering drugs. That summer, the book circulated from hand to hand among like-minded individuals, while back in Germany it was an unqualified success. In various editions it has sold well over 100,000 copies in German to date, and the English translation is also selling apace, especially in the United States. Not since the works of Margaret Mead has an anthropology text had such mass appeal.

At the time of its original publication, *Dreamtime* and Hans Peter Duerr were closely associated with the German 'alternative movement'. Now, with his latest book *Sedna* (see below) he has moved to a position compatible with the philosophy of the Green Party, which is in many ways the continuation of *die Alternative* into the '80s. Both books, therefore, tell us a considerable amount about the strivings of modern German society, and they should be read through this prism.

*Dreamtime* served as a charter for a generation which found society repressive and which sought to escape it by a) physically leaving it, b) cultivating a higher consciousness which could transcend it, or c) getting so stoned that one either did not notice what was bad or else was not troubled by it. In *Dreamtime*, Duerr urges us to look toward archaic societies to see people who are truly happy and at one with themselves, largely, it seems, because they are able to trip out whenever they like.

Duerr is able to assemble plentiful and, it must be said, fascinating material on dream worlds cross-culturally. Yet nowhere is there a recorded statement from one of the participants in the

rites mediating contact with these worlds which says directly, 'I am moved to make contact with the dream world so that my life will make sense, so that I will have a consciousness of myself'. Such a question would hardly make sense, granted that this dream world constitutes an integral part of their life or religion. Australian aborigines think in terms of the dreaming because that is the way they have learned to think: they do not oppose it to anything else. By the same token, dreamtime rituals in shamanic societies are what one performs at moments of illness or impending death. It is basic to one's identity as a member of the group, not indicative of emergence into a qualitatively different consciousness in respect to the rest of the group. The use of such individualist concepts as 'consciousness' (p. 74) and '[one's] own essence' (p. 42) reveal more about the preoccupations of European culture than they do about the strivings of archaic societies.

Duerr's use of ethnographic data to construct a moral parable, an object lesson for our own society, will perhaps arouse scepticism among academic anthropologists. Ethnographic data are applied to original, but nonetheless highly relativistic ends. If x or y society finds it important to transcend the boundaries of its own world, does this necessarily mean that our society should as well?

While such assertions may be open to criticism, they are more than compensated for by the wit and verve of Duerr's presentation. Analytically he is at his finest when considering the difficulties of describing a transcendental experience in language. He notes that anthropologists can be broken down into two groups: those who have experienced the beyond and cannot describe it, and those who have not and can. Looming over the discussion is Wittgenstein's famous dictum that the boundaries of one's world are defined by the limits of one's language. In many respects, Duerr's treatment of these questions grows out of his earlier and bristlier philosophical tract *Ni Dieu - ni mètre* (1974).

*Sedna oder die Leben zum Leben* (Sedna or the Love for Life), Duerr's most recent book (scheduled to appear in English translation) continues the programme of *Dreamtime* by compiling comparative ethnographic material in order to criticise aspects of modern society and other alternatives.\* In *Sedna*, the theme is that simple societies were / are much more integrated with nature. They live in harmony and sensitive balance with the natural world which they both fear and love because it provides them with the means for life. A symptom of this symbiosis with nature is the large number of rituals which these societies boast, especially rituals linked to the year and life cycles. Duerr concentrates principally on fertility rites, particularly those which involve an aspect of 'sacred marriage', that is, where a deity is represented as copulating with a human being or another divine representative of nature. This intercourse assures the benevolence of nature for another year.

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\* HANS PETER DUERR, *Sedna oder die Liebe zum Leben*, Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp 1984. 535pp., Bibliography, Index.

Whereas *Dreamtime* presents an extensive file of ethnographic instances of dream worlds, *Sedna* comprises a Frazerian mass of details on fertility rituals around the world, from the Cheyenne buffalo ceremony to the ancient Greek crane dance (*geranos*). Those who enjoy comparative ethnography will be pleased by *Sedna*, as indeed they would be by *Dreamtime*.

While *Dreamtime* may be taken, naively I think, to support the interest of alternative cultures in drugs or other means of consciousness altering which allow contact with 'other' worlds, *Sedna* is meant to buttress modern-day ecological movements which urge greater sensitivity toward the environment and a 'small-is-beautiful' attitude toward industry. On the dust jacket, it is described as a 'Green Party Philosophy'. In *Dreamtime*, the existence of dream-world rituals among simple societies serves to justify the use of drugs as a means to consciousness and integrity in the present. In *Sedna* the evidence of fertility rites in world ethnography sanctions unlimited sacred intercourse as the path toward unity with nature. Having been given sex and drugs readers will no doubt expect Duerr's next book to offer a cross-cultural survey of folk music with the message that rock and roll is the secret of life. In fact, however, he is about to publish a volume entitled *Nacktheit und Scham* (Nudity and Shame), an ethnography and cultural history of modesty. One anxiously awaits to see what inferences he will draw from such a study.

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NOTES AND QUERIES AND SOCIAL INTERRELATIONS:  
AN ASPECT OF THE HISTORY OF SOCIAL ANTHROPOLOGY

*Notes and Queries*, in its various editions, is a convenient source for tracing aspects of the history of social anthropology. In the first part of this paper I discuss its importance and usefulness as a historical source. In the second part I attempt to trace the changing emphasis on social interrelations, that is, relations between peoples, as a topic in social anthropology as reflected in its various editions. Anthropological interest in social interrelations is shown to have been quite marked in the nineteenth century and to have reached a peak in the early years of this century.<sup>1</sup> With the rise of functionalism, however, social interrelations all but disappeared from view as an anthropological topic. To help illustrate this account of an aspect of the history of social anthropology, the discussion is widened in Part 3 to consider aspects of two classic 'British' ethnographies of the 1920s and 1930s, Malinowski's *Argonauts of the Western Pacific* (1922) and Firth's *We, The Tikopia* (1936) in the light of the discussion in Part 2.

1. Notes and Queries and Social Anthropology

It is perhaps somewhat difficult for anthropologists today to appreciate the importance that *Notes and Queries* formerly had.

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<sup>1</sup> This is perhaps exemplified by the publication in 1910 of G.C. Wheeler's study of *The Tribe, and Intertribal Relations in Australia*, hailed by Westermarck, in his prefatory note to it, as the first study of inter-tribal relations among uncivilized peoples (1910: vi).

Leading contemporary anthropologists contributed to its various editions: for example, Tylor to the first, second and third; Rivers to the fourth; Haddon, Marett and Schapera to the fifth; and Radcliffe-Brown, Daryll Forde, Fortes, Leach and Nadel to the sixth. Some of its role and influence in the development and promotion of anthropology can be gained from Urry's (1972) article on its place in the development of field methods.

*Notes and Queries* was also used by many important and influential anthropologists, both professional and amateur. For example, A.C. Haddon published the results of his first researches in the Torres Straits according to the order of sections of what he called 'that invaluable little book', that is, the first edition of *Notes and Queries* (Haddon 1890: 300 and *passim*; see also Stocking 1983: 75). E.H. Man used the same volume in his researches in the Andaman Islands and wrote in praise of it in the preface to his book ([1885] 1932: ix-x):

Having thus acquired a colloquial knowledge of the ... language, I proceeded to collect as much information as possible in respect to the habits and customs of these savages.... In this interesting task I was greatly assisted by the excellent Manual of Anthropological Notes and Queries ... for I was thereby enabled to work on clearly defined lines.

The value of such systematic guidance as is afforded by this Manual can only be appreciated by those who have endeavoured to collect information from savages concerning the multifarious subjects possessing interest to ethnologists.

It seems as though Man's successor in the Andamans, Radcliffe-Brown, did not have a copy of the fourth (1912) edition while he was carrying out his Andaman researches - he was abroad when it was published. There is no evidence to suppose that he took an earlier edition with him. His copy of the fifth (1929) edition apparently shows little sign of its being used (Urry 1972: 56, n.19).

Malinowski, though he eventually 'dismissed the whole venture' (*ibid.*), certainly used *Notes and Queries* in his early researches. His first publication presenting field data, 'The Natives of Mailu' (1915), was divided into sections along the lines of the fourth edition, and he states in the introduction that he had directly followed its methods and advice on some matters (*ibid.*: 502; see Urry 1972: 52; Langham 1981: 173). Langham claims that Malinowski's diaries reveal that he relied 'heavily on the 1912 edition' (*ibid.*), while Urry quotes just one example from Malinowski's diary, for 31 October 1914, at Derabai on the Southern New Guinea mainland: 'Then I wrote my diary, and tried to synthesise my results, reviewing *Notes and Queries*.... Read some more N&Q and loaded my camera. Then I went into the village ...' (Urry 1972: 52; quoting Malinowski 1967: 30). The Seligmans made reference to the fifth edition when discussing kinship systems in their *Pagan Tribes of the Nilotic Sudan* (1932: 28, n.1) and may well have taken the third and later the fourth editions with them on their expeditions to Southern Sudan in 1909-10, 1911-12 and 1921-2.

It seems as though Evans-Pritchard had one edition (probably

the fourth) with him in the field in Southern Sudan in the 1920s, though he was later very dismissive of its usefulness. His remarks that '*Notes and Queries* was certainly of little help to me' (1973a: 12, n.2) and that 'I never found *Notes and Queries* the help it was supposed to be' (1973b: 241) might well reflect a commonly held attitude amongst professional anthropologists of later generations, which had begun with the older Malinowski. However, even the sixth edition of 1951 received some remarkable praise in its reviews. In the non-anthropological *Journal of African Administration*, 'G.H.' stated that 'the present work is consistent with contemporary anthropological thought' (1952: 35) and that 'it brings together in one place the essence of anthropological study (ibid.: 36). H.S. Morris argued in the *British Journal of Sociology* that 'Whatever may be thought of the list of questions the mere fact of its having been made together with the traditional authority of *Notes and Queries* will make the book an essential piece of equipment to any intending field worker' (1952: 190). Fürer-Haimendorf (1952) commented that 'the new edition marks a most significant advance on all previous issues' and praised it as 'a most valuable handbook which will henceforth form an indispensable part of every field anthropologist's equipment'.<sup>2</sup>

Both Urry and Langham have used *Notes and Queries* in its various editions as a source for reviewing aspects of the history of anthropology. Urry has commented that 'the questions posed by Tylor and others reflected the concerns of their age' (1972: 47). The first four editions, Urry claims, clearly reflect 'the changing attitudes of anthropology, the alteration of fields of interest and the increase in the range of material considered to constitute ethnographic facts' (ibid.: 45); they are a source on, among other things, 'developments and changes of opinion in anthropology. They reflect in their contents and in the type of question asked, the aims and ideas of those who contributed them: the minds of the "leading minds of the age" are encapsulated in a few hundred pages' (ibid.: 54). For Langham the fourth (1912) edition 'accurately reflects the theoretical climate of the day' (1981: xix): he claims that

As can be verified through the more lengthy process of perusing the relevant contemporary journals, the first three editions of

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<sup>2</sup> American anthropologists were more critical and, in the light of the argument of this paper, Vogt's comments (1954: 1156) in particular are revealing of differences between British and North American anthropology at the time:

... there is virtually nothing on culture contact and change, diffusion, nativistic movements, etc. These aspects of modern field situations are not only difficult to avoid in a well-rounded study, but their exclusion appears to eliminate one of the most fruitful areas for the study of cultural dynamics and change. The whole stress upon static unchanging structures in native cultures is undoubtedly the most disturbing aspect of the book.

*Notes and Queries* ... provide a reasonably sensitive barometer of British anthropological thought during the final quarter of the nineteenth century (ibid.: 9).

And he later claims that

... the seminal year for the discipline was not 1922, when *Argonauts of the Western Pacific* and *The Andaman Islanders* were published. Rather it was 1912, when the fourth edition of *Notes and Queries on Anthropology* appeared ... in which Rivers gave the first clear statement of what later came to be identified as the procedural and theoretical basis of British Social Anthropology (ibid.: 327).

While both Urry and Langham were interested in different aspects of the history of social anthropology from that with which I am concerned here, their comments help establish the validity of reviewing the history of the subject - at least in its earlier years: I should argue until some time after the publication of the fifth edition of 1929 - through an examination of the various editions of *Notes and Queries*. It was, though, only one of a variety of such compendiums. Frazer's editions of his own *Questions*, for example, might well have been more influential in certain circles (Frazer 1889; 1916). I deal almost exclusively with *Notes and Queries* here for reasons of space and simplicity, and because of its continued appearance in various editions throughout the period with which we are concerned.

## 2. *Social Interrelations in Notes and Queries*

There have been six editions of *Notes and Queries*, the first being published by the British Association for the Advancement of Science (BAAS) in 1874, and the sixth by the Royal Anthropological Institute (RAI) in 1951 (BAAS 1874; [RAI] 1892; BAAS 1899; BAAS 1929; RAI 1951).<sup>3</sup> This review starts, however, somewhat earlier with the publication by the BAAS in 1841 of a precursor to *Notes and Queries*, viz. a fourteen-page pamphlet with 89 numbered paragraphs entitled *Queries Respecting the Human Race to be Addressed to Travellers and Others* (BAAS 1841).<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> More recently, Spanish and Portuguese translations of *Notes and Queries* have appeared. This suggests that it is still influential in anthropology, if no longer in British social anthropology (RAI [1951] 1966; [1951] 1971).

<sup>4</sup> There have been a number of such questionnaires and compendiums published by both institutions and individuals and a fuller study could take these into account. For an example even earlier than

Here, questions are posed concerning 'Physical Characters', 'Language', 'Individual and Family Life', 'Buildings and Monuments', 'Works of Art', 'Domestic Animals', 'Government and Laws', 'Geography and Statistics', 'Social Relations' and 'Religion, Superstitions, &c.'. Paragraphs 11 and 12, under 'Physical Characters', refer to the mixture of races, and paragraph 16, under 'Language', refers to the congruence, or otherwise, between language and race; paragraphs 51 and 53, under 'Buildings and Monuments' and 'Works of Art' respectively, refer to possible predecessors of contemporary inhabitants. All of these questions are of relevance to the study of social interrelations between peoples but of greater significance are some of the questions asked under the final three headings. Paragraph 71, under 'Geography and Statistics', refers to war and emigration and to the possibility of population increase being due 'to any course tending to bring accessions from other quarters'. The respondent to these queries is asked to state, 'whether such causes are long standing or recent'. Following on from these concerns, paragraph 72 (under the same heading) asks, 'Is the population generally living in a manner to which they have long been accustomed, or have new relations with other people, and consequently new customs and practices, been introduced'. Under 'Religion, Superstitions &c.' connected questions are asked: in paragraph 82: 'Is the religion of the people similar to that of any other people, neighbouring or remote? If different, are they widely so, or dependent upon particular modifications, and of what kind?'; and, most interestingly, in the following paragraph, 'In what light do they regard the religion and deities of neighbouring tribes?'

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*Queries* see Degérando's *The Observation of Savage Peoples* ([1800] 1969). Moore's (1969) introduction to his translation of Degérando's work discusses similar ventures. For other, Africanist, examples see under note 7 below (p. 261).

A history of such works from Degérando to the present would make a fascinating study in its own right. The fact that no seventh (structuralist ?) edition of *Notes and Queries* has been published would have to be explained and a wider range of material could be taken into account: the sections on 'Anthropology' in the various editions of the Royal Geographical Society's *Hints to Travellers* (RGS 1921) (see for example Tylor's section in the tenth edition [Tylor 1921] and Franks's 'Queries on Anthropology' [Franks 1921] in the same volume), anthropology text-books, introductions to the subject and the ASA's new series of publications on Research Methods in Social Anthropology (e.g. Barnard and Good 1984). Questions of the professionalisation of anthropology and its relations with, and attitudes to, other disciplines as well as 'travellers' could also be addressed. By 1921 Marett felt able to say (in a brief note to the reprinting of Tylor's section on 'Anthropology' in *Hints to Travellers* that, 'Unless ... he [the traveller] is prepared to discard superficial modes of observation and devote himself to a critical and intensive study of the available facts, he had much better leave the subject alone. It will help greatly if has been through a course of special training, such as several of the leading Universities can nowadays provide' (Marett 1921).

From the above it can be seen that the compilers of these *Queries*, while focusing on individual peoples, were much interested in the historical and contemporary relations between them; the last question noted above seems particularly modern, though it might be surmised that it was chosen with a view to assessing how amenable the people might be to the efforts of missionaries, rather than out of any anthropological concern with such matters as closed and open belief systems. Most of the questions in this and other such guides were no doubt inspired by more than purely scientific interests, for as well as the plain desire for knowledge there were colonial, commercial and proselytical factors at play. The questions in *Queries* were very relevant for a colonial and missionising power such as Britain was at the time. Knowledge concerning relations between indigenous peoples was vital for subjugating them and establishing the Pax Britannica, as well as for the successful introduction of foreign religious notions.

What is most remarkable, however, is the type of question asked under the heading 'Social Relations', for here the compilers are not concerned with social relations in the modern sense of relations *within* the society, but with those, as it were, *without* the society; that is, relations between societies, inter-social rather than intra-social - 'societal' relations perhaps. These *Queries* pre-date the study of 'sociology', and even the first use of the English term itself by two years, and are little concerned with social relations as we would understand them today, being more concerned with social institutions and customs than with social structure. In their pre-sociological innocence of the potential for the 'scientific' analysis of social relations within a society, the compilers emphasise external social relations.

I shall quote in full the two paragraphs under 'Social Relations' (BAAS 1841: paragraphs 75 and 76):

What kind of relationship, by written treaty or otherwise, subsists between the nation and other nations, civilized or not? Have they any intercourse by sea with other countries? Do any of them understand any European language? Or are there interpreters, by whom they can communicate with them?

Are they peaceable, or addicted to war? Have they any forms of declaring war or making peace? What is their mode of warfare, either by sea or land? [T]heir weapons and strategy? What do they do with the slain, and with prisoners? Have they any mode of communicating victories by monuments, hieroglyphics, or preservation of individual trophies, and of what kind? Have they any national poems, sagas, or traditions respecting their origin and history? Where Europeans have introduced fire-arms, ascertain the modes of warfare which have given place to them.

State whatever particulars respecting their origin and history are derived, either from tradition among themselves or from other sources.

The first edition of *Notes and Queries* itself was published in 1874, before the establishment of 'social anthropology' as an

academic discipline - and well before the establishment of fieldwork as anthropology's hallmark, as the full title of the first edition reveals: *Notes and Queries on Anthropology for the Use of Travellers and Residents in Uncivilized Lands* (BAAS 1874). The volume has three parts: 'Constitution of Man', 'Culture', and 'Miscellaneous'. In part I (Section XV) there is some concern with 'crosses', that is, the progeny of parents of different 'races', and in Part II a number of sections are concerned to some extent with relations between the people being studied and other peoples. For example, in Section XVIII ('History') the question is asked, 'What account do they give of themselves, and their connexions with other nations, wars, alliances, &c?'. In Section XV ('Etymology') there are questions about previous inhabitants, and in Section XXVIII ('Morals') questions comparing the people being studied with others. In Section XXXVI 'Customs' the traveller is asked, 'What are the rules of hospitality as recognized between kinsfolk, neighbours, strangers, and enemies?' Section XXXIX consists in questions on 'Trade'. Section XXX on 'Religion, Fetishes &c' includes, under a sub-section entitled 'Polytheism and Monotheism', the somewhat familiar questions: 'Do any deities seem borrowed, in name or character, from the religions of other nations' and 'Are the gods of other nations recognised as being real and powerful' (see above p. 259). Under the section on war the question is asked: 'How are the hunting-grounds arranged between the neighbouring tribes?' (p. 79).

In 'Miscellaneous' there is a section concerned with 'Contact with Civilized Races', but none dealing solely with relations between peoples.<sup>5</sup> This is not seen as a separate subject as it was in *Queries*, though a number of questions are addressed to such concerns, as has been seen above. Relations between peoples are of interest to the compilers but they do not form a topic, these being the dimensions of 'Culture'.<sup>6</sup>

The second and third editions are not much different from the first; Urry writes that they 'might easily be taken together as the 1899 edition is almost a reprint of the earlier one' (1972: 48). The questions they ask are more or less the same. It should be noted, however, that reference in the title to 'Travellers and Residents in Uncivilized Lands' has gone: we are now just offered *Notes and Queries on Anthropology*. Part II is now 'Ethnography', rather than 'Culture', and 'Contact with Civilised Races' is included under it, instead of being classified as 'Miscellaneous'.

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<sup>5</sup> While recognising that there is no ontological difference between social relations between one indigenous people and another and relations between an indigenous people and a colonial or other dominant people, I do not discuss the latter, 'Contact with Civilized Races', directly in this article.

<sup>6</sup> The section (XLIX) entitled 'Social Relations' is one of those which, as the editors warn in their introduction (p. iv), is incomplete and only consists in headings: 'Including family life; treatment of women, children, &c' (p. 85; cf. Urry 1972: 47). In Haddon's article on the Torres Straits Islanders, under 'Social Relations' the reader is merely told to 'see *Marriage* &c' (Haddon 1890: 355).

With the fourth edition of 1912, however, we are presented amongst other changes, with two new sections: 'External Relations Between Communities' and 'Adopted Elements in Culture: Importation, Imitation, Teaching'.<sup>7</sup> Both these sections I quote here at length, though omitting from the latter the discussion of European influence. The old Part II having been divided into three parts - 'Technology', 'Sociology' and 'Arts and Sciences' - these two sections appear as the last sections of the latter two parts respectively.

The section entitled 'External Relations Between Communities' reads as follows:

Though the simpler communities satisfy most of their needs by their own efforts, few, if any, altogether avoid intercourse with strangers; and most peoples have a fairly wide range of habitual contact with their neighbours. The commonest relations between distinct communities result either from the desire to co-operate, by the interchange of information, personal assistance, or commodities; or else from injuries inflicted either knowingly, or by chance, by one community or individual on another; and from the attempts of the injured party to obtain reparation or protection.

*Intercourse.* The simplest requisite is provision for intercourse. How are *strangers* treated? [O]n what conditions and with what precautions are they allowed to approach or enter the territory, cultivated lands, or settlements? Are there rules of *hospitality*, or any ceremonies by which a stranger can secure admittance, protection, or maintenance? Once admitted, has the stranger acquired permanent *guest-right*? Is any form of *guest-right* hereditary? Is it reciprocal, if the host afterwards visits the home of his guest? Can *guest-right* once

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<sup>7</sup> The period in which the fourth edition of *Notes and Queries* was published was perhaps the heyday of such questionnaires and compendiums. To take a specifically Africanist example which could be usefully compared with *Notes and Queries*, Foucart's *Introductory Questions on African Ethnology* was published by the Sultanieh Geographic Society of Cairo in 1919. For a section on 'Relations of the Social Unit with Strangers', see Foucart 1919: 99-101; for an example of an 'ethnography' organised according to Foucart's questions, see Hillelson's compilation of information on the Latuka (1923).

Slightly earlier, Professor Halkin had prepared a list of questions at the request of the Société belge de sociologie. These formed the basis for the *Collection de monographies ethnographiques* published under the auspices of Cyr. Van Overbergh of the Belgian Ministry of Sciences and Arts. An interesting aspect of these monographs was that the material for each section was published on a separate sheet or sheets which, being perforated, could be removed and reorganised according to topic. For an example of such a monograph, see Vanden Plas's study of the Kuku (1910a); he published the same material in a more literary form in *La Revue congolaise* (1910b).



acquired be suspended or forfeited? If so, for what causes? Is guest-right a private or personal affair between individuals or social groups? [O]r is there any public guest-right? Is any public authority charged with the reception of strangers? Are there public guest-houses? If so, how are they are maintained? [A]nd by whom?

*Messages.* How are information, requests, complaints, or other public messages transmitted from one community to another? Describe all provision for the dispatch, transmission, and reception of envoys, giving actual instances if possible. Are there regular interpreters, or any common code of signs understood by persons of different speech (v. *Signalling ... and Writing ...*)?

How are disputes between members of distinct communities adjusted? Describe all forms of court, or other authorities charged with such negotiation. Can a stranger appeal to them in his own person, or must he appeal through his host or other duly qualified person?

For customs relating to the interchange of commodities v. *Trade ...*; for the settlement of disputes by an appeal to force, v. *Warfare ....* (BAAS 1912: 179-80)

The section entitled 'Adopted Elements in Culture: Importation, Imitation, Teaching' reads as follows:

Probably no ethnic groups are so entirely isolated as to have adopted nothing even in recent times from their neighbours. Manufactured objects and natural products, especially such as are small, valuable and rare, pass from tribe to tribe, often over great distances, by way of gift, plunder or trade. Iron, salt, narcotics sometimes make regular trade-routes or lead to migrations. Travellers bring stories, songs, religious rites. Foreigners are brought into the tribe by marriage, war, slavery, and adoption. Two migrating peoples may settle in the same district, and tribes may be conquered and their lands occupied by other tribes.

In all these cases the native customs, language, and ways of thought are modified in various degrees. Material objects, food and narcotics, ornaments, diseases, stories, songs and dances, even religious cults, and a number of words connected with them, may pass from one people to another, with very little admixture of peoples or of the fundamental elements of their culture. But a much longer and more thorough process of intercourse and blending is needed to change the structure of the language, or to modify the social structure - the native organisation of kinship, clanship, marriage, land-tenure....

To study these *adopted elements in culture* is both important and difficult. Suppose that the observer sees in one island, A, a basket exactly like one that he has seen in another island, B; he may find by enquiry that the basket was actually *imported* from B, lately, or long ago; or, this specimen was made in A, but in *imitation* of baskets imported from B; or, the art of making it was *taught* by visitors from B to A, or by natives of

A who visited B and returned. Or possibly A is the original home of the art, and the baskets seen in B were *imports* or *imitations* or the result of *teaching*.

A dance and the apparatus for it may have been *imitated* from the performances of other tribes, or *taught* by visitors or returned travellers. It may be of native invention but *suggested* by the sight of foreigners and their behaviour. The right to perform the dance and the necessary ornaments may have been bought, given, acquired by marriage, captured in war. A religious cult may have been introduced in any one of these ways, or there may have been a proselytising mission. Foreign words may come by neighbourhood, intermarriage, trade, war, or other means.

By enquiring exactly into these matters, the observer is sure to open up good lines of enquiry into the native way of living, social structure, religious and artistic history. But it is easy to leap to false conclusions. If a peculiar custom of inheritance is found in two tribes, it is not enough to guess that one has adopted it from another. To change part of the social organization is not so simple as to buy a basket or song; other changes would take place along with it, or in consequence, and these must be investigated as evidence for the change. Nor do people adopt new customs unless something already existing in their own culture makes the innovation easy and congenial, or some change of circumstances makes the change necessary. If they adopt a new food, perhaps there was a decided want of that element in their food-supply, perhaps their old food-supply has been suddenly cut off; if they alter their customs of marriage, it may be that the proportion of men to women has been lately altered. The conditions of intercourse, past and present, between the two peoples must be studied. Similarity of customs may come from similarity of conditions, and not by adoption or imitation at all. (*ibid.*: 263-6)

We can see how in 'External Relations Between Communities', reference is made to other sections where specific topics are dealt with, as in previous editions; what is remarkable, then, is how a section has been devoted to the topic of 'External Relations'. In the section of 'Adopted Elements in Culutre' there is a sophisticated set of ideas concerning the adoption of culture which classifies it into 'importation', 'imitation' and 'teaching'. Such adoption is presented as occurring in the normal run of things as a result of the influence of visitors, or travellers, or of war, intermarriage, or trade - or even, at least in the case of 'foreign words', through the mere fact of neighbourhood.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Major C.H. Stigand's (1923: 151-2) discussion of such questions, based on his experiences as Governor of Mongalla Province in Southern Sudan, is perhaps more sophisticated than that given in *Notes and Queries* - it is certainly more complicated:

Ethnography allows the past to be explored to a certain extent, racial differences and characteristics cannot be assumed or

When the fifth edition was published in 1929, the amount of attention paid to relations between peoples had decreased. The section on 'External Relations Between Communities' had been excised and, interestingly, that on 'Adopted Elements in Culture' was reorganised from a position of equivalence, as a section in its own right *vis-à-vis* 'A General Account of Method', 'Life-History of the Individual in Society', 'Social Organization' and 'Economics of the Social Group', to a sub-section of 'Method' along with 'Treatment of Witnesses' and 'The Genealogical Method'. It was thus not included in the reordered Part II, 'Cultural Anthropology, Sociology', with its sub-sections on 'Material Culture', 'Arts and Sciences', 'Nature Lore', 'Language' and 'Archaeology'. This can be taken to reflect a lessening of interest in contact and relations between peoples and an increase in interest in the functioning of social systems without reference to their neighbours or any other possible influence. Making 'Adopted Elements in Culture' a sub-section of 'Method', rather than a section of anthropological study in its own right, implies a desire to analyse out such material while leaving behind what is thought to be the proper stuff of anthropological study.

The editors of the fifth edition made the following plea when discussing the influence of *European* contact in the section under discussion: 'Naturally, the observer must record all that survives

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discarded, like putting on and off a suit of clothes. When, however, one comes to consider customs, it is altogether a different matter; these may be adopted, or abandoned, in a comparatively short space of time. The practice of exogamy encourages their spread far and wide. For instance, there may be a tribe A conterminous with a tribe B, and another tribe C, living next to B on the side remote from A. A woman of A tribe marries a man of B tribe across the border. On her husband's death, his brother, who lives near the opposite border of B near C, comes to claim her and takes her to live with him. While living there her daughter marries into C tribe and carries with her certain customs of A taught her by her mother. A traveller may observe some of these customs whilst passing through C, inquire whether they are practised in B, and find that they are not, and then proceeding to A notice that they are in general use. He might come to the conclusion that this showed that A and C were more closely related than A and B, or B and C. He might even, if so inclined, build up a theory of a former tribe which occupied the country from A to C, till B, coming from elsewhere, drove a wedge in and separated the old AC tribe into two portions.

Again a custom introduced in this way from A to C may be a superstitious one, and the first time it is practised amongst C may meet with great success - someone may make a remarkable recovery which is attributed to the A charm or medicine. It may thus be adopted immediately by a great number of C tribe, whence it may be carried on to D and F, and not to E, and so on.

The above is given only as an example to show that too much importance must not be attributed to the similarity of custom.

of the old native life; but he must show it in its modern setting, and with all its European trappings' (BAAS 1929: 40). However, this plea was merely an amended version of a similar one in the edition of 1912 in which the idea was expressed as follows: 'Naturally, the observer must record all that survives of the old native life; but he must show it in its modern setting. We want the truth and the whole truth' (BAAS 1912: 266). Here there is no mention of 'trappings'. Is it too much to see the 1912 version as having a much more modern approach to 'acculturation', wanting to see cultures in historical process - 'the truth and the whole truth' - whereas the 1929 edition can see modern contacts only as providing 'ornaments; dress; embellishments; external, superficial, and trifling decoration' (*OED*)? If the authors of the 1929 edition viewed the immense influence of European 'contact' on other cultures as mere embellishment, it is hardly surprising that they chose to ignore the importance of the influence of other cultures on each other. Urry fails to notice the major changes from the fourth to the fifth editions that I have identified. He merely claims: 'The 1929 edition was only slightly altered with some new sections on economics and law' (1972: 56, n.18).

With the sixth edition, this trend towards the analysis of societies as isolable units was reinforced. Though relations between societies are touched upon in the sections on 'Warfare' (RAI 1951: 141-4), 'Exchange' (*ibid.*: 169-71) and so on, the concern is with customs regulating the functioning of mutually coexisting social systems. There is, in fact, a section on 'Inter-Group Relations' but it will be seen that though this implies a recognition of social relations between groups and even of overarching units for analysis, particularly in the case of 'common religion', the amount of space devoted to such relations - less than two pages out of three hundred concerned with social anthropological material - reflects the lack of importance attached to them in British social anthropology of the functionalist and structural-functionalist 'schools'. I quote the section on 'Inter-Group Relations' in full:

In simpler societies the political unit is normally the widest effective social group. Within this group the customary rights and obligations of members are enforceable through the medium of a regular system of settling disputes and correcting wrongs. Any non-member of this group is a potential enemy, not protected by established sanctions. But this strict limitation is often set aside, enabling regular peaceful relationships with other groups to be maintained. These relationships may be:

(a) Non-political, e.g. trade or intermarriage. It must be investigated how these relationships are made possible in the absence of a common body of customary law.

(b) There are also unregulated interrelationships in the political field. These take the form of pacts and treaties between political groups, regulating warfare, reconciliation after feuds, and the exchange or ransom of prisoners (*v. below*, Warfare). Through such pacts unrestricted vengeance, such as often obtains between independent political groups, may be replaced by blood-money (*v. Law*) or other obligations of redress,

and the individual acting in disregard of the pact would forfeit the support of his group and be subject to legal or ritual penalties, e.g. outlawry (v. Law). In some societies inviolable go-betweens are entrusted with inter-group negotiations. Among nomadic peoples periodical meetings occur, sometimes taking the form of religious ceremonies, at which outstanding disputes are settled (over blood-money, boundaries, grazing or watering rights). The custom of blood brotherhood is a common device by which people are enabled to visit or traverse the territory of potentially hostile neighbours. Incidence of blood brotherhood and the ritual associated with it should be described in detail. Kinship ties that run across tribal or clan boundaries may fulfil the same purpose (v. Kinship).

(c) In certain societies a common religion creates a community wider than the regular political groups. This is found both amongst very primitive peoples such as the Australian aborigines and amongst more developed peoples, e.g. where Islam has penetrated. (RAI 1951: 135-6)

### 3. *Insular Ethnographies*

The interest in relations between peoples which can be traced through *Queries* and the various earlier editions of *Notes and Queries* gave way by the time of the publication of the fifth edition in 1929 to the overpowering influence of functionalism. Societies and cultures were now to be seen as in theory isolable and therefore as in fact isolated units for analysis. With the abandonment of diffusionism as an acceptable organising theory for anthropological research there was no intellectual foundation for the study of relations between peoples. Questions concerning them, which might be mentioned in passing if they could not be ignored, were now no more than secondary. What perhaps had its origins in the commercial and proselytising interests of European imperial powers gave way to the detached scientific analysis of self-contained units. Questions concerning relations between peoples had never been organised in an intellectually satisfying way - nor, indeed, from a modern perspective, had other anthropological questions - so in the face of the appearance of the then intellectually satisfying functionalism, the disorganised 'External Relations Between Communities' gave way.

This is perhaps a too familiar story, and in some ways it smacks of conventional wisdom ready for disproof - though it does not suit my present purpose to disprove it. But it is not easily to be denied that the defining influence of Malinowskian functionalism, as practised by himself and his students, had a massive effect on the subject of social anthropology in terms of both theory and practice. The functionalist concentration on the interrelatedness of social institutions, as well as the underlying biological - and mechanical (Freedman 1979: 73) - analogy, were bound to lead to almost exclusive attention to tribes, nations, peoples and ethnic groups as isolable units. No doubt this was necessary for the

developments in anthropology that functionalism and structural-functionalism brought about. Boundaries have to be drawn somewhere, the conventional view has it, for analysis to take place, and they are bound to be more or less arbitrary (*ibid.*: 74). Fieldwork by definition requires a long stay in one community and is therefore likely to lead to accounts of peoples as units, where the field-worker's knowledge of one, two or three communities, can be taken as representative of the people, tribe, nation or ethnic group, as a whole.

It is probably not irrelevant that so many of the classic monographs of the 1920s and 1930s, in the defining period of social anthropology, should have been of island peoples - and often studied by anthropologists who were themselves islanders by birth, Firth for example. One could even argue that it is of relevance that all British anthropologists are by definition islanders. In Malinowski's case, however, it would have to be argued that it was the stark contrast between the island communities where he did his early fieldwork and his experiences as a young man of living in the great landmass of Central Europe with its lack of clear-cut, natural geographical divisions there, which encouraged his functionalist view of 'savage' society.

One of the best examples of such work is Firth's classic monograph *We, The Tikopia* (1936), which presents an island people (in his preface, Malinowski refers to Tikopia as 'his [Firth's] little island' [1936: vii]) more or less as they were before the external influences of the contemporary era. The book is, to a marked extent, a reconstruction of traditional Tikopian society and culture with the 'trappings' presented and discussed but analysed out. Firth does not deny the effects of missions etc., but argues that 'the social structure has remained comparatively unchanged (*ibid.*: 38), and he devotes attention to the process of inculturation through which elements of white man's culture have been integrated into the context of Tikopia culture without changing its form. It is with this aspect of his study that Firth admits to some dissatisfaction, saying that if he were able to return to Tikopia he would devote more attention to the 'study of contact of cultures', for example, 'the influence of Christianity on family cohesion' (*ibid.*: xxii), which, of course, he later did, publishing the results in his *Social Change in Tikopia* (1959).

Just as Firth does not ignore the influence of 'the white man' so also he does not deny the contact between Tikopia and other indigenous island peoples; but this is underemphasised in comparison with his stress on their isolation: 'It is hard for anyone who has not actually lived on the island to realize its isolation from the rest of the world' (*ibid.*: 19). After giving us a brilliantly evocative description of the landscape in which the Tikopia live he tells us that 'In this state of isolation from the outer world, in a home of great natural beauty, adequate in the staple materials for a simple but comfortable existence, the Tikopia have shaped their lives' (*ibid.*: 30). And of the horizon as seen from Tumuaki, Firth says it is 'like a cordon from which there is no escape' (*ibid.*: 25).

The Tikopia people live on the island of Tikopia and speak

Tikopia. They are presented as a self-contained and isolated unit, perfect for circumscription as a unit for anthropological study. This is not to say that Firth does not recognise that things are not quite like that. He refers to 'the ocean wanderings of the Tikopia themselves' (ibid.: 34) and calls them 'this sea-faring people' (ibid.: 28). The people of Vanikoro are mentioned as having made frequent visits to Tikopia, and dances are said to have been 'borrowed' and 'adapted' from elsewhere (ibid.: 34), but no more is made of these evidences of relations beyond the unit of analysis. It should also be noted that from Firth's account it seems as if the Tikopia had less contact with other islands at the time he visited them than was the case before; he himself tells us that they do not any more make trips to Anuta, the nearest island (ibid.: 20).

It might be thought easy to challenge this account of the development of anthropology if only by pointing to one of the greatest of all functionalist monographs, Malinowski's *Argonauts of the Western Pacific* (1922), with its wealth of information concerning the *kula* - the complex inter-island trading system. This account of trade beyond the unit of study does not, however, seem to have encouraged such studies elsewhere. It might be said that this is because of the lack of such 'inter-group' institutions elsewhere; but I think there is another, more important, reason.

While Malinowski described *kula* events with his customary wealth of detail, he in fact failed to treat the relations between the peoples involved in the *kula* ring. Evans-Pritchard's criticisms (1981: 198) are cogent:

... we are told nothing of the political interrelations of the communities concerned in the *kula* and nothing of the kinship system ... even the essential facts about the *kula* itself are omitted. He does not tell us who traded with whom; we are not told the interrelationships of the persons composing the villages which take part in the *kula*; and so forth.

Evans-Pritchard blames these omissions on Malinowski's having 'no idea of abstract analysis' (ibid.); Gluckman and Cunnison seem to place the blame on the weakness of the contemporary anthropological theory concerning politics, as well as Malinowski's lack of interest in this subject (1962: vi). It is surely also the case that in his Trobriand researches Malinowski was not concerned to study relations between peoples.

The index to *Argonauts* has only one reference to 'intertribal relations': 'Intertribal relations, how news spreads in' (ibid.: 522). In the few pages referred to (ibid.: 379-82), Malinowski remarks on how surprisingly fast news spreads (a characteristic of representations of the 'primitive' frequently found in novels and films):

It was astonishing to hear all this news, arriving at a small island, apparently completely isolated with its tiny population within these savage and little navigated seas; news only a few days old, yet reporting events which had occurred at a travelling distance of some hundred miles. (ibid.: 380)

Malinowski charts how such communication is achieved in a particular instance and concludes that 'In olden days, not less than now, there must have been an ebullition [*sic*] in the inter-tribal relations, and a great stirring from one place to another, whenever an *uwalaku* Kula was afoot' (ibid.). The hints he gives at the complex organisation underlying the Kula are offset by his choice of language - 'ebullition' implies some unconscious, instinctual, random process; and his earlier references to 'savage and little navigated seas' conflict with his charting of how frequently these seas are crossed. It is almost as if functionalism, while able to comprehend and analyse the complexities of individual societies, could not cope with social relations beyond the defined unit of study. It was these relations beyond the unit which Uberoi has proposed, in his *Politics of the Kula Ring* (1962), underlie the *kula*.

### *Concluding Remarks*

It is not possible in a short paper to do justice to the complexities of more than a century of the intellectual history of an academic discipline. Nevertheless, this review may help to illustrate how anthropology came to ignore an aspect of social reality which had at one time been considered of great importance. The emphasis on studying a people, a society, a tribe, has, I should argue, distorted anthropology's picture of the social reality which it takes to be its subject-matter. Why this happened, and why recently anthropologists are again finding social interrelations interesting and important, are questions I hope to be able to take up elsewhere.

We may assume that anthropologists, at all times, have tried to describe and account for the social reality which they have studied. At all times they have been constrained in their attempts by underlying ideas about the nature of such reality, about the models appropriate for describing and explaining it and so on. Such an exercise as that conducted here helps to illustrate the effects of these underlying ideas. In this particular case the abstracting of a unit for social analysis has been shown to be subject to historical change; reality has been cut up in different ways, facts that do not fit the 'reality' have been underplayed where they have not been ignored.

Knowing how previous studies were limited by their arbitrary abstracting of social reality into convenient units for analysis does not necessarily make the process of delimiting a unit for analysis any less arbitrary. What it does perhaps do is help to contribute to the process whereby anthropology becomes more aware of its own development and of the recalcitrant nature of the social reality it attempts to study.

JEREMY COOTE



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### BRITISH SUBJECT BY BIRTH\*

'Come in', said the boy, and my visitor entered, removing his sandals at the door.

'Come in', said I, in the sort of tone that tried to suggest that I was not being interrupted in the middle of Bardell versus Pickwick. The boy rumbled out a phrase from which I guessed the visitor wanted something for a cold. (I never could catch what the boy said - why is that one's own servants always seemed to speak much less clearly and connectedly than anyone else's?)

My visitor then explained he had a cold in a sort of English no easier to understand than the boy's Arabic; but I had nothing for a cold, not even an aspirin.

'Sit down', I said, offering my canvas easy chair. He refused it, and sat on the little upright one drawn up face to face with mine.

Hot rum, I thought to myself, is good for a cold, but there is only gin, and hot gin might not be. In any case, alcohol is forbidden to the locals. It would, I thought to myself, be a good thing to have some rum. I too have a cold. These houses in hot countries, I thought to myself, are so draughty.

My visitor had in the mean time been speaking, so I gave the reply suitable for all occasions: 'Pour coffee', I said to the boy. We both drank coffee and shook the cups to signify we had had enough.

'Where do you come from?' I said.

'I come from the next room', said my visitor. I noted this mentally; had I been more competent I should have realised this.

'I mean where does your family live?'

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\* This story was found among the papers of the late Peter Lienhardt and was dated April 14th, 1954. It is published here for the first time with the kind permission of Godfrey Lienhardt.

'I am not married.'

'But where did your father and grandfather live?'

'Have you heard of Latfffzsl?' (I didn't catch the name clearly.) From the expectancy on his face I realised that I ought to have heard of it, so I compromised.

'The name sounds familiar, where is it?'

'He was my grandfather. He was the English Consul in Muscat.'

'Have some chocolate.'

I learned that his family were of the Shi'a sect of Islam and came originally from Sind, but had been settled in Muscat for a couple of centuries. They are merchants who know Arabic and other languages, but even after all this time still speak and write in their original language among themselves.

'You have come here to work for Gray McKenzie?' I denied that I was working for the shipping agents, and tried to explain that I was doing some private research for a degree at an English university, and was going to write a book on the life of the people in the Persian Gulf for an examination.

'Yes, I understand,' said my visitor. 'You find out everything and write it down in a book, and then give it to the people who send you so that they know all about the country. The English are very great political men.'

'But I am not doing anything at all political,' I protested. 'I am working for myself.' He smiled an enormous clever smile and his eyes twinkled behind his blue-tinted spectacles.

'The English are very great political men,' he said. 'They wait and wait and they learn about everything, and they wait and then they say, "This is good for you. Let us do it for you," and "that is good for you. Let us do it for you." They wait and wait until they have done everything not from the top (here he made little wiggling motions with his hand just above the carpet) and then they say, "Why are you in this country? We have done this and we have done that and we have done everything, and this is our country. Go away." Tell me, is this not true?' I said I didn't really know.

'How do you say you not know and you are English? It is not possible. My grandfather was the consul in Muscat and I know. The English are great political men.'

Then my visitor had to go and I returned with relief to *The Pickwick Papers*. Had Dickens united the characteristics of Messrs Dodson and Fogg and of Mr Pickwick in one composite personality he would have described a truly eastern character.

The next evening, the pressure lamp lit up the face of my new friend peering in at me through the open window.

'Come in', said I.

'No,' he replied, 'I am just going to pray. I will come in after supper.' I thought of saying that I had to go out, for I feared that the political conversation would begin again, and if there is anything both tiresome and unprofitable it is trying to defend, let alone explain, the behaviour of the British Government in these parts. So many Palestinians had come up, even with printed copies of the Balfour Declaration, or more picturesquely, toying with small daggers, that I had come to wonder whether it would not be a good

thing if we really did what the newspapers blame us for doing, so that we might have a slight practical advantage with no worse reputation attached.

He did come back after supper. He asked my name and I told him it was Peter, then he asked me my father's name and I told him that the name of my family was Lienhardt. He told me his name and explained why the name of his firm was different.

'My grandfather was given the name of W.J. Town by an Englishman who was a big Pot.'

'I beg your pardon?'

'He was a big Pot from London. He came to Muscat and he said, "I will give you an English name. W.J. Town is a big English name." I do not remember the name of the man. What are the names of the big Pots in London, Mr Peter?' (He pronounced the name to rhyme with 'better'.) I put an expression of thought on, but the big Pot's name escaped us, even when I was, after some calculation, told that he died in 1942.

'What is a Khoja?' I asked.

'We are Ithnaashari.'

'That means that you believe in twelve imams? And that you come from India, so the name means that you are not followers of the Aga Khan. My friend said that the Ismaili religious leaders, the Aga Khans, were humbugs.'

'Our Imam is hidden and will not come again until the end of the world. The Aga Khans are not true Imams. The true Imam knows everything; he knows what is your front and what is your behind.'

I hastily made a jocular remark, for I knew that to laugh at his unfortunate expression would be most unsuitable, but also that laugh I must in spite of the seriousness of the subject.

'Listen, Mr Petal,' said he, responding jovially to the laughter, 'I will tell you a story. There was an old man who was an Ismaili and he sent his son to school to learn everything, and he went to school for a very long time, and when he had learned everything, got School Certificate etcetera, started to think about religion.'

'He thought he would be a Sunni because they will not sit with us, and he thought that the religion of the Ismailis was wrong, and so he followed our religion but he kept it secret. His father was a very old man, and he knew that he would die soon. So he went to the Aga Khan and said, "I want you to give me a paper so that when I die I will go straight to heaven." The Aga Khan asked if he had any money, and he said, "Yes, I have a lot of money." So the Aga Khan wrote out a paper and signed, and said, "Tell them to bury this with you, and the angels will not ask any questions when you are in the grave, but will take you to straight to heaven first class." The old man gave forty thousand rupees to the Aga Khan and went home and told his son and then he died. The son washed him and put the grave clothes on him, and took a paper with writing on and showed it to the religious men. He said, "This is the paper that the Aga Khan gave to my father so that he could go to heaven first class and I am going to put it in his grave clothes." The religious men said, "Yes, do that and he is sure to go to heaven first class, when the angels read the letter from the Aga Khan." So the son put the

paper in the grave clothes, and they buried the body. But it was not really the paper that the Aga Khan had written; the son had kept that paper and had written another one, and put it in the grave clothes.

'The next morning the son took the real paper that the Aga Khan had written to the religious men. He said to them, "My father came to me in a dream last night, and gave me this paper back, and said, 'Go and give the paper to the Aga Khan. Tell him that I gave him forty thousand rupees, and he gave me this paper, and when I was in the grave I gave the paper to the angels. I told them that the Aga Khan said that I could go to heaven first class. They said, "First class full, second class full, third class full. You'll have to go to hell.'" So the religious men sent a letter to the Aga Khan. The Aga Khan said, "Give him back the forty thousand rupees and make him promise not to tell anybody."

'He was a very clever political man,' said my friend. 'The English are like that. They go to a thief and say, "You go and rob that house." Then they go to the owner and say, "Somebody is coming to rob your house." The owner stands at the door and waits, and whilst he is at the door the thief comes in at another door and takes all his money. There was an English consul who was getting off the boat with his wife, when a Bedouin came and pinched his wife. The consul looked very pleased and gave the Bedouin two rupees. The Bedouin said to himself, "What is this? I pinch his wife and he gives me two rupees!" So the Bedouin saw the shaikh walking with his wife, and he went up and pinched the shaikh's wife. The shaikh turned round to his soldiers and said, "Shoot him", and so they shot him. When they told the consul what had happened, he laughed and laughed, and he said, "I do not like to shoot people myself."

'That is the way of the English,' said my friend, 'they wait and wait, and then they get what they want. This is what they are doing here. They have asked the Shaikh for three things, and he does not want to. The first thing is that he gives them the customs, like Bahrain.'

'Surely the British don't take any money from the Bahrain customs,' said I. He looked at me with an expression meaning, 'You're a caution.'

'Of course they do,' said he. 'They take all the customs and give the Shaikh a salary.'

'I cannot believe that,' said I.

'You ought to read the *Saut al-Bahrain*,' he replied. I didn't point out that the *Saut al-Bahrain*, in making a short report about myself, had been sufficiently inaccurate in its facts to make me sceptical of its reliability in greater matters.

'What else do they want the Shaikh to do?' I asked. My friend faltered a little as though he thought I was trying to get information out of him, as, in a way, I suppose I was.

'They want to make a municipality to clean the dust from the streets.'

'Surely that would be a good thing?'

'Of course it would be a good thing. By God Almighty, I say to you I wish they would take all these countries. I am a British

subject. I have written on my passport, "British subject by birth". The English work; not like these shaikhs, two days in the town and then ten days in the desert, hunting. Before they came, the countries were wild; now they have soldiers, so that the Bedouin do not raid the towns. I hope they will take all the countries and make them like Bahrain. The English work. I read the great English poet Longfellow when I was at school.' (Then he quoted a lot of verses that I can't remember, though there was a line beginning, 'Let the dead bury the dead,' and another about not being like a cow.)

My friend, having worked himself up a little, turned over into Arabic. 'My cousin,' said he, 'was living in the Batina coast, and the Arabs came up and said, "Give us your money or we will beat you." So he gave them money, and went to see the Consul at Muscat. The consul said, "Don't be frightened. Now you have told me, go back home." As soon as he got back, there was the consul in full uniform getting out of an aeroplane with some soldiers. He went straight to the shaikh and said, "Give this man his money back." The Shaikh was frightened and gave my cousin the money, and then the consul turned round to the shaikh and said, "If you molest this man again I'll pluck your eyes out." That was years ago, and there has been no trouble since. Another time the government said it didn't want to have us in the country, and we said we were perfectly ready to go because it was a poor country anyway, but we had fifteen houses and eleven shops and what were we to do with them? We went and told the consul, and he said, "Don't be frightened, if they try to turn you out I will give you refuge in my house." Then he wrote a letter to the government and it was all settled with no more trouble. I wish the English would take all these countries, by God Almighty, and they will, you see if they don't.'

I expressed some doubt on the subject and tried unsuccessfully to point out that, without the oil revenues, it would be hard to do the sort of work that has already been done in Bahrain, and secondly that Kuwait is doing very well for itself without over-strong British influence.

'Look at yourself, for example', said my friend.

'What have I got to do with the matter?'

'Oh, you know, you come here and you find out everything about the country and then you come back to be consul.'

'I don't do anything of the sort.'

'Of course you do. Why did you take notes on Muhammed's wedding, all about the red canopy?' I could not quite see what use it would be to a future Political Agent to know what happened at Muhammed's wedding or anyone else's, but more important I couldn't understand how he could know I had taken any notes without coming in and reading them when I was out, an idea which made me rather nervous as to what else he might have read. Had he, for example, seen that in all good will I had said that Muhammed's father had a face like a beetle? And if so would he tell Muhammed's father?

'Why do you come to this dusty country from England, leaving your family behind? Who do you sit and eat meals off the floor with your hands? All the English people do it and at home you would be eating with spoons.'

'Politeness', said I.

'Policy', said he. 'I was talking to an Englishman about cigarettes, and I said, "Why do you smoke, when it is not good for your health?" He said, "We make all the cigarettes, and we make a lot of profit out of them, and were we not to smoke ourselves people would notice it and say there must be something wrong about cigarettes and stop buying our cigarettes."' He laughed with glee at this admission of policy.

'If only the English would take over these countries quickly! These people here are like animals. Do you know that when the first wireless sets were brought here, the people heard the Arabic news, and they said, "By God there's a man sitting in that box talking." Then when the Arabic news finished they heard another voice talking, and then another. They said, "By all that's wonderful, there are three men in the box, an Arab, an Englishman, and a Baluchi. But if they spend all their time in the box, where do they eat? There must be a hotel in the box too."'

'No, these people are just animals,' said my friend. 'The English should organise them, Mr Petal. If the English came here they would dredge the creek and make a good port, whereas these people care nothing for trade. Just animals! They have no export or import licences!'

PETER LIENHARDT



## BOOK REVIEWS

ANTHONY JACKSON (ed.), *Anthropology at Home* [ASA Monographs, no. 25], London and New York: Tavistock Publications 1987. x, 212 pp., Indexes. £12.95.

The thirteen contributions from the 1985 ASA conference selected for publication in this volume extend the concept of 'at home' in a number of different directions. For the majority of contributors 'anthropology at home' refers to working within the geographical limits of the country in which they were brought up, or in a neighbouring and broadly similar cultural area. The task of distancing oneself from the subject of research, a recurrent theme among the papers, is tackled in most cases by seeking the unfamiliar within the 'home' area (Travellers for Judith Okely, the Hebrides for Edwin Ardener, Icelanders for Kirsten Hastrup and Bretons for Maryon McDonald). In other cases 'home' is taken literally to mean 'the place in which one has taken up residence'. Both Stella Mascarenhas-Keyes in Goa (India) and Shalva Weil in Israel explore the problems of living in a place as an anthropologist who has cultural links with but is not a native of the area of research. The situation of those who work 'at home' for reasons of political or financial necessity is touched on by Chris Hann (in socialist Eastern Europe), Tamara Dragadze (the Soviet Union) and Angela Cheater (the Third World). In a minority of cases 'home' is the socially and culturally familiar background of the anthropologist. Marilyn Strathern discusses the problem of familiarity and the production of text from fieldwork in an Essex village, Martine Segalen and Françoise Zonabend address the question of over-familiarity in researching French kinship patterns and Orvar Löfgren describes a project exploring 'culture building' in Swedish society.

Certain themes recur in many of the papers, stimulated by familiarity with the subject areas, such as the relationship between objective and subjective modes of perception, the use of Self as informant, the generation of categories, and the construction and interpretation of reality. The majority of contributors have found that the methodological skills of fieldwork 'abroad' have proved their ability to yield results 'at home'. Only Segalen and Zonabend's study of French kinship patterns stands outside the tradition of participant observation. Despite Cheater's citation from Bailey's *Morality and Experience* (Oxford, Basil Blackwell 1977) referring to an anthropological tradition of 'concealing a void of ideas behind a screen of exotic and bizarre fact, helped out by an appropriate selection of photographs' (p. 176), the mood of those anthropologists who have worked at home is confident and optimistic, provoking useful reflection on the nature of anthropological research and the interpretation of culture.

In his introductory paper Anthony Jackson traces the development of interest in anthropology 'at home' in the British context.

Historical sketches of ethnographic traditions are also provided by Löfgren for Sweden, Segalen and Zonabend for France, Hann for Hungary and Dragadze for the Soviet Union. The main interest in each of these papers lies, however, in the writers' reflections on the theoretical and practical implications of their own research experience. Strathern, for example, compares the perceptions of Melanesians and Essex villagers with the anthropologist's acquisition of knowledge and explores the limits of what she terms 'auto-anthropology'. This refers not to doing anthropology within one's own society but to the relationship between the ethnographic text and the society's own interpretations of knowledge.

Edwin Ardener's paper on 'remote areas', drawing on fieldwork experience in Nigeria, Cameroon and the west of Scotland, is a bit of an odd man out, the location of part of the fieldwork 'at home' being largely irrelevant. His contribution is nevertheless welcome for the light it throws on his main theoretical interest in identity. Ardener develops the concept of 'event-density' or 'event-richness' associated with areas considered by outsiders to be 'remote'. Although geographical distance from centres of power and topography help in the designation of a 'remote area', this is not a restatement of the centre/periphery phenomenon. How and why such classifications arise and for whom they are valid deserve further exploration, but with an amusingly light touch the paradoxes of life in a remote area are documented by Ardener and, for me at least, their subjective validity ring true. It is not remote areas in their own right which primarily interest Ardener, but the light that they throw on the construction of identity, and it is here that the main contribution of the paper lies. According to Ardener, an intermittent consciousness of the defining process of others turns 'remote area' into 'very crucibles of the creation of identity' (p. 50).

Space does not allow a detailed discussion of all of the contributions in this volume but overall it is an impressive collection which deserves to be taken seriously. Three in particular might be mentioned. Judith Okely's paper on policy-related fieldwork in Britain, outlining the pitfalls and potential value of such work, provides timely advice for the increasing number of anthropologists employed in policy-related research. It should also be read by all university-based anthropologists making occasional forays outside academia. Orvar Löfgren describes a long-term project looking at the central definitions of Swedish culture. A historical focus is chosen as a means of distancing the researcher from the material. The work is distinguished from that of historians and sociologists by an anthropological perspective which 'consists of a painstaking ethnography of the trivialities of everyday life' (p. 89). A patchwork approach of case-studies drawing on topics such as boundary maintenance, ritualised behaviour as seen through ideas relating to hygiene, table manners, childhood memories and a focus on particular groups (domestic servants, lumberjacks) provides a validation of a qualitative anthropological approach to the study of one's own society. Kirsten Hastrup, a Dane working in Iceland, looks at the influence of gender and at differing notions of time when relating her own fieldwork experience. Hastrup describes ways

in which a historical knowledge of ethnography can make the field-worker deaf to the proper meaning of signs. Thus, thinking that she knew the meaning of the term *draugar* ('ghost'), and deciding that she didn't believe in their existence, Hastrup was unprepared for a change in meaning (and the inclusion of a half-wit with a reputation as a sexual pervert in this category) 'and so ran a real risk of colliding with a living signifier' (p. 103).

The cumulative effect of this collection is to impress upon the reader the need for sensitivity to the nuances of the fieldwork situation and subsequent production of text. Questions relating to the role of the researcher in the production of knowledge, the construction of identity and interpretation of 'reality' are discussed with a welcome honesty and provide a timely demystification of the anthropological enterprise.

FIONA BOWIE

ALAN MACFARLANE, *Marriage and Love in England: Modes of Reproduction 1300-1840*, Oxford: Basil Blackwell 1986. xi, 344pp., Bibliography, Index. £19.50.

Despite its deceptively straightforward title, this book opens up for review some fairly firmly held notions about the wider social and economic development of Western Europe during the period under consideration. An excellent example of the contribution possible when an anthropologist attacks macro-problems usually the preserve of sociologists, historians and demographers, it sets out not only to challenge commonly accepted ideas about the relationship between industrialisation, urbanisation and the family, but also to question some of the even more sacred theories of Marx and Engels about the rise of capitalism and individualism, at least in England. It is also eminently readable and moves in such a satisfactory way through the various strands of its argument that it almost seems unfair on the reader to divulge its conclusion.

The book opens by quoting the deliberations of Charles Darwin who, at the age of 29, set out on a scrap of paper the pros and cons of marriage. Though Darwin did indeed marry early the following year, this cost-benefit analysis remains, and Macfarlane points out that in worldwide perspective the act of writing it is quite extraordinary, partly because of the individual choice that it implies, and also because of the ripe age at which the choice was being made. In the same year, 1838, Darwin satisfied himself that he had solved the problem of how species evolved through natural selection, influenced considerably by Thomas Malthus's *Essay on Population*. Macfarlane suggests that this work may also have influenced the cost-benefit analysis, for he describes Malthus's essay as 'an elegant theoretical model of the marriage system in England

in the early nineteenth century, of which Darwin's ruminations are such an enlightening illustration' (p. 5).

Macfarlane goes on to outline the elements of Malthusian theory and to demonstrate its importance, in his view, particularly in the light of recent reconsiderations of the causes and conditions of industrial and colonial expansion in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century England (and also in explaining the easing of population problems in Third World countries in the last ten years). A spurt in population growth in England in the middle of the eighteenth century has for some time been largely associated with improvements in health and the disappearance of plague, but new research seems to suggest that about three-quarters of the acceleration in population growth may well be attributable to an increase in fertility associated with a decline in the age of marriage and a greater proportion of the population marrying. In other words, importance is being assigned to social factors which may earlier have been neglected. This has opened up questions about the system of family and marriage which was already in operation in England and which seems to have been rather different from those in other European countries.

Within this particularly English context, Macfarlane goes on to examine some of the assumptions made by Malthus about the nature and purposes of marriage, very different from, at times even the opposite of, those which would have been made by his contemporaries in China, India, Africa, Eastern Europe and South America. These include the ideas demonstrated by Darwin of seeing marriage as an individual choice and as an expense, in contrast to the situation common elsewhere in which marriage was seen as an inevitable part of life and a source of wealth for the future. This difference has of course been documented as characteristic of 'familistic' as opposed to 'individualistic' society, with the 'conjugal' or 'nuclear' family developing in the latter case, 'along with other features of industrialism' (Davis, quoted on p. 37). There are still various views about when and how this nuclear family system became the norm in England, and the rest of this book is devoted to demonstrating (and reiterating Macfarlane's thesis in his previous work on individualism) that it goes back a lot further than industrialism.

There follows a wealth of detail about marriage and associated aspects of English life 'roughly from Chaucer to Malthus' (p. 45). There are three chapters on the role of children and why and how they were perceived as a cost rather than a benefit; another three chapters cover the main purposes of marriage, and a final four discuss the rules involved. We are treated to intimate descriptions of customs concerning courtship and consummation, a plethora of examples of the economic arrangements necessary and the status differences considered, and are given various reasons why the age of marriage was so much later than that found in other parts of the world. On the way through all this ethnography, Macfarlane provides comparisons with marriage systems found elsewhere, incidentally dealing a crushing blow to Engels' 'mid-European, and almost universal view' that children were valuables, 'returning more than was invested in them', as well as disposing of the prevalent idea

that 'love' developed from the behaviour of Provençal knights in the twelfth century. He also offers a reasonable economic argument about why the age of marriage declined in the mid-eighteenth century (causing the increase in fertility, mentioned above).

At the end of all this, we emerge with a small number of characteristics of English marriage which have apparently endured throughout the period. They accord perfectly with Malthusian theory. They also fit with urbanisation and industrialisation, but Macfarlane emphasises that there is no necessary connection between them, and the same type of marriage can now be found in areas which are neither urbanised nor industrialised. They fit particularly well with capitalism, indeed 'the accumulative ethic' forms an important component of the system, as Malthus himself realised (and so indeed did Marx, when he criticised Darwin for 'recognising among among brutes and plants his English society'). Those who know the Marx-Engels chronology will see at once that there is a temporal problem with the completion of this jigsaw, and I will refrain from pre-empting the reader's satisfaction by putting in the last few pieces before you have done more than glance at the picture.

There are, of course, problems with trying to cover such a broad area of society over such a long period, and the evidence is drawn from a wide variety of sources of a most inconsistent quality: diaries and autobiographies, parish records and the proceedings of the ecclesiastical courts, literature, ballads and letters. Macfarlane concedes the 'homogenization' which has been necessary over time, levels of society, regions, including urban / rural differences, and religious and political differences. He also admits that there is a male bias. He points out, however, that what he attempts is 'to distil ... some of the quintessential structures and sentiments' (p. 48), and his success with regard to particular periods and regions he leaves to the qualified reader to judge.

For myself, whose speciality lies away in a completely different system, recently firmly capitalist, but as yet showing some considerable resistance to 'Western' family arrangements, I cannot help concluding that although the book presents a convincing picture of 'quintessential' English structures, its author is as bound by a Western view of the world as were some of the great names whose theories he examines. For although he demonstrates considerable knowledge of other marital arrangements and uses anthropological rather than statistical techniques for illustrating his structural principles, Macfarlane does not appear to question at all the validity of applying general evolutionary schemes to the subject of family and marriage. Or perhaps he does in the end, implicitly, for he closes the book with a tantalising question still unanswered. I shall leave that piece of the jigsaw out too, for I enjoyed the book, and I dare say others who agree with all the assumptions will share my view, especially if they are allowed to retain the element of surprise.

R.D. GRILLO, *Ideologies and Institutions in Urban France: The Representation of Immigrants*, Cambridge etc.: Cambridge University Press 1985. xv, 301pp., Appendix, Bibliography, Index, Tables, Figures, Maps. £27.50.

This work is based upon fieldwork in the French city of Lyons. Grillo describes how he began his project hoping to study Italian immigrants who, like many others from Spain, Portugal, Turkey, Algeria, Tunisia and Morocco, have come to Lyons in the post-war period to find work. He homed in, however, on those 'French' institutions whose business it is to deal, socially and politically, with immigrants, and his work became a study of these institutions, of their rhetoric, their organisation, their perceptions of the immigrants, and their relationship to one another and to the 'state'.

After a general introduction, there are chapters on the different language employed by different varieties of political organisation (in particular the two main union groups, the CGT and the CFDT) in their description of immigrants, on housing problems, on the problems peculiar to immigrant women, on the schooling situation, on language, on the workplace, and on industrial disputes. It must be stressed that in dealing with these topics, Grillo's emphasis is very heavily upon how these things are perceived by 'French' organisations. Highly educated, predominantly left-wing, middle-class professional French nationals and French speakers are our main informants - social workers, union officials, and *fonctionnaires* of various kinds, working in housing, planning, medical and educational services and the like. We do not hear the views of immigrants, and neither do we hear the views of the ordinary French natives of Lyons. Rather, we hear the voices of French bureaucrats, professional pedagogues, social workers, union officials and students.

Grillo is aware, given the nature of his study and of his informants, that this is not properly speaking a social anthropology of immigrants in Lyons. It is, rather, only "'about" immigrants' (p. 24), and 'immigrants as such ceased to be the centre of interest' (p. 24). The terms that are employed are those of Grillo himself, and of his informants, who are of a particular type: 'social workers, hostel directors, teachers' (p. 273), who 'translate their information into an idiom (leftish, social scientific)' (p. 276).

In Western European life, the self-presentation of the institutions of social intervention and of the parties and organisations of the political left, with their abundant and articulate self-diagnosis, are a gift for the social-scientific thesis writer already fluent in their idiom. Grillo has accepted this gift and organised it to his purpose. The categories of common understanding, however, in both the immigrant and the native French context, are casualties of this procedure. We are not told of immigrant life in its own terms, and we are not told of ordinary native French life in its own terms either. We are given some fascinating material from a Spanish immigrant on the characteristics of the different varieties of immigrant, but this is unexploited (p. 42). The immigrant community is, in its own eyes, extremely and importantly

diverse, but Grillo is prepared to subsume this diversity under categories of his own (like 'subproletariat', p. 50). The distinction between the European Christian immigrants (Italians, Spanish, Portuguese) and the North African Muslims (Tunisians, Algerians, Moroccans) is of the greatest importance for everybody concerned, but Grillo is prepared to 'reserve judgement' on whether this distinction is 'analytically important' (p. 34). In a book about immigrants, where racism and prejudice on the part of the host society are assumed by the author, we might expect a serious discussion of what the natives of Lyons (outside the concerned bureaucracies and organisations already mentioned) thought of the immigrants, and of why they thought these things. Such discussion is strikingly absent, however. The perceptions of the French people of Lyons are dismissed as follows: 'insofar as ordinary French people are hostile to immigrants, that is to say express racist attitudes' (p. 138) - and little more is accorded them. It should perhaps be noted that this collapse of definitions ('hostility' = 'racism') is by no means as self-evident as Grillo implies. Social anthropology has achieved much through a sensitivity to native terminologies, and it is strange therefore that the vernacular terminology of the people of Lyons should be dismissed, with disapproval, as irrelevant to the task in hand (as 'a variety of abusive words and phrases', p. 63).

As Grillo says, 'In effect, the research was set to become a study of the "community" of immigrants from within. The end result was very different' (p. 15). The main defect of the book, I think, is that Grillo fails to recognise that the end result is smaller, not larger, than the original ambition. He defends the limitations of this work in very positive terms, dismissing the rest of European ethnography as 'irrelevant' (p. 3). He says that his approach, which began with the intention of studying how immigrants saw their world, 'broadened to become an analysis of institutional arrangements and ideological structures in an advanced industrial society' (p. 290). In the context, this comes perilously close to meaning that, rather than talk to immigrants, he talked about immigrants to social workers and union officials. There is nothing wrong with that, but it is very far from being a 'broadening'. The decisive limitations of his work, which are transparently dictated by problems of time, language and access (and no harm there) he refers to as 'coming down on one side in this dispute by giving methodological priority to the institutions of the receiving society' (p. 282). His work, he says, 'became what my basic theoretical position had demanded all along' (p. 23).

Grillo tells us, early on in his work, that he 'would maintain that an interest in beliefs and attitudes expressed by informants must remain part of the anthropological project' (p. 8). The audience for this contention cannot be Grillo's fellow social anthropologists, for many of whom an 'interest in beliefs and attitudes expressed by informants' comes very close to being a definition of the subject of social anthropology. It is clear, however, that Grillo moves within an intellectual world where such an interest is not imperative and even demands prior apology to the serious-minded. This accounts for the sustained indifference to native categories and for the rather unhappy ambiguity of the book's purpose: it is

both '"about" immigrants' and 'about immigrants' - conceived as the latter, doubtless to be shelved as the latter, but researched as the former, and written up somewhere between the two.

MALCOLM CHAPMAN

CAROLINE B. BRETTELL, *Men Who Migrate, Women Who Wait: Population and History in a Portuguese Parish*, Princeton: Princeton University Press 1986. xv, 268 pp., Appendices, Notes, Bibliography, Index, Figures, Map, Plates, Tables. £26.70.

If demography needs anthropology (which it does), then Brettell's book is a welcome contribution. Instead of relating demographic variables to single factors, as though the study of populations was a form of social scientific algebra, Brettell proposes a 'cultural-ecological approach', (i.e. a consideration of the total social and cultural environment).

Her geographical focus is Lanheses, a northwestern Portuguese village where she had already worked as an anthropologist. Using a variety of historical records and the memories of villagers, she situates the meaning and evolution of emigration from Lanheses since 1700 in its changing ethnographical contexts. Emigration helped perpetuate the traditional way of life, otherwise threatened by limited resources and constant population pressure; it provided, and continues to provide, the possibility of social and economic mobility. Both cultural sentiment and socially determined strategy pursued by groups of individuals in particular historical circumstances, this predominantly male emigration is closely related (though not always causally) with late marriage, high illegitimacy rates, moderated fertility, and frequency of female celibacy. In Lanheses men are lacking; women work in the fields and can inherit property in their own right. On marriage, they are not usually obliged to join a corporate kin group but can establish an independent household. Thus women have some autonomy. They become partners with, not inferiors to, the male household head, and 'their labour is valued by both the family of orientation (hence delayed marriages) and the family of procreation (hence proven productivity may be more esteemed than virginity)'. A resolute comparativist, Brettell concludes by proposing *matricentric* regions of Western Europe as a productive frame for comparison.

Though Brettell wishes to combine ethnography and demography, I wonder if she had exploited her anthropology to the full. In many instances, when discussing the possible motivations for certain strategies by historical agents, she makes 'educated guesses', i.e. a mix between her knowledge of village ways and her own conception of human nature. These important sections of her book might have been less speculative if she had studied more intensively villagers'



reasons for actions, whether contemporary or historical. Novels, articles by columnists in local newspapers, statements in legal proceedings in local courts could all help here. She mentions a novel about the region written in the 1940s but makes no use of it. This seems a pity, for it suggests a gap in her otherwise very well-researched book.

JEREMY MACCLANCY

KENNETH E. READ, *Return to the High Valley: Coming Full Circle* [Studies in Melanesian Anthropology], Berkeley etc.: University of California Press 1986. xxi, 259 pp., Illustrations, Index. £15.95.

The 'high valley' to which Read returns is the Asaro Valley in Papua New Guinea's Eastern Highlands Province. Read's record of his earlier trip to the area, itself entitled simply *The High Valley* (1965), was remarkable on three counts. First, rather than focusing directly on Gahuku social structure, Read allowed its character to emerge through portraits of particular Gahuku individuals as they operated within it. In doing this, Read emphasised - well before it was *de rigueur* to do so - the irretrievably personal and subjective dimension to fieldwork. Finally, the elegance and intensity of Read's writing gave that earlier book a currency well beyond professional anthropology.

Similar concerns and qualities are in evidence in the present book, which is based on short return visits to the valley in the summers of 1981 and 1982. The brevity of the visits did not permit systematic fieldwork: Read refers to the process as consisting 'principally in being "brought up-to-date" by relatives at a family reunion' (p. xvi), and to the resulting volume as 'more a memoir than an analysis' (p. 9) of the changes since his first trip to the area thirty years earlier. These changes are particularly striking, as the community in which Read had originally done his fieldwork less than two decades after 'first contact' had, by 1981, become virtually a suburb of Goroka, the province's capital, which has a population of 10,000.

The Gahuku society which Read had known was cross-cut with sharp divisions between the sexes, and by an age-grade system. Read sketches the attenuation of both these central divisions in the face of the suppression of pre-contact warfare, the diversification of employment opportunities, mission activity etc. These and other changes are illuminated through Read's reflections both on the lives and life-chances of his Gahuku friends, and on the pragmatism and flexibility of their world-view, which Read sees as having allowed most of them to ride the extraordinary transformations they have seen. However, Makis - Read's charismatic sponsor on his first visit - is dead, a casualty of the changes, having been knocked

down by a vehicle on the Highlands Highway while drunk. Makis's presence nevertheless looms over this book as it did his predecessor. In some of the most interesting sections, Read describes how, following Makis's death, the political confederation that he had forged collapsed. The aftermath reveals what had previously been hidden from Read: that his own sponsor's clan membership was other than it seemed. Makis's presence looms over the book in another sense: as the ghostly cause of the noises which disturbed Read's sleep during the nights preceding his departure from the valley. "He [Makis] knows you are going and wants to fasten you to your land and people", Read's friends told him - an explanation that may, incidentally, surprise readers who recall the author's statement made in a much earlier paper (see *Oceania*, Vol. XXV, 1955, p. 269) that the dead do not generally concern themselves with the conduct of the living in Gahuku society, particularly when that statement was itself a correction of a yet earlier statement that the dead *are* so concerned.

This ethnographic query aside, this book is a notably well-written personal account. Its undeniable power makes it a worthy successor to its predecessor and, like *The High Valley*, it is certain to prompt lay readers towards both anthropology and field-work.

MICHAEL O'HANLON

KARL JETTMAR, *The Religions of the Hindu Kush, Volume I, The Religion of the Kafirs: The Pre-Islamic Heritage of Afghan Nuristan* (transl. Adam Nayyar, with contributions from Schuyler Jones and Max Klimburg, and a Glossary by Peter Parkes), Warminster: Aris & Phillips 1986. ix, 147 pp., Glossary, Bibliography, Plates, Maps. £18.00.

Professor Jettmar's *magnum opus*, *Die Religionen des Hindu Kusch* (1975), being in German, is less well known than it ought to be. The author, who has just retired from heading the Ethnology Department of the great Südasien-Institut at Heidelberg, here presents an updated version of one-third of his major work; the other two volumes will concentrate on mountain peoples living to the east of Afghanistan. Jettmar has travelled extensively in Northern Pakistan, where he has recently discovered large numbers of ancient rock engravings and inscriptions, but the present volume is primarily a library study.

The Kafir ('pagan') tribes of Northeast Afghanistan became known as Nuristanis after their conquest and forcible conversion in 1895-6. However, the pre-Islamic heritage did not disappear overnight, and in spite of difficulties of access there has been a good deal of subsequent 'salvage' ethnography. Jettmar refers to well over a hundred sources immediately relevant to the area, as well as drawing

on work still in process of publication. A certain period flavour is added by illustrations reproduced from the classic pre-conversion monography by Sir George Robertson, a brave man and a pioneer ethnographer who lived among these warlike peoples for a year at the beginning of the 1890s.

The languages of Nuristan, relatively uninfluenced by neighbouring literate cultures, are of considerable interest to Indo-Iranianists and (enlarging the range of genetic comparison) Indo-Europeanists. This linguistic literature is drawn on usefully by Peter Parkes, who has worked with the still non-Islamised Kalash Kafirs just across the border, and who here provides an etymological glossary of the religious terminology.

Like the languages, the tribal religions are no doubt akin to those of the pre-Vedic Indians and pre-Zoroastrian Iranians (not to mention pre-Christian Europeans), hence potentially of great interest to comparativists. This potential was emphasised by G. Fussman (recently elevated to an important chair of Sanskrit in Paris) in his stimulating reaction to the German edition of this book. Jettmar does respond to a few of Fussman's points but his real enthusiasm clearly lies in other directions. He belongs to that generation of German anthropologists whose approach to alien cultures was primarily via artefacts and material remains, and being an expert on Soviet archaeology, he tries hard to bring this knowledge to bear on Nuristani religion. Those who are sceptical of the resulting atomism and prefer to think in terms of functional and ideological structures will have to do some work for themselves. But they will find Jettmar's signposts to the original sources extremely helpful.

N.J. ALLEN

LOUIS DUMONT, *Essays on Individualism: Modern Ideology in Anthropological Perspective*, Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press 1986. x, 268 pp., Works Cited, Glossary, Index. £21.95.

In *Homo Hierarchicus* Dumont illustrated that an understanding of the hierarchically organised Indian caste system can only fully be achieved if the Western interpreter is aware of the nature of his own society, a kind of society which propagates 'equality' as one of its prime values. He spoke of 'the circuit which we have to travel, from ourselves to caste, and back again from caste to ourselves' (p. 3). In this sense Dumont's writings are a constant encouragement for those anthropologists who believe that the study of so-called 'other cultures' has something to teach us about ourselves and that a sociological self-awareness is a constitutive part of anthropology. As Dumont puts it in the present work: 'there are two ways of looking at any piece of knowledge, a superficial one that

leaves the knowing subject out of account, and a deeper one that includes him' (p. 5). Appropriately, after *Homo Hierarchicus* Dumont has dedicated less effort to the study of Indian society and has turned his attention towards the systematic study of topics concerning the Western history of thought.

The main topic of the various essays collected in the book under review here is that of 'individualism'. 'Individualism' is regarded as a typical modern phenomenon and is defined at the outset as follows: 'Where the individual is a paramount value I speak of individualism. In the opposite case, where the paramount value lies in society as a whole, I speak of holism' (p. 25). This definition or premise indicates Dumont's continual concern with the hierarchy of values which was so dominant in *Homo Hierarchicus*, and he makes clear that in the essays as well he wants to 'leave aside all considerations of cause and effect and consider only configurations of ideas and values, ideological networks, to try and reach the basic relations on which they are built' (p. 24).

The first three chapters are entitled 'Genesis I', 'Genesis II' and 'Genesis III'. 'Genesis I' focuses on the writings of the early fathers of the Church before it jumps, somewhat abruptly, to Calvin. The missing centuries from the thirteenth century onwards up to the French Revolution are discussed in 'Genesis II', while 'Genesis III' (which is taken from Dumont's study of the modern economic ideology published in English as *From Mandeville to Marx*) retraces the emergence of 'the economic category'. As the titles suggest, Dumont sees the origin of modern individualism in Christian ideas: 'something of modern individualism is present with the first Christians and in the surrounding world' (p. 24). Dumont refers here to Troeltsch, the great historian of the Christian Church, who observed that Christian man is an 'individual-in-relation-to-God'. Anthropologists of tribal societies, used to encountering networks of kinship and affinal relations and social groups based on such ties, will readily see the importance of this concept in Christ's social teachings. One could visualise it if one mentally erased all the traditional social ties of a given person and imagined a new vertical link from the single individual upwards to his God. If one then went downwards again and united all those who have such a link in the congregation of the Christian community and Church, one realises where Christianity really breaks through the traditional mould of the Ancient World and where it establishes an essentially new and cosmopolitan concept of society.

This Christian concept of man marks the intellectual starting-point for Dumont's journey through centuries of European thought, from the origins of individualism to its specifically modern form. But what is it that makes 'individualism' modern? Here Dumont applies another distinction, which has its root in Weber's sociology of religion: the distinction between an outwardly- and an inwardly-oriented individual. Dumont holds: 'If individualism is to appear in a society of the traditional, holistic type, it will be in opposition to society and as a kind of supplement to it, that is, in the form of the outwardly individual' (p. 26). At this point there arises the main question which the first three chapters (and, less directly, all the others as well) of Dumont's *Essays on Individualism*

attempt to answer: how could this early outworldly individual who can be found all over the world - take the Indian renouncer, for example - develop into the modern inworldly individual, who according to Dumont is typically represented in modern Western society?

It is perhaps asking too much of short articles which pursue a difficult and complicated question with authority and great clarity of thought to quibble about some omissions. However, I feel that in 'Genesis I', which tackles problems concerning early Christianity, there is too little reference to Gnostic ideas. The specific history of Western thought unfolds itself, vehemently in the beginning, and continuously throughout the centuries (with eruptions every now and again), as a struggle between Christian and Gnostic ideas. One could even hold, with some justification, that modern times represent something like a revival of Gnostic values (I can here only refer to Blumenberg's interesting discussion in *Säkularisierung und Selbstbehauptung* [Frankfurt 1974]). In 'Genesis II' Dumont, in my opinion, could have dedicated more attention to the ideological expressions of the struggle between Church and Empire for political dominance as these are manifested in the doctrines of the nature of the king and the royal office. It is perhaps significant that among the works cited one looks in vain for what must be regarded as one of the best expositions of late medieval ideologies, Ernst H. Kantorowicz's *The King's Two Bodies* (1957).

Dumont's research is based on the assumption that there is a system of ideas and values that characterises modern society, the 'modern ideology' of the book's subtitle. While the first three chapters discuss the origin and emergence of this modern ideology, in Chapters 4, 5 and 6 Dumont is concerned with what he calls 'a national variant', the German variant, which is compared with and opposed to the French one. In Chapter 4 he discusses Herder's and Fichte's notions of the *Volk* and the *Nation*, while Chapter 5 is concerned with 'The German Idea of Liberty According to Troeltsch'. Chapter 6 is entitled 'The Totalitarian Disease: Individualism and Racism in Adolf Hitler's Representations' and it offers an interesting new perspective on the phenomenon of fascism, which appears as a manifestation of the crisis of German ideology and as such of modern ideology in general.

Coming back to the 'circuit we have to travel' one finds throughout the book comparisons between modern Western and Indian ideology. The subtitle 'Modern Ideology in Anthropological Perspective' can thus be read in two ways. On the one hand, Dumont's essays represent a study of modern ideology and its development from the point of view of an anthropologist. On the other hand, they represent a study of modern ideology and its reflections in anthropological perspectives of other cultures. The reason for the constant moving back and forth from the world of the observer to the world of the observed is clarified in the 'Introduction'. It is here that Dumont articulates most clearly not only the legitimacy but also the necessity for the transition in his thought from Indian anthropology to the European history of ideas. He points out that anthropological monographs enshrine 'a comparison of the most basic sort, between "them and us"' (p. 6). And he goes on:

This comparison is radical, for it brings into play the observer's own ideas, and in my view it governs everything else. Now from this point of view, the way we conceive ourselves is obviously not irrelevant: whence it follows that a comparative study of modern ideology does not lie beyond the concern of anthropology (*ibid.*).

By discussing the epistemological basis of anthropological research the 'Introduction' provides the intellectual link between the first part of the book discussed so far and its second part. In Part Two Dumont's conception of the science of anthropology is enlightened by three chapters which address issues of social anthropological theory. Chapter 7 offers a portrait of Marcel Mauss; Chapter 8 is entitled 'The Anthropological Community and Ideology'; while Chapter 9 is a reprint of the Radcliffe-Brown Lecture in Social Anthropology for 1980 with the title 'On Value'.

Though all the chapters of the book were previously published elsewhere and stand by themselves, the coherence in Dumont's thought over the last two decades means that the bringing together of the essays in a single publication results in a volume which makes great sense as a whole. I was impressed by the authority and ease with which Dumont leads the reader through wide-ranging material of great complexity. In his expositions Dumont combines scholarship with imagination and he illustrates that history and anthropology are not just about facts but - essentially - about how to think about facts. In this sense reading Dumont will prove thought-provoking and inspiring to many philosophers, historians, sociologists, or anthropologists, whatever their particular object of interest may be.

The book contains a valuable bibliography, glossary, index and a preface to this English edition.

BURKHARD SCHNEPEL

BRUCE LINCOLN, *Myth, Cosmos and Society: Indo-European Themes of Creation and Destruction*, Cambridge MA and London: Harvard University Press 1986. xv, 171 pp., Notes, Bibliographies, Indexes, Tables, Figures. £18.95.

Dismemberment and creation, kingship and cosmos, death and digestion: a mythic system, centred on a creation story in which a primordial victim is cut in pieces and put back together, but elaborated by a series of 'alloformic homologies' (man / cosmos, flesh / earth, king / society, cattle / food etc.) into an all-embracing ideology that could legitimise an exploitative social hierarchy and encompass even cures for baldness. Such is the system of ideas reconstructed in this book and attributed to the Indo-European tradition.

Lincoln begins with the account in the *Edda* of how the gods created the world from the body of the giant Ymir. 'Narratives resembling this one,' he writes, 'are well attested throughout the world... I take as the data for this book the large set of such stories preserved in the ancient literatures of the various peoples speaking Indo-European languages.'

It comes then as something of a surprise to encounter a few pages later, amongst the first material cited, an apocryphal book of the Old Testament, known as *II Enoch*. This is generally recognised, it seems, as the likely source of descriptions of the creation of man in various Latin, Celtic, Germanic and Slavic texts; but this would most naturally be taken to point to diffusion in the Christian period, and the text would hardly seem to belong within a discussion of Indo-European beliefs. The issue is never squarely faced, but perhaps we may take as justificatory hints the remark that the book 'was most probably written in Hellenistic Alexandria between 30 B.C. and 70 A.D. (and thus, perhaps subject to Greek and Iranian influence)' or the contention that the book became popular because in it 'European peoples found a superficially Christianised - and thus acceptable - version of their own still familiar and fondly remembered pre-Christian creation accounts': in other words, the text may be Indo-European after all, at least in inspiration, or not necessarily Indo-European but just like the Indo-European texts that we might have expected, had they only survived. The manoeuvres are transparent, and serve only to indicate an absence of rigorous criteria for establishing what is to count as evidence.

Let us suppose that the question of which texts may legitimately be cited has been settled; it remains to establish their form (and Lincoln shows a regrettable readiness to delete as an interpolation anything that will not fit his theory) and their interpretation. Since all texts are given in translation, with occasional important words in the original language, and since a wide range of languages is represented, it is not immediately easy for the reader to judge the accuracy of the evidence presented, but an example from a familiar text may illustrate why some misgivings are aroused.

In Lincoln's attempt to show an Indo-European association between cosmogony and sacrifice, and more particularly between the origin of society and ritual dismemberment, one of his key texts is a passage from Tacitus (*Germania* 39) that describes a sacrifice performed by the Semnones. Tacitus relates how at fixed times the tribes assemble at a sacred grove, '*caesoque publice homine celebrant barbari ritus horrenda primordia*'. This is usually construed so as to make the tribes the subject of the verb *celebrant*, since they have appeared as the subject of the immediately preceding *coeunt* 'assemble', and so the Loeb translation, for instance, reads: 'and after publicly offering up a human life, they celebrate the grim "initiation" of their barbarous worship'. Lincoln, ignoring the connecting *-que* and treating this as a new sentence, takes *barbari ritus* to be the subject and translates: 'Barbaric rites celebrate the horrific origins, through the sacrifice (*caeso*, lit. "dismemberment") of a man....' The gloss on *caeso* is absurdly tendentious; one may wonder what Tacitus would expect his readers

to make of 'horrific origins' that are never explained, but in any case the rendering is unnatural and does violence to the language. Lincoln is here following an interpretation put forward by Hammerich 'whose arguments have since won considerable support among Germanists': it would be more pertinent to observe that they have not found favour with any competent Latinist. And Lincoln's complaint that 'scholars have often selected the more obvious readings rather than the more fully expressive ones' seems unlikely to provoke apology.

A few lines later, Tacitus declares: '*eoque omnis superstitio respicit, tamquam inde initia gentis . . .*' The Loeb again has a clear version: 'the whole superstition comes to this, that it was here where the race arose . . .', but Lincoln translates: 'There the belief of all looks backward (to the primordial past), as if from that spot there were the origins of the race.' Apart from translating *omnis* as though it were *omnium*, he has taken *eo* as 'there' instead of 'thither, to that', so that he has failed entirely to recognise the construction of *eo respicit tamquam* (despite the parallel *illuc respicit tamquam* in section 12 of the same book), and has forced onto *respicit* a weight of meaning - the gratuitous addition in brackets - that the word simply cannot sustain; a note explains that he adopted a translation in consonance with his view that the ritual is primarily concerned with repetition of origins, so that he has restored 'the proper active sense to the verb *respicio* . . . instead of artificially translating it in the passive, as is often done ("the superstition of all is respected," or some such)'. It inspires no confidence to find Lincoln's mis-rendering bolstered by the rejection of a version that would disgrace the weakest beginners' class (one wonders, indeed, by whom it is 'often' perpetrated), and the admission that it has been guided by preconceptions about the content is thoroughly disconcerting. 'All the translations', the author writes in a footnote to page 1, 'are my own.' Quite so.

At other times the problem is rather that the texts as presented may seem, on closer examination, not to provide the parallels required to substantiate the claims based on them. Lincoln has, for instance, a chapter on myths concerning the origin of food (or 'sitiogony', as he elects to call it, by somewhat maladroit formation from Greek *sitos*) in which he collects a set of stories that purportedly show how the body of an animal, usually an ox or bull, on being dismembered after sacrifice is transformed into food, in both liquid and solid form. Iranian evidence is adduced to set the pattern, but the next instance cited is a passage from the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* that tells how the god Indra killed *Vṛtra*, and how the waters fled the putrefaction of the body and produced *kuśa* grass: *Vṛtra* is monster, not bovine, and the grass clearly does not spring from the body but from the avoidance of it, and the parallelism amounts to no more than a limp correspondence of a violent death and a somehow consequent creation of plants. Yet there seems to be little reason to suppose that *kuśa* grass is a foodstuff: it is used in sacrifice as a purifier, it is strewn on the sacrificial area, it serves to make ropes with which to bind victims, but is it eaten? Weaker still is the parallelism exhibited by the supposed European



variant, an episode from the Old Irish *Adaigh Con Rói*, in which 'the sacrificial background is absent. Rather ... the creation of food is presented as part of the lore of cattle raiding.' Some cows are driven without being milked, and eventually let their milk flow, from which there springs a plant named *bó-eirne*. The discomfort of swollen udders, as Lincoln recognises, seems hardly commensurate with death and dismemberment, but he still presses the parallel in the creation of food 'again defined as fluid plus plants', claiming further that the very name of the plant, with its first element *bó* 'cow', establishes that it is to be identified as an alloform of cattle. This last assertion seems of doubtful validity - whatever would one make on this principle of fat-hen or viper's bugloss? - but more important is the question of what sort of plant *bó-eirne* is: the word is not in the Dictionary of the Royal Irish Academy, and it is left untranslated in the rendering that accompanies the edition of the text that Lincoln cites, which suggests that there is no secure identification. The problem is simply not addressed by Lincoln, but the matter is surely crucial in the context of a claim that edible plants are in question. It requires considerable faith in identity under transformation to accept that these stories are all manifestations of a single 'sitiogonic' myth, and the consideration that each variant adapts the basic construct to 'its own particular narrative constraints and ritual construct' will hardly suffice to sway the sceptic.

On the basis of his chosen texts, Lincoln has constructed an elaborate edifice. In the face of an entire mythic system, an all-pervasive ideology, philological objections such as those above may seem mere pedantic quibbles, but no superstructure, of course, can be sound if it rests on dubious foundations, and it seems that Lincoln's evidence is, at the least, in need of hard and detailed scrutiny before attention can profitably be turned to his grand schema. But it may be appropriate finally to raise a more general question: in what sense is this an Indo-European ideology?

The claim appears to be that there are sufficient correspondences between the beliefs of various peoples speaking Indo-European languages to allow an Indo-European tradition to be posited. But if similar beliefs are found elsewhere (and it seems that they are - see Lincoln's remark cited in the second paragraph above), then clearly there can be no question of something uniquely Indo-European, in which case it is not obvious that the correspondences must be explained by reference to such a tradition rather than, say, by borrowing. And common tradition implies some common source, in this context, one might suppose, the Indo-European community: but Lincoln is hesitant about positing any such thing. In a note, he writes:

In general, I have tried to avoid in this book formulations that involve positing a hypothetical 'Proto-Indo-European' community, ethnic group, homeland, a body of myth, or social system. Rather, I prefer now to speak in terms of a shared tradition.... Multiple explanations are possible for the commonalities that can be observed: common genetic origin ... diffusion, overlapping circles of influence and connectedness and so on.

This evasion is the *only* discussion that Lincoln offers of the whole question of what it means to label something Indo-European, and how it is to be recognised as such. It is therefore not even clear what this book is supposed to be about.

J.H.W. PENNEY

A. DAVID NAPIER, *Masks, Transformations and Paradox*, Berkeley etc.: University of California Press 1986. xxvi, 223 pp., Bibliography, Index, Plates. £33.95.

Within a monotheistic tradition, masking is considered primarily as a form of deception. It arouses curiosity as to what is being hidden rather than what is being revealed. This ambitious and original book reverses the question. Masking is discussed not as a means of disguise, but as a form of representation. Because the use of masks is often associated with transition, Napier is especially concerned with the capacity of masks to reconcile human beings to uncertainty and change. He therefore seeks to identify a common Indo-European iconography of the apotropaic mask which presents, in visual terms, the ambiguity inherent in its function.

After a relatively conventional review of the origins and importance of the mask in Greek drama, Napier sets off in pursuit of visual and mythological parallels to the pre-classical iconography of the Gorgon's head. The pace is exhilarating and the route unexpected. On page 114 the reader is treated to a full-page photograph of Elsa the lion, and invited to observe her superciliary tufts. This feature of leonine physiognomy is faithfully recorded in both Assyrian and Greek sculpture, and is occasionally featured in representations of the Gorgoneion, suggesting a link between the Gorgon and the leonine pantheon of Assyro-Babylonian religion. Humbaba, the Babylonian monster whose decapitation parallels that of the Medusa, is, in turn, linked with the Sanskrit *kumbha*, a word meaning 'jar', which may also be used metaphorically to mean 'womb', or to describe round objects suggestive of fertility such as the superciliary protuberances of rutting elephants. In India, the Great Goddess is not only worshipped in the form of a *kumbha* filled with water, but also parallels the Gorgon in being depicted with tusks, protruding tongue, bulging eyes and attendant snakes, while in Greece, there is a Proto-Attic amphora which appears to depict the Gorgon's head as a bowl containing water.

It is impossible for a summary to convey either the ingenuity or the intellectual excitement of Napier's argument. For this reason it is all the more disappointing that the author attempts to combine discussion of the intercultural diffusion of images with the view that the features of the apotropaic face are autonomous

archetypes grounded in a phylogenetic mechanism common to lions and primates. While the two accounts are not strictly incompatible, the one renders the other superfluous. Thus, on page 108 Napier argues that it is precisely because the Greeks lacked the opportunity to observe lions at first hand that the leonine character of the Gorgon should be attributed to Assyrian influence. But if we take seriously the suggestion made on page 206 that the apotropaic face is a 'manifestation of the predominant sensory capacities of the brain', the Greeks had no need of lions, or representations of lions, to produce a grimacing face with exposed teeth, bulging eyes and two dark spots on the forehead.

Napier's tolerance of such minor inconsistencies is perhaps the result of his methodology. His own writing has the quality he attributes to his subject matter, namely 'a sensibility for multiplicity and saltatory change' (p. 27). But while thinking in 'unnuclated chain complexes' speeds the author on his fascinating pursuit of the Gorgon from Greece to the Ganges, it also allows him to stray from his initial premisses. In the first chapter it is suggested that masks offer the 'prospect for reconciling the ambiguities of change' (p. 15) and that they are capable of 'elucidating problems in interpretation' (p. 16). Yet in the final chapter it is argued that the apotropaic face 'discourages dialogue' and is 'non-communicative' (p. 200).

A paradox perhaps? If so it is unlikely to concern Napier, who regards a paradox not as a problem to be solved but as a thing to be cherished. In this he is akin to New Critical literary theorists whose vocabulary ('ambivalence', 'ambiguity' etc.) he sometimes appears to share. The mask, like the verbal icon, is conceived as a condensation of conflicting elements dense with meaning. As such it is the very opposite of the monotheistic conception of the mask as something that dilutes and distorts essential truth, and thus demands its own removal. In polytheism the mask signifies presence, not absence.

With the exception of the final chapter, a discussion of contemporary Balinese ritual, Napier's book concentrates on masks not the practice of masking. This may be the unavoidable consequence of having to rely on archaeological data that is mostly visual in nature. But it is regrettable that the different conceptual problems involved are not spelled out more clearly. Masks may embody paradox, but masking does not, for paradox is primarily a contradiction within, not between, layers of reality. Transformation, on the other hand, occurs either diachronically or else between levels, and is thus a concept more appropriate to a discussion of masking. Napier's conflation of the two enables him to generate paradox where others might perceive only transformation. In Balinese drama, for example, both noble characters and demons in noble roles may be presented unmasked. This is surely indicative of the univalence of the human face and of the transformational power of masking, not, as Napier suggests, of the ambivalence of the human face as a mask.

Although Napier's occasional lack of clarity is a source of confusion, the reader is more than compensated by the rich and suggestive detail of the argument, and the dazzling skill displayed

in the handling of visual evidence. The book will also be of interest to students of Western iconography, for it demonstrates the pre-classical ubiquity of the bearded Gorgon, an unusual and anomalous image in the West that has long been attributed to medieval Arabic copyists who mistook the blood dripping from the Medusa's head for a beard. Napier's work potentially sheds light on subjects as far removed from his brief as the iconography of the Caraffa chapel in San Domenico in Naples where a sixteenth-century bas-relief shows Perseus holding the head of a bearded man.

MALCOLM BULL

F.E. HUFFMAN, *Bibliography and Index of Mainland Southeast Asian Languages and Linguistics*, New Haven and London: Yale University Press 1986. xxxii, 514 pp., Index. No price given.

The growth in studies relating to Southeast Asian languages has been phenomenal in the last three decades, partly a consequence of American involvement in the region; overall, there may have been a fivefold increase in the volume of research in that period. Huffman's bibliography is very comprehensive and succeeds in listing the vast bulk of what is now available on the subject, incorporating some earlier bibliographic collections (especially those of Shorto *et al.* and Shafer). Specifically, it covers Tibeto-Burman (not Sinitic), Austroasiatic (including Munda, in India), Tai-Kadai-Kam-Sui, Miao-Yao (or better, Hmong-Mien) and mainland Austronesian apart from Malay (i.e. Chamic). However, it is organised alphabetically by author and not by language family, 'precisely because [the relevant] issues are still being debated'. It includes both published and unpublished material, and some ethnographic references for the least researched languages. The Index includes a number of alternative ethnonyms, though these are not cross-referenced. The Harvard/ASA system of listing references is employed, and in this connection it is unfortunate that there is no way of distinguishing different works published by the same author in the same year: e.g. for 'Benedict 1976', mentioned on page ix of the Introduction, there are eight possible entries in the bibliography. However, this is hardly enough to spoil a very exhaustive work of reference which will be invaluable for Southeast Asianists for years to come.

ROBERT PARKIN

## OTHER NOTES AND NOTICES

### GROUP FOR DEBATES IN ANTHROPOLOGICAL THEORY

In any academic subject, the level of debate concerning its theoretical and intellectual foundations is a good measure of its current vitality. In British social anthropology, such debate is nowadays somewhat muted, and the infectious sense of excitement that it should generate seems to be lacking. In its absence, the great figures of the past cast an ever-lengthening shadow over current work. It is as though, in the search for an academic identity, we have to resurrect an anthropology of former times increasingly at odds with what we practise today.

One reason for this state of affairs lies in the gradual ageing of all those fortunate enough to hold academic posts in the discipline. But it is not the only reason. Another is that there currently exists no suitable forum for the discussion of what could be called 'theoretical anthropology' in this country. To remedy the situation, it has been decided to establish a Group for Debates in Anthropological Theory. The Group was launched at a meeting held in Manchester on 8th January 1988, and has already received the backing of the Royal Anthropological Institute. The aims of the Group are as follows:

1. To establish a forum in the UK for the regular discussion of topics in anthropological theory;
2. To explore the relationship between theoretical and ethnographic work, both in research and in teaching;
3. To examine the connections, on the level of basic concepts and ideas, between anthropology and contingent disciplines in both arts and sciences;
4. To raise the academic profile of anthropology, and to promote wider public awareness of how anthropology can contribute to human understanding;
5. To forge a new identity for the anthropology of the next century, as an intellectually vigorous and thriving discipline.

These aims, particularly the last, may sound inflated and over-ambitious. However, to survive in an increasingly competitive academic environment, we must begin to 'think big', to show the world that we are 'thinking big', and above all to demonstrate that we - more than anyone - have the intellectual and scholarly resources to do so. If we do not, other disciplines will

hog the limelight, and anthropology will remain as an obscure and eccentric backwater.

In calling the Group 'Debates in Anthropological Theory', the intention is to stress that it exists not to *produce* theories so much as to ensure that we go on *arguing* about them. Under no circumstances should the Group become associated with or identified with one or another competing 'school of thought'. Its purpose is rather to promote a continuing dialogue between the many and divergent viewpoints that make up contemporary anthropology, for it is in this dialogue and not in any contrived theoretical consensus that the unity of our subject resides.

There are two ways in which the Group plans to pursue these objectives. The first is by organising a major annual event, in which a motion bearing centrally on concerns in current anthropology will be formally debated. Possible motions might be 'Social anthropology is essentially a theoretical exercise', or 'The concept of society is no longer useful' (I should stress that these are only examples of the kinds of motions that could be debated; they are not being advanced as firm proposals). We would invite a leading UK anthropologist to propose the motion, and another to oppose it. Each would be backed up by an invited seconder. The opening addresses would be followed by a free debate from the floor, a summing-up by each side, and finally a vote. We believe that such an event, apart from being a lot of fun, would generate much serious discussion, and would help to focus attention on issues at the heart of our work. It would make a refreshing change from the standard format for academic events of the 'distinguished lecture' type, which involve minimal audience participation and where debate, if any, follows only years later, after publication. The event, probably of half a day's duration, will normally be scheduled for a Saturday in November, and the first one is planned for 5th November 1988.

Secondly, the Group aims to hold a meeting, at least once a year, scheduled to coincide with the annual conference of the ASA. At these meetings, open to all who are interested, participants would decide on the motion for the following November's debate, on the people to be invited as proposers and seconders, and on the membership of an Executive Committee for the Group, which would be responsible for the practical organization of the event. These meetings would also be occasions for open discussion of other matters of concern to participants, including matters relating to teaching as well as research, and for the consideration for proposals for occasional workshops or symposia dealing with aspects of anthropological theory.

The motion and venue for the first debate should be published in May or June this year. We hope to see plenty of people there.

TIM INGOLD

Further information about the Group is available from Dr Ingold at the Department of Social Anthropology, University of Manchester, Roscoe Building (5th floor), Brunswick Street, Manchester M13 9PL.

## THE ETHIOPIAN FAMINE AND POLITICS

Clay and Holcomb's *Politics and the Ethiopian Famine 1984-5* is a very controversial document.\* They start off with some blunt criticisms: 'none of the agencies or governments currently sending assistance to the area have collected, independently or systematically, the data minimally needed for effective famine relief programme planning, implementation and monitoring' (pp. 2-3). So Cultural Survival decided to do the research themselves. Neither the Ethiopian government nor the aid agencies working in the country would cooperate, so they were compelled to study Ethiopia from neighbouring Sudan, by talking to the refugees there. Refugees are scarcely a representative sample of the population of any country, and the authors admit that they therefore can only obtain part of a complex picture, but claim it is an indispensable part. They warn, in an ominous allusion to the Holocaust, that 'the voices of refugees have been ignored to the peril of many' (p. 26).

What follows is a horrifying account of war and oppression conducted by a tyrannical government, reaching its zenith in the programme for the forcible resettlement of large numbers of potentially hostile people. Much of the report consists of direct translations of what the refugees themselves said. It reads like an indictment of the government for crimes against humanity, and the agencies, by implication, of complicity.

The author's initial charge is that the international agencies cannot prove they are helping the people of Ethiopia. By the end of the report the accusation is much more serious: 'the provision of humanitarian assistance, no questions asked, helps the Ethiopian government get away with murder' (p. 195). In between is the case for the prosecution.

In the time since the publication of this report influential people have put the case for the defence. The first was Dr Richard Pankhurst in *Anthropology Today* (1986, Vol. II, no. 3, pp. 4-5), who cast aspersions on Cultural Survival's impartiality: 'the allegations made in such an unscholarly publication are so one-sided and extreme that they can only be accounted for in terms of the selective use of data to support a preconceived political standpoint'. He claims the sample was too small (only 250, mostly non-randomly selected), the questions leading and the statistics fiddled. This view is supported by Kurt Jansson, head of the UN emergency office in Ethiopia in the 'official' history of the famine and relief effort (K. Jansson, M. Harris and A. Penrose, *The Ethiopian Famine: The Story of the Emergency Relief Operation*, London: Zed Books 1987, p. 26). The testimony, explicit or implicit, of almost all the international agencies working in Ethiopia, supports this opinion. Central to these criticisms are first-hand reports of resettlement sites, which suggest that things are not so bad there,

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\* JASON W. CLAY and BONNIE K. HOLCOMB (eds.), *Politics and the Ethiopian Famine 1984-5* [Cultural Survival Occasional Paper no. 20], Cambridge MA: Cultural Survival 1984. xi, 199 pp., Appendices, Glossary, Bibliography, Maps. \$10.00.

and the observation that the majority of settlers come from Wollo region, which is not generally an area of insurgency. If these criticisms and various others are accepted, the fragments of the picture presented by Clay and Holcomb fall a long way short of proving their case beyond all reasonable doubt.

The criticisms themselves are generally valid. But that does not conclude the case. The defence have yet to produce ordinary Ethiopian villagers who speak in support of the official version of the famine. They produce numerous officials, most of them expatriates. An ITV film made by Charles Stewart, *Living After the Famine* (shown on 18th August 1987), showed ordinary villagers from Wollo welcoming the government's efforts. This is a start but the defence are still not in a position to criticise the small number of ordinary people in Clay and Holcomb's sample while their own sample remains so much smaller. We await further testimony.

ALEX DE WAAL

#### NILO-SAHARAN STUDIES

Six issues of the original *Nilo-Saharan Newsletter* were published in the late 1970s. It is planned that a resurrected version will appear once a year, its aims being 'to facilitate communication and cooperation among linguists, anthropologists, and historians working in the area where Nilo-Saharan languages are spread'. To this end it will publish information on current research, conferences, seminars etc., and on recent publications. The first issue (October 1986) is promisingly full of such information and being of such value to students and scholars one can only hope that it will prove possible to maintain the *Newsletter* as a permanent source of news.

Further information is available from Angelika von Funck, *Nilo-Saharan Newsletter*, Afrikanistik II, Universität Bayreuth, Postfach 10 12 51, 8580 Bayreuth, West Germany.

J.C.



## OXFORD UNIVERSITY ANTHROPOLOGICAL SOCIETY

1986 - 1987

The Oxford University Anthropological Society continued its tradition of bringing a far-ranging selection of material to the Oxford community during the 1986-7 academic year. In Michaelmas Term Veronique Dasen, an archaeologist at Lincoln College, spoke on 'Dwarfs in the Ancient Mediterranean World', and the audience was treated to some slides demonstrating their erotic associations. Jeremy MacClancy brought us through the seedier back streets of London in his talk on 'The British Market in Primitive Art' and Mai Zaki-Yamani flew in from Saudi Arabia to speak on the 'Ramadan in Saudi Arabia'. In order that the society demonstrate interest in subjects other than eating, trafficking and obscenity, Paul Henley, an RAI film fellow, showed his film *Reclaiming the Forest* on the competition for land between gold miners and Indians in Venezuela. In accordance with a long-standing tradition of the Society, the projector malfunctioned, but a tape and cardboard bandage enabled the show to continue.

Hilary Term presentations included William Sturtevant of the Smithsonian Museum on the changing stereotypes of North American Indians. Sturtevant has been collecting material on headdresses for over twenty years and has put together a trail of associations and images that brought us eventually to a recent poster from Pigalle. More erotic associations? Michael Dole from the Wellcome Unit for the History of Medicine on 'Love, Death and Madness in Islamic Society' and Tamara Dragadze on 'Banqueting in Soviet Georgia' rounded off the term.

Trinity Term saw Howard Morphy, the Society's president, speak on Aboriginal land claims, and Brian Murdoch of the University of Birmingham spoke on ethnic identity in that city. Murdoch left the audience puzzling over the 'ethnic identity' of a young woman he met at a Sufi shrine: born in the United States of America, married to an Iranian, living in England and a devout vegetarian as a result of her 'Buddhist phase'. Brian Street of the University of Sussex spoke on the role of anthropology in anti-racist teaching. This talk was followed by a heated debate on the possibility (or impossibility) of applying anthropology to practical problems. Nonetheless, as with all the Society's meetings, the combatants retired to drinks at the bar with the best of spirits. The year ended with a performance of traditional Chinese music by Li Lisha in the new display of instruments at the Balfour Building of the Pitt Rivers Museum. Afterwards, the audience was treated to wine as they strolled through the gallery with short-wave radio headsets tuned into the broadcast music illustrating the material in the display cases. I am pleased to note here that we managed to get through Trinity Term without a paper on eating.

TIM FERRIS  
Secretary, 1986-7

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