

JASO

VOL. XVIII

1987

NO.1

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EDWARD SAPIR, 1884-1939

How shall we approach Sapir in an introductory lecture?¹ 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).² 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,

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

² 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.³

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

³ 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.¹

¹ 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 Künzlen 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).²

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

² 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).³

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,

³ 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).⁴ 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-

⁴ 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).⁵ 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

⁵ 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.

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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 display: 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.¹

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'.² 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,

¹ 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.

² 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 cruise, 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.

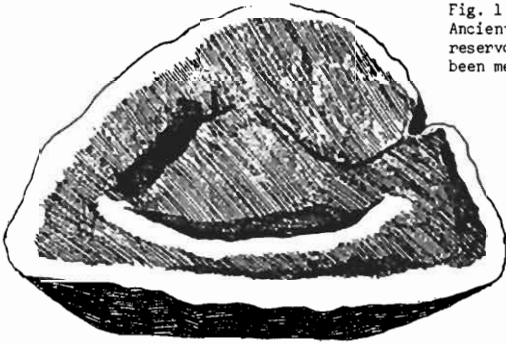


Fig. 1 CANADA - BAFFIN LAND - INUIT - THULE CULTURE
Ancient stone lamp with a ridge dividing the fuel
reservoir from the wick channel. The fuel would have
been melted seal or whale blubber, the wick dried moss

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

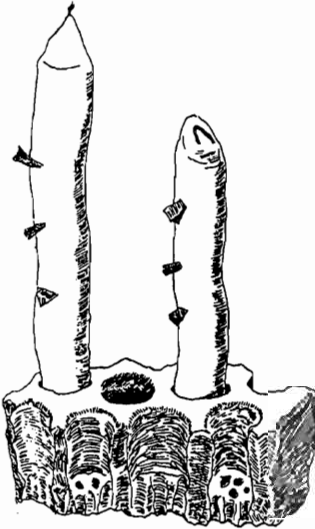


Fig. 2 SOUTH AFRICA
- BACKVELD
Oil lamp improvised
from a Brasso
container



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

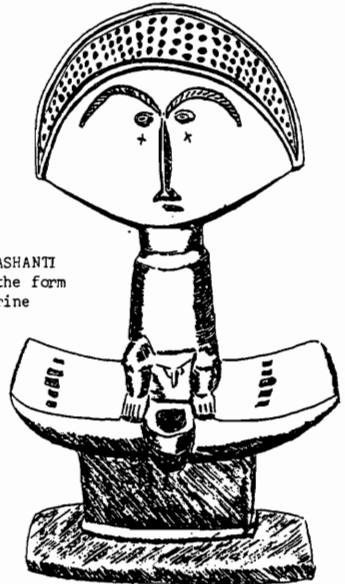


Fig. 6 CHINA
Lantern made from an
inflated fish skin

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.'¹ 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),

¹ 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'.²

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

² 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.

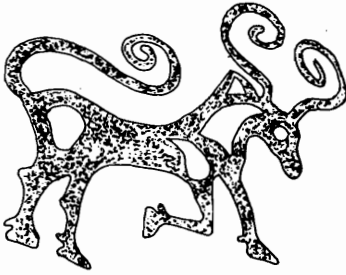
The Karakorum region of northern Pakistan comprises a large mountain tract on the western extremity of the Himalayas, much of which only became accessible to exploration in the late 1970s. The completion of the Karakorum Highway, linking the subcontinent with southwest China, opened up the entire length 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

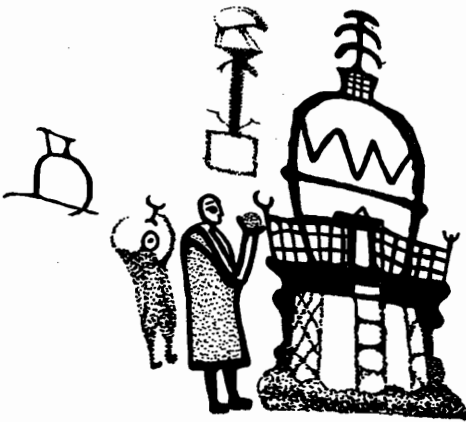


Fig. 2 Buddhist Rockcarvings

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

* 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

* 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

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

* 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

* 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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