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(ii)

#### FORMAT

The journal is published three times per year. Articles are welcome from students of anthropology and from people in other disciplines. It is preferred that the main emphasis should be on analytical discussion rather than on plain description. Papers should be as short as is necessary to get the point over. As a general rule they should not exceed 5,000 words. They should follow the conventions for citations, notes and references used in the A.S.A. monographs. Comments will also be welcome. Communications should be addressed to the Journal Editors, Institute of Social Anthropology, 51 Banbury Road, Oxford.

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The editors would like to express their thanks to all those who have helped with the production of this issue.

## Althusser's Philosophy

This is a preliminary investigation into Althusser's concept of philosophy. Preliminary in that I use several terms that need rethinking, notably that of the 'epistemological break', and I do not criticise the Marxist concept of class or elaborate that of 'class struggle'.

I have chosen Althusser's concept of philosophy as it is central to his more recent work; his reworking of earlier positions concerning ideology, science and philosophy. The wider relevance of such a specialised and narrow study will emerge as we proceed. I would suggest that much of Althusser's work has been misunderstood in England, and that his positive achievements in attempting to think the effects of a totality upon its components in a theory of social formations allows us both to criticize and go beyond certain aspects of his work. The key concepts of overdetermination and the problematic allow us to consider both how Althusser's works are to be seen as arising as specific interventions, which Althusser himself emphasizes, as in the introduction to For Marx, and also how the nature of Althusser's intervention is shaped by his membership of the French Communist Party (P.C.F.) and his class position as an intellectual.<sup>1</sup> The conclusions reached by such an approach justify the route taken.

Althusser's position is that Marx's discovery was the concept and method of the science of history, historical materialism. Much of his thinking derives from the works of the philosopher of science, Bachelard, who attempts to discover the effects in philosophy of the emergence of scientific concepts. We shall therefore start with a brief consideration of Bachelard's epistemology with respect to the sciences, and the philosophical problematic with which it breaks (cf. Jenkins 1974).

### 1. Bachelard: The Philosophical Spectrum

Bachelard saw that the new concepts arising in physics and chemistry in the first thirty years of this century put into question and rendered inadequate, obsolete or even incorrect, previously held concepts, in this sense causing a crisis. He argued that there is not a philosophical solution to this crisis in a 'theory of knowledge', but that the revolution in science had developed without the help of philosophy, indeed against all existing philosophies. Bachelard read Freud, and rigorously thought through the consequences of the 'displacement' of the 'conscious' to the position of only one level in the complex totality of the psyche. This displacement has profound philosophical effects in removing the individual as subject, inducing the elaboration of new categories that separate the domains of the 'psychical' and of 'knowledge'. The 'conscious' (in the philosophical sense) is a fundamental misrecognition, an ideological effect of the structure which denegates (denies) its own position as a particular effect of a complex process.

Thus a science can only be constituted in a break with all theoretical elaborations of social and practical experience: sciences are produced in opposition to philosophies, including those apparently unphilosophical philosophies, empiricism and positivism.

The Philosophical Problematic<sup>2</sup> Philosophy is seen as a 'theory of knowledge' necessarily established on the basis of some variation of the invariant couple of subject and object; philosophy seeks to establish the presence of a subject to an object through a theoretical mechanism.

Thus philosophy seeks to guarantee knowledge of the object; beyond the labours of science a knowledge existent in the 'real' object or 'knowing' subject (and thus a metaphysical knowledge) underlies and secures their validity. This knowledge has always existed (hence problems of origins and ends); and its conditions of existence are identical with the objective or subjective reality of which it is a part.

This poses the problems of correspondence; metaphysics is established to conceive difference as Contradiction in the figure of the Other. The correspondence defines the imaginary object; the first separation of the real object and the thought object is denegated in this reunification. Thus while philosophy is not restricted to identifying the knowing subject with the empirical system, or the object with the perceived object, philosophy still remains within empiricism by 'reproducing' a presence of subject to object, a correspondence which argues an immediacy of knowledge. A 'theory of knowledge', the knowing of an object, is modelled upon the empiricist process of representation of knowledge, that the object is known as if it were a 'reflection' in consciousness. Because knowledge has always existed, and is given directly, only illusion and oversight have barred the path to truth; they must only be torn away to reveal it. This demands the selection of correct elements and the discarding of the false, and correctness or truth invokes a teleology. Philosophy is the posing of the problem of knowledge, of truth; however, in the act of putting to question the character of knowledge the effect of philosophy is to reproduce the terms subject and object.

The philosophical problematic has two poles, corresponding to engagement with the object or the subject. Positivism establishes its guarantee in relation to the 'real object'; it demands that the sciences' hypothesis correspond to aspects of a 'real' object and that these correspondences be demonstrable in experimental proofs (variously conceived). Within this problematic the materialist category of 'matter', the empiricist 'theory of knowledge' and the experimental practice of the natural sciences are systematically conflated; matter is essentially an object of perception. The equation of perception and scientific practice has the theoretical function of guaranteeing the consensus of the epistemological contract; the recognition by individual scientists that certain propositions are true or false by reference to a common standard accessible to all individuals through their natural faculties of sense and reason. Thus positivism moves from an empiricist epistemology to a rationalist psychology/sociology of the sciences.

The mirror-image of the positivist engagement with the object is the philosophy of the subject, in its various forms - gestaltist, phenomenological, neoKantian etc. It is the act of cognition of this hypostasized 'subject' which structures the incoherent - once that logic is known through a radical inner cognition, stripping from thought all illusions stemming from its own externalization or alienation in the world. This subjectivist philosophy appropriates the real (thus conflating the thought object and the real object), in this case the objective knowledge of the sciences, in the only way open to it, through the ingestion of knowledge into subjectivity in the coincidence of subject and object in thought's knowledge of

itself. This 'cogito' is a necessary and prior act of internal cognition which guarantees the subject its balance in consciousness, which prevents the vertigo of an unconscious externalization in the world. The subject embarks upon an endless spiral of reflection and reflection upon reflection to forestall its own appropriation in the unconscious facticity of nature. This guarantee leads to a 'philosophy of nature'; a philosophy in which the order of nature can only mirror the known internal laws of reason, or stand opposed to them in essence as their negation.

The Concept of Production. Bachelard breaks with this problematic by posing science as a process of production of its own concepts. The process of production, the practice of the sciences, is described as a phenomeno-technique, that is, the inscription of the sciences' theories in experimental form. This practice is then characterized by a dialogue between these two aspects of scientific practice - the rational formulation of hypotheses and their technical application in experiments. A dialogue because experiments are the materialization of invented phenomena, not mere sensory observation, and would be impossible without the prior mathematical formulation of the possibility of such phenomena, while experimental failure is the precondition of theoretical reconstruction, whether correction or recasting of the theory.

A number of consequences follow. That science produces its own concepts denies the possibility of a philosophical guarantee of the 'truths' of that practice; further, the process of phenomeno-technique means that the science constitutes its own means of production of its object, so that there is no philosophically defined world to be appropriated. The materiality of the real world, its existence independent of thought and the possibility of its appropriation by the sciences as the primary categories of materialism, are sufficiently confirmed by the practice of the sciences themselves. Therefore sciences do not explain the regularities in the natural world available to the senses, they themselves produce their objects and phenomena in their theories and their materialization in experimental proofs. They cannot then be immediately given to consciousness.

What then is the role of philosophy? Bachelard suggests that a science comes into being by a break with pre-existing ideologies; breaking from common-sense experience and the theoretical modes of thought anchored in common-sense. Once it has come into being the science progresses by the dialectic of reason and application; it is completely open, not the exhaustive investigation of a closed domain, defined a priori by sensory experience, philosophical fiat or scientific hypothesis.

The progress of the science is discontinuous, by breaks and recastings, each of which redefines the basic concepts used by the science. Progress is achieved by the overcoming of epistemological obstacles secreted by these modes of thought; obstacles arise from the resorption of new concepts by traditional modes of thought. Bachelard saw such modes of thought as expressions of the anti-scientific nature of the mind,<sup>3</sup> hence obstacles continue to arise once a science has been constituted. The most characteristic epistemological obstacles, Idealism and Empiricism, are also the two poles of the philosophical spectrum. The psychological power of the obstacles gives a foothold to the philosophies which claim to guarantee the knowledge produced by the sciences, whilst really only batten- ing onto and supporting the epistemological obstacles produced at

each stage of scientific development. Philosophies are produced as a result of scientific advance (thus lagging behind the science); with the aim of reuniting the world of knowledge and the world of experience which each new science and each new scientific advance shatters. Hence philosophies can be defined in a spectrum around ongoing science in terms of their displacement from science.

The New Philosophy. The place of the new philosophy is defined by its function, that of assisting the development of the science; it is therefore an intervention in the area of the science, to neutralize the effects of ideologies, epistemological obstacles. This "Anabaptist philosophy", forswearing all the beliefs and dogmas of traditional philosophy, has a changing existence, in the science's rejection of the claims of ideology. The new discipline is an 'open' philosophy; as the science progresses the footholds it gives ideology may shift. Philosophy itself then has no history, it is a wake left behind by the development of the sciences.

Despite the claims for this philosophy Bachelard lapses into psychologism to explain individual error, thus reintroducing the subject/object couple. He does this because, lacking a theory of epistemological obstacles as a part of a theory of the ideological instance of the social formation, he does not site the obstacles historically. Instead, considering the epistemologist and the historian of the sciences only with respect to the development of the science in question, he locates epistemological obstacles in the anti-scientific nature of the human mind, and the progress of sciences in an epistemological profile.

For Althusser, the constitution of Marx's science of history, historical materialism, involved the rejection of the philosophical tradition in which Marx was educated. The new philosophy of dialectical materialism could only emerge later as a result of the emergence of the new science, thus the concepts of the new science emerged in terms borrowed from the old philosophy or other disciplines, and hence the need for a symptomatic reading, as the effects in discourse of a new practice of history. Thus Althusser's work is parallel to Bachelard's.

Further, it allows the nature of epistemological obstacles to be thought as a part of the ideological instance of the social formation, for the new concept of the object of history is the theory of the social formation as a process without a subject. In this the scientific revolution has to have philosophical effects, because the ideology it replaces stipulates and founds a certain general epistemological problematic (subject/object). Necessarily, historical materialism removes the ground from under this problematic, posing a new non-empiricist, non-speculative epistemology for the science of history, and redefining the historical instance.

The single element in current work which expresses the displacement our thinking must undergo may be termed the 'radical decentering of Man'. This displacement, achieved both in psychoanalysis and history, and constituting their claim to scientificity, has the profound philosophical consequences Bachelard noted. In this early stage of constituting a science of subjectivity, which involves the recasting of what are known as the human sciences,<sup>4</sup> a major task is the constitution of the philosophy that defends the science against the ideologies with which it breaks. Hence the wider interest of Althusser's investigations in this region.

## 2. Althusser and Ideology

In his earlier works - For Marx and Reading Capital - Althusser postulates a general theory of ideology, that constitutes the ideological instance of the social formation. In all societies, classless or with classes, there is a level of ideological disguise that results from the necessary opacity of the social formation to its agents; it has the function of regulating the relation of individuals to their tasks, and, in so doing, ensuring the cohesion of the social whole.

This theory is presented (1964c) to counteract ideologies of dealienation produced in post-Stalin Russia under the theme of socialist humanism. The notion Althusser is combatting is that in a classless state the social formation would not 'misrepresent' itself to those within it, so that the end of capitalism would include the end of mystification of consciousness.

The general theory of ideology is therefore posed to deny the idealism of the notions of consciousness, alienation and so on. However, Althusser does not consider the conjuncture that this socialist humanism arises from; the notion that the USSR is a classless society and hence must face up to the problems of being stateless conceals the nature of the relation between classes in Russia, and hence has a political function. He points only to the non-scientificity of such an ideological discourse, and does not seek the reason for this denegation, the political function of the effect of this concealment. In this way Althusser himself effects a concealment, one that is in line with the PCF's position on the USSR, that the USSR is a classless society. A theory of ideology is posed without that which deals with the exercise of class rule. Against such ideologies of transparency Althusser sets the necessary opacity of every social structure to its agents. Ideology is present in every social totality by virtue of the determination of this totality by its structure; this has a general function of allowing social cohesion.

A general theory of ideology, with a function of social cohesion, denies any form of dialectic, and hence of history. Such a theory has two consequences: most importantly Althusser, by taking a general theory of ideology before conceiving the class struggle leads to the traditional (metaphysical) analysis of society in general. More specifically, this discourse of sociology arises from a distinct conjuncture; the formation of the general (classless) theory is the product of a specific (class) situation, and thus is mystificatory. Althusser in using it imports this mystificatory function, as we have seen above, in a specific conjuncture; in this theory of ideology he allows the placing of science outside the social structure, as we shall see.

Ideology in Class Societies. However, superimposed upon this general theory of ideology there is a more specific theory: seen as a second level of ideological 'disguise' in addition to the first, in class societies there is ideological distortion arising from the requirements of class domination. Ideology is necessarily a false representation of the real, a mystification to keep men in their 'place' in the system of class exploitation. This function dominates the first; the class struggle 'overdetermines' (1964a, pp.30-31) opacity of society determined by the structure.

This superimposition allows the coexistence of two heterogeneous problematics, of historical materialism and of Durkheimian sociology. However, as they are articulated, the Marxist theory, although 'overdetermining', overdetermines a concept of ideology derived from this 'classless' sociology. But this is then reversed, for the general theory of ideology is seen only as a level of the Marxist theory of ideology, thus the former is defined in terms derived from a theory of class societies.

Althusser imports this sociological problematic through making a distinction of level between the 'structure' of society and the existence of class divisions - hence opacity derives from the general 'structure', and distortion arises from class divisions (*ibid.*, p.31). Yet class divisions are a part of the structure: the determination of a social totality is by the relations of production characterizing a dominant mode of production - that is, the social (i.e. class) forms of appropriation of the means of production.

This double subversion by a separation of class relations and structure removes contradiction from the latter, and in this way the effects of the class relations, the specific forms of the relations of production are excluded from this concept of structure. But one of these effects is opacity; opacity is not a function of the 'social structure in general', but a specific effectivity of the relations of production. Thus Althusser, having started with a theory of ideology in general, cannot reimport the class struggle, as it is present in a disguised form in the exclusion of contradiction.

The Double Theory of Ideology. This double theory of ideology re-introduces an idealist philosophy, the myth of an ideological state of nature: ideology is not seen from the outset as the site of a struggle, it is related to a totality of which it forms a natural element. Althusser states (1965a, p.232): "It is as if human societies could not survive without these specific formations, these systems of representations (at various levels), their ideologies, Human societies secrete ideology as the very element and atmosphere indispensable to their historical respiration". Here the 'as if' introduces the myths of origins or ends, which have the function of concealing division. By posing ideology as a totality unified by its relation to its referent Althusser excludes thinking ideology as the site of contradiction. This is the spontaneous discourse of metaphysics.

A second consequence follows. Since the analysis of the second level of ideology is not that of class struggle, but of the 'over-determination' of ideology by class divisions, one speaks of the ideology (singular) of a class society.

The class struggle in ideology is reintroduced in a fetishized form as a class struggle between this ideology (singular), seen as the weapon of the ruling class, and science, weapon of the ruled class. These are introduced as 'tendencies' (1964a, p.32).

By being articulated with a theory of ideology as mystification of class relations, the theory of ideology has ceased to be a necessary system of representation of social relations, that is, other than science, and has become opposed as the Other of science. Ideology is a false representation (of social relations) because it is in the service of the ruling class.

The result of articulating a general theory of ideology with that of overdetermination by class domination is the exclusion of class struggle; what is then defined as the domination of ideology is in fact a function of the dominant ideology. In Althusser's work the general function of ideology is said to be exercised to the profit of class domination, and so the (revolutionary) function of undermining the domination is given to the Other of Ideology - Science.

We are now in the re-established space of metaphysics; the couple science/ideology corresponds to truth/falsity. In the figure of the Other, difference is conceived of as contradiction; the couple science/ideology is no longer of the social formation, but defines and divides the closed universe of discourse between truth and its Other.

Science/Ideology. Earlier we noted that the original suppression that leads to this spontaneous discourse of metaphysics arose from the PCF position. This articulation of revisionist ideology with spontaneous metaphysics may be seen in the development of the science/ideology couple.

The consequence of this idealist true/false, science/ideology couple is to make a static division, to ignore the unity of the dialectic of struggle. Althusser has a misconception of the place of politics, which results in this primary suppression; politics then resurfaces in the hypothetical revolutionary function of science.

Althusser makes use of this in a consideration of the university (1964b). Rather than considering the relation of teacher to taught, he reduces the teaching relation to that of knowledge taught. Thus the division teacher/taught is supported by the couple Knowledge/ignorance, as full to empty. This in turn is justified by the opposition of Marxist academic discourse/bourgeois academic discourse, an opposition of science to ideology.<sup>6</sup> In this way the couple science/ideology is compared to that of knowledge/ignorance, although the original couple science/ideology presents knowledge as determined by the difference between them.

In practice the couple science/ideology, by a focussing on the content of what is taught, acts as a justification for the status of (revolutionary) teachers, and further, for the possessors of knowledge, as representatives of the proletariat. Such a problematic allows for academicism, and the authority of the Central Committee. In opposing Marxist academic discourse to bourgeois academic discourse Althusser confronts 'spontaneous' and 'petty-bourgeois' ideologies with the scientific rigour of Marxism. The division science/ideology serves to reinforce the role of the Party intellectual and the power of the Central Committee. Indeed, any emphasis upon the rigour of scientific knowledge, its correctness, in opposition to 'what is known' is reductive, and in so being leads to elitism and to a reactionary justification for intellectuals.<sup>7</sup>

Science and Philosophy. Althusser has necessarily placed the content of knowledge outside the social formation, and thus outside its conditions and processes of production. In this way while he correctly defends the universality of scientific knowledge against all forms of relativism (Geras 1972), that is, a science is not dependent for its validity on the values and perspectives of a social group or historical epoch, he cannot pass the modes of

appropriation of the knowledge. In rejecting the criteria of validity of knowledge (philosophical theories of knowledge) he poses the question of the mechanism of the relation of the thought-object, the object of knowledge, to its 'absolute reference point', a "raw material provided in the last resort by the practices of real concrete history" (1965b, pp.109-10) in what he terms the knowledge effect. Yet he cannot think through the problem, because of this exclusion of science from the social formation;<sup>8</sup> this exclusion he explicitly recognizes at certain points, as in defining society as comprising three instances - the economy, politics and ideology (1965a, pp.231-2).

This distortion of science leads to a distortion in Althusser's view of philosophy, which is defined as the Theory of practice in general, elaborated on the theory of existing practices (of the sciences), which transform into 'knowledges' (scientific truths) the ideological product of existing 'empirical' practices (the concrete activity of man) (*ibid.*, p.168). Theory is the materialist dialectic, "in which is theoretically expressed the essence of practice in general, and through it the essence of the transformations, of the 'development' of things in general" (*ibid.*, p.169).

This philosophy, a theory of science and of the history of science, has itself to be scientific, producing an objective knowledge of its object (theoretical practice, practice in general); rather than a practice uncovering the dialectic existent 'in the practical state' in a scientific discourse, philosophy is claimed to be a science in its own right. The scientific philosophy specifies the 'essence' of scientific practice; its knowledge is a knowledge of scientificity, of what is within science and what within ideology, of what is true and what is false, an arbiter of what is knowledge. Philosophy as a theory of theoretical practice now constitutes the closed theoretical space of a theory which thinks the space of all knowledge - a metaphysics; philosophy provides a guarantee external to the practice of science of its scientificity: in reflection upon its own knowledge it knows the difference between Science and its Other.

### 3. 'Theoreticism'.

In works after 1967 Althusser recognizes that the definition of dialectical materialism as a 'Theory of theoretical practice' is necessarily 'theoreticist',<sup>9</sup> and he points out that he did not show what it is that constitutes Marxist philosophy in its relation to politics.<sup>10</sup> This 'theoreticism' arises, as we have seen, in thinking the process of the break and subsequent practice of the science in isolation from the social formation, that is, as a theoretical event, removed from its problematic.

But to what extent does Althusser rethink his position? His class position produced a suppression of class struggle, and its re-emergence in the hypothetical revolutionary function of science. In fact, it cannot be 'science' that is either revolutionary or bourgeois; it is the reality of teaching science that is reactionary - the modes of appropriation of the scientific content. The dominant ideology is not expressed in the content of the knowledge, but in the structure of the environment in which it is transmitted. Science does not stand confronted by its other, ideology; it resides within institutions and in those forms of transmission where the ideological dominance of the bourgeois is manifested. Quite clearly the formulation of non-empiricist theory is in no way radical.

The existence of the dominant ideology is not a collection of discourses or a system of ideas; the dominant ideology is a power organized in a number of institutions. Scientific knowledges are articulated into objects of knowledge; the transmission of scientific knowledges is part of the forms of appropriation of scientific knowledge, and these are class forms, as we have seen in Althusser's own practice. Scientific theories are transmitted through a system of discourses, traditions and institutions which constitute the very existence of the dominant ideology, its materiality.

Science, Ideology and Philosophy. Thus the relation of sciences to ideology is not one of rupture but of articulation; the dominant ideology is the space in which scientific knowledges are inscribed, articulated as elements of a social formation's knowledge. It is in the form of the dominant ideology that a scientific theory becomes an object of knowledges.

Knowledge is then a system in which the 'contents' cannot be conceived outside their forms of appropriation. The system is that of the ideological dominance of a class, in it are articulated the class appropriations of science and the ideology of the ruling class; there is no class division in knowledge, it has no institutional existence other than as an instrument of class rule; it is therefore a stake in the class struggle.<sup>11</sup>

To transform this objective into the neutral site of a division is to conceal the class struggle. Althusser's misconception of the function of knowledge does this; as we have seen, the couple science/ideology becomes equated with the couple knowledge/ignorance. This discourse reproduces the spontaneous discourse of metaphysics, the traditional position of philosophy with respect to knowledge. For knowledge constitutes the system of appropriation of scientific conceptions to the profit of a class. Philosophy has been established and developed in a definite relation to knowledge, but without ever recognizing its class nature. Unable to see knowledge as the system of the ideological dominance of a class, philosophies are reduced to criticising the effects of this system. The criticism of knowledge, failing to recognize its class function, is made in the name of an ideal of science, in a discourse which separates the realm of science from that of false knowledge; the opposition of Science and its Other has the function of misconceiving the class nature of knowledge.

Further, the discourse of metaphysics propagates this misconception in as much as it presents itself as a discourse on science, on what constitutes its scientificity. Philosophy thus, as a critique of knowledge, conceals knowledge of the class struggle, its mainspring. It is a denegation of knowledge, knowledge's concealment of itself. In this denegation knowledge only ironically questions itself to restore itself to its previous status; it can never question its foundations.

The New Philosophy (2). The new philosophy arises after the new science has constituted its open problematic, as an open philosophy, not a closed system. It functions in combatting epistemological obstacles that arise in the development of the science; it thus has no history of its own. The science progresses through its dialectic of reason and application, a phenomeno-technique. The obstacles that arise do so at the particular position in the social formation that the practice of the science is taking place, its conjuncture.

The nature of the new philosophy is then an intervention in a specific conjuncture; in this new practice of philosophy there is no separation of theory and practice, no place for exegesis. It is the thinking of an event in its unity, in its immediacy; thus the new philosophy is not an epistemology; it speaks from the site of the intervention, of that site.

Althusser expresses this in his new definition of philosophy in the seminar on 'Marx's relation to Hegel' (1968a): "There follows from this rejection (of the traditional philosophy of knowledge) a new conception of philosophy - not only a new conception - but a new modality of existence, I shall say a new practice of philosophy; a philosophical discourse that speaks from somewhere else than classical philosophical discourse did. To make this comprehensible, let me invoke the analogy of psychoanalysis.

- (1) The point is to carry out a displacement - to make something move over in the internal disposition of the philosophical categories.
- (2) Such that the philosophical discourse changes its modality - speaks otherwise, which creates the difference between interpreting the world and changing it.
- (3) Without philosophy disappearing nonetheless.

Apparently it is the most conscious discourse there is. In fact it is the discourse of an unconscious. The point is no more to suppress philosophy than it would be to suppress the unconscious in Freud. What is required is, by working on the phantasms of philosophy (which underlie its categories), to make something move over in the disposition of the instances of the philosophical unconscious, so that the unconscious discourse of philosophy finds its site, - and speaks at the top of its voice about the very site assigned to it by the instances that produce it". (1972, p.174.)

This new philosophy constitutes a very different mode of appropriation of knowledge, and we can follow Ranciere in making a distinction between what he terms bourgeois ideology and proletarian ideology. The distinction refers to two modes of production that are profoundly heterogeneous. Bourgeois ideology (the dominant ideology) is a system of power relations reproduced daily by the ideological apparatuses of the bourgeois state. Proletarian ideology is a system of power relations established by the struggle of the proletariat and other subordinate classes against all forms of bourgeois exploitation and domination. It is a system of power relations that is always fragmentary because it defines a certain number of conquests, always provisional because it is not produced by apparatuses, but by the development of the struggle. To try to set up a proletarian philosophy<sup>12</sup> against the bourgeois philosophy, ethics, morality is to miss the point of mass practices produced by the struggle; in my terms, not to speak from the site of the intervention, to denegate its position, and thus to fall into idealism.<sup>13</sup>

#### 4. Althusser's New Definition of Philosophy

To what extent does Althusser rethink his position in his later works? In the early works idealism stems from the original exclusion of class struggle in the theory of ideology, so we will consider Althusser's only recent offering on this subject (1969a).

This theory of ideology is a double one. Ideology in general is trans-historical, a mechanism which represents the imaginary relation of individuals to their real conditions of existence, whatever the mode of production and form of class rule dominant in the social formation. The basic role of this ideology is to constitute individuals as subjects, as supports, for economic and political practice.

Central to this role are the 'practical ideologies' according to which actions of everyday life are experienced, reinforced by the rituals of religion and ethics embodied in the institutions of ideological practice, the ideological apparatus. This trans-historical character of ideology accounts for the predominance of empiricism and idealism as epistemological obstacles, for various forms of this couple are characteristic of the transhistorical structure of ideology in general (see Brewster, 1971).

But ideologies are historical, they change with the other instances of the social formation, and with the emergence and development of the different sciences. As well as subject-constituting practical ideologies, the ideological instance contains theoretical ideologies justifying and reflecting the historically changing economic and political practices and theoretical ideologies of application and education vis-a-vis the emerging scientific practices. In class societies these ideologies are unified by the dominance of the ideology of the ruling class, the dominant ideology. Finally, there are those theoretical ideologies known as philosophies, which arise as a result of the emergence of the sciences in the form of a struggle between materialism and idealism.

In the transhistorical ideology Althusser has introduced the inherent tendency of the mind to be idealist, constituting the individual as subject. This is exactly the same as Bachelard's psychologism: that the emergence of a science is a constant struggle against the non-scientificity of the scientist's mind.<sup>14</sup>

The introduction of ideological apparatuses from another problematic does not serve to set Althusser's problematic to rights; their introduction can only be eclectic, they do not serve to reintroduce the class struggle.

The old science/ideology relation holds in a conceptual multiplicity (sciences, ideologies, the spontaneous philosophy of scientists, conceptions of the world and so on). The correct ideas which the researcher draws from his scientific practice are, by a complex mechanism, interfered with by different systems of representation (a conception of the world, spontaneous philosophies etc.) produced elsewhere. But the complexity of this mechanism conceals the question of this practice itself, of its forms of social existence, and of the class struggle which puts it at stake. The class struggle is relegated to the level of a representation of a practice, in the traditional figure of the dislocation between the production of an object and the production of the consciousness of it.

Science, Philosophy and Politics. Thus, although the development of a science can now be thought in relation to the social formation, it presents a weak argument for the political nature of philosophy.

Sciences arise and develop in this complex space of practical and theoretical ideologies, philosophies and other sciences, which makes the histories of the sciences both more concrete and more

differentiated. The different sciences must develop differently, in response to their different ideological environment (Brewster, 1971); the ideologies most closely linked with a science are those of its technical application and teaching, although each differs in its relation to its ideologies of application and education. This is because of the different places in the social formation and hence in the latter's ideological instance that different sciences occupy; there is a political differential between sciences and between their extra-scientific effects.

Amongst these extra-scientific effects is philosophy. Where practical ideologies constitute individuals as subjects, theoretical ideologies recognize such subjects as constitutive of the world, nature, history and Man. In turn individuals can recognize themselves as the subjects constituting the domains of theoretical ideologies. But the world of which these subjects are recognised to be constitutive in theoretical ideologies is always this world - that is, the world of the contemporary ruling ideology. Hence the necessary and universal character of the subject constituted by the mechanism of practical ideologies is attributed to what Marx calls das Bestehende, the existing state of affairs as defined by ideology. The emergence of a science, whose objects are not the objects of ideological subjects, not the objects of 'this' world, threatens this economy and thus the dominance of the ruling ideology.

Hence the emergence of a science evokes a struggle in a new arena denying (idealism) or affirming (materialism) the possibility of such a practice and such a knowledge. This is in accordance with Bachelard: philosophies are produced as a result of scientific advance with the aim of reuniting the world of knowledge and experience which each new science and each new scientific advance shatters. Hitherto the struggle has always been resolved by 'founding' the new knowledge in the subject of a theory of knowledge.

The emergence of different sciences have different effects in philosophy. The emergence of historical materialism made impossible the philosophies of history that contain directly a theoretical space for the empiricism/idealism couple. The concept of the social formation as a process without a subject, as a complex structure in dominance, demands a new conception of philosophy as an instance in which ideologies and sciences are represented alongside politics in what Althusser terms a Kampfplatz, not as a general theory of knowledge. The immediate objective of such struggles is the development of the sciences, but the ultimate aim is to ensure or undermine the continuing dominance of the dominant ideology, in that the dominant ideology is exposed as based upon its denegation, the subject/object couple. Hence the emergence of a science is a political event, and the struggle against its ideological resorption is a political struggle - for materialism, against idealism.

Class Struggle. Yet this approach is incomplete, based as it is upon the eclectic taking of elements from a problematic of ideological apparatuses, through which to produce the effects of a metaphysical theory of ideology. The class struggle, excluded, now reappears in a struggle in philosophy, but not in philosophy, between the new schema and the old schema of subject/object.

It is a struggle between materialism and idealism because the new scientific practice, the new dialectic of rational development and phenomeno-technics, has constructed and demonstrated in its practice the existence of a new form of matter, whilst its rejection on

(old) philosophical grounds literally asserts the claims of thought against matter, claiming that the new matter cannot exist if it cannot be thought according to the present criteria of thoughts as laid down by philosophy, and its resorption by the 'philosophical foundation' ensures its reception as a thinkable object that creates no disturbance in the world of respected truths.

This struggle is political: the science materialism defends against idealism threatens the unity of the ideological world which assures the unity of the dominant ideology, and because the struggle against the idealist resorption of the science is a struggle to ensure that these disruptive effects are not neutralized by the domination of idealism.

Here we can see that the problematic of ideological apparatuses explodes that of a general theory of ideology, and that the element missing from Althusser's analysis is his speaking from his site; defining his own (political) conjuncture. Thus ultimately what is missing from Althusser's later works, despite all outward appearances to the contrary, is a class point of view. We have earlier seen reasons for this denegation. It is precisely because of this that Althusser cannot inaugurate the new practice he speaks of. Practical ideologies are penetrated by the contradictions between classes; the same is true for their effects in theoretical ideologies. Only a modification in the established system of contradiction thus permits the passage from ideology to science, and hence the categories Althusser propounds have not undergone the displacement he speaks of.

Lenin and Philosophy.<sup>15</sup> Nevertheless, as Althusser sees that the displacement must take place, so he names the site of the displacement with great accuracy. Those English commentators (e.g. Cutler and Gane 1973) who have ignored this do Althusser less than justice.

".....I have attempted to prove that Lenin...made a crucial contribution to dialectical materialism.....: Marx's scientific discovery did not lead to a new philosophy (called dialectical materialism), but to a new practice of philosophy, to be precise to the practice of philosophy based on a proletarian class position in philosophy.

This discovery, which I regard as essential, can be formulated in the following theses:

1. Philosophy is not a science, and it has no object, in the sense in which a science has an object.
2. Philosophy is a practice of political intervention carried out in a theoretical form.
3. It intervenes essentially in two privileged domains, the political domain of the effects of the class struggle and the theoretical domain of the effects of scientific practice.
4. In its essence, it is itself produced in the theoretical domain by the conjunction of the effects of the class struggle and the effects of scientific practice.
5. It therefore intervenes politically, in a theoretical form, in the two domains, that of political practice and that of scientific practice: these two domains of intervention being its domain, insofar as it is itself produced by the combination of effects from these two practices.
6. All philosophy expresses a class position, a 'partisanship' in the great debate which dominates the whole history of philosophy, the debate between idealism and materialism.

7. The Marxist-Leninist revolution in philosophy consists of a rejection of the idealist conception of philosophy (philosophy as an 'interpretation of the world') which denies that philosophy expresses a class position, although it always does so itself, and the adoption of the proletarian class position in philosophy, which is materialist, i.e. the inauguration of a new materialist and revolutionary practice of philosophy which induces the effects of class division in theory." (1971, pp. 105-6)

Conclusion. I have attempted to trace Althusser's theories in some detail in their origins and interrelations, both to do justice to Althusser's ideas which are widely misunderstood, and in an effort to supply what is missing in these theories.

Althusser has now invoked philosophy as political intervention. But it is the early (1964) texts which lead, with their theoreticist problematic, to the political effects noted, and the 'new practice of philosophy' has produced no noticeable effect in the class struggle because it turned its back on the political problems in which the Althusserian theoreticisms had been laid bare. This alleged politicization of philosophy is really more of a denegation of the foundations and the political effects of Althusserianism.

In the process we have come upon the outlines of a new mode of discourse, associated fundamentally with the 'decentering of man' with which we started. I would suggest that this new mode goes beyond, and in so doing, subsumes, Marxism.

Tim Jenkins.

### Notes

1. This approach is based for the most part upon the information provided and the clear analysis by Ranciere (1974). His article was originally written in 1969, and has an afterword written in 1973.
2. Clearly a brief outline such as follows must in one sense be a travesty, and I recognize that it is philosophically completely inadequate. However, it serves as a presentation of the empiricism/idealism couple, which for Althusser denotes the misrecognition structure of classical bourgeois philosophy, in which ".... the terms presented and their relations only vary within the invariant type structure which constitutes this very problematic: an empiricism of the subject always corresponds to an idealism of the essence (or an empiricism of the essence to an idealism of the subject)". FM p.228 (cf. Hirst, 1972).  
This presentation is (a) schematic, for purposes only of demonstrating where the new philosophy has to break with the old, and (b) as a result a non-philosophical discussion of philosophy.
3. Bachelard considered such misrecognitions as 'consciousness' in the same way as he regarded 'substantialist' notions such as earth, blood, fire - as complexes, definite psychical formations inhibiting the development of knowledge, and as

formations drawing their power from a libidinal source. A psychoanalysis of such formations, the exposing of such psychical elements within knowledge, was an important task of philosophy in aiding the development of science. See La Formation de l'Esprit Scientifique and the Psychoanalysis of Fire.

4. This involves a transformation of the boundaries and contents of the old disciplines, a restructuring of their hierarchy, and, most interestingly, a critique of the previous arrangements, of their hierarchy of functions and effects. As arbiter of the science of semiotics social anthropology will rule supreme.
5. This section is based essentially on Ranciere op. cit.
6. This is supported by an incorrect division between technical and social divisions of labour, which in the end correspond to 'things as they are' in society - necessary posts, and 'things as they seem' corresponding to the function of reproduction of society. This is then applied to the university: "It is in the knowledge taught in the University that the permanent dividing line of the technical and social division of labour exists, the most reliable and profound line of class division". Ibid., p.89.
7. The notion of Politics as such must be incorrect; any abstraction of this sort must be reactionary, a refusal to 'speak' from the conjuncture.
8. It is this inability that allows Glucksmann to misunderstand Althusser and, by reading him from an idealist position, to accuse him of idealism for the wrong reasons. Althusser rightly sees that the question of a correspondence of knowing subject to known object is an 'improper' question, imaginary. For the correspondence is precisely what defines the imaginary object: the first separation of the real object and thought object (specified in the last instance by the former through the knowledge effect) is denegated in the reunification of correspondence.

Yet Glucksmann reads Althusser as if his was an idealist approach. In considering the relation between the real object and the concrete-in-thought, Glucksmann suggests that this relation can only be brought into existence by a more secret, transcendental correspondence: the conditions of the possibility of experience in general are at the same time the conditions of the possibility of the objects of experience. Otherwise the real must be in thought, and therefore there is not a separate practice of theory. This, Glucksmann argues, is the minimal basis for any structuralism: the kinship of thought and being is conceived, not as the immediate relationship of thought (theory) and its object, but as between the categories of thought and the elements of reality. Thus Althusser, like all philosophers, is seeking the correspondence between the real object and the thought object.

But as Glucksmann points out, Althusser refers to this 'correspondence': "we can set out the 'presuppositions' for the theoretical knowledge of (the modes of production), which are quite simply the concepts of the conditions of their historical existence." It is because Althusser does not think this through that he falls into idealism; it is not the 'quite simply' that introduces the transcendental zugleich (at the

same time), as Glucksmann thinks. Glucksmann himself destroys the distinction between the real object and the thought object; he sees idealism in Althusser where there is none except his own; the ventriloquism he detects is his own voice. See André Glucksmann (1972).

9. See Introduction to Italian edition of RC (1968), pp.7-8.
10. Introduction to the English edition of FM (1967), p.15.
11. So although principles of verifiability are apparently above classes, in its practice a science has its forms of existence solely in a system of social relations, of which formal proofs, propositions, experiments are only elements. Rancière (op.cit.) notes that in the Cultural Revolution the questions posed to scientists were as to the social nature of their practice; who practises the sciences and for whom? A proletarian knowledge is not only that which produces new propositions (for the class struggle must also exhibit itself at this level), but also overthrows the masses' age-old relation to knowledge and power.
12. The notion of a systematic proletarian ideology is used (1) as a science to call to order spontaneity, or (2) posed as proletarian characteristics (order, labour, discipline) to curb anarchism. It serves revisionism in its twin aspects of a theory of objective needs (eclecticism, opportunism), and a defense of the hierarchy of skills (the authority of the Central Committee or the Party intellectual); as a science: a symbol of the power of workers' parties and states; as a sum of proletarian characteristics it defines for the workers so many reasons for obeying 'their' power.
13. Here more clearly we can see that any notion such as 'politics' is to be abstract, a denial of the experience of 'ordinary people', and hence reductive: the intellectual, in not speaking from his own position, concealing his position in the social formation and denying his practice, falls into idealism precisely in this process. The notion politics may be described as reactionary.
14. We must therefore suggest that the subject/object couple is historically necessary, a specific effect of the structure; a denegation associated with the presence of the sciences.
15. 'Lenin and Philosophy' was written in February 1968; this quotation is taken from a summary of it made at the beginning of 'Lenin before Hegel', which was written in April 1969, the month when the article on 'Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses' was finished. It is thus in accord with Althusser's new position on ideology.

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### Some Notions of 'Purity' and 'Impurity' among the Zulu<sup>1</sup>

Among the traditional patrilineal Zulu of South Africa,<sup>2</sup> women are more often associated with mystical experiences than men are. While on the one hand as daughters or sisters, women may be associated with the positive mystical forces as diviners, on the other hand as mothers or wives, women are often related to the negative polluting mystical forces. It is the logic behind these notions that I want to examine in this article.

In Zulu, pollution is expressed by the term umnyama which literally means 'darkness of the night'. The darkness is symbolically seen as representing death while the daylight represents life. Umnyama as a term used to represent death or 'near death' can be translated as pollution because of lack of a better English word to convey this very complex Zulu concept. Pollution then for the Zulu can be seen as a marginal state believed to exist between life and death.

It is conceptualized as a mystical force which diminishes resistance to disease, creates conditions of misfortunes, disagreeableness and repulsiveness. The behaviour pattern observed by those who are in a state of pollution is known as ukuzila and it entails withdrawal from social life, fasting, silence and abstinence from pleasurable experiences. People with umnyama or pollution are expected to speak in low tones and only when necessary. Since umnyama is graded according to its intensity, the extent of ukuzila is dependent on the intensity of the particular phase of pollution.

The source of pollution is a happening that is associated with birth on the one hand, and death on the other. Both birth and death are mysteries associated with the 'other world' from which people come and to which people return. Although 'this world' and the 'other world' are viewed as separate entities, the beginning of life whose source is believed to be in the 'other world' happens in this world and the cessation of life in 'this world' is believed to mean continuity of life in the 'other world'. Notionally, there is an overlap between the two worlds - and such an area of overlap is marginal and dangerous to both worlds in the same sense as analysed by both Mary Douglas (1966) and Leach (1964, 1971).

All situations which are a manifestation of reproductivity or cessation of life are polluting in differing degree of intensity, this being measured by the extent of the contagious nature of each state of pollution. Reproductive emissions such as seminal fluids, or menstrual blood, are therefore polluting and so is gestation,

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1. My thanks to The Philip Bagby Fund and The Ioma Evans-Pritchard Fellowship which made it possible for me to write this article.
  2. Research work was done mainly among the Nyuswa/Zulu of Natal in the Valley of a Thousand Hills 1964-71.

lactation, parturition, death, bereavement or treatment with black medicines which symbolize death.

Since space does not allow me to go into details regarding all these states of pollution, I will focus my attention on the phases of pollution which have the highest degree of intensity, these being birth and death. It will be seen that pollution is much more closely related to a married woman because there are a number of ways in which her role is distinctive and these relate to her marginal position, not only because as a wife she is a link between two corporate groups in a lineage structure, but also because as a mother her marginality is manifested in situations which give rise to pollution.

As the child enters the body of the mother at conception the mother begins to move into a marginal state. Although the child is identified with the mother as it is dependent on her for its development both before and after birth i.e. during gestation and lactation, it is nevertheless different from her as it belongs to a different patrilineage. The mother is only a channel through which the child comes into this world. This is more cogently expressed in the Zulu understanding of conception and patriliney. To quote one of my respondents: "The woman receives, takes in the seed which grows to be a baby - just like the seed of the maize which because of the warmth of the fertile soil, germinates and takes root. The child belongs to the man because it is he who has sown."

A newly delivered mother (umdelzane) is considered to be highly polluted, and her pollution is contagious and particularly endangers men's virility, cattle, and crops. For this reason she withdraws from society. In the house of confinement only married women may keep her company. For ten days, whenever she goes outside the house she is covered up in a blanket. After ten days, she removes the blanket, but she smears her exposed parts, such as the arms, legs and face, with red ochre whenever she goes to the shop, river, or anywhere away from home. She is not only a threat to men, crops and cattle, but she is regarded as weak, and likely to contract all forms of illness. She is also dangerous to her baby as in her state of vulnerability she may pass on the contamination to the baby. For this reason she must stay at home. She remains umdlezane with intensified form of pollution until she stops post-partum emissions. She then stops smearing her body with red ochre and her pollution is no longer contagious. But as long as she is lactating she is polluted, and this is comparable to her gestation period when her vulnerability, though not contagious as far as other people are concerned, is nevertheless a threat to her baby. A lactating mother and a pregnant woman avoid contaminating situations. As a protective measure against unforeseen contamination pregnant and nursing mothers often smear red ochre on the soles of their feet.

Birth and death are seen as belonging to the two sides of one coin. That is why the chief mourner in cases of death is always a married woman and never a man or an unmarried girl. She mourns the death of her husband, her children, her daughter-in-law

or her mother-in-law. For instance, when her husband dies, she prepares the corpse into a sitting position helped by other women who are married into the lineage. By tradition the corpse is tied while it is still supple with knees and arms bent up, each hand touching the chin. In this position it is made to sit, leaning against the main pillar of the hut, and facing the upper part of the hut. The widow sits silently next to the corpse, covered in a blanket.

In the meanwhile men, who may not come into the hut, dig the grave, a round hole with a niche on the side - large enough to receive the corpse. The chief mourner helped by other wives or married women, carries the corpse to the hut doorway where it is received by the lineage men (but not the sons of the deceased) who convey it to the graveside and place it down beside the open grave. The chief mourner cuts off the cord that ties the corpse. She then descends into the grave and receives the corpse from the men above which she carefully places within the niche seated upon a mat and facing towards the cattle fold. Having placed the corpse she sits silently covered up in a blanket next to the grave, while the grave is covered up. She then removes the blanket.

The day following burial is a day for a ceremonial wailing, when the married women from the immediate neighbourhood gather at dawn and wail in the company of the chief mourner at the entrance to the homestead. The widow observes ukuzila or mourning behaviour for a period of one year, while the other members of the family are released sooner from mourning by performing a hunting ritual.

The above abbreviated account suggests several parallels between birth and death in relation to the role of a woman.

When the widow delivers a corpse to the lineage men at the doorway her action represents delivering a baby to the lineage at birth.<sup>1</sup> The corpse is tied up in such a manner that it more or less represents a foetus in the womb - with its knees and arms bent up. The hut in which the corpse and the mourners are, symbolises the confinement hut as well as the womb itself. (That the round hut is sometimes thought of as analogous to the womb was often brought home to me when respondents explained the seniority of twins. I was told that if two people enter a hut, the first one to enter sits away from the doorway while the second sits nearer the doorway. So when they leave, it will be the one sitting nearer the doorway who will go out first. According to this logic the second twin is therefore senior. Furthermore, the uterine siblings are said to belong to the same hut - which is sometimes expressed as the womb (abendlu yinye, abesisu sinye - They are of the same hut, they are of the same womb.) It is because of such analogies that I see the handing of the corpse to the men as symbolising delivering a baby).

Having delivered the corpse to the men, in a dramatization of birth, soon afterwards the conception is dramatized, when the

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1. This is my own interpretation which arises from association of rites and analogies of the hut and the womb, referred to later on.

chief mourner enters the round hole (representing the womb), receives the corpse from the lineage men and places it in the niche - to be born in the other world. The earth here represents the woman who identifies herself with it by sitting down on the bare earth while the grave is covered up.

In other words, while a Christian minister in the performance of funerary rites says, "You are dust and into dust you will return", this being a reference to the creation of the first man who was moulded with clay, the Zulu symbolically say, "You entered into this world through a woman and through her you will return to the other world". This is also a reference to the emergence of the first man when the reed on the river bank became bulky and ultimately split and out came the first man. The reed which is hollow and fixed to the soil symbolizes a woman through whom life is believed to come into this world and returns to the other world.

One can draw parallels between birth and death by looking at the different phases of pollution (umnyama) which are recognized by different degrees of intensity.

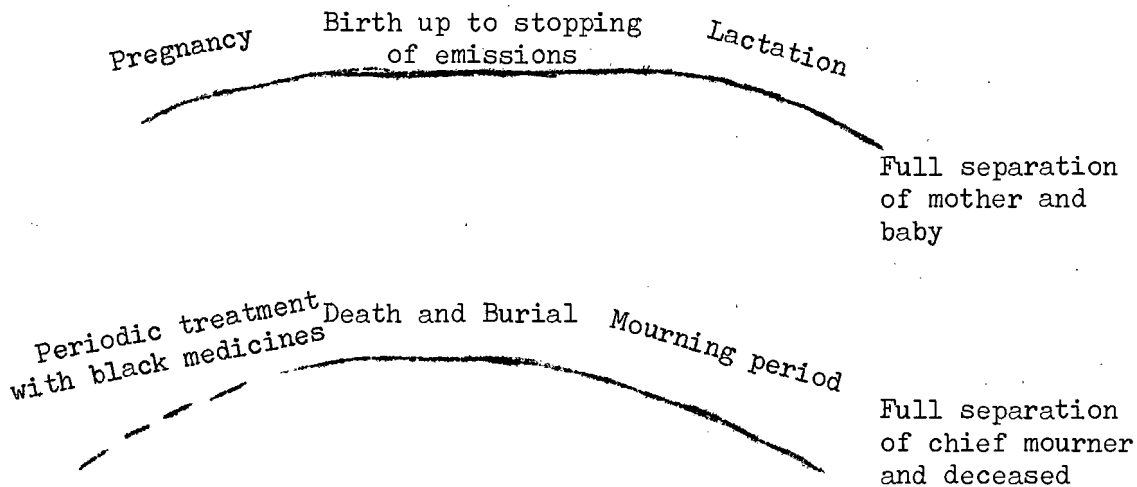
Table I: Showing Phases of Pollution

Phase 1.	(Birth : From conception to parturition ( (Death : From periodical treatment with black ( medicines to death
Phase 2.	(Birth : From birth to the disposal of the after- ( birth emissions (Death : From death to the disposal of the corpse
Phase 3.	(Birth : Lactation period ( (Death : Mourning period
Phase 4.	(Birth : Mother and child fully separated after ( weaning (Death : Chief mourner and deceased fully separated ( after mourning period
Phase 5.	(Birth : Child a full member of this world after ( first sacrifice (Death : Deceased a full member of ancestral world after integration sacrifice

This can be illustrated as a curve of rising intensity during the different phases of pollution in both situations of birth and death. From conception to childbirth the pollution is believed to gradually increase and this is demonstrated by much greater withdrawal from the public arena by the pregnant mother. The intensity is on a high plateau from parturition until the mother stops bleeding; it fades away during lactation as the baby gradually feeds more and more on solids and less on the mother's milk.

If the death is a result of a long drawn out sickness the patient is periodically treated with black medicines and during such treatment all the members of the family are also treated and while thus treated, they observe ukuzila behaviour whereby people withdraw from society. This means that death is often preceded by phases of pollution during treatment with black medicines. The curve would start with treatment with black medicines, reach its high intensity at death to burial and fade away until the end of mourning. It can be illustrated thus:

Fig.1: A curve reflecting the degree of  
intensity of pollution



The institution of divination provides another instance of a woman's marginality as she is a point of contact between "this world" and "the other world". The diviner is not polluted with "darkness" (umnyama). On the contrary she is in a state of light and purity. Her problem is how to reconcile her state of purity (unamakhosi - being with ancestor spirits) with the profane world she lives in. Her whole behaviour is governed by this awareness.

She also goes through three phases but in her case not phases of impurity but of purity. The first phase begins with the manifestation of her contact with the spirits - when she dreams of them, hears voices whispering in her ears, prefers solitude, neglects her appearance, eats very little and chooses the food she eats, has an urge to go and plunge herself in the river where she see a huge snake that coils around her, and finally she runs away to a diviner to be trained as an ithwasa - a neophyte.

Being a neophyte marks her second phase during which she withdraws from the society almost completely. She devotes most of her time to ecstatic experience by singing spiritual songs of her own composition to which she dances. The whole effort is concentrated on promoting her closer contact with the spirits. A series of sacrifices and treatment with white medicines are

all calculated to promote her illumination. She is painted with white clay and has ablutions twice a day for the same reasons. The intensity of contact is measured by the extent of her clairvoyance. The neophyte is notionally in a process of becoming permanently pure and full of spiritual power. When she graduates as a diviner she has attained the maximum clairvoyance which means that her contact with the spirits has reached its highest point which marks her third and final phase.

She maintains her state of purity by various observances such as constant sacrifices and avoidance of all situations which are regarded as unclean. She maintains her ascetic and ecstatic experience by singing and dancing and moving more in the circles of the diviners. She is in general considered a moral and upright person and she endeavours to live up to these expectations. It is very rare for instance to find a case of a diviner accused of sorcery, while on the other hand, ethno-doctors who practise medicine, but not being diviners, are readily accused.

While a mother experiences pollution phases of fluctuating intensity, a diviner's acquisition of spiritual contact increases in its intensity until it reaches a maximum where it remains on a more or less constant plateau.

The diviner remains permanently marginal. This is expressed by her attire, more particularly the white strips of goat skin strapped crossways over her breasts. These are calculated to protect her against the dangers of those who are not diviners.

The argument I have given above about the mother and the chief mourner being channels through whose bodies spiritual beings pass across from the other world to this world and from this world to the other world, fits in with the diviner who is a point of contact with the spirits who return to this world. Through a woman the transition of spiritual beings is made. This point is crucial in that it explains why diviners are women and why men must become transvestites to be diviners.

The diviner, however, belongs to the same patrilineage as the spirits that possess her, while a mother or a mourner is an affinal relation with the spiritual beings with whom she is in contact.

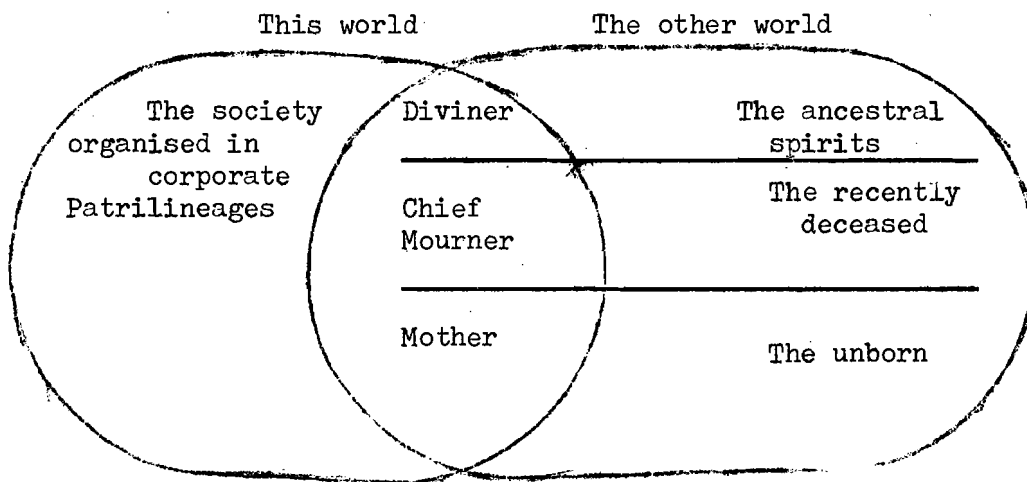
If we use Durkheimian language and regard 'this world' as profane and the 'other world' as sacred, the sacred world for the Zulu could further be qualified as sacred with spiritual power over the living, and sacred with no spiritual control over the living. The sacred and powerful would in this sense refer to the desired ultimate - which is the ancestral spiritual body; while the sacred and powerless refers to the incomplete spiritual states represented by the unborn and the recently deceased.

A woman as a "mother of birth" (umdelzane) and a "mother of death" (umfelokazi) is dangerous not only because she is marginal, she is also dangerous because she is impure - her impurity arises from the fact that she straddles this world and the section of the other world which is sacred but powerless.

The diviner on the other hand is pure and her purity arises from the fact that she straddles this world and the section of the other world which is pure and powerful. She is not dangerous to us, but we as normal people are dangerous to her because we are not as pure as she is.

This could be illustrated in the following way:-

Fig. II The marginality of the women who represent the overlapping of 'this world' and 'the other world'.



I find the basic contrasts in the Radcliffe-Brownian sense between normal and abnormal useful in giving a better understanding of the marginality of a woman as a diviner on one hand and as a 'mother' of birth and death on the other hand.

'Abnormal' conditions are signified by either having too much or too little, by being too strong or too weak, or by being excessively clean or excessively dirty, or by any other form of extremity.

In this sense the diviner's purity = excess of spiritual power confronts the mother's impurity = deficiency of spiritual power. There is a paradoxical conjunction of these two apparently opposite extremes in that as both of them are an index of abnormality they can not live properly with normal people who strike the balance between the two extremes.

The contrasts between diviner and mother can further be tabulated in the following way.

Table II: Showing 'The Diviner' and 'The Mother' Contrasts

Diviner	"Mother" of birth and death
Excess of spiritual power Daughter/Sister	Deficiency of spiritual power Wife/Mother

Not polluted

Polluted

Protects herself from pollution by society

Protects herself from further pollution by society

--

Protects society from her pollution

Permanent purity

Temporary impurity

The **above** table may give the impression that the diviner and the mother are two different people. This may be true for an unmarried girl who may be a diviner but even then she ends up by being a mother. In most cases that I know of, women were possessed, or at least became neophytes, when they were already married. This means that a woman who is a diviner has the double responsibility of coping with her role as a diviner as well as that of a mother. The most successful diviners that I know had passed the child-bearing stage.

I will return once again to the diviner, the mother, and the mourner. At the moment I want to examine the role of a woman not as a link between 'this world' and 'the other world' but as a link between one patrilineage and another, and see to what extent her role as a wife compares with her role as a diviner, a mother, and a mourner.

A woman in a patrilineal society such as the Zulu provides a bridge which links through kinship ties some members of one corporate unit to another corporate lineage unit. In other words, in a polygynous family the man's children are united as siblings, but divided by their maternal relationship (see Fortes 1970). This means that while a woman on the one hand represents her lineage and forms a bridge between her lineage and that of her affines, on the other hand within her affinal corporate lineage group, she forms boundaries and not bridges - boundaries between her own children and those of her co-wives or between her children and those of her husband's brothers. In this sense she is a threat to the continued unity of the corporate group.

Her marginal position is manifested by the fact that jurally and legally she is under the control of her affinal group, whose ancestors also partially protect her as a wife, but her own lineage ancestors continue to protect her as a daughter. This is evidenced by the fact that if she becomes a diviner she is possessed by her own ancestors even if she is married.

The result of this situation is that while the descent group into which she is married is enjoined by religious sanctions against practising sorcery to harm each other, such religious sanctions are not applicable to her because she is not a full member of her husband's group and therefore out of reach of the complete and entire control of her husband's ancestors. With regard to sorcery, only secular sanctions apply to her. Since one can be charged with sorcery only if there is adequate evidence, the logic is that it is safer to practise sorcery as long as one

is not found out while one can not hide an evil deed from the ancestral spirits.

This means that within the extended family only married women can practise sorcery without fearing the consequences of ancestral punishment. What this notionally means is that every woman within the homestead is potentially a sorcerer and particularly a threat not only to her co-wives - but to their children as well.

Women in this sense do not only represent points of segmentation and therefore a threat to the integration of a corporate group, but they also threaten the continuity of the lineage in that sorcery between co-wives or brothers' wives is often said to be calculated to deprive the victim co-wife of children.

The above observations suggest that while the social structure places a woman as a wife in an ambiguous position, religious notions further isolate her as a source of danger.

The question that arises is: Why is the society making such demands on women? The answer to this can be found in the type of 'power' involved in each given situation.

Leach in his paper on "The Nature of War" has this to say in relation to power.

"Society, however we conceive it, is a network of persons held together by links of power... Viewed in this way power does not lie in persons or things, but in the interstices between persons and things that is to say in relations ... Power, the influence of relationship, is ambivalent. On one side it is dominance; on the other submission. In human affairs one man's advantage is always balanced by some other man's disadvantage. Power in itself is amoral, bringing benefits to one, disaster to another. But from the point of view of the individual, power always lies on the outside; power is the influence I have on others, the influence others have on me. It is what joins me to the others, it is betwixt and between, and it is dangerous stuff ... On a grander scale the same is true of society; we recognise what we are as a community, by seeing how we differ from, and how we are related to the others." (1965: 168-169).

This logic of discrimination does not only lead the Zulu to make category distinctions such as 'our lineage' versus 'other lineages' or 'this world' versus the 'other world', but there is also a special category of persons, namely diviners, wives, mothers, who have the very important function of forming a bridge between this world and the other world as well as our lineage and their lineage, which could be illustrated in the following way:

Table III: Showing the Role of  
Women as Bridges

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1. 'Our' lineage - 'Our' wives who are marginal - 'Other' lineages  
because they are affines and  
daughters of other lineages
  2. 'Our' lineage - 'Our' wives as channels - 'Our' lineage  
through whom our children in the spirit  
enter this world from the world  
other world and through whom  
we return to the other world
  3. 'Our' lineage - 'Our' daughters who are - 'Other' lineages  
in the spirit diviners through whom the in this world  
world other lineages benefit
- 

In relation to the first category, i.e. our lineage linked by our wives to their lineages, the ideology is that men exercise jural and legal power over the women. This means that men are dominant and women submissive. But the power of men is challenged by the fact that women who are from outside their lineage do divide them. This is a manifestation of power which contradicts the ideology of submission associated with womanhood. It is this contradiction which is dangerous and which is cast in terms of sorcery operating within the homestead.

In relation to the second category - namely 'Our' wives as a link between 'our' lineage in this world and 'our' lineage in the other world, I will consider the other form of power that men have, in contrast to women.

A very important point which indicates the potency of man is that he is in control of the reproductive fluids. While a woman menstruates involuntarily, a man usually ejaculates the semen when he voluntarily has sexual intercourse. In this sense he is in complete control of the situation. This suggests that the semen is equated with potency. It therefore follows that if a man plans to undertake an uncertain risky enterprise tomorrow, he will not have sexual intercourse with a woman tonight as he needs as much power as he can get hold of. It is not surprising, therefore, that a man is said to abstain from sexual intercourse before such undertakings as going out on a war campaign, performing a sacrifice, going out hunting, and forging spears (in the case of a blacksmith). All these occupations are the prerogatives of males and they are the indices of their power. It therefore makes sense that men should abstain from activities which entail loss of semen - loss of power (i.e. energy, virility, strength).

That the woman's place is submission while that of a man is dominance is demonstrated by the ceremonial wailing (isililo) mentioned earlier on. Weeping and wailing are associated with helplessness and therefore submission, while power is demonstrated

by courage and aggression. Whereas the women wail, the men mark the end of mourning for themselves by a performance of an aggressive act, namely the ritual hunting (ihlambo).

The Zulu ritual hunt is said 'to clean the spears' - spears which are the symbols of aggression, which stab in attack to destroy life, in a sense comparable to the phallus which stabs to create life. The rite of washing the spears lifts the ban on sexual intercourse which had been in operation since the occurrence of death. In other words, what is 'cleaned' and made safe to use is not only the spear but also the phallus. It is the assertion of male virility and male power.

A further insight regarding pollution may be achieved by looking into the notions of fertility. As long as a man is potent he is not considered sterile. If there is no issue it is the woman who is said to be infertile. This explains the elaborate rites and sacrifices associated with marriage most of which are calculated to make the bride fertile. It is the duty of her father to perform such rites towards his ancestors to ask them to make his daughter fertile.

Here again we meet with a paradox where a man who is powerful and manifests it by his virility is dependent on the fertility of a woman. This means that a woman who is ideally submissive and powerless nevertheless exercises some power in that the continuity of the descent group is dependent on her fertility. I believe it is the realisation of this fact which makes a woman's emissions, which are a manifestation of her reproductive powers, particularly dangerous to men's virility. They are a reminder of men's inadequacy in entirely controlling the situation of reproductivity. Women in this sense are ambiguous because they exercise some power that they should not have, and as such they are dangerous to those who are entitled to that power.

I will now return to the significance of reproductive emissions. Compared with the other bodily emissions, they are a class apart. As long as one lives, one defaecates, urinates, produces saliva, tears and mucus as part of the body's functions. But the flow of menstrual blood and seminal fluids can dry up and stop and still a person continues to live. The cessation of such emissions, however, would arrest the continuity of the society. The concern over the reproductive emissions is not only over the good health of the living, but over the replacement of the generations.

If the society must be perpetuated it must have the means of maintaining life, i.e. food. Hence pollution does not only affect the people but it also affects their main means of livelihood i.e. cattle and crops.

In conclusion, what has emerged in this analysis is that pollution is understood to be more particularly associated with situations which marks the beginning and the end of life. These situations are associated with married women who fulfil the important social role of forming a bridge between the two worlds,

and as such they are not only in a condition which is dangerous to themselves as individuals, but they are dangerous to other people.

They are dangerous because they are marginal and ambiguous; their existence generates doubt **about the difference between normal and abnormal**, health and sickness; they represent, as it were, 'gateways to death' as this is indeed evidenced by the fact that in the sample of 161 cases of infant mortality, 57 of them, or 36%, were attributed to the mother's vulnerability during gestation.<sup>1</sup>

So, new ritual boundaries have to be set out 'to close the gate', to establish a new boundary between the truly normal world and the uncertain world represented by an individual in a marginal state. Hence the use of insulating materials, such as when a newly delivered mother (umdelzane) paints red ochre on the exposed parts of her body - the parts that have contact with the ordinary world. She does this in order to protect herself from the dangers to which she is prone and also because she herself is liable to be a channel of danger to others. By the observance of the right behaviour in her state of impurity she sees herself as engaged in a procreative activity to benefit the society as a whole.

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1. See Sibisi 1972.

Semantic Fields and Social Change: The Concept Gnek in Tangu

Social anthropologists, faced with an unfamiliar concept in the language of the people they are describing, often retain the indigenous term and attempt to delineate its uses rather than offer a translation. We have such examples as Mauss' use of the term hau in The Gift, the Nuer term kwoth, and so on. The central concept with which I propose to deal in this paper, gnek, is of this type.

Gnek, Burridge says, is a word "which may be translated as 'soul', 'mind', 'nous', 'psyche', or even 'conscience', but which is probably best thought of simply as gnek" (1969:176). It is a term operating in that difficult area of language associated with mental activity and its manifestations, and we are well aware of the problems we face in describing such activity. 'Mind' is a capricious concept.

As Wittgenstein tells us, "a substantive makes us look for a thing that corresponds to it". Where one is convinced, especially by adherence to the theology of a particular tradition, that there is a thing to find (mind, soul), it is much easier to take that step. It was taken by the missionaries in Tangu with significant results in the field of social and conceptual change. We are told that "Each human being today is deemed whilst alive to have a gnek. But it is probable that in the past only an adult man was deemed to have a gnek. For the gnek is, or appears as, the immediate source of responsible behaviour" (ibid.). Not only was it not a conceptual parallel with the Christian notion of soul, as it was supposed to be by the missionaries, but it is not even best described as a "source of responsible behaviour". Rather, it seems to be more like a manifestation of responsible behaviour. In this paper, I shall be examining its place in both traditional society, and in the ostensibly Christian society which followed it.

In a previous paper, "Power and the Big Man in New Guinea" (1974), I suggested that the way to decide whether "alien rule restricts the power of traditional authorities" or "gives new powers to the native authorities it establishes" (Brown 1963:1) was not by casting round almost at random for evidence of indigenous despotism or of misuse of power by government-appointed officials, but by a careful examination of the details of at least one situation of culture contact and its ramifications in the changing modes of thought and action amongst the peoples contacted (Patching 1974:102). In this paper, I concentrate on just one aspect of culture contact, the changing concept of the person, or individual, within the society, but I hope to show its centrality within the whole spectrum of social and conceptual change. The society I shall concentrate on is Tangu, described in various publications by Burridge.

In my previous paper I frequently referred to the associated ideals in typical New Guinea societies of what is sometimes referred to as "consensus democracy" and of reciprocity, and began to show that these are not merely political concepts but spheres of thought and action germane to all social behaviour. And this is reflected in the many roles of the big man. Not simply a political leader, the typical big man operates within the 'total

social framework'; having importance in political, moral, economic, horticultural, religious and ritual fields of action, and he is also, in many of the cultures, expected to have an awareness of the meanings of the traditions and philosophy of the group as exemplified in the myths. It is the gradual development of expertise in both the practical and the theoretical fields which characterises the development of a big man, and the 'bigness' of a big man, his authority (in the very widest sense of the term) and his centrality in the activities in the group within which he has his ascribed status, is a matter of degree. In Tangu, amongst whom Burridge prefers to talk of 'managers' rather than 'big men', the acquisition of the capabilities associated with the 'manager' is the duty of every man. The Tangu myths persistently relate to the development of responsible behaviour on the part of the growing youth, and the story of the gaining of total responsibility by a man is the story of the 'creation' of a manager. In an ideal world all grown men in Tangu, being fully responsible, operating within the opposition between self-will and self-restraint, would be managers. In practice, of course, some are more successful than others, and it is the reality of degrees of success which separates a manager from other men.

Yet success must be viewed with caution. It would appear to western eyes that the success which went with the ascription of the status of manager in Tangu would be success in horticulture, in ritual, in social manipulation, and so on; success almost susceptible to abstract mensuration. But there is always the man who is too successful in these pursuits, the man who consistently embarrasses his exchange partners by the large quantities of goods offered for exchange, the man whose eloquence in debate carries him beyond the bounds of propriety. Such a man was Kwaling who was "too good for his nearest rival, too cunning and too shrewd. He lost out because by being too good he was unable to maintain equivalence" (Burridge 1957:771). In the acquisition of relevant skills on the way to becoming a responsible man, maybe even a manager, a man must not operate with 'social blinkers' on. No kudos comes to a man who blindly demonstrates his expertise whilst remaining in ignorance of the limits of capability of his colleagues - his kin, affines, friends, and exchange partners. A successful man operating in such a manner is successful only in isolation, subjectively. In the eyes of the community, he has failed.

If we look a little more closely at the fields of activity in which a responsible man has to operate we may be able, more clearly, to see how this situation comes about. A mature man is expected to demonstrate "technological skills; responsible initiatives; effective articulation and communication of thought; management of affairs; obligations to son and to the garamb [the men's house in traditional society in which men, as mothers' brothers, circumcised and taught restraint to their sisters' sons]....; a control over wife; the provision of feasts; acknowledgement of reciprocities, particularly with wife's brothers; the use of dreams and charms; maintaining the moral order; recognition of appropriate relations with the divine; the creation of culture from the wild..." (Burridge 1969:281). In all of these situations one might assume that a man's success depends solely on inherent abilities and on the acumen demonstrated in the learning of and

demonstration of traditional skills learnt at the father's knee. However, the qualities themselves must take second place to a man's social situation. It is skilful operation within other-defined roles rather than self-defined, measurable success in all fields of activity which gives a man responsible or managerial status. Without the appropriate social, affinal, and kin relations, no amount of demonstrable ability will help a man towards approved social status. Operating with 'measurable' success outside of these roles a man will become more of a sorcerer (of whom we shall hear a little more later) than a manager.

There are two aspects of this necessity for operating within a variously defined set of relationships; the one practical, mundane, and contingent, which could to a limited degree be overcome by an energetic and skilful man. The other is semantic, structural, and necessary, and this can in no way be bypassed. From the practical point of view a man would find it extremely difficult to demonstrate the appropriate skills without a father to teach him, a mother's brother to circumcise him, partners to exchange with, a wife or wives to assist him, sons to teach, or sisters' sons to lead through the process of growth and maturation. But the major significance of such an extreme situation would not be practical so much as social, moral, philosophical. It is not so much what a man does from day to day which gives him responsibility as with and for whom he does it. Just as the same behaviour can be morally reprehensible if performed with one woman - "incest" - but morally required with another; so the activities which are a part of responsible behaviour only gain that significance in the appropriate social context. A man is what he does with and to the correct people.

In such a situation the manifestation of responsible behaviour, the use of gnék, in indigenous terms, is what defines a man. Always operating as half of a pair - father and son, mother's brother and sister's son, husband and wife, sister's husband and wife's brother, elder brother and younger brother, and so on - there is no significant activity in which a responsible man can engage which has no moral bearing upon others in the community; unless a man wishes to risk condemnation within the community as a sorcerer. The Tangu concept of self - in traditional terms - begins not with a unified individual, contingently related to others in the social environment, but with an **ever**-increasing series of human relationships within which the responsible man will strive to become central. A successful man is not merely one who produces much, speaks well in debate, and so on, but one who is centrally involved in as many networks as he can manage - husband to many wives, father to many sons, mother's brother to many sisters' sons, partner in many exchange relationships. A man's identity is pieced together in the developmental process towards acquiring gnék. Gnek is itself the reflection of a man's achievement in becoming necessary in the lives of his many dependants. For Tangu, as for many other peoples in New Guinea, there is, "a particular conception of man which does not allow for any clearly recognized distinction between the individual and the status which he occupies" (Read 1955:256). The greater the number of socially defined roles a man occupies, the greater his status, the more of man he is. A man's personality, his 'self' is not born into him, it must be

achieved. To gain gnék, a man must first be drawn into, or draw himself into, the many networks, based upon reciprocity, upon pairing, which characterise Tangu society.

Tangu mythology includes many characters who, for one reason or another, lack the social status required of a mature man in the moral community. The concept of the singular, anathema to the moral community, is examined in many forms in the narratives, and in those several cases where, the singular position of the character cannot be ameliorated by the embracing of the community, catastrophe results, in the form of violent storm, flood, or earthquake. A common theme is that of orphans, a kinless brother and sister who have to ride the storm which their anomalous position (impossible in the mundane world, of course) has precipitated. Another theme, closely connected conceptually, concerns the singular man, lacking a mother's brother, whose masculinity, fecund with power, becomes uncontrollable through unbridled self-will. Figuring in the form of the snake, drawing on the energies of the natural world, his potential creativity becomes, because of his singularity, his isolation from the community as expressed by the absence of the regulative operation of circumcision, ultimately destructive, and, again, catastrophe results. Singularity for Tangu means power, but power which is dangerous and bound to lead to the collapse of society as it is known. The indigenous term for the storm, flood or earthquake which in the mythology overturns the recognised world is pupu'riem'riembaki. It is, according to the mythology, which in traditional times held all the truths, the only conceivable result of uncontrolled singularity.

It is in this conceptual environment that we must assess the impact of the advent of the European and his minions. The European does not fit into the various networks which typify Tangu society and cannot help but be singular. The question for Tangu to answer is what will be the result of the singular behaviour of these obviously powerful beings? For Tangu confronted with examples of just that type of singular being and behaviour which proliferate in their mythology, pupu'riem'riembaki is just round the corner. Unless, that is, these Europeans can be classed as sorcerers, ranguova, singular men who are recognisable to Tangu but whose singularity, perhaps, can be controlled.

"The word ranguma is conveniently translated as 'sorcerer', though in many situations 'witch' or 'criminal' or 'assassin' or 'scapegoat' or 'outlaw' or 'villain' or 'knave' might be more accurate. While allowing that there are different kinds of ranguma, Tangu have but the one word" (Burridge 1969:133). Now it is clear that Tangu do not believe that Europeans are sorcerers (or witches or criminals, etc). What is meant is that Europeans can fall into the category as a result of a significant parallel in their activities and attitudes. "It is what ranguova (plural of ranguma) have in common that justifies the single category, that distinguishes them from other men. A ranguma is he who deliberately places himself outside the system of reciprocities which characterizes the moral order: a singular man, any man who behaves thus singularly" (op. cit.:136).

The concept ranguma is a situational concept. Given that a man could, perhaps, through a series of misfortunes, become like a ranguma, being isolated and therefore acting of necessity outside of the normal reciprocal frameworks, it is far more common for the term to be applied to one who, though in a position to act from concern for his dependants, neglects to do so. And since this sort of neglect for the community can be a feature of any man's behaviour at one time or another, all men run the risk of being classed as a ranguma. But this situation can normally be resolved. Some man, especially if acting in a ranguma-like manner from ignorance, will be easily brought back into line. Others may be persuaded with a little more difficulty. But ultimately, a recalcitrant ranguma becomes the target for physical assault, even assassination. The singularity of the unyielding sorcerer's act is balanced by the singularity of the extreme course of action to the threatened community, and reciprocity is restored.

There are, then, various ways in which Tangu can feel secure in the presence of the potential danger of the ranguma, he who acts in a singular manner, without respect for the reciprocities of the moral community. Yet when Europeans act in this fashion, the situation is far from comfortable. Europeans, classed as ranguova, are so classified not only because of the fact of their singular behaviour, but also by virtue of the fact that they are rangama, strangers. It is necessarily true that strangers, having no reciprocal links within the Tangu community, will be like ranguova; the stranger cannot help but act in a singular manner, having no kin or affines within the community, and, in most cases as well, no exchange relationships there. Yet the stranger will normally pass on. He comes amongst Tangu at their sufferance and will act with tact and courtesy if he knows what is good for him, aware of his anomalous and dangerous position in the sphere of Tangu thought and action. The new strangers, Europeans, are a different problem altogether. "In Tangu, recalcitrant sorcerers who act outside the conventions which control them are beaten up, exiled or killed. White men, on the other hand, so it would seem to Tangu, make their own laws which Tangu have to obey, give their own orders, pay what wages they choose, and imprison when they feel like it" (Burridge 1960:39). Rather than being able to control these new ranguova Tangu are being controlled by them.

So the problem remains. Even classed as ranguova, rather than analogies with the singular, destructive characters in the mythology, Europeans remain as a threat, as unremitting sorcerers who cannot, by force or persuasion, be brought into the community to restore reciprocity and structural harmony, nor can they be driven away or killed. The singularity of the European remains unabated.

Quite by chance, however, one aspect of missionary teaching gave a new slant to the dilemma facing Tangu. It was common practice for the missionaries of the area to carry out all "secular and religious teaching at the lower levels and all church services... as far as possible in native languages" (Lawrence 1956:77). Now this is a laudable intention, but it can create logical difficulties based upon the semantic depth of certain indigenous concepts. The problem for the missionary is, in part, to construct

in native terms such 'truths' as that "souls must be led to the knowledge of their sinfulness and to the experience of the grace of God" (Keysser 1924:430). The missionary must sift through the indigenous language to find linguistic parallels to the Christian concepts of 'soul', 'knowledge', 'sinfulness', and 'God', or, at least, for terms which can be manipulated through teaching the gospels and other elements of the Christian doctrines so that at some point the equivalent phrases in the native language have meanings sufficiently similar to those in the European language to satisfy the missionary that progress in the process of conversion can be made.

It seems, then, that the word the missionary in Tangu decided to borrow from the native language to mean 'soul' was gnék. Through the manipulation of this concept would come about that "awakening of individuals" (ibid.) which is the aim of the missionary. Instead of being the fruits of a long process of growth and gathering of responsibility, with all the structural relations which that entailed in traditional society, gnék (soul) was now given by God to every man, woman, and child as a birthright. And gnék was now a unifying agent creating a new concept of the individual, having a personal relationship with God, was now to be seen "as denoting the whole 'self' or personality, the essential principle of human nature, the basis of conscious, continuous, individual existence" (Robinson 1920:733), rather than a diversifying concept reflecting a mature man's various roles. The moral rules of Tangu society were initially unaffected by this semantic shift, but it soon began to be clear that a man's gnék - his self - was no longer earned from the other members of the society through status; to be constantly monitored by a man's peers, but was now given by God. From being defined by others in society, a man was now to be seen as defined by God. To save his gnék in the old days a man was responsible to many. To save his soul (gnék) a man in the new Christian community was responsible to God. Tangu had to begin to accept the philosophy of singularity to accept Christianity. It was an uncomfortable change.

Why, then, did Tangu go along with this teaching if it was so contradictory to their traditional values? This is almost impossible to demonstrate with full conviction, but we may suspect that the impression of power created by the technology of the Europeans was at least influential in the acceptance of missionary teaching, for, although the missionaries were hardly exemplars of the powerful, gun-toting, jeep-driving, aircraft-flying Europeans, they were the only ones who were there to teach the natives, and the only ones who were seen to be offering anything like answers to the questions Tangu were asking themselves at the time. Given the association in traditional patterns of thought (which I have not the time to go into at this point) between awareness, or knowledge, and power, control of natural forces, it was but a short step to the assumption that acquisition of the sort of knowledge offered by the European missionaries would produce for Tangu the sorts of power demonstrated by the Europeans as a class. As Lawrence puts it, "the attitude was quite early established in the natives' minds that the Mission was a

source from which to secure material wealth" (Lawrence 1956:75). It was knowledge with practical ends which the natives sought from the Mission, and this is expressed concisely by a Tangu informant who told Burridge, "You white men seem to know everything, and now the Mission is teaching us the truth" (1960:153). Even if the 'truth' seemed to contradict certain fundamentals of indigenous thought, Tangu were prepared to accept the intellectual disparity with its attendant fears concerning the dangers of unbridled singularity for the sake of knowledge and its rewards. If the singularity inherent in the European conception of the individual as implied in their use of the term gnek had in traditional times necessarily brought about pupu'riem'riembaki, perhaps Europeans had the means of channelling the already recognised creative potential in non-destructive ways, the means to hold the reins of the power unleashed by uncontrolled, singular, non-reciprocal behaviour. In the years that followed the introduction of Christian teachings this possibility was examined by Tangu both in myth and through the events they perceived in their lives.

Two of the Tangu narratives stand out from the body of traditional mythology, and these are the narratives through which Tangu begin to make the examination of the new concepts. Burridge says of the myths in question, "They are not in the same style or genre, they hardly belong. Yet Tangu regard them as in a sense more precious, more meaningful than their other narratives" (1969:404). These are the narratives relating to Duongangwongar and Mambu respectively, and they are the only ones in which the European environment figures. The first narrative consists of two parts: the first bears some resemblances to the more traditional tales, whilst the second part seems closely based upon a series of coastal myths concerning the two brothers Kilibob and Manup, which have been variously described elsewhere (e.g. Aufinger 1942-5; de Bruijn 1951; Lawrence 1964). And it is worth noting that Tangu first heard of the European from their neighbours on the coast. The Mambu narrative seems to be an entirely new creation, based loosely upon history, and bearing little relation in structure to the more traditional myths.

Of the Duongangwongar narrative, Burridge says that "the first half appears as but an ill-learned preamble to the dialogue between Ambwerk and Tuman [the brothers who are the protagonists of the second half]" (1969:406). I think that this is an uncharacteristically superficial comment by the ethnographer. If we look at the story from the point of view of the attempted 'resolution' of the contradiction inherent in the old and the new uses of the concept gnek, and its implications for singular, individual, non-reciprocal behaviour, we may more readily see its significance. Briefly, the narrative is as follows (omitting, for the sake of brevity, many otherwise important features): Duongangwongar, a man with a mother, but no father or mother's brother, went hunting for pigs with the other men of the village. Finding a pig, he shot and wounded it with an arrow, calling to the others for help. The other men came and each speared the pig, but as they drew their spears out from the pig, they in turn plunged their spears into Duongangwongar who fell dead. His mother, Gundakar, learning of his death in a dream, found his body and

left the village trying to find a place to settle down and bury her dead son. Eventually, at the coast, she met a man who agreed to marry her and the body of Duongangwongar was finally buried. Gundakar bore a son to her new husband. Gundakar found salt water and fish in Duongangwongar's grave and cooked some of the fish which so nourished her new son that he grew and matured overnight. The next day her husband's younger brother, Tuman, visited and remarked on the rapid growth of the youth, upon which Gundakar told Tuman's wife of the salt water and fish in Duongangwongar's grave, warning her not to kill the large, snake-like ramatzka fish which lived in the grave. However, Tuman's wife ignored the warning and speared the large fish. Immediately there was an earthquake, and thunder, and water gushed out of Duongangwongar's nostrils, causing a flood which separated Gundakar's husband, Ambwerk, from his younger brother, Tuman. In the second part of the story Tuman invents, in sequence, writing, canoe-building, boat-building, engines, motor cars and bikes, and a large ship of the type which brings cargo to the jetties on the coast. Ambwerk copies each invention with amazement at the ingenuity of his younger brother.

Duongangwongar was a 'structural' ranguma, a singular man without the modifying mother's brother to control his singularity by circumcision. As such he is killed by his fellows, and rightfully so, for he is unable to take part in society as a mature man. His power, however, lives on in the ramatzka fish which Tuman's wife kills. The fish, being like a snake, associated in traditional thought with the power of uncircumcised self-will, must be controlled but not killed; a lesson learned from the older narratives. Its death causes pupu'riem'riembaki. But in this case, as would most probably have been the case in the older stories (Cf. the Zawapai narrative, Burridge 1969:316-20), this does not conclude the story. The white man, singular, teaching that gnek, individuality, and - by implication - responsibility, is God-given and not to be gained by growth and maturation, has taught, also implicitly, that the singular can be constructive: the white man is singular; he also has superior technology. The two implications of the Missionaries' meaning of gnek, overlaid on the traditional semantic field of the term are worked through in the myth. Gnek used to be associated with maturity, and if the missionary says that gnek is given by God at birth, then maturity must come with it. Consequently the son of Ambwerk's wife grows to almost immediate maturity overnight. (Perhaps at the time Tangu had never seen a European child, but this would not make any difference on the logical level.) This is the more cautious implication. The other is that the singularity of the new meaning of gnek releases the full power of unbridled singularity, which is what is implied by the action of the wife of Tuman, and, drawing on this power in the manner of a European, Tuman was able to perform technological miracles. The cautious Ambwerk, the New Guinea native, must be content to copy and marvel at the wondrous achievements of his brother. The lesson is, perhaps, that caution in the matter of singularity avoids pupu'riem'riembaki, but it also denies access to that power which produces cargo. The choice is set out for Tangu: either continue to accept the doctrines of old which reject the singular, and be content

to remain subservient to the European; or accept his teaching on the singular, for all the inherent dangers, and learn how to control the storm, pupu'riem'riembaki.

It must still be an uncomfortable choice. The truths of the past, the shadow of the ranguma, the threat of the storm cannot be forgotten with ease, and the social structure of kin and exchange will continue to restrain the would-be singular man. It is therefore significant that the earliest expressions of an acceptance of uncontrolled singularity did not come from within the community but were accepted from outside. Burridge says that "In Tangu the internal political values preclude the exercise of authority, or outright leadership, by a single individual Tangu. But they are willing to accept outsiders in such roles. Thus, in Tangu, no hero emerged from within: he came from outside" (1960:42). But, as we have already seen, it was not merely the "internal political values" which prevented outright leadership, it was the entire conceptual significance of the singular which individual leadership implies. It was, I suggest, only with the early stages of acceptance of the Christian form of gnek that even outside individual leadership was welcomed (as opposed to the grudging tolerance of the leadership of the European). Yet the ranguma-like implications would remain strong in these early days, hence the unwillingness on the part of individual Tangu to act out this new form of individual, singular behaviour in any depth. In the guise of the stranger (ranguama), however, the ranguma implications are already present, and acceptance of ranguma-like behaviour from an outsider is far less threatening to the Tangu community in transition than exploration of the implications by their own members. Blame for resultant misfortune, should there be any, could easily be put upon a stranger. Blame of the order expected by the sceptical, put upon members of the moral community within Tangu could cause irreparable fission.

The first New Guinea native to fill the role of singular man in this way was Mambu (Hultker 1941; Burridge 1960). With the Mambu narrative we come across the cargo cult. This is hardly the place for a survey of the empirical and theoretical literature on the subject, but it must be made clear how the changing concept of gnek influenced the way in which Tangu embraced the millenarian doctrines espoused by Mambu and his successor, Yali. Inselmann, a Lutheran missionary working in an area slightly to the east of Tangu was convinced that the Missions had nothing to do with the advent of millenarian activity. He argues (1946:44) that "the primitive natives of New Guinea, under Mission supervision, were making rapid progress towards higher standards of life until their contact with unChristian white man's culture gave rise to the cargo cult." Hultker, a Catholic missionary working in and around Tangu, seems more perceptive. He says of cargo cults that "It is an undeniable fact... that they arise almost spontaneously when a pagan tribe gets its first contact with Christianity and accepts it in part only" (1946:70). Neither of the missionaries, however, goes into the conceptual background to cargo cults in a way which shows satisfactorily what the thinking behind the movements may have been. (Cf. Lawrence 1964).

Gnek, it will be remembered, was that which was acquired by an adult, responsible man when he proved worthy of the status he gained as pivotal in a series of networks. To achieve and maintain this status required hard work to produce goods and artefacts, both mundane and sacred. To a large degree, gnék was manifested in the production of food, valuables, pigs, etc. for exchange; tools and weapons for the daily tasks; slit-gongs for ceremonies; and so on. In fact, the material culture of Tangu stemmed entirely from the gnaker of the mature men. Now if material culture was the product of gnék for Tangu, so it ought to be for Europeans. Cargo, white man's material culture, was the product of the European gnék or soul. Yet the Mission taught that gnék (soul) was not a thing to be worked for: it was given by God to every man, woman and child. The implication must be that this powerful being called God provided Europeans not only with the means to control pupu'riem'riembaki, but also with that responsibility that goes with maturity, and the goods which go with it. If the Mission taught that God gave gnék, but also made the natives channel their energies into "purely secular work - building decent homes, making large fields and proper roads" (Keysser 1924:432), something of the truth was being withheld from Tangu. The missionaries were contradicting themselves: "They did not realise that although the external forms [of native religion] might be removed - even forgotten - the underlying concepts would remain, and that the new institutions and beliefs would be interpreted in terms of the old, which they were meant to replace" (Lawrence 1956:82). Gnek was not a new concept. It was a traditional one with new layers of meaning. In the case of Tangu the Mission had, by implication, offered cargo with one hand, and snatched it away with the other. Europeans must have the answer, but they were withholding it from Tangu; the Mission by telling lies, or, at best, half-truths; the Administration by creating new forms of authority, based not upon reciprocity - the essence of the traditional big man and his gnék - but upon the singular and hierarchical.

The political question with which this investigation was begun in my previous paper has all but completely dissolved. To understand situations of culture contact and the thoughts and activities of those contacted we must do away with the notion that we can work satisfactorily in terms derived from sociology or political science. Tangu concern over the changing patterns of their culture, as seen in the roles of the traditional big man as opposed to the government appointed official, does not stem from a worry about the relative coercive powers of the two roles, but from the fact that there is a whole series of contradictions and choices confronting the society in question, none of the choices being made easier by the way in which the European modes of thought have been presented to Tangu by the missionaries. The change is not so much "From Anarchy to Satrapy", as Brown (1963) would have it, but from logical order to cognitive dissonance, created by the heterogeneous nature of the conceptual patterns experienced by members of the community operating with a traditional linguistic framework wrenched out of context by Mission teaching.

The big man fulfilled a multiplicity of roles in Tangu society, was irrevocably enmeshed in a series of networks based upon reciprocity and pairing. In him the structure and semantics of the society were reflected and given substance in the mundane world. He, more than anyone in Tangu, was the foil to the singular, with its inherent dangers. The government-appointed official came amongst Tangu as a sort of ranguma. Necessarily singular in his role, and agent for Europeans who had the means of channeling the forces of the non-reciprocal, natural world, through their gneker, souls, into the creation of cargo, but who kept their secret from Tangu, the government-appointed official had an unenviable position in the society. His job, which was largely to oversee the digging of latrines, building of roads, tending the cash crops, all viewed as unnecessary in the eyes of Tangu, would seem to have been primarily to keep the men busy and out of the way. "In general, Tangu feel that the labour involved is only worthwhile when an administrative officer on patrol is expected - in order to avoid punishment or wordy castigation" (Burridge 1960:55). Often, only an inadequate man could be persuaded to take on the job, because of the contempt Tangu feel for anyone willing to become a 'stooge' for these deceptive overlords. As Burridge says, "unless an official is also a manager he cannot command the respect of his fellow villagers. He is truly a puppet" (op. cit.:261). A potentially dangerous puppet, however, for, holding the key to success in the European environment, his efficiency will be in direct proportion to the rapidity of the onset of the breakdown of Tangu traditions, of pupu'riem'riembaki. But this does not stem from his political status. It stems primarily from what he, the singular, individual man, represents to his society, a culture in social and conceptual transition.

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The Sexual Boundary - Danger: Transvestism and  
Homosexuality<sup>1</sup>

As an opposite to virginity, which is morally pure, we shall first consider transvestism, which is most commonly treated as morally dangerous. On the phenomenological level, virginity and transvestism thus oppose each other, but on another level they share a trait: both are classificatorily ambiguous.

The choice of transvestism as our first example of sexual dangers is, however, not only based upon logical considerations of fitness, it is also owing to the existence of a famous book, which is devoted to this problem, thereby providing us with the material necessary to this exposition. The book referred to is Naven (Bateson, 1936), which in many ways anticipates current trends and topics in social anthropology, notably the treatment of the social organization of emotions.

Transvestism is ambiguous, and it owes its dangerous powers to this fact. When it is consciously acted out as an appropriate cultural response to certain circumstances, it means a conscious act of play within the boundary areas of a distinct social order, the distinctiveness of which is primarily based upon the opposition of the sex-categories. This kind of transvestism, whose meaning-content need not be as conscious as the play itself, is thus directly related to a conceptual classification within the structural order of the particular culture, and we shall refer to it as a conceptual or cultural transvestism, as opposed to the western notion of psycho-pathological transvestism. The latter of course also means a boundary transgression, but it has its main focus in sexual behaviour, not in the sex-categories. Although the two forms are very closely related, we must keep them separate due to their particular emphases.

Conceptual transvestism is not confined to primitives, it is also found within our own culture. As an example, Bateson mentions the male dress of a horse-woman, and I would like to add the overtly male dress of female students at Oxford, for instance. Why is the academic dress for women not a long blue one with puff sleeves, but a black skirt, white shirt and neck-tie. In both cases it is signalled that women, by sitting on a horse or sitting examinations, are transgressing a boundary. They are attaining the cultural attributes of the male category. It is apparently still somewhat out of place (or of category) for women to receive a higher education. This is not a feminist's bravado to a male chauvinist system of education, since the mere possibility for dressing appropriately (that is like a male) shows the flexibility of the system. It is only the categories that are conservative. Admittedly, this is hair-splitting, since the conceptual categories and the social sentiments are of course two sides of the same coin.

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1. This is the second and final part of an article, the first part of which appeared in the previous issue of the Journal (Vol. 5 no. 3).

However expressed, the occurrence of transvestism presupposes that the sex-categories are clearly defined, since there can be no disorder without order. For the Iatmul, this order is certainly rigid, since they are one of many New Guinean societies characterized by a harsh sexual antagonism. The ethnographic evidence of Iatmul transvestite behaviour will be briefly outlined on the basis of Bateson (1936). Transvestism is a ceremonial act undertaken by certain relatives in order to honour somebody. The most important social relation in which naven-behaviour (the culturally approved transvestite behaviour) occurs is the one between a man and his mother's brother (wau). The wau will act out a naven-ceremony to honour his sister's son (laua), upon the first successful hunt and especially upon the first successful homicide of the latter. But also minor achievements may instigate naven ceremonies by the wau towards his laua. Apart from the mother's brother, a naven ceremony may be initiated by or at least include: the mother's brother's wife, the father's sister, the elder brother's wife, own wife's brother (= the wau of ego's children), a sister and with some modifications also ego's mother. We note that all of the possible male actors are affinally linked with ego, thereby to some degree associated with the female relatives of ego in the patrilineal environment. Within ego's consanguineous relations only women are undertaking naven-behaviour.

Thus we may initially suspect a pattern which relates the ambiguous sexual performances to the ambiguous social classifications of affinal relatives at large and of female consanguineous relatives within a strictly patrilineal system. What may be more important to the classification of male and female is that there are significant differences in the actual naven-performances of the different relatives. For the sake of convenience, we shall concentrate upon the mother's brother (wau) and the father's sister (iau) as the most important representatives of affinally related men and consanguineously related women, respectively.

At the occasion of a naven ceremony, the wau dresses up like a woman, in a grotesquely exaggerated form. Usually he presents himself as an ugly and filthy widow, further ridiculed by a belly-string as the sign of pregnancy. In this costume the (real or classificatory) wau staggers around the village, searching for his laua who tries to avoid him, because his behaviour is rather embarrassing and humiliating in the eyes of the laua, in spite of its intention to honour him. While searching for his laua, the wau ridicules the women by exaggerating their sexual attitudes in particular, by falling to the ground with the legs wide apart, etc. When, or if, the laua is found, the wau rubs his buttocks up and down the laua's leg, an act of overt sexual content. The whole ceremony is accompanied by the laughter of the audience, while the laua himself expresses shame at the conduct of his uncle.

When the iau (FZ) acts out a naven ceremony, she wears a splendid male attire, which is in sharp contrast to the filthy female attire worn by the men, on the parallel occasion. When the women dress like men, it is by borrowing their feather hair-dresses and other ornaments, which it was normally a killer's

privilege to wear. This difference is very important, since it in the most dramatic way underlines a basic distinction between the sex-categories.

If for a moment we can content ourselves with the equivalence of women with nature and men with culture, we might get some relevant insight into one aspect of the sexual distinction. The roughness of this correlation of opposites should be obvious, it may even prove to be generally false, and at the least it will need further discussion, but for the moment it may nevertheless help us to introduce a new facet to the problem of transvestism. After all, the opposition of nature and culture is always very relative, and for the moment we may legitimize our equations by referring to the men as the generalized sex, capable of external social and political relations, and to the women as the specialized sex, by nature confined with internal (reproductive) functions. (Cf. Hasstrup, 1974).

This warning about the roughness of the concepts given, we may proceed to a useful consideration of the humorous content of the naven ceremonies. Milner (1972) suggests that the most general objects for laughter are excessive nature and excessive culture. In the Iatmul transvestite ceremonies, these opposite humorous manifestations are both present. When the men dress and behave as women they are exposing an excessive nature to laughter, while the women wearing the successful killer's dress are mocking of excessive culture.

Speaking about laughter, it is striking to what extent the Iatmul transvestite behaviour shows a family resemblance to joking behaviour. Not only is part of the joke often of obscene character, but the kinship relations, in which the two types of behaviour occur, are also coincident, apart from the occasional naven acting by the mother and sister. But these exceptions rather illustrate than deny the comparison, as we shall see in a moment.

Bateson explains the wau's naven behaviour as a result of the male ethos (for its content), but originating in the emotional ambivalence of this particular kinship relation: the friendliness associated with the mother, the hostility originating in the in-law component. Thus, not only does naven behaviour more or less belong to the same type of kinship relations as traditional joking behaviour ("traditional" within the anthropological mode of registration of "behaviour", only), but it is also defined by the same ambivalent sentiments.

Where Radcliffe-Brown (1940; 1949) described a joking relationship as originating in a simultaneous presence of social conjunction and disjunction, one might as well turn this argument upside down, as suggested by Ovesen (1972), and say that were it not for the joking behaviour there would be no ambivalence. This last argument may hold good for the naven ceremonies, where one suspects the transvestite behaviour to be the source of resentment itself, within this particular kinship relation. This demonstrates that the more old-fashioned parts of Bateson's book should be taken with a grain of mistrust, as causal explanations anyway, since they are very firmly rooted in the thirties' trends

of functionalism. To sum up, the emotional ambivalence towards the mother's brother may originate in the naven ceremonies, since apart from this anomalous behaviour, the wau is not ambivalent by himself. He is certainly a whole person, with whom one has certain personal relations.

Rather than using any emotional ambivalence as causative of behaviour, we shall follow Levi-Strauss, where he stresses that emotions "are consequences, never causes" (Levi-Strauss, 1969, p. 142). In the present case the emotional ambivalence is a result of a conceptual ambiguity, as may be the case of any joking behaviour. But where "normal" joking especially relates to an ambiguity of kin-definitions, the naven is further related to the ambiguity of sex-categories, and this explains why the mother and sister take part. The order of lineal descent and the disorder of extra-lineal relatives which lie at the root of almost any joking behaviour, is in the Iatmul case more overtly related to the order of sexual distinction than in "weaker" joking, but the problem of lineality is still present.

Even though it is a very distinct phenomenon, the naven ceremony may be labeled as a joking phenomenon, since the only reasonable definition of joking relationships must relate to formal and not to behavioural characteristics, stressing conceptual ambiguity rather than emotional ambivalence. By so doing the naven performances naturally become included, as well as a great variety of other phenomena which are casually labelled as joking, often not so. In this way "behaviour" becomes replaced with a "kind of significant action" as Ardener (1973) suggests for the unit of analysis, and we are, as mentioned, able to define the kind formally by the presence of conceptual ambiguity. The naven act is a very dramatic expression of conceptual ambiguity, since it is more marked by the sexual dilemma than are weaker expressions of joking, which are only concerned with the sex-categories through the filter of the social organization of lineality.

By assigning the transvestite performances of the Iatmul to a formal category of joking, we also gain the important insight through Douglas' (1968) treatment of this subject. Douglas suggests that any symbolic joke reflects a "social joke". There would be no articulation of jokes without an experience of a structural joke, a structural ambiguity. By articulating the joke one lives out the unspeakable structure, thereby obtaining a correspondence between all the levels of experience.

In the naven ceremonies the humorous element is not restricted to the laughter at excessive nature and at excessive culture, although these exaggerations add a dramatic quality to the performance. The more fundamental part of the joke is the clash of two distinct universes of discourse (Milner, 1972), the universes of male and female, which perhaps are more distinct in New Guinea than anywhere else. The reversal of sexual identities allows the audience, through the collision of universes, to grasp the fundamental distinction, and at the same time to experience a unity through duality, a complementarity, which is also somehow part of the daily social experience in spite of the cultural emphasis on

separation of the categories.

We hereby get back to the point, made by Douglas (1966) about disorder being a necessary prerequisite of order, ambiguity being necessary to unambiguity. The transgressing of the sexual boundary within naven reinforces distinct sex-categories. A move into the interstices of categories, which are the both/and or the neither/nor areas of conception, may not only invoke joking as a mode of reaction, but also taboo (Leach, 1964), of which avoidance is the classic social expression. These two modes of reaction to ambiguity, which in most cases exclude each other, are both present in the response to Iatmul transvestism. The obscene joking and the laughter are evident, but to the hero (or victim) of the naven ceremony the taboo is part of his response, since he may physically try to avoid his uncle and in any case feels strongly embarrassed.

The danger of transvestism lies in its negation of order, by which of course the same order is reinforced. The very sharp distinction between sex-categories thus becomes the structural "cause" of transvestism, of which the emotional ambivalence within certain dyadic relations then becomes the result. The emotions as such cannot explain behaviour, but the structure of emotions, which Bateson names ethos is nevertheless able to explain the shape of behaviour, since ethos is definitely part of the multiplex cultural programme. The concept of ethos is heavily influenced by the American "culture and personality" school, notably Benedict and Mead, but seen from today's anthropology, it only gains its full meaning in the light of the latest structuralist developments. It is only within this frame that anthropology can afford to give way to emotions again; and from here ethos has a heuristic value which reaches far beyond any definite school within anthropology.

Bateson found sex-specific ethoses among the Iatmul; the categories of male and female had distinct emotional structures, which in turn facilitate our understanding of the different shapes of the naven performances. To see this, we shall consider some aspects of the wider cultural context. If for a moment we look back-stage at the initiation rite for boys into the men's house, it is revealed that every stage of the rite stresses the opposition between the sexes, although in different ways. Through this the male ethos becomes part of the boys' experience, and the appropriate way of conceiving of women is learned. At the first stage the boys are spoken of as "wives" of the initiators, and this is more than just a play on words, since the novices are made to handle the genitals of their initiators. The boys are in every way made to feel uncomfortable and disgusting while they play the female role. At a later stage, the initiators act as "mothers", the initiated being their children, and now the picture is radically altered. In the first period, the men were very violent towards the novices and injured them with any thinkable method; the initiators exaggerated the tense relationship to their real wives and for the novices "the emphasis was upon making them miserable rather than clean" (Bateson, 1936, p.131), and we may be sure that this also holds good in the later developed

metaphorical sense of cleanliness or purity. When the "mothers" take over, they are very keen on making the novices comfortable, on the other hand. They hunt for them, and teach them a variety of things, such as how to make the male ornaments. It is characteristic that this teaching cannot take place within a male idiom (in a man-to-man relationship); the men should not learn from each other, they should compete with each other as equals. Only at the last stage of the initiation rite do the boys become men among men, and decked in their new ornaments they are exhibited to the (real) women, and the completion of the rite is celebrated with a naven ceremony.

The novice thus passes through three stages to become a man. At the first he is associated with the female sphere from which he came, and he experiences how to treat a wife and learns to despise her. In the next stage, he enters a more neutral state as "child", and he learns how to make the male ornaments, which are so important to the next stage, when he becomes a man among men and learns how to boast and to display his skills, including his skills in violence. When he has fully become a man he is feted with a naven ceremony, which through the temporary suspension of its sexual order is the final confirmation of the distinctiveness of the sexual categories, to one of which he now definitely belongs.

However the actual symbolic roles are played by the actors, every stage lends evidence to Bateson's conception of the inter- and intrasexual relationships. The two sex-categories stand in a complementary relation to each other, while the men stand in a symmetrical relationship to each other. From Iatmul evidence it is plain that the male/female relationship fits a description in terms of dominance/submission, active/passive etc. (in any case when seen from a male and an anthropological point of view). The internal male relationship is, on the other hand, described as one of constant brawling and violent competition, thus becoming a primitive armament race.

The submissive female ethos and the boasting male counterpart are apt instruments for explaining why men adopt an unpleasant female attire when undertaking the transvestite behaviour, while the women dress splendidly as successful male killers. These choices reinforce the sex-specific ethoses through the most extreme possible caricatures of the sexual ethical components, the complementarity of which may also be expressed in terms of spectacular culture/ugly nature. Hence naven-behaviour sustains the structure of emotions (ethos) as well as the structure of cognition (eidos). The Iatmul society is divided into moieties, and although it is not central to the argument, it is noteworthy that the principles of hierarchy and symmetry are so enforced that hierarchy governs the relations between the sexes, whereas symmetry reigns between the moieties. This is exactly opposite to the Tewa, (cf. Hastrup, 1974) who had sexual equality, but a hierarchy of moieties. Although it is true that the ranking of the Tewa moieties is not permanent but changes seasonally, the principle of hierarchy is never

questioned. It is part of the order that one moiety shall have precedence over the other, but it is likewise part of the order that the access to power shall alternate, and we may see an attempt to negate the hierarchy in this. The reason why this negation should be logical from the system's point of view is the very close association between the moieties and the equal sex-categories of the Tewa. The continuous competition and boasting between the Iatmul men, who as the generalized sex also represent the moieties, may be seen to complete the picture for the Iatmul, by an apparent attempt to negate the (symmetrical) equality by momentary gains and losses of individuals, whereby the intersexual hierarchy somehow becomes imposed upon the moieties.

For the Tewa equality dominates conceptually, for the Iatmul hierarchy dominates, but both principles are present in the structure of the dual classification of male and female. At one level the categories are antithetical but they are included into a synthesis of a higher logical order, to which the all-inclusive "man" belongs. The dual organization into moieties is just one among other means to socially express the cultural content of the male/female contradiction yet complementarity (in the "normal" sense of this word).

Without intending to reduce Bateson's concepts of complementarity and symmetry to the concepts of hierarchy and equality, respectively, we may nevertheless conclude that the latter set of terms represents the "frozen" logic behind the dynamics of the first set of concepts.

The preceding investigation into Iatmul transvestism brought us beyond the direct topic of this essay: the problem of women, by moving into more general problems of social anthropology. This is, however, not totally superfluous, since the position of women is a position within a larger system, and we need very general, yet specific, tools to grasp this position. Further, the problem of women requires all of the traditional anthropological apparatus reviewed through female glasses, to the extent that this is possible at all, and through this process some traditional analytic concepts lose their value, while others gain. The closer to pure logic, the more resistant will the concepts be to the female attack.

From the symbolic danger of ambiguous categories we shall now make a shift to a consideration of the more directly experienced danger of witchcraft, which at its base is also located in conceptual ambiguities. This shall be only a brief exposition with special reference to our topic of women, since Leach (1961) and Douglas (1966) have already outlined the general implications of boundarism as applied to witchcraft.

"Witchcraft" is here meant to denote a folk-theory of misfortune, that is an explanation of misfortune by reference to some uncontrolled mystical influence, which is located in particular inter-personal relationships. It is mostly the affinal relatives who are accused of witchcraft, since they, as both we and not-we, are sources of danger. The powers of the witches

are not due to voluntary malevolence, but to their involuntary occupation of the cracks in the social structure.

Since it is the women that more often than not play the men's game, indeed are their game, whether alliance or descent theory is part of the conscious model, it is natural that the women become key-persons in the mystical power relations, not only because they constitute the link to the affines in patrilineal societies, but also because they are themselves ambiguously classified.

In New Guinea this pattern is very obvious, since it is everywhere the women that are thought of as dangerous. The women are marginal to social structure, and they are marginal to the male ideology. (They are of course not marginal to themselves, but for the moment we are bound to use the male models, which to some extent may be seen as generalised.) Pollution and poison originate in women, and as they are not only inbetween but also go-betweens, they pollute by themselves and in addition to this they bring poison from their natal group, the affines (Strathern, 1972).

That women should be marginal and thereby attributed with certain internal uncontrolled powers need not only be a correlate to an exogamous patrilineal organization. The Indian caste system also ascribes mystical powers to the women in some cases, and especially to the widows. In the case of a Brahmin caste described by Harper (1969), a widow is not allowed to remarry, which is not uncommon, but she must further shave her head and is no longer referred to as "she" but as "it". Of course this position of widows is rather special to these particular Brahmins, but it may have wider significance. Even where the defeminization is not so complete, we might argue that becoming a widow to some extent means a despecification of the woman. The course of life of a woman runs through the stages of the unspecified yet creative virgin, and next the specified woman, and last it is completed by a final reversal to the unspecificity of widowhood which at this stage is an impotent one. It is a trend from the ambiguous sexual potentiality, through the unambiguous sexual fertility, onto a complete lack of sexuality, deprived of any creativity. These stages of course are influential upon the position of individual women belonging to one of the categories, since they are so differently defined.

Maybe it is pushing the evidence a bit far to suggest that this trend is more general, but it is nevertheless to some degree part of our own experience. Although social anthropology is not reducible to common sense, the latter may have some contributions to anthropology, and in the present case, at least, it seems reasonable to suggest a comparison of the anthropological knowledge of the Havik Brahmins and the anthropologist's experience of the Danes.

It is a fact that we have different attitudes towards widows and widowers. Most of us tend to regard widows as somehow different from other women. It is hard to tell why and how exactly

they differ, but once a woman is labelled widow, she belongs to a category separated from other women, which category includes divorced women without any doubt. A happy widow is either considered a joke or just somewhat out of place. This has nothing to do with moral feelings about years of mourning, it is just that widows have been ascribed a new identity, by the standard of which "normal" life seems strange. This especially relates to young widows, I admit, and it shall also be understood that it will not apply to our widowed friends, since they stay "persons" more than anything else. It is the label, the category, which is ambiguous. As opposed to this, widowers are not only allowed but encouraged to "normal" life, including a normal sexual life. I suggest that the difference in expectancies directed towards men and women being widowed, originates in their pre-widowhood classification. As a specified category, the women are much more vulnerable to momentary disturbances in their environment. If they for a period (or for ever) are deprived of the possibility for acting out their special (natural) functions in reproduction and sex, within the legitimate frames provided by marriage, they lose their specificity, and once they are conceived of as ambiguous, they may also lose any potential for regaining it. On the other hand, men do not change their category affiliation, when they become widowed, since they are already generalized and fully capable of continuing their external social obligations, even though they for a while may be deprived of sex.

The actual position of widows in various societies of course differs enormously, but at least widowhood is very often a powerful symbol in varying contexts. We need only recall the Iatmul case, where the appearance of "pregnant widows" adds a further ridiculous female anomaly to the overarching transvestite ambiguity. This anomaly can be seen as a negative counterpart to virgin motherhood. Virgin mothers and widow mothers occupy the interstices between virgins, mothers and widows, which ought to be distinct categories, and they are therefore reacted to by joking or taboo, according to circumstances.

Considering once more the case of the Havik Brahmins, we must admit that the ambiguity of widows does not explain why women in general are thought of as dangerous, even though less so than widows. Given their danger we may a priori describe them as marginal, if Douglas's theory holds good, but in this case it cannot be due to any principles of lineality or exogamy. Harper suggests that "groups of adults who lack power and prestige, who generally do the bidding of others, and who have minimal control over their own social environment are likely to be portrayed as dangerous or malevolent beings in that society's belief-system." (Harper, 1969, p.81). The marginality of the Havik women is thus to be understood in relation to the access to authority. This is in accordance with Douglas, who states that the internal (uncontrollable) sources of power are vested in people with no formal access to the authority structure. The extreme polluting powers of the out-castes and the fear of the black-smiths in many African and Middle Eastern societies, and many other examples, are also explained by this kind of marginality. As a special female marginality it does not presuppose any particular social

organisation, it may belong to any, and it certainly does.

In this light we may also understand Lewis (1971), who throughout his book confirms a connection between sex-roles and certain kinds of possession. Lewis suggests that spirit possession is a socially acceptable, although dangerous, outlet for suppressed women. To the male system, witchcraft and spirit possession alike are sources of uncontrollable internal powers, and we may summarize that it is most often the women, who are the suspicious ones due to their marginality, however this be defined.

To take the New Guinea example again, women are here thought of as very dangerous to the society, and we may understand not only the specific example but all of the general matter further, if we consider the complementary (in Bateson's sense) relationship between the sex-categories. As previously stated, complementarity in this sense is a kind of processual generalization of a hierarchical relation, and we may see witchcraft (and parallel manifestations) as a kind of counteracting complementary power-relation. This means that where the submissive part of a complementary relation defined by dominance/submission, as e.g. the New Guinean woman, is attributed with some mystical powers, these react (reversely) upon the victims, who cannot but submit themselves in turn; there is no escape from this extreme source of dominance. The complementary witchcraft thus is a counteracting force to the schismogenetic process described by Bateson as originating in a primary relationship of complementarity between the sex-categories, or maybe other clearly defined categories.

Inversely I suggest that sorcery, or any other controlled external power, belongs to symmetrical relations, since counter-magic is likely to occur whereby it is indicated that sorcery is a first step in a dangerous competition between equals. Therefore sorcery is less likely to be bound to one sex-category than witchcraft. These generalizations about witchcraft and sorcery are of course mere suggestions, which need further investigation to be proved valuable. Thus they are not really pretending to be new answers but rather new questions, and as such they may contribute to a rethinking of current anthropological labels, as Crick (1973) has advocated.

So far we have considered the conceptual ambiguity of transvestism and we have briefly dealt with the kind of danger, which originates in 'marginality'. It remains to consider the danger of direct sexual contact, that is sexual pollution as such. This kind of pollution of course is closely related to the preceding ones, but we should nevertheless keep them separate, since they belong to different levels of reality and are characterized by different degrees of awareness.

To the individual, notions of sexual pollution constitute the most comprehensive articulation of what is more dimly known as cultural values, embracing the ideology of social structure, shared by all of the society. This ideological level may be conscious and articulate to some theoreticians of the culture, but at the same time it is related to a p-structural level of

relations, which as a coherent system is not articulate as such to anybody.

We have touched upon the aspect of sexual pollution at various points throughout this paper, and since it is also so fully documented by Douglas (1966), we shall content ourselves with just a brief sketch here. As a repetition of what was already mentioned in the section devoted to purity, we note that sexual contact "out of place" is not only dangerous to the individuals but also to their groups. This needs no further elaboration, but there is one interesting point to be considered.

Often it is only the one sex which is vulnerable to the pollution from the sexual act; most often it is the men who are endangered by the woman's sexuality and by her menstruations. It is not difficult to understand the danger of menstrual blood, since this is associated with "a child not to become", with death, and as both part of the woman and not so. These anomalies make menstrual blood a very powerful substance at the same time as it cleanses women at monthly intervals. The man is not cleansed in the same way, at least not by nature, but there are evidences of men who regularly inflict their genitals, thereby artificially invoking menstruations (e.g. Hogbin, 1970), to get cleansed from sexual pollution.

Thus the danger of menstruation as such in some ways explains why women are not as vulnerable to sexual pollution as the men. But it does not explain why the sexual act by itself is thought of as dangerous in some places. It is because the intercourse as such makes an anomalous being: both man and woman, the danger thus being explained by the psychoanalyst's answer to the riddle of the Sphinx. This may be, but why is the pollution not universal then, since intercourse is?

I do not claim to possess an answer to this "why", but I shall at least try to establish a correlation for the "how". We may use the Mae Enga and the Bemba as well-known examples, since they expose a very striking difference in the notion of sexual pollution: Among the Enga it is the women who pollute the men, among the Bemba it is a mutual pollution. This difference is correlated to a difference in the conception of the intersexual relationship, in terms of categories. To the Enga, women are classified in an analogous relation to the men as stated earlier; among the Bemba, the relation is digital.

In the analog relation it is natural that the "less" part has a negative influence upon the "more so", and this seems to be an explicit model among the Melpa (Strathern, 1972), where women are weak and the men are strong, and where too much association with the women will weaken the men. This one example is maybe not sufficient to legitimate why it should be "natural" that the negative influence is so directed. But we may also find some (theoretical) support in the fact that being "less" something is always being pushed towards marginality, where the uncontrollable powers originate. The power that stems from the "more" ones is quite another type of danger, external and more

formal, maybe even more realistic as such. On the other hand, when men and women are related by a digital type of classification, neither part is a priori more marginal than the other. Thus when sexual pollution occurs in these relationships, we should expect a two-way pollution as is the case for the Bemba.

The two logical types of classification were at an earlier stage tentatively correlated to ideologies of social structure, but bringing the correlation up to this point would squeeze the evidence too much, and we shall only conclude that one-way sexual pollution occurs in analog relations, while mutual sexual pollution belongs to digital relations, if any pollution occurs at all.

In the heading of this paper there is one more theme, which remains to be investigated: homosexuality. In terms of actual sexual behaviour, homosexuality may be seen as morally dangerous in the same way as transvestism, since it among other things shows a disregard for the continuity of the society. I believe that the average-westerner's horror of homosexuality is correlated to its extreme demonstration of disrespect towards basic values, apart from its disrespect of sexual categories. The aversion is very much declining by now, and maybe this is a kind of moral adaptation to the fact of increasing overpopulation. But even in decline, the moral ambivalence persists.

In a wider cultural context, homosexuality is not necessarily dangerous, however. Cultural homosexuality must be considered as well as cultural transvestism, since this also may occur as part of some normal ritual context, e.g. in connection with initiation ceremonies. Often this kind of homosexuality will be seen as a kind of transvestism and interpreted as one of the parts assuming the opposite sex-role. The context of the act may suggest this interpretation, but in other cases, we should regard it as instances of cultural homosexuality proper. As such it gets another quality of meaning, since it must be perceived as pure. Cultural homosexuality is an expression of a desire for keeping one's own sexual category distinct. Thus where homosexuality is morally dangerous when one considers actual sexual behaviour or drives, it is classificatory pure when it constitutes a cultural event.

It may be true that cultural transvestism, as it occurs in e.g. shamanism, provides an outlet for actual individual homosexual drives, as suggested by Bleibtreu-Ehrenberg (1970), but this possibility explains nothing by itself and does certainly not diminish the need for distinguishing between them. It is evident that the reason why transvestism may provide an outlet for individual homosexuality, and we need not suppose that it is very often the case, is that the moral ambivalence of the latter through cultural transvestism is transformed into a socially recognized ambiguity.

From the preceding discussion of homosexuality and from the earlier investigation of virginity it is important to note that

purity and danger do not always belong to one or the other sphere of reality exclusively; . . . it may be a question of social spheres, but it is more profoundly a question of point of view and of analytical level.

To summarize part of the argument of this paper upon sexual boundary, I shall introduce a generalized version of the mathematical group-structure (cf. e.g. Barbut, 1966), which may serve as a useful tool for this summary. It looks like this:

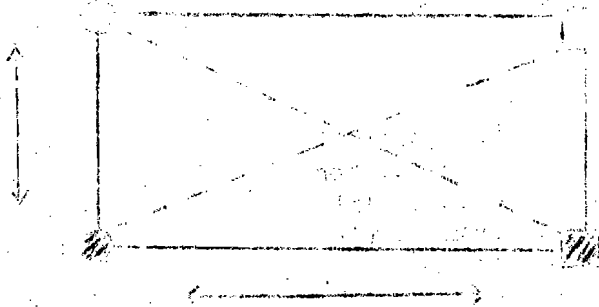


fig. 4

In this structure changes occur along two axes, in such a way that two directly connected elements share one feature, but differ with respect to another one, while two elements connected diagonally do not have any of the two diacritical features in common. In the diagram shown in fig. 4 this is illustrated by means of shape and shading.

Part of the content of the present paper may tentatively be brought into that same form, whereby the sexual boundary, at least to some extent, gets a rather tangible expression in theory.

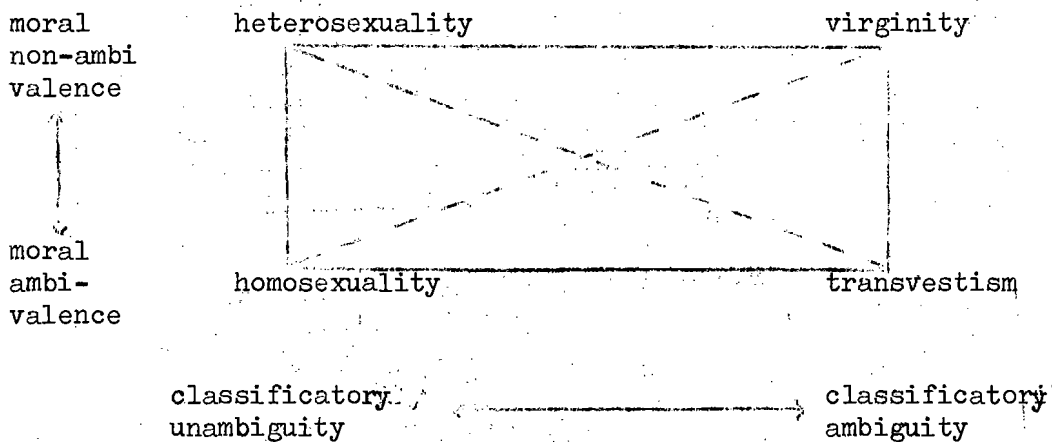


fig. 5

If we accept the premise that all of these terms do have a conceptual or cultural meaning as well as a behavioural aspect,

this scheme for interpretation of their pure and dangerous qualities may be a useful key to understanding the culture-specific evaluations of the sexual boundary, as this appears in different sexual relations, whether these are individual acts or cultural events.

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#### ADVERTISEMENT

#### Psychology of Religion Conference

The Conference is to be held on the 12th and 14th of January 1976; it is jointly sponsored by the Department of Psychology and Religious Studies, University of Lancaster. The theme will concern the current nature and status of the psychological study of religion. We hope that the discussion will involve such topics as the procedural and conceptual difficulties in the application of psychological techniques, and the role of psychological assumptions and theories in the anthropological study of religion. Anyone who is interested in coming to the Conference, or who is interested in contributing a paper, should write to the Conference organizers, Departments of Psychology and Religious Studies, University of Lancaster.

Steve Duck (Department of Psychology)  
Paul Heelas (Department of Religious  
Studies).

### Anthropology Outside The Classroom

Popular representation of 'other' peoples (and of one's own society) are greatly influenced by the work of social anthropologists. This can be demonstrated very specifically in the way that 19th century novels of adventure portraying 'primitive' peoples constantly have recourse to contemporary anthropological theory. At a general level such theory rested on European notions of Progress, Hierarchy and Racial Classification. More specifically anthropologists developed certain characteristic ideas about the nature of 'primitive' people which were also incorporated into popular fiction; theories of animism, fertility, dream-experience, fetishism, sacrifice, magic and totemism, developed by 'Emotionalist', 'Intellectualist' and early 'Functionalist' schools of anthropology, are used by popular writers to 'explain' the activities of fictitious 'primitive' peoples and to lend romance an air of scientific respectability. I have argued elsewhere (1975) that such writings provided for many readers a framework of thought within which information about other societies could be ordered and interpreted.

Many of the pre-suppositions of these 19th century anthropologists have been challenged during the course of this century. The principal change has been in the adoption of a more relativistic attitude to other societies and in the development of the field work method by which anthropologists live among alien peoples for a number of years, learn their language and study the way of life from 'within'. As a result the metaphors of the Chain of Being and of the Ladder of Progress have been put into historical perspective. The development of society is no longer considered comparable to that of the rifle, which was used by Pitt Rivers as the basis of his museum of man (now in Oxford). Where the Victorian anthropologist wondered how he, as a gentleman of some breeding, would talk and act in a 'primitive' society, the modern anthropologist attempts to interpret how the members of that society themselves see the world. How far such a task is possible is currently being debated by philosophers, linguists and anthropologists. But the approach pre-supposes respect for other modes of thought and action to the extent that the immediate response to alien experience is to question 'what does it mean to them?' rather than 'how strange it seems to me'.

These assumptions, which underlie current studies of 'primitive' society and of all society by anthropologists, are themselves being constantly challenged and are no more inviolable than we consider the now outmoded theory of 19th century anthropologists. The point here, though, is that unlike those earlier theories, which were constantly to the forefront of public debate in 19th century England and which underlay much popular writing, the ideas of modern anthropologists have, until recently, not been so closely involved in popular thinking. Modern popular literature of adventure continued to reproduce the ideas and stereotypes about 'primitive' peoples of 19th century novels and anthropology. The academic theory of that period was fossilised in much of the popular theory of mid-twentieth century England. Moreover, more academic and 'serious' writings, popular encyclopedias

and reference to anthropology by other academics, revealed the same tendency; 19th century theory concerning the nature of 'primitive' man and of society continued for a long time to provide a framework for discussion about non-Europeans, with all the moral evaluation that this implied. As recently as 1970, for instance, Pears Cyclo~~p~~edia had the following entry under 'Ideas and Beliefs - God and Man':-

The idea of gods came before the idea of God and even earlier in the evolution of religious thought there existed belief in spirits (see Animism). It was only as a result of a long period of development that the notion of a universal 'God' arose, a development particularly well documented in the Old Testament.

Such misconceptions are common in the work of literary critics too. Maurice Bowra in 'Primitive Song' (1962) attempted to trace the origin of modern literature in the same evolutionary terms, from the crude, collective 'art' of 'primitive' peoples. Literary critics of repute, like Bowra, had long since rejected the 'Battle of the Ancients and Moderns' and, acknowledging that the order in which Shakespeare, Homer and Dante, for instance, wrote their work did not seem to be reflected in their quality of their writing, rejected any attempt to trace the Progress of Good Literature. Within the context of European art and literature the evolutionary framework was seen to be unhelpful in judging matters of quality. But it was still applied to societies outside Europe. Primitive art was still viewed as an early and crude version of European achievement. Information from other societies was still being interpreted through a framework of thought that stemmed from the anthropological theory of an earlier period.

One reason for concern with anthropological theory and with the information about other societies filtered through it, is that it profoundly affects our ideas about the nature of art and society in our own culture. Less ethnocentrically it might be argued that what other people do is intrinsically interesting and important and that any attempt to understand it requires the current theory in that field.

It is the availability of current ideas that I would now like to consider and the extent to which these are being used outside the university. Since most people's theoretical framework for viewing themselves and other people is largely built up in school, that would seem the appropriate place to investigate. What perceptions of other societies are being purveyed in the classroom? And what do these perceptions owe to anthropological theory?

Most schools do not teach anthropology as such. There are few, however, which do not make use of some anthropological theory, whether in relation to information about exotic peoples or about their own community. The concepts of Race and Social Evolution are still employed in the school book without the challenge that they are submitted to in the wider intellectual society. The same is true of 'subjects' dealing less directly

with exotic experience. The literature used by teachers of English was often written at a time when other peoples were seen as 'inferior' and debased. This affects their value as literature, to the extent that the writer accepts such notions uncritically and consequently presents a distorted view of the 'truth' of human experience. Late 19th century 'exotic' novels are particularly prone, for example, to presenting other societies without that 'sense of proportion' which Conrad considered essential to the writer. An anthropological perspective can make a contribution towards the critical appreciation of such novels and towards that 'sense of proportion' that is as essential for the reader as for the writer. Many more explicitly anthropological teaching materials in schools, however, still fail to achieve this. The ILEA World History Units, for instance, continue to purvey 19th century theory in neat 20th century slide and folder packs. The folder on 'Belief' in the pack for Africa, for instance, states:

Religion controls every part of an African's life. He believes that the gods bring him good or bad luck. For this reason he must carry out many ceremonies to make sure that the gods are on his side... If the (hunting) trip is successful, some of the cooked food will be offered on the return. The Africans believe that this will bring them good luck.

Even were there not available numerous sophisticated accounts of different modes of belief in Africa, an intelligent child would (hopefully) be suspicious of such generalisations as 'The Africans believe', while anthropologists and Africans would question the concept of 'luck' and 'religion' presented.

The Folder on weddings exhibits a similar lack of proportion. There are only two photographs to illustrate weddings in Africa; one is of a 'traditional' ceremony, the other of a white Christian wedding. The text on traditional marriage, implicitly covering the whole continent, is taken from a book written in 1904 and refers to the marriage payment as 'buying a bride', a peculiarly western view of exotic marriage practices.

The main point I want to make in this context is that anthropology is being taught in schools, though under a variety of headings and with a range of quality of materials and that this has a profound effect on the quality of the 'subject' being taught. Many schools, or individual teachers, have become aware that this aspect of their subject could be improved upon and a lot of work has gone into Integrated Studies courses in recent years. In these instances anthropologists are often asked to help.

The RAI folder on Teaching Resources for schools lists 17 schools in which anthropology is taught, though a more recent estimate is 26. Over 60 teachers are listed as interested in, or already conducting some work in, anthropology in the classroom. The reasons for apparent expansion of interest in anthropology by schools are various. The introduction of Integrated Studies programmes in which traditional subject boundaries are broken down, has been one important factor. Young teachers, often with some knowledge of sociology or interest in anthropology, are

preparing curricula for such programmes of study and want to introduce some material on the 'underdeveloped' world, on Imperialism or on Race Relations. It was under the pressure of such people and their departments that the Rooyal Anthropological Institute instigated its Teaching Resources Project. The reasons given were that 'teachers were introducing anthropological perspectives into their courses, and museums and libraries were receiving more and more requests for anthropological material'. The most concrete result has been a Teaching Resources Folder, collating all the information so far available and listing it under such headings as 'Schools in which Anthropology is Taught', 'Non-University Teachers of Anthropology', 'Film', 'Museums' and an extensive, annotated bibliography. Various series of books for schools are being prepared and university anthropology departments are asked to provide speakers at local schools and to contribute to Teacher Training Programmes.

Besides this direct interest of professional anthropologists, the development of the perspective in schools is also related to more local political and social factors. Many graduates of anthropology have gone into teaching but have been forced to teach their 'A' level subjects since anthropology was not part of the curriculum. With the development of Integrated Studies courses they can now begin to use their degree more explicitly in the school. Anne Render, research assistant for the Teaching Resources Project, also, points out other reasons she discovered in her contacts with schools. Many teachers in traditional subject areas, she suggests, feel threatened by the challenge to subject specialism, which had provided an important source of identity. Anthropology, while seeming to be among the chief agents of this change, may also provide a solution. It may present a cohesive analytical framework in which a variety of 'facts' can be held together, a way of viewing the world, the material taught in the classroom and the students there, as an integrated whole. In this case it is not just the subject matter, the concern with exotic and 'primitive' peoples, that interests the teacher, but the perspective, the theoretical contribution of anthropology. It is similarly a legitimising agent in their conflicts over the distinction between 'liberal' and 'vocational' education by making the distinction unnecessary. By providing 'cognitive strategies' that enable the teachers themselves to come to terms with society, anthropology places them in a wider perspective, less localised and vulnerable.

An argument levelled against the teaching of anthropology in schools has been that where it is taught by middle class teachers to working class children it will merely confirm existing inequalities in the class system and also, most likely, perpetuate the stereotypes of immigrants and outsiders held by those children. In one sense this is an argument against any education; the class basis of education is well recognized. However, I would argue that anthropology, of all subjects, is best geared to providing the kind of critique of society that could lead to a breakdown of some class inequalities. The middle class teacher of anthropology is not necessarily concerned only to confirm the established values of his society; if he has any grasp of the subject at all

he is likely to use it to demonstrate the relativity of those values and a critical appraisal of them. To point out that this can only happen slowly is not to deny the worth of anthropology in such a task.

Anthropology, then, is spreading in schools and is likely to continue to do so for a variety of reasons, practical and theoretical. Having considered why anthropology is more evident in schools, we can now consider the kind of anthropology that is currently being introduced. The setting within which new curricula are put forward is well outlined by Peter Mitchell of Thomas Bennett School, Crawley;

Our decision to introduce social science into the curriculum came initially from an awareness that religious studies history and literature were between them inadequately meeting the need for children to be equipped to make their personal judgements about choices on moral, political and religious issues, with a clear understanding of the personal and social consequences of such choices. The other two (reasons) being;

- 1) The need to equip students to understand as completely as possible the nature of the society in which they are living as well as the societies amongst which **they** are living in a shrinking world and,
- 2) The need to understand the place of the individual in society; how social forces affect the individual and how individuals affect social change.

(Journal of Curriculum Studies, Nov. 1972)

He goes on to give reasons for introducing anthropology specifically;

It firstly introduces children to knowledge about pre-industrial non-European societies, putting emphasis on ethnographic data rather than on the interpretations of anthropologists.

(Ibid. P.137)

This raises the chief fears that professional anthropologists have with regard to the introduction of the subject into school. They are afraid that it will be taught in the same way that geography was; how many cars are made in Detroit? How many Nuer believe in ghosts? The richness and variety of social life will be reduced to simplistic, statistical analysis. On the other hand, the introduction of theory as though it were 'fact' carries its own dangers. One curriculum asks students to write formal definitions of 'polyandry' etc., an approach which also fails to come to terms with life as it is lived. As far as the anthropologist viewing schools is concerned, then, the teacher is more important than the material. Concerned as they are with the framework of thought, the view of society being presented, they feel that ill-trained teachers may continue to

confirm stereotypes even when teaching more 'up-to-date' material.

A further perspective on the debate concerning anthropology in schools has been offered by Edmund Leach as President of the Royal Anthropological Institute. He has stated that, whatever quality of teachers and material are involved, any anthropology taught in schools is 'damaging'. Ignoring the fact that some anthropology is being taught there anyway, and will probably continue to be so, he concentrates on the dangers of teaching there even the kind of anthropology in which he believes. His main argument is that it would undermine the assumed values of the child's society:

The study of social anthropology, by encouraging the comparison of contrasted systems of moral values, invites us to cast a jaundiced critical eye on the basic moral slogans which we are accustomed to accept as self-evident truth.

He considers it not a bad thing that school teachers should question the assumptions of their society but is less sure of their charges;

Whether their pupils ought to be subjected to the same kinds of doubt may be a rather moot point. It could be very confusing to learn about other people's moral values before you have confident understanding of your own.

(ATSS. 'Anthropology in the Classroom'  
Vol. 3 No. 1. 1973)

He concedes that it might not be a bad thing for sixth formers to be able

to acquire a relatively detached view of the kind of indoctrination to which they are being subjected by being sent to school.

but is against extending it through the school.

It is difficult to envisage when Leach imagines the change comes in a school, from handing on received values to questioning them; and quite what role information from other cultures is to play if, given that it is being presented anyway and that children receive it also through television and newspapers, it ought to be presented in such a way that it does not make them question their own values. A great many teachers in schools, in fact, see their roles as being to question from the outset and they consequently hold up to enquiry the received perspectives on society available in current teaching material and encourage their students to do the same.

David Pocock has criticised Leach for his argument on relativity;

I would argue that social anthropology should be taught in schools precisely on the grounds that Leach seems to regard it as so dangerous. But first I should have something to say about this alleged 'moral relativity' which Leach presents as a total, fluid and almost arbitrary state of affairs. First of all I would present evidence that shows men to be ethically a good deal more uniform than Leach allows. There are 'Human values'; the relativity comes in when these are considered in their relational context e.g. there is no society in which adultery and homicide are not condemned even if they are condemned in wider or narrower contexts for good reasons which can be shown. Second I would argue that the young of all societies, including our own, have early experience of this kind of relativity... Part of all upbringing is the learning of appropriate behaviours in different contexts and I would go so far as to suggest that it is precisely the introduction of 'moral values... as if they were axioms' that cuts the child off from a sense of relativity, let alone an understanding of history or an appreciation of the epistemology of modern physics. On the second part of Leach's argument I would, as I think I have already suggested, argue myself that if young people learn early the historical and social dimensions of their world they will quite simply be more critical in the best and oldest sense of that word. They will, for example, understand the part that kinship and marriage have played and continue to play in their own societies and in others and appreciate that modification of this role does not amount to their abolition.

Why is it desirable that social anthropology is taught in schools? It is desirable because this more than any other social science provides knowledge of Man's being and potentiality. It is desirable because it provides a context for other social sciences which have for the most part yet to break out of the Euro-centred frame of reference; and what is true of the social sciences is also true of the humanities.

(Pocock. 1974)

Leach's latest speech on the subject takes a different stand from the earlier one. The Presidential address to the R.A.I. given by him on the 26th June 1974, dealt extensively with 'Popularisation and its Problems'. Leach there says that 'anything which can make people more genuinely knowledgeable must be an influence for the good' and as a consequence urges his professional colleagues to give others the advantage of their learning;

...specialised work can be made popular and comprehensible to lay public and, in my view, this is something that is supremely worth doing. It is also my view that the job can only be done properly by the professionals themselves.

The Medical Research Council's Molecular Biology Unit at Cambridge has acquired its supreme reputation in the field of basic genetics not simply because the place is

overcrowded with Nobel Prize winners but because several of the leading lights of the place are absolute past masters at the art of explaining to the lay public what they are up to. This is a model worth imitation. The R.A.I.'s task is to foster a communicative spirit among the top professional anthropologists right across the board. This does not imply a 'lowering of academic standard'.

(RAIN 4. Sept. 1974)

Prince Charles, Honorary Patron of the R.A.I. added his own reasons for popularising anthropology;

The more people understand about the background of the immigrants who come to this country, the less apprehensive they would be about them. To get on neighbourly terms with people of other races and countries you've got to get more familiar with them; know how they live, how they eat, how they work, what makes them laugh ... and their history... you can't remove people's apprehensions in one night but you can make a start by making them more knowledgeable.

(RAIN 4)

During the last few years many anthropologists have found themselves doing just what Leach and Prince Charles advocate. Prince Charles' reasons, however, suggest that the purposes behind the spread of anthropology are not always the same. A division can be observed between the 'social engineers' and the 'academics'. To the social engineers, anthropology is being asked to carry the moral burden of the pluralist society. It is hoped and believed that anthropology, well taught, will reduce racial tension, lead to greater human understanding, lessen conflict and establish the pluralist society on sound intellectual as well as moral grounds.

The anthropologists themselves tend to tread more warily and to make more limited claims for their 'subject'. They are concerned that standards of intellectual rigour are maintained and that the most up-to-date work and ideas are taught. The hopes that they entertain for such a task are expressed by Pocock in his belief that anthropology can provide a context in which to 'break out of the Euro-centred frame of reference'. And he suggests another aspect of the effect anthropologists think that their discipline might have when he adds that this is as important for the humanities as for the social sciences. We have seen how the anthropological perspective affects the teaching of literature, contributing to that 'sense of proportion necessary to writer and reader alike'. This is true also of history, geography, religious studies, drama and other subjects that do not deal directly with 'primitive' peoples. If anthropology is to be introduced into schools, for all the reasons cited it must be not just as a separate discipline with a separate subject matter, nor only in social science studies, but as a perspective informing all studies. In the field of modern education the aims of recent efforts by teachers and anthropologists to work together have been both to narrow the gap between popular and

'professional anthropological' notions of 'primitive' peoples and to provide a more broadly-based, critical and balanced conception of the nature of society as a whole. I would suggest that both of these aims are, to some extent, beginning to be realised. While the trend can be observed in some schools, it is most clearly evident in other areas where anthropologists have been involved in popularisation - publishing and film.

Such recent popular Encyclopaedias of Anthropology as 'Peoples of the World' and 'The Family of Man' are aimed at mass sales, emphasise glossy presentation and excellent photographs and are largely written by anthropologists or under their guidance. The problems that this gives rise to are brought out in the pages of 'RAIN', a journal newly brought out by the R.A.I. as part of its own popularising efforts. In No. 3 (July 1974) Jean La Fontaine wrote critically of 'Peoples of the World', a 20 volume series of articles and pictures, not yet released in England but geared to the school market. Her criticism concentrated on the editing and choice of material, on the incorrectness of many 'facts', the 'disastrous' captions of many photographs and the emphasis on the exotic and picturesque. Many of the articles were written by professional anthropologists and, apart from some suspicious editing, made some contribution towards a balanced view. But by being presented in this context they were not likely to challenge the uncritical image of 'primitive' peoples popularly held, and which the editors themselves often seemed to subscribe to. Her criticisms were taken up by Tom Stacey, who had conceived the series. He described the difficulties of producing such books;

Alas, as one finds out, it is only the very rare specialist who is capable of translating his knowledge for the layman. We were the first to rejoice whenever we found such a one. To combine anthropological expertise with marketing expertise involved us in constant compromise. We had qualified and experienced anthropologists in our team as well as trained and experienced editors; the kind of 'errors' your reviewer cited were seldom the result of our not being instructed but of the exigencies of the task facing us... your reviewer's complaints indicate that she was not according us the kind of understanding she would have applied had we been a tribal group of craftsmen under the study in the field.

(RAIN 4 Oct. 1974)

The terms in which the differences between professional anthropologists and popular publishers are here argued out suggest that the gap between them is, in fact narrowing. Stacey was very concerned to have experienced anthropologists in his team and to defend his project in anthropological terms. His books do provide a greater 'sense of proportion' than earlier encyclopaedias, a point admitted by many anthropologists including La Fontaine herself. This, then, is a step towards the more significant narrowing of the gap between professional and popular conceptions of society in general and of 'primitive' peoples in particular.

The same trend can be observed in the area of 'anthropological' film.. Brian Moser, founder and director of the 'Disappearing World' series has been concerned to hire anthropologists to map out the films and to film in areas where an anthropologist has been present for some time, knows the language and the people and can introduce the film crew to the society. The recent, highly successful series, is the result of such policy. Sub-titles are used so that the locals can be heard in their own tongue without too much interference from English commentary;

In every case we have tried to encourage our chief protagonists to speak for themselves; some are reserved, one or two are unbelievably talkative and it is through them that we should be able to learn something new about societies whose values and customs have often seemed strange and exotic though in fact they are logical and to be respected.

(Granada pamphlet 'Disappearing World'  
1974)

Such an attitude on the part of film directors and such an example of close relations between anthropologists and film makers is relatively new. That it should be happening at the same time that popular publishers are also trying to establish closer relations with professional anthropologists and to present 'exotic' societies as 'logical and respectable' is significant. It coincides, also, with the efforts of the Royal Anthropological Institute to popularise and with the interest of teachers in schools and tertiary education in presenting material about non-European societies in a more balanced way.

Even more significantly, though, it seems to coincide with a shift in views about the nature of society as a whole. At a conference for teachers of anthropology in schools, held by the R.A.I. in 1974, some aspects of this shifting perspective were apparent. The teachers and anthropologists present did not talk of their discipline as being concerned with a particular subject matter - namely 'non-industrial society' - as many popularisers of anthropology were doing in the 1950's and 1960's. Rather they talked about perspectives - symbolic aspects of eating, the kinds of food that go together and are kept apart in our own society, rituals of seating, entry behaviour into rooms and body symbolism. Recent articles in Sunday magazines and in 'New Society' have dealt with body touching or with rituals of the classroom in anthropological terms and teachers at the conference were interested in how such approaches might be presented in their classes. That the assumptions and categories of thought of European life might usefully be compared with what anthropologists have discovered in systems of classification in other societies is a relatively new approach in the school. The arguments of anthropologists cited above, that their subject should be introduced into schools not as an autonomous discipline but as a perspective informing other disciplines, in social science and humanities alike, seem to be bearing fruit.

The examples above may justify us in discerning a trend of some significance; the gap between popular and professional conceptions of society in general, and of 'primitive' society in particular, seems to be narrowing through the work of film makers, publishers and teachers. In the same way that historians of the 19th century have pointed to an image of Africa that had hardened by 1850 and an image of anthropology that had rounded out by 1920, so future historians of ideas may pinpoint the significant change in the popular image of society as a whole in Britain to that period in the early 1970's when established anthropological perspectives began to be more widely adopted in popular films and books and in the schools.

Brian Street

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REVIEW ARTICLE

African Women in Towns: An Aspect of Africa's Social Revolution.  
Kenneth Little. London, Cambridge University Press. 1973.  
viii, 242 pp. £4.90.

Kenneth Little, Professor of African Urban Studies at the University of Edinburgh, has shown courage in undertaking a study so problematic as this one. His reason for doing so, he tells us, was his observation along with others that "African women's relationships with men are gradually undergoing radical alteration. Structural change of such great significance has implications for African social change in general..." Having published a monograph on the Mende of Sierra Leone and books on urbanization in Africa, Professor Little has brought to this assignment a familiarity with the vast range of research on contemporary Africa, as well as his own extensive fieldwork and teaching experience in different parts of the continent.

But the difficulties are truly formidable. African cities and towns (to think only of Abidjan, Kano, Kampala, Dar es Salaam, as a beginning) are strikingly diverse in their historical development, in the forces creating their present growth, and thus in the settings they provide for the drama of men and women experiencing 'social revolution'. Multiple ethnic groups are involved, each with defined indigenous patterns of interrelationship for male and female. Different religions - whether traditional, Moslem, or the varied Christian denominations - provide codes for the relations of men and women and thus add a further dimension to be considered. Political ideologies ranging from socialism to capitalism, different rates of economic growth among nations, varied levels of education and income within nations: all these variables enter into the analysis of contemporary African social change and the part in this of women. To add to this complexity, research studies in urban areas have been carried through at different times and for different purposes; they are uneven in scope and quality, sometimes unreliable, and thus awkward for use in comparative analysis. Statistics on a wider scale - population censuses, labour force figures (of men and women in different occupations), wages and incomes, rates of migration - are not readily available for many of the nations of tropical Africa.

Professor Little imposes order on this wide diversity of urban backgrounds, and gets around the deficiency of 'facts', by setting out broad chapter headings - 'women in the urban economy', 'women in the political arena', 'the world of lovers', etc. - and illustrating his themes with data from selected research studies. He also provides excerpts from novels to give a more vivid picture of the vitality and the squalor, the brilliant sense of style and the self-parody, the strivings to be modern while honouring tradition, all the contradictions and inventive energies of the African urban scene today.

At the beginning he warns, significantly: "The position of African women, consequently, has often to be subjectively assessed." But he does not appear to be aware of the full implications of his comment. He continues, "Nevertheless,

certain aspects can be objectively compared and we can say without much fear of contradiction that in African traditional society the greater part of woman's role is ascribed rather than achieved." His description, however, is the kind of conventional wisdom that is now being examined, and even contradicted. Critical revaluations in anthropology are posing questions previously unasked and revealing new insights on women's experience in both traditional and modern societies. These studies are based not on the observation and explanation of behaviour through familiar sociological categories but on the analysis of symbolic modes of self-identification. It was Edwin Ardener's paper, 'Belief and the Problem of Women' (1971), which brought to our awareness the problem that was there: the problem of women in ethnographies; of how, for the most part, anthropologists (both male and female) created interpretations of societies from the perspective of male informants while women's models of themselves in relation to society and nature were all but ignored.

Much more needs to be known about women in traditional African societies, but some present research offers new understanding. Harriet Sibisi (1974) tells how Zulu women diviners gain important influence by conducting religious rites, by diagnosing illness and thus guiding medical treatments by male ethnodoctors, and by determining crucial political decisions; they also interpret new experiences and innovate ways to cope with these within the Zulu philosophical system. Dr. Sibisi stresses the paradox presented by the diviners in the Zulu social structure: in an otherwise male-dominated society, women as diviners have a position superior to men in religion, health and disease, and in Zulu cosmology.

In separate studies Judith Van Allen (1972) and Caroline Ifeka (1975) have re-assessed the Igbo 'Women's War' in 1929. They demonstrate that although the riots were triggered by the fear that taxation would be extended to women, the underlying factors were much deeper. British colonial officers, imbued with Victorian values about women's roles, had failed to discern the women's indigenous political institutions through which women protected their individual and collective rights and also were able to achieve considerable status as leaders. By introducing Native Administration with appointed Warrant Chiefs, colonial officers not only cut across the Igbo traditional system of diffused authority, fluid leadership and shared rights of sanction, but they also reduced the powers of women in the accepted balance of male-female relations. Despite the dramatic rebellion of these Igbo and Ibibio women against the colonial government, the full dimensions of their cause have only recently been recognized.

Reviewing this historical event from what might be called the reformed colonial perspective, Little describes the women's political action as not in accordance with indigenous procedures, by which (he tells us) women took their grievances to the head of the house; thus he perpetuates the view that these women lack their own political institutions. He concludes, "They displayed a degree of militancy associated traditionally with male rather than female behaviour." (It is not clear whether

'traditionally' refers to Igbo tradition or that of Western anthropology.) On the subject of militancy, again recent research has illuminated hidden facets of women's experience in traditional societies. In 'Sexual Insult and Female Militancy', Shirley G. Ardener (1973) discovered similar configurations of women's collective militant action in various African situations and then went on to trace convincing parallels between these and strategies developed separately by modern women's liberation movements in the West.

While Little's book is about women in today's African cities and not about those in traditional societies, a study of social change obviously requires a clear understanding of the past in order to assess the nature and the degree of change. If studies of traditional societies reveal that African women were more important in their structural position than has been previously recognized, more organized into political groups, more militant, more independent, and more achieving, then their active place in the contemporary urban scene might well be interpreted as marking a continuity with tradition and not - as Little would have us accept - a break.

The note on the back cover tells us that the author "dwells on the suggestion - rarely debated in studies in migration - that for women movement into towns has basically a different significance than for men." The difference is, we are told, that young men who migrate from villages to cities tend to rationalize their ambitions in terms of 'progress' while women speak of their desire for 'freedom' and 'emancipation'. The argument continues that girls, wanting to escape rural dullness and adult domination, are tempted by the 'bright lights' of the city, the independence it offers and the hopes of following the latest fashions. But is the case so different for male and female migrants? In my own (limited) experience of talking to African school girls in villages, they spoke of gaining further qualifications in the city and improving their living conditions. "Do I want to spend the rest of my days farming like my mother?" one Igbo girl asked pointedly. And young men are known to move away from authoritarian hierarchies in villages to seek the adventures of city life. As for the urban fashion scene, which can be very vivid and changing, it only takes a few minutes of observation on any crowded city street to note that men are just as conscious of the latest male image in clothes and haircuts as women are about their styles.

What might be called the 'Jagua Nana theme' recurs as a leitmotiv in this volume. Little states that the heroine of Cyprian Ekwensi's novel, Jagua Nana, provides "virtually a sociological case-study of the adventurous type of young woman who has migrated to the more cosmopolitan towns of the West Coast." A case-study in sociology carries the implications of a detailed examination of an individual unit in order to illuminate the characteristics of a much wider group of which it is representative. Can this really be said of Jagua Nana? Little says, "I am not competent to comment on the literary value of these

novelists' writings but I can vouch for their sociological validity." But surely some sensitivity to literary genres and the construction of novels (the interrelations of plot, character, dialogue, style) must go into any assessment of sociological validity. Let us examine Ekwensi's fictional study of life in the city of Lagos during the early days of Nigeria's independence. The novel opens with the central character just having finished a cold bath, admiring herself: "They called her Jagua because of her good looks and stunning fashions. They said she was Ja-gwa, after the British prestige car." Now at 45, she is intent on applying her considerable sexual charms to snare Freddie, an ambitious teacher twenty years younger than herself; she plans to help support his law studies overseas after which he will return to marry her. This main plot is developed with powerful comic sequences, but it can hardly be called a representative situation. At that age most West African women are working hard to help their sons and daughters (or nieces and nephews) gain higher qualifications - not their young lovers. But Jagua has no children (conveniently for the plot) until a few years later when at age 48 she bears a son by a casual lover and the child lives for a brief three days. She hardly mourns, but is off now to Onitsha to become a 'merchant princess'. The multiple sub-plots are equally implausible. For example, Jagua Nana visits Freddie's family in the hinterland; in a succession of comic scenes Jagua uses her magnetic attractions to seduce a chief and by so doing to reconcile two branches of the royal family at war for thirty years. At another stage Jagua becomes associated with a gang of Lagos thieves; this episode comes to a climax with a teenage girl taking a revolver and shooting another young woman in the midst of a traditional ceremony honouring the dead.

It is hardly necessary to note that pistol-packing girls are not likely to appear in a sociological monograph of Lagos. All this belongs to a fantasy comic genre, each scene mocking 'reality' from a different angle. The supporting characters are an assortment of stock figures (chief, politician, thief) brought in to provide spicy interludes and a fast-paced narrative. No doubt Ekwensi will be long remembered for his creation of Jagua Nana; she is an 'independent' woman, larger-than-life, full of shallow cunning and concentrated self-interest. But the question does arise: is this a male projection of a female image? There are of course no objections to this in novels, which always present imaginative constructions of human experience from particular points of reference. (It might be added in this context that Flora Nwapa, the Nigerian woman novelist, gives a more sympathetic rendering of women's thoughts and feelings.) A 'sociological case-study', however, is meant to be neutral and unbiased. It would seem that the relation between literary sources and 'sociological validity' is considerably more subtle and complex than Little's approach acknowledges.

The 'Jagua Nana theme' supports Little's central argument about the difference in the significance of migration for women: they leave rural areas to gain 'freedom' from ties with men; then, because very few wage-paid jobs are available and other opportunities for earning a living are scarce, many provide sexual services for money. Little outlines the different arrangements

of prostitutes, femmes libres, courtesans and 'outside wives', but he tends to emphasize the 'freedom' and glamour rather than the precariousness and vulnerability of their situation. Does this really mark 'independence' from men? True, when cities have a surplus of men (including foreigners of all nationalities) and a booming economic situation, then enterprising and attractive women can cash in and live in comparative luxury. But even Jagua Nana was made to see through this one:

She knew that if a girl went to Tropicana every day, that girl was a pawn; a pawn in the hands of criminals, Senior Service men, contractors, thieves, detectives, liars, cheats, the rabble, the scum of the country's grasping hands and headlong rush to 'civilisation', 'sophistication', and all the falsehood it implied (Ekwensi, p. 128).

Related to the 'Jagua Nana theme' is the question of balance and emphasis in Little's study: more attention is given to women's relations with men than to women's activities and achievements outside the sexual sphere. Thus, while detailed material is presented on night club life and the ventures of 'walk-about women', other significant aspects of urban women's experience are left out altogether from Little's analysis. The subject of 'women in religion', for example, might be expected to merit a chapter on its own. In one sentence Little notes that syncretist cults often favour women evangelists over men, but he does not expand this topic. Any analysis of urban social change can hardly be complete without considering the forces of religion in its long-established forms and its numerous dynamic movements. Throughout tropical Africa, women are not only active participants in various types of religious worship, they also become widely known among certain groups as leaders, prophetesses, and faith-healers.

Another subject which demands fuller treatment is 'women's education'. Little provides only a brief background on the educational status of the present 20-40 age group of women. But since education is widely regarded as the key to advancement - jobs in the modern sector, entry to professional life, greater equality in marriage - more space might be given to the present situation. Statistics could be assembled to give a rough idea of the proportions of boys and girls attending school at different levels in various countries. Which areas have made the greatest efforts to expand educational opportunities for girls? And where are girls almost totally neglected? There is no mention of community education - literacy classes, and the types of lectures and radio talks given to help adult women improve the health and nutrition of their children, the conditions of their home life, and their economic activities. Yet these forms of communication are reaching out in African cities in ways that are meaningful to individuals and effective in social change. Nor is any attention given to indigenous processes of transmitting skills and knowledge: the seamstresses with their apprentices learning to cut cloth and use a sewing machine, the traders in textiles teaching their assistants (often young relatives) the

ways to push sales in a highly competitive market, the street vendors of cooked food training their helpers, and so on. While this method of senior women teaching younger ones follows tradition, the skills themselves are adapted to match the demands of the modern urban milieu.

Despite their obvious potential for leadership, no notice in this volume is given to women in universities. They may be very few, but their numbers are growing, and these women will be the doctors, lawyers, teachers, civil servants, even political leaders, in the years ahead. The highly educated women in African nations stand out in significance far greater than their numbers suggest: they are not only themselves, in many cases holding high-level jobs, but powerful images on the screens of the imagination of younger women who emulate them.

Little's final chapter contrasts the differences in the position of women between East and West Africa and gives a salutary discussion of the obstacles and complexities in women's struggle for equality. Most interesting is his appendix bringing together 'portraits' of African women outstanding in education, politics, social welfare, business. These biographies, beginning with the Ghanaian Mrs. Jessica Otumba-Payne, a contemporary and friend of Lord Lugard, make fascinating reading.

In conclusion, Professor Little should be congratulated for taking up this complicated and controversial subject and setting out lines for further investigation. With the announcement in January 1975 of Africa's first woman prime minister, Madame Elizabeth Domitien in the Central African Republic, it is certain that we shall be hearing much more about - and from - African women.

Helen Callaway

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BOOK REVIEWS

Population and its Problems: A plain man's guide (Wolfson College Lectures 1973) Edited by H.B. Parry, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1974. vi, 422 pp. £6.75

Little has been written in criticism of the academic movement which has grown up around our ignorance of the social side of increased fertility. Demographers, outside of Oxford, have come to have their own foundations and research centres; the respectability of this positive science is well-earned by a statistics whose formality is appreciated by its practitioners. The sociology of population, however, has raced ahead to become a regular part of the proselytation of development without pausing for conceptual retrenchment of its comparatively informal methods. Anthropologists, insofar as they have ignored the topic, are a party in this. The 'Problems' follow from this ill-defined space between the demographers' calculations and the typically alien societies to which those are supposed to refer.

This space is a blur in the plan and language of the lectures. Scattered 'Problems' are put forward in the confident spirit of a movement which condescends to provide 'a background of critical scientific evidence' for 'the plain man':

It seems most useful to restrict our survey to those aspects of demography [very widely construed] where generally acceptable quantitative scientific knowledge could be assembled and where, if present, important lacunae in our knowledge might be defined. (Parry, p.3).

The import of the first three lectures, although carefully understated by each of the authors, effectively does away with this. Varley, writing about the voles and great tits of Wytham Wood, cannot find substantial analogies that would enable us to extend the methods used in studying animal populations to the human variety. Ardener shows that the familiar vocabulary of 'determinants', 'densities', 'populations' and the like readily generates nonsense unless tied to a theory of ethnography. Brass points out that the demographic transition, a centre-piece of social studies of population, is 'extremely doubtful' as an 'empirical description of the world's demographic history'. The situation is all too familiar: the categories, the ideal of infrastructural explanation, and the goal of empirical generalizations that frame most work on population simply do not, of themselves, hold.

This polite clearing is not taken up in any of the later papers, although from those comfortable if worn 'truths' they do note an impressive number of topics about which 'we know lamentably little' or which have even 'made for greater humility and... started a search for a better theory of fertility' (Ohlin). It is worth noting that from the fourth lecture all of the papers are frankly developmental. The series concludes with an amazingly untroubled account of family planning programmes, the movement's black eye.

The book is an introduction to what is going on, but the sub-title should be understood as a defence against things critical.

Phil Kreager

Portrait of a Greek Mountain Village

Juliet du Boulay

Oxford Monographs on Social Anthropology. Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1974. viii, 269 pp. illus. £6.

In 1966 Juliet du Boulay went looking for a traditional Greek village and found one. In fact Ambéli "turned out to be, in its main characteristics, exactly what I had been looking for..." - with a priest and local council, small, remote, airy, beautiful, and above all, in accordance with Miss du Boulay's desires, 'traditional'. It was also, by that, both exceptional and dying.

Certainly Miss du Boulay never hides the historical transience of her 'traditional' society; certainly there is much to be said for documenting the mores of such outposts of tradition before they dissolve into the Western mainstream; but the predilection for 'village studies' in the anthropology of complex societies - a predilection clandestinely born of the necessities for field work - carries with it its own traditionalism.

Let me first state unequivocally that Miss du Boulay's book is a fine piece of ethnography - sensitive and perceptive, as it is usually said (and just how so can be judged from her excellent chapter on marriage). But there is a sense of déjà vu: solidarity of the household in the face of the village; of the village in the face of its neighbours; balances of loyalty and love, malice and distrust; honour and shame. Maybe 'peasant society' is a viable category. But that is not the real question. Let me venture anthropology's occasional achievement as momentarily rendering man alien to himself (though that, as we now know, can be done by foul means and fair). Still it remains a precondition for understanding. Easy to do if the society under study is truly 'exotic'. Common-sense concepts become ineffectual; might finally be discarded along with the Human Nature to which they refer. The problem then is to make sense of the 'senseless'. At least some ground is cleared and new questions, radical questions, demand to be posed.

The trouble with Greek villages is that they are not beyond the pale. Different - yes; but not so different that when ably described (and Miss du Boulay can describe very ably) they cannot be intuitively understood by mere reference to our own experience, or at least the experience of our own traditions. The problem then is to undermine the reason of the 'reasonable'. And that is difficult.

In such situations anthropological explanation, when attempted, exists on a peculiar middle ground. On the one hand 'logical' schemata are constructed which any reasonable man would reject as sheer embellishment (I mean someone who is not an anthropologist or sociologist); on the other hand, even such schemata tend to

rely on a reasonable man's ready acceptance of concepts which are in fact highly problematic. Thus: "... since common subscription to the same values prohibits the making of too many deviants, at the same time as inhibiting the rise of new standards according to which new roles might be created, these roles are limited in number and very clear-cut." Tautology? Then elsewhere and throughout we learn that meals, fields, houses, have a 'symbolic' value. I feel sure that Miss du Boulay is right. I feel sure she is using the word correctly. It is, in context, the natural word to use. But, is it not precisely the nature of 'symbolic' value which needs investigation? What do we mean by it?

I do not wish to be over-critical. Miss du Boulay has called her book 'Portrait of a Greek Mountain Village', and that is an honourable title and it has been honourably fulfilled. The scrupulous compilation of data aside, one does feel that one has experienced through her writing the life of Ambéli. Whether social anthropology as a science of man and society has been advanced is a question which now, in all fairness, must be directed towards the ethnographic tradition as a whole, not towards Miss du Boulay.

Roger Just.

Kédang: A Study of the Collective Thought of an Eastern Indonesian People. R.H. Barnes. Oxford, Clarendon Press, Oxford Monographs on Social Anthropology, 1974. xiv, 350pp. £7

This monograph is the result of over 18 months field research in the district of Kédang on the island Lembata (Lomblen) in eastern Indonesia. As an ethnographic study, its special distinction lies in the author's remarkably successful attempt to elicit principles of order which underlie the totality of Kédangese thought and action. In this endeavour Barnes has chosen to approach his subject from the perspective of the representations of the people themselves. Thus a conventional arrangement of topics is discarded in favour of a discursive analytical treatment which accords with the cultural evaluations of the Kédangese, with the distinctions they make between various areas and aspects of their experience, and with the way in which they relate these one to another.

Instead of a first chapter on 'kinship' or subsistence economy, Barnes starts by considering the symbolic value of the physical setting of Kédang. He then proceeds, through an analysis of village organisation and house form, to a discussion of Kédangese orientation, in which he shows how particular ideas about space are a function of certain general linguistic concepts of orientation. It is only after his exemplary analysis of space and time, which topics the author rightly regards as being the most fundamental to any ethnographic enquiry, that Barnes turns to consider the more sociological aspects of Kédangese culture.

It may come as something of a surprise to the reader, when he learns that Kedang society is ordered by an asymmetric prescription, to find that a discussion of marriage, alliance, and relationship terminology is left until the very end of the book. This strategy, however, can be seen to result from the nature of the object under study, rather than from some previously conceived method or theory. It is by now an established idea, especially as regards prescriptive systems, that the particular facts of terminology, descent, alliance, and marriage may be properly understood only in relation to a logical structure of complete generality to the society in question. The great merit of Barnes's monograph is that he actually demonstrates how such an understanding can be obtained.

Because of both the nature of the object of study and the author's excellent treatment of it, Barnes's work is an original and valuable contribution to a number of topics of current anthropological concern: prescriptive alliance, dual symbolic classification, orientation, transition, and the symbolism of numbers; and in this respect it should be of great interest to all students of social anthropology.

G.L. Forth

After Babel: Aspects of Language and Translation.

George Steiner. London, Oxford University Press. 1975. viii, 507 pp. £8.

The immense diversity of human languages is surely the supreme anthropological mystery. How can we account for this basic fact about the human species? What is language? What is translation? Are either language or translation the sorts of phenomena for which we may hope to formulate systematic theories?

These are some of the problems to which Steiner's fascinating book is addressed. There are some sections on relatively clearly demarcated topics such as the history of the linguistic determinism hypothesis, and on the debate over universals in linguistics. But above and beyond them exists a very complex and sometimes personal journey through a field of basic yet scarcely definable issues. The author has not made it easy for us always to follow his path, but his fantastic erudition has provided documentation to help us with the more abstract discussions.

Steiner begins his explorations of language, translation, and meaning by suggesting that what is normally regarded as translation - translation between different languages - is only a concentrated form of the general problem of understanding. An inquiry into the question of translation is really an inquiry into language in general. All human communication involves interpretation, so translation is concerned not only with semantic exchange between languages, but also exchanges within a single language, and with those between language and non-linguistic sign systems. There is an activity we call understanding when we listen to another human being talk, or when we read a text.

We can speak of translation in terms of trust, of loss of creation, and restitution - the hermeneutic circle represents a simultaneous increase and decrease in semantic entropy - but can we give a systematic account of the processes involved? What sort of answer do we expect to the question 'What is translation?'. For as long as man has existed he has translated, yet this is an activity performed with very little theoretical equipment; over the centuries there have been strikingly few helpful suggestions as to what a good theory might look like.

For Steiner the question whether a theory is possible here is related to the issue of whether language is a subject for which we might expect a 'science of language' to be feasible. Steiner has grave doubts about this, and is extremely unhappy about a great deal of modern linguistic theory. There is, of course, the odd difficulty that a theory of language has to be stated in language. But it is equally striking that so many of those who have written about language - linguists and philosophers alike - are not true friends of language. Ambiguity and violations of grammar are not linguistic pathologies but parts of the genius of language. What is abnormal about hypotheticals and counter-factuals? It may be possible to regard animal signalling as an information system, but human language is not just for stating facts. Our languages allow the luxury of fiction - the creation of 'alternatives of being'. Possibly we may see a survival value here. Perhaps creatures who know they must die need to be able to speak of other worlds: language is a human institution which allows such articulation; it has futurity embedded in its tense structure.

What then is the problem of Babel? Perhaps we should think not of the human species but of the human individual, for is not the difficulty of linguistic diversity one refraction of individual difference? Language and rules are public, yet as individual human beings we are all ultimately alone in the world. This is not to argue for the philosophical concept of 'privacy'. All we know about human beings shows such a notion to be nonsensical. We may build shared semantic worlds out of the resources of a public institution, but because each human being is himself and not someone else, we all speak slightly differing tongues. Whenever two people converse, they have to interpret. They must hope; they must trust. But an inescapable and ultimate indeterminacy of meaning remains. This trust and indeterminacy are both shared; they are equally components of being human. We are all alone, but not totally since we all have this solitude in common. In language we can try to connect, even if it is just to give expression to our sense of significant loneliness.

Malcolm Crick.

#### Books Received

Robertson Smith and the Sociological Study of Religion. T.O. Beidelman. London, University of Chicago Press. 1974. xiv, 92pp. £4.50 (paperback £1).

A Bibliography of the Writings of E.E. Evans-Pritchard. Compiled by E.E. Evans-Pritchard, amended and corrected by T.O. Beidelman. London, Tavistock Publications. 1974. 26pp. £2.25

African Traditional Law in Historical Perspective . The Radcliffe-Brown Lecture in Social Anthropology, 1974. Max Gluckman. London, Oxford University Press for the British Academy. 1975. 45pp. £0.75

The Iban and their Religion. Erik Jensen. Oxford Monographs in Social Anthropology. London, Clarendon Press: Oxford University Press 1975. xii, 242 pp. £4.50

The Winds of Tomorrow: Social Change in Maya Town. Richard A. Thompson. London, University of Chicago Press. 1975. x, 182pp. £6.25.

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