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FORMAT

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NOTE

This is a second edition of the issue. The opportunity has been taken to make a few minor corrections.

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A THULUNG MYTH AND SOME PROBLEMS OF COMPARISON

The greater the altitude of a region of South Asia, the more likely it is that its population will be referred to as tribal. The traditional and stereotypic ethnographic map of a tribal area shows a patchwork or mosaic of sub-areas, each with its own language, customs and ethnonym, and the typical tribal study takes one such group as its unit of description. More or less implicit comparison with the society of the ethnographer is doubtless inevitable, and insofar as the description is specifically anthropological it will be influenced in a general way by comparative perspectives. However, for those interested in going beyond the one tribe/one culture approach, various sorts of explicit comparison are possible. Acculturational studies amount in effect to comparison with the neighbouring large-scale society, and systematic comparison may also be made with neighbouring tribes. Sometimes these tribes will speak unrelated languages (e.g. Garo/Khasi), but often a framework for comparison is provided by language family trees.

The Thulung Rai are one among the traditionally non-literate peoples of eastern Nepal sometimes referred to as Kiranti, and their language is classified with other Rai languages in the Bodic division of Sino- Tibetan. Although bilingual in Nepali and in many ways quite Hinduised, the Thulung retain a certain amount of their own mythology, and in an unpublished D.Phil. thesis (1976) I have attempted to compare the corpus I collected with the mythologies of the other Bodic-speaking peoples (who include Tibetans). The undertaking was conceived as a preliminary step in the direction of the sort of work Dumézil has been doing for the Indo-European speakers. The motive for confining attention to one segment of the language family was of course to keep the volume of material within manageable limits, but there are methodological risks here. In the Indo-European case the Celtic-Sanskrit (i.e. most distant) comparisons have been among the most instructive; moreover one might be failing to ask the most interesting questions of the Thulung material if one ignored comparisons with the Hindu world. To compare Thulung mythology as a whole with the great mass of Puranic and north Indian folkloristic material would require immense erudition, and all I attempt here is a single rapprochement. Taken in conjunction with other materials from the borderlands between India and China, this points to a family of ideas which seem characteristic of the area, and which pose culture-historical problems that deserve further work.

The Thulung myth in question was related by DB, then in his mid-fifties and the most active and respected of the three fully qualified traditional priests in Mukli, which was itself universally regarded as the first permanent Thulung village. Priesthood typically passes from father to son, and DB's father was a priest. As tape-recorded, the myth was the fourth in a string of five episodes which can be seperated from each other both on internal grounds (plot, <u>dramatis personae</u>) and by comparison with episodes from other narrators. The narration took place after the evening meal when a number of relatives had gathered at the death of an old lady. DB had officiated at the burial but the

narration itself was not part of a ritual. The Thulung do not give titles to their myths, but I call this episode "The Foundation of the Bhume Sites". These sites contain sacred stones which are often referred to in ritual chants. Several times a year they are the scene of daytime bhume rites at which the priest makes offerings (beer and blood from the beak of a fowl) and invocations for the community's agricultural success. In June a much larger-scale bhume rite, named after the bhume site called Sakhle, is attended by priests from neighbouring hamlets and attracts a considerable audience (of the order of 50 people). Otherwise the rites are only very sparsely attended though some villagers may collect afterwards to dance. It is clear enough that with growing Hindu influence the cult is in decline, as are the priest's activities in general. Most of the priest's rites are held in individual households and are directed primarily to their ancestors. The bhume sites (an elongated, flat-topped mound in one case, a towering silk-cotton tree in a small walled enclave at the Sakhle) are the only public sacred sites in a Thulung village, excluding those obviously the result of Hindu influence.

The previous episode on the tape tells of one Mapa Raja of Luwale, culture hero of the linguistically distinct Khaling Rai sub-tribe who live on the Dudh Kosi to the north of the Thulung.[1] Mapa is introduced to rock salt by the Sherpas. The episode opens with Mapa falling ill with leprosy. His wife and her younger brother carry him on a journey but at a certain place he turns to stone. His wife, her brother, and then Mapa's two eldest sons try to resuscitate him, but fail. Finally his third and last son, who has previously received from his father clairvoyant powers and ritual knowledge, succeeds by means of his invocations and offerings of beer and a cock's blood. Shortly afterwards Mapa abandons his wife and her brother at Salabesi and tells the youngest son to carry him further.

> The two of them went down to Yaliu, but the wind made it impossible for them to stay long and they went on down to Sase.[2] The gnats would not let them stay there either and they came down to the site of Sakhle. Here there was a stone which suddenly turned round and allowed them to leave. While they were there one of Mapa's thumbs fell off. This was not good, and he told his son to carry him further. When they came to Rindapu hamlet in Dewsa they rested, and there too a bhume site was founded -- the Sakhle bhume site had been founded where this thumb had fallen off, and another was founded where they rested at Dewsa Rindapu. Next they rested at Amaks and another bhume site was founded there.[3] Then they went to Luwale where another was founded. Then they went to Rapcha, where Mapa said to his son: 'You have a meal. I shall not eat. Go and look for firewood.' The son turned him so that he

> was transverse to the slope of the hill, put him down, and went to look for wood. When he returned his father had become a stone (silā), a god (deutā). Rapcha should have been the first to offer him beer from a gourd, in other words to worship him, but the Phuleli people came south and made the offering first, so they now possess the authority (hak) there. We others do not have the right to perform the Sakhle at Rapcha without the permission of Phuleli.

The narrator was unwilling to be cross-questioned, the story and the ideology of the bhume cult were not widely known, and there are many points in the narrative on which one would like further information. However, for my present purpose a narrow focus will have to suffice. What we have here is surely the priest telling the myth of origin of the bhume sites where he officiates, and by implication, the origin of the rites performed there, which constitute by far the greater part of his public non-household duties (the once-yearly communal huppa rite is even less salient in village life than the bhume rites). The loss of a digit is mentioned only in connection with the Sakhle site where DB regularly officiates, but insofar as the loss is the result of Mapa's leprosy one may suppose that in longer versions he would lose digits elsewhere. My feeling (I wish I had stronger evidence for this) is that the reason for the location both of this and of the other sites (excluding Rapcha) was that they were where digits fell; it is clear that the reason for the location and pre-eminence of the Rapcha site is that it possesses, in the form of a stone, what is left of Mapa's body. We know that even at the outset of his journey Mapa was liable to turn into stone, and, given that every bhume site contains a sacred stone, it would make good sense if the stones in those founded directly by Mapa were his petrified digits. There is some justification for playing down the fact that the narrator fails actually to say this: he is speaking very fast, and two of the other myths he told that evening are distinctly shorter - one can reasonably say more cursory in style - than parallel versions collected from other narrators.

Some of these suggestions find support in what is, unfortunately, my only other version of the story. The informant, again in his fifties, had heard it from his father-in-law, a Khaling priest in Kanku village.

> An old man from Phuleli in the north went down to the plains and on his way fell ill with leprosy at Halesi. Being unable to return, he sent for his relatives from Phuleli to carry him in a basket. When they reached Sakhle his little toe fell off, and he instructed the people there how to perform a bhume ceremony. At Kanku his right little finger fell off. At Khali the bearer looked over his shoulder and found there was no man in the basket, and that his aged relative had turned into a stone.[4]

The fact that the Thulung commonly prefer the Nepali term bhume to the indigenous tosi implies that comparable cults are widespread in Nepal, and this is the case. I give references (1976:523) to reports by Höfer, Fürer-Haimendorf and Pignède from the Tamang and Gurung, and one can add a further article by Höfer (1971). The Tamang address their cult to the shipda neda of a region, i.e., in Tibetan orthography, to the gzhi-bdag gnas-bdag 'masters of the soil, masters of the inhabited site' (Höfer), and Pignède's Sildo-naldo (despite his own suggestion) is probably cognate. The gzhi-bdag, often coupled with the sa-bdag, are familiar to Tibetologists, and I suspect that one could reasonably press the comparison to include the early Chinese soil gods. For Chavannes (1910) the cult of the gods of the soil and that of the ancestral temple are equally fundamental in Chinese religions thought; the former takes place at a mound associated with a tree and furnished with a stone tablet sometimes called the 'seat' of the gods. Leaving China aside, Bodic myths explaining the origin of the agricultural cult do not seem to be common, and this in itself would give the Thulung narrative a certain interest. It also deserves attention as one among a variety of indications that, before the massive Hinduisation of the last couple of centuries, innovations reached Thulung society mainly from the north. Similarly, still considering local history, one might wonder whether the ritual supremacy of Rapcha and Phuleli was not associated with some political hegemony; DB's fifth episode shows the Khaling controlling the southward flow of Tibetan salt via the Sherpas to the Thulung. If there is indeed here a hint of political organisation above the level of the linguistically-defined sub-tribe, it could only refer to the period before the Gorkha conquest of the 1770's. However, what intrigues me most about the Thulung narrative is the comparison between it and the Indian myth of Shiva and Sati.

The story is quite well known in a number of versions (see references in O'Flaherty (1975:334), particularly Sircar (1948)). Sati feels insulted by her father Dakṣa and as a result dies or commits suicide. Shiva is furious with Dakṣa and also mad with grief. He picks up the corpse of his dead wife, and dances over the earth with it on his shoulder or head. To free him from his infatuation the gods conspire to deprive him of the body, and Brahma, Vishnu and Shani, having entered Sati, dismember her piece by piece; alternatively Vishnu follows behind Shiva and cuts pieces off the corpse with his bow and arrow or his discus. In any case the limbs which fall to the ground become pīthas, the 'seats' of the goddess and sites of Devi worship, and Sircar collates the lists which relate particular Hindu shrines with particular pieces of Sati's body. The most famous single pīṭha is perhaps Kamakhya in Assam where her yoni fell. Each pīṭha is guarded by a linga representing Shiva in the form of Bhairava. Although names and minor elements of the story can be traced back to the Mahabharata and even earlier, the linking of Sati's dismemberment to particular shrines is a feature of tantric Hinduism, and thus relatively recent in the written record.

Let it be admitted straightaway that there are vast differences between the Thulung myth and the Indian one. Firstly there is the question of scale. Mapa's anticlockwise circuit, setting out (presumably from Luwale) back to Luwale and to Rapcha, could be comfortably fitted into two days walking. Shiva is sometimes described as 'revolving round the world for one year full' (Sen 1922 vol.2:292), and the lists of pīṭhas cover the greater part of India. Mapa is male, more or less alive, and carried by a son, while Sati is female, dead, and carried by a husband. A human leper losing a couple of digits is not the same as a deity being dismembered by other deities. Mapa's youngest son is presumably a prototype priest, like those who still invoke and make offerings at bhume sites; Shiva is an ascetic, a Renouncer. Tantric worship of a mother goddess in a Hindu context is not the same sort of thing as an agricultural fertility cult in a non-literate society.

Having said all this, I cannot help feeling that the rapprochement is still worth making. There are other instances in my corpus where I suspect a watering down of emphasis on sanguinary and physiological details, a process which Kroeber took to be one of the general trends of world history. It is more likely that earlier versions of the Mapa story contained greater emphasis on his bodily losses than that they contained even less. If so, both stories essentially relate the dismemberment of an anthropomorphic being who is carried on a journey by a relative. The seperated bodily parts turn into, or are represented by, stones which are essential elements at a series of sacred sites.

One way to pursue the comparison would be to study the number and arrangement of the sites. The Hindu texts give various totals, some of them (e.g. 108) obviously chosen for their symbolic associations. The total of four (Sircar talks of the catuspīṭha concept) occurs inter alia in the Yogini Tantra, which associates sites not only with the cardinal points but also (Van Kooij 1972: 34-5) with the four yugas (cosmic eras). The Thulung myth mentions nine locations if one includes the initial petrifaction and Salabesi. Sakhle, the southernmost point of the journey, is in the middle of the list. But I very much doubt if this direction of thought is helpful since (among other reasons) Mapa's journey is not clearly a circumambulation of anything and Thulung traditional thought conspicuously avoids emphasis on the cardinal points and the use of symbolic numbers.

However the Indian connection between pīṭhas and cardinal points leads us back to another part of Nepal. The four stupas surrounding the city of Patan in the central valley have long been recognised as reflecting a spatial projection of the notion of the mandala, and German workers have recently been giving us much richer material from the other Newar cities (formerly city states). Kölver (1976) presents a local 'map' of Bhaktapur which shows it as a mandala with Tripurasundari in the centre (cf. Stahl, in press) surrounding by three concentric circles

containing the aṣṭa-(eight) mātṛkā, the aṣṭabhairava and the aṣṭagaṇeśa from outside in. For each deity in the depiction there exists somewhere in the streets of the city or close outside it a corresponding pīṭha, though the actual location of the shrines is of course less symmetrical than is depicted. Kathmandu too is surrounded by three esoterically interpreted concentric 'rings' of eight mātṛkā pīṭhas, which are visited consecutively in the course of a pīṭhapūjā (Gutschow 1977). There does not appear to be a myth accounting for the origin of the circles of shrines (Gutschow, personal communication), but it is a small step from these Newar conceptualisations of space to a better-known Tibetan myth (the sources are listed and analysed in Aris 1978).

The Tibetan king credited with the introduction of Buddhism was a historical empire-builder who died in 649 AD, but the narratives attached to his name are largely mythical in character. Under the influence particularly of his Chinese wife, the King comes to realise that Tibet is like a demoness lying on her back with her heart beneath Lhasa and her limbs extending outwards. To keep her under control and render the land fit for civilisation he must build the Jo-khang temple exactly over her heart and surround it with three concentric rings of four temples. The innermost ring nails down her shoulders and hips, and the next her elbows and knees, the last her hands and feet. The textual references, which start in the 12th-13th century, do not always relate the same named site to the same limb, but the schema is well established. The temples can be indentified with greater or lesser degrees of certainty and precision, though their real geographical distribution again naturally falls short of the neatness of the schema. I do not know if there is direct evidence connecting the temples with agricultural fertility, but the 'left knee' temple in Bhutan is the site of certain rites which elsewhere accompany the 'Agricultural New Year' (Aris 1976:609).

The Tibetan demoness (compared by Aris to the tortoise that appears in certain Chinese traditions) differs from Mapa and Sati in one obvious way: since she extends across the whole empire there is no need for her to be carried round it. Moreover the relationship between limbs and shrine is different: presumably no ancient temple in this part of the world is without a sacred stone (often uncarved -- there is a celebrated one in the Jo-khang covering the passage to the supposed subterranean lake which represents the demoness's heart blood), but these 'nails of immobility' (Stein 1972:39) are not exactly 'seats'. Nevertheless the demoness resembles the other mythical beings in that her body, like theirs, provides a means of expressing the homogeneity of a series of cult sites, and hence, presumably, the religious unity of the territory across which they are distributed.

Sircar makes a passing comparison of Sati's dismemberment, not only with that of Isis, but also with the posthumous distribution of the relics of the Buddha. A local variant on the latter theme has been reported from north Thailand by Keyes (1975).

The twelve years of the duodenary cycle are placed in correspondence with twelve shrines, each of them possessing a relic, and most of them thought to have been visited by the Buddha; theoretically theschema allows individuals to select the optimal pilgrimage site in view of their year of birth. Keyes notes that four of the shrines are located in the Ping valley, whose main capital was Chiang Mai, four are in neighbouring principalities, and four are further afield (the remotest being in Bodh Gaya and in the Culamani heaven). No relationship to cardinal points is mentioned and there is no indication that the three groups are segregated in the traditional 'astrological pictures' which relate years and reliquaries.

It is a long way from Mapa's journey to such scholastic constructions as these north Thai correspondences, but it seems to me that the broader comparisons are helpful and relevant to understanding the Thulung myth. More generally, each of the structures emerges more clearly when it is seen as just one of a series of possible transformations. It is clear that the range of comparison could easily be expanded; it would perhaps be particularly interesting to examine the relationship between myths and concepts using the bodies of supernatural beings to express territorial unity and those using such bodies to express genetic or ethnic unity (cf. e.g. Macdonald 1975, on Prajāpati). The topic is a rich one, and all I shall do in conclusion is raise two brief points.

Is the fact that Mapa's 'dismemberment' is confined to his extremities to be connected with the location of the Thulung region at a distance from Lhasa corresponding to the extremities of the demoness? This hardly seems likely. For one thing, her limbs would hardly have reached so far until the establishment of the Tibetan empire, and such rapprochements as one can make between Thulung culture and that of pre- and extra- Buddhist Tibet fail to reflect what we know of the state ideology of that imperial period; presumably they go back to earlier times. If anything is to be made of the digits, apart from their representing an extreme etiolation of a dismemberment, I would compare them rather with the lingas that guard pīthas, with the 'nails' driven into the demoness, or with Sati's fingers which fell at Prayaga or Kamarupa and are associated (Sircar) with the ten Mahāvidyās, the tantric goddess-transformations which appear in Kölver's map and in the sacred topography of Bhaktapur.[5]

Finally, though it is really outside the scope of the paper, a word must be said on the historical relationship between the Thulung and the Hindu myth - assuming that there is one. Reducing matters to the crudest possible models, there are three types of genetic relationship one can postulate when faced with cultural similarities between the highland areas and the great literate civilisation to the south. The most obvious is to treat the hillspeople simply as the recipient of influences from the plains, so that in this case Mapa would be a distorted highland version of an earlier Sitī, the result of diffusion from the Hindu world of tantric ideas or their precursors. It is

highly unlikely that his particular similarity could be the result of the massive Hinduisation of recent centuries, but it is harder to rule out earlier influences, either directly from the plains or transmitted via Tibet. Secondly, one might postulate the reverse direction of influence. Whatever his Harappan precursors, in popular belief Shiva is strongly associated with the Himalayas, and it may be that Hinduism, especially tantric Hinduism, owes more to the 'Indo-Mongoloids' than has generally been recognised (cf. Walker 1968, s.v. Mongolians). Both in this and certain other contexts, I prefer a third approach (while recognising that theoretically it is not necessarily incompatible with the others). This gives priority neither to the hills version nor to the plains version but treats the similarity as the result of independent retention of and development from a common substratum. It would be premature to come to definite conclusions, but it may be that the surviving oral traditions of such peoples as the Thulung have a useful contribution to make to our understanding of the history of the subcontinent.

Nick Allen.

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I owe the reference to Keyes and the initial idea for this paper to a reading of unpublished work by Alan Morinis on pilgrimage in Bengal. I should also like to thank Dr. Michael Carrithers for bringing to my attention Gutschow's 1977 article, and Dr. Gutschow for writing to me about his findings.

NOTES

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1. For a little more information on Thulung priests see Allen (1976, 1974). The Thulung text and a translation very similar to the one given here were published in Allen (1975: 156ff), but the latter may not easily obtainable.

2. The site at Yaliu high in Mukli has now been abondoned in favour of the Bhumethan which is close to, if not at, Sase.

3. Here we re-enter Khaling territory.

4. Phuleli may be the Nepali name for Luwale. Halesi is well-known as the site of a large, thrice-yearly fair (melā) centred on a shrine which, nowadays at least, is regarded as Hindu. The normal way to carry an invalid, as any other load in this area, is in a basket supported by a tump-line across the forehead.

5. In the same connection one might also note how Mahādeva's linga was cut up with hatchets into 31 pieces and distributed across the worlds (Wilford 1795:367), and how Bhairava's protuding tongue was cut successively into three pieces while he proceeded through Bhaktapur; each piece is commemorated by a stone or group of stones in the main street of the city (Gutschow and Shrestha 1975).

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THE COLONIAL ENCOUNTER ON THE NORTH-WEST FRONTIER PROVINCE: MYTH AND MYSTIFICATION

The story of colonization is not a pretty one. To the Pathans living in the North-West Frontier Province of Pakistan it meant the destruction of villages, of water-tanks and of grain-stores; it meant electric-fences, block houses and an endless series of 'butcher and bolt' raids. The situation was worst in the Tribal Areas: in 1947, when the British left, there were no hospitals, schools, colleges, railways or electricity supplies except, of course, those established within British cantonments and for the exclusive use of the British. The institutions the British left behind were instruments of repression and subversion: the Frontier Scouts and Constabulary, block-houses and barbed wire, political allowances and titles. Today the only remnants of the British cultural legacy are the adjuncts of war: the bagpipes played by the Frontier Constabulary and the shorts still worn as its uniform.

The colonial encounter on the Frontier was brutal, but the way in which it took place prevented it from involving the total uprooting and destruction of the colonized civilization, a process found in other parts of the world (Wolf 1971:231), including other parts of the Indian sub-continent itself. In Bengal for example, whole groups inter-acted with the British and adapted entirely to their ideas, manners and language. The intellectual eclecticism and syntheses created a new class, the bhadralok, literally 'cultivated class', often in the forefront of intellectual life on the subcontinent (Addy and Azad 1973). The hundred years of British rule on the Frontier, however, failed to produce bhadralok groups of any kind. Instead, it was the Britisher who learned the language of his subject: it was a rare Pathan from the Tribal Areas who spoke, dressed or ate like the English.

The British certainly had some influence in social terms. They bolstered and encouraged the growth of a 'chiefly' Malik class in the Tribal Areas and thus created the basis for conflict and contradiction in Pathan society between the elders (mashar, political 'haves') and youngers (kashar, political 'have-nots'). The very core of tribal democracy was touched. Those Maliks who could manipulate both internal agnatic ties and external political ones were able to emerge as a powerful class. At the same time, the British obtained a means of seeing what was going on in the Tribal Areas and of making their voices heard. Overall, however, the move met with little success. The Maliks, despite all their secret allowances and political privileges, remained little more than glorified 'tourist' chiefs; in the interior, the weight of their word depended to a great extent on their personal influence; and, at the slightest sign of political trouble with the British, it was the mullahs, the religious leaders, and not the Maliks, who took the initiative and emerged as leaders, stressing ethnic and religious themes. The Maliks were their first target.

By and large, social contact and administrative control in the Tribal Areas were minimal. Tribal structure in the interior remained whole, symmetrical and unitary in the classic anthropological sense (Fortes and Evans-Pritchard 1970), and there was equilibrium and continuity in the social order. The Tribal Areas remained a closed system, tribal in the most profound sense, and, in this respect, unencapsulated by larger state systems and civilizations. Raids and reprisals did not change social structure and may even have served to confirm it. The only extra-tribal encounters of any sort took place in dark ravines or on rough mountain crags, or perhaps in the exchange of wit with political officers. This was one of the most

barrenmeetings of cultures possible, an almost total failure in communication between two systems.

In this context, a miasma of romance and mystification came to envelop the encounter on the Frontier. In the remainder of this article, I outline these myths and consider the causes underlying the process of mystification.

The North-West Frontier Province remains one of the most fascinating areas and memories of the British Empire. Myth, legend and reality overlap here and it is difficult to be sure where the first two stop and the last begins. The Frontier was a place where careers, including those of Indian Viceroys and British Prime Ministers, could be made and unmade, where a simple incident could escalate rapidly into an international crisis and where in 1897, in the general uprisings in the Tribal Areas (Ahmed 1976), the British faced their greatest crisis in India after 1857. I shall quote a passage to portray the sense of drama and history that permeates the Frontier stage:

> The North-West Frontier of India must surely be one of the most legendary of places on the earth's surface... Both Alexander the Great and Field Marshal Alexander of Tunis served here; and between them a great scroll of names - Tamerlann, Babur, Akbar, and with the coming of the British, Pollock, Napier, Lumsden, Nicholson, Roberts, Robertson, Blook, Churchill, Wavell, Slim, Auchinleck, and even Lawrence of Arabia Apart from soldiers, the Frontier has involved generations of administrators, politicians, and statesmen: Palmerston, Disraeli, Gladstone, Dalhousie, Lawrence, Lytton, Curzon, Ghandhi, Nehru, Attlee, Jinnah, and Mountbatten have come to power or fallen, through their Frontier policies. The Frontier has not only been the concern of Britain, India and Afghanistan (and in recent years Pakistan); the mysterious pressures it generates have involved Russia, China, Persia, Turkey and even France; on two occasions these pressures have brought the world to the brink of war (Swinson 1967: 11).

Two types of writers created the myth of the Frontier: on the one hand people who had lived and served in the area, and, on the other, those who bowdlerized the subject for popular appeal. Of the former let us look at the most celebrated. The romance of the Frontier was to reach its literary apogee with Kipling, troubador of Empire. His most popular stories feature Pathan characters like Mahboob Ali in Kim and Shere Khan in The Jungle Book. Kipling reflects sympathy for the underdog, and his ethnic references are not wilfully malicious. In general, however, the African native prototype is still the 'Fuzzy-Wuzzy' - a 'big black boundin' beggar' (Kipling 1977: 163) - and the Indian prototype, the low-caste 'Gunga Din', 'of all them blackfaced crew the finest man I knew' (ibid: 166). The African and the Asian are 'the White Man's Burden':

> Your new-caught, sullen peoples,
> half devil and half child (ibid: 128).

Contrasting strongly in theme and tone of address is the encounter between the Pathan and the Britisher in perhaps the best known of his Imperial poems, 'The Ballad of East and West'. The mood is grand and imperial. Here is a meeting of two races on equal footing reflecting a mutual admiration and an acceptance of each other's ways:

> But there is neither East nor West, Border, nor Breed, nor Birth,
> When two strong men stand face to face, though they come from
> the ends of the earth.

At the end of the poem 'the two strong men' have come to terms:

> They have taken the Oath of the Brother-in-Blood on fire and fresh cut sod,
> On the hilt and the haft of the Khyber knife, and the wondrous names of God (ibid: 99-103).

This respect for the rough and wild tribesman contrasts with an open and general contempt for natives in the Empire. It is the Pathan in the Pass who forces questions and doubts about the 'Arithmetic on the Frontier' where

> Two thousand pounds of education
> drops to a ten rupee jezail (ibid: 13).

Missionaries, doctors, soldiers and administrators have contributed for over a century to the multi-dimensional and intimate accounts of Pathan social and political life. In these the Pathan emerges as an Indian version of the 'noble savage'. There is a peculiar love-hate relationship inherent in this figure. These sources stress the 'noble' aspect of the figure, a 'different' type of native, his 'likeability', democracy, frankness, sense of humour, yet they also refer to his 'savageness', 'treachery' and the dangers of duty on the Frontier. To take an instance, Irene Edwards, a nurse in the early thirties in Peshawar, relates how she and Captain Coldstream were having coffee and talking about golf:

> He knew that I was very keen on golf and asked me if I'd like a lesson from him. I said yes, I'd be very grateful, and he arranged to pick me up at five that afternoon. Then he went downstairs. When he got to the bottom he waved to me and said, 'I'll pick you up then, at five' I said, 'Right', and I turned round to walk back to the duty room. Then I heard a peculiar sort of scuffling noise. Suddenly I heard shouts of 'Sister, Sister, come quietly'. I rushed to the top of the stairs and looked down and there were two of the babus carrying Captain Coldstream upstairs. I could see blood streaming from his neck and I said, 'What has happened?' 'He's been beaten' one babu said. The other babu said in Hindustani, 'No, he has been knifed'. I looked down at Captain Coldstream and I knew that he was dying. When assistance came I went back into the duty room and I saw our coffee cups. I looked at Captain Coldstream's coffee cup and I picked up mine, which was still warm. I sat there and cried and cried, till another sister came and put her arms around me. We then walked out on to the verandah and we saw Abdul Rashid, the orderly, standing there with blood pouring down his arm. I went up to him and said, 'Oh, Abdul Rashid, have you been hurt?' and they all looked at me queerly. I thought Abdul Rashid had gone to Captain Coldstream's assistance. Actually, he was the murderer (Allen 1977a: 201).

This incident of sudden violence and death took place in the middle of Peshawar, the military and civil heart of the Province. Outside the city it was an even more dangerous world. Every Frontier hand had similar tales to tell (Pettigrew: 80). Nonetheless and on balance, 'everyone liked the Pathan, his courage and his sense of humour ... although there was always the chance of a bullet and often a great deal of discomfort' (Woodruff 1965 II: 292).

The second kind of writing which contributed to the myth of the Frontier is found in highly romanticised novels with titles like Lean Brown Men, King of the Khyber Rifles and Khyber Calling (see North 1945). It is not surprising that Flashman begins his adventures in the first Afghan War (Fraser 1969). These novels were complemented by popular 'B' films like the Brigand of Kandahar or North-West Frontier. The worst novels of the genre create names for people, places and situations which are not even remotely accurate. Attempts even to approximate to the economic, sociological and historical realities are thrown to the wind. A good example is the currently popular series written by Duncan Macneil, with titles like Drums Along the Khyber and Sadhu on the Mountain Peak; their inaccuracies conform to stereotypes of rebellious tribesmen east of Suez living a life of luxury and sin. I shall resist the temptation to quote from the adventures of the intrepid officer Ogilvie in the heart of Waziristan, a puritanically isolated, economically backward zone in the Tribal Areas; he comes across Maliks named Ram Surangar (Macneil 1971:78); is housed in palaces with marble floors, statues of 'well-breasted naked women', and ceilings depicting paintings of debauchery (ibid 157-158); and is sent by his host a chosen girl to keep him company at night (ibid 165).

On the Frontier today the romance engendered by the colonial encounter is still preserved particularly by the political and military administration. It began from the moment of the Independence of Pakistan in 1947, when Sir George Cunningham, an ex-Governor of the North-West Frontier Province, was re-called from Glasgow by Mr. Jinnah, the Governor General of Pakistan, to become the first Governor of the Province. Memories of the colonial encounter remain untouched. The Billiards Room in the Miran Shah, North Waziristan, Scouts Mess is still dominated by the portrait of Captain G. Meynell V.C., Guides Frontier Force, 'killed in action Mohmand operations - 29 September 1935'. Lt.Colonel Harmen (immortalized by Howell's account of him - Caroe 1965, Appendix D) stares from a painting in the Dining Room of the Wana Mess in South Waziristan. Perpetuation of the tradition is itself part of the romance. On the Shabkadar tower that dominates the entire area the plaques commemorating fallen soldiers are still clear. The graveyard, too, is undisturbed, and the head-stones tell their tale clearly.

The continuing romance of the Frontier is best captured for me by a story Askar Ali Shah, the editor of The Khyber Mail (Peshawar) recounted of an old retired British officer who had served in the Frontier Scouts and who was given permission, obtained with difficulty, to visit Razmak, North Waziristan, with his wife. He requested the commanding officer to be allowed to accompany the local Scouts on a 'recce' trip (gasht) and wore his uniform still splendid after all the years. He observed that evening that he would go home and was now ready to die. Perhaps with the death of his generation the romance will also fade and die.

This romance, however, was not originally present in British accounts. Early contacts with Pathans in the middle of the nineteenth century followed the subjugation of more complex, sophisticated and affluent Indian states. The Pathans were referred to as 'absolute barbarians ... avaricious, thievish and predatory to the last degree' (Temple, Secretary to the Chief Commissioner of the Punjab in 1855 - quoted in Wylly 1912: 5). Ibbetson thought the Pathan 'bloodthirsty, cruel and vindictive in the highest degree; he does not know what truth or faith is, in so much that the saying Afghan be iman (i.e. an Afghan is without conscience) has passed into a proverb among his neighbours' (Ibbetson 1883: 219). Two generations later, these attitudes were to be converted to those bordering on affection, respect and even admiration.

What then caused this great halo of romance to float over the British endeavour on the Frontier and continue to grow after it was all over? The

answers are many, and I shall consider them on various levels. Racially the British found that across the Indus there was a different world; the people were fairer and taller, and some, like Afridis, had blue eyes and blonde hair which helped create and perpetuate romantic theories of Greek origin (Bellew 1864, 1867, 1886). Geographically the climate and the physical environment reminded the British of home (Ahmed 1974; 1977). Psychologically the British found themselves, by the turn of the century, with no new worlds to conquer on the subcontinent: India lay passive and quiet. The major military pre-occupation was with the unruly North-West Frontier tribes; peripheral crises on the periphery of Empire. Imperial security bred a confidence in one's values and, as a consequence of this confidence, a better understanding of those of a remote and tribal people.

Perhaps most significant, however, was the change in the nature of colonial personnel. In 1858 India ceased to be the responsibility of a commercial company. It became a colony of the Crown and was turned over to civil and military officers drawn from the middle and upper classes of the most powerful nation of earth. Like school-boys in a state of boredom and security, the new breed of officers at the turn of the century craved some excitement. The Frontier was the French leave, involving an out-of-bounds adventure, the forbidden smoke, the forbidden drink, the innocently exciting infringement of school laws and social taboos.

Social reality appeared as an extension, a confirmation and a parody of public-school life. There was a particular Frontier code of its own that evolved as a consequence of the encounter: 'It became, therefore, a point of honour with us never to leave a wounded man behind. So if one of our men was wounded we counterattacked in order to get that wounded man back'. But above all the Frontier tested the man: 'To run away or to show cowardice on a Frontier campaign and come and wine or dine with your brother officers in the evening was a far worse punishment than risking death' (Allen 1977a:207). At the same time the concepts of 'sportmanship', 'games', 'honour', 'word', 'playing the referee', 'gentlemanly' and 'winning fairly or losing honourably', the key symbols of idealized British social behaviour, could be considered as having almost exact equivalents in the Pathan 'word' (<u>jaba</u>), 'honour' (<u>nang</u>), 'gentlemanly' (<u>Pukhtun</u>) and 'courage (<u>tora</u>).

Because he seemed to be able to fit these consepts of 'honour' and 'the code' with his own equivalent concepts, the Pathan was placed in a different social category to the other natives on the subcontinent: 'There was among the Pathans something that called to the Englishman or the Scotsman - partly that the people looked you straight in the eye, that there was no equivocation and that you couldn't browbeat them even if you wished to. When we crossed the bridge at Attock we felt we'd come home'(Allen 1977a: 197-198). As a result of this identification, the Pathan-British encounter was seen in straight 'game' analogy:

> It is a game - a contest with rules in which men kill without compunction and will die in order to win, in which kinship and friendship count less than winning - but in which there is no malice when the whistle blows and the game is over. And the transfer of an important player may be arranged at half-time while the lemons are being sucked (Mason 1976: 337).

The colonial encounter was reduced to the nature of a cricket match, it was 'our chaps' versus 'your chaps':

> The Political Agents would have been useless if they had not identified themselves thoroughly with the tribesmen's

> thoughts and feelings, but we felt they often carried it too far. At the end of one day of fighting the Political Agent's young assistant came into our camp mess for a drink. M.L., in command, was in a good humour. After a confused beginning, the battalion had fought skilfully and well and several men were certain to win decorations.
>
> The young political put down his glass. 'I thought our chaps fought very well today, sir,' he said.
>
> M.L. beamed. 'So did I. Not at all bad'.
>
> 'And outnumbered about three to one, too, I should say'.
>
> M.L. looked a little puzzled. 'Well, only in one or two places. On the whole I think the tribesmen were outnumbered'.
>
> The political said, 'Oh, I'm sorry. It's the tribesmen I was talking about.' (Masters 1965: 157).

Life on the Frontier was itself part of the Great Game played on three continents by international players. Even the sordid business of bombing tribesmen was cast in a 'sportsman-like' mould and a proper 'warning notice' issued before air-raids. Otherwise it simply would not be cricket:

> Whereas lashkars (war parties) have collected to attack Gandab (Mohmand) and are to this end concentrated in your villages and lands, you are hereby warned that the area lying between Khapak-Nahakki line and the line Mullah Killi - Sam Chakai will be bombed on the morning of (date) beginning at 7 a.m. and daily till further notice.
>
> You are hereby warned to remove all persons from all the villages named and from the area lying between them and the Khapak and Nahakki Passes and not to return till further written notice is sent to you. Any person who returns before receiving such further written notice will do so at his own risk.
>
> Signed Griffith - Governor dated 4th September 1933.

Little wonder that a leader in The Statesman disapproved of this stance and warned that 'war is not a sentimental business and there will be no end to it so long as there is the least tendency to romanticize it as a gentlemanly and heroic and admirable pastime' (Statesman, 13.9.1935).

Above all, the Frontier represented a male world, and its masculine symbols a system that translated easily into classic British public school life. Women, on both sides, were generally out of sight and, when encountered, honoured. No stories of rapes, abductions or mistresses are told on either side. In any case almost the entire Tribal Area was strictly a 'no families' area for officials. In perhaps the most famous and unique affair of its kind Miss Ellis was kidnapped in 1923 from Kohat by an Afridi, Ajab Khan, as revenge for a British raid on his village and what he considered the violation of the Code by exposing his women to the presence of British troops. All accounts of Miss Ellis' treatment corroborate her own statements that her honour was never violated; she found respect and protection at the house of Akhundzada Mahmud among the Orakzai (Swinson 1967). It was this absence of the 'Mem-Sahib' that gave life on the Frontier its special public-schoolboy flavour, and women's presence in large numbers after the opening of the Suez Canal late last century may be thought of as erecting the final ethnic and social barrier between Indians and the British (Allen 1977a, 1977b; Spear 1963).

The mystification of the Frontier encounter created a mythical tribesman worthy of the honour to play opposite the British in the Frontier

game. This mystification helped to popularize a universal image of the Pathan as embodying the finest qualities of loyalty, courage and honour that transcend race, colour and creed (Caroe 1965: 344; Mason 1976: 338-339) - an image, moreover, that approximates to the Pathan's own notions of ideal Pathan behaviour as understood in terms of his Code. Contemporary British accounts end on a romantic and emotional note of contact with a people 'who looked him in the face' (Caroe 1965: xiii; Elliott 1968: 293); they speak of 'an affinity born of a hundred years of conflict, a mutual sense of honour, affection and esteem' (Caroe in Preface to Elliott 1968:v). The British created a special ethnic category of people whom they could elevate to 'noble savages' above the general run of 'savages'. It was an elevation not based on sophisticated intellectual or cultural criteria but an extension of the public-school analogy: someone not at your school but who could take a beating in the boxing ring or rugger without complaining, who could give as good as he got. The map of British India was dyed with various colours: red for British India, yellow for the 'protected areas' of the Indian States and so on. To these categories was added a special one, an acknowledged 'no-man's land', of the Tribal Areas. A land beyond the pale.

As a result of their romantic attitude, the British left social structure in the Tribal Areas largely untouched. Their presence created homogeneity within the tribe and encouraged the preservation of cultural values. In this way the anthropological 'purity' of the area was ensured. This was not the only effect of Britain's 'big-power' strategy, however. The introduction of allowances, estates and tithes exacerbated and deepened internal conflict based on internal rivalry. And the romantic gloss did not change the savagery or determination of the encounter - barbed wire and bombing do not win friends. It should be emphasised that, whatever the British imagined, their attitude was not reciprocated. None of the symbols of Frontier romance or nostalgia are visible among the tribes themselves. For the Pathans, the conflict with the British was not encompassed by standards applicable among themselves. While the British considered the Pathans, in some senses, as worthy opponents in a game, the Pathans considered the British as powerful, alien and unwanted intruders. Present bitterness toward twentieth century 'civilization' and 'modernization' results from an association of these processes with the colonizing British. Locally, official schemes sponsored by larger state systems are still regarded with suspicion.

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SOME REMARKS ON THE CHRONOLOGY OF ICELANDIC SOURCES

This paper takes up some of the points made by Kirsten Hastrup in her discussion of the Icelandic constitution in the period 930-1262 (JASO VIII :3). It also attempts to deal with some of the more general problems involved in historical anthropology. In the present case, as in most historical work, the dates and quality of the sources are at least as important as the events which the sources claim to describe. When examining Icelandic material there has been a tendency among anthropologists (see Turner 1971, Rich 1976, and Thompson 1960) and other scholars to draw parallels between what we know of Old Icelandic society and modern circumstances. This tendency may be partly a product of the Nationalist Movement of the nineteenth century (see Babcock 1976:81), which drew heavily on the literary styles and sources of the sagas. Such parallels are dubious since there is no evidence to suggest a similar 'nationalist' attitude in the period from 930 to the accession of the King of Norway in 1262. The very nature of the sources makes it difficult to come to any firm conclusions about the structure of the Old Icelandic constitution. The majority of the histories and family sagas were written in the latter part of the thirteenth century, after Iceland had come under the rule of the Norwegian king. Often they contain criticisms of contemporary affairs, and it is possible that the 'state-like' image which they present for the earlier community is a product of preservation and idealization and that the criticisms they contain evoke a past which never existed.

It is sometimes assumed that the Old Icelandic 'freestate' (that is, whatever Iceland was before it came under the rule of Norway) was 'constituted' by the Althing, or national assembly (see, for example, Hastrup 1977). In fact we must consider whether the term 'freestate', with its nationalistic overtones, is relevant to our interests in the Old Icelandic constitution. The term 'fristatstid' (Danish: the time of the freestate) appears in Danish histories of Iceland and, translated, in some English histories. In modern Icelandic two compounds may be considered equivalent to this term: lidh-veldi, which refers to the modern Icelandic state, and thjódh-veldi.[2] Neither appears in the Icelandic-English Dictionary compiled by Vigfusson, Cleasby and Craigie (1874), although they may be found in dictionaries of modern Icelandic (see Bodhvarsson 1963).[3] The Danish dictionary (Ordbog over det Danske Sprog) puts the time of first usage for 'fristat' at 1800, while the English term came into use in 1664. The term appears to be anachronistic for the period with which we are concerned; and as with the study of witchcraft which Crick discusses,

> we have probably been misled here by the availability of a term supplied by our own history which has very probably acted as a general means for the illicit importation of a whole host of cultural terms for the description of another society (1973:19).

The Althing may have constituted a 'freestate', but, in view of the linguistic evidence, it is more likely that the supposed event is in fact part of a later interpretation. The Althing probably grew out of a tradition of local things, or gatherings, for the purpose of arbitration.

My own discussion of the Old Icelandic constitution will be fairly generalized, attempting to 'describe a general quality or tendency pervading the whole mass of laws and customs that rule a State which gives to this mass a charter differing from the constitution of any other state' (Bryce 1901:136).

Probably about twenty thousand people came to Iceland during the settlement period (c.860). They were mostly from Norway but settlers also came from Sweden, Denmark and the British Isles. During this period the Norse language was rather undifferentiated, and we may assume that the

Icelanders retained many of the beliefs and customs found in Scandinavia. For example, the heathen gods were worshipped in Iceland as they had been in Norway, although the evidence of place names and archaeological evidence suggests that Thorr may have become more important in Iceland. Some of the independent landowners owned temples for worship and instituted things which acted primarily as courts for the settlement of disputes, all based on models taken from Norway.

In the matter of social stratification, however, many differences may be observed: with reference to Norway, the sagas and histories commonly mention such classes of persons as thrall (slave), bóndi (free farmer), jarl (earl) and konugr (king).

Slaves were treated as chattel and had no legal rights or responsibilities anywhere in Scandinavia; in Iceland, however, the class of free farmer (bóndi) was undifferentiated, in contrast to its sub-division into ranked groups in various provinces of Norway. Nor, in the early period, were there earls or kings in Iceland (Foote and Wilson 1970:84-5). There is no doubt that the Icelanders had a respect for family origins and family estates similar to that of the Norwegians, but the circumstances of the settlement eliminated at the beginning the possibility of inherited land.[4] Later the majority of Icelandic farmers were in a socially equal position as far as inherited ownership rights went.

There is no mention of earls or an aristocracy in Iceland until the thirteenth century; rather the office of godhi was recognised and was unique to Iceland.[5] The godhar (plural of godhi) had specific duties but few special rights,[6] acting in groups of three at the local things, where one of them hallowed the assembly and therefore acted as a 'priest'. All three fulfilled the largely secular function of arbitrator in disputes.

Before the formation of the Althing, Iceland could probably have been accurately described as several communities and it is unlikely that the godhar exercised any general authority:

> Although several of these settlers are described in both Landnámabók and the Family Sagas as powerful chieftains, even of royal or noble ancestry, they were probably no more than the heads of their own families and it is unlikely that they would have been able to exercise any general authority over other men than those of their own kin (Einarsson 1974:45).

The circumstances which in 965 brought these independent farmers together to agree to a fixed number of godhordh and to establish the Althing will remain a mystery. Íslendingabók, the history of Ári Thorgilsson, merely states that it was established by the counsel of Ulfljót. Bjarni Einarsson suggests that part of the explanation is that the office of godhi was not considered a position of authority:

> The independent farmers continued to consider themselves free and equal. This is also obvious from the fact that a godhordh originally had no fixed geographical borders and thus did not give leadership over a fixed population. According to the law each free man could choose which godhi he wished to join in a mutually beneficial relationship (Einarsson ibid:46).

All free men were to be in a thing relationship with a godhi of their choice and this relationship appears to have been crucial to the constitution.

Originally a free man could choose to become the 'thingman' of any *godhi* on the island, but with the reforms of 965 choice was limited to the *godhar* within his geographical quarter. The choice was based on family tradition, both the *godhi's* and the thingman's, and on the personal popularity of the *godhi*. Concerning this relationship Einar Ól. Sveinsson notes:

> The recognition of the mutual independence of the thingman and the chieftain was bound to affect profoundly the whole life of the people. Their relationship was one of mutual trust and involved far-reaching moral obligations precisely because it was based on free choice (Sveinnson 1953:9).

The mutual independence of the *godhi* and his thingmen makes it impossible to conceive of an opposition between 'self-help' and the 'law', one of the oppositions by which Hastrup seeks to explain the collapse of the 'freestate'. The *godhar* functioned more as arbitrators than as judges, negotiating settlements between disputing parties. A free farmer who felt that he had been ill-served by his *godhi* could always enter into a *thing* relationship with another *godhi* who promised to provide a better settlement. Even after the 965 reforms a free farmer could still choose among at least nine *godhar* to represent him.

Contrary to Hastrup's view it seems that, at this early period, law and self-help were not, in fact, contradictory. The very distinction arises only when the law is coincident with some coercive force that claims the right to execute its judgements, in which case those who act outside the structure of authority can be said to 'help themselves'. In the period of the so-called 'freestate' (930-1262), self-help was all there was; the law specified only what one could rightly help oneself to, as is the case with many legal systems which rest on arbitration rather then judgement.

Even with the rise of the 'great families' in the twelfth century, the character and function of arbitration in the courts remained. *Sturlunga saga* describes the course of a case which involves members of two of the great families: Jón Loftsson, grandson of Saemundur the Wise and leader of the Oddaverjar family arbitrates a case in which Sturla Thordsson, father of Snorri Sturluson (author of *Heimskringla*) and member of the Sturlungar family is involved (Jónsson, ed. 1954: I, 74-76). The case serves to illustrate the nature of the law as arbitrary rather than adjudicative. The judge adopts the plaintiff's son as part of his judgement, and the settlement reached is a practical one which satisfies all involved by introducing more personal relationships into the case; the case is not confined to the facts of an inheritance dispute, but rather it aims at a general resolution of the conflict by legal means. Moreover, since the dispute passes from litigation at a local level in Western Iceland to the Althing, to a local meeting in Reykholt in the South, and finally back to the Althing, it is difficult to view the Althing as being at the top of a legal hierarchy. The annual meeting of the Althing seems to have provided an added opportunity to settle disputes, but, in this case at least, it does not appear as a 'higher' court. The idea of a legal hierarchy (Hastrup 1977:129) may, perhaps, be anachronistic, in so far as the structure of power and authority which it conceptualises may not have existed at the period in question. The idea that one court is 'higher' than another needs to be treated warily.

On the whole it appears that the position of the *godhi* did not involve economic power. Free farmers who had achieved a certain level of wealth were obliged to pay *thingfarakaup* (assembly travel costs). The Icelandic law books, *Grágas*, state that every *thingheyjandi* (thing participant) should receive an amount determined by the distance from the place of assembly or the number of day's journeys each man had to travel. The *thingheyjandi*

himself was exempt from these taxes (Grágas I-24,46,116; II-159). A godhi had the right to bring one-ninth of his thingmen to the assembly, and we may therefore gather that the tax was a rather equitable system of defraying the costs of representation for the godhordh.[7]

It was only after the introduction of the Law of Tithes in 1096 that the power of the godhar came to be defined economically. Íslendingabók states that

> by reason of [the] popularity [of Bishop Gízurr of Skalholt], and because of his and Saemunder's representations, and by the counsel of Markus the lawspeaker it was made law that all men should count and appraise their property, and swear that it was correctly valued . . ., and then give tithes thereof (Hermansson (tr.) 1930:69).[8]

The Law of Tithes was intended to provide regular financial support to diocesan and parochial services. All estates which were donated to the church were exempt from the tax so many landowners with churches made their land over to the church while continuing to administer the land on the patron saint's behalf. The law stated that the tithe should be distributed with a quarter going to the bishop, a quarter to the church, a quarter to the poor and a quarter to the priest. Since the priest was usually a member of the landowner's family, this meant that a half to three-quarters of the tax money went directly to the landowners of these estates. In some cases the landowners received the entire amount. Sveinsson, citing Byskupa sögur, notes that

> in payment of a sum of sixty hundreds lent by Saemunder Jonsson to Bishop Pall for a journey abroad, the Oddaverjar received the bishop's share of the tithes paid on certain farms in Rangarthing for about eighty years, although the annual sum realized in this manner amounted to six hundreds . . . . And Abbot Arngrimr reports, on the evidence of trustworthy men, that Sighvatr Sturluson received the bishop's share of the tithes in Eyjafjorthur for six years (Sveinsson 1953:53-54).

Saemundur the Wise, the priest of Oddi who helped Bishop Gízurr bring about the Law of Tithes, was not the least to benefit from this state of affairs. His estate became one of the richest in Iceland and his descendents, the Oddaverjar, one of the leading families.

While some landowners and their descendents benefited from the Law of Tithes, it would appear that the position of many became worse; Bandamanna saga describes eight impoverished godhar in the eleventh century and their attempts to gain wealth from a rich merchant-farmer (Jónsson 1933). Although the saga itself dates from a much later period, it might still lead us to agree with Bjarni Einarsson that

> it is reasonable to believe that this accumulation of wealth by a comparatively small number of families became one of the main sources of disruption of the earlier social balance (1974:47).

With the change in the economic balance came other changes; in the relationships between a godhi and his thingmen, and among godhar. Iceland began to resemble the feudal structure of society to be found in medieval Europe and Scandinavia. By the early part of the thirteenth century six families[9] had extended their authority over most of the country. A family could extend its power over a godhordh by two methods: by owning the godhordh or by receiving the authorization of the actual owners to exercise the power that

went with the godhordh. This in turn affected the field of choice for the free farmers:

> As the domains of individual chieftains were thus extended it became more difficult in practice to change godhi without moving to another district. And gradually out of the three godhordh of each thing, originally independent and without fixed geographical limits, there grew a single geographically defined unit: the heradh or district. . . . Here, whenever a new chieftain came into power, we are told that the men of the district held an assembly and accepted him as their leader (Sveinsson 1953:10).

The authorizations given from one godhi to another were, in practice, oaths of allegiance, and we now begin to see hints of a feudal social structure[10] emerging in Iceland.

We find, during this period, that many of the godhar who went abroad served as hirdhmenn (king's men) to the king of Norway and some continued to use their titles when they returned to Iceland.

At this point (early in the thirteenth century) there were three directions in which the Icelandic state could go. It could break up into a number of smaller kingdoms headed by members of the great families, become a single kingdom united under an Icelandic king, or receive a foreign king as final authority.

In 1235 these possibilities began to play themselves out with the return of Sturla Sighvatsson from Norway:

> He had a definite design: To establish his rule over the whole country; and once this idea had been conceived, the feuds of the chieftains . . . change their character . . . and often their conduct becomes correspondingly violent. From now on there is no certainty that the chieftain will seek power by lawful means (Sveinsson 1953:11).

With these feuds we see the last of the supports taken away from the Althing. Originally the Althing was established to settle disputes arising from local things and derived its legitimacy through the representation of independent godhar and the support of their thingmen, who were also to a great extent independent. But with the consolidation of wealth in a few families and their rise to power, the bases for the Althing had been eliminated. The thingmen were no longer able to choose the chieftain who might best serve their needs but could only accept or reject the rule of a powerful chieftain. The godhar themselves no longer acted independently, but were committed to serve even more powerful godhar through oaths of allegiance. In fact the godhordh, the basic unit of the Icelandic republic and the Althing, had ceased to exist, merged into a new unit, the heradh, with geographical boundaries.

The adoption of the Norwegian king in 1262 was the conclusion of a gradual process and hardly the result of a few 'traitors'[11] working for their own shortsighted ends. Ten years before, the king of Norway had obtained the chieftaincies of Haraldr and Filippus of the Oddaverjar, although he had no legal support (Sveinsson 1953:17). In other parts of Iceland his commands were also heeded. In 1256 Thorgils Skarthi and Bishop Heinrekr made the farmers of Skagafjördhur and Eyjafjördhur in the North pay tribute to the king, and by 1261 the whole of the south of Iceland (where the greatest concentration of population was located) was paying tribute to the king of Norway. The final 'traitorous' acts of a few men served mainly to formalize

a submission which had already occurred.

In the course of this discussion I have presented certain events in Icelandic history which can be found in almost any general history of Iceland and in many histories of the 'Viking Age'. Hastrup (1977) has also presented them and there is little disagreement as to what happened. I disagree only with the interpretation which she places on these events. Perhaps a brief discussion of the theoretical apparatus which she employs may help to clarify my position.

Hastrup's argument begins with the suggestion that

> from the very settlement of Iceland, at least two sets of contradictions were latent in the social system; but it was only as time passed and certain external and internal pressures increased that these contradictions and their mutual interaction became fatal to the freestate (1977:125).

One of these 'consisted in the opposition between self-help and law' (ibid), while the other was 'related to the distinction between Christianity and Paganism' (ibid). I have dealt only with the first but the same arguments apply to the second. The point is that the 'contradiction' is not a matter of two coexistent and incompatible forms which are worked out with various results. Christianity replaces paganism, as law replaces self-help, so the terms have completely different meanings at the beginning of the process and at the end. It is only in retrospect that we may perceive a contradiction.

The case is complicated where the terms remain throughout even though their meanings change. 'Law' is a very different thing in the early and later periods of Icelandic history and the opposition with self-help (not an Icelandic term) makes sense only in the later period.

In her discussion of the Old Icelandic constitution, Hastrup links 'the law', 'the Althing' and 'the freestate' very closely:

> From the moment of the political event that made the Althing emerge, the people of Iceland were no longer just Norwegians once or twice removed, they were Icelanders (ibid:129).
>
> the Althing ... was a dominant symbol . . . and in this sense the national ideology was vested in the Althing (ibid:130).
>
> We are now employing the term ideology as a deep structural fact. It is here conceived as a p-structure for cultural identification, seen as a continuous process of self-definition, expressed in a variety of s-structures. What matters is that Iceland was a self-defining unit, from the very moment of its first constitution, the law of Ulfljötr (ibid).

The thrust of the argument is clear: something (the p-structure) persists once the 'freestate' is founded and generates s-structures which are the more visible aspects of Icelandic self-definition. The p-structure appears to be a descendent of Ardener's earlier formulation of the 'template':

> Something is repeated and revived over time through these successive replications. Whatever 'it' is, it is to be considered at a different level of analysis from that used in even the sophisticated analysis of content. I call it the 'template' (Ardener 1970:159 n.15).

I do not suggest that p-structures and templates are necessarily the same thing but Hastrup's use of 'p-structures' conforms to this early formulation. It might seem unfair to approach Hastrup's work through Ardener's papers, but Hastrup herself places great emphasis on them, and to proceed without considering them would be to ignore the many useful points she makes.

Hastrup's formulation of the 'self-defining unit' leads us to Ardener's 'world-structures' with their 'totalitarian' tendency to 'englobe' their environment (ardener 1975:25). That p-structures are unavoidably part of world-structures is not surprising (Ardener hints at this in his "Events" paper - 1973), but what must not be forgotten is that world-structures are pre-eminently historical. They exist in time and they include their own histories, whether they are 'hot' or 'cold'.[12] It is not simply that something persists through time which is the p-structure, but that the later version 'englobes' or includes the earlier in some more or less orderly 'bricolage'.

Strictly speaking one can say very little about the events of Iceland's history before the twelfth century. There is no documented 'continuous process of self-definition' for the period in question, rather the period itself is a part of later periods' self-definition - periods when Iceland was under the rule of the king of Norway or, later, under the rule of the Danes. The facts which may or may not 'really' have been part of the earlier state are first of all elements within the later structure. Except for the Elder Edda, of dubious origin, and some scaldic poetry, we have no pre-Christian sources. Ári Thorgilsson's Íslendingabók, Grágas, which was the written record of the law, and Landnámabók all date from late in the eleventh and twelfth centuries.[13] The so-called family sagas such as Njala, Hrafnkatla, and others all date from late in the thirteenth century, after the king of Norway had established his rule over Iceland. These stories are often set in the period of the tenth and eleventh centuries and are of dubious historical value.

It is, of course, far easier to criticise others' accounts of early Iceland than to provide an adequate account oneself, but this could hardly be otherwise with the sources as they are. An analysis of the 'freestate', its means of self-definition, the groups which made it up and the idea of equality under the law cannot fail to be interesting. My point is that the proper object of analysis is 'the idea of early Iceland held c. 1200' and not a real 'early Iceland' which could be seen as preceding 'saga Iceland'. One cannot help suspecting that the 'Icelandic Free State' is a semi-factual notion like Daniel Boone's America or 'Merrie England'.

In the more modern general histories dating from the nineteenth century we may observe the imposition of a continuity between that ideal time in the past before Iceland came under the rule of a foreign power and the ideal time in the future when it should be free of Danish rule. It is no wonder, then, that the recognition of the rule of the king of Norway in 1262 should be called a 'traitorous' act in the general history books.

If we are to base our theories on the 'historical facts' of a certain period we should determine what those 'facts' are and avoid using concepts which may have arisen only in a much later process of self-definition. Where this later process has occurred it offers an object which may be analysed in terms of p-structures, world-structures and all the rest. But a careful consideration of the sources is required to be sure which world-structures we are talking about.

Melinda Babcock.

NOTES

1. The sagas' value as histories is open to question. One major debate has centered around Hrafnkels saga freysgodha: Sigurdhur Nordal (1958) focuses on the inconsistencies which appear within Hrafnkatla, maintaining that it is mostly a work of fiction.

2. Due to the limitations of the typewriter I have substituted the Icelandic letter 'ð' (the 'th' sound as in 'the') with 'dh'. The Icelandic letter 'þ' ('th' as in 'thing') is replaced by 'th' and the letter 'æ' has been seperated to 'ae'. All Icelandic words appear in the nominative case in singular or plural form as appropriate.

3. Although Cleasby and Vigfússon do not list the compound thjódh-veldi they do state that 'in quite modern times (thelast 30-40 years) a whole crop of compounds with thjódh- has been formed to express the sense of national; . . . but all such phrases sound foreign and are not vernacular' (Cleasby, Vigfússon and Powell 1957:739). The first edition of the dictionary appeared in 1874 so such a usage would date from the early part of the nineteenth century.

4. There is little reason to maintain that 'when settlers first came to Iceland, they were primarily defined by their home of origin' (Hastrup 1977:126). The evidence suggests, rather, that the settlement represented a new starting point from which to reckon status, although family characteristics were probably still considered in the new reckoning.

5. Outside of Iceland the word godhi is only recorded on two occasions, referring to the priestly function of two men living in Denmark in the ninth and tenth centuries. In Iceland the function of godhi appears to have been mainly secular (Foote and Wilson 1970:133).

6. The wergild payable for a godhi was the same as for any freeman; however a godhi could be prosecuted and fined if he neglected his duties.

7. Íslendingabók states that Bishop Gízurr of Skalholt took a census (about 1100) of all the franklins who paid thingfarakaup and found 4,560 (Ch. x).

8. It is rather interesting that Ári uses the phrase 'aller men' (allir menn= all men) while referring to those who would have to pay under the Law of Tithes but uses the term 'buender' (baendur= free farmers) when he describes the census which Bishop Gízurr took of those paying the thingfarakaup (Holtsmark, ed. 27-28).

9. These families were the Svinfellingar, Oddaverjar, Haukdaelir, Sturlungar, Vatnsfirdhingar and Asbirningar (Einarsson 1974:48).

10. Although loyalty was pledged from the beginning of the thirteenth century, a feudal 'court' did not fully emerge until Gízurr Thorvaldsson, who was made earl by the king of Norway, returned to Iceland and made a number of people his liege vassals (handgegnir menn) (Sveinsson 1953:12).

11. Modern accounts usually refer to Snorri and his son, Urökja, as the 'traitors' of the Icelandic 'freestate'.

12. As Levi-Strauss notes, the criterion of 'historical consciousness'

> is itself ahistorical. It offers not a concrete image of history but an abstract scheme of men making history of such a kind that it can manifest itself in the trend of their lives as a synchronic totality. Its position in relation to history is therefore the same as that of primitives to the eternal past: . . . history plays exactly the part of a myth (Lévi-Strauss 1966:254).

13. In these sources we find no reference to the 'freestate' and are fairly hard put to find any nationalistic sentiment in the works. Even Íslendingabók devotes one of its ten chapters to a description of Greenland and its inhabitants.

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COMMENTARY

SOCIAL ANTHROPOLOGY AND THE STRUCTURE OF ATTENTION

The concept of attention structure as an organizing principle in sub-human primate society has its sources in the sudden abundance of field data on primates which became available in the decade or so up to the mid-sixties and in the unease among many primatologists about the adequacy of existing formulations to accommodate these new facts. In particular the traditional conception of rank-order or dominance, both defined and measured as priority of access to scarce resources, seemed to be approaching the end of its explanatory usefulness. Chance's formulation of the concept of attention structure (1967) may be seen as an attempt to shift the focus of primate studies along several axes, not all of which may have been consciously recognized at the time, although some certainly were.

One impulse for change found expression in the attempt to break free from a constraining and often premature concern with functional explanation, in favour of an elaboration of the notion of structure in primate social organization. (Anthropologists are invited to recognize here a parallel, displaced in time, between the two disciplinary areas.) A second did so in a new attempt to eliminate from the description of non-human primate social life some of the more obvious human preconceptions built into the older formulations of dominance and status. A third sought to lay foundations for a systemic mode of description and explanation in primate ethology to parallel (we may read it) the Durkheimian position in human social science. A fourth addressed once more the problem of establishing a groun!work of continuity for arguments from animal to man, this being seen as part of that broader objective which Chance and many others conceive of as 'founding the study of human behaviour in biology'.

In the studies of attention structure which have succeeded Chance's original paper, progress along these axes has been uneven. While the attention structure model has proved valuable in a number of recent primate studies (e.g. Pitcairn 1976; Reynolds and Luscombe 1976; Waterhouse and Waterhouse 1976), attempts to apply it to man have generated, on the whole, banality and confusion. However the rather unsatisfactory outcome, to date, of attempts to bridge the animal-man gulf via the attention structure model is traceable not to the intrinsic inappropriateness of that model, but rather to our failure to carry out what should have been, logically and chronologically, the very first interdisciplinary task: the establishment of a common conceptual framework wherein anthropologists and ethologists alike could give recognition from the start to the linguistically and socially generated ambiguities written into the core notion of attention itself.

The collection The Social Structure of Attention (Chance and Larsen (Eds.) 1976) brings together a fair selection of recent work on the attention structure theme; and the volume as a whole offers an interesting case-history of what has gone well and what badly with interdisciplinary work in this field. The book falls into two parts, devoted to nonhuman primates and to man, with implications of a continuity of relevance across the two which presumably holds either at the level of 'observation' and data or at that of evolutionary process. The primatological papers are chiefly concerned with documentation and elaboration of the attention structure hypothesis and as such are relatively non-problematical (save at one or two points as I shall show). The human applications range in scale and focus from attempts to demonstrate the existence of an attention structure bearing a stable relationship to 'rank' in preschool children, to an essay on the relevance of attention theory to strategies of information control in the events surrounding the Vietnam protest movement. Chance himself has also sought recently (1975) to link his ideas on the 'agonistic' and 'hedonic' organization of attention to Bernstein's analysis of restricted

and elaborated verbal codes.

I want to pick out two cases where application of the attention structure model to man seems to me to have failed; then, going beyond the shortcomings of individual projects, to refer the failure to a want of explicitness on everyone's part about the ground-rules of the exercise itself. These ground-rules, insofar as they have been articulated at all, are contained in the first paragraph of Chance and Larsen's Introduction to The Social Structure of Attention. Here the entire research field is pre-structured by criteria which are unself-critically empiricist:

> A recent discovery has revealed that the organization of an individual's attention is a feature of the social structure in which that individual lives. Ways of studying this have now been worked out and these are reported here both for sub-human primates and for groups of children and for adults. The concept therefore enables us not only to think from animal society to human society but also to observe the same features of both, and so to begin to distinguish the primate nature of the foundations upon which the unique qualities of human beings exist (1976:1).

It is surely a partial consequence of the unexamined aspects of this empiricist programme that some human ethologists seek via the concept of attention structure to establish a universal mode of social organization among children incorporating second- or higher- order concepts without any proper examination of their appropriateness. In The Social Structure of Attention the paper by Omark and Edelman is a good example of this; its first paragraph states: 'The basic social structure which will be examined is the dominance hierarchy ...' From the first pegging-out of ground, then, 'the' hierarchy is already firmly there, present and, of course, correct. A 'selection' argument is wheeled out to justify the transition from primate to infantile human structures, and it is then claimed that: 'The phylogenetic similarities of dominance hierarchies in primates and children have important implications for the development of children's logical, or cognitive structures' (ibid: 122). Next: 'With their [7 - 11 year olds'] coherent view of the dominance relations in their group, they do not have to fight with each member in order to know their own position in the hierarchy ....' (ibid: 123). There follows an account of procedure in which paired children were asked questions such as 'who's toughest?' We are to have no anxieties about language, culture, meaning or the performative content of putting the question itself, for (we are reassured) 'Prior pilot work indicated that children meant by "toughest" the equivalent of what primatologists meant by "most dominant": e.g. being strong, being good at fighting, and "being able to get others to do what they wanted them to do"'(ibid:124). And lest any doubts linger: 'Basic to our methodology is the use of simple words, part of the vocabulary of all English-speaking children, with clear equivalents in other languages (e.g. Swiss-German and Amharic)' (ibid: 127). By this point (and we are still in the introductory discussion) expectations are firmly structured well in advance of any data, so that the results themselves are almost superfluous. The scheme allows no room for the discovery - even the 'observation' - that children can perceive others as influential but non- 'tough'; or indeed that they can have entirely different ways of perceiving their social world. It is ironic that Omark and Edelman should claim credit, by including children's descriptions of their own social relations, for liberation from what they see as a constraining behaviourism in human ethology. The would-be liberating move letting the children 'speak for themselves' is at once cancelled by the circumscription of what the authors are willing to let them say.[1]

My second example of failure concerns the topic of 'advertence': an extension of the attention structure concept which formed the basis of an inter-disciplinary project in which I was involved with Chance between 1968 and 1970. In my own thinking on the relations between 'attention' and 'advertence' I had conceived of the latter essentially as a human elaboration of the former: a conceptual recognition of the transformation of 'attention' as found in 'nature' and its re-emergence in a cultural world of performance and meaning where it can be owed, withheld, paid, acknowledged and honoured (Callan, Chance and Pitcairn 1973; Callan 1976). Thus, I disagree with Chance when, in his contribution to Biosocial Anthropology, he suggests that:

> Advertence was the name we gave to the process by which /individuals/ advertise their presence and their willingness to become part of the social activity .... advertence ... is used as a means of establishing group acceptance of an individual by manipulating the attention of the group ... (Chance 1975: 109, 110).

Here, perhaps, the failure is one of communication; but once again it has roots in the unexamined features of an empiricist paradigm.[2] For Chance, as he expresses himself in this passage, advertence can be nothing other than a new kind of display, belonging with other sorts of 'display behaviour', in a class of phenomena which one can observe, label and afterwards claim to have 'discovered'. Once this assimilation takes place, the term loses its value as a way of rendering explicit the ambiguity between domains of reference already inherent in such concepts as 'attention', 'response' and 'behaviour' (see Ardener 1973).

My general position is that behavioural scientists have something to gain by taking more serious account than has usually been the case of anthropological insights and approaches in their efforts to develop a biologically grounded, integrated human science. The failure to examine the interpretation of objectivity written into the paradigm which the bridge-builders have taken over from traditional behavioural science has seriously hindered attempts to intergrate animal and human application of the attention structure concept - this despite the virtues of the original insight. It is significant that the more successful papers in the 'human' department of The Social Structure of Attention are ones which, escaping tacitly from the straitjacket of vulgar empiricism, assign an undistorted and unreduced role - and above all one of equal theoretical weight - to social anthropological formulations which themselves have a legitimate provenance within social theory. Examples include Larsen's use of the attention structure concept in a commentary on Weber and charisma and Chisholm's stimulating use of Barth's generative model to speculate about the connection between attention structure, reciprocity, value and the evolution of rules in human life. The latter may in turn be compared with a 'straight' ethologist's conception of what it is to have rules:

> The mechanism which all rank ordered animals have in common is that of social control. This is the establishment of rule structures within a group, to which an individual matches its behaviour in a particular situation and produces an appropriate response (Pitcairn 1976: 75).

In Pitcairn's account it seems that an entire dimension of anthropological awareness is missing from the conceptual equipment with which a behavioural scientist has been taught to work; a moment's reflection on his use of the terms 'situation' and 'appropriate' as well as 'rule' and 'social control' reveals this.

The problem has not been that behavioural scientists have been unreceptive to contributions from anthropology; rather they have used these contributions at the wrong stages of the enquiry, when the ground-rules and criteria of relevance are already firmly written in and no longer easily brought to awareness. They have taken for granted the procedural and logical primacy of the behavioural science paradigm for an integrated account of biological and social reality. This, in the case of attention, has blocked awareness of what should have been clear from the beginning: the core concept of 'attention' is itself ambiguously located in at least three domains - as an operational device equivalent to measures of gaze direction and bodily orientation; as a necessary component of an organism's equipment for selective perception and decision; and finally (as in Chisholm's interpretation of reciprocal value and my approach to advertence) as a social resource which can become a cultural one. The Social Structure of Attention in fact contains explorations of 'attention' in all these spheres, but the linkages remain implicit and unworked because of the initial assumption that the concept itself is elemental and non-problematic. This assumption in turn is intimately bound up with the difficulty of achieving a critical focus on the objectivist, empiricist paradigm which underlies the whole.

It is notoriously hard to push the bus one is riding in; and we may have every sympathy for the ethologists who, armed with a good idea such as that of attention structure, strive to grapple with a challenging human reality. Yet social anthropologists are, by their very conditions of work, forced into an awareness of the problematical aspects of 'mere' observation (see e.g. Ardener 1978). Surely some of the problems exhibited in the debate on attention structure could have been averted, or at least more sensitively explored, had there taken place at the start a more tough-minded conversation between ethologists and social anthropologists about the paradigms under which observation is conducted - including the one which sets up the 'observation' of 'behaviour' as itself a straightforward possibility.

Hilary Callan.

NOTES

1. Perhaps I should confess also to some personal distaste for this sort of work. It seems to me to violate one of the more worthwhile of the ground-rules which social anthropology and ethology have traditionally shared: namely a certain respect for the creature as it is, stickleback, ape or child.

2. The term 'paradigm' is used here in a Kuhnian way to include both the procedural ground-rules of a given mode of inquiry and its spoken and unspoken criteria of relevance.

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VOLOSINOV ON THE IDEOLOGY OF INVERSION

Before the appearance of Barthes' S/Z, or again before the wider circulation of the ideas of Derrida, Kristeva, and Lacan, it was commonplace in Anglo-American circles to refer to simple dichotomies between continental and Anglo-American thought, idealist speculation and empiricism, signifier and signified. Now only naive popularisers would use such simple notions. It was never desirable and is no longer possible to label French critical theory as 'idealist speculation'; the original classification has itself broken down as a result of the contradictions it contains. Since the appearance of texts by Derrida, Kristeva, and Lacan, it has become problematic to speak of "structuralism" except historically, and then only as a category in a process of decomposition.

In this context, the work of V.N. Volosinov is particularly significant. Two books recently translated into English - Freudianism (1976) and Marxism and the Philosophy of Language (1973) - reveal his affinity with the subsequent work of Derrida and Lacan. They contain critical commentary on Saussure which, in examining and exposing the epistemology of structuralism in its classical guise in linguistics and anthropology, parallels current reformulations being made by Bourdieu (1977) in France and by Coward and Ellis (1977) in this country. None of these, however, make reference to the pioneering work of this extraordinary Russian thinker who, having been deemed a heretic, disappeared in the Stalinist purges of the 1930's.

Volosinov proposed the analysis of language at a time when other Marxists advocated only crude mechanistic models to understand the relation between individual and society, ideology and economic substructure. His books are centred around a polemical attack on two approaches to 'the problem of the identification and the delimitation of language as a specific object of study' (1973: 48): 'individualistic subjectivism', represented by Humboldt, Wundt and Vossler and 'abstract objectivism', most notably represented by Saussure. This critical evaluation led to the formulation of a social psychology committed to the study of signs seen as constructing the subject, and as circumscribed by their constantly shifting ideological character. The emphasis is placed on the generation of signs, the restless shifting of signifier under the signified, the production and multivalence of meaning in verbal communication, the circumstances of which are seen as fundamental in deducing the pecular relations between base and superstructure in historically defined social formations. While it is possible to see Volosinov's texts as countering the epistemological foundations of anthropological structuralism, his point of departure is in fact similar to Barthes' in Systemes de la mode and S/Z: that is, the problems presented by the 'nouveau roman' concerning the relationship between connotative and denotative language, between the arbitrary and the mechanistic relation of signifier to signified. In the last resort, these problems demand a 'political theory of language' capable of revealing the process of the appropriation of language and the 'ownership of the means of enunciation'.

Volosinov's Freudianism, a necessary overture to his later work on language, is a polemical attack on the premises of psychoanalysis and its claim to scientific status; in it he combines a critique from the viewpoint of an emphatically social psychology with an attempt to subsume the object of psychoanalysis under semiology. Disputing contemporary assertions that psychoanalysis showed a certain methodological similarity to Marxism, Volosinov declares it to be an ideological formation with specific socio-historical roots; he claims that it works to deny the effectivity of human action in favour of a crude biological trinity of birth, death and procreation. Such an ideology, Volosinov asserts, always appears in those periods of history in which a society is threatened with acute crises and upheavals in the relations of production. Freud's concern with censorship and

his general obsession with sexuality are seen as contradictions characteristic of the petit bourgeois: the inflation of the sexual is intimately related to the disintegration of the structure of the bourgeois family. As man is stripped of his dignity and relegated to the condition of bestiality, so in theories such as Freud's he loses his privileged position as a social and historical being. History is denied; the present is considered regulated by the rationality of nature.

The essence of Freudianism, the source of its false interpretation of individual psychology, is a misdirected discourse concerning language and the means of translation between 'inner' and 'outward' speech. Unfortunately, where we require a sophisticated exegesis of this fundamental relation, Volosinov is at his most unimaginative, reducing a complex problem to a simple deterministic relation.

> The verbal component of behaviour is determined in all the fundamentals and essentials of its content by objective social factors.
>
> The social environment is what has given a person words and what has joined words with specific meanings and value judgements: the same environment continues ceaselessly to determine and control a person's verbal reactions throughout his entire life.
>
> Therefore, nothing verbal in human behaviour (inward and outward speech equally) can under any circumstances be reckoned to the account of the individual subject in isolation; the verbal is not his property, but the property of the social group (his social milieu) (1976: 86).

For Freud, as Volosinov interprets him, the mind structures events according to particular laws, producing sign networks which can be decoded and translated into language through the verbal interaction between psychiatrist and patient. Freud views these sign systems as given by nature through the individual psyche, but Volosinov violently resists any such claim, arguing that 'The reality of the inner psyche is the same reality as that of the sign. Outside the material of the sign there is no psyche' (1973:26). By employing the full radical potential in Saussure and extending the importance of parole in relation to langue, Volosinov is able to assert that signs can emerge only through the interaction of individual consciousnesses, through the medium of speech. The individual only possesses consciousness structured according to certain ideological patterns inherited from society. Psychoanalysis reads the imprints of ideology as it is internalised and fixed in the human subject, but, not recognizing those imprints as ideological, it claims such internalised language to be prior and given, abstracted from any determining social milieu.

At this point we might take one step back before proceeding to discuss Volosinov's reworking of linguistics and its relations to dialectical materialism, to appreciate his criticism of Saussure and of the subjectivist school, and his deployment of the radical potentiality inherent in Saussurean linguistics.

For Humboldt, Wundt and Vossler, verbal expression was formed within the individual psyche and then directed outwards. The creation and continuous generation of language is a creative act of the individual and governed by the laws of psychology. Language as a stable system comprised of lexicon, grammar and phonetics, is conceived as a linguistic abstraction, as a heuristic device desirable only in the practical teaching of the heart of linguistic creativity. By reducing linguistic phenomena purely to parole, to the individual, discontinuous and abstracted creativity of speech acts, Humboldt imputed an absolute freedom to the generative process, which allows for the constant, unlimited transformation of language.

Without a referent, without a full-stop drawn somewhere to limit the freedom of the word, the outcome is a logical absurdity: the fragmentation and decomposition of a language into accents, which themselves drift even further apart, finally leading to incomprehension and the isolation of the individual in a web of speech exclusively created by himself and known only to himself. The abstraction of language as individual speech acts leads to the death of man as a social being, exiling him forever to the labyrinth of solitude.

Of more interest to Volosinov were the linguistic teachings of Ferdinand de Saussure, which were increasingly influential in Russia, particularly among the formalist school and among certain young Marxist scholars. If Humboldt and his later followers had been unduly influenced by German Romanticism, particularly the writings of Herder, then Saussure, tracing his intellectual genealogy from Descartes and the seventeenth and eighteenth century rationalists, was to fall victim to an opposite error. Following the principle of Cartesian dualism, Saussure's insistence on separating langue from parole caused much dissent among Russian linguists. Volosinov embarked on his programme of reforming Saussure's insights just as they began to be employed and developed by the formalists.

Volosinov's disagreement with Saussure concerned the abstract structural foundation - langue - which denies the individual any means of violating, changing, or transcending it. Langue is given primacy over all other linguistic phenomena: speech is under the tyrannical distatorship of the grammatical, lexical and phonetic forms of language structure. For Saussure, this complex and conservative substratum is the basis of all linguistic forms and ensures mutual comprehension in a speech community. Individual speech acts are conceived as refractions and variations generated by the possibilities contained in the underlying structure of the language. Given the existence of this 'immutable system of normatively, identical linguistic forms which the individual consciousness finds ready made' (1973:57), it becomes credible to postulate specifically linguistic laws, concerned with the relation between signs within a given, closed linguistic circle. These laws specify purely linguistic relations, principles objectified in the structure of the language itself and in no way defined by ideological values inherent in the society. Thus the structural architecture of any language is divorced from verbal expression considered as an instance of communication. This view denies both innovation and change at the deeper level of language and allows no reciprocal relationship between language and speech. It is the ghost in the machine which makes articulation possible; language is a timeless presence, the spiritual essence underlying the words' very possibility of being. Of course, the same premises inform the theoretical practices of anthropological structuralism hence the relevance of Volosinov's texts.

Volosinov puts forward three principal objections to this view of language.

1) Language, for Saussure, is an ideal abstraction from reality, denying change and innovation. But since it exists only for the subjective consciousness of a member of a speech community and only as an ideal referent by which verbal expression is monitored, a synchronic system can have no objective existence in itself. Despite claims to the contrary, it is limited in space and time: '... what is important for the speaker about a linguistic form is ... that it is always a changeable and adaptable sign' (1973:68). This opens up new possibilities in the study of strategy and innovation in language, allows the emergence of a truly generative approach to linguistics, and thus facilitates an exploration of its relations with ideology. In the later part of Marxism and the Philosophy of Language, Volosinov tentatively constructs a history of forms of utterance, embedding them in the specificity of historical social formations.

2) For Saussure signs are inert; they are dead (or rather beyond death, but always haunting the living), without passion, value, or orientation. They are

things of existence but beyond existence, things from which springs an indifferent life. In the social world it is not the sign-system itself which is important, but actual words in combination with other words. These denote a variety of meanings, enabling people to speak while masking, to pursue a tortuous route of verbal evasion, to demand response while constantly shifting individual position. The verbal consciousness of speakers has little to do with static linguistic forms. Since linguistic forms exist for the speaker only through specific utterances, and consequently in specific ideological contexts, 'we never say or hear words, we see and hear what is true or false, good or bad, important or unimportant, pleasant, unpleasant, and soon. Words are always filled with content and meaning drawn from behaviour or ideology' (1973:70).

3) Because linguistic forms are separated from ideology, signs are treated as signals. Volosinov sees linguistics as deriving from philology and accounts for the abstracted structural system implied in langue in these terms. Philology, always concerned with the resurrection of dead languages, themselves abstractions, encouraged linguistics to content itself with the neutral silence of the word. Thus Volosinov writes:

> Linguistics makes its appearance wherever and whenever philological need has appeared. Philological need gave birth to linguistics, rocked its cradle, and left its philological flute wrapped in its swaddling clothes. That flute was supposed to be able to awaken the dead. But it lacked the range necessary for mastering living speech as actually and continuously generated (1973:71).

Philology rejected any relation between the word and ideology in favour of elucidating a pure language with a distinctive and rational structure - a presupposition which was accepted as an essential part of the Saussurean system.

Despite these fundamental criticisms of Saussure, Volosinov nevertheless saw the value of his work; indeed it formed the basis of his own distinctive and original contribution to linguistics and social psychology, his redefinition of these as fields of intellectual discourse. As we have seen Volosinov suspends behavioural psychology and psychoanalysis, criticizing their internal constitutions and their relation to the external social milieu; his critique springs from a reconstituted social psychology concerned with the ideological significance of the sign and the combination of signs. For Volosinov, consciousness is not an abstract and autonomous state; rather it is formed and shaped by signs generated by an articulate group in the process of social intercourse. Constituted in ideologically tainted signs, consciousness reveals its semiotic nature; its logic is seen to be the logic of ideological communication. Deprived of this ideological content, consciousness is reduced to a physiological fact.

> Idealism and psychologism alike overlook the fact that understanding itself can come about only within some kind of semiotic material (e.g. inner speech), that sign bears upon sign, that consciousness itself can arise and become a viable fact only in the material embodiment of signs. The understanding of a sign is, after all, an act of reference between the sign apprehended and, other, already known signs: in other words understanding is a response to a sign with signs. And this chain of ideological creativity and understanding, moving from sign to sign and then to a new sign, is perfectly consistent and continuous; from one link of a semiotic nature (hence, also of a material nature) we proceed uninterruptedly to another link of exactly the same nature. And nowhere is there a break in the chain, nowhere does the chain plunge into inner being, non-material in nature and unembedded in signs (1973: 11).

This ideological chain, not unlike Nietzsche's idea of unending sign chains, is stretched and continuously generated between and by individual consciousnesses. Consciousness is given a sociological origin because founded in the materiality of the sign.

Every society defines and accentuates particular modes of discourse, the subjects of which command its attention. Such modes of discourse are not only socially but historically relative and bear relation to the material circumstances of specifically positioned social groups: '... only that which has acquired social value can enter the world of ideology and establish itself there' (1973: 22). Whereas at the level of the production of ideologically constituted sign chains the individual consciousness is passive, here, within the ideologically constituted web of conceptual discourse, the individual can play a creative role, exploiting the tensions and contradictions within and between discursive formations, and thus generating new systems of signification.

Volosinov conceives of discourse not only as tensed and contradictory but also as fragmentary; thus the rich generative potentiality of the word as ideological signifier manifests the 'intersecting of differently oriented social interests within one and the same sign community, i.e.: by the class struggle' (1973: 22). He goes on to write:

> Class does not coincide with the sign community, i.e. with the community which is the totality of users of the same set of signs for ideological communication. Thus various different social classes will use one and the same language. As a result differently oriented accents intersect in every ideological sign. Sign becomes an arena of the class struggle (1973: 23).

This points to the study of enunciation and of the socio-economic context of utterance, as well as to the political theory of the generation and ownership of the mode of enunciation as envisioned by Barthes and others.

Volosinov's works form a starting point for a critical tradition which assumes the relevance of a critique of structuralism in linguistics and anthropology. It finds common ground with the work of those structuralist authors who have sought to decompose and suspend the generic structuralist oeuvre; and it is in fundamental sympath with Bourdieu's criticism of the theory and practice of the social sciences. These relations are hardly surprising if we remember that Volosinov, while critical of formalism, did eventually converge with that movement, most notably in the linguistic work of the Prague circle, a circle which itself greatly influenced French structuralism. With the exception, perhaps, of his mechanistic relation between speech and 'inner language', the most serious defect in his argument, one cannot deny the importance of Volosinov's thought in providing a view of social psychology which links the individual, as species-being, with his society. Given that the relation between individual and society has generally been dealt with inadequately by Marxist theorists and remains a substantial problem for dialectical materialism, the relative neglect of Volosinov's work by contemporary authors concerned with similar problems is difficult to explain (although Jacobson's study on Shifters, Verbal Categories and the Russian Verb (1957) is an exception). It would be a sad loss to scholarship if the work of one of the leading Marxist theoreticians of our century is forgotten, particularly when his concerns are so acute and pertinent to our own in the sciences of man.

Anthony Shelton.

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CORRESPONDENCE

'GERTRUDE'

Dear Editors,

Congratulations on translating 'GERTRUDE', (JASO IX:2) from a long-standing aowaip (appreciater of wife-acknowledgement in prefaces). One solution to GERTRUDE'S research problems would be to extend their study into the prefaces of academics who are neither Africanists nor anthropologists. A comparable harvest awaits them. However, my favourite example of waip is by an Africanist, William Welmers, in African Language Structures, University of California Press, 1973. He says,

> It would be impossible to acknowledge individually all of my colleagues, students, language informants, and friends ... In worldly prestige, they range from distinguished university professors to barefooted children; ... I could not forgive myself, however, if I did not express my unique indebtedness to my wife Beatrice. She has followed me into the most improbable adventures listened patiently to my efforts to formulate structural statements concerning whatever linguistic data I happened to be working on, become a respectable practical linguist in her own right, successfully accomplished research and teaching tasks for which I had opportunity but no time, learned a substantial amount of at least eight African languages, proven herself an inspired language teacher, been an equal collaborator in major publications, and through it all remained a relaxed and gracious companion and hostess, and my most loyal fan (viii, ix).

This passage I believe encapsulates all the themes analysed by GERTRUDE, but in addition we can see from it that the husband-wife relationship can include the dimension of patron-client, which is itself shown to be in the last analysis transcendental: 'He for God only, she for God in him'.

Yours truly,

J.E.A. Tonkin
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'Reality and Representation': A Correction

Dear Editors,

I am writing to correct a misconstruction of my views which appeared on p.37 of your Hilary term issue of this year (IX:1). In reference to a seminar paper of mine given at the Institute of Social Anthropology in Oxford last December, Malcolm Chapman wrote:

> Arguments like the Berlin and Kay hypothesis (1969), that colour categories were determined by structural universality rather than being subject only to the relativistic self-determination of their

> own arbitrary classificatory structure, were ill-received where relativism had become an attitude of mind. Roy Willis, in a seminar given in Oxford in 1977, told how personal a threat such determinisms were to his view of the world -- determinisms that did, as it were, make him fear for the freedom of man.

Now apart from making me appear rather silly, this statement imputes to me a view which happens to be directly contrary to the one I was seeking to put forward in that seminar paper. Far from shrinking in horror from the implication of genetic (i.e. 'natural') foundations for our colour classifications, as proposed in Berlin and Kay's Basic Color Terms and as extended and developed by their colleagues and disciples, I urged that we joyfully accept this evidence (which I consider it to be) of extra-social and extra-cultural determination of our various 'views of the world'. The house we inhabit was, it would seem, built before we came on the scene, but the style we choose to live in it is still our own. Relativism No! Freedon Yes!

Yours sincerely

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The Editors invite letters of criticism, commentary, or response concerning work published in the Journal.

BOOK REVIEWS

Anya Peterson Royce. The Anthropology of Dance. Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Press. 1977. 238pp.

This book represents the first general introduction to the study of dance from an anthropological perspective. (Roderyk Lange's earlier book The Nature of Dance is, by comparison, an idiosyncratic expression of the author's views and hardly a broad-based introduction.) Ms. Royce has drawn upon her experience as a dancer, an anthropologist, and a field worker among the Zapotec Indians of southern Mexico to produce a comprehensive and highly readable book.

The time for such work is certainly right. Although anthropologists have long recognised dancing to be a fundamental and ubiquitous feature of human social life, it has nevertheless suffered from a relative lack of rigorous documentation and analysis. In the past twenty-five years or so, and particularly in the last few, the increase in general academic and anthropological interest in dance has resulted in numerous articles and theses, and the odd book here and there. A general introduction, presenting in an orderly fashion the various ideas and approaches which anthropologists have brought to the study of dance, has been sorely lacking.

Royce presents a broad review of the literature within a well-organised outline of some of the main theoretical issues involved in the anthropological study of dance. It is not clear to what type of audience she is addressing herself; however, it would appear from her fairly basic explanations of anthropological assumptions and theoretical frameworks that she aims her efforts toward laymen (or perhaps dance scholars within other disciplines) who may be unfamiliar with the methods of anthropology. The discussions of some of these basic issues, for instance the problem of defining and classifying social phenomena, are quite clear, illustrating, but not belabouring, certain theoretical pitfalls. Experienced anthropologists may well find these sections elementary, but they provide a solid foundation for the consideration of more specialized issues. Royce manages to give a lucid mix of theoretical discussion and concrete examples, so that the reader need not feel that he or she is being led too far astray from the actual social activity of dancing as it occurs among various peoples.

The book is particularly strong on the methods and history of dance research, including the history of techniques of recording and notating dance. Like others currently writing on the anthropology of dance (for instance, Drid Williams or Judith Lynne Hanna) she agrees that the system of notation developed by Rudolf Laban - Labanotation - is the most subtle and accurate means of recording dances; unlike the others, however, she raises doubts about the practicality of such a highly refined tool to anthropologists in the field. The point is well taken, especially since she follows it up with suggestions toward the development of a personal practical method for recording dances in the field. This sort of method would be advantageous not only to anthropologists whose primary interest is the study of dance or kinesics, but even more to those for whom dance or movement may be a secondary interest and who are unwilling to master the rather time-consuming techniques of Labanotation.

Although Royce is to be commended for her comprehensive outline of the various theoretical issues which confront the anthropologist interested in dance, her presentation of them nonetheless can be faulted in certain respects. In the chapter entitled 'Symbol and Style', for example, her use of the term 'symbol' is somewhat misleading, since it is usually employed within the field of dance research to refer to the representation by movements or gestures of more abstract levels of feeling or meaning. Royce, on the other hand, uses the word to make the argument that dance constitutes an 'identity marker' (156) by which a group represents itself in contradistinction to other groups. 'Ultimately', she claims,

'what we can say is that dance is a powerful, frequently adopted symbol of the way people feel about themselves' (163). Dance is thus an important part of a complex of features which she calls a 'style', by which a group of people characterises or identifies itself. (Royce rejects the usefulness of the word 'tradition' as implying too static a situation, whereas the expression 'style' can encompass more flexibly the flow of time and events.) In this case she is making an unfortunate simplification of a number of complex issues by reverting to an apparently functionalist predilection.

Other problems crop up as a result of the author's functionalist bias. Her characterisation of dance as a symbol, for example, leads her to differentiate between dances used as symbols of identity and dances used for recreation (163). Not only is this distinction unsupported (and, I think, unsupportable), but also it is doubtful that one can meaningfully speak of dance as being 'used' at all. A second problem in the author's approach concerns her rather vague notion of style: she tends to gloss over the interesting question of the particular relations between a people's dances and their other habitual movements. She mentions this issue in passing, but nowhere does she cite Mauss' article 'Techniques of the Body', still one of the most provocative anthropological discussions of movements and gestures. Curiously, in the light of her functionalist bias, Royce, in her description of theoretical positions in anthropological research in dance, is cautious about recommending a functionalist approach and quick to point out its limitations.

The final section of the book is devoted to a consideration of future directions in the anthropological study of dance, and here the functionalist/structuralist dichotomy occupies a key position in her assessment: '... just as this basic dichotomy has underlain previous research, so it will determine the nature of future research' (177). I find this troubling. While she may be correct in perceiving this dichotomy to be a guiding force in dance studies in the past, it is questionable to what extent this is reflected or influential in present studies. Even more debatable is the degree to which it will or should determine the course of future studies.

Part of Royce's problem may be that in seizing upon the functionalist/structuralist dichotomy as a means of distinguishing approaches to the study of dance, she has made an unfortunate choice of terminology. The distinction she wishes to establish is that between approaches which concern the forms of dances and which stress the treatment of these dances as self-contained entities ('structuralist') and approaches which consider dances primarily as they exist in relation to the cultures of which they are a part ('functionalist'). This distinction does not need the use of the terms which the author has chosen, and they have the muddying effect of invoking vast areas of theoretical debate in the discipline.

These categories also need not be portrayed as being mutually exclusive - a consequence of Royce's dividing the discussion of future directions in dance studies into 'The Morphology of Dance' and 'The Meaning of Dance'. The most serious consequence of this division is that the whole theoretical problem of the relationship between the forms and the meanings of dances is left unexplored. Another unfortunate effect of this treatment is to relegate her consideration of creativity in dance to the realm of form, as if creativity and the meanings of dances were unrelated issues. Her notion of creativity in dance is further restricted by her tendency to treat it as an individual phenomenon, and not particularly as a social one. I would argue that an anthropological approach to studies of the arts must wrestle with the issue of whether, or how, creativity is a social phenomenon.

Such reservations as I have about the presentation of theoretical issues in this book do not diminish seriously its importance as a contribution to the field of anthropological studies of dance. In any introductory survey of a discipline there are bound to be difficulties in dealing with areas of theoretical disagreement, and The Anthropology of Dance is no exception. Royce may be commended for not shying away from controversial issues, although she could perhaps have been more careful to have kept her own functionalist bias in check, and she could have gone somewhat more deeply into her evaluation of various approaches. Her anthropological background information, her historical material, and her general organisation and style still make this book an excellent point of departure for anyone interested in what anthropologists have to say about dance.

Paula Schlinger.

John Blacking (Ed.). The Anthropology of the Body. A.S.A. Monograph 15. London: Academic Press. 1977. xii, 426pp. £8.80.

A.S.A. Monograph 15 provides an initiation into the bewildering variety of issues concerning the social aspects of the human body. Since the volume simply furnishes a record of the A.S.A. conference on the anthropology of the body and is not constructed around a close-knit set of selected themes it is exempt from certain types of textual criticism; yet one wonders to what extent a compendium is possible in such an intractable area of research.

For the most part, the contributors show little concern with the question of whether an anthropology of the body can stand as a legitimate field of analysis. They seem pleased simply to get on with their respective researches; and while some contributors seem able to define the inherent theoretical difficulties more successfully than others, the book as a whole gains its continuity from the reflections of each anthropologist on his or her special interest. Thus whereas some writers treat the human body as a source of natural resemblances, others consider the physical body without primary reference to these categorical difficulties. While it is disturbing that one can so easily distinguish between anthropologists who criticize assumptions and those who confidently build upon them, The Anthropology of the Body succeeds in suggesting novel ideas and analytical techniques, as well as in discussing the problem of the commensurability of various cultural notions of the self. It not only makes fascinating reading, but is an index of possible turning points in anthropological theory.

The study of certain conditions of being human can function as a means by which one may diagnose problems in many other fields of concern. The anthropology of the body is an especially fruitful example of this; the essays in this volume use the theme as a vehicle for discussing taxonomy, categorizing, metaphysics - cultural as well as purely physiological problems raised by our consciousness of our bodies. One is tempted, in fact, to suggest that the contributions are linked by a common recognition of the obvious, namely that man's quest for knowledge is always affected by his awareness of himself, that, among those things which puzzle him, his awareness of himself is primary, and that those things which preoccupy him most in the external world are considered by him with reference to his own physical presence. As Ellen puts it, in 'The Semiotics of the Body':

> the very fact that human beings perceive and think anthropocentrically in relation to the non-human universe, together with the demonstrable elaboration of human anatomical classification compared with that of other animals, suggests that, generally speaking, the human body is the primary model in both an evolutionary and logico-operational sense (353).

As one might anticipate, several authors show an interest in alternative methods of charting physical movement. From the Beneshs' research on movement notation (whose theatrical applications have been widely recognized) to Lange's work on the anthropology of dance or Baily's lengthy contribution on movement patterns involved in playing Afghan string instruments, we find evidence for a concern with the relativities of physical relationships through body movement. (See also Schlinger's review of The Anthropology of Dance, p.200 of this issue.) Whether these relativities are explicable by what Hanna, in 'To Dance is Human', calls psychobiological factors, or whether they provide us solely with culturally-derived means of organizing physical experience, the idea that alternative methods of organizing movement might yield qualitatively different informational modes appears as a dominant hypothesis if not an overriding conviction.

Other contributors examine ways in which various classifications of the human body can serve to mediate or illustrate features of social relations: there is, for instance, Sutherland's analysis of pollution concepts among gypsies or Strathern's study in New Guinea of the curious notion whereby shame may be described as being 'on the skin'. The totality of social life itself may be inscribed in the body as a symbol. Thus, Dogon society is meant to be like a human body; it may be reduced or analyzed in terms of 'my' body; a Dogon should be able to increase his understanding of it as he increases his understanding of himself. That the body may become its own interpretative device becomes paradoxical insofar as analogies always refer to things which are simultaneously alike yet different. In The Anthropology of the Body this paradox of self-reference would bear most directly upon Polunin's quest to define what it is that a culture -- even our own 'scientific' culture -- signified in classifying a particular physical condition as diseased. The idea that in their descriptions of relationships, classifications can mediate complex symbolic systems and certain features of social relations is reinforced by several noteworthy anthropological contributions in this volume. That the anthropology of the body may function as a vehicle for discussing a plethora of issues which are common to all varieties of anthropological analysis is not just a comment on the diverse nature of that anthropology; it also shows the way in which those issues, as different approaches to experience, can awaken us to possibilities and, in general, to human potentialities.

David Napier.

J.K. Dover. Greek Homosexuality. London: Duckworth. 1978. 224pp. £15.00

The existence of some form of homosexual practice among the ancient Greeks has always been common knowledge and has often aroused interest, both scholarly and amateur. Typically, however, the questions asked about it have been both morally loaded and empirically simplistic: were the ancient Greeks really homosexual (or just good friends, or, enter Plato, merely indulging in a hyperbolic idiom to express the marriage of true male minds)?; if so, how many of them? (surely not the man in the agora or the stalwart peasant? -- more likely just the rich and the aristocratic, since wealth leads to decadence and decadence to degradation); and could homosexuality have been generally accepted (or merely tolerated on the fringe, its evidential prevalence unfortunately reflecting the tastes of pornographers, poets, philosophers, and other such marginal but notably expressive individuals)?

The answers to these questions tended to be vague. We should remember that strong feelings were not averse to a little imprecision. At a time when our own traditions still saw in Greece the origins of that Civilization which

it was their duty to perpetuate, rumours of a perverted past could create some unease (their detailed examination even more). More importantly, the ancient evidence itself seemed disturbingly contradictory. Whenever the Sokratic circle extolled 'love', it was homsexual eros that was praised; yet Sokrates, or at least Plato, forbade its consummation. Comedy, philosphy, history, the casual asides of law-court speeches and, most explicitly, the artistic representations of vase-painting, make it clear that homosexual affairs (and male prostitution) were commonplace; yet these practices were frequently reviled and the man who 'sold' his body forfeited citizenship. Even though Aristophanes' sturdy heroes could lust after boys as well as girls, effeminates were lampooned in a manner which would have done a rugby club proud.

Clearly the simple empirical questions -- how many? who? and were they really? -- will not suffice. A reorientation is required to confront the question of exactly what constituted 'homosexuality' in the ancient Greek context -- and this we now possess in J.K. Dover's new book.

Let it be stressed, however, that Greek Homosexuality, like Sir Kenneth's earlier Greek Popular Morality, remains very much an empirical work -- a meticulous compilation and analysis of all the available evidence in the best tradition of British classical scholarship. For some this will make it a less than easy book to read, for generalizations follow on exhaustive presentation of the data; but it gives us for the first time, and in a manner which will require no further addition of information, an unshakeble foundation of fact. Out of that body of fact the required reorientation grows.

There can be no doubt that, due allowance being made for individual variation and preference, homosexuality -- physical homosexuality, anal, inter-crural, and manual -- was a deeply entrenched part of Greek culture, and that, from a strictly physical point of view, young men and girls were equally the objects of male sexual desire. What remains complex is the cultural response to that recognized desire and the constraints which Greek society built round its fulfilment.

Though, as the objects of male desire, boys and girls could be classified together, the opposition between masculinity and femininity remained intact. No confusion was made between 'homosexuality' and 'effeminancy'. The first was permissible, the second most certainly not. Yet if 'homosexual' did not equal 'effeminate', the 'passive' partner in a homosexual relationship came close to being placed in a 'female' situation -- close indeed to being subordinated. Hence a socially required display of reluctance on his part. Hence also a question of relative age. No man played simultaneously the 'active' and 'passive' role with another. A younger man submitted himself, but not without difficulty, to an older man, his superior and perhaps his mentor. An older man who continued to play the 'female' role was disgraced. And the younger man, we should note, was supposed to derive no pleasure from the sexual act. To do so would have been effeminate. His masculinity was preserved by the austere denial of physical enjoyment. If he admitted pleasure or if he instigated the relationship, he demeaned himself as a prostitute did. Indeed the prostitute who sold his body was the 'slave' both of his sexuality and of the person who had bought him. He was a man who had lost his freedom -- and, like a slave or like a woman, he was therefore excluded from the body politic.

In a society, then, where homosexual desire was as freely admitted as heterosexual desire (at least for the 'active' partner), but where rigid social and moral constraints still operated, the evidence can appear confusing for those who would assume simplistically that if homosexuality was

prevalent then Greece was Sodom and Gomorrah. Greek civilization was firmly committed to a 'masculine' ideal -- an ideal which stressed physical prowess, rational self-control, self-denial and endurance, and which all to readily defined the antitheses of these as 'feminine'. What men admired, even in the context of a consummated homosexual erotic relationship, were still 'men'.

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