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EDITORIAL NOTE

The idea for this Journal has come from the graduate students at the Subfaculty of Anthropology at Oxford: in particular from those at the Institute of Social Anthropology. Papers given at graduate seminars and ideas arising from work for diplomas and higher degrees very often merit wider circulation and discussion without necessarily being ready for formal publication in professional journals. There obviously exists a need in social anthropology for serious critical and theoretical discussion; JASO sees this at its main purpose. The Oxford University Anthropological Society established a Journal Sub-committee to organise the venture.

We should like to express our thanks to Drid Williams for valuable assistance in the production of this issue of the Journal.

FORMAT

We shall produce one issue per term (three per year). Articles are welcome from students in all branches of anthropology and from people in other disciplines interested in social anthropology. Reviews and comments will also be welcome. For the present, it is preferred that the main emphasis should be on analytical discussion rather than on description or ethnography. Papers should be as short as is necessary to get the point over. As a general rule, they should not exceed 5,000 words. For future issues, papers should be submitted following the conventions for citations, notes and references used in the A.S.A. monographs. Communications should be addressed to the Editors, Institute of Social Anthropology, 51, Banbury Road, Oxford.

BACK ISSUES

We have a small stock of back issues still unsold. Individual copies are available at 30p. in the U.K. and $1 abroad. Volume I complete (1970) is available at the following rates: U.K. - 75p. to individuals, £1 to institutions; abroad - $2.50 to individuals, $3 to institutions. The subscription for Vols. II (1971) and III (1972) are the same. (All prices cover postage). Cheques should be made out to the Journal of the Anthropological Society of Oxford.

<u>Max Müller</u>: ' — we feel that we are — in the presence
of men who, if they lived with us --- would
be looked upon as giants [299] --- [We must]
guard against their memory being insulted'-
[304].

Müller: <u>Lectures on the Science of
Language</u>: 1864

A.A. Macdonell, the professor of Sanskrit at Oxford at the
beginning of this century said of Max Müller (<u>Dictionary of
National Biography</u>: XXII Supplement: 1909) that his name was as
famous as that of any other scholar of the nineteenth century.
Well he might, for Müller who died in 1900, besides his contribution
to Oriental scholarship, had pioneered in this country the
sciences of language and religion and had created the study of
comparative mythology. L.R. Farnell, a classicist and Rector of
Exeter College, on the other hand, was able to say in 1934 (<u>An
Oxonian Looks Back</u>) that 'Andrew Lang's Ballads on Blue China
may preserve his name.' Lang, of course, was Müller's most active
anthropological adversary, but besides that one may fairly presume
that the Ballads are even less frequently read than his other works.

Nothing of any depth or insight has really been written of
Müller. Pater Schmidt, a most learned man, gives a simply
erroneous account of his work (see <u>The Origin and Growth of
Religion</u> 1931) and Evans-Pritchard's <u>Theories of Primitive
Religion</u> (1965) whilst suggesting that Müller's work has been
unjustly decried (p.21) nevertheless is generally condemnatory.
In fact we have had to wait for the publication of <u>Social
Anthropology and Language</u> (ASA 10 ed. Ardener (1971); see remarks
by Ardener in the introduction and the paper by Henson) for even
a hint that Müller might be of value to us. Müller's works do not
form part of a standard anthropological education, and of course
he is not generally regarded as one of our founding fathers.
Indeed, for much of his career he was engaged in dispute with those
whom we conventionally take to be our disciplinary ancestors, and
were it not for Evans-Pritchard's scholarship we might not even
suspect that he existed. But in the present reflective and unsure
state of anthropology, there is much in his badly neglected works
that can be read with profit. More than that, and without wishing
to disparage the work of the Victorian anthropologists, I should
like to suggest that in certain respects he outranks them all.

This remark rests partly upon my own attitude to the present
state of our subject, and reflects also a vision of how it ought to
develop. My initial task, then, is to elucidate this view by
discussing the very general context of my thesis ! To Evans-
Pritchard, in large part, we are indebted for our consciousness
of a long line of distinguished scholars from whom we might claim
to be descended. The outlines of this lineage are well known -
thinkers of the Scottish enlightenment; in France, the
Encyclopaedists, Comte, Fustel de Coulanges, the Année school.
Others have continued this work and we can now add to our past
Van Gennep, and, thanks to the efforts of Dr. Needham, the
brilliant Hocart. Some have not shown any enthusiasm for this
type of reinstatement - Gluckman, as is well known, finds van
Gennep boring - but the scholars among us can well appreciate
the achievements of our forebears.

But I should like to suggest that, despite the work that has already been done, our past is still incomplete, and has in a sense only recently become so. Our interests are becoming linguistic and philosophical and it is now relevant to graft on to our conventional lineage a sub-branch of philosophers, philologists and linguists. Should all this seem decidedly unscientific and remind you of the way in which the Tiv manipulate their genealogies, I should say that the great Jacob Burckhardt defined history as what one generation finds of interest in another. And, if amending genealogies to fit present circumstances seems unhistorical, we have the testimony of Benedetto Croce that in a sense all history is contemporary history. History is not in any simplistic sense simply 'the past', and so I do not feel that I am departing too far from the normal methods of western historical science when I construct a past that has not previously existed. (These remarks, of course, have important implications for those who would contend that there is an absolute distinction between myth and history.)

Who appears in this new sub-lineage ? In order to make Müller chronologically central I shall start it in 1770 and end it in 1970. We may begin with Sir William Jones and Colebrooke, two Sanskritists of enormous learning who wrote much of general anthropological interest. A philosopher also appears at the beginning: Immanuel Kant. Now he appears not because he wrote a book on anthropology in 1787 or because he lectured on the subject at Königsberg, though both these are true. Rather, it is his 'Copernican revolution' as he styled it in his preface to the second edition of the Critique of Pure Reason, which entitles him to our consideration. The philosophical revolution was the opposite to that which took place in astronomy, for Kant placed man in the centre of the universe, so to speak, and for that reason his Critique is a profound anthropological treatise - possibly the most important that we possess. And yet it forms no part of our training. What Kant did was to examine critically the powers of the human mind itself, to assess what the mind itself, owing to its own nature, contributes to our knowledge. We may now speak of fundamental structures of the human mind (the Kantian flavour of Mythologiques is well-known) but Kants's investigation into our synthetic a priori knowledge was an enterprise in the same spirit.

Nearer to the present day this lineage contains such linguists - some of them already accorded a recognition in our past - as de Saussure, the Prague structuralists and Chomsky. But I suggest that anthropology will be similarly fertilised, perhaps more so when it realises the brilliance and anthropological nature of the thought of Wittgenstein and those he has, though in different ways, influenced. I am thinking of Waismann, Strawson and Hampshire in particular. If anthropology were only to recognise the direct relevance of the sensitive type of conceptual inquiry in which these men are experts, anthropology could become a real academic discipline instead of merely a social science. We could also honour our Emeritus Professor who so long ago claimed that our real attachments were with history and philosophy.

But I have begun and ended with Kant and Wittgenstein for a very special reason, for, between them these two men represent firstly, Müller's main intellectual problem, and secondly a major aspect of its solution. I can speak in such general terms

because one senses in all that Müller wrote a strong unity of
purpose and assumption. (Coherence is another matter. Müller's
books are long and rambling and less than consistent, but
generalisation is still possible). Let me return to Kant. It
was in 1881 on the centenary of its first appearance that Müller
published his English translation of the Kritik der Reinen
Vernunft. In the translators preface to this work he says that
the Veda [2] was the first arch of the bridge of thoughts that
spans the whole history of the Aryan mind and that Kant's
critique represents the perfect manhood of that Aryan mind.
'Having once learnt from Kant what man can and what he cannot
know, my plan of life was very simple, namely to learn, so far
as literature, tradition and language allow us to do so, how
man came to believe that he could know so much more than he
ever can know in religion, in mythology and in philosophy'.
The problem, and so what remained to be done after Kant, would
require a 'Critique of Language'.

This brings me to Wittgenstein. Now I should like to make
it perfectly clear here that I intend in no way to suggest that
Müller is the historical source of Wittgenstein's notion
regarding language and philosophy[3]. Anyone with the slightest
acquaintance with the history of philosophy will know that many
have discoursed on the relation between language and thought and
the place of language in philosophy. Even the Greeks, so little
conscious of language as compared with ancient India, produced
men who berated the evil influence of language on thought. To
show the resemblance of Müller's thought to that of Wittgenstein
I shall quote several passages from his book The Science of
Thought (1887). He there quotes Hamann - a friend of Kant's -
as saying, 'Language is not only the foundation of the whole
faculty of thinking, but the central point also from which
proceeds the misunderstanding of reason by herself'. Earlier,
in the preface to his 1861 Lectures on the Science of Language
at the Royal Institution, he wrote that it was his aim to attract
the attention of 'the philosopher, the historian, and the
theologian, to a science which concerns them all, and which
though it professes to treat words only, teaches us that there is
more in words than is dreamt of in our own philosophy'. And he
goes on to quote Bacon: 'Men believe that their reason is lord
over their words, but it happens too that words exercise a
reciprocal and reactionary power over our intellect. Words
shoot back upon the understanding of the wisest, and mightily
entangle and pervert the judgment.' This is the background to
Müller's own phrase 'disease of language'.

In his preface to the Science of Thought, Müller states that
it is written for a few friends who share his interests and that
it will not be popular. 'There is a fullness of time for
philosophical as there is for political and social questions'. Now
the theme of the book is this, that the interdependence of
thought and language places philosophy on a new basis (514), an
obvious basis but perhaps for that very reason overlooked, namely
an investigation of language itself. The history of philosophy is
a battle against mythology, he claims (217) and philosophical
problems must be solved by a study of language. Thought lives in
language and 'philosophy must learn to deal with language as
history deals with events'. (550). True philosophy, then, consists
of its examination and correction. (573). It seems to me that this
is nothing if not a clear enunciation of the 'bewitchment and

therapy! view of philosophy[4]. In 1888 Müller had said (Natural
Religion) that the dictum 'we think in words' must become the
chapter of all exact philosophy in future. But he reflected in
his 1878 paper 'On the Origin of Reason': 'What should we say if
biologists were to attempt to discover the nature and laws of
organic life without ever looking at a living body. And when
are we to find the living body of thought if not in language ?
(467). But he goes on to remark gloomily that 'whenever the
philologist represents the whole history of philosophy as in truth
an uninterrupted struggle between language and thought and
maintains that all philosophy must in the end become a philosophy
of language, he is apt to be taken as an enthusiast'. I would
refer you here to a short article of Müller's in the very first
volume of _Mind_ (1876) where he points out some weaknesses in
Mill's writings on thought. (348) and suggests they would have
been avoided had he only taken care to look more thoroughly
into how his language was constructed and worked. He refers
there to the 'secret cunning of languages' and comments (349):
'Language, as I have often said, always revenges herself when-
ever we do violence to her or whenever we forget her antecedents'.[5]
In short, then, Müller's way to solve the problem that Kant left
is this. We think we know more than we can because we forget how
our language is built and so we use words in ways for which they
were not originally intended. This is the general background to
Muller's system of mythology, and the fact that none of the
commentators on his work have fully sensed that this area is but
a part of a larger scheme explains, in part, why his writings on
myth have been so sadly misunderstood.

I ought to say something of Müller's central assumption that
thought and language are inseparable or identical. I am not
unaware of the problems this involves. If we take the statement
in a philosophical sense we become bemused immediately. What
does it mean; does it make any sense at all to ask _in general_
what the relation between language and thought is ? I cannot
address myself to this general issue here - Wittgenstein himself
advocates silence when one cannot speak clearly. But I should
like to suggest that whatever the validity of the assertion, it
is a stance that has very valuable consequences. Before briefly
indicating what I mean with a few examples, I must defend Müller
against one obvious objection. Possessed as we are now of a
semiological consciousness, we would immediately spot that his
equation is wrong. That he over-stresses language as against
other modes of symbolic thought I do not deny - as a philologist
one would hardly expect anything else. But we must see how Müller
uses the word language, and thought also, for it is clear that
his identity of thought and language is really the interdependence
of human reason (that is conceptual thought, _begriffe_ not
vorstellung) and any system of symbolic signs. (Saussure, of course,
points also to this dependence of definite ideas upon signs).
Language is the best, says Müller, but there are other types of
signs which may be substituted for the verbal, and he therefore
includes under the term language any system of signs which
embodies conceptual thought. As he says in his 1870 lectures on
the _Science of Religion_ (1873:356): '-we do not exclude the less
perfect symbols of thought, such as gestures, signs or pictures.
They, too, are language in a certain sense and they must be
included in language before we are justified in saying that dis-
cursive thought can be realised in language only.' We have signs
and signs of signs. Thus, not only gestural language, ideographic

signs, but such systems as algebra standing in the place of
numbers. Language can abbreviate itself, he says, and so we have
signs which stand for whole trains of reasoning (ibid: 49). It is
clear that what Müller means is that human beings must think in
symbols. 'All I maintain is that thought cannot exist without
signs, and that our most important signs are words.' (ibid: 58).
This surely is not objectionable. What he means is made clear by
his discussion of a game of chess. Müller does not say that when
we play chess we need to talk to ourselves, but chess pieces are
names, they are signs. One can silently play chess without
consciously stating rules, but the pieces are concepts and the
game is a set of rules about how to move pieces. This is clear,
he says, in that we can talk about these rules in the eventuality
of someone making a mistake. If the pieces were not concepts there
would be no game, only chaos.[6]

I should add briefly here that Müller was a fierce opponent
of Darwin over the nature and origins of language, though he, like
many German scholars, was an evolutionist long before the Origin
of Species was published. Müller wanted to insist upon there being
a difference of kind between human language and animal communication
and his arguments would benefit the naiver type of ethologist that
exists today. Müller, quite rightly, says that human language is
more than a medium of communication, it is also a complex conceptual
structure. For this reason, the question of the origin of language
cannot be tackled in isolation, but must be viewed as part of a
larger problem (see 'Origin of Reason':1878). He says in his
lectures on Darwin's philosophy of language (Fraser's Magazine
1873: Vol VIII) that 'our concepts and our words are produced by
a faculty or by a mode of mental action which is not simply a
barrier between man and beast, but which creates a new world in
which we live.' In other words: 'We live in concepts.' (Three
lectures on the Science of thought: 1887). As a Kantian Müller
accepted that we must acknowledge that the world must accept our
terms of knowing. To this extent we do create our own symbolic
world. (I commented on this fact in my essay 'Anthropology and
the Philosophy of Science' (JASO Vol II No.I). Müller's remarks
in fact come close to the central ideas in Langer's Philosophy
in a New Key - an inspiring anthropological philosophy). Müller
said in 1861 that man possessed a specific capacity for forming
general ideas and using general names, and that this put him,
uniquely in a human world of symbols and concepts. (see Frazer's
Magazine, Vol. VIII: 11). 'Through reason we not only stand
above the brute creation, we belong to a different world.' (1861:
364). There is a point here of great import for the humane
sciences, namely that there are concepts necessary to and
specific to the description of human phenomena. When this is
realised and its methodological consequences fully grasped, the
social sciences will begin to be useful.

I should now like to talk briefly about some of the
consequences of his assumption that thought and language are
identical. Firstly, though I cannot here develop it, language
for Müller is a social institution and it follows that thought is
social too. I have time for one quotation only, which of course
raises its own problems. It is from the lectures on Darwin's
theory of language: 'Though the faculty of language may be
congenital, all languages are traditional. The words in which we
think are channels of thought which, we have not dug ourselves,
but which we find ready made for us.' (1873: 528). We must

remember the individualistic associational psychology which so
influenced the work of his contemporary anthropologists and to
which the French sociological school, including Lévy-Bruhl quite
legitimately took such strong exception. Secondly, consider this
remark from his preface to the Science of Thought (1887): '...
there is no such thing as intellect, understanding, mind and reason
...all these are only different aspects of language'. No one should
be upset,however, for - (and giving us a Wittgensteinian comfort) -
he says that these philosophical remarks leave the world exactly as
it was before; we simply have a more valid understanding of our-
selves. Now whatever we think of this particular assertion several
important facts follow from his view that language is the embodi-
ment of mind - and indeed in its historical aspect is the
autobiography of the human mind. Many philosophers had complained
that they had no reliable evidence with which to talk about mental
phenomena. With an incredible blindness they had overlooked the
fact that the evidence they needed was language itself. As Müller
says later in the same book (290-5) 'the true philosophy of the
human mind - is the philosophy of language'. It is well known that
psychology in our century has retreated to a nonsensical
experimentalism or unrealistic behaviourism even, afraid of the
'problem of other minds'. But language is surely the means of
access to, and the proof of, our knowledge of other minds (see
Müller: Chips IV 1875: 460). It is the most important medium in
which our intersubjective understanding lives. Müller said on so
many occasions that the investigation of language had a central role
in psychology and the fact that social psychology has still not
fully realized this fact will stand as one of the most absurd
methodological errors committed by any social science. Thirdly,
(and I must make this my last example) logic for Müller was a
general grammar. Now whilst his philological work was outdated
before his death, the fact that Müller's interest in language was
part of a larger problem means that he displayed that consciousness
of the relevance of linguistics to philosophy that Chomsky possesses.
Müller, in fact, considered (see Three Lectures on the Science of
Thought: 4) comparative philology as a means towards the investi-
gation of larger problems, as a severe apprenticeship to be served
before the wider questions of the science of language could be tackled.
He writes in 1885 ('The Lesson of Jupiter' in Chips IV 1895 ed:
380) that the widest comparisons in philology could show what was
essential to language as such, and therefore to thought. It would
be possible to construct a general grammar, not speculatively as
philosophers had done in the past, but empirically. Though I must
leave the issue here, I should just add that Müller was extremely
interested in universals, as indeed were many of the Victorian
ethnologists. But Müller, for reasons which I shall shortly discuss
was extremely conscious of the abuses of this type of wide comparison;
the method might lead us to think we had definite conclusions when
we had not understood any of our evidence. But, discussing the
ethno-psychological approach to mythology he says this: 'If that
motive turns out to be due to our common human nature, the
ethnological method assumes quite a new interest, and may in time
lead to very important results'. Such statements on direct
expressions of the human mind are not infrequent.

    I should now like to turn to another problem altogether - the
question of 'ethnological-isms' which arises from Henson's essay
in ASA 10 ('Early British Anthropologists and Language'). There she
criticises quite justifiably the naive way in which native
categories such as tabu, totem etc. were used as technical terms
by C19 anthropologists. I shall add here as a similar error the
promiscuous utilization of such terms as fetishism and animism,

native terms - in a sense - from our own culture. Now we would
possibly be wrong to suggest that the anthropologists were
completely unaware of the problems involved, but beyond the
difficulties involved in any one of these terms is the simple fact
that their employment at all involves a very general error
concerning the way in which we should seek to understand meaning.
But Müller must be exempted from a general indictment, for it was
precisely over these terms that he was most censorious of his
contemporaries. He, a translator and philosopher showed in this
respect a sensitivity to conceptual problems which they lacked, and
which most anthropologists today even cannot match.

As an introduction to this particular section of my paper I
had better perhaps say something general on Müller's conflict with
the ethnologists. Müller was the representative of German scholar-
ship in England, but we should not exaggerate his hostility to the
new science. After all, it was he who in a review in the Times in
1865 first brought to the public attention the profound importance
of Tylor's Researches. We should also remember that he was
attending lectures on anthropology at Leipzig as a student in the
early 1840's a generation before the science existed in England.
And he was using savage evidence in mythology before most of the
ethnologists, but became disillusioned. He also attempted to
establish a journal called Ethnological Records of the Colonies, for
which no finance was forthcoming. However, he did send directives
through the Colonial Office to begin the collection of linguistic
and cultural data. We have been told that the value of field work
was only realised in this century, even that Malinowski invented the
new method. So let me refer you to a passage which Müller quotes
in an address of 1891. They were written by Codrington, himself a
Melanesian expert who was in the field for a vastly longer period
than the few years of Malinowski during the First War. 'When a
European has been living for two or three years among savages, he
is sure to be fully convinced that he knows all about them; when
he has been ten years or so amongst them, if he be an observant
man, he knows that he knows very little about them, and so begins
to learn'. (Let us remember also that Radcliffe-Brown one of the
founders of modern anthropology never did any real field-work. He
could not speak the language of the Andaman Islanders, and worked
through interpreters for the whole duration of his stay there.)
Codrington was just one of a group of real Victorian field-workers -
other names are Callaway, Bleck, Gill, Hahn - and it was almost
exclusively on their evidence that Müller relied. He refused to use
evidence from those who could not speak the relevant languages.

But whilst Müller was enthusiastic about anthropology in these
ways, he urged many cautions of method and assumption, which we
should now accept as absolutely sound. He of course shared many
assumptions with the ethnologists such as developmentalism, for
instance, but he could not tolerate nursery psychology, nor the
crude suggestion that savages were primitives. This later equation
was of course, fundamental for the anthropologists, for it
generated from a taxonomy the supposed historical time into which
progress and survivals could be fitted. But Müller's main
objection was a question of language. For him, as a philologist
aware of the difficulties involved in deciding the meaning of
Greek texts and acquainted with the problems of translating
Sanskrit manuscripts he could not accept the way in which
anthropologists drew such bold conclusions about societies whose
languages they did not understand at all. For him it was simply
obvious that if you knew nothing about a people's language then

you could know nothing about its culture. Anthropologists he
thought could learn some caution from scholars: 'what I have
ventured to say on several occasions is, let us wait till we know
a little more of Hottentots and Papuans, let us wait till we
know at least their language, for otherwise we may go hopelessly
wrong'. (Natural Religion: 216). Müller reflected in his 1891
presidential address to the anthropological section of the British
Association that anthropology 'has been raised to the dignity, but
also to the responsibility of a real science'.(5) He said that the
time would come when an accurate knowledge of language would be
regarded as a sine qua non of anthropological work, when the need
for a 'scholarly conscience' would become clear. He concludes the
address with these words: 'If anthropology is to maintain its
high position as a real science, it's alliance with linguistic
science cannot be too close'.

I shall start my discussion of Müller on 'ethnological-isms'
by exposing a lost chapter in the history of totemism. By this
I mean to indicate my annoyance that Lévi-Strauss nowhere make
any reference to Müller's precocious remarks. We remember that
Lévi-Strauss talks of a totemic hysteria,Müller talks of a
tolemistic epidemic - and he lived through much of it. In Natural
Religion, he says this: 'There seems to be a peculiar fascination
in strange names...in order to secure clearness of thought and
honesty of reasoning in the study of religion I am afraid these
terms (animism, fetishism, totemism) ought to be sent into exile.
They have become dangerous...' (159-60). In an appendix on
totemism in Anthropological Religion, he adds: 'All this is
thorougnly unscientific: to take a foreign word without accurately
defining it and then to add to it the magical termination of ism,
may save a great deal of trouble, but what is here called trouble,
is in reality accurate thought'. (409) Müller claims (Nat. Relg.
159; 522) that a totem is what it means to certain groups of Red
Indians. There it is a clan-mark, a visible symbolic sign, an
emblem such as primitive societies frequently used. And 'totem'
should not be promiscuously used or made a general term of
comparison. Indeed, even the word totem itself is wrong. Müller
claims, on the authority of Father Cuoq, a Canadian philologist,
that the proper word for family mark is ote (genitive otem)
(Biography of Words and the Home of the Aryas 1888: 249 n.1). He
quotes Brinton commenting on 'the animate symbolism employed
with such marked preference by the red race to express abstract
ideas'. (Anthr. Relig: 407-8). All this was written in the early
1890's, and if it does not make totemism unreal, at least its
superiority to what contemporary anthropologists were saying is
absolutely clear. For Müller, totemism was a civil institution
among some Red Indian tribes by which groups in a village chose
emblems to distinguish themselves. The beliefs in the sacredness
of the animal,in descent and so on were secondary and grew up,
as he says, 'naturally'. The sign chosen 'became surrounded as the
colours of a regiment are even now, by a halo of many recollections'.
(Nat. Relig: 522). An uncanny parallel, for Lévi Strauss makes
exactly the same point referring to Linton's 'Rainbow' Division.
(Le Totemisme Anjourd'hui: 10). I will bring this little discussion
to a close by saying that Müller was not alone. Winternitz,
another orientalist was asked by him to compile the massive index
which forms Vol L of Sacred Books of the East. It was published
in 1910 after many years labour and in an introductory note
Winternits remarks on the errors that had been made in constructing
theories on the origin and development of religion before adequate

materials were to hand (XIV).He goes on to say that in his index
such familiar terms as totemism, animism, tabu and fetishism are
all excluded because they refer to the theories not to the facts of
religion. Likewise the mythologist Robert Brown Jnr. who in
1898 wrote a book defending Müller against Lang's journalism says:
'the totemism of the 'untutored anthropologist' is necessarily
destined to an absolute collapse'. (Semitic Influence in Hellenic
Mythology: 203).

      The superiority of the scholars over the anthropologists on
totemism is impressive, but I should not have given it such
prominence had it been an isolated incident. I have space here
only to outline Müller's attitude to one more ethnological-ism:
fetishism. As a stage, some said the first in the evolution of
religion, it rested on the testimony of Portuguese sailors who
came back from West Africa with stories of strange beliefs among
the negroes. Comte misunderstood de Brosses, he misunderstood the
sailors, and they never understood the negroes. Fetishism, says
Müller has 'become a panacea for all mythological troubles, and
the acme was reached when more recently a fetish – an African charm –
was defined as a totem (an American emblem) inhabited by an
ancestral spirit (an Indian concept)' (Contributions to the Science
of Mythology: 1897: 195). And for Müller anyway it was quite
obviously a 'grammatical' error to talk of anyone worshipping a
material object. The object must clearly symbolise something else.
Müller's astuteness, however, resided not solely in his caution over
these terms referring to what is conventionally called religion;
it extended to social organisation also. Witness the following on
caste (Six Systems of Indian Philosophy: 1899: 11-2). He says that
the word casta is a misleading term for understanding the social
conditions of ancient India because it was invented by Portuguese
sailors who used it to describe any social divisions that struck
their fancy; to ask therefore what casta means in India is like
asking what it means in England or what feitiço means in Portugal.
What we really want to know is what was implied by such Indian words
as Varna (colour) Gâti (kith) Kula (family), Pravara (lineage);
otherwise we shall have once more the same confusion about the
social organisation of ancient India as about African fetishism or
North American totemism . Each foreign word should always be kept
to its own native meaning, or, if generalised for scientific
purposes, it should be most carefully defined afresh. Otherwise
every social distinction will be called caste, every stick a
totem, every idol a fetish'. Or let me take another custom, the
couvade. Müller did not like folklore method, for it seemed to
him nonsense to attempt wide comparisons of beliefs or institutions
before any of the examples used was really understood – the
similarities, for instance, might be merely superficial. He says
  (1897: 226) 'a comparison of savage and civilised customs might
be useful', but, he maintains that 'we must possess a complete
insight into the one as well as into the other, before we can hope
that our comparisons may be of real scientific value'. Speaking
specifically of the couvade he says: (ibid:290) 'Unless the motive
is the same, the custom is not the same; unless the motive is
discovered the facts themselves are curious, but no more'. For
motive we should read meaning, and there is a great deal in this
perceptive remark on 'sameness' that I cannot go into here. This
quote will have to suffice. 'It may be said that anybody can
describe what he sees, even though unable to converse with the
people. I say, Decidedly no –' (1891 Address: 10). One of Müller's
chief reasons for disliking folklore was that it assumed to under-
stand you needed first to compare. Müller never denied that

comparison could be illuminating, but he did suggest it was absurd
to explain Vedic ceremonies from savage customs before attempting
to explain them from the veda itself (1897: 210); we need an
explanation from within not from without (ibid: 225) as was involved
in ethnological comparison. Müller disliked the way savages seemed
to perform for anthropological theorists and advises (ibid 292):
'If we wish to make the study of savage races really useful we must
try to free ourselves from all preconceived ideas and instead of
looking for idols or for totems or fetishes, learn to accept and
to understand what the savages themselves are able to tell us.'
Later (ibid: 451) he adds: 'I am bound to say, I know, as yet,
of few cases only where Tasmanians, Mincoupies, or Blackfeet have
proved half as useful to us as even Sayana's much abused
commentary'. Müller, in his publication of the Rig-Veda-Sanhita
included, not without the criticism of others, the vast 14th
century commentary of Sayana. Though I cannot present any of the
evidence here7 Müller and other Orientalists had rehearsed our
problem of the use of native models. Should one translate and not
consider the native exegesis, or should one slavishly follow the
native understanding ? Neither, says Müller, (Sacred Books of the
East: 1867 Prospectus) the native commentary is absolutely the
essential beginning to comprehension, but we should expect it to
contain errors, even a systematic bias, so that the scholar
should begin with the native understanding and construct a
translation based upon a critical interpretation of that.

Appendix V to <u>Anthropological Religion</u> is called 'On the
Untrustworthiness of Anthropological evidence'. Müller disliked
'anecdotic' anthropology, which took fragments of evidence from
societies whose languages were unknown and from sources whose
reliability could not be assessed. As Müller said (1897: 205)
'I know what our dangers are nearer home -' He, a translator
and philosopher could not imitate the fearless anthropologist. Of
them he said - and he was right - (ibid: 193) 'They thought that
their task was much easier than it really is'. Now if a
philosopher - MacIntyre, Hampshire, the ghost of Wittgenstein,
were to charge us today in exactly these terms, it would be
equally true. We cannot simply dismiss it as a comment from
another discipline. We have, in short, as an academic subject
failed; we have not appreciated the extreme complexity of our task.
We have not yet truly grasped what is involved in doing
anthropology well. That 'neo-anthropology' will be demanding is
very clear from Ardener's Malinowski Lecture, but as we incom-
petently attempt to establish universals or simply try to
comprehend something particular, we should look back to see what
has already been achieved. The purpose of this paper was to suggest
that Müller belongs to a past which we did not know we possessed
and that these achievements and this history are 'good to think
with'.

Fortes was able in his inaugural lecture at Cambridge to
exclaim that we at last had a true science of anthropology. The
predecessors of Malinowski seemed merely to get in the way of this
achievement. I can only express my complete disagreement. Compared
to the significance of the problems with which our Victorian
predecessors grappled, I regard much of the work of British social
anthropologists in this century as trivial; it could have been
left to sociologists. And besides their own obvious theoretical
failings, I regard it as the greatest insult of those who have
dominated our discipline to have ignored their history, to have
pretended that they have done better by not continuing the concerns

with which their ancestors wrestled. But conventionally we are
descended from Frazer, and scholar though he was, he was the least
original of them all (see Leach: 1965). It is a nonsense to accord
him such a place of honour when there are others of Müller's
stature not accorded any recognition at all. Many of our important
notions within recent decades have come from outside the
discipline, and the suggestion here is that Müller belongs to a
'past' of which we ought to be more conscious. We have, in brief,
robbed ourselves of valuable insights by not thinking about this
lineage of men who were similarly outside our discipline, and who,
in Müller's case, would not have wished to have been called an
anthropologist. It is now many years since Jarvie's 'Back to
Frazer' slogan was voiced.[8] Apart from Frazer being the worst
possible choice, I shall conclude with this remark. This
historical essay looks forwards not back. One does not simply
want to give a man a place in our history. The 'return' is no
more real than that of de Saussure who, reflecting on the classical
grammarians claimed that linguistics 'retournera....mais dans un
esprit nouveau et avec d'autres procédès -' (119). One wishes
merely to suggest that in certain ways Müller's astuteness exceeds
that of many of our professors, that many of his views belong to
the very present of our discipline. If I have glanced back, it
should be clear that my mind has really been on our future, and the
immense problems with which we shall require much assistance in
creating an anthropology that deserves to exist.

Malcolm Crick.

Notes

1.   This article is a shortened version of a paper read at a
     research class at the Institute of Social Anthropology,
     Oxford, during Hilary Term 1972. It represents the first-
     fruits of six months research on Max Müller. The essay is
     dedicated to Exeter College, Oxford, and her talented sons
     A.M. Hocart and E.E. Evans-Pritchard.
2.   On the production of the editio princeps of the Rig-Veda,
     Müller spent the first half of his academic life.
3.   Because his mode of composition, it is difficult to know
     exactly what Wittgenstein read, but it may be interesting to
     note that Wittgentein's phrase 'family likenesses' or
     'resemblances' is used frequently in Müller's work. It is
     used firstly, with regard to the organisation of various
     versions of manuscripts according to the distribution of
     errors, and secondly to refer to features shared by
     the members of a language family. Müller's use predates
     the appearance of the term in Galton's essay 'On Composite
     Portraits' in J.A.I. 1879.
4.   I am conscious of the fact that I have only given part of
     Wittgenstein - the intolerant, and sociologically less
     interesting aspect. On the other hand, this brief discussion
     represents only a part of Müller. He - and unlike his
     anthropological contemporaries - displays in his work on
     religious thought some of those 'charitable' aspects which
     characterize the later Wittgenstein and which do not appear
     in the literalist anthropologists.

5. See also (1) 'My Predecessors' 1888: 492-3 where he speaks
   of utilitarian moral philosophy as 'jugglery'. He points
   out that 'good' like other words has a range of meanings.
   It has one sense in moral philosophy, but also can mean
   'effective'. This latter sense is not one with which
   ethics has any concern; utilitarianism is a simple
   confusion of these two senses. (2) Three Introductory
   Lectures on the Science of Thought 1887: 79-84 where
   he says that 'true philosophy is a constant katharsis
   of our words -'. He refers there to somersaults in the
   history of philosophy and calls materialism a 'grammatical
   blunder'.

6. See the correspondence appendix to Three Lectures on the
   Science of Thought 1887 especially the last letter by
   Müller and his letters to Galton. Readers of de Saussure's
   Cours will know the great use to which he puts the chess
   analogy, and its appearance, and the discussion of signs
   in general by Müller may have a significance for the history
   of ideas. Saussure, like Müller was an Indo-European
   philologist and de Saussure refers to his 1861 lectures on
   language as brilliant, but goes on to add, rightly,
   'mais ce n'est pas par excès de conscience qu'il a péché
   (1949: 16). One should further say that Müller defines
   mythology (1897: 35) as the result of a pathological reaction
   of the 'sign' on the 'signified'. For Müller, as for de
   Saussure the 'signified' is a psychological reality. To
   these remarks one must add that the term 'sign' has a long
   history in philosophy. Locke in his Essay (called by F.
   Lange in his History of Materialism a 'critique of language')
   asserts that words are signs of concepts and not of things.
   Also, it must be said that components of Saussure's thought
   - language as an institution, for instance - would more
   likely have been derived from the writings of the Yale
   Sanskritist W.D. Whitney, whom de Saussure rated above
   Müller.
   See also William Thomson's book Outline of the Necessary
   Laws of thought (3rd ed. 1853) to which Müller appended his
   'Essay on Indian logic'. In this work, Thomson has a
   chapter on language, in which there is a discussion of
   different types of signs. He also suggests that verbal
   language is analytic - from which 'Whorfian' conclusions
   are drawn, whereas the signs in the language of art are
   'compositive' and have to be 'unfolded'.

7. The evidence is mainly in; S.B.E. Prospectus; Müller's
   History of Ancient Sanskrit Literature (1859); prefaces
   to Vols III (1856) and IV (1862) of the Rig-Veda-Sanhita.
   Briefly, the issue revolves around Müller's inclusion of the
   native commentary in his editio princeps, and his critique
   of the principles adopted by H.H. Wilson in his translation
   of the Rig-Veda.

8. See Jarvie: The Revolution in Anthropology (1964).
   Subsequent debate - see esp. Leach (1965) show that Jarvie
   knew very little about Frazer or Malinowski.

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ADAM FERGUSON (1723-1816)

Adam Ferguson was a remarkable person and, in my opinion, though much neglected, one of the major figures in the history of sociological thought. The son of a minister and a child of the Manse, he had the distinction, or may we say advantage, of having served for some years as Chaplain to the 42nd Regiment or ' The Black Watch'' (he fought, so it is said, at the battle of Fontenoy); and he was unique among the Scottish moral philosophers in that he was a Gaelic-speaking highlander. He appears to have been a rugged character, sometimes rather difficult; an ultra-conservative and and an anti-Stuart; and when one reads about his life one can well understand what he meant when he said that men are at their best when they have difficulties to surmount.

To estimate Ferguson one must see him and his writings in the intellectual setting of his time and place; and for this it might be necessary to dwell on the Jacobite troubles, the suppression of Scottish independence, rapid economic changes, and an element of provincial isolation and language difficulty. Without going into the historical and social setting however it will be sufficient to note how much Ferguson was an intellectual child of his time if I mention the names of Hume, Reid, Adam Smith, Lord Montboddo, Lord Kames, John Millar and Ferguson's pupil and his successor in the Chair of Moral Philosophy at Edinburgh, Dugald Stewart. Truly 'Scotland's Agustan age'; two of whom are of particular interest for us, the man I am going to talk about now and Lord Kames.

Ferguson received recognition at the time he wrote, especially in Germany, where he had much influence on Schiller and others. Also, in France, Saint-Simon and Comte owed much to him. In our own country, and later, J. S. Mill fully acknowledged his debt to him. Nevertheless he has since been forgotten, more or less, for over a century and a revival, though not a general one, in his writings has only recently taken place - regretfully one has to say in America (Lehman, 1931, and Kettler, 1965) and Germany (Kaneko, 1904, and Jogland, 1959), and not in his own country.

Ferguson left the Ministry of the Church of Scotland in 1754 to become Professor, first of all of Natural Philosophy and then of Pneumatic and Moral Philosophy at Edinburgh, and it was there he wrote his books during a long life on a variety of philosophical (as he and his contemporaries understood the word) subjects. His first and best known work, the one I am for the most part going to restrict my comments to, was An Essay on the History of Civil Society (1766). I do not think his Institutes of Moral Philosophy (lecture notes, 1772) or his Principles of Moral and Political Science (two large volumes, 1792) add much of sociological importance to what he had said in his first book; in both there is much tedious moralizing and what 18th century philosophers regarded as psychology ; I suppose that was only to have been expected of a moral philosopher of the period, especially of a Scottish Calvinist one. All the same one can at times sympathize with Hume's irritation and even Sir Leslie Stephen's stricture of superficiality. Ferguson's The History of the Progress and Termination of the Roman Republic (1783), a favourite topic among writers of the time, comprises five volumes of almost pure narrative spiced with some rhetoric.

This work has little sociological value; but it is only fair
to say that Ferguson was a very good classical scholar.

The Essay is a fascinating book if you like, as I do, the
ornate, even florid or inflated English 18th century style of
writing. One has, it is true, to put up with a good deal of
sententious verbosity (the book is 430 pages long), but in
spite of all the moralizing there is much sound thought in the
Essay, which, it should be said right away, shows throughout
and very clearly the influence of Montesquieu, as Ferguson
himself says. It should perhaps also be added that Hume, whose
successor he was as Keeper of the Advocates' Library in Edinburgh,
though they were great friends and much admired each other,
regarded the book unfavourably with regard to both style and
content (not that that should necessarily discourage us). If
we are to make any further comments on the author's personal
life and values as reflected in his writings it may be said
that while he abandoned his clerical career he did not go out
of his way, like Condorcet for instance, to attack Christianity.
After all, he had once been a Minister and a Chaplain. He
became I suppose what one might describe as some sort of Deist:
there is much 'The Author of Nature', and much of the reasoning
from 'design'.

Ferguson's book illustrates many of the basic assumptions
we find in modern social anthropology. In the first place he
says that the desire to give some account of the earliest form
of human society has led to fruitless enquiry and wild suppositions
because, while the natural historian thinks himself obliged to
collect facts and not to offer mere conjecture, 'it is only in
what relates to himself, and in matters the most important, and
the most easily known, that he substitutes hypothesis instead
of reality ... (p. 3-4). Here we have a clear statement of the
scope of a study of human societies - they are part of nature and
must be studied, as is any other part of nature, by observation
and induction.

Especially in the study of early man must conjecture be
avoided. It must not be assumed, as it so often is, that a mere
negation of what we find among ourselves is a sufficient
description of man in his original state. This is simply
judging by our own standards and is, moreover, going beyond, or
against, the testimonies of those who have had opportunities of
seeing mankind in their rudest conditions. Nor is direct
observation replaced by the written traditions of a people about
the earlier phases of their history. These are for the most
part mere conjectures and fictions of subsequent ages and bear
the stamp of the times through which a people has passed rather
than that to which the descriptions are supposed to relate (he
was thinking of the Iliad and Odyssey and also of writers
like Vergil and Tasso, who give us historical information only
about the conceptions and sentiments of the age in which they
wrote). In spite of all this excellent advice Ferguson, like
most of his contempories, relied largely on introspection,
using historical examples, taken from such classical authors
as he knew, when they illustrated or corroborated conclusions
reached by deductions from philosophical axioms or psychological
speculations rather than from the facts themselves.

Now, when Ferguson speaks of human societies as being 'natural'
he has in mind the political theories of his day. He will have
nothing to do with hypotheses, e.g. of Hobbes, Locke and others,
about a state of nature in which men lived without any form or
order, and more particularly of government. That kind of state of
nature will be found in the struggle between princes and subjects
rather than among rude tribes. He is also scornful of those who
imagine that they are studying 'natural man' when they interview
a wild man caught in the woods - an 18th century pastime. Human
nature is a product of social life and man is only 'natural' in
society, whether it be rude or polished. Therefore an 18th
century gentleman is not less 'natural' than a savage Redskin of
North America; indeed, in one sense he is more so, because the
potentialities of men in polished societies have greater scope
for expression. Therefore we must not oppose art (culture) to
nature, for art itself is natural to man: 'If we are asked
therefore, where the state of nature is to be found? We may
answer, It is here: and it matters not whether we are understood
to speak in the island of Great Britain, at the Cape of Good Hope,
on the Straits of Magellan . . . If the palace be unnatural, the
cottage is so no less; and the Highest refinements of political
and moral apprehension, are not more artificial in their kind,
than the first operations of sentiment and reason' (p. 12). He
also says 'all the actions of men are equally the result of their
nature (pp. 14-15).

It may here be commented, if only as an aside, that the idea
that primitive peoples are in some sense more 'natural' than
civilized peoples is still an idea commonly met with in everyday
thought. In Ferguson's day it was the centre of much philosophical
discussion. He held that it is futile to try to contrast
hypothetical man living outside society ('natural man') with man
living in society. Did not Aristotle long ago insist that man is
by nature a political (social) creature. The question of what
in a man in any society is to be attributed to biological
inheritance and what to society and culture is altogether different
and one which concerns equally both rude and polished man.

It is true that man, unlike the beasts, is endowed not with
just instinct but also with intelligence and will and so shapes
his own destiny up to a point, though, it must be added, only up
to a point. For societies, being natural, do not develop by
will or design but of their own nature, like trees: 'He who first
said "I will appropriate this field; I will leave it to my heirs";
did not perceive, that he was laying the foundation of civil laws
and political establishments' (p. 186). Men, that is, arrive at
ends they may not aim at; they are free to choose but they cannot
predict what will happen as a result of their choice, for societies
arise from instincts and not from speculations, so that what
happens is 'indeed the result of human action, but not the execution
of any human design' (p.187). Institutions spring out of the
general conditions of a society and are not the conscious creations
of men, far less of any particular man, however gifted. Statesmen
who think that they control events are like the fly in the fable
who thought it was turning the wheel on which it sat. How often
since have sociologists told us this, especially the Marxist ones!

Since man is essentially a social creature he cannot be
understood except as a member of a group. So our first task is
to get some idea of the nature of a social group. All accounts

from all parts of the earth 'represent mankind as assembled in troops and companies . . . (p. 4). Therefore, 'Mankind are to be taken in groups, as they have always subsisted. The history of the individual is but a detail of the sentiments and thoughts he has entertained in the view of his species: and every experiment relative to this subject should be made with entire societies, not with single men' (p. 6). Then again: 'Mankind have always wandered or settled, agreed or quarrelled, in troops and companies. The cause of their assembling, whatever it be, is the principle of their alliance or union' (p. 23). In the Principles we read 'Families may be considered as the elementary forms of society or establishments the most indespensibly necessary to the existence and preservation of the kind'. The family in some form or other is universal. Comte was to say very much the same.

The study of man is therefore a study of institutions in relation to one another in the total conditions of life, including national character and climate (Ferguson picked up some odd ideas about the influence of climate from Montesquieu). He discusses at length, closely following the classification and method of analysis of Montesquieu, the nature of various forms of government, democratic, aristocratic, monarchical and despotic, observing the circumstances in which each is found and the various forms of other institutions found with each. He discusses the beginnings of property in agricultural and pastoral societies (this notion of property and the part it has played in social development was, perhaps rightly, an obsession among philosophers of the period) and the distribution of these two types of societies over the earth's surface and with reference to climate and some of the main cultural features of each. Both, however, show the beginnings of property and the inequalities and subordination which go with it, and jurisdiction and government which accompany them. Property comes about in passing from the savage to the barbarous state. He also discusses how superstition disputes with valour (he never quite ceases to be a soldier) the road to power: the 'magic wand' comes in competition with the sword itself' (p. 161) - cp Condorcet, Frazer and others). He discusses how population grows with increase in wealth and security (here again cp. Condorcet) and is always limited by the means of subsistence. He has an excellent discussion of the circumstances in which cultural borrowing takes place (p. 25 seq.). Also how as a result of borrowing knowledge increases: 'When nations succeed one another in the career of discoveries and inquiries, the last is always the most knowing. Systems of science are gradually formed. The globe itself is traversed by degrees, and the history of every age, when past, is an accession of knowledge to those who succeed. The Romans were more knowing than the Greeks; and every scholar of modern Europe, is in this sense, more learned than the most accomplished person that ever bore either of those celebrated names. But is he on that account their superior?' (p. 44) - (once again cp. Condorcet.) Anyhow, no people borrows from another unless they are ready for the loan. He discusses many other topics of anthropological interest - all of which I cannot, obviously, enter into now. Throughout he adheres to his general viewpoint, that culture, like society, is a natural growth, collectively produced, and having its existence outside, and apart from individual minds, which they shape. Was not Durkheim to say much the same as his main thesis a century later?

Since I cannot appreciate all he wrote, I shall mention
only two of the topics he treated, as examples of his sociological
insights - war and the division of labour - in both of which his
idea of a society being some kind of system of balanced parts
comes out quite clearly. A policital structure is a system of
opposed groups. The Hottentots, he says, quoting Kolben, raid
each other for cattle and women, but they only do this to bring
their neighbours to war: 'Such depredations then are not the
foundation of a war, but the effects of a hostile intention
already conceived. The nations of North America, who have no
herds to preserve, nor settlements to defend, are yet engaged
in almost perpetual wars, for which they can assign no reason,
but the point of honour, and a desire to continue the struggle
their fathers maintained. They do not regard the spoils of an
enemy; and the warrior who has seized any booty, easily parts
with it to the first person who comes in his way' (p. 33).
In other words, wars arise not so much from an opposition of
interests as of sentiments, and the supposed causes of war are
only its occasions - the real cause is to be looked for in the
functioning of the political structure: 'But it is in vain to
expect that we can give to the multitude of a people a sense of
union among themselves, without admitting hostility to those who
oppose them. Could we at once, in the case of any nation
extinguish the emulation which is excited from abroad, we should
probably break or weaken the bands of society at home, and close
the busiest scenes of national occupations and virtues' (p. 37).
Again: 'The society and concourse of other men, are not more
necessary to form the individual, than the rivalship and
competition of nations are to invigorate the principles of
political life in a state' (pp. 182-3). Athens was necessary
to Sparta (for which state and way of life Ferguson had great
admiration) as steel is to flint in making fire. When the
kingdoms of Spain united and the great fiefs in France were
annexed to the crown the nations of Great Britain were joined.
Social groups, that is, maintain their cohesion through opposition
to like groups. Hence the structural necessity of war - both
hot and cold (cp. Gunplowics). In another part of his book he
says 'small and simple tribes, who in their domestic society
have the firmest union, are in their state of opposition as
separate nations, frequently animated with the most implacable
hatred ... Even where no particular claim to superiority is
formed, the repugnance to union, the frequent wars, or rather
the perpetual hostilities, which take place among rude nations
and separate clans, discover how much our species is disposed to
opposition, as well as to concert' (pp. 30-31).

My second example is what Ferguson says about division of
labour. A people can make no great progress in cultivating the
arts of life until they have committed to different persons the
several tasks which require a peculiar skill and attention.
This cannot be done in the savage stage and only partly in the
barbarian stage. All this changes with greater prosperity and
the development of property, and then we get division of labour,
not only in production but in all the activities of social life:
politics, war, civil government, commerce and so on. 'These
separate professions are made, like the parts of an engine, to
concur to a purpose, without any concert of their own' (pp. 278-9).
'The savage who knows no distinction but that of his merit, of
his sex, or of his species, and to whom his community is the
sovereign object of his affection, is astonished to find, that in

a scene of this nature, his being a man does not qualify him for
any station whatever; he flies to the woods with amazement, distaste,
and aversion' (p. 278). Then again: 'Even the savage still less
than the citizen, can be made to quit that manner of life in which
he is trained: he loves that freedom of mind which will not be
bound to any task, and which owns no superior: however tempted to
mix with polished nations, and to better his fortune, the first
moment of liberty brings him back to the woods again ...' (p. 145).

Division of labour is no less a ground for subordination than
difference in natural talents and dispositions and the unequal
division of property; and it results in different sets of values
and modes of custom in each class or profession in society, just
as types of society have their special character - the Roman is
a soldier, the Carthaginian a merchant; and the subjects of a
republic and a monarchy differ in their outlooks, aims and behaviour.
Nevertheless, societies in which there has taken place division of
labour, in spite of divergences, present a uniform structural
similarity. The general point Ferguson is making is that just
as a political society forms part of a system of such societies,
maintained in a balance through opposition, so internally the
same society is a system of classes, ranks, professions, etc.,
which have an interdependence, it being precisely this which
determines the moral solidarity of a complex society (cp. Durkheim).
Furthermore he says 'But apart from these considerations, the
separation of professions, while it seems to promise improvement
of skill, and is actually the cause why the productions of every
art become more perfect as commerce advances; yet in its
termination, and ultimate effects, serves, in some measure, to
break the bands of society, to substitute form in place of
ingenuity, and to withdraw individuals from the common scene of
occupation, on which the sentiments of the heart, and the mind,
are most happily employed' (p. 334).

There are many correspondences one could draw attention to
between what Ferguson is saying here and what others have said
before and since, but I shall make only two comments. The first
is a reference to the purely historical question, whether Ferguson
got what he wrote about the division of labour, or at any rate an
indication of its significance, from his Coeval Adam Smith.
Probably he did, through lectures and private converse. The
second comment is that it has been said that Ferguson had the idea
that what follows division of labour is what later came to be
termed 'alienation'. For this he got a pat on the back from Karl
Marx (e.g. The Poverty of Philosophy, 1910, pp. 109 and 187); and
in a way it is true, for he saw, and stated, clearly that division,
specialization, can bring about what Durkheim called anomie, make
a man feel that he does not belong fully to the society of which
he is a member, make him fly 'to the woods'. What he wrote may also
be linked to what has been written about Gemeinschaft and
Gesellschaft.

As I have remarked earlier, Ferguson has much to say on many
topics to which in a brief lecture I can only make allusion. The
anthropologist will note that he was very interested in primitive -
what he called 'rude' or 'savage' or 'barbarous' peoples - a
study of whose social life he considered most valuable in that
it enables us to make signigicant comparisons between the simpler
societies and the more complex (cp. Hobbes, Locke, Rousseau).
He gives a good account, based on Jesuit sources, of what was then

known of the American Indians, and in his chapter 'Of Rude Nations prior to the Establishment of Property' (pp. 125 seq.) he makes many sensible and penetrating observations about these savages, though on the whole he tends to romanticise them somewhat. His brilliant and acutely sensitive skit on travellers' reports is highly amusing.

However, leaving many topics aside, it will be evident to you from what has already been said that Ferguson, conceiving, as he did, of societies being natural systems of some kind, and hence that they can be studied as such much as the natural sciences study the phenomena with which they deal, it was necessary for him to hold also that there are general sociological laws ('principles') to be discovered, by reference to which variations can be explained. 'In collecting the materials of history, we are seldom willing to put up with our subject merely as we find it. We are loth to be embarrassed with a multiplicity of particulars, and apparent inconsistencies. In theory we profess the investigation of general principles; and in order to bring the matter of our inquiries within the reach of our comprehension, are disposed to adopt any system' (pp. 23-4). Again: 'To collect a multiplicity of particulars under general heads, and to refer a variety of operations to their common principle, is the object of science' (p. 40). May I quote him again - I prefer on a matter of this kind to quote than to paraphrase - :'In order to have a general and comprehensive knowledge of the whole, we must be determined on this, as on every other subject, to overlook many particulars and singulatities, distinguishing different governments; to fix our attention on certain points, in which many agree; and thereby establish a few general heads, under which the subject may be distinctly considered. When we have marked the characteristics which form the general points of coincidence; when we have pursued them to their consequences in the several modes of legislation, execution, and judicature, in the establishments which relate to police, commerce, religion, or domestic life; we have made an acquisition of knowledge, which, though it does not supersede the necessity of experience, may serve to direct our inquiries, and, in the midst of affairs, to give an order and a method for the arrangement of particulars that occur to our observation' (pp. 97-8). So we have to fix our attention on the significant general features of social institutions and overlook many particulars and singularities - mere events and personalities, these are 'accidents'. A Classification of types may then be made, and must be made if any general and comprehensive laws are to be reached; this is the manner in which all the natural sciences have proceeded: they have traced facts to their general laws. He lays the same emphasis on the difference between the mere recording of facts and their relation to laws in the Institutes and the Principles: history is concerned with the detail of particulars, science with general principles (laws).

If there are general principles they must be dynamic principles for, like most of his contemporaries, Ferguson was chiefly interested in the study of social development. Indeed, he tells us, the great difference between man and animals is that 'in the human kind, the species has a progress as well as the individual; they build in every subsequent age on foundations formerly laid ...' (p. 7). Every scholar in Europe is more learned than the most

accomplished of the Greeks and Romans, though this does not mean
that he is their superior. How often have we been told this, that
dwarfs on the backs of giants see further than the giants themselves?
If I may quote our author again: 'This progress in the case of man
is continued to a greater extent than in that of any other animal.
Not only the individual advances from infancy to manhood, but the
species itself from rudeness to civilization' (pp. 1-2). Adam
Ferguson was a great believer in progress and laws of progress.

Now, the method to be used in making the historical
reconstruction necessary for the earlier phases of a people's
social development so that the principles of progress can be revealed
is that of what Duglad Stewart called 'conjectural', that is,
hypothetical, history. Early phases in the history of our own
society can, it was supposed, be known by observation of how people
now live who are still in those stages. 'What should distinguish
a German or a Briton, in the habits of his mind or his body, in
his manners or apprehensions, from an American (Indian), who, like
him, with his bow and his dart, is left to traverse the forest; and
in a like severe or variable climate, is obliged to subsist by the
chase. If, in advanced years, we would form a just notion of our
progress from the cradle, we must have recourse to the nursery, and
from the example of those who are still in the period of life we
mean to describe, take our representation of past manners, that
cannot, in any other way, be recalled' (p. 122). Ferguson's
interest in savages was chiefly that they illustrated a phase, he
supposed, in our own history; and the evidences of prehistory
give support to his supposition.

As always, the conception of laws ('principles') combined
with the notion of progress inevitably led Ferguson to formulate
a paradigm of stages drawn up on criteria of production and
productive relations. With these ecomomic stages go certain types
of institutions and certain cultural traits. The criteria of
Ferguson were much the same, and understandably so, as those of
other writers who reflected on the different forms of society still
to be observed (e.g. Condorcet). The earliest stage is that of
hunting, fishing, or collecting the natural produce of the soil;
in which there is little property and scarcely even the beginnings
of subordination or government. The next stage is that of herders,
who have property and hence distinctions between rich and poor,
patron and client, master and servant. This distinction 'must
create a material difference of character, and may furnish two
separate heads, under which to consider the history of mankind in
their rudest state; that of the savage, who is not yet acquainted
with property; and that of the barbarian, to whom it is, although
not ascertained by laws, a principal object of care and desire',
(p.124). Property is the mother of progress, for it implies
laws and habits of industry (cp. Condorcet). In all this Ferguson
leans heavily on Montesquieu.

In fact we see in this book the essential ideas which make
Montesquieu's Esprit so brilliant and original a classic. There
is the same insistance on an objective study of social facts and
on the need to reach formulations of a general kind based on a
systematic comparison of societies. There is also the same
emphasis on the logical consistency between series of social facts
that we are later to find so strongly emphasized by Comte, and
the need to explain institutions by reference to their functions
in the activities of the total society rather than by reference to

doctrines or philosophical axioms about social life or human nature
(not that he always lived up to his exhortations in this respect).
Where he differs most from Montesquieu is in a more rigid, though
far from mechanical, idea of what might constitute a sociological
law, and in the notion of unilinear social development, stages
through which all societies pass and which can be reconstructed
by use of what later became known as the comparative method, a
notion deriving from a combination of the ideas of law and progress,
the first largely a product of discoveries in physics, the second,
according to Comte, a consequence of the collapse of Catholic
feudal institutions.

<div align="right">E.E. Evans-Pritchard</div>

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Signs, Symptoms and Symbols

Dancing is essentially the active termination of a symbolic transformation of experience. Speaking is also a symbolic transformation of experience. The terminal symbols of speech are expressed in words, sentences and paragraphs, the terminal symbols of dance in gestures, poses and movement phrases. The terminal symbols of speech are often considered to be symbolic in quite different ways from the terminal symbols of dance, and we will now examine a few of these differences.

Both kinds of symbolic system, movement and language, share the function of meaning, for that is what any symbolic system is about, and meaning is based in both systems upon a condition which is logical, although meaning has both logical and psychological aspects. Logically or psychologically, utterances in either medium, just as items of stone or other materials which are to have meaning must, in the first place be employed as signals or symbols, then they must be signals or symbols to someone or a group of people.

To illustrate: until the item or the utterance is employed as a sign or a symbol, it is Nature. When it is thus employed, it becomes Culture. The item has got to have undergone this kind of fundamental transformation. The movements we perform in such fundamental acts as relieving ourselves or in eating, dressing, running, etc. are not dance movements, nor, in the terms of this argument, are they symbolic, although they are definitely symptomatic and could therefore be called signal in that they may be interpreted as signs of various activities, needs, situations, etc. Non-dance movements may be symptomatic of physiological or emotional states or they may be artificial socio-cultural signs of states of affairs.

The problem with symptoms, signs and symbols for the anthropologist when dealing specifically with dance or generally with movement is one which in a larger sense turns around the notion of 'expression'; a much used, — and misused, word, in relation to dance. The word expression points to a concept with which Suzanne Langer has dealt very sensibly: the important point she makes is that when we see a dance, what we are seeing is not a symptom of the dancer's feelings but a symbolic expression (better called exposition) of the composer's or participants' knowledge about all human feeling. Equally, we may say that Macbeth, for instance, is not a symptom of the actors' or Shakespeare's feelings but a symbolic expression of his and their knowledge of human feelings.

Dances may be symbolic expressions of diverse kinds of knowledge. They need not have emotions, the term most frequently associated with 'expression' in dance, as the main axis around which their subject matter turns. A dance may involve emotion but not be about emotions at all. Frequently, states of greater muscular tension or increased speed of movement are wrongly interpreted as 'emotion' of some kind. An outstanding example of an 'emotionless' system of movement, that is, one which does not include any of what we commonly think of as 'emotional expression' at all, is the ancient Chinese exercise technique Tai-Chi-Chu'uan, developed in the sixth century A.D. in contrast to the then prevailing system of movement, nearly universally used in China,

called Shao-Lin. Many dances from India and Africa are more usefully classified as highly disciplined rehearsals of socially sanctioned and correct attitudes. Still others are of a distinctly historical nature. All dances, however, convey meaning, including those which are considered by some to express 'pure beauty' or to project some vaguely defined aesthetic phlogiston. Sometimes the meaning is banal, trivial and superficial but this does not alter the fact of the symbolically expressive nature of the system, nor does it alter the validity or logical character- istics of dance gestures. Similarly, the existence of nursery rhymes, just-so stories and trashy novels and comic books in no way alters the unique syntactical or grammatical character of the English language or any other language.

It is worth quoting Mrs. Langer at length regarding the concept of symbolic expression in dance because her succinct statement helps to clear the notion of so many received ideas about it:

> As soon as an expressive act is performed without
> inner momentary compulsion it is no longer self-
> expressive; it is expressive in a logical sense. It
> is not a sign (underline supplied) of the emotions
> it conveys, but a symbol of it; instead of completing
> the natural history of a feeling, it denotes the
> feeling, and may merely bring it to mind, even for
> the actor. When an action acquires such a meaning,
> it becomes a gesture....[1]

Philosophers tell us that we can say at least two things about symbols: we can say that a certain symbol means an object, concept or idea TO a person or that a person means an object, concept or idea BY the symbol. In the first instance, meaning is treated in a logical sense; in the second, in a psychological sense. We can, in view of this distinction, say with impunity that when an Indian dancer assumes a Krishna pose in the Kathak idiom; that is, when the right hand is in a gesture near the mouth 'holding the flute' and the left is extended fully to the side in the ahamsa position, that this gesture (plus the total bodily posture) means the whole tale of the time when Krishna held up a mountain on his little finger thereby saving the Gopis from a flood; that this total bodily gesture IS a symbol in the logical sense, for it is but one posture employed within the total idiom which means that story to a significant number of Indians and all non-Indians who have studied the Kathak idiom.

Similarly, when the leading dancer of the Ga Obonu assumes an almost kneeling position before the Ga Mantse at the beginning of the dance and the Ga Mantse then raises his right arm in a certain gesture, these gestures mean, respectively, the questions, 'May we dance?' and the responding affirmative answer. Another gesture or no gesture on the part of the Ga Mantse in this situation would mean that the dance would not proceed; that only the drums would continue. No doubt most anthropologists are familiar with similar uses of gesture in other parts of the world, among the Navajo,[2] the Mohave,[3] the Balinese,[4] Anglo-American speaking peoples,[5] the Poles[6] and others. It would merely be tedious to summarize or re-state all of the ethnographic evidence which supports the thesis of the logical characteristics of gesture and hence, much of dance movement.

Then why dwell upon the point? When we regard gesture in this
way, we are looking at it in a logical, near-discursive sense and
few would deny the distinction or the supporting evidence. When,
however, we lapse (as so frequently happens) into talking about
what the dancer may be feeling or what his private meaning may be
for the gesture, when, in other words, we focus not upon the
symbol but upon the actor, we are in dangerous territory indeed.
It is commonly accepted among dancers that little or no personal
feeling or emotion is experienced while they are dancing in any
case.

Many, although by no means all, of the ways in which dance has
been accounted for by anthropologists, aestheticians, psycholo-
gists and even dancers themselves are couched in such subjective
terms. If such subjective terms are not used, then dance is
treated, even by semiologists, as primarily symptomatic or signal
rather than symbolic, which only compounds the confusion. Yet
both logical and psychological descriptions are related, but only
if we view meaning, as Mrs. Langer so rightly argues, as a
function of our terms and not as a property of them.

The distinction between signs and symbols is of paramount
importance then, if our aim is to discover the foundation of the
relation between dance or movement and society. It is indispen-
sable if we are to disentangle movement-which-is-dance from other
movement phenomena. For those who might find such a distinction
arbitrary or over-scrupulous, considering that these words, 'sign'
and 'symbol' are commonly used terms, it may be useful to look upon
the following material as operational definitions. This makes it
possible to withold judgment as to the value of the exercise until
a later stage of the inquiry.

A sign, thus operationally defined, indicates the existence; past,
present or future, of a thing, event or condition, --- wet streets,
the sound of hail on a roof, smoke, dawn, the presence of palm
trees instead of pine, spruce or tamarack, etc. These are natural
signs. On the other hand, a person squatting by the roadside
in Africa is a socio-cultural sign, perhaps of weariness, perhaps
that he is defacating, or, in combination with other objects,
that he is selling cigarettes. Following Mrs. Langer, I also
take 'sign' to mean a symptom of a state of affairs.

The logical relationship between a sign and its object, she
tells us, is simple; they are associated in such a way that they
form a pair and they stand in a one to one relationship or
correlation. One of the examples she gives is interesting: a
white mark on a person's arm as simple data is not very interest-
ing but that data in relation to the past, which discursively
tags it as a scar, is interesting. A white mark on a person's
arm, to an anthropologist, might include the simple data she
mentions plus other much wider, more complex connotations: a
white mark on the arm of an African, for example, would not in
the first place be a scar, but might indicate some special inner
state or condition which in turn would be connected with a socio-
religious status of some kind such that, as a sign, we might more
usefully think of it like a badge or emblem of some sort, rather
than as a sign of a past event in the personal history of the
individual.

Train whistles, black arm bands, traffic lights, the streaks of
white clay mentioned above, in contrast to the natural signs
previously mentioned, are not natural: they are artificial
socio-cultural signs. They are not necessarily nor even usually
a part of the event or condition they signify although the logical
relation is still one to one. A symbol has a more complex frame
of reference. Langer says that

> Symbols are not proxy for their objects, but are
> vehicles for the conception of objects.[7]

There are three, not two terms involved. To conceive a thing or
a situation or a cosmos, a 'role' or a 'status' is not the same
thing as to react towards it overtly or to merely notice its
presence. Langer says that words normally evoke behaviour
towards conceptions. Movement symbols also evoke behaviour to-
wards conceptions, especially outside of Europe, England and
North America. It seems necessary to make a distinction between,
for example, Africa or India and the West in this connection, not
because many westerners do not perceive what we know as 'artistic
symbols' in this way, but because in general, our societies have
become so specialized and our artists are in such distinct and
usually relatively marginal social categories that we have
minimized or reduced our awareness of these facts. We are not a
'people-who-dance' and therein, perhaps, lies much of the
difficulty in communication between the minority group of
specialists who do and the vast majority who do not.

Tentatively, we might assume that culturally organized form,
whether idioms of dance, paintings, sculptures, drumming, etc. are
ways of abstracting and/or conceptualizing, which is what I
believe we may take Levi-Strauss to mean when he speaks about the
face painting designs among the Caduveo. For purposes of
clarity in relation to gesture, we might keep the following
illustration in mind as a kind of 'shorthand notion' of some of
the major differences between symptoms, signs and symbols
relating to movement which have so far been indicated: a thumb
in a baby's mouth may be symptomatic of an inner condition of
hunger or a sign of some physiological or biological condition
for which sucking is a necessary accompaniment. A thumb in an
adult's mouth may be a symptom of regressive behaviour. A thumb-
nail flicked against the teeth in Italy (or a thumb pulled quickly
out of a sucking position in the mouth in Milwaukee, Wisconsin)
is a socio-cultural sign of abuse and may lead to a fight. The
baby's thumb sucking is a natural sign which is perhaps symptomatic,
the adult's thumb-sucking is clearly symptomatic and the Italian's
thumb gesture is a socio-cultural sign of impending violence.

A dancer who employs the Italian gesture of abuse in a dance is
not 1) completing the natural history of his feelings, as is the
man-in-the-street who does it and 2) he is not making the gesture
under the stress of momentary inner compulsion. He is making the
gesture because it has been employed as a symbol in the dance to
convey a conception about violence, perhaps, or a concept of an
abusive person or group of people or something of that nature.
Peter Janiero's masterful handling of movements and gesture for
the Puerto Ricans in West Side Story is an excellent example of
what is meant. In a dance, the gestures become vehicles for the
conceptions of people, objects, attitudes or situations. Exactly
the same things could be said of the rude or abusive gestures which

are incorporated into the modern Ga dance 'Kpanlogo'; these gestures, which out of context of the dance might invite immediate and perhaps violent responses do not do so in the context of the dance.

Nothing has been said so far about the real differences inherent in the techniques involved in various kinds of systems of symbolization. For the moment, it will suffice to mention the major difference between discursive and non-discursive symbolic systems. Mrs. Langer sums it up neatly in one sentence:

> We cannot talk in simultaneous bunches of names.[8]

She illustrates this proposition with the contrasting images of the layers of clothing which we wear everyday hanging side by side on a clothes line. Non-discursive symbolic systems deal with symbols which have the quality of simultaniety; musical chords, paintings, Grässer's sculptures of Morris dancers, -- the list is nearly endless. Like these, the dance gesture or symbol has diverse meanings, multiple simultaneous impacts on many levels. The movement symbol, in other words, is semantically very dense indeed, hence the dancer's traditional dissatisfaction with words, which often seem so tedious largely because of their linear quality. Words seem to lack the specificity that gesture has to the dancer. While it is true that degrees of emotion, for example, can be indicated verbally, they can never be denoted with the degree of sophistication and refinement which can occur in a dance. On the other hand, a choreographer is wise not to create a dance work in which the plot or the meaning of the piece hangs upon the fact that one of the characters is someone's sister-in-law, unless his idiom provides specific conventional gestures having that kind of referential value, or unless he includes paragraphs of program notes which 'explain' such a plot.

The over-riding difficulty, the big problem which Mrs. Langer posed, and in my view answered, once and for all, is the one which Nelson Goodman calls

> ...the domineering dichotomy between the cognitive and the emotive.[9]

'On the one side', he says, 'we put sensation, inference, conjecture, all nerveless inspection and investigation, fact and truth; on the other, pleasure, pain, interest, satisfaction, disappointment, all brainless affective response, liking and loathing.'

Both philosophers whom I invoke have recognized this problem and to them in particular and to philosophers in general what follows may appear to be a revival of exhausted arguments but what may be an exhausted argument in formal philosophy still seems to have strong currency as an argument in other disciplines: to the extent that a brief re-examination of some of these paradigmatic problems may be justified. For it would seem that many of the explanations of dance, theories about dance and definitions of dance are, after all, only based upon an a priori assumption of this dichotomy, which in the end does involve the logicians and philosophers who have investigated the limits of language.

Nothing that is not 'language' in the sense of their technical
definitions can possess the character of symbolic expressiveness,
contrary to everything which has so far been stated in this
argument, though they will grant non-discursive symbolization
'expressiveness' in a symptomatic way. We get the picture from
this, as Langer says, that outside their definitional domain,
their tiny 'grammar-bound island' as she calls it, is the
inexpressible realm of feeling, of immediate experience, sub-
jectivity and satisfactions forever incommunicado and incognito.
The earlier Wittgenstein called it 'This logical beyond; the
unspeakable.' Russell and Carnap, as she points out, regard this
as the sphere of subjective experience, emotion, feeling and wish
from which only symptoms come to us in the form of metaphysical
and artistic fancies ! Moreover, they relegated the study of such
products to psychology; the discipline which purports to deal
with the inner machinations of individuals. The dance, one of
the most 'unspeakable' of all the arts, ranks high in this realm
of the logical beyond.

In all fairness, because the argument may now seem to tend towards
being a polemic against philosophers, which is certainly not
intended, it must be said that no modern philosopher would agree,
for example, with Cartesian divisions between mind and body and
that they would, in general, be against the kinds of emotive-
cognitive distinctions which he made. While it is true, as has
been mentioned before, that certain forms of positivism have been
rejected within the discipline of modern philosophy during the past
fifteen or twenty years, some of these arguments still have strong
currency in other disciplines, including Social Anthropology, --
not totally without reason perhaps. Artists are traditionally
lazy intellectually and they often seem to gain their sense of
individual and social power from capitalizing upon the mystery and
obscurity with which their society surrounds their activities.
They respond very humanly and perfectly understandably, to their
marginal social and academic categorization with further withdrawal.
On the other hand, the 'domineering dichotomy' of intellect vs.
emotion has a long intellectual history in the Anglo-American
philosophical and academic tradition which is venerable and
hoary with age. It is a very deeply entrenched notion, even if
some people do think it is dead wrong.

Probably the most damaging features about this positivistic sort
of dichotomy for non-discursive artists and any possible contribution
which they might have to make to the general fund of human know-
ledge are the two basic assumptions which lie behind the
contentions of the philosophers about whom Langer speaks.
Interestingly, these contentions are not so different from the
ones which seem to lie between the more recent 'fact-value'
distinctions, which found their parenthood in the Humean 'ought-
is' distinction. The similarity lies in the fact that all these
kinds of dichotomies seem to be attempts to undermine the
objectivity of art and of non-discursive symbol systems, not to
mention ethics and morals.

The contentions which lie behind such distinctions seem to be that
1) language is the only means of articulating thought and 2) that
everything which is not speakable thought is feeling. Language,
according to the philosophers Langer mentions, is the limit of the
expressive symbolic medium and therefore, the limit of our
conceptual power. Beyond this, we can have only inarticulate
feeling which neither conveys nor records anything, but which has
to be, rather compulsively apparently, discharged in actions,
'self-expression' or some kind of impulsive demonstrations. In

the light of these contentions, dancers, all artists, and 'primitives' of all sorts are people who have to express themselves, preferably publicly, whether for the edification of, or to the profound dismay of, -- others.

These contentions and the axiomatic assumptions upon which they are based provide the modern anthropologist with very little in the way of conceptual tools with which to deal with the several non-discursive symbolic systems which he encounters everyday in the field, or, for that matter, those which he encounters at home. It becomes abundantly clear if one reviews the definitional problems connected with dance and examines several naive, unsophisticated theories which have been developed in various disciplines about dance, that all of these problems and theories are perhaps the inevitable products of methodology, models and attitudes which reflect the narrowness of the traditional philosophical paradigm itself.

That language has a privileged position and will continue to hold that position among human symbolic systems is an assertion that few would deny. To question the assertion does not necessarily mean that ultimately we would reject it, to question it merely means that we might enrich our ideas of the nature of its companion systems. Roland Barthes, for example, seems to feel that language is privileged because of its universality,[10] although upon reflection, we realize that speaking is not more universal than moving. Perhaps we think that language is privileged because it has been written. Because of written language we can categorize ourselves as 'literate'; we become writers instead of just speakers. This seems to mean that we can in some way confirm or affirm our existence in the past or the future or that we are then 'civilized' where before we wrote, we were not, or something of that kind. Dance, we say, is no longer an 'illiterate art' because notation systems have, since the time of Laban, been devised which are now universally used.

Certainly, most social anthropologists, as well as many modern philosophers and linguists would agree that there are grounds for reasonable doubt that spoken language is the only means of articulating thought or that it represents the limits of human conceptualizing power.

To conclude: we must summarize the distinction so far made between sign, symbol and symptom. On a basis of this distinction we must then distinguish two kinds of intention which are involved in movements, actions and dances. Expressive gestures or actions can be either signal or symbolic. They are signal when they complete the natural history of feelings and symbolic when they are performed without inner momentary compulsion; i.e. when they denote feelings, emotions, ideas, situations, etc., even for the actor. Quite simply, symbols are taken to be characters which bestow conceptual identity upon an event, object, situation or group of people and signs are characters which do not bestow conceptual identity. I believe that de Sassure meant something very similar when he made a distinction between signs and symbols as well. Gesture or action which is signal may also be symptomatic, on the one hand of inner states or conditions, which is to look at them in a purely psychological sense, or they may be symptomatic of states of affairs, which is to look at them as socio-cultural signs.

Our essential distinction; that between signs and symbols, seems
to lead in the direction of being able to postulate both private
and public intentions in relation to the 'language' of movement.
To pursue this line of thought points towards what modern
philosophers, including the later Wittgenstein, would postulate
about spoken language; that language has agreed public meanings
and interpretations which are often distinct from private
interpretations or meanings. de Sassure went a little further,
perhaps, when he said that all means of expression are based on
collectively agreed upon interpretations, by which he meant
conventions, and he said that it was the conventional rules, not
the intrinsic value of the signs, symbols or characters of what-
ever sort that obliges us to use them. In dancerly terms what this
means is that it is not possible to create a dance which anyone
is going to understand if, for example, the dance is about God
and all the gestures are towards the ground.

Modern philosophers argue that language has the characteristic of
publicity because people do intend to communicate something when
they use language. It is important to note, in connection with
this point, that, contrary to Prof. Strawson's recent criticism
of Noam Chomsky,[11] the latter does take account of the intentions
of native speakers of the language because he presupposes that
people intend to communicate something by virtue of this system
of sounds. This public character of spoken language is, by
definition, conventional.

If we are to look upon the dance, even partially, as having the
characteristics of a language, then we must grant that it also
has characteristics of publicity and I would submit the
ethnographic evidence already cited to support this claim.
Private gesture languages, like private verbal languages are
largely irrelevant to the social anthropologist, although they
may be of paramount importance to the psychologist or to the
medical doctor. And this does not mean a commitment to the
position that the artist, who is often conceptualizing ahead of
his time or in a manner similar to the Buryat shamans described
by Humphries,[12] is expressing a 'private language' and that his
insights and activities are therefore to be discredited. To
speak of the public and 'private' intentions of discursive or
non-discursive symbol systems, does not mean that only the
artist or the shaman will understand. We do not involve the
artist or the shaman in this kind of private fallacy. Any
language is, as everyone knows, open-ended. We are always
involved in the tension between the prevailing cultural canon
and current innovation which is based upon these canons. Real
innovators are those who can function within the canons and then
take us beyond. The reference here is to artists like Picasso,
whose innovations were in part, surely, accepted because he
could paint supremely well within the framework of the prevailing
academic canon of his time. He didn't paint as he did because
he couldn't paint representationally, but because he could and
moreover, could then lead us beyond that.

Signs and symbols both indicate intention; what is important in
considering symbolic systems of dances, is whether or not the
emphasis is upon the subjects and the inner states of the
subjects or whether the emphasis is up on the publicly agreed
upon interpretations of the signs and symbols. That is to
say, we must emphasize what the symbols mean to a given people.
We need to be very careful that we do not impose technical terms

onto their symbolic systems which distort their publicly agreed interpretations of phenomena; i.e., calling a trance state an hysterical fit and things of that kind.

It will be clear by now that the discussion has so far been chiefly on a syntagmatic level, but dance movements are symbolic both as 'utterances' and as a total apparition. We have so far not discussed dance on a paradigmatic level. We might ask, at this stage of the inquiry, are we to understand, then, that every movement in a dance has the kinds of referential meanings attached to them as does deaf-dumb language ? Is dance to be understood in exactly the same way as spoken language, the only difference being that it is mute ? The answer is, of course, no. We can only understand from the exposition thus far that dance movements have logical and denotative aspects which make the total system potentially a symbolically expressive one and that we distort matters severely if we confuse movement which is symbolic with that which is signal or symptomatic.

Drid Williams.

This article is a truncated version of some of the preliminary research material for a thesis entitled 'Social Anthropology and Dance'.

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RECENT WRITING ON WITCHCRAFT

Interest in the belief in and supposed practice of witchcraft, and in the attitude of persons in authority towards it - questions which are not always as clearly distinguished as they ought to be - is at a high level at the moment, to judge by the number of recent publications on these themes. The ASA monograph[1] planned to celebrate the thirtieth anniversary of <u>Witchcraft among the Azande</u> is introduced by Mary Douglas with an evaluation of the successes and failures of British anthropology in this field that all of us might not share. It includes new data and some discussion of possible new lines of enquiry. British historians, examining the records in the light of anthropological theory, have switched their attention from the wickedness of judges who sentenced condemned persons to death for impossible crimes to the social context of accusations. Keith Thomas[2] has traced the history of magical beliefs in England through several centuries, and offered other reasons than rational conviction for the virtual disappearance of practices directed against witchcraft. Like the French historian Robert Mandrou[3], whose theme is the Loudon trials and the parallel cases that followed them, he summarizes the story of attempts to draw the line between the natural and the supernatural; in France this debate was conducted largely by lawyers. Alan Macfarlane[4] in England and Etienne Delcambre[5] rather earlier in France have made detailed examinations of cases recorded in limited areas; the former is interested in the social context, the latter in the belief system which allowed accusers to attach a religious value to confession, and accused to suppose that they might in fact be guilty. Structuralists and cognitive anthropologists have had their say.

All we like sheep have gone astray.

We should begin with Mary Douglas's review of the state of our studies. As she rightly reminds us, Evans-Pritchard treated witchcraft beliefs not only as an explanation for every kind of misfortune, but as a system of ideas that tolerated discrepancies and closed doors to enquiries such as might have invalidated the beliefs. She rebukes us for failing to pursue his questions but turning instead ('every one to his own way') to micropolitics - a field in which, in my view, the study of witchcraft accusations has been richly rewarding.

Dr. Douglas does not mention what some of us would regard as the next advance in the study of witchcraft beliefs, Monica Wilson's[6] recognition that they are inherent in the logic of many religions. She telescopes the thirty years from 1937 as a period in which we were all led astray by the 'crude functionalism' that Evans-Pritchard, she reminds us, himself denounced; the statement that she refers to[7] is not made in the context of witchcraft and is so general as not to constitute any kind of argument. For her, however, we have been inhibited, rather like the Azande, from fruitful enquiry by following what she calls the wrong paradigm. In her terms the paradigm is simultaneously, crude functionalism, liberal philosophy and the 'homeostatic' theory which, according to her, has dominated this field because its data have been drawn from Africa and not from Oceania. Although I would not claim to compete in the field of philosophy with the new anthropology, I certainly had the impression that a paradigm was something more specific than a general theory or an attitude of mind.

How have these three defects in our thinking contributed to our failure to understand witchcraft ? First, one must try to distinguish crude functionalism from the more refined functionalism which Dr. Douglas herself professes. In its crudest form, now long since rejected, it asserted that every small-scale society had attained a state of integration to which all its institutions contributed something indispensable. A less crude functionalist might argue that institutions would not continue to exist if they did not have <u>some</u> value - some more than illusory value - for the persons engaged in them. I doubt whether anyone would deny this; the argument is between those who think that every institution benefits all members of a society and those who hold that they are maintained for the benefit of a minority. This type of functional argument can draw support from both Evans-Pritchard and Monica Wilson: people cannot do without some explanation of misfortune, which includes supposed means of countering it, and people 'need' an explanation of unjustified misfortune which will sustain a belief in a moral universe. Dr. Douglas rejects the first hypothesis. 'People can do without explanations of misfortune', she says[8], and refers to the Mbuti pygmies. Here her ethnography is at fault; the pygmies do not believe in witchcraft, but they think they suffer misfortune when the forest is angry with them.[9] In discussion she prefers to cite the Hadza, on whom we still have little published material.

Liberal philosophy led us between the wars to try to avoid ethno-centric judgments, and to see the rationale of beliefs and practices that administrators and missionaries condemned outright. I think this was not misguided, and that there is just as much room for it now that the 'developing countries' are ruled by alienated members of their own populations. The 1935 number of <u>Africa</u> devoted to witchcraft, the contributors to which were not all anthropologists, noted the complaint of Africans that they were at the mercy of witches now that they were not allowed to take action against them. The writers did not expressly say that action against witches should be permitted, but they called attention to the conflict of values.

Dr. Douglas does not make it very clear what she means by the homoeostasis theory. I cannot understand her reference to the 'crude, rigid, homoeostatic control model'[10] to which she refers. Do these epithets describe a total theory of society ? I should much like to know whose it is - or was. If the word 'model' means anything more than a dominant metaphor, I should have thought the model-makers would be more likely to criticise functionalists for not having a model. But perhaps homoeostatic theory is different from functional theory. However, I thought the concept of homoeostasis was inherent in the idea of a system as something which maintains itself through change, and that it presupposed nothing about the satisfaction, or even the observable benefit, that the individual members of a society derive from it. Can it be that Dr. Douglas' identifies a homoeostatic with a consensus theory ? What is even more curious is her argument that work in Melanesia would have destroyed such a theory <u>because of the appearance there of cargo cults</u>. I am quite unable to follow this argument, the more so as all Africanists interested in religion are acquainted with the work of Sundkler[11] and Balandier[12] on prophet religions, the former published before anything had been written about the war-time cargo cults. Is it suggested that we think Africans <u>like</u> having witches among them ? The fact that the African millennium often includes the destruction of all witches is familiar to most of us.

There seem really to be two types of argument that trouble Dr. Douglas: that ordeals were 'not as bad as all that', and that only a successful accusation of witchcraft could provide a justification for the division of a descent group. On the first point the evidence of ethnographic data is inconsistent, though there is no reason to suppose that it is particularly unreliable; why should not different peoples have had different kinds of ordeal ? Dr. Douglas has argued that decision by ordeal is a matter of pure chance; there is no guarantee that the ordeal would 'cut out dead wood' by killing off the old men who clung to power in the lineage; and it could lead to many deaths, as is evidenced by the hundreds of deaths among the Lele when ordeals were reintroduced at independence (but who counted them ?) One of the latest discussions of this subject is Dr. Anne Laurentin's book[13] on the Nzakara, the next-door neighbours of the Zande. She introduces it with the comment that 'ordeals have been discussed as barbarous customs, but they must be understood in their historical context'. Liberal philosophy? One of her most illuminating observations is that, in this kingdom based on conquest, rulers and subjects whom the ordeal condemned were differently treated. A free man would be carried off as soon as the poison began to take effect and given treatment supposed to make him recover. A slave would be deliberately finished off and his body given to the soldiers to eat. Certainly in this case the ordeal could not lead to a bloodless revolution; but the result was not a matter of pure chance either.

What is interesting in such new material as has been published on the ordeal is the evidence that it was part of a judicial process often accompanied with much ceremony. Dr. Laurentin remarks that it supported the authority of the judge by placing responsibility for decisions on an impersonal force which could not be attacked. Her detailed observations of rubbing-board and chicken oracles - both operated among the Nzakara by specialists as part of the public process - show that both can be manipulated to give the result desired. They should lead to closer enquiry elsewhere into the possibility and extent of conscious manipulation; of course we know already that people can evade an undesired answer by consulting a different oracle.

The argument that witchcraft accusations - and therefore the beliefs that justify them - have the function of making possible the breaking of otherwise indissoluble kinship ties was certainly once accepted, by myself among others. Nowadays it seems very naive. Every study of a segmentary lineage system insists on the necessary and continual fission of lineages; every beginner in kinship knows that everyday factors such as population growth and the widening of the gap between cousins in each generation contribute to this. But Middleton's[14], and even more Turner's[15], studies in micropolitics made it perfectly clear that accusations of witchcraft accompany these factors; they do not even precipitate fission. I should have thought that by now this was an established part of our theory.

Dr. Douglas's own theory seeks to show how the belief in witchcraft is used by 'people trying to control one another'[16], and how the nature of the belief is related to the kind of control which it allows. Sometimes the witch is thought of as an outsider; in this case accusations contribute to the definition of boundaries, or what old-fashioned people might call solidarity. If the witch is an insider, there are various possibilities. If accusations are

directed against political rivals, they result in a redefinition
of faction boundaries (people stand up to be counted, or what ?)
or in a realignment of faction hierarchy (the outs beat the ins?)
or in a split. In the unique case (so far) of the New Guinea
Highlands an accusation has all these consequences at once. But
what does it mean to say they are functions ? Sometimes
accusations are brought against 'dangerous deviants', whether rich
men or beggars. Here their function is to control deviants, one
of the crudest uses, I would have thought, of the word function.

The ambiguity of witchcraft power.

Much of the other recent writing is concerned with that body of
theory that has not yet been generally found unsatisfactory. In
line with present trends in anthropology, there is more emphasis
on symbolism and the place of witchcraft beliefs in a wider ideology
embracing all the various objects which are associated with witches
in different cultures. One study of this kind has been made by
Alan Harwood[17], who applies a structuralist analysis to the Safwa
of Tanzania. Like many other peoples, they believe that witchcraft
is the mode of attack of members of an in-group, sorcery that of
outsiders; the in-group in this context is, of course, a descent
group. He suggests that any society which recognised two major
categories would believe that witchcraft was used within categories
and sorcery across them; one might find that members of the same
sex were supposed to bewitch one another while cross-sex 'mystical
aggression' would be sorcery.

Harwood also argues, with evidence from a number of eth-
nographies, that the power used by witches is not conceived as
inherently evil; it can be used in defence against witches. But
this is not the same as saying the act of witchcraft is not inherently
evil in a way that no other form of aggression is. One answer to
his contention is given in an article by Luc de Heusch, which uses
linguistic evidence, as Harwood himself does. de Heusch starts from
the case of the Kongo, who use closely related words for the
illegitimate action of sorcery/witchcraft and the curse which
elders may legitimately call down on disrespectful juniors.
Nevertheless they make an important distinction; they would not
use the verbal form to describe the justifiable use of this 'power
to act and not be seen', as Harwood calls it. Harwood's own
material actually shows the existence of a similar distinction.
The Safwa word for witchcraft power and its possessors is not
derived, as are those of so many peoples, from the 'Ur-Bantu' root
-dog-. They refer to itonga, which they categorize as good or bad,
and to 'men of itonga' BUT, like their neighbours the Nyakyusa and
like the Kongo, they have a verb which applies only to the evil use
of this power: '-ly-', to eat, in the sense of mystically consuming
a person's life-force. de Heusch goes on to give a neat structural
opposition between

'Kindoki': an act of illegitimate sorcery/witchcraft
(envoutement) performed by a maleficent person, outside the
bounds of law, against a victim who has social value and is
protected by society

and

'Nloko': an action of legitimate sorcery/witchcraft
performed by a beneficent person (elder) against an object
(his junior) without social value, who has deliberately set
himself outside the bounds of law. [18]

Is all this in the minds of the people who use these words,
or are we again being shown how much cleverer they are than they
realise ?

Pitt-Rivers' contribution to the ASA monograph describes a
situation that has parallels in two of the ethnographies that I
regard as classical, Monica Wilson's of the Nyakyusa and Middleton's
of the Lugbara. The Nyakyusa believe that the power to bewitch and
the power to defend reside in pythons which are mystically projected
from the bodies of their owners and fight a continual nocturnal
battle. The Lugbara have no such symbolism, but they hold that an
act which is described in the same words in both cases is the
invocation of ghosts to punish a malefactor, or witchcraft, according
as it is or is not held to be justified. The Chiapas believe that
everyone has a mystical animal counterpart, a nagual. The possessor
of a powerful nagual can injure his fellows, and threats to do so are
expressed as threats to punish. The threatened action would be
called witchcraft if it came from someone who was not held to have
the right to punish his victim. Unfortunately Pitt-Rivers does not
give us the linguistic details. It seems that very large numbers
of people are accused of witchcraft (unjustified 'mystical aggression',
as Mary Douglas and Esther Goody would call it) and then assassinated.

The Gonja as described by the last-named believe that
individuals can acquire the power to leave their bodies at night and
attack others in animal shape. Like the Nyakyusa, they believe that
this power can be used for defence as well as for attack. And they
have their own way of discriminating between the legitimate and
illegitimate use of witchcraft power. In their eyes it is
universally employed by men in the process of competition for
political office. One is reminded of Fortune's account of Dobu
sorcery[19], which seems to have its counterpart among other New
Guinea peoples; they take it for granted that everyone is
practising sorcery against his neighbours. The sorcerer there is
not a sinister being with peculiar mystical powers, but an ordinary
man who knows the use of medicines. In Gonja no distinction is made
between sorcery operating with medicines and witchcraft,without and
logically for them a man who employs his mystical powers against a
rival for office is also one who must have sacrificed one of his
close kin so as to become able to turn into a lion, etc. Whenever
a holder of political office dies, he is assumed to have been
bewitched by a rival. Yet no attempt is made to identify, still
less punish, the person responsible. In part this reflects the
belief that the holders of political office need to have this
mystical power in order to defend their subjects against its
illegitimate use by others.

These others are almost invariably women. Women are thought
to use witchcraft-power in ways for which there can be no justifi-
cation, and extremely cruel punishments were sometimes inflicted
on them in the past. So that if 'witchcraft' were defined as
'mystical aggression by women' one could still say it was
'unambiguously evil'. Women have no authority to punish, there-
fore their attacks on others can never be justified. They are, as
Esther Goody puts it, 'beyond the bounds of tolerance'. A woman
informant said to her 'We are witches because we are evil' - i.e.
because we are aggressive without justification. Women's roles
as Goody remarks, does not permit aggression; a hypothesis that might
be added to the current ones about the frequent ascriptions of
witchcraft to old women - that they are poor, so have to beg, so

may be spiteful, that they have nobody to defend them against accusations.

Mandrou writing of France, and Keith Thomas of England, have traced the progress of discussions among the educated minority which essentially concerned the status of the Devil - the question whether it was possible for him to confer powers of evil on his human subjects. This was a theological question, the answer to which must have affected the teaching of popular religion. It certainly affected the attitudes of judges and juries. But villagers, like Africans today, resented what they saw as a denial of justice when the repeal of the witchcraft Act in 1736 made it impossible to bring accusations. Again like Africans today, they turned to 'informal violence, counter-magic and the occasional lynching'.[20]

It is in connection with the decline of recourse to counter-magic that Thomas is able to offer confident explanations of a change in attitudes. He notes that from the sixteenth century onwards visitations of disaster that had been ascribed to witch-craft were either becoming less frequent or could be better provided against. Famine and plague were less common (though, as he remarks elsewhere, and as would also be true of Africa, these generalized disasters were not usually ascribed to witchcraft). Communications improved, and with them the possibility of identi-fying thieves and recovering stolen goods. Insurance against business risks, against fire, against death, gave a new kind of security. A greater general sense of security, then, led to a general decline in recourse to magical precautions (including counter-magic against unknown offenders). The magical practices were forgotten as much as discredited by argument. One may expect to see a parallel process in Africa, if someone ever finds the key to that improvement in living standards that we have been seeking ever since the march to independence began. But we can hardly expect a parallel in Africa's intellectual history. The discussion is over now, and Africans have been presented with the result by teachers whom they have had reason to regard with suspicion. Dr. Douglas's attempt to draw a contrast between the decline of witchcraft fears with economic development in England and the alleged increase in similar circumstances in Africa simply does not work (it may not be true, as is so often asserted, that they are increasing, but they certainly are not declining. A possible question to ask, if the answer could be found, would be whether events that used to be imputed to witchcraft are coming to be ascribed to natural causes; the fact that one could make a longer list of possible disasters tells us nothing about the amount of fear). Where Keith Thomas does offer us a parallel is in his reference to the popular reaction to the Witchcraft Act and to the effect of the Reformation in 'drastically reducing the degree of immunity from witchcraft which could be conveyed by religious faith alone'. [21]

Macfarlane's examination of the Essex records follows the anthropologist's principle that the status and status-relationship of accused and victim must be established in order to find what sort of relationships typically give rise to suspicion or accusation. He endorses the theory that this indicates what relationships are sources of tension, to which I would make the reply that an adequate analysis of social structure should indicate where tensions can be expected without the need of such a roundabout procedure. What is more interesting in his book is

his demonstration that the decline first in convictions and then
in accusations of witchcraft predated such advances in knowledge
as might logically be supposed to invalidate the belief in it.
He notes that no explanation in general terms can account for the
particularity of individual disaster, and asks whether circum-
stances had changed so that loss was more bearable. Here, in so
far as material loss is concerned, he refers, like Thomas, to the
possibility of defence against such loss by insurance. He ascribes
the change in attitudes also to changes in social structure which
in his view led first to the increase in accusations and then to
their abandonment. Here he follows the line first suggested by
Lienhardt[22], that witchcraft is suspected between persons whose
relative status - I would prefer to say whose mutual obligations -
is/are not clearly defined. This explanation accounts of course
for the belief that people bewitch their kin; the mutual obli-
gations of kin are in theory unlimited, but in practice individuals
have to judge priorities. In the same way there was in an English
village an undefined principle of charity towards the needy, which,
as the acquisitive society emerged, began to conflict with the new
principle that charity begins at home. The guilty conscience of
the man who failed in charity led him to attribute his misfortunes
to the poor old woman whose request he had refused. As values
changed and it was no longer considered to be the duty of the
individual Christian to succour the unfortunate, but rather of
representatives of the collectivity such as Poor Law Guardians,
no more guilt attached to the refusal of alms.

Confessions

Possibly it is in our attitude to confessions that we have
been most ethnocentric. That anyone would voluntarily confess to
patently impossible acts seems at first sight absurd. But we have
to take care what actions the accused person is confessing. The later
developments of European witch beliefs include the manifest imposs-
ibilities - to us - of the pact with the Devil and the Black
Mass. It is certainly hard to believe that people could be
persuaded by suggestion - as opposed to torture - that they had
met on a mountain top and danced naked with numbers of their
acquaintances. But supposing one seriously believes in the Devil?
Supposing one believes that dreams reveal truth, or that in some
mystical way one has actually experienced what one dreams?

I mentioned earlier the official Christian attitude towards
confession as an act which, though it must lead to a person's
death, could yet save him (more likely her) from an eternal torment
that all believed in. Delcambre in his articles on witch trials
in Lorraine makes the illuminating comment that the torture of
accused witches was conceived as a form of ordeal, which God would
enable an innocent person to resist (though not without feeling
the pain); of course this belief has its counterpart in the idea
that the Devil too could give his followers strength against
torture. Nevertheless, some accused offered to undergo torture,
as Africans submit themselves to the ordeal, in the confidence
that it would prove their innocence. Few resisted physical mal-
treatment which was greater than anything known in Africa, but
many recanted later, fearing damnation for perjury.

Yet some seem to have made sincere confessions, some no doubt
in the abnormal mental conditions to which Margaret Field[23] ascribes
all confessions of witchcraft. Some begged the pardon of those they
were supposed to have harmed. Some admitted to part of the charges

against them while denying the rest. One is on record as saying that she had 'no wish to put any livestock to death but only people who were angry with her'.[24]

It is here that we find the point of contact with African confessions. At any rate in the field where it is believed that witchcraft can be involuntary, depending on no deliberate action (and this field is geographically so wide that one cannot abandon the analytical distinction between witchcraft and sorcery), accused persons must always be uncertain of their own innocence. Evans-Pritchard has made this point himself, though not in the context of confessions. Morton-Williams' account of the _Atinga_ witch-finders[25]refers to old women saying 'If they all say I am a witch I suppose I must be'. Hilda Kuper's play[26]- in which the protagonist is a childless young woman accused of bewitching her co-wife's child to death - ends convincingly with the line 'I _am_ a witch in my heart'. Few of us can honestly disclaim any ill-will towards the people we quarrel with.

Special cases of confession discussed in the ASA volume are those of the neighbouring Banyang and Bangwa, both of whom believe in witchcraft through the activity of were-animals. In both these belief systems it is the sickness of the supposed witch (believed to have been injured in were-form), and not of a victim, that calls for confession, which is held to be the only way to recovery. The Bangwa ascribe these were-animals to children, and if a child is ill in any of the ways that are supposed to indicate injury to the were-animal, he is badgered to confess. That some do claim responsibility for the sickness or death of siblings or fathers would surprise no psychologist. But others are clever at thinking of more or less innocuous adventures of their were-animals. Banyang confessions are often made _in extremis_, in the hope of escaping death. They are admissions of the possession of were-animals, not of causing specific damage - 'a kind of blanket guilt'.[27] They are not sought in order to explain misfortunes suffered by others, nor associated with particular quarrels.

Repentance and Reform.

The ASA volume ends rather inconclusively with an article by Beidelman suggesting new lines of study. Like Mary Douglas he thinks functionalism has put us on the wrong track, but his criticism is the contrary of what hers appears to be. In his view we have thought the belief in witchcraft needed explaining because of its dysfunctional consequences. He seems to be arguing that this is why we ask why people hold these beliefs, and certainly we do not ask in quite the same way why they believe in other non-empirical beings or forces. But in the main what he is recommending is a closer scrutiny of a larger number of case-histories, and more attention to the social psychology of attitudes towards aggression. We should also seek parallels with our own ideas of mental illness and treatment, and consider more carefully 'the delusional aspects of behaviour associated with witchcraft and sorcery';[28] and should ask how the minds of witches are supposed to differ from those of saints on the one hand and madmen on the other. And finally 'our analytical notions regarding witches, sorcerers and other malevolent beings require a re-assessment which will take considerably more account of moral ambiguities'.

All these new questions are to be welcomed; I am less sure than Dr. Douglas and Dr. Beidelman that the answers will make it necessary to scrap everything that has been done in the last thirty-five years.

Lucy Mair.

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18. Pourquoi l'Epouser ? 1971, p.173.

19. Sorcerers of Dobu, 1932.

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AN ASPECT OF BOUGLE'S SOCIOLOGISM.[1]

Through the work of Dumont and Pocock, Bouglé's contribution to Indian sociology is well known. Pocock's recent English version of the "Essais sur le Régime des Castes" will make this aspect of his work completely accessible. This paper is an attempt to present one aspect of Bouglé's thought. This aspect might loosely be called his theory of cognition, though the term is inadequate.

Bouglé's philosophic position is implied in his own remark, "La science est avant tout un perfectionnement du langage, lui-même produit d'une élaboration collective". (1929: 190). He was an academic and an eclectic. He chose not to present his thought in a rigid, systematic form. In such circumstances, it would be foolish to pretend to give anything better than one interpretation out of the many possible.

....

For Bouglé, sociology was not a synthesis of all the branches of the study of society, but was a study of "forms". He uses the word in a number of ways. Firstly, the forms can be physical (the spatial distribution of the members of a society, for example). Secondly they can be ideological (a classification, for example). Thirdly, Bouglé speaks of "the forms of the mind", meaning a structure which actively forms ideas. In general, he seeks to provide an account of the "formation of ideas", and so is trying to practise the "formal psychology" which Durkheim advocated. In doing this, he in fact does synthesise all the branches of the study of society, but in a way which is not quite like that of Durkheim or Mauss.

Though he diverged a little from the "party line" of the Année Sociologue, this did not prevent him from taking a place at the spearhead of the attack. He contributed reviews to every number of the Année from its inception till his death in 1940, and he produced the first full length book to be sponsored by the Année (1908 b). Such persistance came from the ambitions he had for sociology: sociology might be the base for a well-founded sociologism, which was "a philosophical effort to crown the specialist, objective and comparative studies ... with an explanatory theory of the human mind" (1951: viii). The methods of sociology alone could ensure the objective concepts necessary for the construction of such a theory: "the sociologist is by definition a relativist"...and, at the same time, a comparatist (1935: 120). Self-doubt combined with empirical classification would generate universally applicable concepts. Then, (and then only), sociology could formulate theories capable of bearing the full weight of rational criticism, and then it would be a true science. History and sociology only stopped being "popular", or ethno-sciences when their explanations were couched in terms sufficiently rigorous and universal to be rationally and universally criticised. (1925, pp.47-9, 55-6). Explanation had to be by means of "laws" of the highest generality. Any other sort of explanation was "the adoration of a mystery", or merely an empirical correlation devoid of explanatory power (1908 a: 66, 80).

None of the contributors to the Année believed that
sociology could be anything but historical. Bouglé agreed with
Simiand that history alone provided the laboratory conditions
necessary for experimentation. It was only in an historical
perspective that the specificity of sociological variables could
be determined, because it was only in history that extraneous
variables (presumably such as ecology) could be seen to be
constant, and so eliminated. (Annales S.A. 2: 27-8). Inasmuch
as sociology had to be historical, it was most important to
refute certain historicist doctrines. The most objectionable
of these doctrines was the doctrine that history never repeats
itself, that every event is unique. Bouglé pointed out that no
human being could really believe this: if they did, the writing
of history would itself be impossible (1925: 48).

Other historicist doctrines that had to be refuted were
Evolutionism in its rigid form, and "historical materialism".
Evolutionism appeared to be untrue on empirical grounds, and when
it appealed to the old biological Anthropology, it was
aligning itself with a lost cause (1908 a. 57, 68-71; 1908 b;
129-42). The refutation of materialism was a difficult one to
phrase: on the one hand, sociology had to be rid of mechanistic
associations; on the other hand, the theory that a man of
genius appears and spreads his ideas is "the adoration of a
mystery". A certain freedom had to be allowed to the human mind,
but the freedom had to be shown to be regular in its action.
"The Division of Labour" was not absolutely clear on the point,
as Bouglé ruefully remarks. In order to escape from this nasty
fork, Bouglé chose to stress the "hyperspiritualist" aspect of
Durkheim's sociology, using the "Représentations Individuelles et
Représentations Collectives" as his authority (e.g. 1951: xv;
Année S II: 152-5). More important, he stresses the "relative
autonomy" of the mind vis-à-vis its data (1935: 4-5). The mind is
not a passive mirror of reality, it transforms it (1929: 186).
The mind has its own "forms", but mental forms are themselves
instances of an adaptive mechanism: "To know is not to reproduce;
it is always to transform. And the order which the mind, by
means of the concept, introduces into the chaos of sensory
impressions, is, first of all, a revelation of its own forms.
Now, are these forms eternal and given from the beginning ne
varietur ? Do they not themselves undergo a progressive
elaboration which takes account of the successes obtained or the
disappointment experienced by some idea when put to the test?"
(1929: 186-7). The ambiguity of the word "form" is here most
unfortunate, but Bouglé must mean that the mind is free to re-
construct the forms of reality, but is not free to choose (or
create) reality. The same is true, at a higher level, of the
social mind. It is free to create concepts, but cannot in any
sense create reality itself. No "collective enthusiasm" can
create the nature of things, nor the nature of the mind. The
fact that the right hand is generally socially preferred does
not mean that "hand", neither the thing itself, nor the idea
that man has of it, is created by society. (1929: 192-5).

There is a certain divergence here from Durkheim, and there
are other points on which Bouglé is unwilling to interpret
Durkheim too literally. He maintained that the passage from
reality to collective awareness is always mediated by the
individual consciousness. Indeed, strictly speaking, there was
no such thing as a collective awareness, only a reforming of

individual awarenesses. He did, however, accept the notion of
the collective mind as a useful locus for all the mental activity
which could not exist in pre-social man. He notes cautiously
that the notion is only heuristic, and in particular, a search
for a collective unconscious, as opposed to a collective conscious
raised more problems than it would solve (1935: 11-12).
Collective representations are a re-ordering of individual
interior states: for example, to say that social density leads
to social differentiation presupposes that the physical condition
passes through individual representations before becoming a
collective representation (1925: 156-7, 160-1; cf. 1908 a:
85-6; Année S I: 126-35). Thus, the individual mind reconstrues
material drawn from what may be called "Nature" (set of real
effects), and the metaphorical "collective mind" reconstrues
material drawn from individual representations. In effect,
Bouglé sees man as a three-part being: he is at the same time,
social person, individual being, and vital organism. (This,
clearly, is a variation on a familiar theme. Durkheim generally
sees man as a social person grafted onto a vital organism, so
finding it often difficult to calibrate the two. Tarde also
posits two levels, but they are mirror-images. Blondel adopts a
three-tier psychology, for which he alleges the authority of Comte.
The important point is that the psychology of the individual being
in Bouglé's scheme is a psychology which is common to the whole
species of man. It is possible, therefore, for Bouglé to give a
"psychological demonstration" which is really a series of logical
operations, as in "Les Idées Egalitaires".

It must be stressed at this point that Bouglé regarded
constructs such as a three-level being as no more than heuristic
concepts. To oppose bio-mechanical and psycho-social functions
was a way of posing the problem, not of answering it. (e.g.
Annales S.A.1. p.148). What was more, the three parts of man
were inextricably interwoven: "to perceive is already to
conceive, and to remember still" (1925: 42), i.e. perception, that
most individual of interior states, depends not only on
sensations, but also on socially derived concepts.

For the sake of clarity, I will sum up the major themes so far:

1) There are three types of mental activity - bio-mechanical
(sensation), psychic (individual representation), and social
(collective representation).

2) There are three types of "form" or pattern - forms in Nature,
forms from the act of individual representation, and forms
from the act of collective representation. They are not
reducible one to another.

3) Collective representations of Nature are formed via individual
representations.

4) Representations do not create the reality to which they refer
(i.e. collective representations do not create individual
representations any more than individual representations
create Nature). On the contrary, they tend to greater
conformity with it by a process of testing and experience.

The last point is of particular importance. It implies that
representation is in some way translated into behaviour. (cf. the

statement 1908 a: 30-1 that in order to know what a person is
thinking, it is best to interpret his actions). In the case of
a (hypothetical) pre-social individual being, such "cognitive
behaviour" would allow feed back, and a consequent adjustment of
the forms of cognition. However, since man is, in fact, always a
social being, it follows that his representations are never solely
"individual". Collective representations should adjust because
of the feed-back of collective behaviour; but collective
behaviour is unlikely to be in grave disaccord with the facts
of individual representation, because the individual represen-
tations in this case are not of non-human events which might, or
might not, be regular, but of human events which are motivated
by a formal system. (This would help to explain the fact that
sociological correlates appear to be causal of each other, as
noted, without comment, 1925: 30).

Aberrant behaviour poses a problem to any theory of
equilibrium such as the one sketched above. Bouglé hints at a
solution in his remarks on the logical category of chance. This
is expounded later, but it can be said now that Bouglé saw reason
as a need for harmony, that the need for harmony manifested it-
self both in the individual and in the social mind, and that a
system of cognition can accomodate considerable disharmony.

Most of this argument can be represented in a diagram. It
is not necessary to draw in three levels of mental activity,
since the relation nature/individual representation is analogous
to the relation individual representation/collective represen-
tation.

Fig 1:

"Psyche"

"sensation"   "Knowing"
mechanically   undetermined
determined

"data"
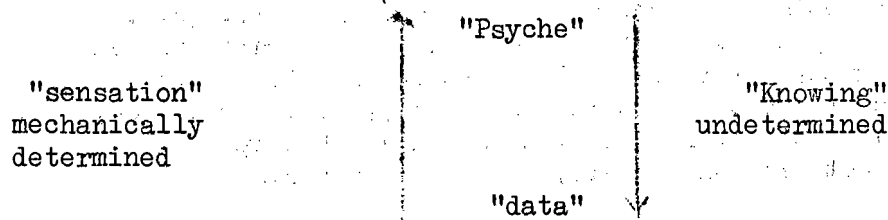
The arrows of the diagram are to be understood as referring only
to relations. In such a scheme, "reality" is a flexible term
which refers to anything on a lower level, but Nature is the
"basic reality" because it can "know" nothing else, i.e. nothing
is lower than it. Man is defined as the combination of all the
elements of the diagram, except the natural data (but some of
this natural data is of his own making, i.e. the results of
what Bouglé calls man's "offensive adaptation", 1929: 162).
The interest of the scheme is that it can be telescoped upwards,
simply by supposing that representations of any sort can furnish
the "data" for a higher level of representation.

If "knowing" is never absolutely determined, it follows that
all science and the science of sociology in particular, can only
be sciences of possibilities and tendencies. Bouglé never claimed
sociology to be anything more than this (e.g. Annales S, A.1:
188-91). Why then bother with correlations of patterns lying at
different levels ? "Let us allow that conscious meditation
transfigures and 'denatures' the materials furnished to it by
the milieu: it is nonetheless true that..by showing, for example,
how certain social conditions were to lead the minds of

philosophers, in accordance with the general laws of the formation of ideas, to (the idea of) egalitarianism, we are biting into the unknown" (1908 a: 80).

The theory of levels is held to account not only for "easy" concepts, such as judgments of existence, but also for "hard" concepts such as judgments of value. Values are defined as conceptions of possibilities of satisfaction. (This presupposes the existence of teleological categories in the psyche). Values are ranked inside a level (by definition), but they are also ranked by the height of the level in which they are situated. Thus individual values are, as a set, lower than social values, and these, once social activity starts to separate out into law, religion and so on, rank, as a set, lower than legal or religious values. Moreoever, concepts which are "polytelic" (which can convert into many other values) tend to be seen as "autotelic", and hence as very high values. "Gold" or "Science", for example, tend to become the highest values, because of the indetermination of their ends. (1929).

It is easy to see that such a theory of values tends eventually to agree, to some extent, with the functionalism of Durkheim or Mauss; but, because values, like any other concept, must always be supposed to relatively unmotivated, there could never be any question of postulating a perfect functional fit between social and individual representations, let alone between "culture" and "nature". Indeed, the fit of one level to another can only be termed functional to the degree that teleological and functional criteria are involved, and to the degree that such criteria derive from logical categories.

To show how Bouglé developed and refined his theory, I shall offer very brief comments on the two monographs, "Les Idées Egalitaires" (1908 a) and "Essais sur le Régime des Castes" (1908 b), and on the article "Les Rapports de l'Histoire et de la Science Sociale d'après Cournot".

Les Idées Egalitaires was first published in 1899, when Bouglé was 29. It is an attempt to fill the first part of the programme "relativism and comparatism". Theories of Equality were to be seen as folk-systems, and correlable with demographic data. Explanation was to consist in a "reconstitution of the mental work" involved in passing from a state of demography to an ideology. To do this, Bouglé uses some of the arguments of the "Division of Labour" (as he understood them), and adopts Simmel's argument that individuation (of social persons, that is) results from a very advanced degree of intersection of unilateral classes. These theories are both taken as premises, so that what is assumed by Bouglé is roughly this:

1) a high "density" involves a high degree of competition, which is resolved by

2) a functional differentiation of the self and competitors by each individual. This differentiation is in some way converted into

3) a collective representation of the division of social labour by means of a classification.

4) Where classification is by unilateral classes, intersection
must take place; if there are enough unilateral classes,
this will result in individuation.

This corresponds to the scheme (i) Nature (real effects) / (ii)
individual representation / (iii) collective representation.
What Bouglé tries to show is that, on a fourth level, that of
philosophers of law, a transformation of the individuations of
level (iii) will most likely involve a predication of "equality"
between "individuals". He proposes that "heterogeneous individuals
who participate in one quality are equal", and the rest of the
book is spent showing that the right mix of heterogeneity and
homogeneity occurs only in the societies which are egalitarian.
In fact the whole argument is marred by the fact that the
proposition "individuals homogeneous in one respect are equal"
is quite fallacious: the "individuals" of which Bouglé is
speaking are not "real objects" but are one-member classes
produced by intersection. Thus individuals can be equal in
respect of A-ness, while remaining unequal in all other respects.
All depends on the rules of the classification. However, even
though the work raises more problems than it solves, it retains
a true interest precisely because it rephrases the problem of
egalitarianism as a question about the logic or psychology of
classification. Especially interesting is the notion that
equality is a special case of inequality (probably a deliberate
inversion of the atomistic philosophy of law).

"Essais sur le Régime des Castes" was a meditated contrast
to "Les Idées Egalitaires". The argument "differentiation from
density" still held, but unlike the Western system, the system
of classification that was implicit in caste was such that the
classes did not intersect. Thus there was no individualism, and,
as yet, no egalitarianism. Bouglé was still confused about the
notion of "individual", and maintained that the British by
creating towns, speeding communications, and imposing a sense of
unity, would eventually motivate an egalitarian ideology. (This
follows from the theory of levels, where a sufficient change of
natural data should promote a reformation of ideas at all levels).
In a sense, however, it is fortunate that the confusion remained:
believing that caste was surviving when it should not be, he
came to the conclusion that some social representations tended to
equilibrium. The resilience of caste came partly from the fact
that the "data" was human behaviour which was already "formed",
and partly because the system could be so constructed that even
exceptions proved the rule: "It can be maintained that the theories
of Manu, although they have not expressed the Hindu reality
exactly, have managed, to a large extent, to impose their form
on it. (The theories) triumph as "idées-force"; they furnish
opinion with the frameworks in which it is led instinctively to
class groups whatever they are" (121. "idée-force": "force"
force-piece, load-bearing channel in an electric circuit, or,
improbably, dynamic force; cf. 'prescriptive categories').
"Opinion will not allow you to transgress the traditional order,
except on condition that you demonstrate that this order has been
skewed; when you do that, you are only breaking the law so as
to respect it all the more." (121).

Though the Law exerts an influence on the castes, the system
of caste itself (= system implicit in jati) is a collective
representation. The Law is a system motivated by the products of
the system of caste. Similar remarks apply to religion,

economics, and art. They are all, as systems, re-formations of
the products of collective representations, (which are not
confined to caste: it is important that Bouglé does not claim to
explain Hinduism by deriving it from caste, he merely claims that
part of the peculiar coloration of Hinduism can be explained by
reference to caste. Similarly law, economics and art. In the
case of law and religion, the peculiarities can also be explained
by the fact that they are the creations of the Brahmans).

The category of natural data is widened so as to comprise
not only demography and behaviour, but also racial and ecological
data, but the demographic data remain the most important.

The levels are now, therefore, as follows:

(i)   natural (=demography, behaviour, ethnography, ecology) /
      (ii) individual (iii) collective (iv) legal, economic,
      religious, philosophical, and artistic.

To the fourth level could be added other types, science, for
example. As far as Bouglé is concerned, terms like "law",
economics" etc. refer only to functions which have separated out.
Thus if it makes sense to talk of "social representations" when
what is meant is the representations of men thinking as members
of a society, it makes the same sense to talk of a "legal psyche"
or "legal representations". It also explains why Bouglé assumes
the "general laws of the formation of ideas" can explain the
"mental work" not only of individuals but also of societies, the
law, etc. If even the sciences are liable to be treated like any
other sociological phenomenon, then the "study of forms", the
"sociologie stricto sensu" is in reality the most general of all
sciences.

"Les Rapports de l'histoire et de la Science Sociale d'après
Cournot" is a presentation of some themes of the thought of
Cournot (the man Tarde apparently "set a hundred cubits above
Comte"), principally so as to insist on a rationalist explanation
in history, but also so as to comment on the category of "chance".

Cournot affirms that chance exists in Nature, and that
chance, though not itself rational, is a category of Reason.
An accident is a "pure fact", a fact at the intersection of a
concourse of systems of causality. Bouglé accepts these arguments.

For Cournot there are two types of science: 1) the contemplation
of a law-bound nature (e.g. physics), and 2) the contemplation of
a law-like cosmos (e.g. biology). The second type has a greater
preponderance of historical data. Bouglé observes that all
sciences are historical, in the sense that the time through which
their data extend is not infinite, and makes the distinction
between History, the science into which contingencies enter, and
all other sciences, which consider contingency to be eliminated.
He is, in fact, reviving a very old distinction: between what may
be called "natured nature", which is a nature in the process of a
law-like becoming, and "naturing nature", which is a nature in a
process of random, law-less becoming.

The implications of this are far-reaching. If chance is held
to be a category of the reason, then human beings represent the
world as law-like, for the law-less events are discounted as
Accident. Now, sociology had to be historical for Bouglé.

That means that sociology had to take account of contingency.
The reason must be that contingency alone could provide the test
for the epistemological theory. For, if it is assumed that, on
the one hand representations are relatively undetermined, and on
the other hand relatively adapted to their data, then major
change in representations would have to be motivated by a fairly
violent change in the order of natured nature. Such a change
would, by definition, have to be the result of an accident - and
the accident would have to be not an accident without permanent
consequence (such as an unforeseen, but ephemeral catastrophe),
but an accident which changed the order of things (such as
conquest and settlement by aliens). If sociology wished to find
such accidents it would have to look to history.

Bougle's epistemology, then includes a definition as to what
is to count as 'natural data". Pure accidents which do not
change the forms of nature, are not included into any system of
knowledge, because they are so amorphous that they are relegated
to a special category. This asserts again most forcefully the
lesson that Bougle learnt from Simmel: that sociology appeals
to reality only to claim the forms in reality as the sole
legitimate objects of study.

Mark Aston.

This essay is based on a paper read at Mr. Ardener's Tuesday
seminar during Michaelmas Term 1971.

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Book Reviews

The Interpretation of Ritual. Essays in Honour of A.I. Richards.
Edited by J.S. La Fountaine. Tavistock Publications.
1972. £3.50p.

The appearance of a volume of essays on ritual is, in itself,
some index of changing interests in British anthropology. This is
not, however, to say that all the papers are modern in style. And,
indeed, one who wished to contribute to this festshrift for Audrey
Richards felt unable to do so once the theme of the book had been
chosen.

The Interpretation of Ritual is, in fact, an excellent miniature
of the history of our discipline since 1945. The articles by Firth
and Esther Goody still display a desire to talk about 'social
adaptation' or 'manipulation' before fully eliciting the grammar
which underlies their observational data; the timidity of the
references to kinesics and codes merely serves to confirm their
date. At the other extreme are the articles by La Fontaine and
Ardener in which the composition of the cultural syntax receives
primary attention. The piece by Southall is an 'English reaction to
Lévi-Strauss', but of a far higher quality than many of those in
this category hitherto published; it is a valuable essay.

There is also a debate between Leach and the sociologist-
psychoanalyst Bott. She gives a rather unsophisticated psycho-
analytic interpretation of the Tongan kava ceremony. Leach does not
raise all the issues involved in the relations between psychology
and anthropology, but his critique of Bott's interpretation is just.
Quite legitimately he objects to what he calls the fairly straight-
forward kind of functionalism to which it is attached. Rightly,
he draws our attention to the intuitive aspect of functionalism.
On the other hand, he exaggerates when he claims that structuralism
is 'objective'. No method is objective in a hard sense, but
structuralism certainly does not lose its analytical superiority
or become undermined by one's acknowledging that the analyst plays
an active and selective role. On the broader issue of the debate,
one ought to recall the work of Kluckhohn on witchcraft or
Bettelheim on ritual. No one would deny the importance of an inter-
change between psychology and anthropology, but these earlier
failures impress upon us the fact that the task is not achieved in a
conceptually satisfactory way with any facility. And before the
attempt is made, one ought to ask, as Bott does not, just how
adequate our different psychological theories are, that is, just how
useful a model of the human mind psychology gives us.

It is a sign that anthropology has left the Gluckmaniac stage
when, as the editor says, there is no longer a need felt to define
ritual. Special definitions of ritual, or ceremonial, as different
from ordinary social or pragmatic behaviour conceal a rather pro-
found error. If ritual is formal, patterned, symbolic action, then
we have all the elements of a definition of any behaviour which
we would wish to call social. Once a semiological view of society
is seriously adopted the retention of the category 'ritual' at all
would clearly be a mistake; finding definition of no import is
perhaps a step towards a full realization of this.

An interesting point emerges from Ardener's and Southall's
papers - namely that our changing analytical interests show
fieldwork to have been defective in important ways. It has become

customary to point to the theoretical failings of our functionalist ancestors, but to commend them for their excellent fieldwork. But the obvious influence of a theoretical framework on a research technique lessens the weight of this 'empirical compliment' considerably. Paradoxically, anthropology in its recently more penetrating and analytic phase has been more dependent upon detailed ethnography than functionalism ever was. It would be a nonsense for functionalists to delude themselves into thinking that they dealt with 'facts' whilst structuralists irreverently dabbled in metaphysics. A close scrutiny of these two approaches might even suggest the justice of reversing the charge-though doubtless many would remain unconvinced.

<div align="right">Malcolm Crick.</div>

Three Styles in the Study of Kinship.   J.A. Barnes. £3.00.

London: Tavistock Publications, 1971

Professor Barnes might ponder on whether he has written the wrong book. This is a study of the study of kinship (and this reviewer has no intention of writing a study of the study of the study ...), or more precisely of the work of three practitioners in this field; they are Murdock, Lévi-Strauss, and Fortes. Uneasy bedfellows one would have thought, but the choice seems to have been dictated less by the range of views which they represent than by one of the author's aims which is "to assist the transformation of social anthropology from an intuitive art to a cumulative science." To achieve this questionable enterprise, Professor Barnes deems it necessary to make a decisive break with the past. Accordingly he has selected 1949 as the cut-off point on the grounds that the three anthropologists mentioned above, whom he sees in some sense as typical of some post-Malinowskian and post-Radcliffe-Brownian era, all published major works in that year. This seems an extraordinarily arbitrary step, for the first essential in the founding of this new science should be to demonstrate that the ideas (I hesitate to say theories, let alone general laws) in existence at that time were generally accepted. However Barnes shows only too clearly that there was no more general agreement in the field of kinship studies in 1949 than there is today. Paradoxically he almost manages to make a stronger case for social anthropology as a non-cumulative science than another book published at the same time by the same house which mainly supports such a view.

What of the three studies? They provide more or less good commentaries on the works of the three anthropologists. I found Professor Barnes at his best when dealing with Murdock and at his worst with Lévi-Strauss. Fortes comes out of it quite well but then his batteries of irreducible principles make his position almost impregnable and impregnate. None of these examinations is very conclusive (indeed they are all rather negative) and it is curious that another of Barnes' aims is "to encourage others to tackle the works of Murdock, Lévi-Strauss and Fortes more effectively" when there are in existence more effective treatments of these writers than those offered here.

It was suggested at the beginning of this review that Professor Barnes has written the wrong book. Apparently he had originally intended a second half to this volume in which he planned to undertake case studies of particular problems and topics on the lines represented by his Inquest on the Murngin . Although it is difficult to know without seeing the result, this sounds a more valuable, interesting and above all positive exercise than that which has appeared.

<div align="right">Peter Rivière</div>