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EDITORIAL NOTE

The idea for this Journal has come from the graduate students at the Institute of Social Anthropology in Oxford. 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 as its main purpose. The Oxford University Anthropological Society established a Journal sub-committee to organise the venture.

FORMAT

The journal is published three times per year. Articles are welcome from students of anthropology and from people in other disciplines. It is preferred that the main emphasis should be on analytical discussion rather than on 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. They should follow the conventions for citations, notes and references used in the A.S.A. monographs. Comments will also be welcome. Communications should be addressed to the Journal Editors, Institute of Social Anthropology, 51 Banbury Road, Oxford.

BACK ISSUES

We have a stock of back issues still unsold. Single issues are available at 30p. in the U.K. and $1 abroad. Complete volumes (I (1970), II (1971) and III (1972) are each available at the following rates: U.K. - 75p. to individuals, £1 to institutions; abroad - $2.50 to individuals, $3 to institutions. The subscription for Vol. IV (1973) is the same. (All prices cover postage). Cheques should be made out to the Journal of the Anthropological Society of Oxford, and sent to the Journal Editors at 51 Banbury Road, Oxford.

Anthropology and Contemporary Literature *

My subject is a short period in the history of literary sensibility - that period which saw the end of the Victorian era, and the first World War, and which formed the minds of the first writers whom we normally refer to as "contemporary". It is precisely to that period that contemporary anthropology, as well as contemporary literature, traces its sources; and, by considering some aspects of the work of three writers familiar to everyone - Eliot, Yeats, and D. H. Lawrence - and of some anthropologists, I think we may see how the sensibility - one might say, the experience - of a generation was changed, in one way, by acquaintance with "primitive" culture and belief. As I see it, it was not merely that creative writers had read anthropological studies and made use of them or been influenced by them; it was rather that in some respects the works of anthropologists, of poets and essayists and novelists, all exhibit some of the same interests and directions in the workings of educated and imaginative minds as the Victorian world was ending. Both anthropologists and the first characteristically modern writers, that is, seem to have been interested in similar questions, though their interests were of quite different kinds. These questions were concerned with a rapidly expanding experience of the relativities of human experience in time and place, with the loss or destruction of the ethnocentric values of the mid-Victorians. By the time that Yeats, Eliot and Lawrence were writing, a conscious reaction against those values had set in in the most advanced literary circles; and the late Victorian anthropologists, though themselves not repudiating them with the warmth of these creative writers, had done much to undermine confidence in them.

A sign of what was to happen may be found in one of the best-known poems of Tennyson, Locksley Hall, in which, you may remember, the unhappy (and arrogant) lover considers the possibility of escaping from the restrictions of the English life of his time:

> Or to burst all links with habit - there to wander far away,
> On from island unto island at the gateways of the day.
>
> .....
>
> Never comes the trader, never floats an European flag,
> Slides the bird o'er lustrous woodland, swings the trailer
> from the crag.
>
> .....
>
> There methinks would be enjoyment more than in this march
> of mind,
> In the steamship, in the railway, in the thoughts that shake
> mankind.
> There the passions, cramp'd no longer, shall have scope and
> breathing space;
> I will take some savage woman, she shall rear my dusky race.
> Iron-jointed, supple-sinewed, they shall dive and they shall
> run,
> Catch the wild goat by the hair, and hurl their lances in the
> sun.
>
> .....

> Fool, again the dream, the fancy! but I know my words are wild,
> But I count the grey barbarian lower than the Christian child.
> I, to herd with narrow foreheads, vacant of our glorious gains
> Like a beast with lower pleasures, like a beast with lower pains!
> Mated with a squalid savage - what to me were sun or clime
> I the heir of all the ages, in the foremost files of time -
> Through the shadow of the globe we sweep into a younger day,
> Better fifty years of Europe than a cycle of Cathay.

There is an indication here (and one might cite examples from other Victorian writers) that "the march of mind" was becoming a conscious burden. With Tennyson's sententious loyalty to his own culture, there is also a recognition of the possibility of deliberately repudiating it; a kind of doubt about the value of the very experience of being a European has become possible, though in this poem it is dispelled as artificially as it was introduced. The poet's consciousness of himself, and of himself in his society, have started to separate, and it is felt that it might be possible, if foolish, for the individual to detach himself from and get right outside a particular society and system of values.

How differently, after the few decades in which anthropology and (to a less extent psychology) were popularised among educated men, does D. H. Lawrence represent and develop a somewhat similar situation. In 1922 Lawrence wrote his essay on the Indians of New Mexico, whom he had visited and observed, and to a point admired. I do not think that his attempt to suggest their relationship with himself is entirely successful, but I quote part of it in order to compare the direction of his interest with that shown in Tennyson's poem; quite a different way of apprehending savages has become possible, and it cannot be accounted for, it seems to me, by differences in temperament between Tennyson and Lawrence alone. Lawrence is describing an Indian dance:

> "And the young man, who chewed gum and listened without listening. The voice (of an old man singing) no doubt registered on their under-consciousness, as they looked around and lit a cigarette, and spat sometimes aside. With their day consciousness they hardly attended.
> .....The voice of the far-off was not for my ears. Its language was unknown to me. And I did not wish to know.... Nor had I any curiosity to understand it. The soul is as old as the oldest day, and has its own hushed echoes, its far-off tribal understandings sunk and incorporated. We do not need to live the past over again. Our darkest tissues are twisted in this old tribal experience, our warmest blood came out of the old tribal fire..... I don't want to live again the tribal mysteries my blood had lived long since. I don't want to know as I have known in the tribal exclusiveness. But every drop of me trembles still alive to the old sound... I have a dark faced bronze voiced father far back in the resinous ages... And I have not forgotten him. But he, like many an old father with a changeling son, he would like to deny me. But I stand on the far edge of their firelight, and am neither denied nor accepted. My way is my own, old red father: I can't cluster at the drum any more."

If to our ears today, this passage has its own tendency to sentimentality, it is towards a sentimentality very different from that represented in Tennyson's poem; a new framework for experience, and not merely a new kind of experience, has been achieved. Tennyson recognises that his world excludes his savage; but Lawrence, partly taking the savage's point of view, recognises equally that the savage's world excludes him. The tension in the passage is created by a partial consciousness of being able, of being required, to be in two very different societies, without being of either. A point has been reached at which it is no longer possible to set the sense of being "in the foremost files of time" boldly against a nostalgia for primitive spontaneity of feeling. And, if I were to select one striking way in which anthropologists and creative writers at the end of the Victorian and into the Georgian period were sharing a common experience, I would say that it was in the apprehension, by both, that they were in a sense at the end of time, turning their eyes backwards; but while the anthropologists, as good Victorians, yet regarded 19th century England as the consummation of human development, and themselves in the 'foremost files' the creative writers of the early part of this century came to believe that they were in its decline, as in the famous lines of Matthew Arnold:

> Wandering between two worlds, one dead,
> The other powerless to be born.

Already in 1909, Nietzsche was analysing their situation in the life of his contemporaries as one brought about by an excess of historical knowledge; and in considering what he then said we may properly include the anthropological knowledge of the time with the historical. "An excess of history" says Nietzsche "seems to be an enemy to the life of the time in five ways:

> Firstly, the contrasts of inner and outer is emphasised, and personality weakened. Secondly the time comes to imagine that it possesses the rarest of virtues, justice, to a higher degree than any other time. Thirdly the instincts of a nation are thwarted, the maturity of the individual arrested no less than that of the whole. Fourthly we get the belief in the old age of mankind, the belief, at all times harmful, that we are late survivals, mere Epigoni. Lastly, an age reaches a dangerous condition of irony with regard to itself, and the still more dangerous state of cynicism..."

Nietzsche, of course, was arguing a case as well as analysing a situation but if we take what he says as simple analysis, it applies very well to the background of those writers we are here considering. Without the contrast of inner and outer, for example, the criticisms, all different but all radical, made of their own society by Eliot, Yeats and Lawrence, could not have been made. All recognised, again in their different ways, that a kind of instinctive knowledge and experience had been lost, had been hidden by over-rationalisation. All imply that they find themselves in a decadent old age of the world, though Lawrence perhaps indulges the sentiment of this rather less than the others; less than Eliot of "withered stumps of time", or than Yeats writing The Second Coming:

> Things fall apart; the centre cannot hold;
> Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world...

Finally, that condition of irony of which Nietzche writes, and which he calls "dangerous", is so well-known in the literature of this century that I need not dwell further upon it.

Of the writers I have mentioned, it seems to me that it is Eliot who most explicitly states the situation in which an excess, if it be an excess, of comparative knowledge about societies placed him and his contemporaries. This comparative knowledge came, in part, explicitly from such works as The Golden Bough, as we know from the general note to The WasteLand; but the kind of multiplication of experience I refer to in anthropological and creative writings, seems to me to be most succinctly expressed in the poem Ash Wednesday, where, you will remember, the difficulty of too much awareness is resolved, for Eliot, by an act of faith:

> Because I know that time is always time
> And place is always and only place
> And what is actual is actual only for one time
> And only for one place
> I rejoice that things are as they are and
> I renounce the blessed face...
> Consequently I rejoice, having construct something
> Upon which to rejoice...

Eliot is the most intellectual - one might say, the most academic of the writers discussed, and it is he who seems to have wished to explore most systematically the kinds of questions of comparative anthropology which anthropologists also were exploring; so far, indeed, that by 1940 he seems to have been enquiring of Ezra Pound for a work on the morphology of cultures, an indication of the interest which produced the vaguely sociological Notes Towards a a Definition of Culture. Ezra Pound replies in his racy and whimsical style:

> There is, so far as I know, no English work on Kulturmorphologie, transformation of cultures. Can't use a German term at this moment. Morphology of cultures. Historic process taken in the larger. I know that you jib at China and Frobenius because they ain't pie church; and none of us likes savages, black habits etc. However, for yr. enlightment, Frazer worked largely from documents. Frob. went to things, memories still in spoken tradition etc. His students had to see...

The contrast between Frobeius and Frazer indicates also what had happened to anthropology between the beginning of the century, and 1940; and in order to understand how literary and anthropological interests had moved together, we have to return to the beginning of anthropology in England, and see how, in that subject too, there is a reaching out for foreign worlds of experience, for their own sake, which eventually quite destroys the framework of ideas and values within and from which it first started.

The systematic comparative study of primitive cultures began in England only after the height of the Victorian period and the men who started it were to see the end of the narrower Victorian world of their childhood. Tylor's Primitive Culture (first published

in 1871) of course directed Frazer to the vein of interest which was later to yield The Golden Bough. Tylor had travelled in Mexico, a fact which seems to have given his studies of primitive cultures, though made from literary sources, a direct understanding which those of the untravelled Frazer sometimes lacked; and it need not surprise us that while Eliot was indebted to the more bookish and consciously literary study of Frazer, D. H. Lawrence preferred Tylor's work. He writes to Lady Ottoline Morrell in 1916:

> "Murry will read Tylor's Primitive Culture before I return it. It is a very good, sound substantial book, I had far rather read it than the Golden Bough or Gilbert Murray."

and elsewhere he describes Primitive Culture as "a v. interesting book, better than the G.B. I think."

Tylor was from most points of view a characteristic liberal Victorian savant; yet, from the beginning of anthropology, he gives us a hint of the development of interests and sympathies which were to threaten and finally destroy the philosophical and imaginative security of the age in which he was born.

The preface of Tylor's book Anthropology, published in 1881, indicates his view of the uses to which the study of that subject might be put. He refers to that multiplication and diversification of studies which was doubtless part of the ultimately wearying "march of mind" from which the hero of Tennyson's poem wished for a time to escape.

> "In times when subjects of education have multiplied" says Tylor, " it may seem at first sight a hardship to lay on the heavily-pressed student a new science. But it will be found that the real effect of anthropology is rather to lighten than increase the strain of learning. In mountains we see the bearers of heavy burdens contentedly shoulder a carrying-frame besides, because they find its weight more than compensated by the convenience of holding together and balancing their load. So it is with the science of Man and Civilisation, which connects in a more manageable whole the scattered subjects of an ordinary education".

Tylor's new science, however, was not merely to be an account of primitive and civilised societies seen, as it were, from the outside; he tried (not always very satisfactorily from the point of view of modern anthropologists) to put himself in the position of those people whose life he was describing, to suggest how he would think were he them. The attempt was made, in fact, however inadequately, to enter into a very foreign kind of experience, as well as to describe and analyse it, or rather, in order the better to give an account of it. This attempt has been characteristically the effort of anthropologists.

Now I think we may see a parallel between this conscious effort of Tylor to think and experience, at once, the thoughts and experiences of foreign cultures and of his own, thus unifying and relating them, and the efforts made by the writers of this century to find some way of integrating their sympathies and experience, which has been so much a subject of critical thought:

> "I wished for a system of thought that would leave my imagination free to create as it chose, and yet make all it created, or could create, part of the one history, and that the soul's."

Surely this is Yeats' way of expressing, as a poet, the sense of fundamental human similarities under the diversities of appearance, which animated the work of the earlier anthropologists, and led them to undertake the task of unification? And Yeats' own anti-scientific mythological and magical imaginative system in a surprising way receives a charter from the rationalist and scientific author of The Golden Bough. Towards the end of the abridgment of this work he writes:

> "Yet the history of thought should warn us against concluding that because the scientific theory of the world is the best that has yet been formulated, it is necessarily complete and final. We must remember that at the bottom the generalisations of science, or, in common parlance, the laws of nature are merely hypotheses to explain that ever-shifting phantasmagoria of thought which we dignify with the high-sounding names of the world and the universe. In the last analysis magic, religion and science are nothing but theories of thought; and as science has supplanted its predecessors, so it may hereafter be itself superseded by some more perfect hypothesis, perhaps by some totally different way of looking at the phenomena - of registering the shadows on the screen - of which we in this generation can form no idea."

I doubt if, at any other period, the "contrast between the inner and the outer" of which Nietzsche wrote could have become so acute as to permit a thoughtful person to speak of the world or the universe as "ever-shifting phantasmagoria of thought"; I think that no one will deny that both Yeats and Eliot were able to think of it as such, and, in Eliot's case at least, tried by a deliberate act of will to dispel this sense of relativities which the growth of knowledge and awareness, and the decline of faith, had brought about. The passages from Eliot's verse which expresses this situation are very numerous, and will readily spring to mind; perhaps that which most exactly express the impact of the extension of knowledge and experience in the late 19th century on the poets of the 20th is in East Coker. It may not be too fanciful, indeed, to see it as the imaginative summing up of the course of the development of thought of a generation, from the security of Victorianism, of a world with precise if restricting horizons, to the felt-complexities of the earlier part of this century;

> "Home is where one starts from. As we grow older
> The world becomes stranger, the pattern more complicated
> Of dead and living. Not the intense moment
> Isolated, with no before and after,
> But a lifetime burning in every moment
> And not the lifetime of one man only
> But of old stones that cannot be deciphered....

Eliot was much concerned with finding a way out of, or through, this experience of "ever-shifting phantasmagoria of thought", but he understood well what it implied. In Notes Towards a Definition of Culture, for example, he is at one point explicitly concerned with the extent

to which it is possible for an anthropologist to participate in a savage culture - to live that foreign life - and yet remain himself and a member of his own society and tradition. He seems to suggest that, somewhere, a halt must be called to sympathy, or empathy, lest the person, no longer belonging to any society, disintegrate. The same problem, though differently resolved, is clearly present also to D. H. Lawrence, both in the passage I have quoted earlier, and elsewhere. Take, for example, his comments on Walt Whitman:

> "Walt wasn't an Eskimo. A little, yellow, sly, cunning greasy little Eskimo. And when Walt blandly assumed All-ness, including Eskimoness, unto himself, he was just sucking the wind out of a blown egg-shell, no more. Eskimos are not minor little Walts. They are something that I am not, I know that. Outside the egg of my Allness chuckles the greasy little Eskimo. Outside the egg of Whitman's Allness too.
> But Walt wouldn't have it. He was everything, and everything was in him..."

And that, of course, is the point which one would logically reach if one were convinced that the World could be represented as an "Ever-shifting phantasmagoria of thought." The efforts of anthropologists to think and live the experience of primitive peoples, however far they remained from success, similarly were bound to break down the particular society and at a particular time:

> "...a lifetime burning in every moment
> And not the lifetime of one man only
> But of old stones that cannot be deciphered..."

And with the break-down of that exclusiveness, with the imaginative attempt to enter into the experience of other lives and times, there goes the isolation of the thinking individual which is such a characteristic theme of this country's thought and writing. There are examples in The Waste Land, but the direct statement of the problem is found in the essays of Yeats. Yeats, of course, thought himself strengthened and inspired directly by the operations of "enchantments, glamours and illusions" from other societies and times:

> "Our most elaborate thoughts, elaborate purposes, precise emotions, are often, as I think, not really ours, but have on sudden come up, as it were, out of hell or down out of heaven..."

and he continues significantly:

> "We cannot doubt that barbaric people receive such influences more visibly and obviously, and in all likelihood more easily and fully than we do, for our life in cities, which deafens or kills the passive meditative life, and our education that enlarges the separated self-moving mind, have made our souls less sensitive...

We know, in this case, that Yeats was thinking specifically of the researches of anthropologists, for in the next few lines he refers to the work of Andrew Lang as supporting his contentions. Here is one example of the presence of direct connection between poetic and critical, and anthropological, thought and experience. I do not doubt

that research would produce many more; but it is enough here also to note not only Eliot's indebtedness to The Golden Bough and Miss Weston's From Ritual to Romance, but also his use of W. H. Rivers' Essays on the Depopulation of Melanesia. There he explicitly uses Rivers' anthropological material to make his point about the breakdown and disintegration of European society. The comparative study of cultures, which in Tylor's day was to demonstrate the stages by which mankind had reached the summit of Victorian perfection, has turned the mind back critically on the society in which it started, to the disadvantage of that society:

> "W. H. R. Rivers adduced evidence which has led him to believe that the natives of that unfortunate archipelago are dying out principally for the reason that the 'Civilisation' forced upon them has deprived them of all interest in life. They are dying from pure boredom....

and he goes on

> "when applied science has done everything possible with the materials on this earth to make life as interesting as possible, it will not be surprising if the population of the entire civilised world rapidly follows the fate of the Melanesians."

It is ironical that anthropological writing should, in so short a time, have served this purpose for the best and most sensitive minds, when it started in Tylor's words, with the faith that

> "we civilised moderns have just that wider knowledge which the rude ancients wanted. Acquainted with events and their consequences far and wide over the world, we are able to direct our own course with more confidence toward improvement. In a word, mankind is passing from the age of unconscious to that of conscious progress..."

We know how the writers of the early years of this century suffered from the reaction against just such an increase in consciousness, against the varied knowledge about cultures which seemed to have destroyed any living culture in the society which produced it. So D. H. Lawrence:

> "Poor creatures that we are, we crave for experience, yet we are like flies that crawl on the pure and transparent mucous paper in which the world like a bon-bon is wrapped so carefully that we can never get at it....

and

> "I think New Mexico was the greatest experience from the outside world that I ever had. It certainly changed me for ever. Curious as it may sound, it was New Mexico that liberated me for ever from the present era of civilization, the great era of material and mechanical development... the great psych of materialism and idealism which dominated me..."

It was this then, that the movement exemplified in the development of anthropology, towards a wider sympathy with foreign and barbarous societies had led. And such a criticism of idealism and materialism could not fail to be suggested by the works of anthropologists who were themselves, in one way or another, idealists and materialists.

If we consider the many writings of Lévy-Bruhl, whom Ezra Pound much admired, on the nature of primitive thought, we find there an attempt to suggest that primitive thought has a kind of correctness and spontaneity (a lack of idealism) which the scientific and logical thought of civilised men lacks. It had been for long a feature of anthropological writings to try to compare the kind of thought found in savage societies with that which was found in the poetry of our own. Tylor himself compares them:

> "The modern poet still uses for picturesqueness the metaphors which for the barbarian were real helps to express his sense... early barbaric man, not for poetic affectation, but simply to find the plainest words to convey his thoughts, would talk in metaphors taken from nature...."

And again we find in the writings of Max-Muller:

> "before language had sanctioned a distinction between the concrete and the abstract, between purely spiritual as opposed to coarsely material, the intention of the speakers comprehended both the concrete and the abstract, both material and the spiritual, in a manner which has become quite strange to us, though it lives on in the language of every true poet"

I do not need to point out in detail the relation between this kind of concern with concreteness, directness, a kind of spontaneity and absence of rationalisation, and the critical and poetic theory and practice of the writers whom I have discussed. What else is Eliot desiderating when he writes that:

> "Tennyson and Browning are poets, and they think; but they do not feel their thought as immediately as the odour of a rose..."

or Lawrence

> "it seems to me that when the human being becomes too much divided between his subjective and objective consciousness, at last something splits in him and he becomes a social being. When he becomes too much aware of objective reality, and of his own isolation in the face of the universe of objective reality, the core of his identity splits, his nucleus collapses, his innocence or naïveté perishes, and he becomes only a subjective-objective reality, a divided thing hinged together but not strictly individual..."

Anthropologists, though more soberly and coldly, have been aware of such kinds of problems arising from attempts to understand foreign or exotic societies. Not only have they been aware of them, but it seems to me that their work is itself a symptom of the division in the self of which writers of this century have made so much.

Godfrey Lienhardt

* A talk given at the Institute of Contemporary Arts in 1951, with minor stylistic modifications.

Divine King or Divine Right: Models of Ritual Authority

The difference between "primitive" and industrial "Western" societies, Levi-Strauss tells us (Charbonnier 1969, pp. 32-42), is something like that between grandfather clocks and steam-engines, between mechanical repetition and the struggle between entropy and "temperature" differentiation. In distinguishing between kings who rule by divine right ("divine kings" in Hocart's (1927) sense) and leaders who are themselves the embodiment of divinity, we shall examine here a phenomenon that may be suggestively considered in terms of these two poles. On the one hand, we have the identification of spiritual authority with temporal power or the subjugation of the former to the latter: this, in the comparative terms required by the model, characterizes "hot" societies. In the contrasted extreme, we have an egalitarian dispersal of ritual and political functions in economically and technologically simple societies. Most of the societies to be considered fall between the two poles; indeed, the "mechanical" model, as should become clear, can hardly be more than a kind of processual absolute zero - a useful construct, but empirically unrealised. The ethnographic comparisons presented here are conceived in the idiom of what Needham (1970) has called "structural history".

Karl Marx acutely pinpointed the distinction, in nineteenth-century Germany, between the "official" rule of the aristocrats and the effective rule, or "domination", of the bourgeoisie. There is, perhaps, something incongruous in representing the Junker class as in some sense ritual office-holders; but a point of structural interest remains, that it is possible in a highly "conservative" society for economic and nominal power to be quite differently distributed. In India, again, the Brahmans are invested with undeniable superiority in all matters relating to ritual, but they rarely constitute a locally recognised "dominant caste". And, to bring this introduction nearer to one of the main ethnographic theatres with which we shall be concerned, the leopard-skin chiefs of the Nuer are never members of the dominant clans in the tribes in which they function (Evans-Pritchard 1940, p. 174). The Nuer closely approach the "mechanical" model, as is shown particularly by their practice of telescoping lineage history to fit a conventional generational length; and their society has been described as having an essentially egalitarian character. Among the Shilluk, the dominant lineage (dyil) is linked with the soil (Evans-Pritchard : 1948), which suggests a connection between dominance and a combination of numerical strength with landholding, whether or not this is paralleled in the sphere of ritual authority; this is essentially true of the Indian case as well.

* * * *

The Shilluk provide the classic focal point for a discussion of "divine kinship", as a result of Evans-Pritchard's well-known essay (1948) on the status and significance of the Shilluk reth. Much of his discussions is taken up by the question of whether the reth was actually immolated before he could meet a natural death; Evans-Pritchard was at the time disposed to doubt the authenticity of ritual regicide, though Lienhardt (1961, p. 314) subsequently showed that among the Dinka the evidence for it was quite definite (if "regicide" may be used for the killing of "masters of the fishing

spear", a less exclusive office than that of the Shilluk reth). However, as Evans-Pritchard himself points out, the significant fact is that the Shilluk evidently believe that their "kings" had been ritually killed; we should thus expect to seek the meaning of the office of the reth partly in this belief. His explanation of the stories of how the reth had been "walled in" to die as deriving from the traditional form of royal tomb rather begs the question; the historical development may equally have been the other way about, the present kind of tomb being a skeuomorph of a putative "original" suffocation chamber.

Frazer (1922, p. 350) explained away the killing of the reth in terms of his own theory of magic: "Whereas by slaying him his worshippers could, in the first place, make sure of catching his soul as it escaped and transferring it to a suitable successor; and, in the second place, by putting him to death before his natural force was abated, they would secure that the world should not fall into decay with the decay of the man-god. Every purpose, therefore, was answered, and all dangers averted by thus killing the man-god and transferring his soul, while yet at its prime, to a vigorous successor." Nowadays, we should not lay such complacent stress on the argument for belief in efficient causation of this kind: but it is not unlikely that as an act of expressive ritual the killing of the reth held some such metonymical significance. In Hocart's (1936, p. 54) definition of ritual, "If you cannot act on A by acting on B there can be no ritual" - whether the ritual itself be an expressive physical act or the use of verbal analogy. Thus, the killing of the reth or of Dinka fishing-spear masters was regarded with self-righteous horror by early European commentators: but savagery is in the mind of the beholder. The performance of corrective surgery - clothing Nyik ng in a new human form, as we might objectivize it - here assumes the force of equivalence qua analogy in the Kantian definition quoted by Needham (1970): "Analogy... does not mean... an imperfect similarity of two things, but a perfect similarity of relations between quite dissimilar things." Frazer was at least right to discern a close correlation between the condition of all the many divine kings he excavated from his book-shelves and that of the societies over which they were alleged to have ruled.

It is surprisingly relevant at this point to consider the beliefs which attached to imperial power in the Byzantine Empire. The Emperor was not, of course, equivalent to God: he was the divinely sanctioned leader on earth. Ensslin (1948, pp. 272-3) comments: "So Constantine Porphyrogenitus saw in the rhythm and order of the imperial power a reflection of the harmony and order displayed by the Creator of the world... A necessary condition for succession to the throne was membership not only of the Empire but also of the orthodox Church, as well as the full possession of bodily and mental powers" (my emphasis). It is, of course, natural for a people to expect their temporal ruler to begin his reign in reasonably good health; but there were Roman Emperors, for instance, whose outward disabilities (such as those of Claudius) did not in the event debar them from assuming the purple toga. In Byzantium, the imperial personage was the symbol of his entire flock; and in his downfall through revolution his erstwhile subjects could read the marks of divine disfavour. This being so, there is no flaw in the logic (in Hocart's sense of "the logic of ritual") of the Emperor's accession through the choice of God and the choice of the people simultaneously. Vox populi, vox Dei: the people expressed through the analogy of their choice of ruler the condition

in which they hoped to find themselves.

This digression into mediaeval European history has a special kind of interest here. Above all, it is instructive to note in a highly organized state the same sort of metonymic reasoning as we have encountered in a relatively "cold" Nilotic society. Although the Byzantine Emperor was only nominally invested with religious power, his relationship with the ecclesiastical hierarchy must have been not unlike that of kings in ancient India: the separation of ritual and temporal functions in no way deprived the king of temporal leadership in a cosmologically ordained ordo rerum. There was, as Dumont tells us (1962), no actual struggle between the king and the Brahmans for spiritual leadership - the kind of rivalry which Nordholt reports for the Timorese Atoni (Nordholt: 1971) seems to have had more to do with the acquisition of temporal authority; and if the Byzantine clergy struggled at all with the kingship, it was to reinforce, not to destroy, its ritual foundations. The king of Byzantium could not be ritually killed within the framework of Christian ideology; but his death could be validated by hindsight as a divinely ordered regeneration of the society for whom he occupied the throne.

The "reign" of a reth, however, could only terminate (in theory, at least) in his execution. In a sense his people reigned over him rather than the other way round, and his state perpetuated itself in the condition to which the earlier Roman empire periodically returned: Mommsen wrote, "the consummation of the sovereignty of the people is at the same time its self-destruction". The welfare of the people resides symbolically in the person of the reth, and only the constant re-assertion of the whole society's sovereignty can avert decay. But it will be objected, and rightly, that the killing of the reth was a cyclical event, invariably triggered by signs of regal infirmity, whereas a strong Roman princeps could expect not only to retain his imperium up to the natural end of his life, but also ensure the succession of a favoured or adopted son as well as his own posterity as a personally recognized divinity - not submerged in the collective anonymity of Nyikang, but projected as in Vespasian's justly famous deathbed quip: "Methinks I am becoming a god!" Vespasian's irreverence showed a realistic confidence in his own posterity, and perhaps also in the succession of his son Titus. Divinity was invested in the Shilluk reth as the embodiment of Nyikang, from the moment of his investiture; whereas there were few Roman Emperors who were popularly regarded as divine during their own lifetimes.

Shilluk kingship can thus be conceptualized as a "mechanical" model: it was repetitive and evidently resistant to change. The Roman Emperor, by contrast, was elevated to a position of temporal power and was thenceforth committed to a struggle against the entropic forces of popular rebellion which could (and ultimately did) lead to the creation of anarchic chaos through the increasing disparity between the Emperor and the opposing masses which made and unmade him at ever shortening intervals. We must here clarify Balandier's (1970) use of the notion of entropy so as to distinguish more clearly between the mechanical notion of equilibrium (the balancing weight in the grandfather clock) and the specific opposition to personal power generated by a historically developing conflict between competing political forces.

Balandier's approach calls for examination here especially as it has some direct bearing on the symbolism of divine kingship. He writes: "In the ancient kingdom of Kongo, the initiation procedure known as Kimpasi... operates at times when the community is weakened or threatened... Society rediscovers its earlier vigour by re-enacting its own genesis. It assures its own rebirth by bringing to birth, according to its own norms, the young men fashioned by initiation" (p. 111). In the first place, this statement reifies society to the unacceptable extent of making it collectively objectify the analogy inherent in a set of rites de passage: ethnographical support for this contention is not given. Balandier is concerned to show how society uses ritual to replace the force expended in the continual struggle against entropy. Since, however, rituals of this kind are themselves cyclical - they may not occur at calendrically equidistant intervals, but they mark divisions of what Evans-Pritchard has called "structural time" - the search for renewal is generated by forces inherent in, and not extrinsic to, the society. In such a context the notion of entropy is at best of doubtful relevance.

Thus, too, the creation of a new reth and the killing of his predecessor are not to be regarded as manifestations of "heat" or "energy". If there are cases of interference with the regular procedure, these may be regarded as incipient traces of energy generated by the gradual development of a sense of social differentiation: man usually realises the impractibility (if not always the mechanical impossibility) of a social perpetuum mobile. That would mean a totally friction-free society!

Let us now return to the metonymical character of the divine king, and take up Evans-Pritchard's insight: "It is the kingship and not the king who is divine." This remark underlines the distinction just made, between the divinity of Vespasian qua Vespasian and the divinity of a Shilluk king qua occupier of his position. In a "hot" society the individual monarch plays a dynamic and active part in re-structuring the relationship he has with his subjects according to the specific exigencies of the moment; the "divine king", by contrast, occupies a passive position in a repetitive process which for him ends with his execution. We cannot but agree with Evans-Pritchard's sceptical reaction to reports, published by Seligman and others, of the "absolute power" of the Shilluk king.

Gluckman's distinction between rebellion and revolution (1956, pp. 125-6) is foreshadowed - in the paradigmatic dimension, it should be noted - in Evans-Pritchard's essay: Shilluk rebellions "were not revolutions but rebellions against the king in the name of the kingship." It is interesting that the Shilluk apparently gave up ritual regicide long before the Dinka, whose masters of the fishing-spear are less exclusive and dominant figures. By the time Evans-Pritchard conducted his investigations, it would appear, the friction between a reth desirous of life and power and other contenders for the same office had begun to generate a little "heat", though further developments were precluded by European domination.

The Nyoro kingship provides an interesting contrast to the cases so far discussed. The Mukama must not come into contact with death, and Nyoro believe that in the past a king who was afflicted with physical weakness would ideally bring about his own death. Beattie seems to follow Evans-Pritchard when he writes: "We do not know for sure whether any kings were killed in this way, but the important thing is that it

is thought that they were. This shows us how Nyoro traditionally thought about their country and their kingship" (Beattie 1960, p. 26). But does it, when the historical facts are so uncertain? In any case, it is now clear that different kinds of authority were at stake in Bunyoro (Needham 1967), and the differentiation between these, as we shall see, is of paramount importance. In fact, a line of historical development is not outside the bounds of reasonable conjecture, and is suggested by the fact that Dinka masters of the fishing-spear are on record as having died at the hands of their "subjects" far more recently than any Nyoro Mukama can have done. But the phrase "how Nyoro traditionally thought" reduces us to a level of generalization, a kind of gnomic synchrony, in which the processes of political change become quite indistinguishable.

In this connection it is instructive to look at the mythology of divine kingship as it appears in these three cultures, Dinka, Shilluk and Nyoro. Here are three myths thus connected, sharing a common thematic structure but exhibiting variation over significant points for our study of the different evaluations of divine kingship. The common feature of all these stories is the crossing of a river, made possible by some form of supernatural intervention. In all three, moreover, the origins of the divine kingship are hinted at. But the differences are also very striking, the more so in view of the common matrix. It is not my intention here to attempt a full structural comparison of these myths in all their major aspects, but simply to demonstrate that the textual variation is in a correlative relationship to the local differences in political authority, and to show how this may help us to understand more clearly the nature of "divine kingship".

To facilitate discussion, we now present the three myths.

1. Dinka (Lienhardt 1961, pp. 173-5)

"Aiwel Longar then left the people; and Divinity placed mountains and rivers between him and them. And across one river which the people had to cross, Divinity made a dike like a fence. As the people tried to pass this fence of reeds to cross to the other side, Longar stood above them on the opposite bank of the river, and as soon as he saw the reeds moved as men touched them, he darted his fishing-spear at them and struck them in the head, thus killing them as they crossed.

'The people were thus being finished altogether, and a man named Agothyathik called the people together... His plan was that his friend should take the sacrum of an ox which he had fastened to a long pole, and should move through the water before him, holding out the sacral bone so that it would move the reeds. They carried out this plan, and Longar's fishing-spear, darted at the sacrum which he mistook for a human head, was held fast there." This gave Agothyathik a chance to engage Longar in wrestling and tire him out, whereupon Longar gave various things to men who were to be the founders of spear-master clans, and created warrior clans.

"When Aiwel Longar had given out his powers with the spears, he told Agothyathik and the other masters of the fishing-spear to look after the country, saying that he himself would leave it to them to do so" except in the event of their needing him in times of serious trouble.

2. Shilluk (Crazzolara 1950, pp. 40-41)

"... the river was blocked by a grass barrier. They had to leave and wanted to make use of the river also, which however was obstructed. A man from the suite of Nyikaango came forth and suggested to him how a way in the river could be opened... He, Oboogo said, would descend into the river up to his neck, indicating the place convenient for cutting, and Nyikaango should descend after him and cut, from under the arm of Oboongo, the grass cover and, at the same time, make an incision into his armpit. The running blood and the grass-cutting would divide the barrier, thus leaving a way for the canoes of the Shilluk. This was done and the water-way was cleared. The wound was insignificant... (Oboogo) established his fame for ever in his country..."

3. Nyoro (Fisher n.d., pp. 112-4)

"The warriors went before... to seek the kingdom of Bunyoro, and to found a dynasty of kings that should reign over it to the present day...

"So the people then knew that their master was going to settle in a new land; and they were afraid... (The witch-doctor) Nyakoko... (told) them that... with a leader like Mpuga and a priest like himself they had nothing to fear.

"So in the morning they continued their journey, and at midday reached the River Nile. The usual ferry was not there, and after waiting till evening and it failed to appear, Mpuga and his people greatly feared, for they imagined that this misfortune portended evil to their enterprise. Nyakoko then commanded a little girl to be brought... (and) laid his wand on the face of the river and the waters separated into two, leaving a dry path in the midst. The little girl was placed in the middle of the river-bed, then Nyakoko caused the waters to unite again, and they immediately swallowed up the child...

"Instantly the boat appeared..."
(A similar story follows, in which Mpuga himself performs the sacrifice. They eventually reach Bunyoro amd Mpuga becomes king, with Nyakoko as his High Priest.)

The major differences between these myths would appear to shed much light on our stated line of enquiry. In the Shilluk and Nyoro versions, the ancestor of the kings is assisted by a friend to produce the desired crossing by an appeal to divine aid; whereas the Dinka myth attributes the beginnings of the clans of the masters of the fishing-spear to the success of an ancestor and his friend in overcoming a semi-divine adversary who is personalized. The Shilluk and Nyoro stories both require a measure of sacrifice, whereas the Dinka story seems to portray the control of life-forces, personified by Aiwel Longar, as being taken over by the spear-masters' ancestors through the use of physical coercion. Aiwel Longar thus represents the objective of ritual, the control of the dangerous forces of life and death. But, as Lienhardt points out, Longar is himself a prototypical spear-master. Moreover, Dinka commoners regard it as highly prestigious to marry into a spear-masters' clan, and Lienhardt sees a reflection of this in the myth. This concern with life reminds us of Hocart's wise pronouncement: "It is not government that man wants, but life."

The heroes of the Shilluk and Nyoro stories, then, make their appeal to unseen powers. The significance of this would seem to lie in a difference in the relationship between the various "kings" and their divine models. Among the Dinka, ritual authority is not concentrated in the hands of one leader, and the existence of many equal colleagues is validated by the way in which Longar distributes his spears and concomitant power so widely. In the Nyoro myth the hero, Mpuga, is merely instructed by a ritual specialist and subsequently demonstrates his ability to communicate with the divine powers according to Nyakoko's example. His power is not shared, and it is passed down intact from generation to generation. There is no Nyoro or Shilluk story of a prototypical "divine king" sharing his powers among several appointed successors, in the manner of Aiwel Longar.

The emergence of a dominant politico-military figure seems to be accompanied by a specialisation of the role of ritual leader in the person of a priest; or, in other words, the separation of the one from the many is accompanied by a separation of the ritual from the political function. Already in the Dinka myth we encounter the origins of a division between war-masters and masters of the fishing-spear. In the Nyoro myth, by contrast, the High Priest is a single man - still the faithful friend we meet in the other stories, and still in remarkable possession of a store of esoteric knowledge, but here finally given the specific position of chief ritual specialist in preference to the king himself. Formally, and especially in view of the dualistic symbolism in both areas, we may not unreasonably compare the Nyoro situation with the similar separation of the ritual and political spheres in Asia, cosmologically and pragmatically (Dumézil 1948; Coomaraswamy 1942; Needham 1962; Needham 1967 ; Nordholt 1971). But for an essentially historical view, we have to turn to the mythologies of a more or less culturally homogeneous area, as we have done here. That is the way "structural history" can seek empirical validation.

We have noted that among the Dinka there is a separation of ritual and military functions, which are vested in the spear-master and the warrior clans respectively. Lienhardt (1961, p. 145) writes: "There is one possible exception to the statement that only spear-master clans have Flesh as a divinity; it is sometimes claimed by members of the clan Padiangbar, a warrior clan. Where the Padiangbar clan is represented in any force, it is my experience that its members regard themselves as having spiritual equality with masters of the fishing-spear." It is interesting to note that in this society spiritual authority can be claimed by a high-ranking clan which has numerical strength: one is reminded of the numerical aspect of dominance in the Indian caste system; and the analogy suggests that the spiritual power of the Dinka masters of the fishing-spear is seen as more than a mere formality, that indeed it is the kind of authority that must be obtained before a progression to autocratic rule becomes possible. Fustel de Coulanges early stressed the sacerdotal origins of kingship in the ancient Mediterranean: "Religion created the king in the city, as it had made the family chief in the house" (n.d., p. 178); and Ensslin (1948, p. 269) shows how even after Christianity had made the divinity of the Emperor an unacceptable notion, yet: "Resistance to the will of the sovereign was a crime against something inviolably sacred: it was a sacrilege." In Republican Rome, as Fustel de Coulanges reminds us, kingship was not so much odious as sacred: Suetonius talks of the sanctitas regum (Julius Caesar, 6; Fustel de Coulanges n.d., p. 179).

Here let us return for a moment to our three myths. It will be recalled that the common element which stands out above all others is the notion of passage: in passage, in a state or marginality, the society in each case is exposed to danger. In the Dinka myth, this danger, personified in Aiwel Longar, is brought under control; but, according to the age-old paradox that the conqueror becomes the conquered, the ability to give life and to take it away is now vested in the spear-master clans. In the Shilluk and Nyoro versions, however, the spiritual power of the leader does not derive from his risking his own life to wrest it from some semi-divine source: he sheds blood, not his own, in order to gain life for the rest of his people, and it is in his ability to do this that the successful negotiation of passage lies.

Mary Douglas suggests "that those holding office in the explicit part of the structure tend to be credited with consciously controlled powers, in contrast with those whose role is less explicit and who tend to be credited with unconscious, uncontrollable powers, menacing those in better defined positions" (1966, p. 123). But this formulation leads logically to the further conclusion that even where power is controlled it may yet be dangerous. The Dinka spear-masters' ancestor wrested control of power from Aiwel Longar, but it is still a dangerous thing that they control. Compare also the two-edged quality of Nyoro mahano. The separation of priestly and warrior functions among the Dinka moreover, shows that when it comes to military affairs the masters of the fishing-spear are interstitial: they remain at home when war breaks out. This accords well with Douglas' observation that "it is a common feature of competitive segmentary political systems that the leaders of the aligned forces enjoy less credit for spiritual power than certain persons in the interstices of political alignment" (1966, p. 132). The division of power follows a division of kinds of political interest.

If, however, the divine king controls the dangerous powers of life and death, his own decay, if not violently forestalled, spells disaster for the community. For in him, in a very real sense, man and god are conjoined, fused, identified. Only to the limited extent that he is separated from his people is divinity separated from them. But as he draws away from his people and rises higher and higher in the temporal sphere, he cuts himself away more and more from divinity. This externalization is paralleled by the increasing specialization of the priesthood. For now the king is not divine; he rules by a right conferred from above, not from within. As he draws away from his erstwhile godhead, he has an increasing need of intermediaries to sanctify his claims to temporal authority. He has sacrificed his own puissance and strives to increase his pouvoir. And the latter is dependent upon his ability to keep the entropic hordes of rebellion at bay.

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Montesquieu (1689 - 1755)

It is difficult to decide where, from a pedagogical standpoint, to begin an account of what today might be considered to be social anthropological thought. One can go back to Plato and Aristotle, or yet further back; and I used to give a course of lectures on Ibn Khaldun; but the break of centuries is too great. Then I have started with Machiavelli, nibbled at Vico and toyed with Montaigne, before finally deciding that if one has to begin somewhere, or rather with someone, it must be with Montesquieu. I agree with Prof. Aron that it is he who should be called, not a precursor (at any rate in France), of sociological thought, but as its modern founder (this was Durkheim's opinion also), on account of what was at the time of his writing it a most remarkable, brilliant, and original, though rather chaotic, book, the Esprit des lois (1748). His other writings, the Considerations and others, are very inadequate history, (nevertheless Sir Frederick Pollock regarded him as the father of historical research) showing clearly the influence of Machiavelli, but not with Machiavelli's acute understanding of politics; and they contribute little to sociological thought.

Little need be said about the life of Charles-Louis de Secondat, Baron de Montesquieu. He came, as his name shows, of an aristocratic family, - noblesse d'épée et de robe from the region of Bordeaux and he was a student of law first in Bordeaux and then in Paris, and was a lawyer of the courts, (President à mortier). He was for his time a very learned man who enjoyed high repute among the savants of the salons of licentious Regency Paris, where he appears to have had a good time. Some have called him a libertine. He fancied himself as a galant homme; though he was also, some said, a bit parsimonious. He was much travelled in Europe, the two years he spent in England having especially made a deep impression on him and much influenced his thought, particularly in political matters. He was very tolerant, one might almost say liberal, and sometimes a bit muddled in his outlook. He was, at any rate formally, a Catholic though no one seems to know for certain - perhaps they cannot - how much of the deference he paid to the Church was merely formal. Anyhow whatever he may privately have thought of its dogmas he was certainly not himself dogmatic. He was, I suppose, what in the eighteenth century would have been regarded as a Deist.

Montesquieu was, if not the first, one of the first, writers to place great emphasis on the idea that in any society all the institutions constitute a system of interdependent parts. The relations between them can be discovered by observations made in a large number of different societies and a comparison between them since they are embodied in 'the nature of things'. 'Laws in their most general signification, are the necessary relations derived from the nature of things. In this sense all beings have their laws...' (p.I). By 'necessary' he means little, or no more than that given a certain type of social structure or conditions we will not normally find going with them institutions which would conflict with them. There is a certain consistency between one social fact and another and between one type of society and the environmental circumstances in which it is placed.

The size of population and hence of the political community depends on the mode of livelihood. Hunting peoples are widely dispersed and live in small communities. We find larger communities

among pastoral peoples and larger still among agriculturalists and yet larger among husbandmen who cultivate the arts (higher agriculturalists). The line of distinction between savages and barbarians lies between hunters, who roam in independent hordes, and herdsmen and shepherds, among whom there is unity on a larger scale, e.g. the peoples of Siberia cannot live in large bodies because they cannot find subsistence, whereas the Tartars can, for at any rate limited periods, because their flocks and herds can be assembled in one area. This to Montesquieu is a 'law'. Another 'law' is that the character and even the philosophy of a people are largely a product of climatic conditions, e.g. the Indians are naturally a cowardly people, and even the children of Europeans born in India lose the courage of the people of their homeland, being ennervated by the climate. The metaphysics of the Indians are suited to the climate, being those of repose and inertia. He was Hippocratic in his ideas about the influences of climate on character. I give some further examples of these 'laws' later.

Though his book is about 'laws' he uses this word in different senses in reference to the dual nature of man. That is to say, he distinguishes between natural law, to which animals are subject, and positive law, which is characteristic of human societies (law of nations, laws of religion and morality, and political and civil laws); and in matters of positive law man is a free agent, although a certain type of positive law is generally found in a certain type of society or, if it is not, it ought to be. 'Man, as a physical being, is, like other bodies, governed by invariable laws. As an intelligent being, he inces antly transgresses the laws established by God, and changes those which he himself has established' (p.4). Note the two senses of 'law' in that passage. I conclude that by the 'laws' of a society Montesquieu meant little more than what people of that society do (social facts), or at any rate what he thought they ought to do. On the whole he speaks of 'law' in the modern scientific sense rather than in the moral sense of his time.

It being his point of view that where one finds one or other fundamental institution others will conform to it, he proceeds to examine societies of which he had first-hand experience (those of Europe) and others about which he had read (Greece, Rome, China, India, Formosa, the Maldive Islands, the Arabs, the Hebrews, Turkey, Ethiopia, the Carthaginians, Franks, Germans, Mexicans, American Indians, and others) and to compare their different ways of social life. In the course of his lengthy treatise, in which he was much influenced by Aristotle, he discusses a very large number of topics: constitutions, education, position of women, laws, customs, manners, luxury, war, currency, commerce, economics, taxes, climate, slavery, morals, religion, etc. A large part of it is taken up with a history of European feudalisms. It is a general commentary on human affairs, of a sensible and reflective kind; and also a sort of guide to rulers about what sort of institutions they should encourage: no wonder that, as he confesses, the labour of writing it nearly killed him. He obviously felt the need for discretion in discussing both political and religious subjects; and he sometimes sheltered behind irony, e.g. in his discussion of Negro slavery. (There had been trouble about the Academy and with the Court and the Church). Nevertheless, in spite of its many obscurities and diversions there is a clear and persistent attempt to make a scientific classification of types of human society and to reveal the significant features of each type.

In the earlier part of his book Montesquieu takes (following Aristotle) as his constant, to which all other institutions are variables, the form of government (he tends to ignore it later). He classes governments into the three classical species: republican (democratic or aristocratic), monarchical, and despotic, but though using Aristotle's classification he employs it differently - Aristotle's knowledge having been more or less restricted to the Greek city states. These words indicate the nature of each, and we must now examine those laws, manners, customs, etc. which follow from the form of government, for what is proper to one form would be unsuitable in another. We know whether they are suitable or unsuitable once we have isolated the principle (ethos) of each type of government. 'There is this difference between the nature and principle of government, that its nature is that by which it is constituted, and its principle that by which it is made to act. One is its particular structure, and the other the human passions which set it in motion' (p. 27). The principle of a government is thus what is its main interest or goal or value to which all other interests and goals and values are subordinated. The principle of a democracy is virtue (probity); of an aristocracy, moderation (restraint) founded on virtue; of a monarchy, honour (grandeur); and of a despotism, fear. (Montesquieu was partial to a republican government or to a limited monarchy. He greatly disliked everything Spanish and admired everything English, being a great believer in constitutional checks and balances between the legislative and executive and juridical branches; also between a prince's prerogatives and the privileges of clergy and nobles and the civil liberty of the people). Such are the three principles of the three sorts of government. It does not, however, follow that in a particular republic the people actually are virtuous, though they ought to be, or that in a particular monarchy they are actuated by honour, but if they are not the government is imperfect. In other words, these were for Montesquieu what today some people would call ideal types, to which actual societies approximate more or less. The corruption of a government generally begins with that of its principle: the spirit of equality becomes extinct; the power of the nobles becomes arbitrary; a prince deprives his subjects of their prerogatives and privileges.

Other institutions conform to the pattern of the government. Forms of education must evidently be consistent with its principle, e.g. in republics its aim will be to inculcate self-renunciation. Then 'it is natural' to a republic to have only a small territory; a monarchy to have only a moderately big territory (if smaller it would become a republic, if larger the nobility would assert their independence, safe from swift retribution, e.g. Charlemagne had to break up his empire, and Alexander's broke up after his death); and a large empire supposes a despotic authority (quick decisions can be taken, and fear keeps remote governors from rebellion) e.g. China, Turkey, Persia. The spirits of states change as they contract or expand their limits. In monarchies which have also an hereditary nobility between the prince and the people, entails preserve the estates of families and are very useful; they are not so proper in other sorts of government. In despotisms punishments have to be very severe; in moderate governments (monarchical and republican) shame and a sense of duty act as restraints. Luxury is extremely proper in monarchies and there should be no sumptuary laws, for were the rich not to spend their wealth the poor would starve. In democracies there can be no luxury (there was none among the old Romans and the Lacaedemonians). In monarchies women are subject to very little

restraint; in republics they are free by the laws and constrained by manners; in despotisms they are chattels. Dowries ought to be considerable in monarchies to enable husbands to support their rank; in republics they ought to be moderate.

However, the ethos (esprit) of a people is not just determined by their form of government, though it is most clearly seen in this, but by their total way of life: 'men are influenced by various causes, by the climate, the religion, the laws, the maxims of government; by precedents, morals, and customs, from whence is formed a general spirit that takes its rise from these' (p.418). Among different peoples one or other of these influences may be dominant and that of the others will then be weaker. 'Nature and climate rule almost alone among the savages; customs govern the Chinese; the laws tyrannize in Japan; morals had formerly all their influence at Sparta; maxims of government, and the ancient simplicity of manners, once prevailed at Rome' (p. 418). It follows that the introduction of new laws may alter the spirit of a nation. One should be careful.

Montesquieu's method of interpretation can readily be seen by taking a few typical examples from his book. They demonstrate his thesis: we should explain the laws by the laws, and history by history. (A social fact can only be explained in terms of other social facts, by the totality of which it is part). At Athens, for example, a man could marry a sister only on the father's side, and not a sister by the same venter. This rule originated in republics whose aim it was not to let two inheritances devolve on the same person. A man who married his father's daughter could inherit only his father's estate, but if he married his mother's daughter it might happen that this sister's father had no male issue and might leave her his estate, and so her husband would acquire two estates. Domestic servitude (as distinct from slavery) is explained by the fact that in hot climates girls are married between the ages of 8 and 10 and are old by the time they are 20; so infancy and marriage go together, and hence the dependency of women in the home. He says this about polygamy: in Europe there are more boys than girls, and in Asia more girls than boys (so he says) - hence monogamy in Europe and polygamy in Asia; but in the cold climates of Asia there are, as in Europe, more males than females, 'and from hence, say the Lamas, is derived the reason of that law, which amongst them, permits a woman to have many husbands' (p. 361) i.e. polyandry. We are told that 'in the tribe of the Naires, on the coast of Malabar, the men can only have one wife, while a woman, on the contrary, may have many husbands. The origin of this custom is not I believe difficult to discover. The Naires are the tribe of nobles, who are the soldiers of all those nations. In Europe, soldiers are forbidden to marry: in Malabar, where the climate requires greater indulgence, they are satisfied with rendering marriage as little burdensome as possible; they give a wife amongst many men, which consequently diminishes the attachment to a family, and the cares of housekeeping, and leaves them in the free possession of a military spirit' (p. 362). Among the Tartars the youngest of the males is always the heir because as soon as the older sons are capable of leading a pastoral life, they leave the home with cattle given them by their father and start a new home of their own. 'The last of the males who continues in the house with the father, is then his natural heir. I have heard that a like custom/ultimogeniture/

was also observed in some small districts of England. This was doubtless a pastoral law conveyed thither by some of the people of Britany, or established by some German nation. We are informed by Caesar and Tacitus, that these last cultivated but little land' (p. 401). Some of these explanations may seem to us today to be somewhat fanciful, but they are certainly an attempt at being sociological; even if logical constructions entirely, or for the most part, unsupported by evidence.

There is a connection between forms of domestic and political government. The equal status of the citizens of a republic is consistent with the high standing of women in the home. When the climate demands that women be in subjection this fits in better with a monarchical form of government. This is one of the reasons why it has always been difficult to establish popular government in the east. But the abasement of women is most conformable to the genius of a despotic government, which treats all with severity. 'Thus at all times have we seen in Asia domestic slavery and despotic government walk hand in hand with an equal pace' (p. 365). 'One thing is very closely united to another: the despotic power of the prince is naturally connected with the servitude of women, the liberty of women with the spirit of monarchy' (p. 428).

Montesquieu had a clear idea of the integrative function of custom - and we may perhaps compare him to Confucius - 'We shall now show the relation which things in appearance the most indifferent, may have to the fundamental constitution of China. This empire is formed on the plan of the government of a family. If you diminish the paternal authority, or even if you restrict the ceremonies, which express your respect for it, you weaken the reverence due to magistrates, who are considered as fathers; nor would the magistrates have the same care of the people whom they ought to consider as their children; and that tender relation which subsists between the prince and his subjects, would insensibly be lost. Retrench but one of these habits, and you overturn the state. It is a thing in itself very indifferent whether the daughter-in-law, rises every morning to pay such and such duties to her step-mother: but if we consider that these exterior habits incessantly revive an idea necessary to be imprinted on all minds, an idea that forms the governing spirit of the empire, we shall see that it is necessary that such, or such a particular action be performed' (p. 433).

On the prohibition of marriage between near kin Montesquieu says that the marriage of son with mother 'confounds the state of things: the son ought to have an unlimited respect to his mother, the wife owes an unlimited respect to her husband; therefore the marriage of the mother to the son, would subvert the natural state of both'. (Vol ii p. 205). The prohibition of marriage between cousins-germans is due to the fact that in the past it was customary for children on their marriage to remain in the home of their parents: 'The children /sons/ of two brothers, or cousins-germans, were considered both by others and themselves, as brothers' (Vol ii, p. 207). Hence marriage was not permitted. These incest-prohibitions are universal: 'These principles are so strong and so natural, that they have had their influence almost all over the earth, independently of any communication. It was not the Romans who taught the inhabitants of Formosa, that the marriage of relations of the fourth degree was incestuous: it was not the Romans that communicated this sentiment

to the Arabs [he comes down rather badly on this one]; it was not they who taught it to the inhabitants of the Maldivian islands.' (Vol. ii p. 207) However, religion sometimes permits, or even encourages, marriage to mothers and sisters, e.g. among the Assyrians, Persians, and Egyptians. Then in speaking of the large number of suicides in England he observes that most of them take place at the beginning or end of winter when the wind comes from the north-east and brings about introspection and despair.

Montesquieu's what today would be called functional point of view is perhaps best seen in his discussion of religion. Even though a religion may be false it may have an extremely useful function. It will also be found to conform to the type of government found with it. Christianity goes best with moderate government and Islam with despotic government. Christianity has hindered the establishment of despotic power in Ethiopia. Northern Europe embraced Protestantism and Southern Europe stuck to the Catholic Church: 'The reason is plain: the people of the north have, and will for ever have, a spirit of liberty and independence, which the people of the south have not; and therefore a religion, which has no visible head, is more agreeable to the independency of the climate than one which has one'. (Vol. ii p. 149). 'In the countries themselves where the protestant religion became established, the revolutions were made pursuant to the several plans of political government. Luther having great princes on his side, would never have been able to make them relish an acclesiastic authority that had no exterior pre-eminence; while Calvin, having to do with people who lived under republican governments, or with obscure citizens in monarchies, might very well avoid establishing dignities and pre-eminence', (Vol. ii, p. 150).

Even peoples whose religion is not revealed have one agreeable to morality (was not Lévy-Bruhl to urge us to this more than a century later?). All alike teach that men should not murder, steal and so on, and that they should help their neighbours (we may indeed ask whom should we not kill or take from their property, and who are our neighbours?). The philosophical sects of the ancients were a species of religion, e.g. the Stoics. Religion and civil laws ought everywhere to be in harmony. 'The most true and holy doctrines may be attended with the very worst consequences, when they are not connected with the principles of society; doctrines the most false may be attended with excellent consequences, when contrived so as to be connected with these principles' (Vol. ii, p. 161). Neither Confucius nor Zeno believed in the immortality of the soul (so Montesquieu says) but both religions are admirable as to their influence on society. On the other hand, the sects of Tao and Foe believe in the immortality of the soul and have drawn from this doctrine the most frightful consequences, e.g. they encourage suicide. The sacred books of the Persians advised the faithful to have children because at the day of judgement children will be as a bridge over which those who have none cannot pass. 'These doctrines were false, but extremely useful' (Vol. ii, p. 163). A people's religion is suited to their way of life. It is difficult to breed cattle in India (so he says) so a law of religion which preserves them is appropriate. India is good for cultivation of rice and pulse: a law of religion which permits of this kind of nourishment is therefore useful. The flesh of beasts is insipid (whatever he meant by that): therefore the law which prohibits the eating of it is not unreasonable. 'It follows from hence, that there are frequently many inconveniences attending the

transplanting a religion from one country to another' (Vol. ii, p. 167) e.g. the hog is scarce in Arabia but it is almost universal in China and to some extent a necessary nourishment. In India it is most meritorious to pray to God in running streams. How could this be performed in winter in climates such as our own?

Now, I say again, that a lot of this was, anyone can see, an attempt to present an answer to a question with a bright idea, a logical presentation which often has little to support it in fact (as we now know); and much of it was naive guesswork. Perhaps it is for this reason we can see how close he was to much modern sociological thinking. We have to remember that the area of social behaviour in literature and in life was very limited to Montesquieu and what he knew about it was deficient. And there is the unfortunate 18th century/tendency to moralize, but there is nevertheless an attempt at a cold dissection of the social body, if this sometimes unfortunately used analogy be allowed, and to discover the functioning of its organs, and the belief that the principles of social life cannot be known by reasoning from philosophical maxims and axioms but only by observation, by inductive and comparative study. If we can say that Machavelli wrote a treatise on social psychology we can say that Montesquieu's treatise is what today we would call sociological. In it we find most of the ingredients of sociological (socio-philosophical) thought, especially in France from his day to Durkheim's and beyond: the insistence on the scientific study of society and that it must be a comparative study, the use of the data of as many societies as possible, or at any rate as convenient for the problem being tackled; the study including primitive societies as furnishing examples of certain types of social systems; a need to start with a classification or taxonomy of species of society based on significant criteria - the way zoology and botany, for example, have begun; the idea of inter-consistency between social facts (social systems), and that any social fact can only be understood by reference to other social facts and environmental conditions, as part of a complex whole; and the idea of this inter-consistency being of a functional kind. Also we find clearly stated in the Esprit des lois the idea of social structure and of dominant values (social representations) which operate through the structure. There is also the notion there of an applied science of social life: what we learn from a comparative study of human societies helps us to shape the organization of our own. What are lacking in his writings - perhaps all to his advantage - which are prominent in those of social philosophers of a later date is the idea of societies being natural in the same sense as the systems studied by the experimental sciences, the idea, in spite of the impression he sometimes gives to the contrary, of sociological laws similar to the laws formulated in the natural sciences, general statements of invariable and inevitable regularities, and the idea as an inevitable and unilinear development. (As Comte points out, he did not have the idea of progress at all). So though now we know much more about human societies than Montesquieu and can see that some of his surmises were naive, it must nevertheless be allowed that it would be difficult to assert that so far as method and theoretical knowledge go we have advanced much beyond Montesquieu. And if this not be granted, then at least it must be conceded that most writers concerned with social philosophy, social history and sociology (including social anthropology) right up to the present day show his influence, whether direct or indirect; it is stamped plain on their writings. And what a majestic thesis, and in what prose, was the

Esprit and can we not understand that at the end of his life he said 'I have but two things to do, to learn to be ill, and to learn to die'.

E. E. Evans-Pritchard

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Can There be an Anthropology of Children?

I

My initial concern with this question arose from browsing through The Language and Lore of Schoolchildren (1959), and Children's Games in Street and Playground (1969) by Iona and Peter Opie. My interest increased as I read that it can be useful to know that the reply to 'a pinch and a punch for the first of the month' is 'a pinch and a kick for being so quick', or that saying the Lord's prayer backwards raises the devil, that crossing fingers and saying 'barley' or 'cree, screws, screase, crogs, blobs, or fainites' signifies immunity in a game, in fact that 'the schoolchild ... conducts his business with his fellows by ritual declaration ... sealed by the utterance of ancient words which are recognised and considered binding by the rest of the community' (Opie and Opie, 1959: 1, 121, 146). This was all intriguing: the Opie's style was reminiscent of an early ethnography, covering for example, 'occasional customs', 'half belief', 'partisanship', 'curiosities', 'oral legislation', 'friendship' and fortune'.

But why should this be of anthropological concern? Why not leave the books as amusing and interesting collections? The Opie introduction was however provocative and their commentary tantalising: too disappointing to abandon. The introduction reveals that these child traditions 'circulate from child to child, beyond the influence of the family circle', that 'part of their fun is the thought, usually correct, that adults know nothing about them' and though 'scarcely altering from generation to generation, this thriving unselfconscious culture remains unnoticed by the sophisticated world and quite as little affected by it' (op. cit.:1). The Opie's commentary, however, became increasingly unsatisfactory. Are the oral rhymes, tongue-twisters, improper verses, jingles and parodies merely 'expressions of exuberance'? Was there nothing more to be said about this material than the type of reductionist interpretation given, such as 'language is still new to them, and they find difficulty in expressing themselves. When on their own they burst into rhyme, of no recognisable relevancy, as a cover in unexpected situations, to pass off an awkward meeting, to fill a silence, to hide a deeply felt emotion, or in a gasp of excitement' (ibid.:18)? This could be Radcliffe-Brown in Chapter VI of The Andaman Islanders, explaining that 'all the legends... are simply the expression in concrete form of the feelings and ideas aroused by things of all kinds as a result of the way in which these things affect the moral and social life of the Andaman Islanders' (1964: 376). The Opie introduction raised the point that perhaps children could be studied in their own right. The commentary suggested the lack of any recent anthropological perspective.

What approach could be taken? How can we interpret children's games and their oral tradition? How could children be thought of, and how do they classify or think about the world? What difference does age make? What have other people said about children?

With such questions in mind, I then turned to other material. First, Edwin Ardener's article 'Belief and the Problem of Women' (1972) encouraged me to think that children were valid as a group to be studied. Both women and children might perhaps be called 'muted groups', i.e. unperceived or elusive groups (in terms of anyone studying a society). Then, since children are no novelty to anthropologists, I hoped to gain some answer to problems from writers who had thought

about them, such as the nineteenth century evolutionists. Though primarily concerned with establishing stages of development, these writers saw a consideration of the behaviour, minds and beliefs of children as necessary support for their theories about the primitive. Thus just as the child, according to Spencer, is ignorant of the course of things and therefore believes in fiction as readily as fact, so the savage, similarly without classified knowledge, feels no incongruity between absurd falsehood and established truth. Another school of relevance is the psycho-analytic anthropologists who see the genesis of individual personality or a whole culture's personality embodied in childhood. The idea that basic character structures of a society can be found in the child led to unsuccessful searches, for example, for the Oedipus Complex amongst the Trobrianders and the Hopi Indians. Culture and Personality writers, heavily influenced by psycho-analysis, concentrated on child-rearing practices to explain cultural personality and beliefs. Thus Leighton and Kluckhohn (1947) explain witch and ghost tales current in Navaho society in terms of relieving the shocks and emotional wounds that occur during the training of the Navaho child. Slight variants of this psychological approach appear in those writers on the child who see themselves concerned with the process of socialisation, whether concentrating on the home, school or general environment, as the influencing factor. They are concerned with the process by which someone learns the ways of a given society or social group so that he can function within it. One of the few recent cross-cultural books on this subject is From Child to Adult by John Middleton, which illustrates the contexts in which children grow up and become adults, and the kind of pressures, sanctions, peer group organization, initiation rituals and religious and economic pressures which are used to steer the young towards acceptable adult conformity. Cognitive and linguistic development - two enormous fields of research on the child - also need to be looked into, but I shall only mention some of their work in this paper.

None of the main approaches mentioned, however, some of which I shall make more explicit, revealed the beginnings of an anthropology of children, concerned with beliefs, values, or interpretation of their viewpoint, their meaning of the world. The germ of the possible use of children in the field can be seen in Margaret Mead's work in 1929, when she attempted to study the thought of children in Samoa. Was it characterised by the type of animistic premise, anthropomorphic interpretation and faulty logic, which had been reported for civilised children, or was this type of thought a product of the social environment? Unfortunately she based this hypothesis on oversimplified Piaget-type terminology and applied Western oriented experiments, such as the analysis of 3,200 drawings of children who had never used pencil or paper before. She did, however, recognise them as informants and saw child thinking as interesting in its own right.

By 1938 the position of children in anthropology still looked pretty meagre. Newbury, concerned with games summed it up saying, 'Many educationalists and anthropologists have raised the opinion that too often is it the case that the study of a tribe or people is confined almost entirely to adult life from puberty onwards, that only occasionally is a detailed account of children's games given in what are in other respects comprehensive accounts' (1938: 85). The lack of studies is noticed again by Mary Goodman, 'children can serve as anthropological-style informants, being qualified like their elders by membership in a society and a command of a limited part of that society's culture.

Children not only can but should be solicited to act as informants since their very naivete offers advantages. They can tell us first-hand and without retrospection what their society and culture looks like through their eyes, or what childhood is like with respect to its perception of society and culture' (1959 979). But though Goodman tries to stick to her approach of a child's eye-view of society in her book (1970), unfortunately she relies on statistical results using formal experiments which hardly fit the culture she is dealing with.

How could an anthropological approach to children be developed? How would it differ from the theoretical approaches mentioned, which are concerned with children in terms of what they reflect about adult behaviour or thinking? What analytical terms could be used? Would it be a functional anthropology? The main difference between my proposed perspective and that of the culture and personality writers, psychologists, functionalists etc. is that instead of stressing the diachronic, I want to stress the synchronic. It may be asked 'how can you study something that isn't yet, except in terms of its development'? I answer this in the following way: those anthropological fields concerned with children, which I have mentioned, view them to a greater or lesser extent, as passive objects, as helpless spectators in a pressing environment which affects and produces their every behaviour. They see the child as continually assimilating, learning and responding to the adult, having little autonomy, contributing nothing to social values or behaviour except the latent outpourings of earlier acquired experiences. The adult plays the role of either frustratring the child in its toilet training, feeding or other activities, or compelling the child to fit to a cultural pattern. My proposed approach regards children as people to be studied in their own right, and not just as receptacles of adult teaching. My search is to discover whether there is in childhood a self-regulating, autonomous world which does not necessarily reflect early development of adult culture. If we conceive of society as a group of intertwining, overlapping circles, which as a whole, form a stock of beliefs, values, social interaction, then children, for example from the age of four to eleven or children before initiation ceremonies (depending on the society) may be said to constitute one conceptual area, one segment of this stock. The children will move in and out of this segment into another, but others take their place. The segment still remains. The segment may overlap with others, may reflect on others, but there is a basic order of beliefs, values and ideas of one group which bounds them off from any other group. Thus I propose that instead of just looking at one or two segments, usually men and sometimes women, we can add other dimensions, children or the aged for example. (see Ardener 1972) Let me emphasise that whatever the society there will inevitably be overlaps (children are for example continually trying to imitate and include certain adult viewpoints), yet at the level of behaviour, values, symbols, games, beliefs and oral traditions, there may be a dimension exclusive to the child.

The Opies are important for they reveal the inadequacies of the usual approach. Children, they claim, have a tradition of their own, verses and lores which are not intended for adult ears. Then is the child so passive? English children may learn at school, one, two, three, four, five, while uninitiated Nuer boys may learn from the women how to milk, but less is known about Iggy Oggy, Black Froggy, Iggy Oggy out, or about the ox names which Nuer boys may take 'in play but only

in imitation of their elders' (Evans-Pritchard, 1956:250). If we look at the rest of this short passage it raises a relevant question about ox-names amongst the Nuer, 'Likewise maidens may take ox-names from bull calves of the cows they milk, but they are mainly used only between girls themselves and in the nature of a game, copying their brothers: the names are short lived. Married women use cow-names among themselves, but here again, this is similitude and it has none of the significance of the ox-names of men.' (op.cit.:250). Since there is a distinction between the copy-names of boys, girls and women and those names used by men, I wonder whether these may not be interpreted with the proposed approach in mind. May there not be a symbolic difference in oxen or their names for boys, girls and women? From whom did Evans-Pritchard get his information? Since such symbolic importance is attached to the name of the ox in the men's conceptual sphere, it would not be surprising if Nuer men should denigrate the ox-names of women and children, as mere imitation, with no importance attached. The tone of pride captured in the passage, with concern for male supremacy and the dismissal of any significance of cattle for women, leads me to think that there may be other aspects of ox-values to be found in the belief worlds of uninitiated children and women. After all Evans-Pritchard himself says that 'for all Nuer-men, women, and children, cattle are their greatest treasure' (1959:248).

II

At this point it may be helpful to indicate some of the ideas on children put forward by the writers mentioned earlier. Surprisingly, the concept of childhood itself is mainly left ignored. Yet we have only to follow the history of our own idea of childhood as shown by Aries (1973) to see that the concept varies widely according to the particular time or place revealing a different awareness of 'that particular nature which distinguishes the child from the adult' (Aries, 1973:125). Puberty may for example seem an obvious end to childhood but in some societies the psychological aspect may be unimportant compared to the cultural aspect which defines adulthood, marked often by a 'rite de passage' at anywhere from age eight to twenty or more.

I turn first to the anthropological literature and the nineteenth century evolutionists, whose observations on child behaviour and thought have contributed a popular but misleading view of primitive thought. The characteristic of children which writers such as Spencer and Tylor considered most revealing about primitive thought, was their supposed irrationality, their inability to reason in an abstract way. Children, some argued, derive their associations from direct human experience and then extend them to phenomena. They class together in a simple and vague way objects or actions of conspicuous likeness. For a child, they thought, each object was not only what it seemed but was potentially something else. Thus children attributed life to a straw that moved or thought of a shadow as an entity. Others were less convinced that the child confused living with non-living. Spencer, for example, saw the child endowing its playthings with personalities, speaking and fondling them as though they were living, as not actually believing this, but as using deliberate fiction. Though pretending that the things are alive the child does not really think so. Were its doll to bite, it would be no less astounded than an adult would be. (1882: 145) For Spencer the child is not exactly

confused but is rather a playful dramatiser who 'lacking the required living-objects', accepts as 'representing them non-living objects' (1882:145). Tylor is equally unconvinced about a child's confusion. For him, the child does not believe a doll is anything more than it is, but its imagination allows it to treat it as something more. Thus wooden toy soldiers can be seen as living soldiers who are walking of themselves when they are pushed about. The shape of the toy is of little importance. The toy for Tylor is mainly an assistance to the child in enabling it to arrange and develop its ideas by working the objects and actions it is acquainted with into a series of dramatic pictures (1870:108).

As we shall see such discussions of the child are not wholly unrelated to more recent ideas on their thought. On the other hand, the direct comparison, or so-called comparison, of child thought with primitive thought was hardly more than the same type of vague classing together of similar items, of which the child was accused. The idea which gave credance to their writings was the recapitulation theory which viewed the development of the individual as an epitome of the evolution of the race. The influence of this idea has spread widely in the literature on children by educationalists, psychoanalysts, psychologists, and anthropologists, amongst such writers as Freud, Blondel, and the early Piaget. Some modern writers on children have obviously read this nineteenth-century literature, seen some superficial similarity between the described savage and the behaviour of the children they have observed, and to complete the circle some have concluded that there must be some truth in the recapitulation theory. Kay, for example, writing in 1968 writes 'an infant school child is not just a miniature adult. He is really a modern version of primitive man ... the junior school child is passing through all the mental experiences of mankind as he approaches the logical age' (75). Or Stephen Ullmann talking about the primitiveness of language says 'one wonders whether there is not a grain of truth in the old (recapitulation) theory. Certain facts in child psychology and in the history of our own language seem to suggest there is' (1966: 73). The theory is accepted by Schumaker. He supports an argument about the development of the senses with the fact that 'there is an apparent tendency of young children to recapitulate primitive stages of consciousness' (1960:30), and as secondary support he quotes von Holzschuher, 'Feelings and wishes flow, in the child, without sharp boundaries into sensations and perceptions of reality. The child lives in his own magical world' and 'remains in the primitive consciousness' and 'we conclude that in the small child the primitive person rules exclusively'. Worseley, also makes use of the theory, appealing to Vygotsky's 'congeries' or 'complex thinking' stage to understand 'Groote Eylandt Totemism' (1968: 151).

Why should there be such persistence in a schema which has had to face much adverse evidence? One explanation - that advocated by Lévi-Strauss (1949: ch. 6) - brings out the idea of the universal child, the child of nature. For Lévi-Strauss, infant thought provides the resource of 'mental structures and schemes of sociability for all cultures, each of which draws on certain elements for its own particular model'. Since the child's experience has been less influenced than an adult's by the particular culture to which he belongs, he presents a more convenient point of comparison with foreign customs and attitudes than one's own. Not only may primitive thought or behaviour seem childish to the Westerner, but the primitive will be inclined also to compare us with his children. This argument, though at first

appealing is less convincing if one doubts the premise and the evidence on which it is based. The characterisation implicit in Lévi-Strauss' view, that human beings at birth already possess an inborn ability to control actions according to genetic rules cannot yet be proved. It suggests that particular abilities should not be thought of as the consequences of social interaction but as potentially underlying it. A slightly altered version of this view sees particular abilities as acquired after birth but derived from an inborn capacity to construct or create in collaboration with other people, or as Shotter puts it 'human beings ... possess a natural power to construct or create in interaction with other human beings a personal power to control their performances in accordance with rules' (1972:1). Thus the abilities acquired will be performed according to cultural patterns but their acquisition cannot be achieved in independence: the help is required of some other person already possessing such skills.

In accordance with his premise, Lévi-Strauss supports his point with the example of language prattling. The variety of sounds which can at first be articulated is almost unlimited, yet each culture retains only a few. Once the selection has been made, the unlimited possibilities on the phonetic plane are irremediably lost. Lévi-Strauss applies this argument directly to the social plane and using observations made by Susan Isaacs shows how the notion of reciprocity derive from a universal need, the need for security; the need underlies the behaviour which is culturally expressed. But Lévi-Strauss ignores the possibility that needs themselves are interpreted culturally, a suitable interpretation if one accepts the second characterisation of human beings. In this view some needs, feelings, moods, intentions etc. may be 'fictitious' but become meaningful in the course of exchanges between the young child and others 'in which one individual responds in an immediate and unconscious manner as a result of the way he perceives or apprehends the immediate and unconsidered reaction of the other individual to him' (Shotter, 1972:4). So-called universal feelings, needs etc. may be culturally rather than naturally derived. If such were the case the child could hardly then be called a 'polymorphous socialite' giving access to all mental structures and institutional schemas.

A more convincing reason for some people's acceptance of a similarity between child thought and primitive thought is that given by Leach (1966). It is almost summed up by Gide's phrase 'The less intelligent the white man is, the more stupid he thinks the black'. Native thought is seen as childish ignorance when the actions or ideas concerned are misinterpreted by the anthropologist. They seem irrational, because not explained by any cultural criteria, and therefore similar to child behaviour, which I might add is likewise often misinterpreted.

The literature on child thought in the field of anthropology is sparse. If we look at writers in other disciplines (apart from psychology), most interest seems to lie in the problem of whether the child confuses the living with the non-living, following the interest shown by the nineteenth century writers. Durkheim, for example, follows Spencer and sees the child's need to play 'as so forceful that to play properly he imagines a live person'. Gombrich the art theoretician converts the problem to a hobby horse. If the child calls a stick a hobby horse it obviously means nothing of the kind. He sees the child's functional needs and the dangers of over-image-making creating the

minimum and maximum limits which hold on the child's creative play in achieving the idea of horseness. The main idea is that the hobby horse or stick is a substitute for a horse. The stick is neither a sign signifying the concept of a horse nor is it a portrait of an individual horse. By its capacity to act as a substitute, the stick becomes a horse in its own right. The first hobby horse was probably, says Gombrich, "just a stick which qualified as a horse, because one could ride it", or more precisely "the stick was that formal aspect which fulfilled the minimum requirement for the performance of the function"(1963:4). Thus so long as riding mattered any rideable object could serve as a horse. The greater the wish to ride, the fewer the features needed that will do for a horse. But the attempt to exploit the minimum leads to dangers, for if the hobby horse becomes too lifelike, it might gallop away on its own. In Gombrich we see the functional explanation of the child's behaviour with a stick or doll.

Vygotsky gives us a psychological explanation. In 1933 in a lecture on play he talks about the relation between meanings and objects. At pre-school age there first begins a divergence between the fields of meaning and vision. "Thought is separated from objects - a piece of wood begins to be a doll and a stick becomes a horse ... but "it is terribly difficult for the child to sever thought (the meaning of a word) from object" (1966: 12). Perhaps the best way to illustrate the importance of what Vygotsky is saying is to give an example of how he may help interpret some specific material. Children have numerous names for different parts of the body. At St. Barnabas School, where I am doing field work, my own plaits on first appearance became within five minutes "ears", "lugs", "hose-pipe", "loos". The latter I suppose because they looked like chains. Other common names children apply are nob, nut, loaf, bonce, and block for head; mug, dial, phiz for face, while some people according to children have ferret noses, pignoses, jelly noses, Peggy Parrot noses, cheese cutters, Rudolphs (i.e. Red noses). How can we interpret these? We now return to Vygotsky who writes, "in play a child deals with things as having meaning. Word meanings replace objects, and thus an emancipation of word from object occurs". He suggests a formulated fraction for the structure of human perception which is expressed as:

$$\frac{\text{Object}\quad\text{(numerator)}}{\text{Meaning}\quad\text{(denominator)}}$$

For the child in play the idea is the central point and "things" are moved from a dominating to a subordinate position ... The child concentrates on meaning severed from the objects". My plaits, as playful objects to pull, and as "novelties", food for the imagination, thus invited a separation from themselves as objects and became endowed with several meanings. Faces, noses and heads, usually ordinary objects, in certain contexts, or in certain manifestations merit unusual epithets. But this is not to say that (out of such contexts) children do not know the distinction between plaits and ears. Similarly then, children know the difference between a baby and a doll or a stick and a horse. They have passed the infant stage of intimate fusion between word and object in which 'a divergence between the meaning field and the visible field is impossible' (op. cit: 12). But it is in play, in imaginary situations that children mostly reveal spontaneous meanings dominating over objects. This is important technically and for explanation in the proposed anthropology of children. Young children's play, according to Vygotsky must be interpreted with meanings being more important than the objects, and action arising from ideas

rather than things; the establishment of rules develop out of this process, but rules are not integral to it, or formulated in advance. It is in play with others that meaning and things become linked. We shall see later how this can help us understand activity in the playground.

An old anthropological problem is raised for our studies by Vygotsky, Piaget and other child psychologists: the question of different modes of thought. We now assume that primitives have a similar way of thinking to the West; the difference is merely a question of balance. What about child thinking? Recent studies have concentrated on the difference between child and adult mental processes, but (1) is child thought so different from ours that we can only describe their speech and actions, without comprehending them? Or, if it is so different, may we not learn from psychologists and then proceed? Or (2) is their thought like our own but in a different idiom, or (3) should we make a distinction between the thought of children of different ages?

In order to answer these questions, it has been helpful to refer to and evaluate for example Piaget's and Isaacs' work on child development. They each reveal a very different picture of child thought and in turn disagree about the extent to which child thought resembles adult thought. Piaget, to begin with, maintains that child thought has a different structure from the adult's. He sees a child's mental capacities developing in definite stages, gradually acquiring logical competence in such notions as representation or relationship, to arrive eventually at a regulated system of rational thought. To give some impression of the distinctive world in which Piagetian children appear I have invented a conversation between two piaget-type children aged about six. The outline is created from a real situation at St. Barnabas School playground in Oxford. Arthur is burying stones, wrapped in sweet papers, in the sand, and talking to himself, while Peter sits drawing in the sand.

Arthur (to himself): This is my treasure. Oh, it's fallen out. There now I got to bury it again - must wrap it up. My stones is made of marbles. That one's all round.

Peter: (glancing at Arthur's activity): What's round?

Arthur: My stones was in the water. My tummy drinks too much water and then it gets round.

Peter: Those aren't stones, they're sweeties. I'm going to tell Miss. I'll tell.

Arthur: That's not fair. Don't tell. Daddy said I can, so you can't tell. They're not sweeties anyway.

Peter: They are.

Arthur: They're not. They're treasures an' they've all got names.

Peter: What if there were'nt no names"?

Arthur: If there were'nt no words it would be hard - you couldn't make nothing ... (pause) ... What's that? You've drawed moons?

Peter: No, two suns.

Arthur: Suns aren't like that - With that mouth - they're round. Suns have'nt got eyes and a mouth.

Peter: Yes they have. They can see.

Arthur: No they can't - it's only God who can see.

Peter: How d'you know.

Arthur: I've always known.

Arthur and Peter are both in Piaget's pre-operational stage, which is characterised by its particular explanatory procedure - the lack of an integrated system.

As you may notice, reasoning about the stone's roundness is carried out by way of linking two preconcepts, the roundness of the stone and the roundness of his tummy, both imagistic and concrete; concepts which have no general class and no individual identity. The concepts are like Vygotsky's unorganised 'congeries', where "the heap, consisting of disparate objects grouped together without any basis, reveals a diffuse undirected extension of the meaning of the sign to inherently unrelated objects linked by chance in the child' perception." (1962: 59) This is a type of thinking which assimilates reality into undifferentiated schemas. Anything can be joined or combined to anything else in this jumble bag. Thus Arthur links his round stomach full of water with the stone which is round also. It is the superficial view of "roundness" which forms his classification. For children of this age everything around them is real and concrete, nothing can be abstract. Thus physical objects are made by man, or look like man: the sun has eyes and a mouth for Peter. They must have since they react in physical ways, (the sun can move and see). Piaget sees this explanation of participation between objects in terms of transduction and syncretism. In the children's ideas on names, the sun and God, we can see concrete, static images of reality. "Names must be 'real' or nothing would exist", Rather than schematize and reorder events as an adult would in an argument, Arthur and Peter merely run on their own reality sequence and state their own point of view. "They can see", "no they can't". Things are what they appear to be to the child, so immaterial things are materialised: words must be entities, suns must be able to see - their own thoughts must have always existed. The whole episode of play must appear as a reality for the children, from a Piagetian standpoint. He is here in agreement with many of those nineteenth century writers previously mentioned. Piaget would argue that Peter and Arthur would not clearly distinguish play and reality as different cognitive realms possessing distinct and different 'ground rules', 'because in both cases belief is arbitrary and pretty much destitute of logical reasons. Play is a reality which the child is disposed to believe in when by himself, just as reality is a game at which he is willing to play with the adult and anyone else who believes in it' (Piaget, 1924: 93).

How can we evaluate this impression of the child which Piaget gives us? Is there really no distinction for a child of six between play and reality? Vygotsky suggests that there is. He gives an example of 'play with an imaginary situation', that of two sisters

(age five and seven) playing at being sisters, that is playing at reality. The difference between play and reality being that in play the child tries to be a sister. They both acquire rules of behaviour which fit 'sisterly' actions. Only actions which fit these rules, which emphasise the relationship as sisters, are acceptable to the play situation. Thus they dress themselves alike, they walk about holding hands, the elder tells the younger about other people and says 'that is theirs, not ours'. What Piaget misses in making no distinction between play and reality for young children is the element of conscious action in play. 'What passes unnoticed by the child in real life becomes a rule of behaviour in play' (Vygotsky, 1966: 10). From the above invented conversation we can also see Piaget's over-riding concern with the child's intellectual capacities and the different structure of their thought from that of the adult. In contrast, Susan Isaacs has argued that the difference between child thought and adult thought is merely a matter of experience, degree not kind. She directly critises Piaget saying that 'the untrained, undisciplined, and ignorant mind is, of course, ego-centric, precausal and magical in proportion to its ignorance and lack of discipline' (1930: 94). It is ego-centric because of its ignorance, and not vice versa. Isaacs also says the child can be easily pushed back into the realm of phantasy and ego-centricity when asked certain questions prompted by the adult. With these severe criticisms in mind it is difficult not to accept her view that children's thought is not so different from adult thought, especially when seen against the background of her two excellent books (1930 and 1933). Piaget's preoccupation with intellectual capacities and their development is a significant limitation to any contribution he might make to an anthropology of children. This is especially true in terms of the child over about eight, who forms an integrated system, which Piaget sees as a structure with definite logical and mathematical properties. Function and content almost disappear and so too the possibility of much comprehension. Piaget can, thus, be of little help in analysing the Opies as a means of access to children, since the ages of the children are about nine to fourteen, and their rhymes, spontaneous games, and verbal exchanges are outside his range of study; 'these stages of development naturally concern only the child's intellectual activities (drawings, constructive games, arithmetic, etc.). It goes without saying that in outdoor games the problem is a completely different one' (1926: 42). This is not to say that Piaget can be of no use in other approaches used to understand the child. An anthropology of children must however be more concerned with content already formulated within the already existing culture, and Piaget, especially in his early "content" books, aims "not at examining ideas but at seeing how their ideas are formed in response to certain questions, and principally in what direction their spontaneous attitude of mind tends to lead them' (1929: 123).

'In certain other aspects Piaget is surprisingly anthropological in his approach, or rather he links with anthropology through structuralism. He sees his own theory of cognitive structure as intimately connected with Lévi-Strauss' doctrine of the primacy of structure in social life, and like Lévi-Strauss is seeking that conceptual structure which lurks behind the social structure. 'It is the logic of oppositions and correlations, exclusion and inclusion, compatabilities and incompatabilities', says Piaget, 'which explains the laws of association and not the reverse' (1971: 109). They both believe that through careful examination of groups, which, like children of primitives differ from the contemporary western adult, new interpretations can be made on the whole of human

experience.

We might perhaps link the works of Piaget and Lévi-Strauss as a means to understand child thought. There seem to be some aspects of mythical thinking which lie close to aspects of child thinking. I stress only some. I am not equating mythical and child thought. Following Lonergan, we might call this a symbolic mentality, which is present in all men, and which has 'its own quasi logic, its own method of explanation, all of which are connatural to the psychic and sensitive level in man (quoted in Barden, 1966: 38). We might, for example, bear in mind magical thinking, which postulates a complete and all-embracing determinism, when looking at elements of childish thought, such as their need for justification at any price. 'This logical or pre-logical law leads them into a certain determinism, since it is probably owing to it that the idea of chance is absent from the mentality of the child' (op. cit: 40). We might also bear in mind the bricoleur who fits together anything at hand, when trying to understand the young child who assimilates everything into the structure he has already made.

III

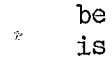
In the first sections of this paper I have tried to indicate the lack of anthropological literature on children's values, beliefs and social behaviour, and to suggest a possible model for including them in anthropological viewpoints of society. Then I looked at some particular writers' perspectives on children and discussed the problem of child thought. Now I hope to give some empirical support to two of these notions; that children may have an autonomous world, independent to some extent of the worlds of adults; and secondly that children's thoughts and social behaviour may not be totally incomprehensible to adults, so long as we do not try to interpret them in adult terms.

The material used in this section is drawn mainly from the Opie books (1959 and 1969) and from my own observations in St. Barnabas School playground.

In the playground, the children ranging from about five years old to ten, naturally spend most of their time playing. To an adult outsider the first impression is one of screaming chaos, restrained only by brick walls and a door separating the two play areas, though these too seem to exude scrambling children. None of the physical objects of the environment offer their usual protective safety; even the benches which might provide a sedate adult corner are upturned. As an outsider one either stands nakedly in the midst of a volley of gunfire, retires clinging to the walls surrounded by young hands and arms claiming attention or one bravely falls on the ground dead joining into the playful warfare. I was soon made aware that the bio-physical environment constituted the main equipment for the apparent confusion and anarchy; important equipment also for communication, as I later found out. The environment has no idiosyncratic meaning at the level of play; the objects, including their own bodies, are at the mercy of the realm of their imagination. Thus the benches, the main door leading into the ground, the door dividing the two play areas, a pot of sand, some stairs leading down to a shed, two drains in the middle of one play area and the children themselves, especially their hands,

arms, fingers and feet all show immense potential for possible play. Each object will acquire meaning or value through its relative position with other objects or the specific context. Thus the two drains have value in races in so far as they present different possible starting places. The little ones use the drain nearest the wall, the older ones use the further one. With this view in mind, St. Barnabas playground begins to appear at odds with any values which might be applied by an adult visitor. There are two benches. These are however the boxing-ring. This is made explicit by the two up-turned benches placed at right-angles against one of the brick walls. Inside it one boy is holding up a clenched fist while the second strikes the knuckles before the first can avoid the heavy blow: several other boys cheer - but no-one outside the ring shouts for fear of being dragged in as a participant. Physical endurance is the necessary conformity to this game. As one boy explained, 'you mustn't give in - the first to cry is a baby'. The children's values indicate the context in which the boxing is to be understood. Bravery and endurance are here esteemed and these are soon made manifest in the bleeding knuckles. On another day, the benches take on the meaning of the basic structure for a house and the greatest value for the children is the pleasure of actually making the 'house', the gathering of jackets and bits of wood or anything else at hand to make the benches domestic. These same benches may provide the equipment for whatever is valued at that moment, whether horses or hospitals. This same pattern continues - the door between the two play areas in certain relationship to the two platforms on either side is valued as a swing over a dangerous moat, whilst on other days the two platforms alone represent the distance between teacher and pupils; the walls are castles for a king to sit upon, or 'safety' in a game of 'chase'. The hands of several children in a ring represent a decision, whilst several hands joined together can be understood as the making of a bargain. There is much detail which I have left out for the sake of brevity, but what I have been concerned to show is that the environment of the playground may be viewed in terms of a meaningful system, which reveals a structure of great range. The objects of the environment are incorporated into play not for what they are in themselves but for the meaning given them. But as Gombrich points out (See part II of this paper) the objects have to qualify (1963: 4).

The contexts which define the meanings of the environment are the imaginary situations agreed upon by the group. It seems that certain situations are played so often that children know certain rules which the behaviour should adhere to. They all know that in 'warfare' you aim your machine gun at others, but occasionally you must fall down dead for a while and then get up and continue as before. You must know the minimum correct procedure or you are not playing correctly. I found myself rebuked for 'running somebody over'. We were playing army trucks (i.e. sitting on one upturned bench in front of another). Benji was driving while I was one of the passengers. When Benji was shot and fell out of the truck, I said I would drive and took over the wheel. Benji most indignantly cried out that I would run him over if I continued driving. Of course he was right, he was lying in front of the bench. One must know the criteria appropriate for the play, but there is nothing absolute about them. As for the two sisters playing at being sisters, the rules of real life which pass unnoticed in every-day life become overtly emphasised amongst children in the playground.

In verbal exchanges there is the same combination of mental imagination with certain agreed constraints which may be exercised when interacting with others. For example in certain play, mainly energetic chasing games or duelling games, the value of bravery and persistence is pre-eminent. For someone who tries to opt out, who lacks the necessary resolution, the recognised solution is the jeer 'cowardy, cowardy, custard, can't eat bread and mustard'. There may be variations (such as 'scaredy, scaredy, scarecrow'), but the meaning is fixed in the tune  . The meaning of persistence and bravery does, however, tolerate an amount of sympathy and reprieve so long as it is performed in the appropriate manner, with the accepted 'truce' term of the area. As the Opies found out, to ask for mercy with the right word is not 'giving in', 'before we ourselves appreciated that children were sensitive to the difference between making a truce and surrendering, we were puzzled by the number of boys who declared stoutly (and correctly) that they had no term for giving in'. Opie and Opie, 1959: 142). The implication in a truce term is temporary relief, whereas to surreptitiously leave the game or to blatantly opt out is to provoke the customary jeer.

Children, however, can rarely explain why they perform certain other prescriptive actions, especially those involving specific beliefs. For example they claim that 'If you say that something nice is going to happen, you must either touch wood or your head'. Such sayings make sense only when they have been taken to pieces and their parts analysed in terms of other sayings or an already familiar piece of knowledge. To understand this particular saying we have to know that:

(1) a fool is categorised by children as a blockhead, that is his head is likened to the denseness of wood.

(2) that as a joke, when saying "touch wood", children will touch the head of a friend or a notorious dunce or their own head in self-deprecation, and

(3) that we must touch wood. But why must we touch wood? To explain this we must look at other sayings, for example "If you see an ambulance you must touch wood or you will have bad luck". Here we see that wood is considered lucky. Perhaps this is because touching something hard concretizes the abstract. Luck is insubstantial, whereas wood is substantial. Touching wood is literally bringing the luck down to earth. But does this meaning of 'wood' fit into other children's sayings? "Touch wood, no returns". The meaning seems to fit in this case, for if luck is brought to hand and materialised, it can't get back at anyone in any unlucky form.

"Touch wood, no good,
Touch iron, rely on".

This denial of the force of wood to negate the abstract nature of luck merely reinforces the concrete category - iron being harder is even more effective in giving substance to luck; wood is just not as good.

"Touch wood and whistle". This is used in the context of bargain-making. An explanation for this is then that:- touching the wood materialises luck onto one's own side of the bargain, whilst the whistling is perhaps for support, though we should refer to other

sayings to find its value for children. By this type of analysis a considerable number of children's values may be drawn up. Concepts which have one meaning in the adult sphere begin to possess a different value for children. 'Mother' is held in respect, almost a symbol of truth, closely connected with a child's idea of honour; the colours white, black and green dominate and act as antidotes or dangers depending on the context; backs of objects are devious and polluting; concepts proliferate in connection with food, animals and parts of the body; touching develops almost magic power in its effect; spitting represents separation; clothing takes on a new significance though I am not sure how this works, why for example is touching collars an antidote to bad luck?

In this last part of the paper I have tried to demonstrate that children do reveal a segment of the society's stock of beliefs, values and social interaction, which is exclusive to them; and that we can begin to understand children by observing and listening to them and then interpreting the material collected with various methods in mind. There is then perhaps here the beginnings of an anthropology of children to be extended by, for example (1) elaborating the idea of a semantic system which depends not only on speech but on the bio-physical environment, (2) by constructing some kind of formal list of analytical notions concerning ways of thinking applicable to the child, such as magical thought, the drive for order, metynomy, compiled from such writers as Lévi-Strauss, Piaget, Vygotsky, or de Saussure, (3) by analysing children's sayings, (4) by examining their oral traditions, their games and their other playground activities and the values underlying them, or (5) by analysing children's drawings, such as those collected by de Bono (1972). I am sure that other means and methods of interpretation will gradually emerge as more observation of children is undertaken. There is nothing more difficult than trying to ask the right questions of a subject about which little is known. But I suggest that children have much to offer. Male models of society alone are not sufficient to represent a society, or to reveal its meaning; we may achieve new insights if other dimensions of society are considered. Should there not then be an anthropology of children?

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Tristes Tropes: Lévi-Strauss and the impoverishment of metaphor

> The logical level (of a metaphor) is reached by semantic impoverishment (Lévi-Strauss, SM 105).

> When logics die,
> The secret of the soil grows through the eye,
> And blodd jumps in the sun.
> (Dylan Thomas, "Light breaks where no sun shines").

There is a nature, said Wallace Stevens, that absorbs the mixedness of metaphors. Such a temperament is not characteristic of our academic tradition. We do not, with bland passivity, soak up statements like "twins are birds" or "shamans are jaguars" but instead find them intriguing puzzles to be explored and analyzed. We want to make sense of the initial obscurity; to restore rationality to what is apparent nonsense; to discover the hidden logic in what appears absurd. We feel that to understand figurative language we must be able to paraphrase it, to unpack it, to translate it into literal discourse. Understanding therefore becomes associated with what we describe as "literal" and conversely, what we call "metaphorical" becomes suspect. When Evans-Pritchard (1956) in one of the most illuminating studies of a primitive religion in anthropological literature, wrote that the Nuer usually talk about their religion in poetic metaphors, he was accused of relying on a "non-explanatory notion":

> If any piece of literal nonsense can be taken metaphorically then anthropology rapidly becomes impossible ... Literal sense is as important to the temple as it is to the market place (Hollis, 1970, 223, 237).

Figurative language seems to bring sense into disrepute; metaphor seems to be wrong; and if we allow our suspicions to solidify, we soon turn to that idiom which describes metaphor as an abuse and dislocation of language, constituting an offence against the exigencies of logic. In this extremity it becomes that notion "which has scandalized philosophers, including both scholastics and semioticists" (Percy, 1958, 81).

Were all puzzles to turn so easily into scandals, anthropology would just as rapidly become impossible. When we encounter those aspects of "la pensée sauvage" that appear to abuse our canons of sense and logicality, we prefer to respond with caution, looking for a way to resolve the outrage. And it would be generally agreed, certainly in the popular imagination, that Lévi-Strauss has been one of the leaders in teaching such tolerance. A recent editorial in The Times states that his most sympathetic achievement has been...

> to question unremittingly the assumed superiority of Western logic and rationalism over the mental systems of (primitive) peoples. (May 26, 1973).

It is held that Totemism and The Savage Mind revealed the "logic" of primitive classification and associative thought processes which had

previously proved baffling and devoid of any rationality. The Mythologiques discovered, beneath the apparent absurdity of Amerindian myth, hidden logical armatures, showing that mythological thought is indeed determined and controlled by structuring principles. These are certainly intriguing claims. Furthermore, since Lévi-Strauss has a strong strain of semiology in his intellectual pedigree, and since he constantly stresses the metaphorical character of his material, it seems there could be no-one better able to dispel the scandal of the latter. It will be recalled that besides resting on a logic of oppositions, the institution of totemism is also "metaphorical" in character (T. 95). Similarly, while the Mythologiques discovers logical armatures, myth is considered a "metaphorical genre" (HN 607). It is held that metaphor is a fundamental mode of language (T. 175); that it purifies and restores language to its original nature (RC 339); and above all that

> ... metaphors are based on an intutive sense of the logical relations between one realm and other realms (RC 339).

The broad claims made for the structural method are indeed exciting and invite critical commentary and evaluation. But an examination of the notion of "structure" and a discussion of the status of the various "logiques" (concrete logic, the logic of totemic classification, and, of course, "mytho-logic") is beyond the scope of this paper. I want to look at Lévi-Strauss' use of "metaphor" firstly because it gives an opportunity to look at the metaphor/metonym distinction which commentators usually gloss over in an offhand manner, typically describing it as "that important distinction borrowed from linguistics", and secondly, because I feel that structural analysis, in its insistence on the subordination of metaphor to logic, demonstrates a singularly unhelpful approach to the interpretation and understanding of modes of discourse. This will lead to some general observations on the traditional distinction between the metaphorical and the literal, where, it seems to me, the difficulties lie more with our entrenched assumptions regarding the second term rather than with our misgivings about the first.

* * * *

In the concluding pages of Totemism Lévi-Strauss adduces Rousseau as a precursor of his own views, attributing to him the "extraordinarily modern view" of the passage from nature to culture based on "the emergence of a logic operating by means of binary oppositions" (T 175). Coincident with the birth of the intellect and the emergence of this logic was the appearance of language — "the first manifestations of symbolism" - which, in its original state, must have been figurative:

> As emotions were the first motives which induced men to speak, his first utterances were tropes. Figurative language was the first to be born, proper meanings were the last to be found. Things were called by their true name only when they were seen in their true form. The first speech was all in poetry; reasoning was thought of only long afterwards. (Rousseau, 1783, quoted T. 175).

Since "tropes", "figurative language", and "poetry" can all be subsumed under the term "metaphor", Lévi-Strauss finds in Rousseau a clear presage of his own view:

> Metaphor, the role of which in totemism we have repeatedly underlined, is not a later embellishment of language but one of its fundamental modes. Placed by Rousseau on the same plane as opposition, it constitutes, on the same ground, a primary form of discursive thought. (T. 175).

But in Lévi-Strauss' view, as indicated above, it is not just the case that metaphor and logic are "on the same plane": the first is subordinate to and depends on the second. And just as in the analysis of myth the truth of a myth does not lie in any special content but in "logical relations which are devoid of content" (RC 240), so we explain a metaphor by revealing its logic, subjecting it to a process of semantic impoverishment (SM 105).

It is a peculiar thesis. Logic and metaphor have seldom been comfortable partners. The difficulties in the understanding and interpretation of metaphor and figurative language have usually concerned questions of semantic richness, of ambiguity, of condensation and complexity of meaning. What sort of explanation is this where the stark regimen of a logic deprived of meaning triumphs over the semantic anarchy of metaphor? The literary tradition might call it "Ramism with a Freudian twist". Peter Ramus (1515-1572) held that since the laws of logic were the laws of thought, poetry, being rational discourse, was grounded in logic. Therefore the poet must use logic in the construction of his metaphors.

> It meant that they were to learn to do this from the discipline to which Ramus said it properly belonged: dialectica. Awareness of process might vary, but given the structure of man's mind, there was but one way to "invent" or think out what one wished to say - logically, and but one way to dispose of thought - reasonably (Tuve, 1947, 340).

It is odd that this view should be resuscitated by Lévi-Strauss, complete with the structuralists interest in "fundamental structures of the mind", but refurbished in a new post-Freudian guise, adding that the laws of thought are unconscious (e.g. SA 33), thereby constituting a sublimal Ramistic instruction manual. We might ask, therefore, whether Lévi-Strauss' use of the term "metaphor" might not be somewhat idiosyncratic.

From Totemism onwards the term almost always appears inopposition to "metonym", a usage which seems difficult to justify by reference to any tradition in rhetoric, literary criticism, or philosophy, its sole authority being Jakobson's essay on two kinds of aphasia, included as Part 2 of Fundamentals of Language (Jakobson and Halle, 1956, 55-82). Lévi-Strauss uses the terms with such assurance that it would appear we are being offered a rigorous analytical distinction, but, since no definitions are offered it is necessary to go back to the source to understand what is being implied.

Having previously established that the linguistic sign involves two modes of arrangement, (i) combination (cf. Saussurian syntagms) and (ii) selection (cf. Saussurian associations and Hjelmslev's paradigmatic series), Jakobson applies these terms to distinguish two kinds of aphasic disorder. Since combination, following Saussure, "is based on two or several terms jointly present in an actual series", the constituent signs are in a relation of contiguity (61). Thus, in the first type of aphasia the ability to combine words may be preserved,

connectives and auxiliaries being particularly prone to survive, while specific nouns are replaced by vague ones like "things" or "doings". This Jakobson calls SELECTION DEFICIENCY.

Selection "connects terms 'in absentia' as members of a virtual mnemonic series" (61), the signs being in a relationship of similarity. Thus in the opposite type of aphasia, words with purely grammatical functions - conjunctions, prepositions, pronouns, articles - are the first to disappear and only kernel subject words (the first to be affected in the other type) are retained. This can be called COMBINATION DEFICIENCY.

Put in this way the argument is clear, but the further examples of the disorders are difficult to understand. In SELECTION DEFICIENCY, although specific nouns tend to be replaced by vague ones, the "gift for combination may nevertheless be preserved", the subject perhaps producing the word "fork" for "knife", "table" for "lamp," "smoke" for "pipe", "dead" for "black". Following Goldstein, this is characterized as "grasping the words in their literal meaning but failing to understand the metaphorical character of the same words" (69). Thus:

> From the two polar figures of speech, metaphor and metonym, the latter, based on contiguity, is widely employed by aphasics whose selective capacities have been affected (69).

Selection deficiency therefore uses metonym and can be called SIMILARITY DISORDER.

In combination deficiency, where specific words survive at the expense of the connectives, "to say what a thing is, becomes to say what it is like", for example, "spyglass" for "microscope", "fire" for "gaslight". On the authority of a few articles written in the 1860's and first published in Brain, 1915, these identifications can be called "metaphoric". Thus combination deficiency uses metaphor, and can be called CONTIGUITY DISORDER.

The following terms have now been incorporated into the opposition:

(a)	selection deficiency connectives survive metonymic similarity disorder	(b)	combination deficiency subject words survive metaphoric contiguity disorder

but the propriety of the last two pairs is suspect. If we look at the examples of metonym in similarity disorder we find (a) that they are subject words, and (b) that they could just as well be described as "saying what a thing is, becomes saying what it is like", since all that is meant by "like" in the metaphoric context is "associated with". We might just as well claim from the examples given that the subject was suffering from contiguity disorder. The production of "fork" for "knife", and "spyglass" for "microscope" seem to indicate the same disorder rather than the distinction that in one case specific nouns are lost while in the other the auxiliary connectives disappear. Similarly, if we look at the examples of metaphor in contiguity disorder we might just as well say that the subject "fails to understand the metaphoric character "of the words he is using, and suggest he was suffering from similarity disorder.

These last oppositions are both superflous. It is acknowledged that the distinction similarity/contiguity is borrowed from Frazer's description of homeopathic and contagious rites, and it seems nothing is gained by trying to relate them to the linguistic principles of combination and selection of units. There is also no justification for metonym being taken as the "polar opposite figure" of metaphor. If anything it is a particular kind of metaphor. One should say that the classifications of figures of speech produced by classical rhetoric are of little use as analytical terms in the study of language and thought. Yet Jakobson goes on to conflate both oppositions under the Saussurian distinction syntagmatic/pardigmatic, thus metonym is the contiguity of two distinctive features of language (the characteristic of prose); metaphor is based on the substitution of one distinctive feature of language for another (the characteristic of poetry) (76-82).

While it was an interesting insight to apply the original distinction (combination/selection) to two types of aphasia, the following accumulation of opposition after opposition into that distinction makes the argument obscure and leads to an unnecessary confusion of terminology. The argument does, however, make somewhat clearer Lévi-Strauss' use of the metaphor/metonym distinction, which is taken to imply the entire set of Jakobson's oppositions and a few more besides.

Its first use occurs in Totemism in considering the Ojibwa myth (T. 87-88), which shows that there can be no direct relation based on CONTIGUITY between man and totem (since the god looked at the man and the man died). The relationship must be "masked" (the god wore a veil) and is thus metaphorical. Similarly, the Tikopia evidence shows that contiguity between gods (in the form of men) and totems

> ... is contrary to the spirit of the institution: the totem becomes such only on condition that it first be set apart (T. 95).

Totemism is therefore held to be metaphorical not metonymical.

In the first use of the opposition we can note its imprecision. There is no justification in the Tikopia myth for the totems being said to be "set apart" from men. The contrary is the case: the god lets fall the totemic vegetables and men succeed in retaining them. Why might we not say that among the Tikopia contiguity is the spirit of the institution? The rather convoluted argument we must accept consists of the following steps: (a) the Ojibwa god's being veiled and the Tikopia god dropping the vegetable totem both constitute "setting apart"; (b) "setting apart" is the opposite of "contiguity"; (c) (c) "contiguity" is the characteristic of "metonym"; (d) the opposite of metonym is "metaphor"; (e) thus, totemism is metaphorical.

This established, the same pair of oppositions - contiguity/resemblance, metonym/metaphor - can also be seen to distinguish totemism and religion. It would be tedious to rehearse another similar argument, but briefly, the difficulty is that in Tikopia thought the four important vegetable foods are held to be sacred because they represent the four gods (the totemic relation), but there is the further complication that the gods are believed to be fish (the religious relation) (T. 95). The metaphorical character of the totemic relationship is therefore confirmed against the metonymical

religious relationship.

There is one further opposition to be incorporated: since the Tikopia god is believed to enter the animal only intermittently, and since that god is permanently represented by the vegetable,

> ... one might almost say that metonymy corresponds to the order of events, metaphor to the order of structure. (T.95-6)

A footnote refers us to Jakobson and Halle.

From this point on, metaphor and metonym become a familiar part of the analytical vocabulary. Among the more notable examples is the discussion of the lace collar in Clouet's painting (SM 24-5) where science is described as metonymical, art as metaphorical. Totemism and sacrifice are distinguished in the same way (SM 224-227). The opposition is found useful at various points in the Mythologiques, for example, in the analysis of M 149a where at one point in the myth the vultures cover the hero with excrement, and later the hero visits their village to be seduced by their daughters. The hero is said to be "conjoined to the metonymical ordure of the vultures (they produce it)" and later is said to return to that ordure "metaphorically" in allowing himself to be seduced by their daughters (OMT 113-4).

Finally, almost ten years after its first appearance, the distinction is still accruing oppositions. In the "Finale", metaphor and metonym distinguish the genres of myth and ritual. Ritual is metonymical. It takes each relative totality and breaks it down into its parts. Each part then constitutes another totality which in its turn is broken down and the process goes on, producing the infinitesimal oppositions which we find in ritual discourse. Ritual decomposes the syntagm, breaking up the cultural order; produces confusion; suppresses differences tries to create the continuous; and moves towards nature. Myth is metaphorical. It subsumes individualities under the paradigm. Thus concrete details are at the same time reduced and enlarged: reduced in number but enlarged by their incorporation in the paradigm. Myth makes distinctions, contrasts, and oppositions, creates the discontinuous and moves towards culture (HN 607-608).

There seem to be no limits to what can be incorporated into this bundle of oppositions; but looking over the ground covered, we can reconstitute the following group.

Metaphor	Metonym
resemblance	contiguity
paradigmatic	syntagmatic
classification (into paradigm)	segmentation (of syntagm)
selection (from paradigm)	combination (into syntagm)
structure	event
synchronic	diachronic
poetry	prose
art	science
totemism	religion and sacrifice
myth	ritual
discontinuous	continuous
order	disorder
culture	nature.

A table like this illustrates an irritating characteristic of the structuralist method which consecrates imprecision and vagueness of terminology as a methodological principle.* Having made the original distinction between metaphor and metonym, instead of the perpetual attempt at a more precise definition of the terms, the development of the idea consists only in the accretion to the first distinction of an indefinite number of increasingly vague reflections of the solitary principle that was given as a definition of the distinction in the first place: opposition. That is to say, it is originally stated that metaphor and metonym are "opposite figures", but if we ask what is meant by each term and why they are in opposition, we have no further information other than the list of oppositions which they characterize. The result is simply to trivialize the original distinction and invite the conclusion that we are dealing with no more than an idle, obscurantist jargon.

The only twist of complexity in the terms is that it is the metaphor column that is the markedly "structural" side. Diachrony in Saussurian linguistics is subordinate to synchrony as the syntagm is to the paradigm. Structure takes precedence over event; while "totemism, classification, myth, and culture" is an apposite summary of Lévi-Strauss' later work (ritual being confined to a few occasional essays). We might also recall that totemism is "true" while sacrifice is "false", a kind of discourse "denue de bon sens" (PS 301-2). Why do relations of resemblance conceal a logic of oppositions while relations of contiguity remain relatively uninteresting?

It will be recalled that in Saussurian linguistics "relations between terms" consisted of the principle of differential opposition - "Each linguistic term derives its value from its opposition to all other terms"; "In language there are only differences WITHOUT POSITIVE TERMS" (Saussure, 1959, 84, 120). But in this account there was an area of doubt where semiological approach seemed to falter. In the establishment of linguistic "value", as well as the factor of the opposition of dissimilar things, there is also the factor of the comparison of similar things (ibid. 115). Saussure could not give a systematic account of this latter factor. In the distinction between "syntagmatic and associative relations" (ibid. 122-7), the principle of differential opposition operates only with respect to the first. The axis of associative relations involving the comparison of similar things is characterized as "of indeterminate order and indefinite number" (126). It would be difficult to claim otherwise.

> We could go on picking out resemblances forever, inexhaustibly; and to some extent we do, as we perpetually extend the vocabulary of our language, or as we learn to move from one language to another, each recording different resemblances in vocabularies which do not always translate each other (Hampshire, 1959, 31).

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* cf. "I am conscious as anyone of the very loose senses in which I have employed terms such as "symmetry", "inversion", "equivalence", "homology", "isomorphism", etc. I have used them to refer to large bundles of relations which we vaguely perceive to have something in common". (RC 31)

Yet it is on to these unbounded possibilities that Lévi-Strauss wishes to fit his semiological model in order to demonstrate "the logical subordination of resemblance to contrast" (SM 106). The rich ambiguities of semantic analogy will be reduced to the stark outline of structural homology. The semantic complexities of metaphor can be reduced to the jolting pluses and minuses of a logic of oppositions. In my view, the result demonstrates a 'reductio ad absurdum' of the semiological model.

In the examination of texts and discourse, if we want to understand what is being said, what sort of credibility are we going to give an analysis which proceeds by a technique of "semantic impoverishment" to produce a structure of "logical relations which are deprived of content"? Is it an increment to our understanding of the "profound analogy which people throughout the world seem to find between copulation and eating" to learn that the union of the sexes and the union of eater and eaten both effect a "conjunction by complementarity"? (SM 105-6). Do we understand any better the immense pedigree of honey metaphors (MC 12) when we find that honey is " logically opposed" to tobacco? (MC 22). Do we really understand the figures and fancies of Amerindian myths after they have been reduced to the logical oppositions of empirical categories such as raw/cooked, fire/water, noise/silence, and all the rest?

The significance of the discoveries of structural analysis has always been difficult to assess. This was reflected, for instance, in the early discussions of Lévi-Strauss' analyses of myth where a question which perplexed the commentators was whether the structures were really "there", in the material, or simply an organizational device in the mind of the analyst. The difficulty lies in the status we are prepared to grant such logical analysis and its related technique of semantic impoverishment. What sort of questions is the procedure trying to answer?

> What do we do when we paraphrase a sentence by introducing logical symbols and truth functions? ... I find the phrase "logical analysis" misleading, in its suggestion that we are exposing a logical structure that lay hidden in the sentence all along. This conception I find both obscure and idle ... I mentioned the analogy of the computer; but essentially the same thing is happening in a more moderate way when in natural history we switch to the Latin binomials for genera and species, or when in relativity physics we paraphrase our temporal references into a spatial idiom using four dimensions. No one wants to say that the binomials of Linnaeus or the fourth dimension of Einstein or the binary code of the computer were somehow implicit in ordinary language; and I have seen no more reason to so regard the quantifiers and truth functions.
>
> (Quine, 1972, 451)

The claim that the material one is analyzing rests on a "logic of oppositions" does not make sense. The logicality is to be imputed to the method of analysis and one should not be misled into taking it as a property inherent in the material and revealed by that analysis. This is not to claim that logical analysis is in itself idle. There are clearly conceptual and heuristic advantages in having at one's disposal some sort of technique by which one can organize one's material. But these advantages are not measured by the degree of formal elegance which such analyses can produce, but by the degree

to which such organization renders the material intelligible.

It is difficult to see how any sort of restoration of intelligibility is possible by a technique of semantic impoverishment which involves a quite candid contempt for meaning. Structural analysis does not attempt to translate or interpret the discourse it analyzes since its initial assumption is that the content of that discourse is in the first place trivial. Content does not require interpretation; it requires reduction. This indifference to the cognitive content of discourse is justified by appeal to the "phonological revolution" where Jakobson, Troubetzkoy, and others, applying Saussurian principles, succeeded in giving a systematic account of the sound systems of language. The "revolution" consisted in the discovery that meaning always results from the combination of elements (phonemes) which are not in themselves significant. Hence,

> ... le sens n'est jamais un phénomène premier: le sens est toujours réductible. Autrement dit, derrière tout sens il y a un non-sens, et le contraire n'est vrai.
> (Reponses, 637)

Whether or not this peculiar "non-sens" of a logic of oppositions and contrasts tells us anything about the constraining structures of the mind (RC 10) is a question beyond the scope of this paper. What is clear is that if such an analysis presupposes that the material being analyzed consists of "un discours qui ne dit rien" (Ricoeur, in Reponses, 625), it is therefore not surprising to find that the results offer little with regard to the interpretation of that material. If we start from the assumption that what we call figurative language or symbolic discourse is indeed saying something then we must look for some other approach which does not reduce that discourse to the formal caricature of bundles of oppositions. Semantic impoverishment, the reduction of analogy to homology and of resemblance to contrast, whatever else it may be, is not an interpretative technique. Revealing the "logic" of a metaphor does not, evidently, help us understand it. Consequently we might well look for the beginnings of an approach to compensate for this one-sided diet of structuralism.

Ricoeur, in his discussion of structuralism, suggests, it seems to me, a quite adequate response. Arguing that it is a semantic of content that is required, not a syntax of arrangements, his vocabulary of "hermeneutic" offers an interpretative approach which overturns the main structuralist principles mentioned above. Firstly, and most obviously, instead of approaching the material as "un discours qui ne dit rien", hermeneutic involves a "plunge into the circle of understanding and believing" in an exercise of reinterpretation and understanding (Ricoeur, 1963, 596 ff). Secondly, in place of the arbitrary sign, devoid of significance, he substitutes the idea of the polysemic symbol. The great themes of Hebraic thought, for example, are not seen as empty signs, the debris on which the bricoleur goes to work, but as symbols which carry a surplus of meaning (ibid. 614). Because of this overdetermination of meaning it is not arbitrariness that is appropriate to symbolism but "la polysemie est sa loi" (ibid. 624). He quotes le Père Chenu:

> Le feu réchauffe, éclaire, purifie, brûle, régénère, consume: il signifie aussi bien la concupiscence que le Saint-Esprit (Théologie au XII^{e} siècle, cited 624).

Thirdly, instead of the empty sign being invested with meaning by its incorporation into a system, the task of the system is to stem the polysemy of the symbol, and, by limiting it, articulate its meaning (ibid, 626).

In a later essay, making a distinction between univocal (what we might provisionally call "literal") and plurivocal or symbolic discourse, he substitutes for system the idea of CONTEXT. It is the work of contexts, not of words, which establishes univocality or plurivocality In univocal discourse, which will only tolerate one significance, context must reduce and hide the semantic richness of words. This is what Wheelwright (1954) calls "stenolanguage" - a form of discourse where the inherent ambiguity of words is as far as possible suppressed. Symbolic discourse, on the other hand, in Ricoeur's figure of the palimpsest (1967, 819), allows several dimensions of meaning to be established at the same time. This is not to say that symbolic discourse is simply performing the task of the obliteration of polysemy in a less successful or less complete way, thereby requiring a further process of reduction in order to extract the cognitive content of that discourse. What is being stressed is that cognitive content can be established by making use of the polysemic character of words - and it is this process that we describe as metaphor.

The "metaphor as mistake" view alluded to at the beginning of this paper is the result of the presupposition that meaning in language is constituted by relations among discrete semantic categories, hence metaphor constitutes an interference with the boundaries of those categories. It is to be taken as a category confusion; an abuse and dislocation of language. But this view rests on a misconception. Because of the polysemy of words such boundaries are never clear in the first place. Words have blurred edges. Semantic boundaries are not established by rigorous distinction among words, since those words and the ideas they represent characteristically shift their contours from one use to another (Black, 1968, 90). The extension of a semantic or cognitive category is therefore not limited by the word used to denote it. One word suggests another, thereby extending its meaning beyond itself and transferring its meaning to other words. "Meta" (in the sense of "change") and "phora" (meaning "movement" or "carrying across") describe this process of semantic transformation where the categories of our thought are, not interfered with, but extended and redefined. One category can slip into the next, outreaching and extending the meaning of the first - that type of semantic movement called by Wheelwright "epiphor", movement "over on to". Or the original category is transformed by its juxtaposition with another, thought to be discrete and unrelated, that is, by "diaphor" - movement "through" the other category (Wheelwright, 1962, 71ff).

Although there is a risk here of escaping from one obscurantist jargon only to be seduced by another, there is an advantage in Wheelwright's distinction. Most accounts of metaphor are diaphoric - Richards' "tenor/vehicle" (1936), Black's "focus/frame" (1962) - accounting for expressions like "policemen are pigs" where the focus (policemen) is viewed through the frame (pig) and seen in the light of the associations brought to the latter. Their juxtaposition alters the conception of the focus. Epiphor, on the other hand, accounts for those instances where the unfamiliar focus is seen by its being grasped within a familiar frame, as the metaphors of religious language try to "express the inexpressible": "God is the rain", "God

is the sky". Epiphor accounts for much of the practical application of metaphorical insight - definitions are epiphorical, as are models, diagrams, maps, formulas, paradigms. All are ways of "seeing-as".

It should be stressed that these terms do not attempt to isolate types of metaphor. Extension and juxtaposition describe aspects of that process described by Hampshire (above) as the perpetual picking out of resemblances, which allows us to extend our vocabulary and enables us to move from one language to another, translating and interpreting other categories of thought. At the same time the metaphorical resources of language allow us to extend, modify, and change our own categories of thought, giving us new opportunities of "ways of seeing". Reality, to quote again from Wallace Stevens' mine of aphorisms, is a cliché from which we escape by metaphor.

Such an account, giving central prominence to the metaphoric process in the establishment of meaning in language, casts some doubts on the propriety of the traditional distinction between the literal and the metaphorical. In the foregoing account univocal discourse or "stenolanguage" is not given any priviliged status, but is rather a highly specialized derivative from "normal" usage, where the greatest possible degree of restraint is exercised on polysemy. It is, of course, an idealization, since outside the contexts of mathematics, the propositional calculus, and other systems of signs, we do not possess a form of discourse whose constituent units can be defined univocally. The production of a "stenolanguage" involves a perpetual struggle to define the blurred edges of words which will not stay still. Polysemy can be controlled and used, but cannot be obliterated. But the literal/metaphorical distinction does not admit this. Literal, in a commonsensical way, suggests clarity, precision, and most significantly, normality. It is the second term of this distinction which suggests a deviant and difficult use of words, hence the distinction always insists on the subordination of the second term to the first. The metaphorical is taken to be a cipher of the literal - a crypto-utterance which condenses or confuses meaning but which nevertheless has some sort of cognitive content. However, this crypto-sense appears like any other non-sense and the problem becomes one of how to distinguish the counterfeit from the true jewel of absurdity. This is done by reconstituting, reflexively, the steps of the condensation to see that the rules of sense, the laws of identity and non-contradiction, have not been violated. If there construction is successful the metaphor, with its appended gloss, is vindicated as "intelligible". If not, then it becomes a "piece of literal nonsense".

Certainly this view of metaphor has had a prestigious history. Its most typical form is to regard the original metaphor as a condensed simile: A is B = A is like B. If the points of resemblance can be justified, the metaphor stands as meaningful. The Encyclopaedia Britannica held this view for two hundred years, the entry in 1963 being essentially the same as the first entry in 1771. But, following Wheelwright, we can agree that the best we can do with the metaphor/simile distinction is to ignore it. Regarding metaphor as "metamorphosis", the transmutation of meaning in semantic movement, he concludes:

> The test of essential metaphor is not any rule of grammatical form but rather the quality of semantic transformation that is brought about (Wheelwright, 1962, 71).

In an entry under "Figures of Speech", the 1968 edition of Encyclopaedia Britannica produces a hesitant reappraisal, describing metaphor as an integral part of language, the development of consciousness and sensory perception, and of the earliest thought processes, but insists, nevertheless, that it is a "deviation" from the "literal". Valuable though this step is in the rehabilitation of metaphor it still leaves us with the problem of giving sense to the notion of "literal". It cannot be said to be "normal usage" since metaphorical expression is normal usage:

> Most sentences in free and fluid discourse turn out to be metaphors (Richards 1936, 120).

We cannot appeal to grammatical criteria, pointing out that "twins are birds" is an ellipsis; that "are" is not to be taken as indicating identity but is a condensation of a comparison: "twins are like birds because...." We are asking what the phrase means, not what are the intricacies of its syntax. Do we mean simply that when we find an utterance intelligible it is "literal" but when we confront an initial difficulty in its interpretation it is "metaphorical", indicating that it is to be taken "in a different way"? This is probably a better account of the matter, but it would then follow that when "twins are birds"becomes intelligible to us, as it no doubt has always been for the Nuer, the expression will cease to be a metaphor. We will now understand what has always been "literal" Nuer usage.

The distinction certainly seems to reflect something of our own prejudices:

> We have our neat distinctions between metaphor and fact, and we are bound at first to assume that the assertion "Some men are lions" is an assertion of one or the other kind, either figuratively or literally accepted. We have to learn that often, in translating primitive languages, it is not possible to make just such sorts of distinction between the literal and the metaphorical; and we have to be content to recognize that such statements made by primitive people cannot really be said to be of the one sort or the other. They lie between these categories of ours. They do not properly fit ... The study of primitive thought, then, reminds us that it is not always appropriate to suppose that metaphorical and literal interpretations of experience are, in the very nature of thinking, distinct; it is only when we, unlike most primitive peoples think about thought, that we begin to make such distinctions. (Lienhardt, 1954, 98-9, 106.)

But why do we need the distinction at all? Should we not conclude from this example that it is our thinking about thought that is misguided? If we regard metaphor as an integral, essential, and normal part of the constitution of meaning in language, establishing, by the relation and juxtaposition of categories, a way of seeing appropriate to a particular universe of discourse, the category "literal" becomes superfluous. To insist on it represents just that capitulation to the compelling undertow of logic mentioned at the opening of this paper. We find that logic provides formal criteria for deciding between truth and falsity and go on to mistake these for

criteria of meaningfulness in language. But where are these rules applicable when we find that language does not consist of a system of truth functions?

> The familiar, inherited forms of language turn our attention towards certain kinds of resemblance and we cannot easily see through them and past them. We cannot return to a state of nature and to an innocent eye and, by a new social contract, start to build the institution of language again upon some rational principles. (Hampshire, 1959, 31).

It may be only an accident of history that we are best with the assumptions of empiricism and positivism which lead to our impoverishment of metaphor and our suspicion of other "ways of seeing". The stylistic metaphors of Old Norse poetry were called "kennings", the word being present in the vocabulary of Middle English and surviving in some Scottish dialects with the sense of "knowledge" or "mental cognition". It is indicative of our own prejudices that the Oxford English Dictionary makes a travesty of the word by defining it as "a periphrastic expression used instead of a simple name."

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BOOK REVIEWS

Socialization: the approach from Social Anthropology. A.S.A. conference edited by Philip Mayer. £1.50p paperback. London, Tavistock Publications.

This collection of essays presented at the A.S.A. conference in 1967 aims to clarify and elaborate the theme of 'socialization'and to reveal it 'as a fit subject for analysis in the British anthropological tradition'. Thankfully, the definition of 'socialization' given by Mayer, the convener and editor, as 'the inculcation of the skills and attitudes necessary for playing given social roles' is not systematically adhered to by the rest of the contributors. One wonders how many of those anthropologists interested in cognitive systems, categories and meaning would be attracted to 'socialization' studies if they had to be in terms of roles and role-systems, implying the narrow perspective of functional adaptation, and social conformity.

Audrey Richards, in one of the better essays, reminds us of the history of the term and its unfortunate association with the crude statements in 'culture-and-personality' studies. She attempts to clarify the related but distinct themes of 'socialization', 'cultural patterns','value systems' and 'basic personality'. 'Socialization' for Richards includes the study of education in, for example, political values, decision-making, economic values and practices, magico-religious beliefs and associated ethical codes, the meaning of symbols, and the use of sanctions both negative and positive. She also shows how socialization studies could perhaps make a 'major contribution' to the problem of symbolism and the study of cognitive and values systems. It is a pity that her view is not shared by more of the contributors.

Forge and Loudon, whose articles deal respectively with 'Learning to see in New Guinea' and 'Teasing and Socialization on Tristan da Cunha', make one realize the difficulties of trying to limit the boundaries of 'socialization'; surely every aspect of life has some influence in the process and each aspect may be viewed as being significant in different ways by different people? Perhaps the first job of those interested in 'socialization' is to observe more case studies and to try out different analyses before generalising about 'socialization' as a whole.

G. Jahoda advocates more co-operation between anthropology and psychology. One problem is that psychologists do not yet have a store of universally valid generalisations to which anthropologiests can turn when they want to interpret their material. And when psychological generalisations are made (for example by Lloyd in her paper 'Yoruba Mothers' Reports of Child-rearing'),anthropologists remain suspicious of words like 'permissiveness' or 'aggression' and of the tests and approaches which are the psychologists' stock-in-trade. Not surprisingly, the psychological explanations used in Socialization are not very illuminating. Spencer, for example, uses a behaviourist theory to explain how Samburu elders manage to persuade young men to accept a socially marginal status. His explanation, however, is a normal functional statement in the Radcliffe-Brownian tradition, combined with interpretation in terms of 'conditioned responses'. (Honour for them could have become what the sound of trickling water was for Pavlov's dogs', Wilder's article p. 144). We are left with little information about the actual contents of the rites, their symbolic meaning, or the concerns of the people involved.

For 'socialization' studies to progress as they should, we must go beyond common-sense and the type of functionalism which Ward, for example, maintains when she links the playing down of aggression, the institutionalised treatment of temper tantrums

and the ability of the Chinese to live in crowded conditions. One hopes that Richard's and Forge's contributions will not get lost amongst the uninspiring articles which tend to reduce the attraction of the book.

Charlotte Hardman

Marxism and 'Primitive'Societies. Two Studies: Emmanuel Terray. Translated by Mary Klopper. Monthly Review Press. London £1.30p. 1972

Two years have now passed since Banaji's succinct exposure of the endogenous crisis of British social anthropology and his declaration that its only salvation lies in the use of the concepts and method of historical materialism. Terray's Le Marxisme devant les sociétés 'primitives' has been a basis for many radical pronouncements of this sort, and this English translation is welcome, despite its unfortunate weaknesses - 'superdetermined' for 'overdetermined' is a prime example.

In his first essay Terray examines Morgan's Ancient Society, distinguishing the various supposed misinterpretations and criticisms of this work which led to the increasing confusion of the anthropological tradition. Terray concludes: "it is not so much Morgan's results that are of interest as his intentions, not so much the theses he put forward but the concepts and methods he used to establish them." In his second essay Terray evaluates and, more significantly, elaborates upon Meillassoux's L'Anthropologie Economique des Gouro de Côte d'Ivoire (1964). Terray regards this as the first rigorous application of historical materialism to a concrete 'primitive' society. Meillassoux examines the effect of colonial domination on a 'self-subsistence' economy - the transition from a traditional mode of production to a new mode. It is with the analysis of the particular traditional mode of the Gouro that Terray is concerned. Whilst praising Meillassoux's initial contribution, Terray points out that a fundamental error in this analysis is the confusion - noted by Marx in Capital - of the general description of an economy with the analysis of the mode of production. Meillasoux's study is limited to the former, whereas Terray sets out the three aspects of a socioeconomic formation; the economic infrastructure, the juridical and political superstructure, and the ideological superstructure. In this his analysis is not constricted by crude Marxist 'economic determinism', but rather 'the relations of production are represented in the ideological and political relations which result from the articulation of the elements of its superstructure on the economic base of the mode of production concerned.

Levi-Strauss recently proposed that kinship and marriage in 'primitive' societies have an operational value equal to that of economic phenomena in our society (implying that the role of the economic infrastructure should be disregarded in favour of concern with kinship relations). Terray suggests, on the contrary, that the so-called theoretical entity of kinship is no better than the notion of 'totemism' which Lévi-Straus rightly condemns. The point being that societies where kinship relations dominate (in Althusserian terms kinship relations are 'overdetermined') are merely to be associated with the presence of particular modes of production. Terray takes kinship relations to manifest essentially the same characteristics as class relations. Both are overdetermined 'because their nature can only be understood by invoking the structural causality of the three levels in society, economic, political, and ideological. This structural causality takes the form of a conjunction of the three structural determinants in a single object and in the variation of the dominant element within this conjunction.'

Examining Terray's publication it is evident that the French Marxist school of anthropology has developed a more viable theory and methodology than their supposed British Marxist counterparts who have based their claim to Marxism on their use of concepts like conflict, exploitation, domination, and a greater awareness of the realities of colonialism. Terray is concerned to demonstrate the applicability of the categories of historical materialism to the analysis of 'primitive' societies. Categories which apply equally to pre-capitalist socioeconomic formations - including segmentary lineage-based societies which some anthropologists have regarded as their special preserve - as to contemporary Western Capitalist society. Nevertheless, Terray admits, the concepts and method of historical materialism are not yet fully worked out:'I do not yet have the tools to achieve this (complete) analysis'. Theory and praxis go hand in hand, and it is only by further analyses along these lines that a greater appreciation of the validity of historical materialism will become more general among British anthropologists.

Bob Heath
Judy Brett

Belief, Language, and Experience. Rodney Needham
Basil Blackwell. Oxford 1972. £3.75p.

Recent 'rethinkings' in anthropology will have exhausted the patience of the more pragmatical. During a recent ASA conference, indeed, one prominent figure felt compelled to invent a new ontological proof to refute the analytical dissolution of kinship: it must exist because he himself had taught it. Colleagues with such an outlook are not going to be over-pleased by Dr. Needham's latest book.

Belief, Language, and Experience suggests that anthropologists, including the author himself, have displayed insufficient self-scrutiny on matters of fundamental importance. Though aware of the difficulties of using culture-bound concepts such as 'marriage', 'priest' and so on, they have employed concepts such as 'belief' quite unreflectingly: they have uncritically adhered to that Western philosophy of mind embedded in the language they use. But this, Needham argues, is simply to assume that the faculties common to all men have already been adequately established by comparative research. Philosophers, however, after centuries of inquiry do not agree on their analyses of belief, and a detailed investigation does not provide any criteria with which to recognise any experience or discriminable mode of consciousness to correspond to the verbal concept. All we have, it seems, is the word itself, subject to the most diverse employment. A search into the empirical grounds of this cultural concept does not give us any reasons for including 'belief' in a universal psychological vocabulary.

This is an impressive and stimulating piece of work. Drawing heavily upon the writings of Wittgenstein, Hampshire, Lévy-Bruhl and others, indeed, it has an importance going far beyond the particular subject matter of belief, for it offers us a conception of anthropology as an activity contributing to an empirical philosophy. The book

does not leave one with the impression of Boethius waiting for his end and deriving consolation from the visits of Philosophia, but rather of a discipline invigorated by its relationships with other branches of scholarship. Images of the disintegration of anthropology do not make sense. Belief, Language, and Experience suggests that far from dying, anthropology is only now being conceived.

Malcolm Crick

Anthropologists and Anthropology. The British School 1922-1972
Adam Kuper, London. Allen Lane/Penguin. £3.50.

This is a puzzling book. On the one hand, we have an author of evident confidence and ability. On the other, a point of view of remarkable limitations. It is tempting to explain the resulting gap by the same biographical methods that Dr. Kuper uses on his own anthropological subjects. This is, for example, a very 'African' view of social anthropology. Even the 'oral traditions' used express this. The gossip is rather dusty - anecdotes that might have been told by Professor Isaac Schapera or the like on trips to South Africa in the 'fifties. The news about the Oxford of Evans-Pritchard is nudgingly a matter of conversions to Roman Catholicism. (Those damned R.C.'s' - as a London lady called them - were barely a majority even fifteen years ago; the present score is two out of eight). By 1964 Kuper's informants also favoured other stereotypes, as he wrote in a review:

> 'The "Oxford group" features in the gossip of other cliques of anthropologists, and has kept itself a trifle removed from other British schools, perhaps because so many of the Oxford men are upper-upper.' (African Studies 1964, p. 34).

In the present volume only Leach now gets this gloss of class (merely 'upper-middle').

Otherwise the chief connotation of 'Oxford' for this book is the evanescent Oxford of the late 'thirties and the 'forties: the world of African Political Systems, and of Fortes and Gluckman before they moved elsewhere. A ghost category of 'Oxford structuralism' is set up for that period, from which the most incompatible people are later traced, like the descent of nations from the sons of Noah. It will sometimes help to read Kuper's 'structuralism' as 'late functionalism' (the 'structural-functionalism' of some). What most people know as 'structuralism' Dr. Kuper calls 'neo-structuralism'. But the basic problem is that the whole Oxford development is foreshortened into the early unstable period of the false start under Radcliffe-Brown.

The Oxford sections of the book would not be of particular moment, save for the light they throw on its general peculiar bias. As a history it reads entertainingly and often informatively for the period up to the end of the second World War. There are chapters on colonialism and the post-War professionalization of the discipline. About there the scene freezes. In some earlier recension of the text, what looks like an originally final chapter was then added, in which Leach and Gluckman emerged as the coming men, their self-evident differences from each other being obscured by the distant perspective, and by a chapter sub-title: 'Beyond Orthodoxy' (the orthodoxy being the mythic 'Oxford Structuralism'). Then, as if added in another

scriptorium (possibly in London rather than Johannesburg, but in the same monkish hand), comes an extra rather uneven chapter on Lévi-Strauss and British 'neo-structuralism', in which a different character also called Leach appears. One more addendum to the text then follows called '1972'. In this the author remarks: 'I do not know what the future of social anthropology will be. If I did I would be there already'. But he does reveal: 'If there are signs of a new departure, M. G. Smith is probably the man to watch'. Even in '1972', the ill-assorted Goody, Lloyd, and Smith are still referred to as a 'development from Oxford' - although two at least of those mentioned may well be tempted to initiate actions for libel!

Enough has been said to suggest that this is a book of curious idiosyncracies. This is a pity, because there is plenty to commend in individual chapters. The relationship of anthropologists to the colonial governments is sensibly discussed, and the author sketches in the story of the Malinowski generation with sympathy and insight. But these were not just avuncular figures. No consideration is given to why the pattern of chair-allocation fell out precisely as it did in the 'forties. By what consensus did Firth emerge as the successor of Malinowski? Why should Schapera rather than (say) Audrey Richards have taken the second (African) chair at LSE? Each of the post-Malinowskian departments took on a particular form, but some loomed more importantly than others on the gossip-circuits in the outposts. Why did so many Africanists eventually fail to foresee the major developments in the subject (with the result that many in the string of names given by Dr. Kuper in this field are now of minor significance)? Why is the tradition that (for example) Professor Fortes will leave, of a different scope, interest or influence from that bequeathed by Evans-Pritchard? Both men are for Kuper (inevitably) 'pre-war Oxford structuralists'. Why is Gluckman (contrary to the author's judgment) surely not credibly summed up as 'Beyond Orthodoxy'? These questions are not asked, and they require for their answer much more thought than we are offered here.

Dr. Kuper's frequently readable history does not account in any way for the present - not even for his fragmented version of it in '1972'. For example, the book finishes with a consideration of Worsley's paper 'The End of Anthropology', first given in 1966, and Needham's paper of 1970 on 'The Future of Social Anthropology: Disintegration or Metamorphosis'. The author does not ask himself why he finds himself having to deal in his conclusion with these particular figures. Where do they spring from to raise such doubts? And do their papers start from the same premisses, predict the same doom? Hardly. Worsley's 1966 doom is merely the death of 'structural-functionalism' (his usage) which was an event in the past even when he wrote. Needham's future of anthropology is barely comprehensible in such terms; it essentially warns that the subject may become too difficult for some kinds of practitioner it once attracted, if it is not already. There are no tips in it about men to watch, or anything of that sort. It probably falls into Kuper's category of 'the odd bid for grandeur' (the author's phrase for contributions that are 'defused by scepticism' or 'polite inattention').

Finally, Dr. Kuper, in a passage with whose drift few will disagree, contrasts social anthropology favourably with sociology - 'sociology as it is rather than it might have been'. Almost his last sentence is: 'The anthropological contribution to sociological understanding constitutes a standing reproach to those prissy methodologists

and excitable reformists who have made modern sociology so boring and sterile'. Yet in 1951 an eminent social anthropologist declared his subject to be a branch of sociology - sociology as it was. What happened? Clearly something of importance. No history of it is to be found in this book. Dr. Kuper's final scene is a crowded tableau of familiar and, no doubt, well-loved faces with the older generation nodding approval in the wings. Cheers drown any distant sound of dissidence.

Edwin Ardener

Chiefship in Western Tanzania. Aylward Shorter. Clarendon Press, 1972. £7.50

Students of East African peoples cannot fail to be impressed by the wealth of historical material contained in many of their oral traditions. In 1961, at Manchester University, Evans-Pritchard entered a plea for more interest to be taken by social anthropologists in such historical traditions, and argued strongly that it was their legitimate business to do so. Shorter too, in the book under review, has briefly noted that the social anthropologist is probably in the best position to interpret oral material. But the pendulum has swung far in East Africa from the day when Evans-Pritchard delivered that lecture, and emergent nations are themselves eagerly seeking to establish a broader place in history for their peoples than the colonial chapters written in European history books. Independent governments have promoted the drive; historians of their universities have willingly taken up the challenge; and the various groups of peoples themselves are now freely disclosing their oral traditions in order to ensure their identity and inclusion in the overall picture. With the richness of material at hand, and the indirect pressures exerted, the question is no longer whether the social anthropologist should engage at all in the examination of oral history, but where his emphasis should lie: whether, in fact, he should use an historical knowledge for a proper perspective in the analysis of contemporary social institutions, or an anthropological training for an illuminating reconstruction of unwritten history.

Shorter has chosen the latter course, and the book will therefore be of most interest to historians of Africa, and students of traditional African political institutions. Nevertheless, since social anthropologists cannot ignore political institutions, it also provides a useful case-study for them.

On the whole, the book is concerned with the proliferation of Kimbu chiefdoms, and the nature of their political and ritual associations subsequent to fission. Shorter concludes that proliferation occured in Ukimbu mainly through competition from foreign invaders, or from other associations of chiefdoms, acting within a physical environment which, coupled to a paucity of population, encouraged far-flung, isolated settlement that could lay claim to wide tracts of country. Wakimbu, in short, would block the entry of an invader by a more effective occupation of their own country. Chiefdoms with a common ancestry formed an association; but the major associations were politically independent of each other, although linked by ritual values. Within each association the founder chiefdom had a limited political influence on its own immediate daughter chiefdoms; an influence which

became more attenuated as the daughter chiefdoms divided in their turn.

The book contains several minor faults and some of consequence. For example, Shorter quite rightly attaches great importance to the distribution of conus-shells (in this context an emblem of chiefship with religious associations), but states that "ultimately, what counts in the internal relationship of /chiefdom/ associations is the pattern of distribution of conus-shells and not dynastic relationships", and "The associations are distinct because there is no link between them in the distribution of regalia" (p. 128). I am left unconvinced that a symbol generates its own criteria for distribution. Furthermore, when he suggests that the Sagara peoples, who he also remarks may have founded the large Sagari group of chiefdoms in Unyamwezi, were connected with the origin of the conus emblems in western Tanzania (p. 18), it is perhaps necessary to consider that the senior chiefdom of the Sagari group does not use a conus-shell as the main emblem of chiefship, but the horns of a small antelope.

I would also challenge the accuracy of many of his references to the Wanyamwezi on the basis of my own field research. For example, the Bagota society is not, as he states, a society of midwives for delivering twins (p. 28), but ritual specialists dealing with grave danger to the chiefdom engendered by the birth of twins and breach-presentations. On the other hand, it is only fair to say that the majority of these references are made in an effort to establish a separate identity for the Wakimbu, and in this respect I am in agreement with his general conclusion, even though I have arrived at his position by a different route.

The queries I have made do not seriously reflect upon Shorter's main thesis; and I would consequently thoroughly recommend the book as a fascinating disclosure of Kimbu political history, and as a constructive lesson in the contributions social anthropologists can make to historical accounts.

J. D. H. Collinson

From Symbolism to Structuralism: Lévi-Strauss in a Literary Tradition. James A. Boon. Oxford, Basil Blackwell, 1972, £3

I must confess that I found this book severely disappointing. A preliminary inspection had led me to optimism for a number of reasons: the approach from literature, particularly poets like Baudelaire and Mallarmé; the concentration on the concept of 'texts'; the use of Merleau-Ponty (actually one of the originators of structuralism - e.g. La Structure du Comportement, 1942 - though rarely cited in English works on the subject). All augured well for a stimulating book with a partly new approach.

But in fact the book is an unprepossessing mixture of detail and overview, with the implications of each for the other rarely worked out satisfactorily. The author provides us with a number of contrasting statements of the book's aims (e.g. p.16, p.113, pp. 230-1), which serve only to confirm what is already apparent from the main text: that the author is not sure of what he is doing. Agreed, he admits this himself (in the Preface and the Introduction), but

were we to accept all the disclaimers in these two sections, we would be forced to the conclusion that the book was written by an idiot setting himself a sort of elaborate crossword puzzle without a solution.

It is never quite clear whether Boon's main aim is to understand Lévi-Strauss the better by looking at what he calls the symbolists (viz. Baudelaire, Mallarmé, and Proust); or to understand the symbolists the better by comparing them with Lévi-Strauss; or to see what affinities lie between these previously unconnected people; or just to confront the two sets of ideas, and see whether some kind of magical dialectic can't produce an interesting synthesis. Thus he spends most of his time explicating Lévi-Strauss, but occasionally remembers his title. Thus, after over ten pages on Lévi-Strauss and semantics, during which the symbolists are relegated to something like a dream-memory, Boon suddenly interpolates the following (and in brackets too!) "So as not to forget the Symbolists, it should be suggested that such a semantic bedrock was precisely what many of them were after." (p. 88)

So in the end we have what is simply another exposition of Lévi-Strauss' thought (often less clear than Lévi-Strauss himself, or explicit where Lévi-Strauss is deliberately obscure), which too often degenerates into an impassioned defense of the guru on all subjects and against all-comers (including, on one occasion, the master himself). No mention, though, from this devotee, of Lévi-Strauss' rejection of any fundamental similarity between myth and poety (e.g. the Ouverture in Le Cru et Le Cuit.)

If the general approach is inadequate, so is the treatment of detailed points. To introduce us to the technique of structuralism, Boon provides us with a sixteen-page paraphrase (pp. 38-54) of Levi-Strauss and Jakobson's (sixteen-page) article on Les Chats - the original is better, both as analysis of the poem and as exposition of the method. The two central chapters ('Poetic Everyman' and 'Poetic Straw Man') are convoluted discussions which lead to nothing of significance. Moreover in these two chapters, which constitute the body of the book, the symbolists are almost always primarily represented by Baudelaire - Proust and Mallarme figure significantly only in chapter five ('Critical Ramifications'), while others such as Rimbaud and Verlaine are used to reinforce the argument rather than add to it. By using 'text' as a denotative term (and a broad one at that) rather than an analytic or connotative concept, he reduces its potential significance to a minimum. His treatment of the problem of consciousness is sporadic and incomplete; unable to get to the crux of the problem, he dismisses it as relatively unimportant.

This is symptomatic of the general failure to come to terms with the philosophical problems asked, and sometimes answered, in Levi-Strauss' endeavour. The problems of translation, communication, and meaning are implicit in Levi-Strauss' explorations, but, more than Levi-Strauss himself, Boon skirts these questions, masking them with the concepts of 'transformation', 'correspondence', and 'signification'. Only once does he approach these problems in anything like a meaningful way, and this in a single sentence: "And so it is that in language, art, or anything else, communicability lies somewhere between reproduction and randomness; therefore, communicability cannot be exact, yet neither can it be absent." (p. 85).

The style too, like the content, is for the most part clumsy and pretentious. At times it obtrudes in self-conscious display, at others

it is even more depressingly absent. One part of Boon's general theory is worthwhile, if not outstandingly new: that Levi-Strauss uses the processes he uncovers to uncover those processes; that Mythologiques is a myth; that, given its premisses, structuralism is essentially a method. But in the end, one has to accept the import of all the self-deprecating remarks of the Preface and Introduction - that the book was written without purpose, without meaning, and with little understanding.

Martin Cantor

Concepts and Society. I.C. Jarvie. Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1972, £2.50

Jarvie believes in the explanatory force of what he calls 'situational logic', an approach more commonly known as the 'means-end action schema' or simply as methodological individualism. Unfortunately, Jarvie tries to combine this essentially unobjectionable way of interpreting social life with a rather extreme variety of positivism- 'If today we have any knowledge at all it can only be found among the current theories of science' (137). Consequently, he is unable to agree with those methodological individualists who account for social action by specifying those participant beliefs which serve to relate means and ends. Jarvie feels he should evaluate participant explanations against what the social scientist knows actually to be the case. He follows his mentor, Popper, in arguing that words like 'war' are hypotheses applied by social actors and social scientists to explain what they see to be the case (in this example, to quote Popper, 'the many who are killed; or the men and women in uniform, etc'). Since such words function as hypotheses, there is nothing to prevent the social scientist coming along and telling the social actors 'well, you might think you are at war, but I know better'. Several people, including Winch, have objected that there is an intrinsic or essential connection between being at war and saying that one is at war. Jarvie has to accept this: remarks like 'in the social sciences we are entirely concerned with relationships and meanings as they give significance to things and behaviour' and 'the reality [of social class] is a product of the ideology' (186) show the extent to which he believes that there is no independent social reality against which hypotheses can be applied. In other words, if participant words like 'war' create the reality of being at war and give social meaning to things like wearing uniforms, then the social scientist cannot then come along and say that this is a false hypothesis.

Jarvie cannot have it both ways: if social reality is largely the product of social ideology, one cannot criticise the ideology without criticising and replacing the reality; but Jarvie wants to criticise the ideology in terms of some 'mind-independent' (126,147) social reality against which he can judge participant explanations; if one finds such a reality then one necessarily has to break with the initial assumption.

Exactly the same confusions appear in Jarvie's confrontation with Winch. Crosscultural value judgements - saying that some participant accounts are false - have to rely on the existence of an 'extra-linguistic' reality (53), but 'how society is conceived to be by its members considerably influences how it is' (69). It seems to me that either one follows Winch and the rest, explaining social behaviour in terms of beliefs which can be ascribed to social participants, or one says that men do not always act for the reasons they give, which implies that one has to relinquish the subjective means-end action schema and apply something other than Jarvie's version of situational logic.

Jarvie raises some interesting questions, particularly those concerning the ontological status and explanatory powers of participants' beliefs, but he nowhere shows us how to get to the type of social reality demanded by his ethnocentric scientism. For this reason, Concepts and Society does not provide the useful development of methodological individualism (or perhaps essentialism) that he hopes for.

P. Heelas