MAN, MEANING AND HISTORY

Prof. Dr. H. G. SCHULTE NORDHOLT

MAN, MEANING AND HISTORY

ESSAYS IN HONOUR OF H. G. SCHULTE NORDHOLT

Edited by

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J.W. SCHOORL

FOREWORD

These essays have been written to commemorate the occasion of
H.G. Schulte Nordholt, having reached the age of sixty-five, retiring
as professor of cultural anthropology at the 'Vrije Universiteit'. This
parting is not final yet, since he will continue his work parttime. But
for his friends - his colleagues and ex-students - it was a good
opportunity to present him with a Festschrift in his honour, a fitting
tribute to the significance of his role in the field of cultural
anthropology.

   This volume was compiled with a view to certain specific themes and
regions. There was the clear intention to put together a volume mainly
dealing with subjects in the field of symbolic anthropology, and
preferably within the anthropology of Indonesia. This intention excluded
a number of friends who would have liked to make a contribution to this
Festschrift. However, we hope and trust that the present composition of
the volume will give it a clear position in its field, which would have
been more difficult if it had consisted of contributions on a wide
variety of subjects and regions. Schulte Nordholt is an anthropologist
with a wide range of interests, but within that wide scope there are
certain main points above and beyond the rest. These are what we hope
to focus on in this book.

   From 1930 to 1934, Schulte Nordholt studied Indology at 'Rijks-
universiteit' in Utrecht, in order to prepare for a career as a
government official in the former Dutch colony of Indonesia. Due to the
Depression, he could not be sent abroad immediately upon completing his
studies. He took advantage of this opportunity to go more deeply into
philosophy, Islam and cultural anthropology of Indonesia. In October,
1936, he was sent to Indonesia. First he worked at Sumbawa Besar; in
October, 1938, he was transferred to East Flores, and in November, 1939,
to Timor. The Japanese invasion in May, 1942, put an end to this stay.
In 'Besturen in een vacuüm' (in S.L. van der Wal, ed. *Besturen Overzee*),
he gave an absorbing account of the situation just before and during
the landing of the Japanese. After spending more than three years in a

Japanese prison camp, in September, 1945, he returned to Timor, where he
worked as a government official in Kefamnanu until July, 1947. Due to
his health, he was not stationed abroad again.

   He went back to the University, where he studied Semitic languages,
Arabic and Hebrew ('kandidaats'-degree, 1948) and History ('doctoraal'-
degree, 1953). From July to the end of 1949, he interrupted his studies
to devote himself to official activities in connection with the Round
Table Conference about the recognition of the sovereignty of Indonesia.
From 1950 to 1961, he was a high school History teacher. In 1960, he
joined the cultural anthropology sub-department at 'Vrije Universiteit',
where he was given a lectureship in the cultural anthropology of Africa
in 1961. He got his Ph.D. at the end of 1966, with the thesis *Het
Politieke Systeem van de Atoni van Timor* (in 1971 the English trans-
lation was published as no. 60 of the 'Verhandelingen van het
Koninklijk Instituut voor Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde' under the title:
The Political System of the Atoni of Timor). He had gathered the material
for this thesis when he was in Timor as a government official. In 1967,
he succeeded L. Onvlee as professor of cultural anthropology at 'Vrije
Universiteit'.

   This summary of Schulte Nordholt's activities illustrates the broad-
ness of his scope of interest in man and his culture, as well as the
main points within it. In the first place, history has always fascinated
him. Not just history as a field of academic study, but mainly history
as an essential dimension in human life. No matter how interested he
might have been in structures, to him that never meant emphasis on the
synchronic approach at the expense of the diachronic approach. No matter
how greatly he was influenced by the 'Leiden School' and the work of
Lévi-Strauss, the anthropologist never disavowed the historian. His
inaugural speech, *Culturele Antropologie en Geschiedenis* (Cultural
Anthropology and History), was a clear illustration of this.

   In the process of the development of the cultural anthropology
department at 'Vrije Universiteit', Schulte Nordholt initially devoted
most of his attention to political anthropology. In his dissertation,
there is a clear evidence of this interest on his part, as is the case
in later publications as well, particularly in *Verantwoorde revolutie*
(with J. Verkuyl, 1968). This interest also constituted the beginning
of the political anthropology specialization which developed at 'Vrije
Universiteit'.

   However, in the past decade, his theoretical interest shifted in the

direction of the symbolic classifications and the thought structures
which had also already played such an important role in his study of the
Atoni. In this way, in addition to political anthropology, under his
supervision symbolic anthropology was developed as the second teaching
and research specialization. An increasing number of faculty members
and students devoted their attention to the analysis of classification
systems, rituals, myths and so forth. In the research that took place
- and is still taking place - under his supervision, this interest in
the symbolic dimension of human thinking and conduct is also evident.

   His most important activities have been in the field of the cultural
anthropology of Indonesia. That was the first and foremost object of
his affection. As a government official in the former Dutch colony of
Indonesia, he made a practical contribution to the development of the
country. The fact that, in the course of doing so, he developed an
interest in the culture of the local population was evident from his
excellent study of the Atoni of Timor. This interest in Indonesia has
never ceased to fascinate him, even when he was concentrating his
attention on the cultural anthropology of Africa. His dissertation led
him to return to the anthropology of Indonesia, and confirmed this move.
This was also manifestly expressed by the fact that he was made a member
of the executive committee - and vice-president - of the 'Koninklijk
Instituut voor Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde' (twice) and a member of the
guidance board of the Indonesian Studies Programme, a product of the
co-operation between Indonesia and The Netherlands within the framework
of the Cultural Agreement.

   His enthusiasm for the study of Indonesia has accorded this particular
study an important position within the department of cultural
anthropology at 'Vrije Universiteit'. Almost a dozen graduate students
have either already conducted research in Indonesia under his super-
vision, or are preparing to do so. This has granted symbolic
anthropology, as well as the specializations referred to above, a place
of their own within the anthropology of Indonesia. Thus, Schulte Nordholt
has greatly helped to stimulate the revived interest in Indonesia within
the field of cultural anthropology in The Netherlands.

   In the production of this volume a number of people were involved.
Also on behalf of Dr. Schefold and Professor Tennekes I would like to
thank all those who were willing to contribute. In addition I would like
to express our special gratitude to Mrs. M. Kreuze who, whilst doing her
work at our secretariat, assisted and advised the editors and prepared

the manuscripts for publication. We are also grateful to Mr. G.H.
Speelman for kindly providing the photograph of Professor Schulte
Nordholt which appears at the beginning of this book and to Mr.
J. Ter Haar for his drawings for the essays of N.G. Schulte Nordholt
and J. Tennekes.

In view of the long history of the preparation of this volume as well as
the circumstances of its production, it may display shortcomings here
and there, the responsibility for which both the editors and the
publisher were obliged to leave with the authors.

Amsterdam, Autumn 1979.

J. TENNEKES

ATONI-CLASSIFICATIES: PROBLEMEN EN MOGELIJKHEDEN VAN EEN SEMIOLOGISCHE BENADERING[+]

SEMIOLOGIE EN SYMBOLISCHE ANTROPOLOGIE

In de culturele antropologie is altijd veel aandacht geweest voor symbolische verschijnselen zoals mythen, rituelen, classificatiesystemen e.d. De laatste jaren is die aandacht echter nog toegenomen en begint zich op dit terrein een nieuw specialisme af te tekenen dat wel symbolische antropologie wordt genoemd. Theoretisch gezien verkeert dit jonge specialisme in een situatie van grote verwarring. Er ontbreekt een duidelijke theoretische conceptie van waaruit men aan het werk kan gaan, en de meeste beoefenaren van de symbolische antropologie zijn dan ook geneigd tot allerlei vormen van syncretistisch ad hoc-theoretiseren. Dat blijkt al direct bij de definities die men geeft van het meest centrale begrip, nl. 'symbool'. Dat begrip is verwant aan andere begrippen, zoals 'teken' en 'signaal' en het ligt voor de hand dat men probeert te komen tot een omschrijving waarin het symboolbegrip op een of andere manier wordt afgebakend ten opzichte van andere concepten. Als we echter de literatuur er op nalezen blijkt dat die afbakening bij iedere auteur weer anders komt te liggen, al naar gelang de antropologische en filosofische literatuur die hij toevallig heeft geraadpleegd (vgl. bijv. Firth 1973:74-75 en Leach 1976:12).

Eenzelfde lot treft het begrip 'betekenis'. Ieder is het er over eens dat symbolen betekenen.[1] Rituelen, mythen en andere vormen van symboliek worden veelal gezien als een bepaalde vorm van communicatie en de onderzoeker wil weten wat de inhoud is van die communicatie, wàt er nu wel precies wordt gezegd, gedaan en gesymboliseerd. Maar als we dan na-gaan wat er onder 'betekenis' wordt verstaan, dan blijkt dat een veel-heid van verschillende zaken te zijn. Zo zegt Turner bijv. dat er 'ten minste' drie niveaus of velden van betekenis moeten worden onderscheiden, nl. (1) het veld van inheemse interpretaties (*exegetical meaning*), (2)

de betekenis die naar voren komt uit het gebruik dat mensen van
symbolen maken en de emoties die daarbij worden losgemaakt
(*operational meaning*), en (3) de betekenis die voortvloeit uit de
structurele relaties die symbolen onderling hebben (*positional meaning*)
(Turner 1970:50). Die onderscheidingen komen direct voort uit de
ethnografische situatie waarmee Turner in zijn veldwerk werd geconfron-
teerd. In de Ndembu-samenleving worden nl. zeer veel rituelen uitgevoerd
waarbij een menigte van symbolen wordt gehanteerd terwijl de Ndembu zelf
vaak duidelijke ideeën blijken te hebben omtrent de betekenis van die
symbolen. Het kan echter moeilijk worden volgehouden dat de verschillende
betekenis-niveaus - datgene wat de mensen er zelf over zeggen, datgene
wat die symbolen in het individuele gedrag en in het groepsproces uit-
werken en wat de symbolen betekenen in het kader van het systeem waarvan
ze deel uitmaken - zonder meer in elkaars verlengde liggen. De emoties
die symbolen los maken en de uitwerking die ze hebben op het individuele
handelen en het groepsgedrag, vormen een heel ander 'type' betekenis dan
de betekenis die voortvloeit uit de structurele positie van een symbool
in een systeem. In een kritiek op Turner merkt Sperber dan ook op:
"This inventory of the properties of symbols that Turner develops and
illustrates is undoubtedly useful; it underscores distinctions which are
generally neglected. It is then all the more paradoxical to see, as the
descriptive categories multiply and become refined, the concept of
meaning become distended and take in indiscriminately all the conceivable
properties of symbols, no matter how heterogeneous. This laxity in the
use of 'meaning' - particularly clear in Turner because it contrasts
with a definite refinement in the use of other concepts - characterises
as well the whole set of works devoted to symbolism" (1975:13).

   Wat ontbreekt in de huidige symbolische antropologie is een samen-
hangende theoretische visie op symbolische verschijnselen. Het is daarom
begrijpelijk dat men de laatste decennia, onder invloed van het Franse
structuralisme en met name van Lévi-Strauss, een neiging kan bespeuren
om theoretisch houvast te zoeken bij de verworvenheden van de structurele
linguïstiek. De grondlegger van deze linguïstiek, Ferdinand de Saussure,
meende dat er in de toekomst een alomvattende wetenschap zou moeten
komen, die zich zou richten op het functioneren van tekens in de mense-
lijke samenleving. Van deze algemene leer van de tekens, die hij
semiologie noemde, zou de taalwetenschap dan slechts een onderdeel zijn,
omdat zulk een wetenschap elk stelsel van tekens in haar onderzoek zou
moeten betrekken. Dit programma werd gelanceerd in het jaar 1916 toen

De Saussure's *Cours de Linguistique Générale* voor het eerst verscheen, maar het werd pas weer serieus opgenomen door Lévi-Strauss, die zijn werk presenteerde als een nadere uitwerking van dit programma. In concreto betekent een semiologische benadering van symboliek dat de analyse zich zoveel mogelijk voltrekt naar analogie van de methoden die in de structurele linguïstiek werden ontwikkeld. Semiologische analyses van symboliek onderscheiden zich dan ook van de gangbare analyses door hun gebruik van een bepaald jargon, zoals het onderscheid tussen *langue* en *parole*, *signifiant* en *signifié*, 'paradigma' en 'syntagma', etc. Aangezien toch ook dit nieuwe jargon vaak op een bijzonder losse wijze wordt gehanteerd door symbolisch antropologen, is het niet altijd een- voudig zich een beeld te vormen van wat we ons nu eigenlijk precies moeten voorstellen bij een semiologische benadering van symboliek. Kan een semiologische benadering worden gezien als een nieuw, consistent, alomvattend paradigma om symboliek te bestuderen, of is het niet veel meer dan een zwaarwichtig woordgebruik waarmee allerlei oude redeneringen van een nieuwe en moderne aankleding worden voorzien? En, als het eerste het geval is, kan een benadering die zich oriënteert op de verworven- heden van de linguïstiek inderdaad een uitweg bieden uit de theoretische verwarring die er bestaat? Kan ze ons bijv. een adequate en werkbare omschrijving verschaffen van begrippen als symbool, teken en betekenis en ons verder helpen bij wat naar mijn mening de belangrijkste opdracht is van de symbolische antropologie, nl. het ontsluieren van de betekenis van symboliek?

Het zijn deze vragen die ik in deze bijdrage centraal wil stellen. Daartoe zal ik eerst enkele kernbegrippen behandelen uit de structurele linguïstiek zoals deze door De Saussure naar voren is gebracht. Daarna zal ik laten zien hoe die begrippen kunnen worden gebruikt bij de analyse van symboliek om zodoende een indruk te geven van wat we onder een semiologische benadering kunnen verstaan. Daarbij zal ik, om mijn betoog voor te grote theoretische vrijblijvendheid te behoeden, aandacht geven aan het classificatorisch systeem van de Atoni en proberen na te gaan in hoeverre een semiologische benadering ons verder kan helpen bij de analyse van een concreet symbolisch fenomeen, nl. het huis van de Atoni. Op basis daarvan hoop ik dan te komen tot een beantwoording van de hier gestelde vragen.

ENKELE KERNBEGRIPPEN VAN DE STRUCTURELE LINGUISTIEK
De Saussure kan worden gezien als grondlegger van de structurele

linguïstiek. Zijn naam valt daarom steeds opnieuw als antropologen als
Lévi-Strauss het semiologisch programma dat hij formuleerde, nader
proberen uit te werken. Het is daarom voor een goed begrip van wat
volgen gaat noodzakelijk enkele hoofdlijnen te schetsen van het denken
over taal zoals dat is ontwikkeld door De Saussure en zijn directe na-
volgers.

Het eerste wat in dit verband dan van belang is, is het onderscheid
tussen *langue* en *parole*. Het systeem van de taal kan worden gekarakteri-
seerd als een geheel van regels dat als een soort collectief contract
door de leden van een 'spraakmakende gemeente' moet worden eerbiedigd
willen ze met elkaar kunnen communiceren (vgl. Barthes 1970:81). Daar-
tegenover staat dan de 'spraak' als datgene wat door de afzonderlijke
individuen wordt gezegd. Spraak omschrijft Barthes als "..... een
individuele, selecterende en actualiserende taalbehandeling: zij bestaat
in de eerste plaats uit de combinaties dankzij welke het sprekend subject
de code van het taalsysteem kan hanteren, teneinde uitdrukking te geven
aan zijn persoonlijke gedachten en verder uit de psychofysische mecha-
nismen die hem in staat stellen deze combinaties te veruitwendigen"
(idem:82). De verhouding tussen 'taal' en 'spraak' is er een van weder-
zijdse insluiting: Een taal ".... is het kapitaal dat door de beoefening
van de spraak gedeponeerd wordt in de individuen die tot eenzelfde gemeen-
schap behoren. Ze moet dus, omdat het een totaalsom is van individuele
indrukken, wel onvolledig zijn op het niveau van ieder afzonderlijk
individu: een taal bestaat slechts volkomen in de 'spraakmakende gemeen-
te'; men kan geen spraak hanteren zonder het taalsysteem aan te spreken"
(idem:83). De spraak (de concrete betekenisdragende klanken waarmee een
concreet individu op een bepaald moment iets bedoelt te zeggen) valt vol-
gens De Saussure buiten het terrein van de linguïstiek. De linguïst dient
zich volgens hem slechts bezig te houden met de taal als een systeem.

Deze visie op taal heeft consequenties voor de inhoud die aan het
begrip 'teken' wordt gegeven. Als de taaltekens als elementen van een
systeem worden gezien, dan zullen ze ook als zodanig moeten worden
omschreven. Dat wil zeggen dat ze niet kunnen worden gedefinieerd als
'vormen' (klanken) die verwijzen naar (buitentalige) 'zaken'. Als taal
een eigensoortige structuur heeft, dan is dat niet alleen een structuur
van klanken, maar evenzeer een structuur van betekenissen. Die beteke-
nissen maken dus deel uit van het taalsysteem (zoals dat aanwezig is in
het bewustzijn) en kunnen dientengevolge niet voortkomen uit de buiten-
talige 'zaken' waarover met behulp van de taal kan worden gecommuniceerd.

De Saussure zelf zegt hierover het volgende: "Some people regard language, when reduced to its elements, as a naming process only - a list of words, each corresponding to the things that it names ..... This conception is open to criticism at several points. It assumes that ready-made ideas exist before words; it does not tell us whether a name is vocal or psychological in nature .....; finally, it lets us assume that the linking of a name and a thing is a very simple operation - an assumption that is anything but true. But this rather naive approach can bring us near the truth by showing us that the linguistic unit is a double entity ..... The linguistic sign unites, not a thing and a name, but a concept and a sound image. The latter is not the material sound, a purely physical thing, but the psychological imprint of the sound, the impression that it makes on our senses. The sound-image is sensory, and if I happen to call it 'material', it is only in that sense, and by way of opposing it to the other term of association, the concept, which is generally more abstract. ..... The linguistic sign is then a two-sided psychological entity ..... The two elements are intimately united, and each recalls the other. Whether we try to find the meaning of the Latin word *arbor* or the word that Latin uses to designate the concept 'tree', it is clear that only the associations sanctioned by that language appear to us to conform to reality, and we disregard whatever others might be imagined.

Our definition of the linguistic sign poses an important question of terminology. I call the combination of a concept and a sound-image a *sign*, but in current usage the term generally designates only a sound-image, a word, for example (*arbor*, etc.). One tends to forget that *arbor* is called a sign only because it carries the concept 'tree', with the result that the idea of the sensory part implies the idea of the whole. Ambiguity would disappear if the three notions involved here were designated by three names, each suggesting and opposing the others. I propose to retain the word *sign* (*signe*) to designate the whole and to replace *concept* and *sound-image* respectively by *signified* (*signifié*) and *signifier* (*signifiant*);" (In Lane 1970:43-45).[2]

Door het teken te omschrijven als een combinatie van *signifiant* en *signifié* werd het mogelijk over taal als een autonoom systeem te spreken dat kan worden geanalyseerd los van de werkelijkheid waarover met behulp van taal kan worden gecommuniceerd. Eigenlijk gezegd is de term 'teken' daarom ook minder gelukkig, want 'teken' suggereert dat het gaat om een 'teken van iets', terwijl De Saussure de *referent* van het teken juist

radicaal tussen haakjes zet. Oók over de betekenis-dimensie van taal wil
de structurele linguïstiek slechts spreken los van de buitentalige
werkelijkheid. De verwijzende functie van taal is voor haar in principe
slechts een pro-memoriepost.

Het is in verband hiermee wellicht goed er nadrukkelijk op te wijzen
dat de relatie tussen *signifiant* en *signifié* er niet een is van repre-
sentatie. Als het *signifiant* het *signifié* zou representeren, dan zou dat
nl. betekenen dat aan het *signifié* een bestaan zou kunnen worden toe-
gedacht dat los staat van het *signifiant*. *Signifiant* en *signifié* zijn
echter onlosmakelijk met elkaar verbonden. Men kan niet over het een
spreken zonder het ander. Maar hoewel noodzakelijk, is de relatie ook
arbitrair. Deze uitdrukking moet echter niet worden misverstaan: ''The
term should not imply that the choice of the signifier is left entirely
to the speaker; I mean that it is unmotivated, i.e. arbitrary in that
it actually has no natural connection with the signified.'' (In Lane
1970:45). Uit de vorm van een taalteken is de betekenis ervan niet direct
af te leiden.[3] Het is dit principe van de arbitraire aard van de
elementen van het taalsysteem dat De Saussure ertoe bracht van 'teken'
en niet van 'symbool' te spreken: ''One characteristic of the symbol is
that it is never wholly arbitrary; it is not empty, for there is the
rudiment of a natural bond between the signifier and the signified. The
symbol of justice, a pair of scales, could not be replaced by just any
other symbol, such as a chariot.'' (In Lane 1970:46).[4]

Het onderscheid tussen *signifiant* en *signifié* als twee aspecten van
één en hetzelfde taalteken, is essentieel om te begrijpen hoe taal kan
worden geanalyseerd als een verschijnsel dat autonoom is ten opzichte
van de buitentalige werkelijkheid. Het is echter eigenlijk onjuist om
het teken op zich te bezien, enkel en alleen als een combinatie van
signifiant en *signifié*. In laatste instantie moeten we het teken niet
benaderen via zijn 'samenstelling' naar via zijn 'omgeving'. En daarmee
zijn we op het in de saussuriaanse visie zo belangrijke begrip 'waarde'
gestuit. Elk taalgegeven functioneert zowel in zijn fonologische als in
zijn semantische dimensie slechts door in zeker opzicht anders te zijn
dan de overige gegevens en niet omdat het op zichzelf een positief
gegeven is. De taal bezit slechts relatieve waarden. Elk taalelement kan
worden omschreven als een 'term' in een systeem, waarvan de 'waarde'
(*valeur*) bepaald wordt door zijn relaties met andere elementen. De
semantische dimensie van de waarde van het Engelse woord *mutton* wordt
mede bepaald door woorden als *sheep*, *meat*, *beef*, *lamb*, etc. (vgl.

Barthes 1970:113-114).[5] Waarde komt dus voort uit de wederzijdse
situering van de taaldelen en het is de taak van de linguïst die
onderlinge relaties, opposities en verschillen op het spoor te komen en
na te gaan volgens welke combinatieregels de elementen tot taalbouwsels
kunnen worden verenigd.

De structurele linguïstiek onderscheidt twee verschillende soorten
relaties tussen de elementen van een taalsysteem, nl. syntagmatische
en paradigmatische relaties: "Syntagmatische relaties zijn relaties
tussen elementen die binnen ééznelfde groter geheel (bijv. een woord
of een zin,T.) met elkaar zijn gecombineerd. Paradigmatische relaties
zijn relaties tussen elementen die onderling bepaalde systematische
overeenkomsten vertonen, in fonologische vorm, grammaticale eigen-
schappen, semantisch aspect, etc. Syntagmatische relaties betreffen dus
de combinatiemogelijkheden van taalelementen op elk niveau; paradig-
matische relaties betreffen de klassen of categorieën waarin deze
elementen ingedeeld kunnen worden op grond van hun onderlinge over-
eenkomsten." (Dik en Kooij 1972:58-59).

De door De Saussure geïntroduceerde structuralistische visie op taal
heeft ook gevolgen voor het spreken over betekenis. De structurele
linguïstiek wil over betekenis spreken als een linguïstisch verschijnsel
zonder daarbij een beroep te doen op kennis van de buitentalige
werkelijkheid. Taalbouwsels zoals woorden en zinnen 'betekenen' iets
en maken het daarom de taalgebruiker mogelijk te spreken over 'zaken' in
de buitentalige werkelijkheid (en onder 'zaken' verstaan we dan alles
waarover men praten en denken kan). Maar het is mogelijk over die
'betekenis' te spreken, los van die 'zaken'. Dat onderscheid tussen die
'zaken' in de buitentalige werkelijkheid en het semantisch aspect van de
taalbouwsels zelf, is het centrale uitgangspunt van de moderne semantiek
(het onderdeel van de taalwetenschap dat zich met het betekenis-aspect
van de taal bezighoudt). De linguïsten Dik en Kooij zeggen dan ook: "Het
semantisch aspect van welk taalbouwsel dan ook is een linguïstisch
gegeven, een eigensoortige vorm van 'kennis' die een andere is dan de
kennis die we hebben van de buitentalige werkelijkheid. Die conclusie
lijkt voor de hand te liggen, maar het is aan de andere kant voor taal-
gebruikers zo vanzelfsprekend dat je met taalbouwsels over 'zaken' praat,
dat het betrekkelijk lang geduurd heeft voor men zich in de taalweten-
schap principieel rekenschap heeft gegeven van dit verschil tussen
'betekenis' en 'zaak'." (1972:158). Dit impliceert ook dat datgene wat
men in taalgebruik wil mededelen en datgene wat door dat taalgebruik

begrepen wordt (d.w.z. de boodschap zoals die wordt uitgezonden en zoals
hij bij de ontvanger overkomt) maar ten dele vervat is in de (seman-
tische) betekenis van het taalbouwsel zelf: "Het semantisch aspect van
het woord 'stoel' verandert niet of we het nu over een keukenstoel of
een leunstoel hebben. De zin 'Geef die stoel eens een zet.' zal in een
concreet geval van taalgebruik geen problemen opleveren, omdat degene
tegen wie het gezegd wordt, begrijpt over welke stoel, of over welke van
de twee leunstoelen, het gaat" (idem:159). De 'boodschap' van zulk een
zin omvat dus meer dan alleen de (semantische) betekenis en is alleen te
begrijpen als de concrete situatie waarin die zin wordt uitgesproken en
waar die zin naar verwijst, daarbij in acht wordt genomen. In de taal-
wetenschap wordt het verschil tussen 'betekenis' en datgene waarnaar
wordt verwezen, veelal aangeduid als *meaning* tegenover *reference* (idem:
166). Ik zal in het vervolg spreken van semantische betekenis en
verwijzende betekenis.

EEN SEMIOLOGISCHE VISIE OP SYMBOLIEK

Het is duidelijk dat een linguïstisch analyse-model zoals dat van De
Saussure en zijn navolgers, niet zonder meer kan worden toegepast op
symboliek. Symboliek verschilt immers in allerlei opzichten van taal.
Daarnaast moet ook in het oog gehouden worden dat de doelstellingen die
de linguïst nastreeft niet noodzakelijkerwijs samenvallen met die van
de cultureel antropoloog die zich bezighoudt met symboliek. Als men dus
bij de studie van symbolische verschijnselen de methode en het
begrippenapparaat van de structurele linguïstiek als voorbeeld wil nemen,
dat zal dat alleen maar kunnen als men de eigen aard zowel van die
verschijnselen, als van de culturele antropologie goed in het oog blijft
houden.

   Om een beeld te krijgen van wat we onder een semiologische benadering
dienen te verstaan zal ik daarom proberen na te gaan hoe de hiervoor
gepresenteerde begrippen en onderscheidingen bruikbaar kunnen worden
gemaakt voor de studie van symboliek. Om daarbij echter niet voortdurend
in de ijle lucht van de theoretische abstracties te verkeren, zal ik
uitgaan van een concreet voorbeeld. En het ligt dan in het kader van deze
bundel voor de hand daarbij de keuze te laten vallen op de cultuur over
de Atoni. Ik zal daarbij vooral aandacht geven aan het classificatorisch
systeem, aangezien dat zich het beste als illustratie laat gebruiken.
Alvorens daarom mijn betoog te vervolgen, eerst een korte weergave van
wat Schulte Nordholt en de Amerikaanse antropoloog Cunningham over Atoni-

classificaties hebben geschreven.

1. Het classificatiesysteem van de Atoni
Het hoofdwerk van Schulte Nordholt is getiteld *The Political System of the Atoni of Timor* (1971). Gericht als het is op het politieke systeem, kan het moeilijk een semiologische studie worden genoemd. Wèl spreekt er een grote interesse uit voor symbolische ordening en voor classificatiesystemen. De zeer gedetailleerde uiteenzettingen over het politieke systeem worden dan ook afgesloten met een analyse van het classificatiesysteem van de Atoni, waarvan ik hier een aantal passages in extenso zal weergeven.

   "In our discussion of the various aspects of life, and especially in the analysis of the political system, we discovered that the Atoni fitted his outlook on the world in which he lives and the relations which are important in this world into set frameworks, or fixed categories within which he arranged his world and assigned everything its proper place .... Bipartition is the dominant principle. This is never indicated by the number two but always by the mention of two polar opposites in pairs. The most important of these are:

feminine	masculine	*(feto – mone)*
wife/sister	husband/brother	*(fe, fetof – mone, nauf)*
female ancestor	male ancestor	*(be'i – na'i)*
inside	outside	*(nanan – mone)*
silence	speech	
closed	open	
immobile	active	
west/north; left	east/south; right	
yellow/black? earth	red/white? heaven	
night	day	
death	life	

All of these pairs of opposites fit into one scheme and combine to form one important dichotomy. All of the concepts listed in the left-hand column are mutually related by a process of mental associations, whilst the same is true of those in the righthand column. The one is inconceivable without the other" (1971:407-408).

   Het is niet mogelijk in het bestek van dit opstel deze gehele reeks van commentaar te voorzien. Daarom slechts een enkele opmerking over de beide eerste categorieën. Opnieuw laat ik Schulte Nordholt zelf aan het woord:

"One of the most important divisions, by which both cosmic and social relationships are expressed, is that into *feto-mone*. This particular form of polar opposition may act as a frame of reference for the distinction between different kinds of relationships.

In the kinship system the *feto-mone* relationship is found to exist between two *ume* which are allied by affinal relationships. The *ume* with which the natal *ume* has affinal relationships via its daughters is called *feto* and the one with which it has such relationships via its sons is *mone*. Or in other words, the *ume* receiving a woman (who is the source of life) is inferior in respect of the one which is the giver of life and which is hence its superior. This relationship of subordination is expressed in terms of *feto-mone*. But at the same time the term *feto-mone* indicates that the one cannot exist without the other, as life is impossible without the unity of male and female. Thus *feto-mone* groups form each other's complements.

Another relationship of superordination and subordination is that existing between husband and wife (*mone-fe*) and that between brother and sister (*nauf-fetof*). A husband's superiority is limited however, by his being the inferior of his wife's brother. The latter, in turn, is aware of the fact that he owes his social superiority to his sister's marriage. For this reason he will not regard her primarily as his inferior, but as the woman who merits his protection. This relationship has important bearings on the political system, as it determines the relationship between *amaf naek* (letterlijk 'grote vaders' - d.w.z. de hoofden van de twee helften van de politieke gemeenschap die als zodanig bruidgevers zijn van de vorst. T.) and the ruler on the one hand and that between the ruler and rulers of the other princedoms ..... on the other. The relationship between the two halves of the realm of Insana is also a *feto-mone* one, the half living in the eastern and southern part being *mone* and superior in respect of that living in the west and north, which is *feto* ..... The relationship between inside and outside (*nanan-mone*) runs parallel with that between *feto-mone*, with one important reservation, namely that the centre, i.e. the interior, is superior to the exterior. The order of the words denoting this relationship is *mone-nanan*, the second always indicating the superior of the two, as in *feto-mone* ..... 'Inside' is equivalent to 'the centre in which the ruler lives'; he is the supreme being, and is *feto*. The centre links the parts together, and is symbolic of the totality which it itself effects. That is why the interior is superior to the exterior. It is inside that

the most sacred ritual is performed. It is inside, in the feminine half of the house (the left hand half), that the maternal pillar (*ni ainaf*) is found ..... The masculine post (*hau monef*) is the sacrificial post outside (*mone*) the house. It is inside, in the 'navel' of the realm, that the chief altar (*tola naek*) is located, adjacent to the ruler's palace. Here is also the centre, the culminating point of the war ritual; it is here that the harvest gifts are presented to the ruler ..... Here the harvest gifts are sacrificed to *Uis Neno*, who has given man the fruits of the earth" (idem:412-413).

Schulte Nordholt laat in zijn studie zien hoe de classificatie-categorieën steeds weer een rol spelen bij sociale relaties, de organisatie van het politieke systeem, maar ook bij religieuze riten of de bouw van het huis. Over dit laatste, het Atoni-huis, heeft Cunningham een aparte, zeer uitvoerige studie geschreven (Cunningham 1946), waarmee het Atoni-huis een van de best gedocumenteerde con-cretiseringen is geworden van het classificatiesysteem van de Atoni. Het is bij uitstek geschikt om als illustratie bij het hierna te ontvouwen betoog te worden gebruikt en ik zal daarom de voornaamste elementen uit Cunninghams weergave hier de revue laten passeren.
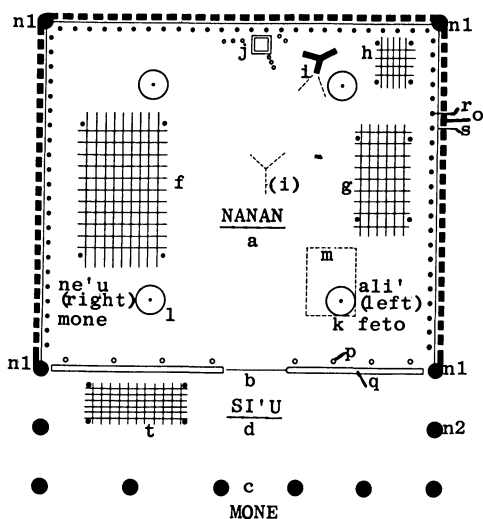
a.	nanan	- binnen
b.	eno	- deur
c.	toi	- ingang
d.	si'u	- rand
e.	mone	- buiten; pan mone - mannetjes hout, offerpaal
f.	harak ko'u	- grote rustbank
g.	harak tupa	- slaapbank
h.	harak manba'at	- dienbank
i.	(i) tunaf	- haard, event. in het midden en met drie of vijf stenen
j.	nai oe teke	- vaste waterbak
k.	ni ainaf	- moederstijl die feto, vrouwelijk, is
l.	rechterstijl	- die mone, mannelijk, is
m.	toi	- 'ingang' naar de vliering
n1 en n2 ni manu		- kippestijlen
o.	haef	- 'voet', de kleine buiten-stijlen van de wand
p.	haef mese	- 'eerste voet'
q.	piku	- wand
r.	rusi	- de kleine binnenstijlen van de wand
s.	rupit	- de regel onder de wand
t.	harak	- de bank voor de gasten

Geogr. Inst. VU

Het Atoni-huis is extern in principe duidelijke georiënteerd op de
windstreken. Cunningham zegt hierover het volgende: "Atoni say that the
door should be oriented southward, the direction they call *ne'u* (right).
North is *ali'* (left); east, *neonsaen* (sunrise); west, *neontes* (sunset)
..... It is forbidden to orient the door directly east-west, say
informants, 'because that is the way of the sun' or 'because the sun must
not enter the house'. In fact, houses are oriented variously ....., yet
the front (or door) direction is called *ne'u* (right or south)" (1964:36).

Als we nu echter het huis binnentreden, wijzigt de oriëntatie een
kwartslag. Cunningham schrijft: "Within the house, orientation is
normally established as a person faces the door from the inside - just
as Atoni compass directions are fixed facing 'sunrise' - and again *ne'u*
and *ali'* (right and left) sides of the house are determined". (idem).
Beide helften verhouden zich ten opzichte van elkaar als de inferieure
vrouwelijke linker helft tot de superieure, mannelijke rechter helft,
een verhouding die zich ook voortzet in het buiten-gedeelte (*si'u*) van
het huis, de 'voorgalerij', die zich onder het dak voor de deur bevindt.
Ook daar is de linker helft vrouwelijk en de rechter helft mannelijk.
In het binnengedeelte van het huis bevindt zich het watervat tegen de
achterwand, tegenover de deur maar in het linker gedeelte. De haard is
ook in het linker gedeelte gelegen, in het centrum van het binnen-
gedeelte of tegen de achterkant. Ook bevindt zich in het vrouwelijke
gedeelte de slaapbank waarop het (oudste) echtpaar van het huis slaapt.
De kinderen en jongeren slapen in hetzelfde gedeelte, maar lager, op
matten bij de haard. Soms is er ook nog een extra bank in de achterste
hoek achter de haard, die als aanrecht wordt gebruikt. Op beide banken
kan de geboorte plaatsvinden. In de mannelijke rechter helft bevindt
zich als tegenhanger van het watervat de deur, en als tegenhanger van de
slaapbank de 'grote bank'. Hierop liggen gereedschappen, huishoudelijke
zaken en gestampte maïs en rijst, meestal in manden opgeborgen.
Deze bank dient als zitplaats voor de ouders en de mannen van het huis-
gezin, hoewel op bepaalde feesten daar ook wel de bruidgevers mogen zitten
omdat die *mone* zijn. De grote bank is groter en hoger dan de kleine bank.
Er mogen geen vrouwen en kinderen (behalve babies) slapen.

De verhouding tussen de beide helften van het huis komt ook tot
uiting in het feit dat zich voor in het linker gedeelte de vrouwelijke
hoofdpaal bevindt. Bij deze paal staat de ladder naar de zolder. Verder
speelt deze paal een rol in het ritueel. Er ligt een plat stenen altaar
aan zijn voet en heilige voorwerpen van de voorouders zijn er aan opge-

hangen (Cunningham 1964:42). Deze paal verhoudt zich tot de voorste
hoofdpaal in het rechter gedeelte als *'feto'* tegenover *'mone'* (Schulte
Nordholt 1971:429). De betekenis van deze paal wordt echter ook nog door
een andere paal bepaald, nl. de mannelijke offerpaal die buiten het huis
op de rechter zijde van het erf staat. De voornaamste moederpaal is dus
niet alleen een element van vrouwelijk-links tegenover mannelijk-rechts,
maar ook van vrouwelijk-binnen tegenover mannelijk-buiten (Teljeur 1974:
10-11). Daarmee komt een geheel nieuw element in de symboliek van het
huis naar voren, want vrouwelijk-links is inferieur aan mannelijk-rechts,
maar vrouwelijk-binnen (*nanan*) is superieur aan mannelijk-buiten (*mone*).
Deze spanning tussen mannelijk/vrouwelijk als *feto/mone* en als *nanan/*
mone wordt door Cunningham als volgt omschreven: "Despite the subordinate
connotations of the 'inner' section (expressed in 'female' or 'left'
symbols) this area is the ritual centre. The 'head mother post' is
located on the inner left. Given the connotations of 'left' and 'female',
this world seems to associate the ritual (or supernatural) with a sub-
ordinate sphere." Dit is echter zijns inziens niet het geval: "Spiritual
matters are considered superior to secular ones. When spiritual matters
are at hand, the idea of *nanan* as 'centre' is expressed, and the
symbolically 'female' becomes pivotal in the relation of Man to Divinity.
The presence of the 'head mother post' on the left illustrates this
fact within the house. As 'head' it is foremost; it is the route to
the attic which has symbolic superordination and it is the route to the
supernatural, being the place for prayer and certain sacred heirlooms"
(1964:60).

In bovenstaande passage komt reeds tot uiting dat er nóg een
complicatie is. Het binnenste van het huis mag dan wel als *'nanan'*
superieur zijn aan het buiten (*'mone'*), boven de *'ume nanan'* (het
binnenste van het huis) bevindt zich de zolder waartoe de ladder bij de
vrouwelijke hoofdpaal toegang verschaft. En daarmee verschuift het
perspectief opnieuw op een essentiële wijze, want de zolder (*po'af*) is
mannelijk en als zodanig superieur aan het binnen- zowel als aan het
buitendeel van het huis waarboven hij zich bevindt. De zolder is
gereserveerd voor de opslag van de ongestampte maïs en rijst en heeft
een altaarsteen die in het landbouwritueel wordt gebruikt. Cunningham
vermeldt dat "..... entrance to the attic is forbidden to anyone who is
not an agnate of the householder. The elder male and female in the
household usually manage it, sometimes with the help of a son, but
daughters rarely go there. Atoni say that the presence of another person

in the attic 'makes the soul of the rice and maize flee'" (1964:45). Het
is verleidelijk om een parallel te zien tussen de cosmos (waarin de
koepelvormige hemel, die onder de heerschappij staat van de Godheid
- *Uis Neno* betekent 'hemelheer' - in oppositie staat tot het land,
dat dan weer wordt onderscheiden in het 'droge land' en de 'zee') en het
huis als een ruimte onder de zolder. Cunningham zegt dan ook: "It is not
fortuitous, or merely practical I believe that the attic of a house is
devoted to rice and maize, produce of the fields; that a ritual stone is
kept there; and that the entrance is restricted in a ritual idiom. Dome-
shaped as it is, it represents *neno* (zon, hemel of dag, T.) and all that
it implies" (1964:51).

Uit de zeer gedetailleerde studie van Cunningham zouden nog veel meer
belangwekkende gegevens zijn te putten. Ik wil hier echter volstaan met
het noemen van nog slechts één gegeven, nl. het feit dat het dak bekroond
wordt door twee horizontale nokbalken die in de richting oost/west
liggen en de namen *fuf manas* (zonneschedel) en *fuf ai* (vuurschedel)
dragen terwijl de onderkant van het dak wordt afgesloten door dwars-
sparren die de dakrand vormen en *tnat oe* ('houdt het water vast') heten.
Cunningham zegt hiervan: "..... the uppermost roof beam, the 'sun
cranium' is opposed to the 'fire cranium' below it; furthermore it is
opposed to the 'hold water' cross spars at the outer extremity of the
roof. Here in symbolic terms, 'fire' and 'water' stand together, below,
in opposition to the sun" (1964:55).

2. Semiologie en Atoni-classificaties

Ik wil nu proberen na te gaan hoe de hiervoor gepresenteerde gegevens
vanuit een semiologisch gezichtspunt geïnterpreteerd zouden kunnen
worden. Drie elementen uit het signalement van een structurele linguïs-
tiek dat ik hiervoor gaf, wil ik daarbij centraal stellen, nl. het
onderscheid systeem-spraak, de typische eigenschappen van 'tekens' als
elementen van een systeem en de verschillende manieren waarop men over
'betekenis' kan spreken.

a. Systeem en spraak

Als we symboliek willen analyseren op een wijze die analoog is aan taal,
dan zullen we onderscheid moeten maken tussen het symbolisch systeem en
de symbolische 'spraak'. Een symbolisch systeem zou dan kunnen worden
omschreven als een samenhangend, gestructureerd geheel van tekens die
als een anonieme code een sociaal produkt vormen, dat verankerd ligt in

de geest van de mensen die tot een bepaalde samenleving behoren en in
een bepaalde cultuur zijn geëncultureerd. Die code kan men zien als een
soort collectieve afspraak die men heeft te eerbiedigen, wil men middels
symboliek kunnen communiceren. Als symbolische 'spraak' zouden we dan
kunnen aanmerken alle (resultaten van) menselijk handelen waarin dat
systeem wordt geconcretiseerd: rituelen, mythen, voedselregels, e.d. In
het geval van de Atoni-cultuur dient het classificatie-systeem als een
symbolisch systeem te worden gezien, terwijl het Atoni-huis, als een
concretisering van dat systeem, het karakter heeft van *parole*.

Een semiologische analyse van Atoni-classificaties zal zich steeds
op beide niveaus bewegen. Ze richt zich zowel op het systeem als zo-
danig (in dit geval de onderlinge verhouding tussen de verschillende
categorieën - *feto/mone*; *nanan/mone* etc. - gezien als abstracte 'termen')
als op de 'spraak' (de rituelen, mythen, voedselregels, huizenbouw,
etc., waarin de termen worden geëxternaliseerd en concreet gestalte
krijgen).

Zowel op het niveau van het systeem als op dat van de 'spraak' zijn
er echter grote verschillen tussen taal en symboliek. Op de verschillen
op het systematische niveau kom ik de volgende paragraaf terug. Hier
enkele opmerkingen over de verschillen op het niveau van de 'spraak'.
Rituelen en mythen zijn 'spraak' in die zin, dat het concrete hande-
lingen en verhalen zijn, waarin de elementen van het symbolisch systeem
op een zodanige wijze worden geëxternaliseerd en gecombineerd, dat ze
bepaalde ideeën en gedachten tot uitdrukking kunnen brengen. Maar er is
geen sprake van een individuele selecterende taalbehandeling teneinde
uitdrukking te geven aan persoonlijke gedachten (vgl. Barthes 1970:82).
Rituelen, mythen en andere vormen van symbolische 'spraak' zijn deel
van een collectieve erfenis. Het 'sprekend subject' is de groep zelf.
Door het uitvoeren van een ritueel of het vertellen van een mythe spreekt
een groep als het ware tot zichzelf. Vandaar dat ook kan worden gezegd
dat de functie van communicatie middels symboliek een andere is dan die
middels taal. Zowel de wijze waarop wordt gecommuniceerd, als datgene
wat er wordt gezegd, is van een heel specifieke aard. De taal van de
symbolen is impliciet, ambigu en veelduidig. Het is de taal van
verhalen en handelingen die als bijzonder zin-vol worden ervaren, zonder
dat men vaak exact kan zeggen wat die zin dan wel is. De communicatie
middels symbolen ligt grotendeels op het impliciete en zelfs onbewuste
niveau. Vandaar dat symbolen zich bij uitstek lenen voor het uitdrukken
van zaken die in het alledaagse leven ongezegd moeten blijven of zelfs

onzegbaar zijn. Turner kan dan ook van het symbool zoals dat bij de
Ndembu functioneert zeggen: "It connects the known world of sensory
perceptible phenomena with the unknown and invisible realm of the shades.
It makes intelligible what is mysterious and dangerous" (1974:16).

   Het collectieve karakter van veel symboliek en de aard van de bood-
schappen die door middel van symbolen worden doorgegeven, impliceert ook
dat de symbolische 'spraak' zoals dat tot uiting komt in mythen,
rituelen e.d. grotendeels gestandaardiseerd is. Hoewel er een zekere
ruimte is voor variaties, liggen op zijn minst de grote lijnen ervan in
principe vast. Elk Atoni-huis verschilt in details van alle andere, maar
toch is het patroon nagenoeg constant. Symbolische 'spraak' is dus
slechts 'spraak' in de zin dat het een combinatie van geconcretiseerde
en geëxternaliseerde tekens is, maar zonder het element van oneindige
variatie van concrete combinaties zoals dat eigen is aan de 'spraak' van
de taal. In symbolische 'spraak' zit daarom veel meer 'systeem' dan in
de 'spraak' van de taal. Het bestaat in het algemeen uit wat Barthes
'versteende syntagma's' noemt, nl. vaste combinaties van tekens die
worden overgeërfd en die door degenen die het ritueel uitvoeren, de
mythe vertellen of het huis bouwen, niet zelf behoeven te worden bedacht
of geconstrueerd. Wat dat betreft wijkt symbolische *parole* dus essentieel
af van de 'spraak' van de taal.[6]

b. Symbool en teken

Niet alleen op het niveau van de concrete symbolische uitingen (de
'spraak'), ook op het niveau van het systeem verschillen taal en symbo-
liek. De centrale vraag is hier de verhouding tussen het begrip 'symbool'
en het taalkundig begrip 'teken'. Turner sluit nadrukkelijk aan bij het
gangbaar spraakgebruik en citeert de *Concise Oxford Dictionary* als hij
symbool omschrijft als "A thing regarded by general consent as naturally
typifying or representing or recalling something by possession of
analogous qualities or by association in fact or thought" (1970:19). Naar
mijn mening is deze definitie (en alle definities die, hoe ze ook precies
geformuleerd mogen zijn, een symbool omschrijven als iets dat iets
anders representeert of oproept) een noodzakelijk uitgangspunt voor een
symbolische antropologie. Want welke verschijnselen we allemaal ook als
symbolen zien - en antropologen als Douglas kennen zelfs aan religieuze
voorstellingen een symbolisch karakter toe - het startpunt moet mijns
inziens blijven liggen in het gangbaar spraakgebruik, waarin bijv. de
vlag als een nationaal 'symbool' wordt gezien, of het brood en de wijn

van het protestantse Heilig Avondmaal of de katholieke Eucharistie
'symbolen' zijn van het lichaam en bloed van Christus. Dit soort symbolen
representeren datgene waarvoor ze staan op een andere wijze dan in de
taal gebruikelijk is. Ze verwijzen niet alleen, maar stellen tot op
zekere hoogte tegenwoordig. Soldaten kunnen hun leven geven voor de vlag;
Christus is in de symbolen van brood en wijn op een heel bijzondere wijze
aanwezig. Allerlei vormen van magie zijn gebaseerd op de veronderstelling
dat bepaalde zaken iets anders niet alleen representeren, maar zodanig
aanwezig stellen dat handelingen die men met die zaken verricht directe
gevolgen hebben voor datgene wat ze symboliseren.

Maar als we vasthouden aan deze traditionele definitie van symbool
dan wordt in die definitie precies benadrukt datgene wat De Saussure
in zijn teken-begrip eigenlijk buiten beschouwing wilde laten, nl. het
verwijzende karakter (waarop de uitdrukking 'stands for or represents'
betrekking heeft). Op zichzelf sluiten beide begrippen elkaar niet zonder
meer uit. Veel symbolen kunnen nl. fungeren als 'tekens'. Ze kunnen dan
worden gezien als een combinatie van *signifiant* en *signifié* en als zo-
danig worden bestudeerd als onderdeel van een code die kan worden ge-
analyseerd los van de werkelijkheid waarover men middels die code
communiceert. En bij het teken is de mogelijkheid van verwijzing
logischerwijze verondersteld. Het ontleent zijn bestaan immers aan het
feit dat middels tekens over de niet-symbolische werkelijkheid kan worden
gecommuniceerd. Niettemin blijven de begrippen-woorden 'teken' en
'symbool' in een verschillende context thuishoren. De traditionele
symbooldefinitie start bij het geïsoleerde symbool en impliceert niet
zonder meer ook een symbolisch systeem, terwijl het teken per definitie
als element van een systeem moet worden verstaan.

Het is in dit verband wellicht van belang met nadruk te wijzen op het
verschil tussen de relatie *signifiant/signifié* (als de twee dimensies
van het ene en ondeelbare teken) en de relatie symbool/gesymboliseerde.
Zoals we zagen kan niet worden gezegd dat het *signifiant* het *signifié*
representeert, terwijl dat juist de essentie is van de relatie symbool/
gesymboliseerde. Weliswaar worden in veel studies beide relaties met
elkaar geïdentificeerd, maar als men dat doet verliest het begrippen-
paar *signifiant/signifié* de specifieke betekenis die De Saussure er aan
gaf. Het is dan niet veel meer dan een nieuwe benaming voor een onder-
scheid dat als zodanig geheel los van een saussuriaans semiologisch
begrippenkader staat en als zodanig is het in feite overbodig.

Als we ons het classificatorisch systeem van de Atoni in de

herinnering terugroepen, dan is duidelijk dat de termen van dat systeem
wel als 'tekens' kunnen worden aangemerkt, maar niet als 'symbolen',
omdat die termen als zodanig niet iets anders representeren. Ook in het
kader van de symbolische 'spraak' geeft het substantief 'symbool'
problemen. Symbolische *parole* is per definitie een syntagmatische keten
van 'tekens' (d.w.z. van betekenende eenheden die te vergelijken zijn
met de woorden of woord-delen van een taal). Die betekenende eenheden
zijn in het geval van het Atoni-huis gemakkelijk aan te wijzen maar het
is duidelijk dat die eenheden geen 'symbolen' zijn, omdat ze als zodanig
niet staan voor iets anders. Ze verwijzen niet direct naar gegevens in
de buitentalige werkelijkheid.

Dit alles overziende kan ik niet anders dan concluderen dat het
substantief 'symbool' binnen het semiologisch analysekader met grote
voorzichtigheid moet worden gehanteerd, omdat het niet zonder meer kan
worden geïdentificeerd met de 'tekens' die de basiselementen van
semiologische systemen vormen. De consequentie hiervan is tamelijk ver-
strekkend. Het betekent nl. dat symbolische systemen, zoals bijv. het
Atoni-systeem van classificaties, eigenlijk niet als systemen van
symbolen worden omschreven, omdat symbolen niet zonder meer als de basis-
elementen van symbolische systemen kunnen worden getypeerd en evenmin
noodzakelijkerwijs de elementaire bouwstenen van de symbolische 'spraak'
zijn.[7]

Nu hiermee de aard van de betekenende eenheden die de bouwstenen
vormen van symbolische systemen, duidelijker is geworden, is het nood-
zakelijk nog even stil te staan bij de aard van de *signifiants* en de
relatie tussen *signifiant* en *signifié* zoals we die vinden binnen
symbolische systemen. Aangezien het *signifiant* in symboliek allerlei
gestalten kan hebben, kan het moeilijk op dezelfde wijze worden om-
schreven als in taal. Op dit punt helpt Leach ons echter verder als hij
zegt: "Just as we can think with words without actually speaking, we
can think with visual and tactile images without using our eyes or
actually touching anything. So I shall write of *sense-images* rather
than sound images" (1976:18). Omschreven als de verhouding tussen een
'zintuiglijk beeld' en een 'begrip' (of beter: een 'mentale voor-
stelling'[8]) is het onderscheid tussen *signifiant* en *signifié* ook in de
analyse van symboliek te hanteren.

De aard van de *signifiants* heeft consequenties voor de relatie tussen
signifiant en *signifié*. In het algemeen zijn de *sense-images* van de
'tekens' van symbolische systemen nl. ontleend aan de werkelijkheid

buiten het systeem als zodanig. Symbolische systemen maken het de mens
mogelijk om door middel van beelden ontleend aan de hem omringende
werkelijkheid over die werkelijkheid na te denken. Dat betekent dat de
relatie tussen *signifiant* en *signifié* niet, zoals bij taal, arbitrair en
ongemotiveerd is. Tussen de beide aspecten van het teken bestaat het
'natuurlijk verband' dat De Saussure met betrekking tot het taalkundig
teken-begrip zo nadrukkelijk uitsluit. De eigen aard van de werkelijk-
heid waaraan het *sense-image* is ontleend, suggereert tot op zekere
hoogte de inhoud van het *signifié*. De 'mentale voorstellingen' die met
de *sense-images* van *feto/mone*, *nanan/mone* e.d. zijn verbonden, hebben
te maken met de concrete ervaringen die men heeft met de werkelijkheid
waaraan die *sense-images* zijn ontleend, d.w.z. de eigenschappen en
handelwijzen van de mannen en vrouwen die men kent, de gevoelens die
de beslotenheid van de woning en van de eigen gemeenschap oproept
tegenover datgene wat daarbuiten is gelegen, e.d.

Hiervòòr stelde ik reeds dat het substantief 'symbool' niet direct
in het semiologisch perspectief past. Met het adjectief staat dat
echter anders. Op basis van het voorgaande zouden we symbolische
systemen nl. kunnen omschrijven als tekensystemen waarvan de *signifiants*
ontleend zijn aan de concrete werkelijkheid en waarvan de relatie tussen
signifiant en *signifié* dientengevolge tot op zekere hoogte gemotiveerd
is.

Het 'concrete' karakter van symbolische systemen heeft direct ook
consequenties voor de aard van die systemen. Op zichzelf kan men het
methodologisch uitgangspunt van de linguïstiek - het bestuderen van
taal als een autonoom systeem - tot op zekere hoogte overnemen en de
elementen van een symbolisch systeem opvatten als 'termen' die hun
'waarde' ontlenen aan de gelijktijdige aanwezigheid van andere 'termen'.
Men kan er bijv. van uit gaan dat de betekenende elementen van het
symbolisch systeem bovenal functioneren doordat ze anders zijn dan
andere elementen en minder omdat ze een positieve betekenis oproepen.
Vandaar dat in een analyse van het semantisch aspect van een symbolisch
systeem opposities een centrale rol spelen. Via opposities en oppositie-
reeksen kan nl. de waarde van de betekenende eenheden worden opgespoord.
Maar meer dan een methodologisch uitgangspunt kan dat niet zijn. Anders
dan het taalsysteem is een symbolisch systeem nl. nooit volledig
autonoom ten opzichte van de werkelijkheid waarover door middel van dat
systeem wordt gecommuniceerd. Die werkelijkheid doet in semantisch
opzicht allerlei suggesties die in het symboolsysteem op een of andere

wijze worden verdisconteerd. De betekenisrelaties binnen het systeem
zijn daarom vaak tot op zekere hoogte 'afgekeken' van die werkelijk-
heid. Daardoor worden ook vaak allerlei contradicties in dat systeem
geïntroduceerd. De toepasbaarheid van de analysemethoden die in de
linguïstiek worden ontwikkeld, is daarmee aan duidelijke grenzen
gebonden.

Als we vanuit dit perspectief kijken naar de analyse van classifica-
tiesystemen, dan kan worden vastgesteld dat de methodes die zijn ont-
wikkeld om zulke systemen te analyseren, nog steeds betrekkelijk
rudimentair zijn. Meestal komt men niet verder dan het opstellen van een
lange reeks opposities die op een of andere wijze samenhangen. Ook
Schulte Nordholt gaat wat dat betreft niet verder dan het bekende
artikel dat Needham in 1967 publiceerde over Nyoro-classificatie. De
zin van zulke lange reeksen is beperkt, omdat niet erg duidelijk wordt
hoe de verschillende elementen zich nu eigenlijk precies ten opzichte
van elkaar verhouden en ze lokken daarom gemakkelijk het soort kritiek
uit dat Beattie op Needham's classificatie uitoefende (vgl. Beattie
1968) Niettemin geven zulke reeksen wel althans de richting aan waarin
zich een semiologische analyse van classificatiesystemen zou dienen
te ontwikkelen. Ze zijn te zien als een eerste aanzet tot de analyse
van de paradigmatische betekenisrelaties tussen elementen die onderling
bepaalde systematische kenmerken vertonen en met elkaar een 'code' vormen
die in allerlei vormen van symbolisch *parole* wordt gebruikt om bood-
schappen door te geven. Als men echter de betekenisdimensie van de waarde
van de termen van een classificatiesysteem adequaat wil onderzoeken,
dan zal men een nadere geleding moeten aanbrengen in de lange reeks van
opposities. Hoewel elke oppositie op een of andere wijze is verbonden
met een of meerdere andere, staat nl. niet elke oppositie uit de door
Schulte Nordholt opgestelde reeks met alle andere in relatie. Binnen/
buiten bijv. is niet verbonden met dood/leven. Een volgende stap zou dus
moeten zijn om per oppositie-paar het semantisch 'veld' in kaart te
brengen door een reeks op te stellen van opposities die met dat paar
zijn verbonden. Daarbij zal men soms bepaalde niet direct met elkaar
te verenigen sub-velden ontdekken. Vrouwelijk/mannelijk is immers zowel
geassocieerd met inferieur/superieur (bruidnemers/bruidgevers), als met
binnen/buiten en met west-noord/oost-zuid. Deze drie associatie-
richtingen zijn echter niet op één gemeenschappelijke noemer te brengen.
Bruidgevers zijn 'mannelijk' ten opzichte van de 'vrouwelijke' bruid-
nemers, maar daarom nog niet geassocieerd met het mannelijke buiten

dat inferieur is ten opzichte van het vrouwelijk binnen. Evenmin
is het binnen, omdat het vrouwelijk is, geassocieerd met het eveneens
'vrouwelijke' (kwade) links en het met de dood geassocieerde
'vrouwelijke' westen. Elke associatierichting beslaat als het ware een
eigen semantisch veld. De oppositie mannelijk/vrouwelijk is dus, in
Turners woorden gezegd, sterk 'polyseem' van karakter; het is een
"unification of disparate significata" (Turner 1970:28).

In het voorgaande heb ik het classificatorisch systeem van de Atoni
'symbolisch' genoemd. Dat symbolische karakter is gegeven met het feit
dat het hier gaat om een 'concreet' semiologisch systeem, waarvan de
signifiants zintuiglijke beelden (*sense-images*) zijn die ontleend zijn
aan de werkelijkheid die zich buiten het tekensysteem als zodanig
bevindt. Een werkelijkheid waar de zon in het oosten opgaat en in het
westen onder, een wereld waar mannen en vrouwen zich op een bepaalde
wijze gedragen en waar er tussen bruidgevers en bruidnemers een
essentieel rangverschil bestaat, een wereld ook van het vertrouwde
'thuis' en de gevaarlijke buitenwereld. In dat concrete karakter is het
verschil gelegen met de classificaties die inherent zijn aan taal.

In elke taal vormen de begrippen met behulp waarvan men kan verwijzen
naar de buitentalige werkelijkheid gezamenlijk een systeem. Zulk een
classificatiesysteem legt aan die werkelijkheid een bepaalde orde op.
Barthes omschrijft dan ook de taal als 'het domein van de geledingen'
en hij stelt vervolgens: "Hieruit volgt dat de toekomstige taak van de
semiologie veel minder ligt in het opstellen van lexicons van de
objecten dan in het terugvinden van de geledingen die de mensen de
werkelijkheid opleggen" (1970:116). Het kenmerkende van symbolische
classificaties ten opzichte van de classificaties zoals die in elke taal
voorkomen, is echter dat de geledingen die middels de termen van het
systeem worden opgelegd aan de werkelijkheid, op een bepaalde wijze
ook aan die werkelijkheid zelf zijn ontleend.

c. Semantische en verwijzende betekenis
Rituelen, mythen en huizenbouw worden door de mensen zelf ervaren als op
een bepaalde manier bij uitstek 'zinvol'. Meestal is men echter niet in
staat om onder woorden te brengen wat die 'zin' dan wel precies is. De
antropoloog probeert niettemin toch tot die 'zin' door te dringen. Hij
dient zich daarvoor kennis te verwerven omtrent het symbolisch systeem
waarbinnen die ervaring van zinvolheid mogelijk is en dat als
communicatie-code de voortbrenging van betekenissen reguleert. Het is

daarbij van groot belang het onderscheid in de gaten te houden dat hier-
voor werd gemaakt tussen semantische en verwijzende betekenis. Ook voor
wat betreft symbolische 'spraak' kan men nl. spreken over semantische
betekenis als de betekenis die voortvloeit uit de systematische - de
syntagmatische zowel als de paradigmatische - relaties die de betekenende
eenheden van een syntagmatische reeks met elkaar en met andere elementen
van het systeem onderhouden. Die semantische betekenis is echter slechts
een deel van de totale boodschap die door middel van die reeks van tekens
wordt doorgegeven. In die boodschap spelen nl. ook een rol de associa-
tieve en affectieve betekenissen die o.a. voortvloeien uit de context
van het concrete handelen en de concrete sociale relaties waarbinnen
rituelen worden uitgevoerd, huizen gebouwd en mythen verteld. De
associatieve en affectieve betekenissen komen dus voort uit de
werkelijkheid waarnaar het *parole* verwijst, en waarin het functioneert.
Samen met de semantische betekenis vormen ze de totale boodschap (Leech
spreekt hier over de totale 'communicatiewaarde'[9]) van het syntagma.
Die boodschap, al datgene wat er dus op een of andere wijze wordt
'gezegd', noem ik de verwijzende betekenis. Als we de boodschap van een
ritueel analyseren, dienen we dus niet alleen te kijken naar de
betekenissen die voortvloeien uit de symbolische structuur van dat
ritueel, maar evenzeer naar de sociale en politieke structuur waar de
boodschap van dat ritueel betrekking op heeft en naar de specifieke
omstandigheden - rivaliteiten en conflicten tussen de mensen die het
ritueel uitvoeren - waaronder het wordt uitgevoerd.

    Als we op deze wijze semantische van verwijzende betekenis onder-
scheiden, kan ook in dit semiologische kader het werkwoord 'symboliseren'
zinvol worden gebruikt. Men kan immers zeggen dat een bepaald symbolisch
parole 'staat voor' of 'verwijst naar' een 'boodschap'. Uitgaande van
het gangbaar spraakgebruik zou men dan dus van symbolische 'spraak'
kunnen zeggen dat het in principe een boodschap 'symboliseert'.[10]

    Tegen deze achtergrond krijgt ook de in het begin van dit artikel
vermelde onderscheiding tussen *positional meaning*, *operational meaning*
en *exegetical meaning* een nieuwe zinvolle inhoud. Wat Turner *positional
meaning* noemt komt globaal overeen met de semantische betekenis. De
exegetical meaning, het commentaar dat de mensen zelf geven op de
symbolen die ze gebruiken, kan vaak worden gezien als een inheemse
interpretatie van de semantische betekenis, maar geeft in elk geval ook
inzicht in (het bewuste gedeelte[11] van) de andere betekenisdimensies
van de totale boodschap van het concrete symbolische syntagma. De

operational meaning - datgene wat dat syntagma concreet bij individuen oproept en uitwerkt - is eveneens een bijdrage tot die totale communicatiewaarde.

Het concrete karakter van symbolische systemen stelt ons echter voor grote problemen zodra we meer precies proberen te achterhalen op welke wijze we over de semantische betekenis van symbolische 'spraak' kunnen spreken. In het kader van de taalanalyse onderscheidt Leech de denotatieve betekenis (datgene wat ik semantische betekenis noemde: de betekenis die voortvloeit uit de samenhangen binnen het taalsysteem) van de connotatieve betekenis (d.w.z. "what is communicated by virtue of what language refers to").(1974:26). Zo zal in onze eigen cultuur waarbinnen een heel bepaald beeld bestaat van wat een vrouw is, het woord 'vrouw' associaties met zich meebrengen als 'emotioneel', 'gevoelig', 'snel in tranen' etc.[12] Dat onderscheid valt volgens Leech samen met "that nebulous but crucial boundary between *language* and *the real world*" (Leech 1974:15).[13] De connotatieve betekenis kan in taal buiten de semantische betekenis worden gehouden. Maar in het geval van symboliek liggen de zaken anders. De *significants* van de betekenende eenheden worden hier immers ontleend aan de werkelijkheid en doen als zodanig suggesties omtrent de inhoud van het *signifié*. In de betekenis van de elementen van symbolische systemen is dus de *real world* waarover met behulp van symbolische systemen wordt gecommuniceerd nooit weg te denken. Het voor de linguïstiek zo essentiële onderscheid tussen denotatie en connotatie kan dus bij de analyse van symboliek niet zonder meer worden overgenomen.

Maar, ook al kan bij symboliek niet over semantische betekenis worden gesproken op dezelfde wijze als dat bij taal het geval is, de analogie blijft bestaan. In allerlei opzichten komen symbolische systemen overeen met wat Barthes 'connotatie-systemen' noemt, d.w.z. secundaire betekenissystemen, waarvan de *significants* ontleend zijn aan de *tekens* van een reeds bestaand betekenissysteem (Barthes 1970:143 e.v.). Hij stelt dat die systemen, ondanks hun van de taal afwijkend karakter, als echte *systemen* kunnen worden beschouwd. Dat betekent dat de betekenissen die in het kader van taal - het primaire betekenissysteem - connotatief van karakter zijn, niettemin toch systematisch met elkaar kunnen samenhangen (ook al is het connotatiesysteem vergeleken met het taalsysteem veel minder duidelijk afgegrensd en meer 'open' van karakter). Op het niveau van een secundair betekenissysteem kan daarom, ondanks alle verschillen met taal, toch over semantische betekenis worden gesproken.

Barthes denkt bij dit alles in eerste instantie aan connotatie-
systemen waarvan de *signifiants* ontleend zijn aan de taal, maar voor
symbolische systemen, d.w.z. systemen die hun *signifiants* ontlenen aan
de *real world*, geldt in feite hetzelfde. Symbolische systemen kunnen als
communicatie-medium nooit los van de werkelijkheid waarover wordt ge-
communiceerd worden bezien. Dat neemt echter niet weg dat ook in die
systemen de betekenis der elementen in eerste instantie voortvloeit uit
de onderlinge (systematische) relatie van die elementen. De beschrijving
die Schulte Nordholt geeft van het classificatorisch systeem van de
Atoni kan in dit verband worden gezien als een eerste aanzet voor een
analyse van semantische betekenissen in het kader van een connotatie-
systeem. Om de aard aan te duiden van de relaties die er bestaan tussen
een term en de elementen van het semantisch veld die door die term worden
bestreken, gebruik ik het woord 'associatie'. Het gaat hier immers niet
om '*denotatie*' (vrouwelijk *betekent* niet 'onderschikking', 'binnen' of
'west-noord'), maar om '*connotatie*' (het woord 'vrouwelijk' heeft in een
bepaalde context een bepaalde inhoud omdat het wordt *geassocieerd* met
'onderschikking', 'binnen' of 'west-noord'). Wat een oppositie semantisch
'betekent' wordt dus duidelijk als we via een analyse van het systeem
systematisch in kaart brengen welke andere opposities er in meeklinken.[14]
In plaats van over semantische betekenis kan daarom wellicht beter worden
gesproken over een semantisch 'veld' van associaties dat door middel van
een structurele analyse weliswaar in kaart gebracht kan worden, maar dat
nooit helemaal duidelijk kan worden afgebakend omdat het principieel open
is. De methoden die in de taalwetenschap zijn ontwikkeld om het seman-
tisch aspect van de taal te analyseren zullen daarom voor symboliek
slechts een geringe relevantie hebben. De symbolische antropologie zal
op dit punt haar eigen weg dienen te vinden.

3. *Het Atoni-huis als een symbolisch syntagma*

Vanuit het hiervoor ontwikkelde perspectief zal ik proberen iets te
zeggen over de symbolische betekenis van het Atoni-huis. Uit de
beschrijving die ik hiervoor gaf van het Atoni-huis is duidelijk
geworden dat het veel méér is dan alleen een huis. Behalve een huis om
in te wonen, heeft het het karakter van een symbolisch *parole*. Zoals de
woorden die gesproken worden (het *parole*) een concretisering zijn van
de taaltekens (in hun twee-eenheid van klankvoorstelling en begrip),
kan een Atoni-huis in zijn verschillende constructieve eenheden en zijn
inrichting worden gezien als een concretisering van de termen van het

classificatiesysteem (in hun twee-eenheid van *sense-image* en *mental representation*). Hoewel de individuele concrete huizen (het *parole* in strikte zin) onderling in details verschillen, vertonen ze alle dezelfde grondstructuur. Dit maakt het mogelijk om te spreken over 'het' Atoni-huis en maakt dit huis tot een schoolvoorbeeld van een versteend syntagma in semiologische zin.

Als we het Atoni-huis zien als een combinatie van tekens, dan valt de vraag naar de betekenis in tweeën uiteen. We zullen nl. zowel moeten onderzoeken wat de betekenis van de elementen is, als nagaan wat de betekenis is van het syntagma als geheel. Daarmee maken we een onderscheid dat overeenkomt met het onderscheid dat in de taal wordt gemaakt tussen woorden en zinnen. Daarbij onderscheiden zinnen zich van woorden doordat er met behulp van zinnen uitspraken, beweringen of, algemener nog, 'predikaten' worden geformuleerd.[15] Hetzelfde geldt ook hier. We gaan er van uit dat er door middel van het Atoni-huis iets wordt gezegd en het is de taak van de symbolisch antropoloog er achter te komen wàt er wordt gezegd. Voordat daarover echter iets kan worden opgemerkt, moeten we eerst een duidelijker beeld krijgen van de betekenis van de elementen waaruit het huis-syntagma is opgebouwd.

Het Atoni-huis maakt het de semioloog in één opzicht gemakkelijk. De betekenende eenheid die men bijv. in de analyse van mythen vaak eerst identificeren kan na een moeizame analyse, biedt zich hier als het ware aan ons aan. Bijna alle concrete onderdelen van de constructie en de inrichting worden aangeduid met een aparte naam waarin vaak reeds de relatie met het classificatiesysteem wordt gelegd. Moeilijker is het om inzicht te krijgen in de betekenis van de verschillende elementen en in de eventuele boodschap die aan het huis als een symbolisch syntagma mag worden toegeschreven. De semantische betekenis van de betekenende eenheden van het huis-syntagma vloeit, zoals we reeds zagen, per definitie voort uit de systematische (syntagmatische zowel als paradigmatische) relaties waarin deze eenheden staan ten opzichte van elkaar en van andere elementen uit het totale systeem. Dat betekent dat het noodzakelijk is (1) op de hoogte te zijn van de semantische waarde die de termen, die in het syntagma spelen, hebben in het kader van het totale semiologische systeem, (2) na te gaan welk deel van die waarde in de betekenende eenheden van syntagma worden gerealiseerd, en (3) te weten volgens welke regels die eenheden in het syntagma zijn gecombineerd.

Als we de semantische waarde van de betekenende eenheden van het syntagma in kaart willen brengen, zijn we in feite bezig met wat Turner

de *positional meaning* noemt. Immers: ".... the positional meaning of a
symbol derives from its relationship to other symbols in a totality,
a *Gestalt*, whose elements acquire their significance from the system as
a whole" (Turner 1967:51). Terecht verbindt hij dit meteen met wat hij
het polyseme karakter van symbolen noemt, het feit dat symbolen veelal
een zeer grote verscheidenheid aan semantische betekenissen hebben. Van-
daar dat ik voorstelde om in plaats van over semantische betekenis, over
een 'semantisch veld' te spreken. Het is in het bestek van dit artikel
niet mogelijk het semantisch veld van alle termen die een rol spelen
nader te analyseren. Ik wil mij daarom beperken tot enkele opmerkingen
over de verhouding *feto/mone* (vrouwelijk/mannelijk).

In de toelichting van Schulte Nordholt op het begrippenpaar *feto/mone*
is het semantisch veld van deze begrippen in hoofdlijnen reeds aan-
gegeven. Uit gegevens van allerlei aard, ontleend zowel aan het verwant-
schapssysteem en het politieke systeem, als aan de huizenbouw en de
rituelen, komt naar voren dat dit veld in drie delen uiteen valt. Aller-
eerst is er de associatie met bruidgevers en bruidnemers en met de notie
van inferieur/superieur die daarmee gegeven is. In de tweede plaats is
er de associatie met de windrichtingen. In de politieke structuur van
het rijk staan de oostelijke en zuidelijke helft van het rijk tegenover
de westelijke en de noordelijke helft als *mone* tegenover *feto*. Daarbij
is echter, zoals we zagen, de betekenis van noord/zuid verschillend van
oost/west. Het woordpaar *ali'/ne'u* is een homoniem dat zowel staat voor
noord/zuid als voor links/rechts. Als zodanig ".... it is a common
Atoni metaphor for good and evil" (Cunningham 1964:36). Het woordenpaar
neonsaen (zonsopgang, oost) en *neontes* (zonsondergang, west) heeft
enigszins andere associaties. "East (sunrise) is the direction where
prayers are made to the divinity, *Uis neno* (lord of the sun, sky or
day) .... East is considered to be the direction of origin where the
ancient hill, ancient hamlet of each lineage is located, but the way of
the deceased upon death is towards the west or the sea" (idem). Schulte
Nordholt kan op basis van dit gegeven dan ook *feto/mone* associëren met
dood/leven.

Tenslotte wordt *feto/mone* geassocieerd met *nanan/mone* (binnen/buiten).
Zoals we zagen speelt dit begrippenpaar een belangrijke rol in het
politieke systeem. *Nanan* is geassocieerd met het centrum waar de vorst
woont en waar het hoogste ritueel wordt uitgevoerd. Maar, hoewel '*nanan*'
superieur is aan '*mone*', verhoudt dit centrum zich tot de rest van het
rijk als *feto* staat tot *mone*. De 'grote vaders' (*amaf naek*),die als

hoofden van de beide stamhelften het buiten van het rijk vertegenwoor-
digen, zijn nl. de bruidgevers van het centrum en als zodanig op hun
beurt superieur. In het centrum bevindt zich echter niet alleen de
vorst, de *Atupas*, maar ook de *Kolnel Bala* (in een huis ten oosten(!) van
het paleis). Over hun relatie zegt Schulte Nordholt het volgende: "In the
relationship *atupas-kolnel* the *atupas* must always be immobile and
responsible for the ritual, whilst the *kolnel*, as his 'mouth' (*mafela*)
speaks on his behalf ..... The *kolnel* is active, executing all of the
atupas' orders. The latter merely exists, he eats and drinks, sits and
sleeps, while the *kolnel* is active ..... Without the *atupas* his position
is inconceivable, but as the *atupas*' right hand he is the supreme
executive authority of the realm" (Schulte Nordholt 1971:202). De ver-
houding tussen beiden wordt aangeduid met *feto* en *mone*, zodat Schulte
Nordholt in zijn reeks opposities *feto/mone* via binnen/buiten in verband
kan brengen met '*passive/active*'.

Er zou zonder twijfel op basis van de schat van gegevens die Schulte
Nordholt aandraagt nog veel meer zijn te zeggen over de semantische
waarde van de tegenstelling *feto/mone*, maar het bovenstaande is genoeg
om aan te tonen dat het begrippenpaar in het symbolisch *parole*, dat is
verbonden met het verwantschapssysteem, het politieke systeem en de
ruimtelijke oriëntatie, een veelheid van betekenissen heeft. De volgende
vraag waarvoor we nu staan is wat er van deze waarde in het concrete
syntagma van het Atoni-huis wordt gerealiseerd. We mogen nl. verwachten
dat in het concrete symbolisch *parole*, evenals in het linguïstisch
parole,[16] slechts een deel van de totale waarde van de termen zal worden
gerealiseerd. Geheel in overeenstemming hiermee benadrukt ook Turner
dat symbolen weliswaar vaak sterk polyseem van karakter zijn, maar dat
in de context van een concreet ritueel meestal slechts een deel van het
semantisch veld van de rituele symbolen zal worden gemobiliseerd (Turner
1967:51). Als we ons dan opnieuw beperken tot het begrippenpaar *feto/mone*
dan valt het op dat de associatie van *feto/mone* met de windrichtingen en
de daaraan verbonden connotaties van kwaad/goed en dood/leven althans in
het geval van het door Cunningham beschreven huis in het prinsdom
Amarasi, niet sterk ontwikkeld lijkt. De associatie van *feto/mone* met
west/oost en dood/leven lijkt in het geheel niet te spelen en die met
noord/zuid maar in zeer beperkte mate. Immers, de voorkant van het huis
wordt wel 'zuiden' (*ne'u*) genoemd, en is als 'buiten-gedeelte' (*si'u*)
geassocieerd met mannelijk, maar de noordelijke achterkant van het huis
is niet expliciet vrouwelijk. Dat kan dan ook moeilijk zolang de achter-

kant van het huis, extern gezien, geen specifieke kenmerken heeft, zoals
de voorkant die heeft.[17]

Over de combinatieregels die het syntagma de vorm geven die het heeft,
zou zeer veel te zeggen zijn. Ik moet hier echter volstaan met enkele
hoofdlijnen. Het is duidelijk dat het huis in de eerste plaats een
utilitaire functie heeft. Het dient om te slapen, voedsel te bereiden,
de voorraden te bewaren, gasten te ontvangen, etc. Dat betekent dat er
een haard, een watervat, slaapplaatsen, bergplaatsen en een plaats voor
gasten in aanwezig moeten zijn. Ook de constructie stelt bepaalde eisen:
de dakconstructie moet bijv. stevig door palen worden gedragen. Door hun
plaatsing in het geheel worden echter de verschillende elementen in het
geval van het Atoni-huis tot dragers van betekenis (d.w.z. tot 'tekens'
als een combinatie van *signifiant* en *signifié*). Die betekenis spruit
steeds voort uit de relatie die een element heeft met de andere elemen-
ten, in dit geval vooral oppositionele relaties. Het huis staat in een
ruimte waarin de windrichtingen een bepaalde symbolische waarde hebben
en dus in het bewustzijn van de bouwers natuurlijkerwijs een noord-,
oost-, zuid- en westzijde. De vraag waar de deur te plaatsen is daarmee
niet meer een zuiver utilitaire. Het ligt immers voor de hand de deur
naar een 'goede' zijde aan te brengen, d.w.z. aan de oost- of zuidzijde.
Aangezien 'de zon het huis niet mag binnen komen' blijft nog slechts de
zuidzijde over. Als eenmaal de plaats van de deur is bepaald, volgt een
belangrijk deel van de rest van de constructie en de inrichting vanzelf,
omdat nu duidelijk is wat links is en wat rechts, en wat buiten is en
wat binnen. De verschillende onderdelen van de inrichting en de con-
structie worden nu afgetast op hun potentiële betekenis in het kader
van die categorieën en aan de hand daarvan een plaats toegewezen. De
voorgalerij, de plaats waar men gasten 'van buiten' ontvangt, staat vóór
de deur, maar onder het dak. Als zodanig is het een overgang tussen het
'binnen' van het huis en het 'buiten' van het erf. Als zich op de voor-
galerij slechts één bank bevindt, dan staat deze rechts, omdat die bank
de plaats is waar men gasten ontvangt.

In de binnenruimte wordt de grote rustbank, waar de voornaamste voor-
raden en de gereedschappen worden bewaard, rechts geplaatst, want mannen
zijn verantwoordelijk voor de voedselverschaffing. Als zodanig staat hij
tegenover de haard en de dienbank die zich in de linkerhelft bevinden
en waar de vrouwen het voedsel bereiden. De gasten die tot het binnen
worden toegelaten - de bruidgevers - zullen op deze, de meest eervolle,
plaats in het huis worden uitgenodigd. Ten opzichte van hun gasten

moeten de gastheren zich verlagen, ze blijven aan de linkerkant, in
gebogen houding en bedienen hun gasten (Cunningham 1964:59). Vandaar
dat het grote platform ook in oppositie staat tot de (lagere) slaapbank
van de heer en de vrouw des huizes. Die bank bevindt zich dan ook in het
inferieure linker, vrouwelijke deel van het huis.

De constructie van het huis is gebaseerd op vier hoofdpalen. Een van
die palen is de vrouwelijke hoofdpaal, het rituele centrum van het huis
en de plaats van de toegang tot de zolder, waar de maîs- en rijstvoor-
raden worden bewaard en die slechts door bepaalde personen mag worden
betreden. Deze paal bevindt zich binnen en staat als zodanig als vrouwe-
lijk tegenover de mannelijke offerpaal buiten. Bij de nadere bepaling
welke van de vier palen nu de vrouwelijke hoofdpaal is, speelt opnieuw
weer de tegenstelling links/rechts als *feto/mone* een grote rol. De
hoofdpaal dient als *feto* in het linker gedeelte van het huis te staan.
Hij verhoudt zich volgens Schulte Nordholt (1971:429) tot de vergelijk-
bare paal in het rechter gedeelte als *feto* staat tot *mone*. Maar wáár in
het vrouwelijke gedeelte hoort de hoofdpaal thuis, in het voorste of in
het achterste gedeelte? De Atoni plaatsen hem in het voorste gedeelte,
bij de deur, d.w.z. in de superieure voorkant van het huis, en niet
achterin, bij de haard en het watervat.[18]

De bovenstaande observaties - die noodzakelijkerwijs fragmentarisch
zijn - maken duidelijk op welke wijze in het Atoni-huis de relaties
zoals die bestaan tussen de termen van het classificatorisch systeem
" .... are expressed through a whole set of convergent signs which
establish the relationships at the same time as receiving their meaning
from them".[19] Het blijkt inderdaad mogelijk dat huis te zien als een
symbolisch syntagma dat op zijn semantisch aspect kan worden
geanalyseerd.

Maar als we over de semantische betekenis van de elementen van het
huis kunnen spreken, hoe staat het dan met de verwijzende betekenis?
Deze vraag is op het niveau van de betekenende eenheden slechts van
beperkt belang. Zo min als alle elementen van een zin direct verwijzen
naar een bepaald gegeven in de buitentalige werkelijkheid, behoeft dat
het geval te zijn met de elementen van het huis. In de beperkte opzet
van deze studie kan deze vraag slechts terloops worden gesteld. Toch is
het van belang er even bij stil te staan, omdat de vraag naar de status
van het begrip symbool in dit kader thuishoort. Zoals we zagen kan de
verwijzende betekenis van een element van een syntagma niet anders zijn
dan een 'zaak' in de buitentalige werkelijkheid waarnaar dat element

verwijst. Een betekenende eenheid die staat voor iets dat zich bevindt
in de werkelijkheid waarover door middel van het symbolisch *parole* wordt
gecommuniceerd, zou dus per definitie een symbool moeten worden genoemd.

Zo kunnen we bijv. stellen dat de zolder (*po'af*) in de context van
het huis staat voor de hemel. De zolder kan daarom worden gezien als
een *symbool* van de hemel. Dat symbool-karakter ontleent de zolder dan
overigens niet aan iets dat hij op zichzelf is, maar aan zijn relatieve
positie in het geheel. Er zijn echter ook elementen in het huis die niet
alleen en uitsluitend betekenis hebben vanwege de positie die ze innemen
ten opzichte van andere elementen in de totale structuur van het huis.
Dat geldt bijv. voor de haard en het watervat. Beide elementen zijn niet
vrouwelijk omdat ze 'links' in het huis staan, maar ze staan links omdat
ze 'vrouwelijk' zijn. Ze hebben dus een symbolisch gehalte dat
logischerwijze voorafgaat aan het huis als syntagma. Niet van alle
elementen van het Atoni-huis kan dus worden gezegd dat ze geen
intrinsieke betekenis hebben. Voor het grootste gedeelte van het huis
geldt dat echter wel: de eventuele verwijzende betekenis van bepaalde
elementen (zoals bijv. die van de zolder) is doorgaans gebaseerd op de
aan de structuur van het syntagma ontleende semantische betekenis.

Nu we ons oordeel hebben gevormd omtrent de betekenis van de elementen
waaruit het huis-syntagma is opgebouwd, wordt het tijd na te gaan wat nu
wel de betekenis kan zijn van het syntagma als zodanig. Anders dan bij
de elementen zal hier het zwaartepunt liggen bij de vraag naar de
verwijzende betekenis. Als we een Atoni-huis *parole* noemen, dan zullen
we ook iets moeten kunnen zeggen over de 'boodschap' die door middel
van zulk een huis wordt doorgegeven. Bij het beantwoorden van deze vraag
zal ik opnieuw allereerst aandacht geven aan de betekenis die voortvloeit
uit de structuur van het syntagma als zodanig, om eerst daarna na te gaan
welke andere betekenissen in de totale 'communicatiewaarde' meespelen.

Om te beginnen zien zowel Cunningham als Schulte Nordholt het Atoni-
huis als een expressie van de basisprincipes van de sociale, de politieke
en de cosmologische orde. Cunningham zegt hierover het volgende: "The
house, like ritual, may be an effective means to communicate ideas
between generations in a preliterate society. The Atoni of Indonesian
Timor do not build houses to express abstract notions: they build homes.
However, they do so in a way thought and managed by elders, according
to rules regarded as a vital part of their heritage, and houses follow
patterns, not individual whim ..... To the question why a particular

order is necessary, one simple answer predominates: ..... this is the
..... order ..... I believe that order in building expresses ideas
symbolically and the house depicts them vividly for every individual
from birth to death. Furthermore, order concerns not just discrete ideas
or symbols, but a system; and the system expresses both principles of
classification and a value for classification *per se*, the definition of
unity and difference" (1964:34). Ook Schulte Nordholt is van mening dat:
"The structure of the house embodies the cosmic and the social order".
Volgens hem zijn het huis en de *lopo* (het gemeenschapshuis en het voor-
raadhuis) voor de Atoni "..... a book in which the order of this world
is recorded. They are the reflection and embodiment of the categories
of this thinking" (1971:432).

Hoe voor de hand liggend ook, zulke conclusies roepen toch nogal wat
vragen op. Het huis is dus een effectief middel om ideeën te communi-
ceren, zo zegt Cunningham. Die ideeën blijken dan met name principes van
classificatie en de waarde van classificatie als zodanig te zijn. Dat-
gene wat de Atoni in zijn huis als in een open boek afleest is volgens
Schulte Nordholt de orde van zijn wereld en de categorieën van zijn
denken. Maar kan het worden volgehouden dat de boodschap van een bepaald
syntagma gelegen is in het systeem zelf? Voor wat betreft taal zou dit
onzin zijn: de boodschap van een bepaalde zin ligt in datgene wat wordt
gezegd en niet in het feit dat die zin aan dat taalsysteem op een
bepaalde wijze concreet gestalte geeft. Men kan zich daarom afvragen of
het spreken over 'orde', 'classificatieprincipes', 'denkcategorieën',
etc. als de boodschap van het huis in zijn kwaliteit van semiologisch
syntagma, wel juist is. De boodschap die middels de code van de orde van
het huis wordt doorgegeven zou dan dus slechts diezelfde code zijn. De
orde in het Atoni-huis zou dan immers niets anders dan zichzelf betekenen.
The medium is the message!

Er is in dit geval echter toch alle reden zich af te vragen of *the
medium* ('de code') niet inderdaad een *message* heeft. Voor wat betreft
taal mag het idee dat het systeem een boodschap zou hebben dan absurd
zijn, voor classificatiesysteem ligt dat anders. Een classificatiesysteem
is immers een systeem van concreet denken waarvan de categorieën zijn
ontleend aan natuurlijke en sociale gegevens. De wijze waarop de
verschillende categorieën van het classificatiesysteem zich tot elkaar
verhouden (de 'waarde' die ze in het systeem hebben), hangt daarom ten
nauwste samen met de visie die men heeft op kosmos en samenleving. Die
categorieën zijn niet mentale termen van een abstract systeem, maar een

belichaming van de sociale en cosmische orde. En die orde is niet,
zoals een grammatica, een waardevrije, feitelijke zaak, maar een positief
gegeven dat tegenover de wanorde, de chaos staat. Het is de goede, de
morele orde. Kan men van het taalsysteem zeggen dat het slechts vorm
is,[20] de orde die in het classificatiesysteem gestalte krijgt, is juist
zeer betekenisvol, omdat ze de rechte relatie aangeeft die er tussen
sociale groeperingen en sociale posities (bruidnemers/bruidgevers;
mannen/vrouwen; *atupas/kolnel bala*, etc.), tussen cosmische gegevenheden
(zoals hemel/aarde; zee/land, etc.) en tussen mens en cosmos, niet alleen
bestaat, maar ook behóórt te bestaan.

Als dus het classificatiesysteem meer is dan slechts een code, als
het uitdrukking is van een *worldview* en als zodanig ook een normatief
gegeven, dan kan van een 'realisering' van die orde in een concreet
syntagma, zoals dat van het huis, worden gezegd dat het drager is van
een boodschap. Het huis is dan immers een toonbeeld van orde. Door aan
die orde op een bepaalde manier concreet gestalte te geven, past de mens
zich in in de orde die ten grondslag ligt aan de relaties tussen de
mensen onderling en de relaties tussen mens en cosmos. Hij bevestigt
daarmee niet alleen de feitelijkheid maar ook de juistheid van die orde.
Hij verricht daarmee dus een veelzeggende en symbolische handeling. Een
handeling waaraan, evenals bij een ritueel, een zekere *efficacy* kan
worden toegeschreven. Door zijn huis te bouwen volgens de regels van de
orde, door zich dus overeenkomstig de orde te gedragen, mag de mens nl.
verwachten dat het hem goed zal gaan in dit leven.[21]

Het is overigens wellicht mogelijk ook in een meer specifieke zin te
spreken van een boodschap. Cunningham vestigt er nl. de aandacht op dat
het Atoni-huis "..... is set in opposition to the sun, sky or day (all
neno in Atoni). It is segregated from all three, windowless and dark,
and even in daytime its light and heat are generated by the perpetual
fire. The door orientation symbolically blocks the 'sun's way'. The
pervasive interior division, right and left, is then made facing the
door ..... The naming of the two summit beams is opposite: it concerns
an opposition of 'heats', one of the hearth and the other of the sun. The
two 'heats' are symbolically opposed, or separated, by these beams, just
as door orientation blocks the way of the sun. The reader will remember
that one reason for orienting the door southward was 'because the sun
must not enter the house' and that the hearth stones are oriented
toward the back and the door 'so that heat may go out'. The opposition
of the house to the sky is illustrated further in the naming of the two

linked cross-spars at the roof edge, the *tnat oe* (hold water). The
cross-spars do not literally 'hold water'; they are not gutters. Rain
water, for which most prayers to the Divinity are made, is symbolically
kept from touching the ground by the house, the epitome of segregation
of sky and earth" (1964:50). Cunningham zegt op basis van deze
observaties: "The Atonihouse is a model of the cosmos. However, it is
more than simply analogous to the universe. It is integrated within it"
(idem). Daarmee is echter niet meer dan een eerste aanzet gegeven voor
een meer preciese formulering van wat de Atoni nu eigenlijk willen zeggen
door hun huis te bouwen zoals ze dat doen. Van iemand die geen diepgaande
kennis heeft van de symbolische code van de Atoni-cultuur kan moeilijk
verwacht worden dat hij zich wèl aan zulk een formulering zal wagen.
Daarom wil ik mij tot een enkele kanttekening beperken.

In zijn studie van het Berber-huis probeert Bourdieu nadrukkelijk te
komen tot een omschrijving van datgene wat door middel van dat huis wordt
gezegd. Ook het Berber-huis staat in oppositie tot de ruimte waarin het
is gebouwd, maar op een heel andere wijze dan het Atoni-huis. De interne
oriëntatie staat niet dwars op de externe oriëntatie, maar is er de
exacte omkering van. Vandaar dat Bourdieu kan zeggen dat de drempel van
de (op het oosten geplaatste) deur de plaats is 'waar de wereld wordt
omgekeerd'. Hij zegt van de verhouding tussen de ruimte van het huis
(het domein van de vrouw) en die van de buitenwereld (het domein van de
man) het volgende: "The two symmetrical and inverse spaces are not
interchangeable but hierarchized, the internal space being nothing but
the inverted image or the mirror-reflection of the male space. It is not
by chance that only the direction which the door faces is explicitly
prescribed, whereas the interior organization of space is never
consciously perceived and is even less desired to be so organized by the
inhabitants. The orientation of the house is fundamentally defined from
the outside, from the point of view of men and, if one may say so, by
men and for men, as the place from which men come out. The house is an
empire within an empire, but one which always remains subordinate
because, even though it presents all the properties and all the
relations which define the archetypal world, it remains a reversed world,
an inverted reflection. Man is the lamp of the outside and woman the
lamp of the inside" (Bourdieu 1973:109-110).

Voor Bourdieu wordt er dus door middel van de tegenstelling tussen
het huis en de buitenwereld iets gezegd over de verhouding tussen
mannen en vrouwen en hun plaats in de samenleving. In het Atoni-huis

lijkt het om iets heel anders te gaan. Wordt er in de scheiding tussen
de (bij de hemelheer behorende) hemel en de (door de mensen bewoonde)
aarde en in de oppositie van zonnevuur en haardvuur niet iets gezegd
over de plaats van de mens in de cosmos, de rol die hem daarin is toe-
gedacht en de juiste verhouding tussen hem en de hem omringende machten?
Verder dan deze vragenderwijze gestelde suggestie wil ik hier niet gaan.
Het onder woorden brengen van datgene wat er middels symbolische *'parole'*
wordt gezegd is een hachelijke zaak en kan slechts tot een goed einde
worden gebracht door onderzoekers die zich een diepgaande kennis hebben
verworven van de desbetreffende cultuur. Niettemin hoop ik hiermee aan-
nemelijk te hebben gemaakt dat we op basis van een analyse van de
structuur van een syntagma kunnen komen tot inzicht omtrent de
semantische betekenis van dat syntagma.[22]

CONCLUSIES

Welke conclusies kunnen we nu trekken uit het voorgaande? Ik meen dat
volgehouden kan worden dat een analyse volgens de lijnen die ik uitzette
inderdaad kan worden gekarakteriseerd als 'nieuw' en 'consistent'. In
een semiologische benadering wordt 'systeem' en 'spraak' van elkaar
onderscheiden. Daardoor wordt de analyse van paradigmatische relaties
tussen de elementen van een symbolisch systeem onderscheiden van de
analyse van concrete syntagmatische reeksen, zoals rituelen, mythen, en
- in ons voorbeeld - huizen. Het wordt duidelijk welke theoretische
status de rijen binaire opposities hebben die worden gehanteerd bij de
analyse van symbolische classificaties. Het gaat daar immers, zoals we
zagen, om het opsporen van de waarde van de termen van dat systeem en
het is ook duidelijk in welke relatie dat staat tot de analyse van
concrete vormen van symboliek (om de semantische betekenis van de
betekenende eenheden van syntagmatische reeksen op te sporen is kennis
van de waarde van die eenheden essentieel). Door uit te gaan van het
systeemkarakter van symboliek en af te zien van de directe verwijzing
naar de buitensymbolische werkelijkheid waarover met behulp van symbolen
wordt gecommuniceerd, wordt het onderscheid *signifié/signifiant* nood-
zakelijk. Een nadere analyse van de relatie tussen deze beide aspecten
van de betekenende eenheden van symbolische systemen maakt duidelijk
op welke wijze taal en symboliek van elkaar verschillen. (Taal
communiceert over de werkelijkheid door middel van een autonoom systeem
van tekens, in de symboliek worden die tekens ontleend aan de werkelijk-
heid zelf.) Het blijkt bovendien dat het nuttig is ook in symboliek een

onderscheid te maken tussen de semantische betekenis en de verwijzende betekenis, de totale communicatiewaarde, waarvan de semantische betekenis slechts een onderdeel is. Zo kan bijv. een duidelijker beeld worden verkregen van de verschillende niveaus van betekenis die Turner hanteert. Bovendien komt zo opnieuw het verschil tussen taal en symboliek weer in het vizier. Het blijkt nl. dat met betrekking tot symboliek niet over denotatie en connotatie kan worden gesproken op de wijze waarop dat ten aanzien van taal wordt gedaan.

Maar, ook al kan men met behulp van een semiologische benadering, zoals die door mij in grote lijnen werd geschetst, een aantal theoretische begrippen duidelijker dan voorheen in een samenhangend patroon krijgen, alomvattend is die benadering toch niet te noemen. Er is een heel essentieel gegeven van symboliek dat grotendeels buiten de *scope* van een semiologische benadering lijkt te vallen, nl. de traditionele definitie van symbool als 'iets' dat staat voor 'iets anders'. Als we symbool omschrijven als een teken in semiologische zin, dan wordt de prioriteit van de verwijzing vervangen door die van de systematische betrekkingen en is er van een symbool in de traditionele betekenis in feite geen sprake meer. Strikt semiologisch gezien zou men een symbool kunnen omschrijven als drager van verwijzende betekenissen - en meer specifiek van een boodschap. Maar daarmee zou men geen recht doen aan de traditionele omschrijving. Zulk een omschrijving blijft te zeer steken in de cognitieve sfeer. Het zo essentiële gegeven van het tegenwoordig stellen van het gesymboliseerde, dat een vooronderstelling vormt voor de 'werkzaamheid' (*efficacy*) van symbolen, wordt daarin onvoldoende verdisconteerd. In een semiologische visie is voor het, door iemand als Douglas zo zeer benadrukte, 'magische' karakter van symbolen onvoldoende plaats ingeruimd.

De uitgangsvragen van deze bijdrage worden dus niet alleen bevestigend beantwoord, ook al valt de balans over het geheel niet ongunstig uit. Er is echter nog een ander element dat we in onze beschouwing dienen te betrekken. In mijn inleiding op de centrale paragraaf waarin ik een semiologische visie op symboliek ontwikkelde, stelde ik dat men bij de oordeelvorming over de waarde van een linguïstisch analysemodel als leidende analogie voor de analyse van symboliek, niet alleen de eigen aard van symboliek in vergelijking met taal in het oog moet houden, maar ook moet bedenken dat de doelstellingen van de antropoloog niet noodzakelijkerwijze samenvallen met die van de linguïst. De linguïst kan het zich veroorloven zich te concentreren op het systeem en de structuur,

omdat in principe de betekenis van het concrete *parole* wel duidelijk is.
Hij kan zelfs, zoals Leech dat in navolging van Chomski doet, bij het
analyseren van semantische structuren uitgaan van het intuïtief begrijpen
van wat er met een bepaalde zin wordt gezegd. Voor de antropoloog liggen
de zaken volledig anders. Voor hem is het achterhalen van de betekenis
van concrete symboliek juist een van zijn belangrijkste, zo niet de al-
lerbelangrijkste opgave. Op zijn best (wanneer hij, zoals Turner bij de
Ndembu, uitvoerig commentaar van de mensen zelf krijgt op de betekenis
van de symbolen die ze hanteren) is die kennis van de inhoud van wat er
wordt 'gezegd' fragmentarisch aanwezig; op zijn slechtst (wanneer hij,
zoals Sperber bij de Dorze in Ethiopië, geen ander commentaar loskrijgt
dan 'het is gewoonte') is die volledig onbekend.

Anders dan de structurele linguïst die zich afvraagt hoe er middels
taal kan worden gecommuniceerd en daarom al zijn aandacht richt op de
structuur van de taalcode, is de antropoloog dus bovenal geïnteresseerd
in de vraag *wat* er middels symboliek wordt gezegd. Zijn belangstelling
gaat minder uit naar de code alswel naar de boodschap. Maar aangezien
die boodschap veelal niet expliciet aanwezig is in het bewustzijn van
degenen van wie het symbolisch *parole* afkomstig is, is een nadere analyse
van de code toch vaak een onmisbare omweg. Via zulk een analyse kan men
zich immers inzicht verschaffen in de waarde van de termen van het des-
betreffend symboolsysteem en kennis vergaren omtrent de betekenis-
relaties die het semantisch aspect van het systeem bepalen en met behulp
daarvan het symbolisch *parole* ontraadselen. En juist voor de analyse van
die code is kennis van de methoden en ideeën van de structurele linguïs-
tiek van groot belang. Wat dat betreft is de positie van de symbolisch
antropoloog te vergelijken met die van iemand die de teksten van een tot
nog toe onbekende taal probeert te ontcijferen en daartoe probeert de
structuur van die taal te achterhalen. De antropoloog dient naar mijn
mening zich niet zozeer te richten op het symbolisch systeem ter wille
van dat systeem zelf, alswel omdat hij door middel van kennis van die
code beter in staat is symbolisch *parole* te ontcijferen.

Nu moet worden toegegeven dat het maar al te veel voorkomt dat
antropologen zozeer geboeid raken door het symboolsysteem dat ze aan het
parole niet meer toekomen. De ontwikkeling die Lévi-Strauss in de loop
van de jaren doormaakte is mijns inziens daarvan tot op zekere hoogte
een voorbeeld. Op zichzelf is zo'n ontwikkeling te begrijpen. Bij de
analyse van een symbolisch systeem kan men immers maximaal gebruik maken
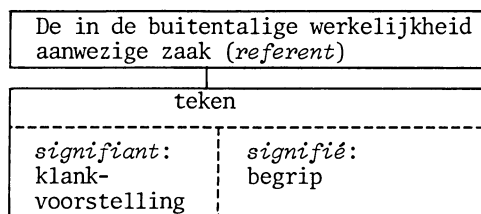van de verworvenheden van de structurele linguïstiek. Maar ook de

linguïstiek mag niet uit het oog verliezen dat haar onderzoeksobject,
de taal, haar bestaan alleen en uitsluitend dankt aan haar vermogen te
verwijzen naar de buitentalige werkelijkheid. En van niet-talige teken-
complexen dient hetzelfde te worden gezegd: een onderzoek naar hun
systematisch karakter gaat noodzakelijkerwijze uit van hun belang voor
communicatie over een werkelijkheid die buiten die tekens-als-tekens is
gelegen. Zolang dit grondgegeven in het oog wordt gehouden, is er geen
bezwaar tegen wanneer sommigen hun aandacht vooral richten op de 'hoe'-
vraag. Als echter het 'wat' geheel achter de horizon verdwijnt en de
vraag 'hoe' symbolen betekenen dreigt te ontaarden in de vraag hoe
symbolische systemen in elkaar zitten en hoe ze 'werken', zonder dat de
vraag naar de betekenis nog aan de orde komt, dan zijn de grenzen van
wat ik in dit artikel onder semiologie meende te moeten verstaan over-
schreden. Het bestuderen van 'tekens', zonder na te gaan wat ze
'betekenen', valt naar mijn mening buiten het onderzoeksterrein van de
symbolische antropologie.

Samenvattend meen ik te kunnen concluderen dat er alle reden is om bij
de symbolisch-antropologische theorievorming aandacht te geven aan het
semiologisch perspectief. Bovenstaande analyse heeft ons echter drie
dingen geleerd. Allereerst dat ook in een semiologische visie, waarin
niet alleen 'structuur' maar ook 'betekenis' centraal staat, toch aan
een belangrijk element van symboliek, nl. de werkzaamheid (*efficacy*) van
symbolen niet volledig recht kan worden gedaan. In de tweede plaats dat
het hanteren van een analysemodel, dat is opgebouwd naar analogie van de
structurele linguïstiek, ons opzadelt met een groot aantal terminolo-
gische problemen. Voor het gebruik van een semiologisch begrippenkader
moet maar al te vaak een hoge prijs worden betaald. De mogelijkheid is
daarom niet denkbeeldig dat het hanteren van zulk een kader zoveel
theoretische complicaties met zich meebrengt, dat het de analyse van de
empirie meer frustreert dan dat het nut afwerpt. We zullen daarom steeds
de kosten tegen de baten moeten afwegen. Het zou niet de eerste keer zijn
dat beoefenaren van de sociale wetenschappen zozeer gebiologeerd raken
door hun begrippenapparaat, dat ze aan analyse van de empirie nauwelijks
meer toekomen. In de derde plaats is ons duidelijk geworden dat een
semiologische benadering het gevaar in zich bergt dat men, in navolging
van de structurele linguïstiek, (symbolische) systemen en structuren in
het centrum van de belangstelling plaatst. Daarmee zou echter een
belangrijk deel van de nog jonge traditie van de symbolische antropologie

worden verloochend. Ik denk daarbij met name aan analyses van antropologen als Turner, waaruit duidelijk wordt welk een essentiële rol communicatie middels symbolen in de menselijke interactie speelt, wat het uitwerkt in de sociale structuur en hoe het richting kan geven aan het individuele handelen. Er is alle reden om de mogelijkheden van een semiologische benaderingswijze nader te onderzoeken, zolang dit bijdraagt en juist niet afleidt van vooral dit soort analyses.

NOTEN

1 In een geruchtmakend boek heeft Sperber (1975) recentelijk aannemelijk pogen te maken dat het idee dat symbolen 'betekenen' niet houdbaar is. Hoewel veel van zijn kritiek op wat hij als een 'semiologische' visie op symboliek beschouwt de moeite waard is, meen ik dat het alternatief dat hij geeft - symboliek is een bepaalde vorm van 'kennis' - zich zo ver van het alledaagse zowel als van het antropologisch spraakgebruik verwijdert, dat het moeilijk als een zinnig uitgangspunt voor empirisch onderzoek kan worden aanvaard.

2 De ideeën van De Saussure kunnen als volgt in schema worden gebracht:

De in de buitentalige werkelijkheid aanwezige zaak (*referent*)	
teken	
signifiant: klank-voorstelling	*signifié*: begrip

3 In twee gevallen geldt deze willekeurigheid niet. In de eerste plaats is er het vrij marginale verschijnsel van de klanknabootsende woorden (onomatopeeën). In de tweede plaats - en dit is veel belangrijker - geldt de willekeur niet voor tekens die uit kleinere betekenisdragende elementen zijn opgebouwd. De Saussure noemt deze samengestelde tekens 'gemotiveerd' in onderscheid van de 'niet-gemotiveerde', willekeurige basistekens waaruit ze zijn opgebouwd (Dik en Kooij 1972:57-58).

4 Gasché zegt in dit verband: "Die Radikale Arbitrarität ist ..... die Voraussetzung für die Möglichkeit des Systemcharakters des Zeichens" (1970:319).

5 Hoezeer talen wat dat betreft verschillen in de wijze waarop ze geledingen aanbrengen in de betekenis-dimensie, blijkt wel uit onderstaand schema, waarin de Nederlandse woorden 'hout' en 'bos' in het Engels, Italiaans en Duits ten opzichte van elkaar worden geplaatst (uit Eco 1973:68).

1		legno	Holz	1
2	wood	bosco	Wald	2
3	forest	foresta		3

6 Volgens De Saussure kan *parole* geen object van de taalwetenschap zijn omdat de structurele linguïstiek zich slechts bezighoudt met de *systematische* betrekkingen tussen tekens. In die betrekkingen kunnen, zoals we zagen, twee niveaus worden onderscheiden, nl. het paradigmatisch en syntagmatisch niveau. Het syntagmatisch niveau reguleert de combinatiemogelijkheden van de tekens. Een syntagma kan dan ook worden gezien als een combinatie van tekens en als zodanig is het verwant met 'spraak'. Aangezien echter in de 'spraak' de combinatiemogelijkheden van de taal op velerlei wijzen worden benut en het aantal syntagma's oneindig is, moet de vraag rijzen of, als een linguïstiek van spraak onmogelijk is, niet ook een linguïstiek van het syntagma onmogelijk moet worden geacht. Barthes specificeert daarom in navolging van De Saussure in welk opzicht het syntagma niet als een spraakverschijnsel kan worden beschouwd: "Allereerst omdat er versteende paradigma's bestaan, waaraan het gebruik ons verbiedt iets te veranderen (*en wat dan nog? Kom nou!*) en die buiten het bereik van de combinatorische vrijheid van de spraak liggen (deze stereotypische syntagma's worden dus een soort paradigmatische eenheden); vervolgens omdat de spraaksyntagma's geconstrueerd worden volgens bepaalde regelmatige vormen, die tot de taal behoren (*onleefbaar* wordt gevormd naar *onbewoonbaar, onleesbaar*, enz.)" (Barthes 1970:121). Ook Barthes ziet voor de semiologie vooral perspectief in die versteende syntagma's.

7 Deze visie staat tegenover die van Turner, die stelt dat het (rituele) symbool dient te worden gezien als: "..... the ultimate unit of specific structure in a ritual context" (1970:19). Voor wat betreft de symboliek van de Ndembu is dat wellicht in verregaande mate vol te houden, maar er zijn ook rituelen die als zodanig 'symbolisch' zijn (omdat ze een 'boodschap' doorgeven), maar waarvan de samenstellende elementen toch niet als symbolen kunnen worden gezien. Een voorbeeld hiervan geeft Sperber als hij schrijft over het Dorze-offer (1975:111).

8 Leach (1976:17) gebruikt in plaats van 'concept' ook de uitdrukking 'internalized mental representation'. Die uitdrukking, hoewel omslachtig, geeft, beter dan het woord 'concept', weer wat we ons moeten voorstellen bij het symbolisch *signifié*.

9 Zie Leech 1974:27. Vgl. ook noot 13.

10 Ook van de spraak van de taal zou men kunnen zeggen dat deze een boodschap 'symboliseert'. Dat de linguïstiek bij het spreken over betekenis de *referent* buiten beschouwing pleegt te laten om zich te concentreren op de semantische betekenis, doet niets af aan het feit dat ook taal wordt gebruikt om te 'staan voor' iets anders. Er blijft echter toch verschil met symboliek. De symbolische 'spraak' maakt in het algemeen gebruik van elementen die reeds een betekenis of althans een bestaan hebben los van hun behoren tot het symbolisch systeem en daarom juist de aandacht trekken als dingen die kennelijk (ook nog) voor iets anders staan. Kost het bij taal een aparte denkoperatie om de tekens los te zien van hun verwijzende functie - omdat ze zonder die functie niet zouden bestaan - bij niet-talige tekencomplexen ligt dat anders. Daar is juist dat verwijzende karakter in de eerste instantie het meest intrigerend.

11 Communicatie middels symbolen beweegt zich meestal op een impliciet, half-bewust of zelfs onbewust niveau. Veel van wat wordt 'gezegd', is

niet expliciet aanwezig in de hoofden van de mensen die een mythe
vertellen of een ritueel uitvoeren. Hun commentaar blijft daarom
noodzakelijkerwijze beperkt tot het bewuste gedeelte van de boodschap.

12 Leech onderscheidt naast de denotatieve betekenis in feite een reeks
van associatieve betekenissen. Behalve de connotatieve betekenis noemt
hij bijv. ook affectieve betekenis en de betekenissen die zijn ge-
associeerd met bepaalde typen woordgebruik ('stylistische betekenis')
(1974:26). Al die betekenissen bijeen, de denotatieve zowel als andere
soorten betekenissen noemt Leech de 'communicatiewaarde' (idem:27).

13 Volgens Leech is het onderscheid tussen de taal en de wereld ('the
real world') een essentieel uitgangspunt voor de linguïst die zich
met vrucht wil bezighouden met betekenis. Semantische kennis is dien-
tengevolge principieel verschillend van 'real world knowledge'. Onder
het eerste verstaat hij "..... what it is to 'know a language'
semantically, e.g. to know what is involved in recognizing relations
of meaning between sentences, and in recognizing which sentences are
meaningful and which are not" (1974:9). Daarentegen omschrijft hij
'real world knowledge' als "..... that vast encyclopedic knowledge
of the universe which ..... cannot be part of the study of semantics"
(idem:80). De linguïst beperkt zich tot het bestuderen van wat Leech
de 'semantische competentie' noemt, maar hij geeft toe dat daarmee
slechts een deel van het totale communicatieproces wordt bestreken.
Er is nl. ook nog zoiets als een algemene 'communicatie competentie':
"In a sense, 'real world knowledge' is a kind of competence - part
of a general 'communicative competence' - but insofar as they are
kept apart in theory, linguistic knowledge and 'real world knowledge'
mingle together only on the level of performance" (idem:80). Anders
dan de linguïst moet de antropoloog zich wèl bezighouden met de
algemene communicatiecompetentie. Alleen als hij daar inzicht in
heeft kan hij het menselijk handelen in de eigen cultuur zowel als in
die van anderen begrijpen.

14 Voor een nadere analyse van de betekenisrelaties binnen zulk een
connotatiesysteem zal men overigens wel een meer gedifferentieerd
begrippenapparaat moeten ontwikkelen. Alleen met het vage concept
'associatie' kan men moeilijk uitkomen. Maar nooit zal men daarvoor
het begrip 'representatie' ('verwijzen', 'staan voor', 'symboliseren')
kunnen gebruiken. Dat begrip zal men moeten reserveren voor de
relatie tussen concrete symbolen en symbolische spraak enerzijds en
de zich in de *real world* bevindende *referent*. Doet men dat niet, dan
treedt een heilloze begripsverwarring op.

15 Leech stelt dat de semantiek zich niet zozeer met zinnen bezighoudt,
maar met de betekenis van zinnen. De zin 'Hugo is drawing a cart'
heeft twee betekenissen ('Hugo is drawing a picture of a cart' en
'Hugo is pulling a cart'). Het zijn deze betekenissen die volgens hem
het object van analyse van de semantiek vormen en niet de zin als zo-
danig. In plaats van zinnen spreekt hij daarom van 'beweringen',
'proposities' of in wijdere zin van 'predikaten' (*predications*).

16 Gaschê ziet het teken en de haar constituerende elementen van
signifiant en *signifié* als elementen van *parole*. Het *signifié* is
volgens hem datgene wat van de 'waarde' van een 'term' in de spraak-
handeling wordt gerealiseerd. Hij omschrijft het *signifié* dan ook als
"..... eine begrenzte Realisation des Wertes" (Gaschê 1970:335).

17 Uit bepaalde gegevens van Schulte Nordholt blijkt overigens dat in
   bepaalde gevallen die associatie tussen de windrichtingen en *feto/mone*
   wel degelijk ook met betrekking tot bepaalde huizen wordt gemaakt.
   Hij vermeldt bijv. dat het paleis van de vorst van Kono "..... has a
   masculine door, a men's entrance which is in the front or southern
   wall, and a feminine door, a women's entrance in its rear or northern
   wall" (1971:284). Elders spreekt hij over een sacraal huis in het
   centrum van het prinsdom Beboki waar de bewijzen van de eenheid van
   het rijk en de tekenen der saamhorigheid worden bewaard. Dit huis had
   een deur naar het zuiden, de mannendeur, en aan de westzijde de
   vrouwendeur (idem:244).

18 Op zich blijft de plaatsing van de vrouwelijke hoofdpaal voor in het
   huis vragen oproepen. Het was nl. op zichzelf ook zeer goed denkbaar
   geweest dat hij zich in de achterste helft van het vrouwelijk gedeelte
   zou bevinden. Het idee dat de vrouwelijke hoofdpaal, omdat hij de
   meest belangrijke is, voor in het huis moet worden geplaatst, vinden
   we ook terug in wat Schulte Nordholt vermeldt van de zgn. Neno Beboki
   (zie ook noot 17). In dit sacrale huis staan nl. de beide hoofdpalen
   (die *liurai/sonba'i* worden genoemd) ook in een *feto/mone* relatie tot
   elkaar. Schulte Nordholt zegt in dat verband: "Their position is said
   to be north/south (i.e. feminine/masculine) respectively. But in
   reality the *liurai* pillar is on the southern side near the men's door;
   no one was able to offer an explanation for this." Hij vervolgt dan:
   "The explanation could be that the southern or men's door is the more
   important, just as *liurai* is the more important of the pair ..... "
   (1971:244).

19 Aldus Bourdieu in een uitstekende analyse van het Berber-huis die
   voor een semiologische benadering van symboliek bijzonder verhelderend
   is (Bourdieu 1973:99-100).

20 Overigens kan ook het taalsysteem in bepaalde omstandigheden als
   de belichaming van een 'moral order' worden gezien, nl. als het als
   de taal van beschaafde mensen wordt gecontrasteerd met het 'gebrabbel'
   en de 'dierlijke klanken' van anderen, buiten het eigen cultuurgebied.

21 Dit alles betekent dat ik mij niet kan verenigen met de visie van
   Cunningham, dat het in het Atoni-huis niet alleen gaat om bepaalde
   classificatieprincipes, maar bovenal om de waarde van classificatie
   als zodanig (zie Cunningham 1964:67). Ik meen integendeel dat in het
   Atoni-huis wel degelijk de juistheid van een heel bepáálde ordening
   wordt bevestigd. Een ordening waarin bijv. de basiscategorieën welis-
   waar in complementaire paren zijn geordend, maar waarin, zoals
   Cunningham zelf zegt: "The premise of inequality is pervasive." Een
   ordening dus, waaraan een bepaald 'ethos' ten grondslag ligt.

22 Ik ben in het voorgaande slechts ingegaan op de semantische betekenis
   van het huis-syntagma. Die betekenis is zonder twijfel de kern van de
   'boodschap' van het syntagma, maar valt daar niet mee samen. Om de
   totale communicatiewaarde in kaart te brengen zouden we echter meer
   moeten weten van de wijze waarop het huis bij allerlei gelegenheden
   concreet wordt gebruikt en de wijze waarop het in zijn symbolische
   hoedanigheid door de mensen zelf wordt ervaren. Over dat laatste kan
   hier niets naders worden gezegd, hoe belangrijk juist deze ervarings-
   component, met alle emoties die ermee verbonden zijn, ook zijn moge.
   Over het eerste - het gebruik van het huis - is veel meer informatie

beschikbaar. Reeds bij de beschrijving van het huis werd bijv. het een en ander gezegd over de plaats waar de verschillende categorieën bewoners slapen en de plaatsen waar de verschillende categorieën gasten kunnen worden ontvangen. Een meer gedetailleerde weergave daarvan zou mij in het bestek van deze bijdrage te ver voeren. Ik moet daarvoor verwijzen naar de studie van Cunningham. Hier wil ik volstaan met de constatering dat ook dit soort gegevens informatie verschaft over datgene waar het in het huis om gaat: de goede orde in de cosmos en de menselijke samenleving, het ideaalbeeld van een harmonieuze wereld waarin ieder zijn eigen plaats heeft en die ook kent.

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L. ONVLEE

MANNELIJK EN VROUWELIJK IN DE SOCIALE ORGANISATIE VAN SOEMBA

Wanneer we spreken over sociale organisatie, dan gaat het over de wijze
waarop mensen met elkaar samenleven, het netwerk van de draden waarmee
mensen en groepen van mensen, al naar afstamming, stand, sexe, leeftijd,
enz. aan elkaar zijn verbonden, zo dat elk zijn plaats heeft en kent
tegenover de ander en dan in verband met die plaats ook een taak in het
geheel heeft te vervullen. Zó dat ieder weet wat in de verschillende
betrekkingen waarin zijn leven is gehecht, van hem wordt verwacht en
waarop hij of zij van de kant van de ander mag rekenen, al is het
natuurlijk niet zeker dat deze verwachtingen in alle gevallen zullen
worden vervuld.

Het behoort toch tot de eigen aard van de hier geldende regels, dat
deze niet dwingend, maar in gehoorzaamheid van de betrokkenen worden
gerealiseerd. Samenleven is gestructureerd leven in verantwoordelijkheid.

Daarmee hangt samen wat men wel genoemd heeft het selectief karakter
van het cultuurleven. Meermalen gebruikt men dan de analogie met de taal.
Er is bijvoorbeeld een onafzienbare veelheid van klanken, die fysiolo-
gisch beschouwd door de mens kan worden voortgebracht, maar elke taal
gebruikt daarvan slechts een zeer kleine selectie, een selectie die
geordend is naar een bepaald systeem, waarin orde en regel is te ont-
dekken. Elke taal realiseert dus slechts bepaalde mogelijkheden uit veel
meerdere. En wat nu geldt van de taal, geldt ook op elk terrein van de
levensuitingen van een bepaalde mensengemeenschap, ook op het gebied van
de samenleving.

We komen hier in aanraking met het feit en de vraag van de eenheid en
de verscheidenheid in het culturele leven der mensen; een eenheid die
zich alleen in de verscheidenheid laat kennen en een verscheidenheid die
juist aan die eenheid als verscheidenheid openbaar wordt, zich daar-
tegen aftekent. De vraag naar de verhouding tussen die beide, welke het
fundament is van de eenheid en uit welke factoren de verscheidenheid
resulteert, is een vraag die de antropologie van de aanvang af tot nu
toe heeft beziggehouden. Op de historie daarvan gaan we niet in, ik
noem alleen het bekende artikel van Murdock, 'A Common Denominator of

Cultures'. Het gaat daarin om de vraag of er een algemene noemer is
waarop alle culturen kunnen worden betrokken. Hij noemt in alfabetische
orde en zonder volledig te willen zijn, een zeventig onderwerpen die in
zijn analyse van meer dan tweehonderd culturen telkens op een of andere
wijze aan de orde komen. Het valt daarbij op dat Murdock als een van de
gegevens die overal wordt aangetroffen de gezinskern noemt, de eenheid
van man, vrouw en kinderen, ook al is de plaats van dit gezin in het
geheel van de samenleving hier en ginds zeer onderscheiden.

Murdock komt dan tot de conclusie dat datgene wat de culturen gemeen
hebben een zekere classificatie is. Het leven is gegroepeerd om bepaalde
kernen, zodat de categorieën waaronder de gegevens kunnen worden geordend
in vele opzichten gelijk zijn. Het schijnt of overal het cultuurleven
van de mens tenslotte is gebouwd naar wat hij noemt "a universal culture
pattern", "a basic plan", een algemeen fundamenteel patroon dat zich
overal laat herkennen. Dit kan geen vrucht zijn van opzettelijke
menselijke activiteit, niet afhankelijk zijn van bepaalde geografische
of historische factoren, maar moet berusten op een "substantial
foundation", op een wezenlijk naar de aard van de zaak gegeven fundament,
dat naar hij meent dient te worden gezocht in "the fundamental biological
and psychological (ik zou daaraan willen toevoegen: 'spiritual') nature
of man and the universal conditions of human existence". Hiermee is
feitelijk uitgesproken dat we bij de vraag naar de culturele activiteit
van de mens uitkomen bij de vraag naar de mens en zijn plaats in deze
geschapen werkelijkheid.

Naast of liever in deze eenheid is de verscheidenheid niet minder
wezenlijk kenmerk van het menselijk cultuurleven. Deze verscheidenheid
treffen we niet alleen aan bij geografisch ver van elkaar verwijderde
bevolkingsgroepen, maar ook bij groepen die cultureel na verwant zijn
en geografisch niet ver van elkaar verwijderd. Om dit te adstrueren wil
ik hier nader ingaan op de verhouding van mannelijk en vrouwelijk in
de sociale organisatie op Soemba.

Mannelijk en vrouwelijk is een onderscheiding die ons zeker in aan-
raking brengt met de "universal conditions of human existence". Denk
maar aan het gezin, waarin we al dadelijk de verbinding van mannelijk
en vrouwelijk vinden. Maar het geldt niet alleen voor het gezin; deze
onderscheiding heeft betekenis voor het geheel van de samenleving.

Reeds eerder heb ik er op gewezen van hoe grote waarde deze
verbinding (tevens onderscheiding) mannelijk - vrouwelijk, *mini - kawini*,
voor de bewoners van Soemba is om uitdrukking te geven aan de relatie

tussen zaken die in hun verbondenheid onderscheiden en in hun onderscheid
verbonden zijn (Onvlee 1949). Van de dagelijks gebruikte *sirih pinang
kuta winu* geldt de *sirih* als mannelijk, de *pinang* als vrouwelijk; het
stampblok, *ngohungu*, waarin de rijst wordt gestampt is vrouwelijk tegen-
over de stamper, *alu*, die mannelijk is; rechts, *kawana*, valt onder de
categorie *mini*; links, *kalai*, onder *kawini*. Toen wij bij de vertaling
van het N.T. toekwamen aan de woorden "Laat uw linkerhand niet weten
wat uw rechterhand doet" (Mattheüs 6:3), heb ik mijn assistenten
gevraagd of zij in hun taal een dergelijke uitdrukking kenden. Dat bleek
zo te zijn, maar om daarmee te zeggen: Vertel aan je vrouw je geheimen
niet. Het oosten, *la pahunga lodu*, de plaats waar de zon opgaat, geldt
als *mini*; het westen, *la patama lodu*, waar de zon ondergaat, als *kawini*;
het luchtruim, de hemel, *awangu*, is mannelijk tegenover de aarde, *tana*,
als vrouwelijk en van de regen kan worden gesproken als *wai palinju
awangu*, hemelsperma. In het luchtruim vinden we *ina lodu*, moeder zon,
naast *ama wulangu*, vader maan. Van de geestelijke machten, die het
menselijk leven bepalen zijn de *ndewa* vrouwelijk naast de mannelijke
pahomba. De naam van het Hoogste Wezen in West Soemba luidt *Ina Kalada,
Ama Kalada*, Grote Moeder, Grote Vader, terwijl men in Oost Soemba spreekt
van *na Mawulu tau, na Maji tau*, Die de mensen maakt, Die de mensen
vlecht, waarbij *wulu*, maken, een mannelijke en *ji*, vlechten, een
vrouwelijke bezigheid is.

De sociale realisering van *mini* - *kawini* is nu te vinden in de relatie
tussen de verschillende verwantengroepen. Over heel Soemba vinden we een
patrilineaal verwantschapssysteem. De verwantengroep waartoe men behoort
wordt bepaald door afstamming in vaderlijke linie. Deze verwantschap
spreekt zo sterk, dat generatiegenoten binnen dezelfde verwantengroep
(*kabisu*), ook waar de gemeenschappelijke stamvader generaties ver terug
ligt, tegenover elkaar staan als broeder en zuster tussen welke een
huwelijk is uitgesloten. Deze *kabisu* is dus exogaam, d.w.z. een
huwelijkspartner moet worden gezocht buiten de eigen *kabisu*.

Soemba is verdeeld over een aantal woongebieden, landschappen. Elk
van deze landschappen is een plaats van samenwonen van een aantal van
dergelijke patrilineaal georganiseerde verwantengroepen. In de vroegere
stamdorpen waarin meerdere *kabisu* samenwoonden, had elke *kabisu* zijn
eigen *talóra* (Oost Soemba) of *nátara* (West Soemba), een dorpsplein,
waar omheen de huizen waren gebouwd en waarop men de stenen graf-
monumenten van de gestorvenen vond. De bewoners van een dorp bestaan
dus uit enkele generaties patrilineale verwanten, plus de ingetrouwde

vrouwen.

Voor zijn functioneren heeft dus de *kabisu* een andere *kabisu* nodig, waar huwelijkspartners voor de jonge mannen worden gevonden. En ook daarmee is de zaak niet klaar, want deze verhouding is niet omkeerbaar en er is dus miństens een derde *kabisu* nodig, waarheen de jonge vrouwen kunnen worden uitgehuwelijkt. Zo zou men de samenleving kunnen zien als verticaal verdeeld in bijvoorbeeld vier *kabisu*, die dan horizontaal worden doorsneden door de verschillende generaties en binnen deze generaties vinden we de knooppunten daar, waar de huwelijkspartners de verbinding tussen de ene en de andere *kabisu* leggen. Door haar huwelijk gaat de vrouw over in de *kabisu* van haar man. Er zijn onderscheiden vormen, waar nu niet op wordt ingegaan, maar voor het schema houden we ons aan het feit dat het huwelijk patrilocaal is en dat dus de vrouw overgaat naar het huis van haar schoonouders.

Daarmee is echter niet gezegd, dat met de afstamming in vrouwelijke, moederlijke linie niet zou worden gerekend. Er ligt feitelijk in de erkenning daarvan, al geschiedt die hier anders dan elders, een natuurlijk gegeven. De exogamie van de *kabisu* zegt dat men op vrouwelijke huwelijkspartners van elders is aangewezen. Het leven kan slechts voort-bestaan door de relatie met andere groepen. Zo vormt dus elke verwanten-groep op Soemba een eenheid met twee andere, nl. de groep vanwaar hij vrouwen voor zijn zonen ontvangt en de groep waarheen hij zijn dochters uithuwelijkt. Dit alles is te schematisch, de werkelijkheid is gecompliceerder, al was het alleen maar om het feit dat er bepaald niet steeds een gelijk aantal benodigde kandidaten in de verbonden *kabisu* beschikbaar is en de verbinding kan dus in meerdere richtingen gaan. Maar het geheel dienen we toch naar deze orde te verstaan.

Ik noem nu de verschillende feiten die wijzen op de betekenis van de erkenning van de matrilineaire afstamming in dit geheel. Allereerst is daar de dominerende plaats die de vrouwengevende groep steeds min of meer heeft in de verbinding van de drie *kabisu*. In Wewewa zegt men, de verwantengroep vanwaar de vrouw genomen is 'ligt hoger' (*apalàmbe-rana*; *làmbera* is een verhoging in de vlakte). Elke verwantengroep is dus enerzijds dominerend tegenover de groep waarheen hij dochters geeft en min of meer ondergeschikt, lager in ieder geval, ten opzichte van de groep waaruit hij dochters ontvangt. Deze laatste is het die hem 'mensen' geeft en dus het voortbestaan in de eigen groep mogelijk maakt. Vandaar dat men in Oost Soemba daarvan spreekt als de *ngia pata ngara*, 'de plaats waarheen men opziet', of de *ngia pamiri*, 'degene die men als heer erkent'.

Ik noem verder de grote betekenis van de moeders broer (Oost Soemba: *tuya*; West Soemba: *loka*) ten opzichte van zijn zusters kinderen, inzonderheid haar zoon, die in verschillende situaties de aangewezene is om aan zijn oom ('oom' is hier altijd moeders broer) bepaalde diensten te verlenen. Deze jongen spreekt dan ook van het huis van zijn moeder en speciaal van de moeders broer en verder van heel de verwantengroep waartoe ze behoort als 'de stam waaruit ik ben gegroeid, de bron waaruit ik ben voortgekomen' (*pola pingi daranggu, mata we'e pawalinggu*, West Soemba), dus het laten gelden van de afstamming via zijn moeder.

In een Soembanees huis, waar we bij de huispalen de plaats van aanroeping vinden, is een van de huispalen de plaats van aanroeping van wat men noemt de *marapu padeku*, dat wil zeggen de *marapu* die volgt, de *marapu* vereerd in het huis en de groep van waaruit de vrouw afkomstig is.

Heeft nu de zusters zoon verplichtingen tegenover zijn moeders broer, omgekeerd zoekt deze de relatie tot zijn zusters kinderen. Men acht het over heel Soemba een kwalijk ding geen zusters of dochters te hebben. Wie geen zusters heeft, heeft straks ook geen 'familie'. Het woord familie in West Soemba is *dü* met een gerekte *u*, d.w.z. 'verlengstuk', 'aangehecht stuk', wat wijst op de verbindingen die door en via de zusters en dochters tot stand komen. Met familie worden hier dus aangeduid aanverwanten die men door huwelijk van dochter of zuster verkrijgt. Heeft een man geen zusters of dochters, dan zal hij geen gelegenheid hebben tot vestiging en versteviging van de relaties die hij buiten eigen verwantengroep behoeft.

De verwantengroep waaruit de vrouw afkomstig is wordt geacht leven en kracht te verlenen aan de groep waarin zij trouwt. Dat blijkt o.a. hierin dat in geval van ernstige ziekte, wanneer in het eigen huis geen genezing wordt gevonden, de zieke wel wordt overgebracht naar de *uma loka*, het huis van moeders broer, vanwaar de vrouw afkomstig is.

De relatie tussen deze groepen kan nu een constant karakter dragen doordat Soemba een preferente vorm van huwelijk kent, nl. die tussen zusters zoon en broers dochter, wat dus betekent, dat een jongen zijn vrouw allereerst zal zoeken in hetzelfde huis van waaruit zijn moeder afkomstig is. Men spreekt dan ook in dit verband van 'de deur waardoor ik ben uitgegaan, de trap waarlangs ik ben nedergedaald' (*bina palouzonggu, nauta pamburunggu*), d.w.z. het huis vanwaar mijn moeder is uitgegaan. En om te kennen te geven dat hij zich niet naar een andere verbinding wendt, zal hij zeggen 'ik leg geen andere tuin aan, ik brand

geen ander bos', ik houd mij dus aan de in generaties gewende relatie.
Deze preferente huwelijksvorm is bekend als het eenzijdig cross-cousin
huwelijk. 'Cross-cousin' omdat het gaat om een huwelijk tussen kinderen
van een broer en een zuster, in onderscheiding van 'parallel cousins',
d.w.z. kinderen van twee broers of twee zusters; eenzijdig omdat het
steeds gaat om de relatie tussen broers dochter en zusters zoon, terwijl
de andere mogelijkheid, de verbinding van broers zoon en zusters
dochter over een groot deel van Soemba, speciaal in Oost Soemba, bepaald
uitgesloten is.

Nu heeft Van Wouden in zijn dissertatie *Sociale Structuurtypen in de
Groote Oost* betoogd, dat uit de verbinding van een organisatie in exogame
patrilineaire verwantengroepen met eenzijdig cross-cousin huwelijk de
aanwezigheid volgt van een eveneens exogame matrilineaire verwanten-
groep. Wanneer we denken aan de verticale verdeling van het geheel van
de samenleving door de patrilineaire clans en de horizontale verbinding
door de generaties, dan doortrekt deze groep dit geheel diagonaals-
gewijze. Een en ander wil zeggen dat verbinding van patrilineaat met
eenzijdig cross-cousin huwelijk zou wijzen op de aanwezigheid, al of
niet nog duidelijk functionerend, van een dubbel unilaterale organisatie.
Elk van de gemeenschapsgenoten behoort dan tot tweeërlei verwantengroep,
de een naar vaderlijke afstamming, de ander naar moederlijke afstamming
bepaald. Beide zijn exogaam, zodat een jongen dus niet mag trouwen met
een meisje van dezelfde vaderszijdige, maar evenmin met een meisje van
dezelfde moederszijdige groep.

In een artikel over verwantschapsbetrekkingen op Soemba (Onvlee 1930)
heb ik er op gewezen dat zowel in Kodi (West Soemba) als in Oost Soemba
patrilaterale zowel als matrilaterale parallel cousins met de term worden
aangeduid, die ook voor broers en zusters wordt gebruikt. In beide
gebieden is dan ook een huwelijk tussen matrilaterale parallel cousins -
hoewel niet behorend tot dezelfde *kabisu* - nadrukkelijk verboden. In
Oost Soemba gebruikt men dezelfde term ook voor patrilaterale cross-
cousins. Broers zoon en zusters dochter gelden daar dus eveneens als
broer en zuster. Matrilaterale cross-cousins - de gewenste huwelijks-
partners - duidt men vanzelfsprekend met andere termen aan.

In Kodi komt dit samengaan van patrilineaire en matrilineaire
verwantengroep nog weer sterker uit doordat de matrilineaire groepen
uitdrukkelijk met eigen naam worden onderscheiden. Hier vinden we de
parôna, dat zowel door patrilineaire clan als door dorp kan worden
weergegeven, wat dus wil zeggen dat de clan in het dorp samenwoont, in

elk geval daar bij bepaalde gelegenheden een gemeenschappelijke ontmoetingsplaats heeft, en daarnaast de *wàla*, wat kan betekenen bloem, bloesem, ontplooiing, waarmee wordt aangeduid de matrilineaal bepaalde verwantengroep. Ieder weet tot een bepaalde *paróna* en tot een bepaalde *wàla* te behoren. Welke nu ook de functie van de *wàla* zij, vast staat dat ze strikt exogaam is. Met een *wàla*-genoot trouwt men per sé niet.

De *wàla* heeft mij lang geïntrigeerd. Ik wist dat die bestond en een belangrijke plaats in het leven van de mensen innam, maar ik kon die functie in geen enkel grijpbaar instituut vastgelegd vinden, geen centrale *wàla*-huizen, geen *wàla*-gronden, geen *wàla*-functionarissen, geen *wàla*-feesten, geheel anders dan bij de patrilineaire *paróna*. Nu heeft Van Wouden in een artikel over dubbele afstamming en locale groepen in Kodi (Van Wouden 1956) het resultaat gepubliceerd van een onderzoek naar de verhouding van *paróna* en *wàla*. Hij komt dan tot de conclusie dat de betekenis van de *wàla* juist met het moeilijk te localiseren, moeilijk te begrenzen, amorfe karakter samenhangt. De *wàla* trekt niet naar vaste lijnen, maar willekeurig door heel de samenleving heen, zelfs tot buiten de grenzen van het eigen gebied. Ze is, als we dat woord met betrekking tot de verschillende landschappen van Soemba mogen gebruiken, internationaal; men is telkens bereid nieuwe relaties te leggen, want deze relaties zijn nieuwe steunpunten door het hele gebied, buiten de eigen groep. Hoewel de functie van de *wàla* niet in duidelijk grijpbare instituten is vastgelegd, bestaat toch tussen de leden van dezelfde *wàla* een hecht verband, een band des bloeds, die zich uitwerkt in sociale verbondenheid. Hulpvaardigheid en gastvrijheid zijn typerend voor de verhouding tussen de *wàla*-genoten.

Daarbij doet zich nu dit merkwaardige feit voor, dat terwijl in de taal ook hier de uitdrukkingen zijn te vinden die spreken van een voorkeur voor het eenzijdig cross-cousin huwelijk, men in de praktijk deze regel vaak niet volgt. Zelfs komt hier voor een huwelijk van broers zoon en zusters dochter, een huwelijk in Oost Soemba streng verboden, omdat men op deze wijze in de tweede generatie weer *wàla*-genoten tot de *paróna* doet terugkeren.

J.P.B. de Josselin de Jong (1935) heeft er op gewezen, dat waar we het samengaan vinden van matrilineaat en patrilineaat het steeds zo is dat de exogamie van de ene verwantengroep prevaleert, terwijl de andere schijnt te verzwakken. Beide kan men in Oost en in West Soemba dunkt mij zien, maar de ontwikkeling is een andere. In Kodi geldt voor alles de *wàla* als exogame groep. Als zodanig geldt ook de *paróna*, maar hier zijn

uitwijkmogelijken. In Oost Soemba is de patrilineaire groep blijvend
exogaam. Na enige generaties is een huwelijk van partners die van een-
zelfde voormoeder afstammen mogelijk.

In Oost en West Soemba weet men van de betekenis van de relaties via
de dochters en zusters. In Kodi heeft deze betekenis zoveel waarde
gekregen dat men het aantal relaties uitbreidde zonder te vragen naar
de vroegere betrekkingen. Men is daar begonnen wel een andere tuin aan
te leggen en een ander stuk bos te branden. In Oost Soemba heeft men
aan de zuivere afstamming in moederlijke linie zoveel waarde gehecht,
dat men, vooral in de hoogste stand, aan de voortzetting van de vanouds
erkende relatie sterk heeft vastgehouden.

Soemba is een verwant cultuurgebied, waar over het gehele gebied de
betekenis van vaderszijdige en moederszijdige verwantschap duidelijk
wordt erkend. Desniettegenstaande zien we, ook waar we historisch niet
kunnen vaststellen welke factoren daar specifiek toe hebben geleid, een
differentiatie in de functie van de moederszijdige verwantengroepen.
Eenheid en verscheidenheid ook binnen een zo betrekkelijk klein en
onderling cultureel verbonden gebied als Soemba.

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R. NEEDHAM

DIVERSITY, STRUCTURE, AND ASPECT IN MANGGARAI SOCIAL CLASSIFICATION

"The secret of progress is the speculative interest in abstract schemes of morphology."

A.N. Whitehead

I

Among the contributions of H.G. Schulte Nordholt to the ethnography of eastern Indonesia, and more generally to central concerns in social anthropology, a particular value inheres in his account of the classification of descent and alliance among the Atoni of western Timor (1966, 1971, ch. 1) and especially in his report that "the Atoni have a preference for asymmetric marriage relations, although their kinship terminology indicates rather a symmetric marriage relationship" (1967: 32 n. 16).

This contrast between alliance and classification, which has fundamental theoretical implications, has been clearly established for the Garo and Endeh systems also, and, with certain qualifications, for Manggarai society (Needham 1966, 1967). In this last instance, the qualifications, which inevitably reduce the impact of the case, are of various kinds.

First, the analysis of the relationship terminology depends on two reports, by Coolhaas and by Verheijen, which conflict in certain diagnostic respects; and the terminology which results from the combination of the two is itself at some points a product of analysis (Needham 1967:148-51). Second, the analysis is carried out against a summary background of Manggarai institutions, and not by reference to a full-scale study of Manggarai ethnography (1967:149 n. 8). Third, the Manggarai reports do not in themselves present the contrast between terminology and alliance with the clarity that characterises the Garo and, to a lesser degree, the Endeh cases. Both in the analysis and in subsequent places it was necessary to moderate the contrast by a quali-

tative, not formal, characterisation of the relationship terminology.
The Manggarai terminology is found to present "in general" the structure
of a system of symmetric alliance (1966:152) and can be interpreted as
representing one of a number of "stages" in an evolutionary process to-
wards asymmetry (1967:46); taken as a whole, it is "preponderantly"
symmetric in structure and can "best be represented" in a two-section
frame (1968:324). The chief occasion for these qualifying phrases is
that the terminology introduces "a classificatory element of asymmetry",
such that it can be seen as making "an individual elaboration on the
general scheme of symmetric prescription" and as exemplifying "a point
on an evolutionary scale" (1968:331). In sum, there are "matrilateral
indications" in this otherwise symmetric, i.e. two-line, terminology
which are taken to mean that the Manggarai system could have "emerged
from a consistently symmetric system" (Needham, in press, sec. VII).

These qualifications do not impair the conclusion that in this system
"there is no direct and general correspondence between the structure of
the social classification and the modes of social action which this go-
verns", nor in particular the crucial point that overall the terminology
is symmetric whereas the alliance system is asymmetric (1967:154-5), but
they do state that the Manggarai case does not possess the systematic
precision and simplicity that would establish the theoretical outcome
most decisively. Indeed, a considerable part of the interest of this
case derives from the extent to which the terminology departs from a
consistent principle of symmetry: it is the contrariant indications of
asymmetry that attract attention as possible signs of a process of evo-
lution in prescriptive social classification.

In these circumstances it is the more important that we should be
quite sure of the ethnographic evidence on the terminology; yet the
first qualification that has to be conceded is that the scheme of clas-
sification examined in the analysis (1966:151, table 2) is in some res-
pects a construction based on the supposed resolution of points of con-
flict between Coolhaas and Verheijen. Inevitably, this representation of
Manggarai social classification depends at places on *a priori* argument,
on comparative considerations, and even on conjecture. Hence, whereas
the mode of alliance is clearly evident in the ethnographic authorities
cited, the exact pattern of correlation between this mode and the cate-
gories of alliance remains disputable. That is, it remained disputable
so far as the sources available at the date of publication (1966) were
concerned. But only a year later the position was vastly improved by the

appearance of the first volume of Fr. Verheijen's great dictionary *Kamus Manggarai* (1967); and in 1970 there appeared the second volume, containing a comparative list of relationship terms (100-101) from the greater part of Manggarai territory. It is this list that I intend to examine in the present paper.

II

The first lesson to be drawn from Verheijen's dictionary is that there is not one single terminology which is employed uniformly everywhere in Manggarai. There are instead numerous dialect areas, coinciding for the most part with the 38 former *dalu*, "feudal territories", which are in general "something like ethnic and linguistic units" (Verheijen 1967:xv); and certain of these, e.g. the extensive territory of Lamba-Léda, are divided by Verheijen into a number of dialect areas. There are considerable differences in the relationship terms as employed in different dialects; and certain sporadic variations recorded by Verheijen contribute to the impression that an even greater diversity might be disclosed by a more intensive plotting of terminological usages throughout Manggarai.

Verheijen's list of relationship terms is arranged under English genealogical specifications (e.g. FZD, father's sister's daughter) in alphabetical order. There are 73 specifications, each followed by the Manggarai term or terms from various dialects. The terms are differentiated according to whether the persons related are of the same or opposite sex, and also as terms of address or of reference. This long and detailed list, invaluable though it is, could hardly be reproduced here to the last particular, so I propose to represent the terms by means of four tables. Table 1 collocates the terms marked for dialect as "U" for *umum*, i.e. common or general; table 2 represents terms in the dialect of "Mt" for *Manggarai tengah*, i.e. central Manggarai; table 3, "S/h" for the dialect area in which *s* becomes *h'*; table 4, "Mb" for *Manggarai barat*, i.e. western Manggarai (cf. Verheijen 1967, map; reproduced, in black and white, as present map).[1] Terms are not reported for eastern Manggarai, bordering on Ngadha country; this area, with a population of 40,000, is perhaps likely to contain further terminological diversity. The tables should be compared throughout against the consolidated terminology as represented in my original analysis (Needham 1966:151, table 2).

Table 1: Manggarai Terminology (U)

m. ←——— f.		f. ———→ m.	
		inang, FZ	*amang*, FZH
ka'é, eB, FBSe, MZSe *asé*, yB, FBSy, MZSy	*weta*, FZD, MBD	*weta*, Z, FBD, MZD	*ka'e*, FZSe, MBSe *asé*, FZSy, MBSy
anak, S, BS	*woté*, SW	*anak*, D, BD	*koa*, DH
empo, SS	*empo*, DD	*empo*, SD	*empo*, DS

Table 2: Manggarai Terminology (Mt)

m. ←——— f.		f. ———→ m.	
ema tu'a/ *ema lopo*	*endé tu'a/* *endé lopo*	*endé tu'a/* *endé lopo*	*ema tu'a/* *ema lopo*
ema, F, MZH	*endé*, M, FBW, MZ	*inang*, MBW, WM[+]	*amang*, MB, WF
	to'a, ZD, WBD		*to'a*, ZS, WBS

[+]FZ is *wa'u* in Lamba-Léda.

Table 3: Manggarai Terminology (S/h)

m. ◄——— f.		f. ———► m.	
empo	*empo*	*empo*	*empo*
amé, F, FB, MZH	*iné*, M, MZ, FBW	*tu'a*, MBW, WM	*tu'a*, MB, WF
	wina, MBD		*késa*, FZS, MBS *kéla*, WB
	koa, ZD *woté*, WBD		*koa*, ZS *woté*, WBS

Table 4: Manggarai Terminology (Mb)

m. ◄——— f.		f. ———► m.	
empo	*empo*	*empo*	*empo*
amé, F, MZH	*iné*, M, MZ	*to'a*, MBW, WM *wa'u*, FZ	*to'a*, MB
	wina, MBD		*késa*, FZS, MBS *kéla*, ZH, WB
	koa, ZD *woté*, WBD		*koa*, ZS *woté*, WBS
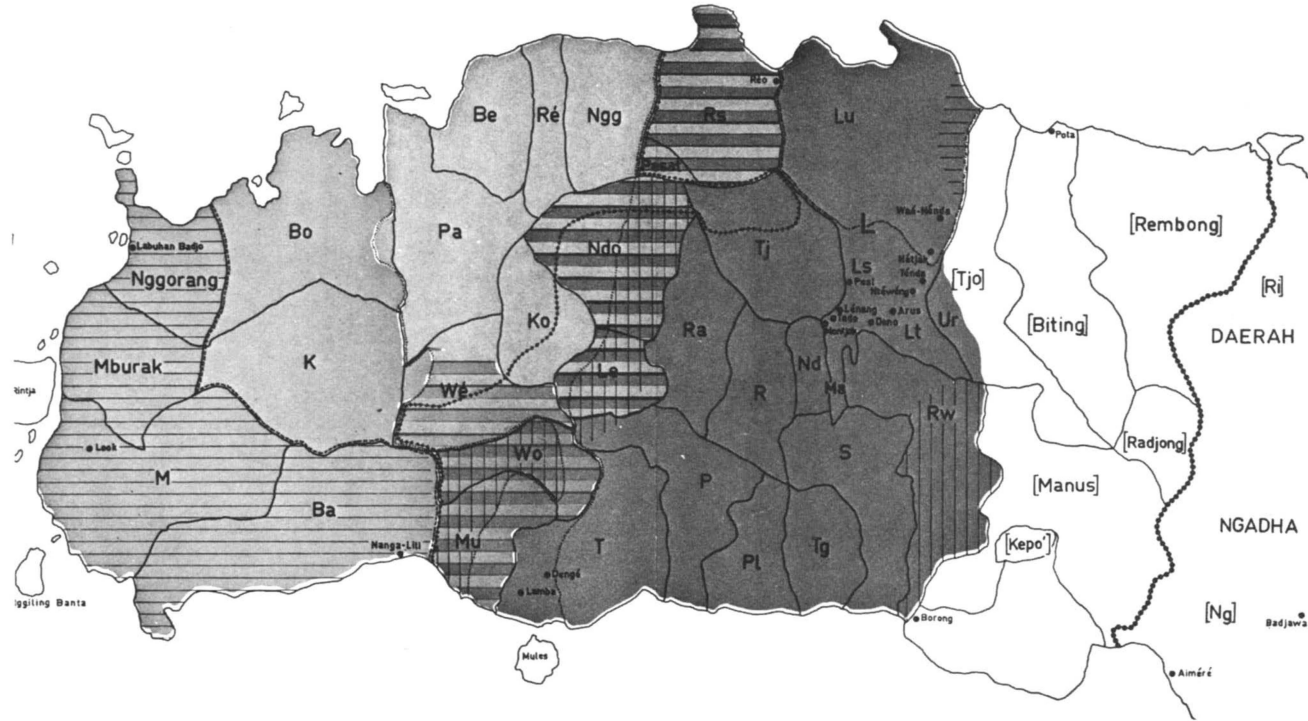
Manggarai. (From: Verheijen 1967, with acknowledgements.)

Before we examine the particular terms there are two basic points to
make. First, that in each of the tables the terms can, with certain tacit
concessions that we shall consider later, be accommodated within a two-
line matrix. Second, that the asymmetric mode of affinal alliance
(Needham 1966:152), to which the asymmetric indications in the termino-
logy are held to correspond, is confirmed by the dictionary, where Ver-
heijen defines the common meaning of *tungku* as: "marriage connecting the
family, cross-marriage [*kawin silang*], i.e. the son takes the child of
his mother's brother" (1967:663 s.v.); the glosses make it plain that
this MBD marriage may be either with a first cousin or (as *tungku
tjanggot*, translatable as "linking by choice or selection") with a girl
whose mother belongs to a different "branch", i.e. descent group. In
these regards it would appear therefore that the conclusions of my ana-
lysis (1966:155) are borne out: namely that the terminology is symmetric
while the mode of alliance is asymmetric. But in order to assess the
precise systematic significance of this contrast it is necessary to
collate the major forms of Manggarai social classification and to isolate
their points of resemblance and diversity.

The first thing to strike one is that table 3 (S/h) and table 4 (Mb)
are almost identical, both in the terms and in their specifications. The
differences are the phonetic variation between *tu'a* and *to'a*, and the
presence of *wa'u* in Mb. We shall consider the status of FZ in a moment.
For the rest, the near-identity of S/h and Mb means that in general they
can be taken together in contrast with Mt (table 2). It should be kept
in mind however that terms are reported variously from five dialects
within Mt, so that on any particular point one has to be prepared to find
some diversity under the general scheme of table 2.

After these preliminaries we may approach the task of collation. The
obvious method is to take the "common" (U) terminology (table 1), and
then the others, but there is first a source of uncertainty that has to
be noted. A number of the terms in U are defined by genealogical speci-
fications that also define terms in Mt, S/h and Mb. For instance, the
common (U) term for FZ is *inang*, whereas in Mb the term is *wa'u*, with
inang in Mt specified also as MBW and WM. It is not clear in such a case
what "common" means. It would seem unlikely that *inang* should be used for
FZ in Mb, when this dialect already distinguishes the status by the se-
parate term *wa'u*. In the text of the dictionary, Verheijen uses the indi-
cation "U - L", for example, to mean that a given word is "usual in whole
Manggarai but not in L [i.e. Lamba-Léda]" (1967:xvi), but this

stipulation is not resorted to in the case of relationship terms in U.

Another uncertainty that one encounters in reading Verheijen's list is that it appears that terms of address are not always expressly distinguished as such. After four specifications (H, HeW, HyW, W) the abbreviation "addr." precedes the term; but in certain crucial instances (FZS, MBD) the abbreviation "ref." is used without an express indication that the alternative term provided is in fact a term of address. Such points will have to be dealt with as we come to them.

With these cautionary observations, let us now take up the analysis of the terms of reference (m.s.) and the principles by which they are ordered. I shall isolate for analysis only those features that are prob- lematic or diagnostic. Since my primary concern is with the formal properties of diverse terminologies, and since the allocation of terms is made on the basis of genealogical specifications, I shall examine the denotation of each structural locus by reference in the first place to the specifications. Confirmation of these, by resort to the text of the dictionary, will be made tacitly; only on points of special importance will the entries be cited.

III

(1) PP: no common term is supplied. Three terms, *empo, popo* and *popong*, are found in different areas. There is an areal contrast between the forms *ema lopo/ema tu'a* and *endé lopo/endé tu'a* (Mt) and *empo* (S/h, Mb); *lopo* means "senile", *tu'a* means "old" (Verheijen 1967:295, 658 s.vv.).

(2) F,M: the dialectal differentiation into central and western terminologies is confirmed by the contrasts in the terms for parents et al., namely *ema* (F) and *endé* (M) in Mt, *amé* (F) and *iné* (M) in the west; the specifications are equivalent.

(3) MB: *amang* in the central dialect zone (Mt), *tu'a/to'a* in the west (S/h, MB); *amang* in the Ndoso dialect (map, Ndo) of the transitional zone between Mt and S/h, and in the Kolang (Ko) dialect of S/h (Verheijen 1967:9 s.v. *amang*).

(4) FZ: *inang* (U); *wa'u* in Mb and also in Lamba-Léda (Mt). This specification thus accretes to MBW in Mt minus Lamba-Léda.

(5) FZH: *amang*, which has this specification as its common meaning (s.v., sense 3), the dictionary marking it as "U" with no dialects excepted. This has the consequence, presumably, that the specification FZH accretes to MB and WF in the Mt terminology.

(6) WM: *inang* in Mt, W (sc. Wo, i.e. Wontong), and Ko (Kolang)

(Verheijen 1967:176 s.v.), yielding, in this central area with a westward extension, FZ = WM.

(7) Z: *weta* (U); likewise FBD, MZD.

(8) FZD: *weta* (U), a term which is in addition applied as a term of address to MBD.

(9) MBD: *wina* "ref.", i.e. explicitly as term of reference, in S/h and Mb; "seldom" so used in Mt. The common meaning of the word is "wife" (Verheijen 1967:756 s.v.).

(10) MBS: *ka'é, asé* (U); *késa*, apparently as a term of reference, in S/h and Mb; seldom in Mt, according to the list.

(11) FZS: *ka'é, asé* (U); *késa*, "ref.", in S/h and Mb; seldom in Mt, according to the list, though the dictionary entry has "U" with no qualification concerning Mt.

(12) ZH: *késa* (U); *kéla* in Mu (i.e. Munting, in the transitional region between Mt and Mb), S/h, and Mb (Verheijen 1967:199 s.v. *kéla* I), a term seldom used in Mt, where it is archaic.

(13) WB: *késa* (U), except in Mu and S/h, where the term is *kéla*; in Mt, *kéla* is archaic and seldom used (Verheijen 1967:199 s.v.); although marked as common, *késa* would appear not to denote WB in the western areas.

(14) ZC: *to'a* in Mt; *koa* in S/h and Mb.[2]

(15) SW: *woté* (U); this specification presumably accretes to WBC in S/h and Mb; for Mt the dictionary entry glosses this term as BD (Verheijen 1967:766 s.v. *woté*, sense 2), but as the list in the second volume (1970:100 s.v. BC) confirms, this specification holds good only for FZ speaking, which explains the definition "prospective daughter-in-law" (*bakal menantu*); it also implies that in Mt *woté* means SW (w.s.).

(16) DH: *koa* (U); in Mt, Ndo (Ndoso), and Wo (Wontong) this term denotes ZS (Verheijen 1967:223 s.v.).

(17) WBC: *to'a* in Mt; *woté* in S/h and Mb.

(18) SWF: *késa* (U); also reciprocally DHF.

IV

The determinations made above, by means of genealogical specifications, permit next a structural resolution by reference to certain standard equivalences and distinctions in the three medial genealogical levels. I present first those that are characteristic of the central (Mt) terminology, represented by a consolidation of tables 1 and 2 as in table 5.

Table 5: Manggarai Terminology (Central)

m. ⟵——— f.		f. ———⟶ m.	
ema tu'a ema lopo	endé tu'a endé lopo	endé tu'a endé lopo	ema tu'a ema lopo
ema, F, FB, MZH	endé, M, MZ, FBW	inang, FZ, MBW, WM	amang, FZH, MB, WF
ka'é, eB asé, yB	weta, FZD, MBD	weta, Z, FBD, MZD	ka'é, FZSe, MBSe asé, FZSy, MBSy
anak, S	to'a, ZD, WBD woté, SW	anak, D	to'a, ZS, WBS koa, DH
empo, SS	enpo, DD	empo, SD	empo, DS

(19) FZH = MB = WF. This set of equivalences is obtained by combining the common (U) specification of *amang*, FZH, with the Mt specifications MB and WF.

(20) FZ = MBW = WM. This set is formed by the common specification FZ for *inang* combined with the Mt specifications MBW and WM. In the Lamba-Léda region, however, the term for FZ is not *inang* but *wa'u*, which term is also specified as HM (Verheijen 1967:730 s.v., sense 4).

(21) FZS = MBS ≠ ZH = WB. The terms for FZS and MBS (cf. sec. III, nos. 10, 11) are *ka'e/asé*, i.e. terms of co-descent which equate cross-cousins with agnates. The common affinal term *késa* (ZH, WB), however, falls into the same locus in the matrix as the bilateral cross-cousin, an allocation that is confirmed by the additional specifications in the equivalence SWF = DHF. *Késa* is also commonly used among men with the meanings of "brother, cousin, friend, companion" (Verheijen 1967:203 s.v. -- "saudara, kawan").

(22) FZD = MBD = Z. The term, *weta*, is also used an address to fiancée and to wife (Verheijen 1967:753 s.v.; 1970:86 s.v. *isteri*). The common term of reference for W is *wina*, which as an adjective means "feminine" (Verheijen 1967:756 s.v., sense 2). In the designation *ata wina* it

signifies wife-takers (cf. Needham 1966:153), i.e. people (*ata*) who are associated with women/wives or are characterised as feminine in relation to their wife-givers (*ata rona*, husband/masculine people).

(23) ZS = WBS ≠ DH. This set introduces a non-symmetric feature, since a consistent scheme of symmetric alliance (represented by the two-line matrix) would give ZS = DH. The equivalence ZS = WBS accords with a symmetric contraction of marriage but not with an asymmetric; whereas the distinction WBS ≠ DH accords with asymmetric alliance but not with symmetric.

(24) ZD = WBD ≠ SW. In this set also there is a non-symmetric feature, since in a consistently symmetric scheme ZD = SW. The equivalence ZD = WBD accords with symmetric alliance but not with asymmetric, whereas the distinction WBD ≠ SW accords with asymmetric alliance but not with symmetric.

The central terminology makes a contrast, not only in the terms used but also in constitutive relations, with that of western Manggarai (table 6).

Table 6: Manggarai Terminology (Western)

m. ←———	f.	f. ——→	m.
empo, FF	*empo*, FM	*empo*, MM	*empo*, MF
amé, F, FB, MZH	*iné*, M, MZ, FBW	*to'a*, MBW, WM *wa'u*, FZ	*to'a*, MB, WF *amang*, FZH
ka'é, eB, FBSe, MZSe *asé*, yB, FBSy, MZSy	*wina*, MBD *weta*, FZD	*weta*, Z, FBD, MZD	*késa*, FZS, MBS *kéla*, ZH, WB
anak, S	*koa*, ZD *woté*, SW, WBD	*anak*, D	*koa*, ZS, DH *woté*, WBS
empo, SS	*empo*, DD	*empo*, SD	*empo*, DS

(25) MB = WF ≠ FZH. This set of specifications introduces, in the
first ascending level, a non-symmetric feature. The equivalence MB = WF
accords with both symmetric (two-line) and asymmetric alliance, whereas
the distinction MB/WF ≠ FZH does not accord with a consistently symmetric
scheme.

(26) MBW = WM ≠ FZ. This set is congruent with, and confirms, the
relations in no. 25. The distinction WM ≠ FZ is made both by the common
(U) term for FZ, *inang*, and by the western (Mb) *wa'u*, in contrast to
to'a (MBW, WM).

(27) MBS = FZS ≠ ZH = WB. The equivalences in this set are consistent
with symmetric alliance; the distinction separates male cross-cousins
and affines, however, which while not inconsistent is not typical.

(28) MBD ≠ FZD = Z. The distinction calls for special attention.
There is indeed a common term, *weta*, that is applied to both MBD and
FZD; but Verheijen clearly states that the term of reference for MBD in
S/h and Mb is *wina*, i.e. the same term as for W. That *weta* is used as a
term of address is confirmed by the dictionary entry (1967:753 s.v.)
which reports explicitly that it is employed as such (*kata sapaan*) to
fiancée and to wife (cf. 1970:86 s.v. *isteri*). The general mode of
address to all women of male ego's genealogical level is thus *weta*,
whereby FZD = Z, while the distinctive term of reference for MBD is
wina, giving MBD = W ≠ FZD.

(29) ZS = DH ≠ WBS. The equivalence accords with symmetric alliance
and also with asymmetric; the distinction does not accord with a
consistently symmetric scheme, but it does accord with asymmetric
alliance.

(30) ZD ≠ SW = WBD. This set is complementary to no. 29, in that the
distinction accords with asymmetric alliance but not with a consistently
symmetric scheme, whereas the equivalence accords with either asymmetric
or symmetric alliance.

V

A comparison of the central and western terminologies reveals first of
all that the consolidated form based on the reports of Coolhaas and
Verheijen (Needham 1966:151, table 2) agrees more nearly with the
central form, both lexically and structurally, but still not exactly.

The points of contrast are the presence in the consolidated termino-
logy of *wina* (MBD) and the inclusion of FZS and MBS among the specifi-
cations of *késah*. The term *wina*, as MBD, does however occur in the

western terminology, while the cross-cousin specifications of *késa(h)*
do not occur for certain in either the western or the central
terminology (cf. nos. 10 and 11 above).[3] The consolidated terminology
on which I carried out my original analysis was the more decidedly,
therefore, a construct and not a representation of "the" Manggarai
terminology. We shall take up certain more particular implications of
this realisation as we proceed.

Nevertheless, a chief theoretical lesson of the Manggarai case, so
far as the central terminology at least is concerned, still stands;
namely that "there is no direct and general correspondence between the
structure of social classification and the modes of social action
[sc. affinal alliance] which this governs" and that "there is a clear
contrast between the categorical and the empirical" (Needham 1966:154-
5). But a difficulty in characterising the system of terminology and
alliance also remains. Neither the central nor the western terminology
is consistently symmetric, but each contains non-symmetric features
such as in the original analysis were interpreted as indicators of
structural evolution. This is plain, to begin with, in the central
terminology. Although the terms and specifications in the first
ascending genealogical level are typical of symmetric alliance, those
in the succeeding levels are not. In the level of reference (i.e.
ego's), cross-cousins are distinguished from affines (sec. IV, no. 21
above) and the potential spouse is equated with Z. In the first
descending level, DH and SW are distinguished from ZC and WBC.

If we regard prescription as a formal property of a system of
categories of social classification, the property being defined as a
constant relation that articulates lines and categories (Needham 1973:
174-5), then the central Manggarai terminology is not neatly prescrip-
tive but at certain points calls for contextual interpretation. If one
asks what is the prescribed category, the answer has to be that it is
weta (Z, etc.), but a *weta* from the opposite line and a daughter of
persons in the categories *amang* and *inang*. Doubtless for the Manggarai
themselves this is not a practical difficulty, but from a formal point
of view the prescription is not patent since it calls for ancillary
stipulation. Similar considerations apply to the male cross-cousins, who
are denoted by terms of co-descent (*ka'é/asé*), and to the separate
designation of affines (ZH, WB) at this locus. The equivalence ZH = WB
is indeed typical of symmetric alliance, and it is congruent with the
prescriptive specifications in the first ascending level, yet all the

same the terminology in this sector does not possess the formal
simplicity of a consistently prescriptive classification. As for the
first descending level, the separate designations of SW and DH can be
seen as fitting significantly with the asymmetric contraction of
alliances (Needham 1966:154, fig. 2) which gives Manggarai society a
special theoretical interest; but this feature departs all the more
clearly from the definitive form of a two-line prescriptive system.

   Notwithstanding these non-symmetric features in the central
terminology, the fact remains that the categories can be accommodated
within a scheme of symmetric alliance (as in table 5). What this means
analytically can be better assessed after we have similarly scrutinised
the western terminology (table 6).

   In this classification the first ascending level is not only non-
symmetric but positively asymmetric. The terms and their specifications,
taken by themselves, accord perfectly with asymmetric prescriptive
alliance and are thus in complete contrast with the symmetric
distribution in the consolidated terminology of the original analysis.
In the level of reference however this unilateral cast is not fully
replicated. The separate designation of MBD as *wina* (W), and the
equation of FZD with Z, certainly make a classical asymmetric contrast;
but this effect is countered by the equivalence MBS = FZS, which as it
stands is a symmetric feature, and also by ZH = WB. In the first
descending level, finally, the specifications (cf. sets nos. 29 and 30
above) differentiate the terms in a way that accords with asymmetric
alliance (cf. Needham 1966:154, fig. 2). Taken overall, indeed, the
western terminology can well be represented in a three-line asymmetric
matrix (table 7).

   Seen under this aspect, the western terminology is not only lexically
different from the central (though there are terms in common): it is
structurally different also. But this does not entail a corresponding
contrast in modes of social action, specifically in affinal alliance,
and before we proceed to a more abstract comparison we should briefly
determine this point separately.

Table 7: Manggarai Terminology (Western)
Arranged as in Asymmetric Alliance.

f.	m. ←	f.	m. ←	f.	m. ←	f.
			empo, FF	*empo*, FM	*empo*, MF	*empo*, MM
	amang, FZH	*wa'u*, FZ	*amé*, F, FB, MZH	*iné*, M, MZ, FBW	*to'a*, MB, WF	*to'a*, MBW, WM
weta, FZD	*késa*, FZS *kéla*, ZH	*weta*, Z, FBD, MZS	*ka'é*, eB, FBSe, MZSe *asé*, YB, FBSy, MZSy	*wina*, MBD, W	*késa*, MBS *kéla*, WB	
koa, ZD	*koa*, ZS, DH	*anak*, D	*anak*, S	*woté*, SW, WBD	*woté*, WBS	
empo, DD	*empo*, DS	*empo*, SD	*empo*, SS			

VI

Manggarai society has repeatedly been characterised as practising a-symmetric alliance by means of an affinal link known as *tungku*, a word meaning "to connect" or "to tie on to" (cf. Needham 1966:152). As we have seen in section II above, Verheijen's dictionary clearly confirms matri-lateral cross-cousin marriage as a general practice, without restriction to any particular areas. None the less, it could be that the structural difference between the central and western terminologies was to be correlated with different modes of affinal alliance, and this possibility has to be investigated.

In the original analysis, I tabulated Coolhaas's report of a pattern of alliances among certain chiefdoms (*dalu*), which showed a clear asym-metry, and I traced two alliance cycles (1966:153), thus confirming the practice of asymmetric alliance in those areas at any rate. The map in Verheijen's dictionary permits the parties to the alliance to be located according to their dialect regions. The outcome is as follows: Kolang (Ko), S/h; Ndosso (Ndo), S/h + Mt; Pongkor (P), Mt; Rahong (Ra), Mt; Sita (S), Mt; Todo (T), Mt. That is, one *dalu* belongs to the S/h region,

between Mb (western) and Mt, one belongs to the transitional area where
S/h and Mt merge, and four belong to the Mt (central) region. The a-
symmetric alliances reported by Coolhaas thus fall preponderantly within
the linguistic region of the central terminology, which itself is by
contrast preponderantly symmetric. The asymmetric differentiation of
statuses in the first descending level of this terminology can be
connected with the practice of asymmetric (*tungku*) alliance; but the
contrast between the asymmetry of the western terminology and the
symmetry of the central cannot be explained by correspondingly contrasted
modes of alliance.

This is confirmed by the report of Mennes (1933:378-9)[4] on the
alliances contracted by Todo (Mt), which is described as the head of all
the *dalu*. The wife-givers of Todo, with Verheijen's abbreviations for
dialect regions given here after each, are: Lelak (Le), Mt-S/h; Manus,
east of Mt; Pongkor (P), Mt; Potjo-Léok (Pl), Mt; Riwu (Rw), Mt +
eastern; Torogolo (Tg), Mt. The wife-takers of Todo are: Kempah (K), Mb;
Kolang (Ko), S/h; Ndosso (Ndo), S/h + Mt; Rongga-Koé (RKoé), [unlocated];
Sita (S), Mt; Welak (Wé), Mb + S/h. These alliances thus range from Manus
in the east to Kempo in the west, linking every major linguistic region,
and are associated with both the central and the western terminologies.

The alliances reported by Coolhaas and by Mennes are represented to-
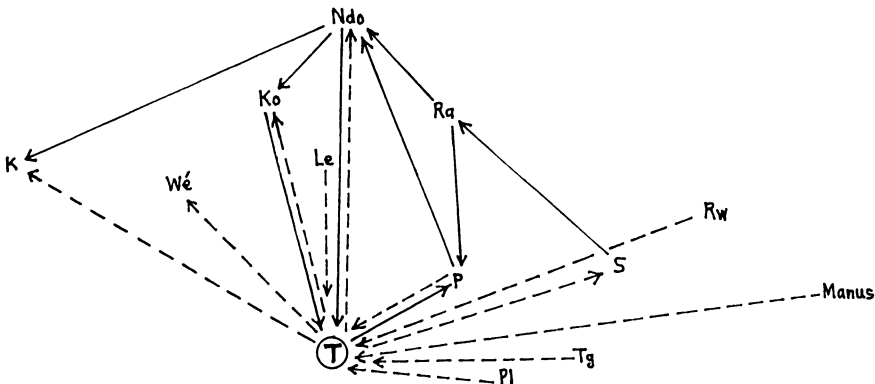gether in the present figure 1.

Figure 1. Manggarai affinal alliances.

Alliances in Coolhaas are represented by solid lines; those in Mennes are represented by broken lines. Two points in the resultant pattern may be stressed. First, that the alliances reported in each source are in fact asymmetric, i.e. non-reciprocal. The combination of the separate reports appears however to produce contradictions in three instances: T←→Ndo; T←→Ko; T←→P. But these are not necessarily genuine contradictions, for it is a well-known feature of asymmetric systems that symmetric exchange of women between descent groups of a certain order may be constituted by asymmetric alliances contracted differentially (and non-reciprocally) by alliance groups of a lesser order. Second, it is of incidental interest that in the majority of the alliances recorded by Mennes there is an overall movement of women from the east, westwards to Todo, and then onwards to the northwest and north. The report is doubtless only a partial record of the Todo alliances, and probably only of those that are of political significance, but all the same it is quite striking to see the normative asymmetry of *tungku* affinal alliance so largely put into effect with a territorial asymmetry also.

The outcome of this examination of reported alliances, then, is that asymmetric alliance is in fact general in Manggarai, and that it is not distinctively correlated with the asymmetry of the western terminology.

VII

Given that the practice of asymmetric affinal alliance can be managed practically by reliance upon either the near-symmetric central terminology or the near-asymmetric western terminology, there remains the task of determining the relationship between the two forms of social classification. This is an undertaking that, if done properly, would involve the cultural history of Flores, a ransacking of the ethnographies of the island, and much else; but, short of that exigent ideal, it may be feasible to advance some speculative considerations, on a formal score, which will at least indicate problems and possible resolutions.

Let us take as premise that the linguistic diversities that we have encountered belong to what can be treated as a single language which is spoken throughout central and western Manggarai. The language belongs to the Bima-Sumba grouping, and it is distinguished (together with Ngadha and Lio) by "the lack of formatives, only base words being used", in which respect it resembles the Mon-Khmer languages and is contrasted with most Indonesian languages (Verheijen 1967:ix). The distribution, testified to by the large U (*umum*) component in the dictionary, and the

distinctiveness permit us to assume that the central and western
terminologies have a common origin. This is given particular support by
the general employment of the U relationship terms and also by the number
of individual terms, even if these are employed with different
denotations, that are found in both of the terminologies.

Granted so much, possible evolutionary connexions between the two
forms of classification are: (a) central⟶western;
(b) western⟶central; (c) a common earlier form⟶central + western.
Within each classification, moreover, there have no doubt intervened
various diversities such as in other regards are abundantly evidenced in
the dialectal variations signalled throughout Verheijen's dictionary. In
addition to these routes and types of linguistic change, also, there have
been cultural influences from outside Manggarai (cf. Van Bekkum 1944:
145, sketchmap), and these must complicate the case incalculably. All the
more reason therefore that the present observations should be essentially
not historical in intent but formal.

In conjecturing a transformational connexion between the central and
western terminologies, accordingly, I shall refer to hypothetical
structures of classification and not in the first place to particular
terms. With this stipulation, let us resume a line of argument adumbrated
in my original analysis of Manggarai society. Two points of importance
are: that a society with a symmetric prescriptive terminology can
contract either symmetric or asymmetric alliances; and that there are no
grounds to think that an asymmetric prescriptive terminology is liable
to change by reduction into a symmetric (specifically, two-line)
classification. I shall provisionally assume, therefore, that the
terminologies under study are likely to have evolved from a simpler two-
line scheme, and also that the western terminology, as the more
differentiated, is at a more advanced stage of evolution than the
central.

Let us again inspect the medial three levels, looking this time at
certain genealogical distinctions as signs of possible transformations.
We may begin with the first ascending level, and work down, though with
no implication that this is the order in which the hypothetical trans-
formations are supposed to have taken place.

(31) MB = FZH⟶MB ≠ FZH. This makes a distinction between wife-
givers (MB = WF) and wife-takers (FZH), and it initiates a third descent
line.

(32) MBW = FZ⟶MBW ≠ FZ. This distinction is concordant with no. 31.

(33) MBD = FZD ⟶ MBD = W ≠ FZD = Z. The differentiation of MBD, leaving FZD = Z, accords with a scheme of three lines, and the equation MBD = W confirms the asymmetric relation between wife-givers and wife-takers.

(34) ZS = WBS ⟶ ZS ≠ WBS. The distinction isolates ZS and allocates the status to the wife-taking line, leaving WBS in the wife-giving line.

These transformations cohere significantly, so far as they go, in representing a structural change from a two-line to a three-line scheme and from symmetry to asymmetry. The outcome, based as it is on an empirical contrast between the central and western terminologies, agrees with the course of evolution previously conjectured in the original Manggarai analysis (Needham 1967:44). But, as we have seen above, the western classification does not compose a consistently asymmetric scheme. The outstanding discrepancies are (a) the equation of cross-cousins without regard to the discrimination, made elsewhere in the terminology, of three descent lines; and (b) the distinction of certain affines (ZH, WB) from cross-cousins, and their equation with each other regardless of the a-symmetric relation between lines. These features call for some renewed comment.

(35) MBS = FZS. This equivalence cannot be connected directly with the structure of the central terminology, for in Mt there is not even a differentiation of cross-cousins from parallel cousins; at this level no distinction is made between lines. This feature may itself signify a kind of change more fundamental than that from symmetric to asymmetric alliance. It is a feature that Rivers isolated as long ago as 1920, when he interpreted its occurrence in Oceania as an intermediate step in a series of transformations from a two-line terminology into a non-lineal form of classification. It is found also in a society very far from Indonesia, namely among the Warao of Venezuela, and precisely in a society that can be analysed (Suárez 1971) as the product of a trans-formation from a two-line system of prescriptive alliance into a cognatic form of organisation (Needham 1974b:37). Possibly therefore the Mt equivalences at this specific level are precursors of a more general erosion of lineal distinctions in Manggarai social classification.

There remains in any case the interpretation of the western equivalence MBS = FZS (under *késa*) in a three-line asymmetric scheme and in a classification which does after all make the crucial distinction MBD ≠ FZD. Formally speaking, of course, the equivalence is characteristic of a scheme of symmetric alliance such as *ex hypothesi*

preceded the western classification; but even on this assumption it is
none the less a puzzle that a symmetric feature should be retained in
just this relationship when asymmetric distinctions are neatly made
between female cross-cousins and elsewhere in the terminology.[5]

(36) ZH = WB. This equivalence is doubly difficult to account for.
First, it is characteristic of symmetric alliance, whereas the termino-
logy is in other respects asymmetric; second, the term (*kéla*) by which
it is made separates affines from cross-cousins, whereas characteristic-
ally in prescriptive systems these statuses are conflated. To interpret
the equivalence as a relic of a preceding symmetric scheme (cf. Mt *késa*,
ZH, WB, DHF, SWF) would hardly be in keeping with the separate denotation
of affines, when this latter feature can be seen in general as actually
marking the attenuation of a prescriptive system. The equivalence is
indeed formally consistent, as a symmetric feature, with that of cross-
cousins, which suggests some systematic significance; but it is not in
the least evident what the connexion may be or how it results from the
postulated transformation from symmetric to asymmetric prescriptive
alliance.

Finally, in addition to these formal considerations, there are certain
terms that call for an eventual examination in the context of comparative
eastern Indonesian linguistics. Here I shall simply allude to them.

(37) *To'a* is MB, WF, MBW, WM in the western terminology, but ZC, WBC
in the central. Among the Ngadha, eastern neighbours of the Manggarai,
the term *tu'a* (cf. S/h *tu'a*) denotes WF, WM, HF, HM and is the radical
component in the terms for DH and SW (Barnes 1972:85). The fact that
Ngadha society is non-lineal, and bears no systematic resemblance to
either of the Manggarai systems under investigation, intensifies one's
curiosity about the significance of this term in the wider evolution of
social classification in western Flores.

(38) *Wa'u* makes the crucial distinction FZ ≠ MBW in the western
terminology, and thus effects an asymmetric distribution of terms in the
first ascending level, but it is an interesting word in itself. In its
common usage it means "descent", "below"; also "patrilineal clan", and in
addition any animal or plant which members of a clan are forbidden to
eat (Verheijen 1967:730 s.v.). With the meaning of "descent" it has,
according to Verheijen, a wide extension eastwards in other languages of
Flores: Ngadha, Lio, Ede (Endeh), Sika. One can only wonder how it came
about, in the conjectured evolution of an asymmetric system in western
Manggarai, that this word (assuming it to be the same word

etymologically) should have been put to the consequential employment of
distinguishing FZ.

(39) *Kèsa* commonly denotes ZH and WB, but in the western terminology
it refers to MBS and FZS. The word has cognates in a wide distribution
eastwards on Flores and apparently elsewhere in the Lesser Sunda Islands
(Verheijen 1967:203 s.v.), with affinal meanings. In Endehnese, *èja*
(adduced in comparison by Verheijen) denotes MBS, FZS, ZH, WB (cf.
Needham 1968:315, 324). It is a question how it came about that, in the
evolution of Manggarai society, *kèsa* should have acquired different
meanings in the central and the western terminologies, and in particular
why in the latter a separate term *kèla* was introduced for ZH and WB. The
problem is intensified by the fact that *kèla* is known in Mt, though
seldom used; it confirms the linguistic relationship of Mb and Mt, but
at the same time it renders more complicated the reconstruction of the
related usages of *kèsa* and *kèla*.

In the outcome, the impression conveyed by this limited comparison of
the central and the western forms of social classification is that they
are relatively separate manifestations of a shared tendency to evolve
from symmetry towards asymmetry. To judge by the disparity of a number of
the terms employed, the likelihood is that the course of evolution of
each classification was for some time historically separate. This is an
imprecise inference, and it cannot be given a strictly historical
justification by reference to dated events and movements of peoples and
customs. In any case, the analytical distinction of just two forms of
classification, central (Mt) and western (S/h, Mb), is a simplification
that does not respond exactly to the variety and the distribution of the
social facts that are the actual products of the past. More generally,
too, the systematic contrast between the terminologies is liable to be
subverted by what has throughout been a standing obstacle to a secure
analysis, namely the uncertainty about the extent to which the "U" terms
are in fact common to central and to western Manggarai. We have to be
prepared to learn, in this connexion, that the usages of social
classification in Manggarai are far more various and complicated, and
less easily discriminable as systems, than they have been taken to be in
this study.

For the present, however, the following seem to be reasonable con-
clusions: (a) in the range of categories distinguished, and in the number
of descent lines entailed by their genealogical specifications, the
western classification is more complex than the central; (b) the western

classification is preponderantly asymmetric with a symmetric component, whereas the central classification is preponderantly symmetric with an asymmetric component; (c) there is a phylogenetic connexion between the two forms of classification, the western being the more evolved along the cline of asymmetry; (d) both classifications may be derived from a symmetric system.

VIII

The analysis of Manggarai social classification links up particularly closely with that of the Endeh system (Needham 1968:324, 326), which similarly has been characterised by a combination of the following features: a prescriptive terminology that is defined as symmetric; an asymmetric mode of affinal alliance; and asymmetric indications in the terminology corresponding to the unilateral contraction of alliances (327). But if we compare the table of Endeh categories, arranged as in symmetric prescriptive alliance (325, table 4), with that above representing the western Manggarai terminology arranged asymmetrically (table 7), certain methodological issues are clearly posed.

Structurally, the Endeh terminology is almost congruent with that of western Manggarai. The differences in Mb are: MBS = FZS ≠ ZH = WB; ZS = DH ≠ WBS; and ZD ≠ WBD = SW. We can describe these differences by saying that at the level of reference the symmetry of the Endeh terms is duplicated in Manggarai, and that at the first descending level the symmetry of the Endeh terms is replaced by the asymmetry of the Manggarai. In these circumstances, why should the Endeh classification be defined as symmetric and the western Manggarai as asymmetric? In the Endeh analysis, I took it initially that the bilateral specifications of *ɛ̀ja* (MBS, FZS, ZH, WB) constrained us to posit a "basically" symmetric structure in the terminology (325), to which were superadded the asymmetric distinctions at the first ascending level and the asymmetric set of features MBD ≠ FZD = Z at the level of reference. To the extent that this procedure is admitted (but cf. 331-32), why should the western Manggarai classification not be defined also as symmetric? An answer might be that the Mb terminology exhibits asymmetry at five of the six points of structural comparison in the three medial levels, including most notably MBD = W ≠ FZD = Z, and that the only symmetric features are those at the structural locus (MBS = FZS) + (ZH = WB). We might say then that the Mb terminology was indeed basically symmetric, but with the "contingent elaboration" (326) of asymmetric distinctions in FZ ≠ MBW and MBD ≠ FZD (= Z). Viewed

in this way, the question is a matter of balance: Mb is weighted more towards asymmetry, Endeh more towards symmetry. Gauging by this scale, we can say that the Endeh terminology is mid-way between Mb and Mt: i.e. it exhibits asymmetry at three points of comparison and at two genealogical levels (first ascending and the level of reference), whereas in Mt asymmetry is found at two points of comparison and at only one level (first descending).

But these characterisations, defensible and contextually useful though they may be, tend to divert attention from more fundamental lessons of the Endeh example. The theoretical difficulty first encountered in understanding Endeh society, I found, was not so much that it fell on a typological borderline, but that the conventional inclination was to approach it typologically in the first place. The Endeh system combined symmetric and asymmetric features; the line between symmetric and asymmetric systems was tenuous; and the one type was readily convertible into the other (333):

In analysing a case such as the Endeh system, therefore, we should not be much concerned to show that it is symmetric or that it is asymmetric, in an endeavour to assign it to a place in a sociological typology. We should instead try to understand it by ascertaining the distinctive features of the particular arrangement by means of which it takes advantage, integrally or in limited sectors, of elementary principles of social classification.

This is precisely what I have tried to do here in the analysis of Manggarai social classification. The formal concepts of "symmetry" and "asymmetry" have a crucial use in the determination of structure in variant social facts, but there is no need to make either property into the unique and exclusive definition of any set of ethnographic data. Our task is indeed not to demonstrate that either Mb or Mt is asymmetric or symmetric, or even, for that matter, prescriptive or non-prescriptive; but instead to use these abstract criteria in a patient and cumulative interpretation of the distinctive features, varied as they are, of Manggarai categories and action. Nor is it necessarily our task to represent Manggarai society, or any part of it, as possessing absolutely any single and fixed form. A symmetric scheme shows one aspect, an asymmetric scheme another. Within a single terminology, also, a symmetric component displays one aspect, an asymmetric component another. It is by an imaginative combination, and then repeated recombination, of aspects that we can grasp the possibilities of order that are latent in a complex

form of social classification.

     To some extent the difficulty in achieving this kind of systematic
but relative comprehension has to do with the limits of technical re-
presentation and in particular of conventional diagrams. The matrices
that I have employed here (partly because of their accommodating
simplicity) permit one to see through them, as it were, to a more
abstract scheme of relations underlying the concrete representation;
and one can manipulate this scheme in the imagination, seeing it now
under one aspect and again under another, or with changing sets of
aspects in various combinations. It would require a formidable battery
of technical means, including no doubt three-dimensional models such as
are used to depict molecular structure, to represent these perspectives
on Manggarai institutions. But even to exploit such techniques of re-
presentation would not in itself cope with a graver source of difficulty,
namely that what we depict by such means are the abstractions by which
we apprehend and arrange the ethnographical evidences. It is this side
of the undertaking that most calls for methodical doubt, an insistent
skepticism about the categories in which we frame our analyses. Let me
therefore conclude the present exercise with some observations on these
matters as they have come repeatedly into question in the study of
Manggarai classification.

     First is the concept of prescription. Strictly speaking (cf. Needham
1973), neither the central nor the western terminology is one of pre-
scriptive alliance: i.e. there is no constant relation in either that
consistently articulates the terms and lines into a closed
classification. In Mt, the first ascending level and the specifications
of *késa* give intimations of a symmetric prescription, but there is no
exclusive prescribed category of potential spouse at the level of
reference, and at the first descending level the indications are not
symmetric but asymmetric. Clearly, there is no "invariant factor,
operative in whatever sector of the terminology" (1973:175), to qualify
the central terminology as prescriptive. The nearest we get to this
character is in Mb, with *wina* (MBD) as prescribed category, and a
constant asymmetry articulating most sectors of the terminology (see
table 7 above); but in even this case there are symmetric features, under
késa and *kéla*, which impair the consistency of the classification. How-
ever, this does not affect the value of the concept of prescription.
There exist forms of social classification, notably in eastern Indonesia
(see e.g. Barnes 1973, 1974, 1977), which are consistently prescriptive

in the sense required, and these provide empirical evidence of the
schemes from which the Manggarai terminologies can be seen as divergent.
It is by reference to such systems that we can identify "prescriptive
features" as distinctive classificatory components and as evidences of
evolution in Manggarai, and in these regards the concept of prescription
has indeed a singular utility. In other words, we do not have to be
dealing with a prescriptive system, as a consistent totality, in order
to detect the constructive resources, in limited sectors of a social
classification, of the absolute mode of relation by which prescriptive
alliance is ordered. Here again (cf. Needham 1974a:59-60) we should
abjure the idea of a type and look for a principle, in this case that of
a prescriptive relation, whether or not it characterises an entire
terminology or social system.[6]

   A similar approach is called for in assessing the idea of a descent
line. The central terminology has been defined by reference to two lines,
the western by reference to three lines, and this difference has been
taken to express an important contrast in structure. We have to consider,
however, that the unitary character of a descent line may be a potential-
ly misleading product of a method of representation. The matrices which
frame the present analysis are in many respects concordant with the
social facts, and they are demonstrably useful for certain argumentative
purposes, but structurally they are open to question so far as their
constituent descent lines are concerned. In table 5, representing the
central classification, there is not much problem about discriminating two
lines at the first ascending level; but what is the justification for
positing only two lines at the level of reference? I have referred above
(sec. IV, no. 21) to male cross-cousins and male affines (ZH, WB) being
at the same "structural locus", but this could mean only that given this
particular form of diagram the terms at issue have to be located in the
same compartment of the matrix by which the terminology happens to be
represented. The same consideration applies to the continuation of the
affinal line into the first descending level. Here are two terms (*koa,
to'a*), yet they are shown as occupying the same location. Moreover,
whereas the specifications of the terms at the level of reference indi-
cate a symmetric relationship with the line of reference, those for the
terms at the first descending level indicate an asymmetric relationship,
so that there seems less justification yet to link the terms at three
successive levels into just a single line. The difficulty is compounded,
furthermore, when we compare this line with the diagram representing the

western classification in a two-line matrix (table 6), and when we recall
the considerations of "balance" and "preponderance" that led us to expand
that diagram into a scheme organised by three lines (table 7). Neverthe-
less, I think it is correct to say that the reliance on descent lines,
as represented in the matrices, has not invalidated or fallaciously
biased the analysis of Manggarai terminologies - at least so far as the
analysis has been pursued. The purpose of these skeptical comments is to
draw attention once more, and this time with a specific example in view,
to the necessity to look through our technical apparatus and not to
treat it as though it were a concrete replica of social facts. A matrix
such as table 5, or table 6, does not depict a structure: it permits a
structure to be conceived.

   This brief scrutiny of certain technical notions on which the present
analysis depends is a methodical continuation of an approach that has
already been developed in other regards. In another place I have made a
critique of the very notion of "descent", with which that of a descent
line is cognate, and I have argued that it can be highly misleading to
ascribe a unitary character to a term such as "patrilineal descent", when
the social facts subsumed under such a term cannot be supposed to possess
any significant attribute in common (1974a:46-50). In that instance as
well the generic idea of a type of institution, defined by a unitary and
substantive concept of descent, is given up in favour of the formal
isolation of principles.[7] I should like to think that the advantages of
that critical approach have contributed to the comprehension of Manggarai
social classification. Admitted, the result in practice, in this case as
in others, is that the analysis of ethnographic particulars becomes more
complicated, and that the aspects under which a "system" can be viewed
are multiplied; but the method depends none the less on a very restricted
set of formal concepts and on their deliberate simplicity. In other
words, the complexity of the analysis is not a distracting fabrication
of the method: it is an index of the resourcefulness of the concepts in
the determination of structure and aspect.

   There is, to close with, a further lesson to be drawn from these
considerations in the context of Manggarai ethnography. The positing of
certain formal notions, and the refinement of their application, comes
most effectively from the empirical analysis of ethnographic evidences
and from the critical responses that are evoked, in one concrete case
after another, by the confrontation with specific configurations of social
facts. There is no substitute, e.g. by sociological generalities or by

computer simulations, for the encounter with factual reports of what
aggregates of human beings actually say and do. In eastern Indonesia a
distinct scientific advance has been made, in this regard, by Schulte
Nordholt and latterly Barnes and others, in an increasingly intense
comparative enterprise ranging from Timor to Manggarai and western Sumba
(Needham, in press). With the prosecution of this work it becomes
possible to determine the variety of empirical forms of prescriptive
alliance, and thereby to reconstruct the courses of evolution that such
systems may divergently trace. Throughout this series of analyses it is
largely the ethnographic evidences themselves, as semantic constructions
by which people order their lives, which prompt and test the speculative
interest in abstract schemes of morphology on which theoretical progress
depends.

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NOTES

1 I have slightly changed the abbreviations from Verheijen's "MB" and
   "SH", which look like genealogical specifications, and likewise "MT"
   for the sake of consistency.

2 Verheijen's list gives *bangkong* also as the common (U) term for ZC,
   as used by MB; but the dictionary entry states that it is used by HB
   (which is not at all clear; possibly HBW is intended) and by MBW
   (1967:29 s.v.), making it appear that the term is employed by a woman
   speaker.

3 According to Fischer's report of the terminology he obtained from
   Verheijen, FZS and MBS are indeed referred to reciprocally as *kêsa*,
   "meaning (potential) brother-in-law" (Fischer 1957:21, 22 n. 13); but
   these denotations are not included in Verheijen's published account,
   either in the dictionary entry (s.v. *kêsa*) or in the list of
   specifications and corresponding terms.

4 I am grateful to Mr. Robert Hain, B.Litt., of Merton College, Oxford,
   for the kind loan of a photographic copy of this source; as also of
   Van Bekkum (1944), adduced below.

5 The same feature is found among the Karo Batak, in a particularly
   clear instance of asymmetric prescriptive alliance (cf. Needham 1978).

6 Without elaborating the matter, I think it may be instructive to add
   that in this context also a decisive move is to suspend an exclusive
   reliance on a monothetic (i.e. common-feature) definition of a class
   - in this case a class of social facts - and to think instead in terms
   of a polythetic constitution (in which a class is defined by sporadic

resemblances, no one feature being common to all members). See
Needham (1975); especially, with reference to systems of prescriptive
alliance and their evolution, pp. 360-61.

7   For an effective demonstration of the use of the technique, see the
    comparison of Sanumá with central Yanõmami institutions by Lizot
    (1977:62-3).

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R. SCHEFOLD

THE SACRIFICES OF THE SAKUDDEI (MENTAWAI ARCHIPELAGO, WESTERN INDONESIA):
AN ATTEMPT AT CLASSIFICATION[1]

In a recent essay on the phenomenon of reciprocity, Van Baal (1975a)
points out that, if one is to understand its various manifestations, a
distinction must be drawn between those exchanges whose purpose is the
acquisition of goods from the other party (*trade*) and those in which the
goods exchanged are merely a means to a further end, namely establishing
or strengthening a bond between the parties as partners with accepted
social statuses (*gifts*). In trade, the reciprocity is balanced and the
relationship is terminated with the exchange of the goods (*'balanced
reciprocity'*); in the case of gifts, on the other hand, it is the
consolidation of the relationship that is essential, and the relative
value of gift and return gift depends upon the closeness and the social
status of the partners. Where there are partners of equal status whose
relationship is not a familiar one, the values of the gifts exchanged
must again be in balance. Here, the goods are regarded as a means of
expressing the closeness of the relationship; this provides the sole
explanation for the fact that the relationship does not end with the
exchange, as happens in simple trade.[2] On the other hand, where relative
status is recognized as unequal or where the relationship is a familiar
one, no attention is paid to equivalence, but each partner always gives
or contributes as much as he can. With reference to this form of
exchange, Van Baal mentions the expression *generalized reciprocity*
(cf. Sahlins 1974).

   In two further publications (1975b and 1976), Van Baal compares this
last-mentioned situation with the phenomenon of offering, which he
defines as "any act of presenting something to a supernatural being"
(1976:161). Offerings and sacrifices in their elementary form are gifts
with which man seeks to express a relationship with their supernatural
recipient. Usually, no more is actually given away than the very tiniest
of amounts; yet, in so doing, man confirms his trust in a relationship
in which he is by far the inferior partner. The fact that requests are
sometimes made during a sacrifice appears, at least at first sight, to

conflict with the nature of a gift; indeed it is surely part of the
essence of a gift that the bond which the recipient agrees to in
accepting it is such that he may decide in what way and at what time he
will, to the best of his abilities, return that gift. Van Baal, however,
sees this merely as a further expression of the realization that the
sacrificer and the deity are of unequal status: "Requesting is both the
most simple and the most decisive act of self-humiliation, the
recognition at once of the requestrant's dependence and of the
addressee's power" (1976:170). Van Baal thereby disassociates himself
from the *do ut des* theory of Tylor's: it is not a question of offering a
'bribe' with a view to receiving particular goods, but rather of con-
solidating an unequal bond that is beneficial to man.

   The distinction between 'trading' and 'giving' must clearly not be
regarded as absolute. Thus, while the exchange of goods by the groups
involved in an exogamous marriage confirms the new alliance, it can also
be accompanied by negotiations characterized by an interest in the
demanded reciprocation which is more than merely friendly. And indeed
sacrifice strikes me as an example which we must take particular care not
to ascribe too one-sidedly to one of the two categories, for, even if the
desire for communication and communion are frequently of foremost
importance, it can also be associated with a positive desire for specific
reciprocation. Van Baal also recognizes this possibility, for cases of
"misfortune or disaster" (1976:168); it will however emerge below that
it is not always true to the facts to restrict oneself to such situations,
since there are other forms of sacrificial act in which the trading
aspect is manifested.

   This, however, gives rise to a distinct dilemma. The desire for
particular goods is in accord with the principle of balanced reciprocity
and should be accompanied by an equivalent offer. Indeed, the fact that
negotiation with the supernatural 'partner' is impossible makes this
requirement all the more pressing. Yet any such equivalence appears to
be ruled out in advance by the difference between sacrificer and deity.
Where there is a familiar, intimate relationship between man and the
powers to whom he addresses his sacrifice, an appeal to their paternal
care can weaken the requirement of balanced reciprocity and temper the
contradiction. The dilemma is manifested in all its clarity where there
is no basis for such familiarity.

   This range of possibilities is the topic of the present article. I
shall show, with reference to several examples, how within the same

group of people, different actions, all of which fall under the above-
mentioned definition of offering, manifest various steps on the scale.
It will emerge that the dilemma is consciously experienced as such, and
also that an explicit effort is made to resolve it. We shall not consider
to what extent the particular economic situation objectively influences
the quality and frequency of the sacrifices (cf. Firth 1972). Rather it
is a matter of subjective notions about the different types of sacrifice.
These notions will be developed into a classification of sacrificial
acts, with the degree of familiarity and the specificity of the hoped-for
reciprocation as the variable factors.

The examples relate to the Sakkudei, a group living in the interior of
Siberut (4,480 square km, 18,000 inhabitants), the northernmost island of
the Mentawai Archipelago in Western Indonesia.[3] The inhabitants of
Siberut are organized into exogamous patrilineal groups of five to ten
families; each group lives in a large dwelling built on stilts. Both
group and dwelling are known as an *uma*. The individual *uma*s are dotted
along the river-banks. There, in low, marshy ground, they plant great
amounts of sago and taro and, on the river-banks, coconut palms. On
higher ground they lay out 'shifting cultivation' gardens where they
grow other tubers, bananas and fruit-trees. They raise pigs and chickens
as domestic animals. Other important activities are fishing, in the
rivers and on the coast, and hunting with bow and arrow in the hilly,
thick jungle of the hinterland.
    They do not work metal, nor do they weave nor make pots. Formerly,
the Mentawaians used neolithic techniques to fashion stone-axes, but,
for several generations now, they have acquired iron tools from Sumatran
traders in exchange for coconuts and rattan. There is no artisan
specialization, nor is there a system of leadership. Decisions relating
to the entire group may be taken only on the basis of a general
consensus. Differences of opinion continually threaten each group with
disintegration; it is the function of great communal ceremonies, called
puliaijat, to contribute to reinforcing the feeling of unity. To these
ceremonies everyone must contribute as much as he can, and individual
contributions are distributed to each family in equal 'shares' (*otsai*)
and consumed together.
    Over against this 'generalized reciprocity' within the group, there
is, carefully supervised, a 'balanced reciprocity' with neighbouring
groups. Both the (non-prescriptive) exogamous marriages and also the

ceremonial relationships of friendship are associated with an exchange
of gifts; through long negotiations, an endeavour is made to achieve a
precise balance (cf. Schefold 1975:59). Occasional simple trading
relationships are also characterized by balanced reciprocity. In this
way each *uma* seeks to build up alliances throughout the whole region
which can contribute to the preservation of peace in potential
situations of conflict. Only when tensions between groups flare up is
the law of balanced reciprocity violated. Then the group which feels
insulted invites friends to a great feast, at which they are regaled
with the meat of many pigs. Then, in the language of the slit-drums,
they challenge opponents from the rival group to outstrip them. These
opponents must seek their revenge and the competition can become so in-
tense that open fighting ultimately breaks out (cf. Schefold 1973a:60f).

Human beings, animals, plants, even objects all possess an individual
soul. Man's soul lives on after death as an ancestral spirit (*ukkui*).
Each *uma* has its own settlement of the ancestors, whose location is
known -perhaps in secluded areas of the jungle or on small islands off
the coast. The people have an ambivalent relationship with their
ancestors: on the one hand, the ancestors belong to the group; on the
other, they are both alien and dangerous. This duality is expressed in
many ritual patterns of behaviour, all of which are accompanied by
sacrificial acts.

Example I
The most inconspicuous manifestation of the lasting bond with the
ancestors is at the daily meal. The members of the *uma* gather in families
around the well-filled bowls of food. The head of the family takes a
little piece of food and drops it between the floorboards of the pile-
house, saying "With blessings" (*tulu*); "With blessings" the others
respond, and they start eating. This little piece of food is the
ancestors 'share' (*otsai*), to which they are just as entitled as the
living, and which in this way documents their membership of the group.

Every now and then, the people feel the need to give even more
emphatic expression to their feeling of oneness with their ancestors.
There is a special ritual for this, 'the bringing in of the ancestors'
(*guruake saukkui*). This ritual lasts about a month. The external impulse
is usually the death of a member of the *uma* a few months before. All the
forefathers in the *uma*'s settlement of the dead are invited, especially
those who have died recently, since they have a particular longing for

their surviving relatives and also for the possessions, above all the
pigs, which they have perforce left behind. This is an opportunity to
be reunited with the ancestors and to forestall any desire they might
have to call their relatives and the souls of their pigs to them
prematurely.

The ceremony is preceded by weeks of preparation: the provision of
sufficient food, the gathering of firewood, etc. The ritual begins late
in the afternoon with a solemn invocation of the ancestors. They are
addressed with the name of the settlement of the dead of the *uma* in
question; the case described here is that of the *Satepu* group, whose
ancestors dwell on the island of *Beriloga* ('many squirrels'). It is as-
sumed, however, that the souls of more distant relatives and of deceased
friends also come to watch. The medicine-men call across the valley:
"Come   ancestors of Beriloga, we shall borrow you, we shall sing and
dance!"   Then they sing to the ancestors as follows:

"Let us dance, o ancestors of Beriloga, on the broad back of the
dance-floor, o ancestors of ours.
Only the longing in our hearts makes us dance, o Beriloga.
Gather the blossoms with us, o ancestors, *totonan*-blossoms.
Let us bedeck ourselves with fringes of yellow blossom, o ancestors.
Let us dance till we fly over the broad back of the dance-floor.
Let us bedeck ourselves, bedeck ourselves with blossom, o ancestors,
Let us bedeck ourselves with flowers with longing in our hearts.
Adorn yourselves, o ancestors, with our blossoms.
Let us bedeck ourselves with flowers, let us dance.
We orphans, the drum is awaiting us, the drum that craves for a hot
back.[4]
A youth is there to protect the brilliance of the fire.
Let us bedeck ourselves with flowers, o Beriloga."

Sacred plants are made ready in the *uma*. The ancestors are invited to
take some; then the people use them to decorate themselves with. There
now follows a ceremony which is designed to neutralize the dangerous
radiation from the inhabitants of the settlement of the dead (*bajou*; cf.
Schefold 1973b:96f). In the meantime, women and youths have been pre-
paring the meal, which is now portioned out into wooden bowls. At first,
those present sit down around the bowls, doing nothing and waiting. Only
occasionally does one of the men summon the ancestors to partake: "Come,
come, o ancestors, let us now eat!" A little later, the call is heard:
"We shall eat what remains", and only then do the living eat their fill.
Thereafter there is dancing till dawn.

The following day is spent gathering flowers in the vicinity and
making decorations with them. In the evening, everybody assembles in
the inner room of the *uma*. Guests wishing to watch have also arrived by

now, as indeed have friendly ancestors from other settlements of the
dead. At first, everyone sits peacefully; a few gently sing a song to
the ancestors. Then the women roll out a large mat which covers the
entire dance-floor. The flowers are strewn over the carpet, and little
wooden boxes, in which the families keep their ornaments and their
cloths, are placed beside them. The boxes are opened and their contents
invitingly displayed to view. The master of ceremonies, the *rimata*,
stands in the entrance to the house by the veranda and calls into the
inside of the house: "Come, come, o ancestors, let us bedeck ourselves
with flowers, come all of you! " While the ancestors are decorating
themselves, the living continue singing songs to them, and some start
sobbing quietly as they become conscious of the presence of their
deceased relatives. This lasts about half an hour. Then, hesitantly, the
living also begin to decorate themselves. Suddenly, as if a sign had
been given, they all dash towards the flowers, the children in front,
and adorn themselves as beautifully as possible. In the meantime, further
spectators have arrived, and they too adorn themselves; again the
dancing continues until dawn. In contrast with the dances on other
occasions, each one of these dances is introduced with a song to the
ancestors. The ancestors join in with the dancing, and their movements
make the medicine-men so giddy that they continually fall down in a
trance. Men who are not medicine-men, women and even children may also
take part in these dances.

For some four weeks thereafter, this spectacle is repeated every
second night, each occasion being separated from the next by a night's
rest. Throughout this time pigs are continually slaughtered and served
up at banquets. Not until the final day, however, is it the turn of the
big castrated hogs (*babui*) from the estate of the newly deceased. On
this day the flowers have been laid out by midday. The son of the
deceased sings, tears streaming from his eyes, while the meat from his
father's swine is distributed: "Alas, father, thus he dies whom you
reared. Even though you have become the wind in the sky, yet we have
borrowed you."

There follow many individual ceremonial acts designed to ensure that,
despite this great scene of carnage, they will continue to enjoy success
in breeding pigs. Then portions of pork are stacked up in little piles
for the individual families and close relations from other *umas*; every-
thing is again offered to the ancestors, and then everyone carries his
share home to cook. That night, they dance for the last time.

On the following day the departure of the ancestors takes place. First
a great banquet is held, then everyone decorates himself. Before leave
is taken of the ancestors, measures are adopted to prevent the souls of
the living, which have now been in prolonged contact with their fore-
bears, from believing that they are now one of their number and from
following them back to the settlement of the dead. A bur is placed on
the little children's fontanelles as a 'barrier for the soul' (*kekera-
t-simagere*) - their souls are regarded as especially vulnerable and are
considered to be stuck fast, as it were, in this way. The medicine-men
take up little bamboo-quivers filled with smoked meat and blossoms;
these are also intended to induce the souls to remain in the *uma*. All
those present sit in the inner room, and they all begin to weep, even
the little children, carried away by the general atmosphere. The
medicine-men exclaim: "Slowly, slowly, do not go yet!", and continually
run up to the entrance, barring it with arms held out wide. Then, on
behalf of the ancestors, they go up to each individual and, sobbing,
take his hand - at the same time maintaining their grip on the bamboos
in order to hold the soul fast. Finally, they escort the ancestors as
far as the platform in front of the veranda.

Thereafter, they call up their own souls, using the decorated bamboo-
quivers as lures; water is poured into them and sprinkled over the
children, whose burs have meanwhile been removed.

The Mentawaians do not much concern themselves with what happens to
the actual 'share' of the ancestors in this ceremony. They see it as
consisting in a kind of invisible emanation from material reality, but,
unlike the Tikopia (cf. Firth 1972:322), they do not even have a name
for this, but arbitrarily interchange such expressions as 'soul'
(*simagere* or *ketsat*), 'smell' (*beu*) and 'smoke' (*otsut*). This is why
the ancestors may be offered the same objects time and time again. It
is precisely this apparent indifference that reveals the closeness of
the relationship of trust. Nothing is requested, but every man makes
available what he has, and thus does not need to specify it.

Example II
The ancestors are also continually invoked during the *uma*'s normal
rituals (*puliaijat*; cf. Schefold 1973b:109). The individual ceremonies
that take place during the rituals usually have a specific magic purpose,
namely to ward off sickness and sorcery and to ensure success in hunting
and daily work. By means of ritual acts and texts they conjure up those

The decorating of the dance-floor for the
ancestors at the ritual of the *guruake saukkui.*

A piece of food is offered to the ancestors.

particular phenomena which they wish to influence. Special mediators (*gaut*) are used for this purpose, particularly certain sacred plants whose souls are called upon to lend their support in influencing the souls of the relevant phenomena to grant the wishes uttered in the invocations. The people however always begin by offering some of these mediators to the ancestors, the familiar authority that is competent for all their concerns. They commit themselves to their protection and, in this way, sanction their own actions.

At the festive meals held during these ceremonies the ancestors are invoked more explicitly than in everyday life. The head of the family holds a piece of food above a crack in the floor to allure the ancestors. He asks them in general terms to ward off all evil from the group and then drops the piece of food down through the crack. Only when, after several weeks, the climax of the ceremony is reached are the ancestors solemnly invited into the house again. As in the ritual described above, the people embellish the veranda with flowers and decorations, and perform dances to delight both the ancestors and their own souls. On this occasion, the ancestors stay only until the following day. Before they leave, those present address a short speech to them in which they are again invited to take any decorations and food that appeal to them. Then they are informed of the problems preoccupying the group, and their aid is implored. Above all they are asked to ward off sickness, and rather to send it to unpopular neighbours. The speech concludes with valedictory formulae, and the ancestors return to their settlements.

Thus, in these ceremonies, a sense of oneness with the ancestors is combined with a clear appeal for general aid. As with the ceremony described previously, the wish for communion is still markedly in the foreground. The people offer what they have in the expectation that the bond they have thereby renewed will have beneficial consequences, just as in daily life the members of the *uma* assist one another to the best of their abilities. The atmosphere is still that of the general give and take that characterizes 'generalized reciprocity'; it is left to the ancestors to determine the nature of the reciprocation. In this instance, however, the reciprocation as such is expressly requested.

Example III
The Sakuddei believe that the souls of the living are continually detaching themselves from the body and roaming about independently. This cannot be prevented, but the soul of every man should regularly be

called back to him, so that it does not wander off too far. Otherwise
there would be a danger of its losing its bearings and not finding the
way back. If this happens, it becomes afraid and takes refuge with the
ancestors - and this is what they wish to obviate, for, if the soul
settles with the ancestors, adorns itself and eats with them, so the man
must die. That is why everyone's soul is called to every ceremonial meal.
And the hub of the great *puliaijat*-rituals is a ceremony in which the
medicine-men entice the soul of each member of the *uma*, calling out his
name, and solemnly present the soul to its possessor.

On this occasion, the ancestors are asked to help entice the souls.
This therefore differs from the example described above in that a
specific contribution from the ancestors is hoped for. An element is
hereby introduced into the relationship that transcends the giving of
arbitrary gifts in a pure gift-relationship. This is clearly expressed
in certain of the Sakuddei's modes of behaviour.

At the beginning of the ceremony, the *rimata* (see above) sticks a
kinumbu-decoration into the sand of the riverbank near the landing-place.
This decoration is cut from the stalk of a reed-like plant (*gojo*), rather
thicker than a thumb, and about a metre long. One end is hammered against
a stone until it is frayed, and the fibres are coloured yellow with
turmeric. Then blossoms of various colours are attached to it, as are
simple little fishes and birds (*jajat*) woven from strips of leaf. The
rimata calls out over the valley to the ancestors and the spirits
residing in the area:

> "O forebears, o ancestors, o spirits, here is a *kinumbu* for you, the
> purchase price at which we, your grandchildren, would buy our souls,
> the purchase price at which we, your grandchildren, would buy our
> lives. We, your grandchildren, call our souls that they should not
> remain out here in the cold. Give them to us, send them to us. This,
> a *kinumbu*, is the purchase price at which we would buy them!"

There follow various ceremonies in the house that do not relate
specifically to the ancestors. Then begins the enticement of the souls
of the people. The *rimata* walks from one person to the next with a little
chicken and strokes it across each of them:

> "The chicken for me and my children. This shall be the food for our
> souls. Slowly, slowly the souls will put their confidence in our
> bodies. We shall kill you, that you may be food for our souls."

The chicken is killed and cooked. From its flesh, food is made, which
the medicine-men now use to entice the ancestors and the souls. Through-
out the evening, deep into the night, there is dancing and singing so
that the enticement will be irresistible. Then the souls are ready to

gather on the plate with the food. The medicine-men go with the plate
from person to person, inviting the souls to jump across to their
possessors.

   Finally, the medicine-men assemble around the plate with the food,
and one of them sacrifices some of it in thanksgiving to the ancestors;
he calls to them:

   "O our departed forefathers, this is your reward for what you have
   brought!"
Then the dancing continues throughout the night till dawn.

   These actions show clearly that the Sakuddei are perfectly aware of
the distinction between a kinship-based commensalism with their ancestors
and appeals for specific help. The ancestors remain a reliable, familiar
authority. They will not insist upon exact recompense for their
assistance, for man is poor in comparison with them. Although he is not
a 'slave' of the supernatural powers as in hierarchical high religions,
he is referred to as a 'suckling' in the songs in which the medicine-men
act as the ancestors' mouthpiece. Nonetheless, however small the
offering, a specific request must be accompanied by a specific gift. This
becomes almost excessively clear in the way in which it is expressed:
only in such a context is the word 'purchase price' (*saki*) used with
regard to the ancestors; thus the little *kinumbu*-tree is referred to with
the same expression as is used for offering a piece of goods to a
neighbouring group or the Sumatran traders on the coast in exchange for
something of theirs. As if to underline the disparity, they gild the lily
by offering a 'reward' (*upa*) which again is presented to the ancestors
only in this context: at the conclusion of the ceremony, they give them
the food with which they had tried to achieve themselves what they now
are asking of the ancestors - an admission of dependence which the
pompousness of the expression cannot gloss over.

Example IV
As well as the souls of the dead, the Mentawaians recognize many other
categories of spirit: in the rivers, in the jungle, in the sky, under
the ground and in the sea. At the foot of the main pile of every *uma*
dwells 'the shaker' (*si Gegeugeu*), the spirit who causes the earthquakes.
In a myth, it is told that he was originally a human being, an orphan
who, early in life, displayed supernatural abilities and taught men how
to build houses and perform the associated ceremonies. His relatives
killed him out of envy: during the construction of the house, they bade

Invoking the ancestors at the *kinumbu*-decoration (right).

Two medicine-men entice the souls to settle on the plate (below).

him climb into the hole that had been dug out for the main pile and
then dropped the pile down onto him, smashing him to pieces. His soul
became a spirit. When the house was finally completed and was to be
consecrated, he brought about an earthquake which cost many lives. The
house collapsed but all other houses constructed since then were
originally made possible by him. Although he does not count as one of
their own ancestors, every *uma* maintains a friendly relationship with
him.

Part of the great rituals of the *uma* is a sacrifice to the earth-
quake-spirit, and also to his family (about which no details are given
in the myth). The medicine-men (*kerei*) assemble on the veranda, and one
of them holds a piece of cooked pig's liver over a crack between the
floorboards. They all lower their eyes and sing in chorus, slowly and
solemnly, a dialogue with him:

> "Old man, old man, ruler of the settlements, old man,
> Answer as we *kerei* call to thee,
> And knock at thy village.'
> 'Yes, o grandchildren, wherefore do you knock at the customs of the
> village?'
> 'Yes, o orphaned one[5], open thy door of board-roots of *menegat*,
> That cannot be raised, that cannot be turned,
> Bring out thy broken plate[6],
> The place for thy food, the liver of a swine with markings on its
> side, old man,
> The purchase price at which we, thy grandchildren, would buy our
> lives, old man.
> Do not tilt the plate, old man, do not tilt it,
> The place for thy food and the food of thy grandchildren,
> Otherwise we will be in trouble, we *kerei*.
> Thou art testing the *kerei* who are invited from settlement to
> settlement, the seeing *kerei*[7]. Come, have pity, old man,
> Level, hold it level, old man, the meat for thee and thy grand-
> children is falling."

The medicine-man lets the meat fall, and they all sing together the
thanksgiving of the earthquake-spirit:

> "'Blessings to you for my food and the food of my grandchildren!'
> 'Yes, o orphaned one, may the wind of the settlements of the dead be
> far from us, thy grandchildren,
> Here is the price at which we, thy grandchildren, would buy our lives,
> old man."

Now the medicine-man takes up a vessel made of coconut-shell
containing some meat-broth. He holds it tilted over a crack in such a
way that the liquid just fails to pour out. It is for Tajirigetmanai,
the sister (or wife?) of the earthquake-spirit. Everyone sings:

> "Mother, mother, Tajirigetmanai, mother,
> Bring thy broken coconut-shell, o mother,
> The place for thy meat-broth, o orphaned one,

That frees the body, that purifies the body, that cools the body,
The price we pay for our lives."

The medicine-man tilts the bowl until the meat-broth flows out.

Everyone invites the spirits to give themselves time:

"Slowly, slowly, old man, mother, and give us a good fruit-season, old
man!"

For the earthquake-spirit is also lord of the fruit of trees.

In this sacrifice, too, the close relationship with the recipient is
emphatically stressed. The human beings refer to themselves as 'grand-
children', thereby giving expression not only to their inferior position
- as with the name 'suckling' with regard to their ancestors - but also
to the kinsmanlike familiarity (the expression 'grandchild' is extended
in Mentawaian linguistic usage to subsume the children of the children
of all people with whom one has friendly relations). Just as in the
cases mentioned under Example II, the hoped-for reciprocation is alluded
to only in general terms, 'life', 'favour', 'good fruit-season' and the
'warding off' of all that threatens. It is striking, however, that, here
too, the expression 'purchase price' is repeatedly employed. We have
encountered this expression in connexion with the ancestors only in the
more specific request made in the previous example, whereas the present
situation corresponds rather to the general appeal to the ancestors made
in the course of the sacrifices in Example II, where there was nowhere
any mention of a purchase price.

It appears to me that this diversity of expression is explicable only
in terms of the difference between the people's distance from the
ancestors and their distance from the earthquake-spirit. Before he died,
he was a man, so that he too is an ancestor, but an ancestor of other
men. Everything is shared with one's own ancestors; one actually gives
less, but in so doing one is behaving no differently from a weak member
of the *uma* who is still entitled to a full share. With the earthquake-
spirit, the situation is different. He does not belong to the group like
one's own ancestors, rather he is equivalent to a member of a friendly
group with whom one also exchanges goods, if need be, but all the time
paying careful attention to the equivalence in value of what is offered
and what is received. This explains why terms are used with relation
to the earthquake-spirit which make the sacrifice appear more important
than it is, even here where the appeal for reciprocation is so general
that it barely detracts from the gift character of the sacrifice. The
Sakuddei are aware that the little piece of liver cannot represent an

equivalent for the favour they hope will be bestowed upon them. Yet their relationship to the earthquake-spirit is such that they cannot expect this favour to be offered as a gift. Thus they endeavour to see to it that the required balance in the reciprocal relationship be achieved at least verbally. Materially, the disparity remains, of course. However, since the request for reciprocation is made in symbolic terms only and is accompanied by an appeal to their own inferiority, the Sakuddei do not feel any more concerned about it.

Example V

The situation is different where the purpose of making a sacrifice to spirits is the extraction of specific reciprocation. Such a situation is found in interaction with the spirits of the wood (*sai ka leleu*). In a myth (cf. Schefold 1973b:100), it is told that these spirits were also previously human beings. But one day, they came to have separate domains; the men that now are spirits of the wood became invisible and settled where the men of today believe they see wilderness: their plantations are the jungle, their swine are the deer, and their chickens are the monkeys.

At the end of each of the great *puliaijat*-ceremonies, the Sakuddei set up a simple hunting-camp (*alaman*) for a few days far upstream in the jungle. After weeks of complex ritual activities, in which the entire cultural order has been symbolically expressed and consolidated, this sojourn seems like a return to a more elementary form of society - a situation which may be best referred to with Turner's (1969) expression 'Communitas'. But, at the same time, it involves entering alien territory, the domain of the spirits of the wood and also of the ancestors of other *uma*s which perhaps used to live there.

In return for permission to hunt in their territory, a purchase price (*saki*) is paid to them as well. Outside the hunting camp, a plant, one metre high, with, at the top, branches spreading out in clusters, is stuck into the ground (*pasaksak*:'crash down'). The branches are tied at the top to form a kind of funnel. The *rimata* stands next to it, and calls out into the surrounding terrain:

> "Come hither, o ancestors, o spirits, all of you who have plantations
> here by the river, we shall pay the purchase price for the monkeys,
> the purchase price for life. *Jeee*, let your bodies be seen, ancient
> fathers of the plantations, ancient mothers of the plantations, o
> ancient planters, munificent with the wild life of the woods. *Jeee*,
> let your bodies be seen, you whose land this is by the river, come,
> we shall pay the price!"

While the *rimata* is convoking the spirits, the others go one by one to the 'crash down' place of sacrifice and put some of their possessions on it: ornaments, cloths, etc.

"The place of the things for you, o ancestors, with the name 'crash down'. The monkeys will crash down before our eyes, before the eyes of the dogs. Here are things for you."

Thereafter the spirits of the wood receive an ornament made specifically for the purpose, just as, in Example III, the *kinumbu* was placed on the riverbank. One of the men has used a piece of charcoal to paint a hard-boiled egg carefully with decorative spirals. He now takes it in his hand and hides it behind his back. He is exhorted by everybody to sacrifice his egg to the ancestors as well. But he coils himself up in theatrical despair, claiming that he is especially attached to this egg, that it would be too much to give up, that he could not possibly give it away. The idea is to make it clear to the spirits that this is really something quite out of the ordinary. After lengthy persuasion, he finally yields and, with a tortured expression on his face, puts the egg beside the other objects on the stem of the little 'crash-down' plant.

"We have given you various things, o spirits, and now we have here a toy for you, a round one, we also are well-rounded in life, we'll round up the monkeys, what you give will be round!"

During the days that follow they hunt, for monkeys above all. Sometimes, they are lucky enough to shoot a deer or a wild boar. If the Sakuddei carry off one of these animals, the successful hunter cuts off a piece of the animal's left ear before they leave the jungle and slams it - crash! (like the crash of the falling animal) - down on a fallen leaf:

"O, our departed forefathers, friends, o spirits, friends, a tiny young monkey has fallen before the eyes of your grandchildren. Here is meat for you, let us share the spoils of the woods. Where shall I lay it? On a fallen leaf. Make his companions fall now too, his spouse, make those who come from his villages fall, those who bear his name, his cousins. Do not be grudging in your hearts."

This little piece of ear is thus a thanksgiving to the spirits of the woods, and at the same time it is also their share, designed to induce them to continue ensuring successful hunting.

There is obviously a striking disparity between their share and what is being asked for in return. The hypothesis mentioned at the beginning of this article would predict that this disparity would merely reinforce the bond which man establishes with the spirits of the wood: the disparity would allow him to appeal to their superior power and to show that he was in need of help and could, in the context of 'generalized

reciprocity', expect to receive a greater gift in return.

But even Examples III and IV have shown that this hypothesis is only partially compatible with the Sakuddei's way of thinking. Where something specific was being asked for, such as the ancestors' help in calling up the souls, or where the bond was less close, as with the earthquake-spirit, the use of the expression 'purchase price' laid a particular emphasis on the sacrifice such that the image of pure generalized reciprocity was relativized. The present example involves both aspects: they are asking a specific favour of spirits to whom they are not closely related. Now it is no longer sufficient for them to appeal to their not being adults. At first they try to diminish the value of the spirits' gift by pointing out that they are presenting them with only a tiny sample. Above all, however, they now endeavour to increase the value of their own offering. In the introductory offer of a 'purchase price' after the camp was set up, this was achieved by means of theatrical distortion. The value of the sacrifice of the ear described above is however the subject of a myth which brings out how intensely the Sakuddei experience the conflict between, on the one hand, their feeling that, given the type of relationship they have with the spirits of the wood, their request for the gift they desire should be accompanied by an introductory offering equal in value and, on the other hand, their inability to bring this about. This myth was recounted to me in the following way[8]:

"There was once a man who was a keen tracker of game. One day he tracked down a deer and shot at it with bow and arrow. Whoosh! He shot at it, and followed it and followed it. He came to a wallow and lost the track. A short time after, he went tracking again, and again shot a deer. Whoosh! He followed it, came to a wallow, but the tracks had disappeared and he couldn't find them any more. Another day he went out again. He walked and walked through the wood, walked and walked, walked and walked and then saw a deer. Whoosh! He shot at it. He went and followed its tracks, followed and followed, came to a wallow, but did not catch up with his prey, did not even see it, did not even find its tracks any more.
This had now been happening so frequently that all his brass-tipped arrows were used up. He began to weep. He wept and wept - then suddenly his eyes opened and he saw a great house. And as for the wallow, it had become a feeding-place for pigs, just like what we have at home. And he saw a spirit who said:
'Come up here, grandchild!'
So the man climbed up to the house. And there he saw his brass-tipped arrows that he had previously shot at the deer and wild boars. He saw them sticking out of the roof which was thatched with leaves. He saw them - 'Hey, aren't these my arrowheads? So this is where the game is that I shot. So the people here have eaten it!'
The spirit said: 'What is wrong, my grandson, you are weeping!'

'I am weeping, grandfather, because I am looking for the animals
I have shot, and I cannot find them.'

'Are you? Then go and fetch sago for the pigs, my grandson!'

Then he went and fetched sago for the pigs. He chopped up the great
logs, and then carried them, carried and carried, and laid them down
in front of the veranda. Now the spirit said:

'Quickly, throw it onto the feeding-place, the food for the swine.'

Then he threw it. Crash, crash, crash, he threw it, to the last
piece. And then he called them together, *'Kiooo!'* Then wonderful deer
came with antlers branching out wide! The man however said to himself
in his thoughts: 'So, this must be where they come from, this is the
feeding-place of the deer. Then somebody must own them!'

Now the spirit asked: 'Tell me, when are you going back, my grand-
son?'

'Yes - I was just on the point of going'.

'When you go, my grandson, I shall give you something to take with
you. Meat for all of you, and for your wife.'

'So be it, grandfather.'

Now the spirit tested the man. He said: 'Fetch your arrows, my
grandson, shoot that little deer and take it with you.'

Then the man thought: 'What, if I only shoot a little one, it will
not be enough for all of us. I will shoot a big one.' And he fetched
his brass-tipped arrows and shot a magnificent deer. Whoosh! He shot
it, and it died. Then he went back up to the house:

'Grandfather, it is dead.' The spirit answered:

'You are truly clever. It is right that it should be so.'

'What shall we do, grandfather? Shall we share the meat?'

'So be it.'

They now singed the deer. Singed and singed, and then cut up, cut
up the meat. The head they laid in a wooden trough. And now the spirit
put his foot against the deer's ear. His left ear. 'Come now, divide
the meat into two halves, my grandson.'

And he divided up the meat. Divided, divided, into exactly equal
pieces. But the spirit said: 'What is this, my grandson? That is not
very much meat for us, for your grandparents. You have given us only
a little, we have come off worse'.

'No grandfather, the shares are exactly equal', answered the man.
In his thoughts, however, he said to himself: 'What ever shall I do?'
He divided it up again, so that he came off worse. He did not give
himself much, but he did give a large quantity to the spirits. He
divided and divided, and all the while the spirit tapped his foot
against the deer's left ear.

'So, grandfather, that is the meat for you.'

'Grandson, what you are doing is wrong. That is not enough for us.
You are simply giving us too little. Really, you're doing nothing but
making sure we come off worse!'

'No, grandfather, you have more, there is only a little for me.'

'No.' And, so saying, the spirit tapped his left foot against the
deer's left ear.

Now the man noticed the spirit's foot on the deer's ear, and said
to himself: 'What ever is he trying to convey? Maybe he's trying to
indicate that he would like to have the meat of the ear for himself?'
He tried this out, and cut off the ear. Cut, cut off the deer's ear.

'Yes indeed, my grandson, that is the meat we want! If you ever
again shoot a deer, or a wild-boar, or a Simakobu monkey, or indeed
any kind of game, then give us, your grandparents, its ear as our
meat. Its ear - you will be giving but a little, but for us it is a

great deal. Even if you cut the body into equal halves, even if you
give us yet more, it is not much, it can never be much. The ear, on
the other hand, is more than enough!'
    He said this to the man, who went to fetch palm-leaflets to pack
everything in, the whole body and the bones, he packed and packed,
and then he made to leave. 'I shall go now, grandfather.'
    'So be it, go now, grandson.'
    And so he walked off, walked and walked, and arrived home. And
since the deer he had shot was there, he called his brothers, called
his sisters, his brothers-in-law and his nephews. They all ate up the
venison, ate it, ate it up until there was none left.
    Then he went to fetch wood. While he was fetching the wood, the
spirit saw him again. He went up to him and said:
    'How is it, my grandson, is your meat all eaten up?'
    'Yes, grandfather, it is all eaten up.'
    'Why, grandson, we still have a great amount. We, your grand-
parents, still have something left.'
    'Really?'
    'If you think I'm lying, come and see.'
    So they went to the home of the spirits. And there was meat every-
where, he saw it in the bamboo-carriers, he saw it in pots, he saw it
in pans and - in what enormous quantities! All from the deer's left
ear. The spirit said: 'Look, that meat of ours, how much there still
is. You took away the whole body, and we took only one of its ears,
but what an enormous amount has come from that!'
    'Yes, indeed.'
    'Well, take these for your people, grandson, these two bamboo
cooking-vessels full of meat.'
    So the man took a couple of bamboo cooking-vessels full of meat
away with him when he left. Took them away, away, away, came home,
and there they ate it up again, ate it, ate it up.
    This is the story and the significance of our sacrificing the
deer's ear and the ears of any game we capture. This and no other."

The immediate import of this tale is obvious. Man learns that what
appears little to him is a great amount to the spirits. And what to man
are deer are pigs to spirits. What to man is jungle is cultivated land
to spirits. If we followed this track farther, we would encounter many
similar conceptions in other contexts: men speak, spirits sing; when it
is dark for men, it is light for the spirits, etc. The idea crops up
repeatedly that, in the realm of the ancestors and spirits, everything
is changed round. Right becomes left.

Such a 'symbolic reversal' (cf. Needham 1973:306ff) with reference
to the world of the spirits is a device frequently employed by ethnic
groups of Indonesia to delineate their own cultural order and mark off
contexts. Therefore, it would certainly be misguided to ascribe such ways
of thinking in Mentawai simply to the people's attempt to resolve the
dilemma inherent in the sacrifice. The myth surrounding the sacrifice
of the ear merely makes use of already existent principles of thinking.
But, at the same time, the myth brings out certain elements that lift

the sacrifice of the ear out of the generalizing give-and-take
atmosphere of the pure gift in an unequal relationship. The meat is not
intended for a meal to be consumed by spirits and men together, but it
is divided up and eaten separately, and the portioning out of the meat
is accompanied by negotiations such as are necessary for all instances
of balanced reciprocity and as characterize simple trading the world
over. This is expressed unambiguously by such phrases as 'come off
worse'. Man shoulders the burden of killing, but if he wishes to continue
profiting from it in the future, he must be prepared to abide by the
agreement which guarantees the possessors of the slain animals their fair
share.

   Nor is a lasting bond excluded here either. The kinship terminology
used reveals a hope in the persistence of a relationship, the value of
which is yet again emphatically underscored by the episode concerning
the generosity of the spirits at the end of the tale. For the alien
spirits of the wood, however, such munificence is no matter of course.
Man owes them some equivalent for his own specific desires. Judged by
human standards, he is incapable of offering any such equivalence, and,
in this case, an appeal to his own weakness of the type made to the
ancestors is no longer of any avail. The notions of symbolic reversal
release him from his dilemma. The myth teaches that the spirits will be
satisfied with the left ear and thus helps man to overcome a dilemma for
which a seeming solution is clearly better than no solution at all.

Example VI
There is, however, one situation known to the Sakuddei in which sacrifice
entails a real material loss. This situation is the one which is most
readily comparable with the cases of 'misfortune' or 'disaster' mentioned
by Van Baal (see above). Characteristically, one of the components of the
dilemma sketched out in the previous examples is, in this situation,
completely turned about: no endeavour is made to establish a bond with
the recipient of the sacrifice; rather the aim is, through the gift, to
achieve complete separation. In such a situation, it is obvious that no
trust will be placed in the seeming solution offered by a previously
concluded agreement, as with the spirits of the wood. Now man must
surrender some of his own possessions, however severely this may affect
him. This situation arises on the death of a member of the *uma*.

   When a man dies, his soul goes to join his ancestors and is admitted
into their settlement. For two days and two nights the deceased is

mourned at home, then he is taken to the funeral place and there laid
to rest above the ground in a coffin set on a scaffold. But just as man,
when he is alive, leads his own existence, even if his soul is roaming
around somewhere else, so the Sakuddei believe that, even now the soul
has settled with the ancestors, the body has an independent individu-
ality. From the decaying flesh and the bones there arises a spirit, the
pitto, one of the most feared phenomena on Siberut. The *pitto*s are full
of envy, they are jealous of the living who still have their beautiful
bodies, and are continually threatening to return and settle in the *uma*
and harm the people living there. Part of every great *puliaijat*-festival
is a nightly ceremony in which the medicine-men run them to earth and
drive them out of the vicinity of the people.

In order to mitigate the *pitto*'s envy from the very outset and to buy
freedom from being persecuted by it, the people make a sacrifice at the
funeral once and for all. Before the coffin lying on the funeral place
is closed, gifts are laid next to the body. This is done almost
stealthily, lest their actions inspire thoughts of establishing a new
relationship - in clear contrast to the words uttered during the
sacrificial acts discussed above, in which they enhance the value of
their meagre gift with fine words. A chicken is killed, and laid into
the coffin, with the whispered words: "Here is a chicken for you"[9].
Bowls of meat-broth and cooked taro are added. Then the heirs surrender
some of their inheritance: if it is a man who has died, perhaps a bush-
knife, an axe, an iron bowl, some glass beads, a few of his ornaments,
some brass bracelets, and several yards of white and coloured materials.
A bow and a few arrows are also put in, but only after having been
damaged a little, so as not to give the *pitto* the chance of shooting the
animals that are game for the living[10].

All these funeral gifts must remain in the coffin and decay with it.
They are called 'successors' (*usut*). What the gifts are depends on the
value of the estate. Sometimes an agreement about this, too, is made in
advance: the dying man announces expressly what he wishes to take with
him. The Sakuddei claimed that they themselves would always abide by
such agreements, and rebuked neighbouring *uma*s for not doing so; I was
unable to check what the true facts are.

This is therefore a real case of things being given away. Only when
the coffin crumbles away and its contents have fallen to the ground may
those objects which are still intact be taken back. In the meanwhile,
the fear of that particular *pitto* will have abated. But even yet the

Old decaying coffin on a scaffold
with a plate, a fishing-net and cloth
as gifts for the *pitto*-spirit of the deceased.

funeral gifts are felt to be sinister, and only in great destitution do
people get over this feeling. This is true, for example, of the old
beads, which are esteemed more highly than those that are now imported.
The objects are ceremonially cleaned to neutralize the dangerous
radiation (*bajou*; see above) that still attaches to them from their past.
The old property-rights are however now forfeit. Whoever comes along may
take possession of such objects.

   Halfway home, a ceremony is performed to repel the dead man, should
he still be following. Yet again he receives *usut*. A coconut palm is
partly defoliated and the top cut off, which causes the whole to die.
Some time later the same is also done to a few sago palms and fruit-
trees; but these do not die completely. They should however never be sold
or given away. Lest the trees take it ill of the people that they should
put them to such miserable use, they later plant there particular bushes,
to whose soul a calming influence is ascribed, saying: "Here are flowers
for you, o trees, they are cool, your voices will be cool here, our
bodies will also be cool. We have given you to the dead as trees." — As
they continue their way home, they paddle their dugouts through a gate
constructed of two slender stems, branching at the top, that have been
stuck into the river-bed, and say: "We are passing through. The shadow-
beings cannot see us any more, the dead man can see us no more!" Thus
they leave the domain of death behind and return to life.

Conclusion

All the actions described here fall under the definition of offering
mentioned at the outset as an 'act of presenting something to a super-
natural being'. Our examples have however shown that this 'presenting'
may be variably emphasized according to the situation and the donors'
assessment of the recipient. Our point of departure was Van Baal's
fruitful, ideal-typical distinction between a gift-relationship, which
establishes a bond between partners, and a trading relationship, whose
purpose is the bilateral acquisition of goods; in this distinction,
typical offering and sacrifice should belong to the former category. The
examples from the Sakuddei have however shown that this category
assignment, even in normal situations, is in no way appropriate for all
types of sacrifice. Our first example was characterizable as a pure gift:
what took place with the *guruake saukkui* was completely in line with the
conception of the sacrifice first expressed by Robertson Smith as a
"communion of the participants with one another and the deity"

(Lessa and Vogt 1972:323). As, progressing through the following examples, we found that the offering of sacrifices became increasingly clearly linked with a request for specific reciprocation and ever more distant authorities were called upon, so the conceptions began to diverge more and more from the typical characteristics of the exchange of gifts. This was apparent not only in the forms of expression used, but also in the people's attempts to increase the value of their own, human contributions. For their strongly felt need to achieve an equivalence of gift and return gift is incompatible with the generalizing give-and-take of unequal contributions by unequal partners, as must be the case in a pure gift-relationship between men and spirits. Rather, it belongs to the sphere of trade, where goods are measured up against one another irrespective of social statuses. Nonetheless, even the most extreme of these actions - the sacrificing of the ear - did not lack something of the gift. That sacrifice ensured the consolidation of a mutual bond that made the seeming resolution of the discrepancy between the inadequacy of human powers and what was really necessary nonetheless seem satisfactory and harmonious. Only in the last example, where this bond was no longer guaranteed, did the sacrifice entail real material loss.

Employing the two variables discussed above, the relationship with the recipient of the sacrifice and the specificity of the request for reciprocation, one may represent the six types of sacrificial acts performed by the Sakuddei as follows:

'Gift' Type of request / Relationship with the recipient	not expressed	expressed in general terms	expressed in specific terms
kinship	I Union (communion) with the ancestors	II 'Share' for the ancestors to obtain general help	III 'Purchase price' and 'reward' for the ancestors to obtain the souls
trust	-	IV 'Purchase price' paid to the earth-quake-spirit for general help	V 'Purchase price' and negotiated 'share' given to the spirits of the wood for game
enmity	-	VI Required destruction of inherited property, for the *pitto*, to achieve 'separation'	-

'Trade'

It is clear from this table that nothing but a combination of our two criteria is sufficient to differentiate the various acts. Only in this way does the particular character of each type of sacrifice emerge.

Accordingly, the kind of result that the sacrificers expect appears in a different light in each case. By finding a name for each of these results, the particular nature of each type may be expressed in yet more general terms. Using the same tabular lay-out as above, we may refer to these types using the following terms:

Communio	Blessing	Assistance
1	Favour	Recompense
	Non-affliction	2

Examples from other cultures would doubtless permit an extension of this classification. For example, a sacrifice made to superordinate powers without explicit requests (position 1) could be characterized as an expression of trust in their 'protectorate', or a substantial renunciation of goods to inimical powers in order to achieve relief from a specific calamity (position 2) as a 'ransom'[11].

There thus emerges an initial attempt to set up a classification of sacrificial acts, the basis for which is the way in which the sacrificer himself views the event. Each type characterizes a particular kind of relationship with the otherworldly powers. In this way, the various sacrificial acts, alongside their tacit or explicit purposes, also contribute to expressing an order among those powers. Thus they are consistent with an endeavour to which the recipient of this Festschrift has referred as 'man's innate desire': "Man has to arrange his world in some sort of pattern so as not to lose his foothold in the surrounding chaos." (Schulte Nordholt 1971:435f).

NOTES

1 To all those who commented on early drafts of this article, and to Lachlan Mackenzie who translated the text into English, I wish to express my appreciation.

2 This principle is applied differently in the case of the competitive giving of gifts, where one partner endeavours to humiliate the other by giving more valuable gifts.

3 The fieldwork in Mentawai (1967-1969 and 1974) was financed by the Swiss National Foundation and Granada TV (London).

4 The skins of the dancing-drums are stretched by being heated before the fire.

5 In the myth, the earthquake-spirit is an orphan.

6 In the myth, everything was broken in the earthquake.

7 The Mentawaian medicine-men can see spirits and souls.

8 The present version is slightly abbreviated.

9 The Sakuddei do not like doing this, since they are afraid that the chicken could take the miserable purpose to which it has been put amiss and could incite the other chickens against them. This is why pigs are never slaughtered on such occasions.

10 For analogous reasons, a little slit is made between the thumb and index-finger on the right hand of respected men after their death.

11 It strikes me as less appropriate to characterize such cases as 'bribes', as Van Baal (1976:175) proposes, since this term introduces an unsuitable note of illegality into the relationship.

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P.E. DE JOSSELIN DE JONG

MYTH AND NON-MYTH

One of the reasons why a number of anthropologists still "feel cheated
in some devious way" by the publications of Lévi-Strauss seems to be that
they feel the lack of a *Règles de la Méthode Structuraliste*. His study
of myths, for example, is still sometimes held to be a brilliant piece
of sleight of hand rather than a truly methodical work. It is, therefore,
all the more satisfactory that the methods applied in *Mythologiques* have
been proved to be replicable, thanks to the interpretations of Australian
myths by Maddock (1970), of central African myths by De Heusch (1972),
and of myths and rites of ancient Greece by Detienne (1972). So far, all
is well apparently.

However, each of the two books I just referred to gives rise to
further questions. Luc de Heusch's *Le roi ivre ou l'origine de l'état*
raises the issue of political myths, a point to which I shall return
below. As for Marcel Detienne's elegant and lucid *Les jardins d'Adonis*,
Lévi-Strauss has pointed out (1972:102) that the Greek beliefs and
rituals concerning Adonis and the aromatic plants associated with him
appear to be a "miniature version", a "paradoxical reflection" of the
Mesopotamian myths of Ishtar and Tammuz. A *reflection* of myths in other
elements of culture is a notion which brings us to the subject of the
present essay: the relation between myth and non-myth.

I
An exhaustive listing of past and present definitions of myth (if it were
possible) would undoubtedly yield a collection at least as large as the
161 definitions of culture reviewed by Kroeber and Kluckhohn. For our
present purpose a more modest survey will be sufficient. I shall consider
a few definitions and circumscriptions, both old and recent, with an
emphasis on those to be found in general introductory works, since these
are likely to draw a greater consensus of opinion than other definitions.

The definition by Peter Kloos (1972:114,115) is a good starting point,
as it uses the criteria that occur in all or most other definitions as
well. "In the first place, myths often have a clearly sacral character...

In the second place, personages occur and events take place in myths
which are only encountered in the world of myth, and not in the every-
day world or in the past: myths are not simply historical tales (al-
though many myths are set in the past). In the third place, many myths
refer to important happenings such as the origin of things and momentous
changes. In the fourth place ... the truth of a myth is irrelevant: the
era of myth is not bound by the possibilities and constraints of this
world ...".

A rather similar compound definition is given by Percy S. Cohen (1969).
Most definitions of myth are formulated in terms of (a) the truth of a
myth, (b) its function in and for the society concerned, and (c) its
contents. We shall briefly consider these one by one.

a. *Truth of a myth*
The *Oxford English Dictionary* is in accordance with the every-day
imprecise usage when it defines myth as a "Purely fictitious
narrative...". On the contrary, in Kloos' definition the truth of a myth
is irrelevant. The same opinion is held by Locher (1956:169), who cites
in his support J.P.B. de Josselin de Jong, Rubin Gotesky, and R.M. Mac-
Iver. On the other hand, as early as 1917 E.A. Gardner wrote: "Its
(myth's) difference from ordinary tales seems to be partly in the fact
that it is believed" (1917:118). The same point is also made by Marcel
Mauss (1947:203) when he writes that "un mythe proprement dit est une
histoire crue", and by Mircea Eliade (1971:1133) who states that "myth
tells only of that which really happened". Obviously the definitions
given by the *Oxford English Dictionary* on the one hand, and by Kloos and
Locher on the other are based on an outside or observer's point of view,
while the definitions put forward by Gardner, Mauss, and Eliade are based
on the point of view of the cultural participants. This brings us to the
next point.

b. *Function of a myth*
Not only Kloos, but also Eliade and Locher remark that myth is sacral
and/or of special importance for the society concerned; it is this
feature which sets myth apart from fables or tales (e.g. Eliade 1971:
1134). The special importance of myths lies in the fact that they deal
with "events which human beings consider as absolutely essential for
their existence and as giving meaning simultaneously to the present, the
past, and the future" (Locher 1956:169). For Mauss, the fact that a myth

is an *histoire crue* (a story believed to be true) has consequences which legends - "less believed" - do not have, namely that myths usually entail rites.

c. *Content of myth*
Some authors combine both or either of the above discussed criteria with a more or less exhaustive enumeration of topics that are dealt with in myths (e.g. Kloos 1972; Eliade 1971:1138). A less satisfactory definition of myth is based exclusively on its contents. For example, the *Dictionary of the Social Sciences*: "In anthropology there is general agreement that a *myth* is a narrative tale concerned with the gods and the nature and meaning of the universe and man" (Gould and Kolb 1967:450). Boas also defines myth purely by its contents. This inevitably leads him to conclude that "it is impossible to draw a sharp line between myths and folk tales ..." (Boas 1938:609).

This brief survey of definitions of myth has led us to the issue of the boundary-lines between myths and texts[1] of a different nature.

As we saw in our mini-sample, it is the criterion of truth (as seen by the native speakers) which mainly serves to distinguish myth from "a parable or allegory, as well as from a fiction or romance" (Gardner 1917:118) or from a "fable or tale" (Eliade 1971:1134). On the other hand it is logical that Locher, for whom the question of the truth of a myth is irrelevant, speaks of the "new national myth" of "the awakening of the Indonesian nation and of their struggle for national freedom and in-dependence" (1956:185, 186), whereas others would prefer to speak of "political ideology" rather than "myth". He also uses the word "myths" when referring to "several stories ... which showed how cleverly (the Timorese ruler of) Sonbai knew to act against the Dutch and how he hoodwinked them" (p. 172). In this case one may wonder whether the term 'legend' would be more appropriate.

It is particularly the relation of myth to legend that remains a vexed problem. Mauss first makes a not too sharp distinction between them as being respectively an *histoire crue* and *moins crue*, and goes on to bring the two together again with the words "le mythe peut pénétrer la légende ...". Roger Bastide, having quoted Mauss, also comes to the conclusion that "the boundary-line between myth and heroic legend or tale is quite fluid" (1968:1053).

It is hardly surprising that this should be so. Both myths and legends

(and sagas, as Bastide adds) are set in the past. The latter generally
also have a specific socio-political setting or theme, and consequently
may well express a particular political point of view or ideology. In
his article "Myth in a Changing World", Locher refers to Lévi-Strauss'
proposal for a "comparison between myth and what has largely replaced
it in modern societies, namely politics". He then gives reasons for
including political ideology and tales of a politico-social type (e.g.
those of Sonbai's reaction to the Dutch) in the category of myth.

In the present article we have not yet considered Lévi-Strauss' views
on this matter. It is becoming clear that the problem of the distinction
between myth and non-myth is most acute when we narrow it down to the
relation between myth and legend. The question of the relation between
myth and political ideology would seem to be absorbed by the myth-versus-
legend problem, for it is only a *formulated* ideology, and one that is
expressed by means of a historical or would-be historical, i.e.
legendary, narrative that can be usefully compared with a myth.

In the Ouverture to *Mythologiques*, Lévi-Strauss warns against too
hasty opinions as to what is myth and what it is not. Still, he does make
the distinction between myths and such texts as "stories, legends, and
pseudo-historical traditions" that can be used to clarify them (1964:12).
He does not, to the best of my knowledge, ever define myth, but he
characterizes it in various passages throughout his works.

In contrast to poetry, a myth is eminently translatable, for its value
does not lie in its style or syntax, but in the fact that it is built up
not out of isolated elements, but out of elements in combination
(1958:232). The mythical structure is resistant to even the worst
translation, and makes a myth always recognizable as such. On this
conceptualization is based his exposé on the method of myth analysis,
which he applies in *Mythologiques*.

Myth is the counterpart, in the domain of reflection, to the technical
activity called *bricolage* ("la pensée mythique, cette bricoleuse":
1962:32), and *bricolage* is a product of *la pensée sauvage*. The *sauvage*,
undomesticated character of myths leads us to two conclusions. First, as
to the study of myth, it is hazardous to attempt a structural inter-
pretation of myths which are *only* known to us in versions which have been
consciously shaped as works of art or for moral or other purposes (Lévi-
Strauss 1963:631; 1958:235; 1971:475). Secondly, being *sauvage*, myths do
not aim at *rendement*, at practical results. This has to be qualified,
however, as will be apparent when we compare the two following passages.

Myths "have no apparent practical function; in contrast to the
phenomena previously studied (viz. kinship and marriage) they do not
directly come to grips with a different reality ..." (1964:18). But:
"What can be said of the rules of kinship and marriage can also be said
of myths. Neither one of them simply *exist*; they *serve a purpose*, which
is to solve sociological problems in the one case, socio-logical problems
in the other" (1968:187). The contradiction is only apparent. At the
moment we need only note that, according to Lévi-Strauss, myths deal with
certain logical problems.

One of the most important problems is the question of time. In a well-
known phrase, Lévi-Strauss asserts that myths are "machines for the sup-
pression of time" (1964:24; cp. 1971:542, 543). This idea was spelled
out more explicitly in *Anthropologie Structurale* (1958:231). Myths
always deal with events in the past; but what gives myths their special
value is that these events "also form a permanent structure". I prefer
the original English version: what gives myths their special value is
that "the specific pattern described is everlasting" (Lévi-Strauss
1955:52). This structure, or pattern, refers at once to the past, the
present, and the future. "It is at one and the same time historical and
a-historical". In myths, the past is conceived as a timeless model,
rather than as a stage in a process of change (1962:312). As we said
before, myths as narrations of past events come closest to legends; but
I think it is correct to say that for Lévi-Strauss the principal
distinction between the two lies in the timelessness of myths, i.e. in
their double structure, both historical and a-historical. We saw that
for Mauss, myth can penetrate legend. For Lévi-Strauss, history
penetrates myth: myths tell of a happening in time, but this history is
locked up inside the myth, not open to the future (1963:636).

In *Mythologiques*, for example in the chapter with the significant
title "Du mythe au roman", Lévi-Strauss discusses the passage from myth
to romance or novel via the serial myth (1968:11, 105). The relation
between myths and other kinds of texts is always, as far as I know,
discussed in terms of transformation: e.g. in 1971:539, but most fully
in "Comment meurent les mythes". During its diffusion in North America,
a particular myth crossed several cultural and linguistic "thresholds",
and was thereby transformed, in the first case into a romance, in the
second case into a legend, and in the third case into a history. The
difference between the two latter end-products is that in the legendary
version an event in the distant past justifies certain clan privileges

in the ethnographic present; it is retrospective. The historical version
justifies a recent policy decision: the Cree co-operate with the Whites.
It is prospective, as it deals with one course of action among the
several which were possible in a situation that is still open to change.
(This passage also seems to give us the distinction Lévi-Strauss would
wish to make between legend and historiography.)

   After this review of Lévi-Strauss' position, it is time to draw to-
gether the various lines of argument we have so far considered. For the
purpose of defining myth, five criteria have been employed. The first
criterion, namely that a myth is a narrative, has often been simply
implied by one or more of the other criteria. Yet, it is of some
importance as it distinguishes myths from ideas (Cohen 1969:337) or un-
formulated notions - a point we also had to make previously. (It also
distinguishes myths from tracts and treatises.)

   Secondly, as to the contents of the myth, some writers give a list of
the typically mythical themes. For some authors this list distinguishes
between myth and folk-tale (Cohen 1969:337), for others it does not
(Boas 1938:609, 610) because the themes presumed to be mythical occur
also in folk-tales. Differently stated, according to this criterion,
myths deal with characters and events which only occur in myths, as
distinct from historical accounts. A problem here is that some tales,
which in all other respects can be called myths, do not have this
particular kind of contents (e.g. M20 in De Heusch 1972:182-184). Must
they therefore be banished from the fold?

   As to the question of truth neither the point of view that myth is
untrue, nor that the truth of a myth is irrelevant, has discriminating
power. On the other hand, the statement that myth is eminently true sets
off myths against parables and allegories, romances, fables and tales
(Gardner; Eliade), and against legends, although less distinctly (Mauss).

   The criterion of the eminent truth of myth is close to the third
criterion, which is concerned with its cultural value, that is its sacred
character and/or its particular importance for the society in question.
Thus myth is again distinguished from fables, fairy-tales, etc.

   To these generally used criteria we should add two other ones,
suggested mainly by Lévi-Strauss. One is the feature of timelessness.
The mythical events which took place in the (remote) past are 'locked up'
in the myth, they are not part of an open-ended sequence to which new
events are continually being added. The historicity of mythical
characters and happenings is irrelevant, their *properties* are eternal.

Therefore myths are both historical (because what they narrate must necessarily be situated in time - *what* time is irrelevant and therefore usually not specified) and a-historical (because "the specific pattern described is everlasting"). For this reason, Lévi-Strauss can say that nothing so resembles myth as political ideology, and Locher can even equate the two. I can add that this timelessness also serves to distinguish myth from legend.

The question of politics is also involved in the fifth and final characteristic of myths: their lack of an instrumental aspect or practical effect (*rendement*). This leads to a tangential problem, which becomes clearest when we consider 'political' myths. A brief excursus on this subject is in order here. Lévi-Strauss situates myths in the domain of thought; as one example we may quote *l'Homme Nu*: "the opposition between ritual and myth is that between living and thinking" (p. 603). He does consider external influences on mythical thought (*ibid.*: 543, 561, 566), but not the reverse. In complete antithesis to Lévi-Strauss in this respect is Malinowski, since for him myth is not an "idle (*sic*) mental pursuit", but a manifestation of "man's pragmatic interest in the outside world" (Malinowski 1954:147, 145). Although disagreeing with this extreme view, we recognize that, in order to distinguish myth from non-myth, it is necessary to consider two more things. One is the social influence of myth: the social participants' use or manipulation of myth, as discussed,for instance, by Locher. The other one is the question of whether certain myths may have properties which make them particularly apt to be manipulated and put to practical use, because they have something to say about the world of affairs (cp. Smith & Sperber 1971:583, 585). This, I think, could be said of political myths.

But *are* there political myths? In a sense, no, because if anything has been made clear by the structural study of myths, it is that labelling myths as 'nature myth', 'vegetation myth', 'solar myth' etc. is unacceptably simplistic; there are no "privileged semantic levels" in myths (Lévi-Strauss 1971:347). However, the manifest contents of a myth may well be an etiology, for example, so that it is possible for certain myths in *Mythologiques* to be designated as "the origin of cultivated plants", "the origin of the seasons", etc. So De Heusch (1972:96) is also quite justified in concluding that a group of seven myths "gives a privileged status to socio-political themes".

This being so, it seems quite possible, to put it mildly, that the

political phenomena dealt with in these myths: the relation between king
and country, between the savage and the civilized king, between home and
abroad, etc., are not only considered as sets of logically distinct
qualities, but give the myths a 'direct grip' on practical matters.
Possibly such myths are not only suitable objects for political
manipulation, but are also in themselves concerned with matters of actual
statecraft.

As I said before, political myths give rise to problems of their own
which require a special study. This will not be attempted now, and we
need only observe that Luc de Heusch, the author of the recent
penetrating study on African political myths, was obviously confronted
by difficulties because of these very problems. At times he calls the
texts he is studying "myths" (e.g. p. 11, 44, 45, 84), but he also
qualifies them, or some of them, as *geste*, epic, pseudo-historical texts
(p. 13, 19, 83, 48), or as "tales with a historical purpose that must be
studied as myths for the same reason, *mutatis mutandis*, as the epic
legends of the earliest stages of the Roman state" (p. 9).

The question what is and what is not myth may be most acute when we
are dealing with 'political' myths and the criterion of absence of
practical effect. It will be apparent that all five properties of myth
we have been discussing are only partially discriminative; the category
of myth remains ragged at the edges. One could, of course, call this a
pseudo-problem. After all, what does it matter? The structural approach
to myths has been successful when applied to indubitable myths of the
Americas, and is now also yielding results when applied to somewhat
different material from other areas - so why worry, as long as the texts
in question can be 'studied as myths'? But this easy way out is un-
acceptable. More fundamental questions than the applicability of a method
are involved, namely the scope and range of mythical thought, of *pensée
sauvage*. I think that the root of the difficulty in defining myth lies
at this very point.

The applicability of terms in the social sciences is often (or
always?) a matter of degree: a 'patrilineal' society can be more or less
patrilineal, a 'nomadic' tribe more or less nomadic, etc. One can
stipulate a definition of such terms on the grounds of its usefulness for
the purpose of description and analysis. As one recognizes that each
defined term denotes an area in a continuum rather than a distinct class,
some measure of vagueness in the definition will not be unwelcome.

Can we say the same of the term 'myth'? Does the term denote one kind

of text within a whole range of texts, and does myth shade off into
legends, romances, and histories? On the contrary, Lévi-Strauss seems to
have demonstrated that myths (although they may resemble political
ideology in some respects, and resemble music in others), are *sui generis*.
If this is so, a stipulated, nominal definition will not suffice, and we
shall need a real definition (cp. Bocheński 1969:95). My conjecture is
that myth is definite, but as yet undefined[2].

II

I shall leave this problem for others who are more competent to deal with
it, and now move from theory to ethnography. As the stipulative
definitions and circumscriptions of myth discussed in the previous
section have given useful but not decisive answers to the question of
how myth is to be (or is) delimitated, it is reasonable to turn from
these definitions from without to definitions from within - a procedure
familiar enough in anthropology as in linguistics (where, for example,
functional analysis has superseded description in terms of pre-deter-
mined word-classes).

   Malinowski's *Myth in Primitive Psychology* affords a well-known
example of this procedure. The Trobrianders themselves make a distinction
between *kukwanebu*, *libwogwo*, and *liliu*, and these words can fittingly be
translated as 'fairy-tales', 'historical accounts, legends and hearsay
tales', and 'myths' respectively. The anthropologist was able to discover
the distinctive features of the tales denoted by the three Trobriand
terms[3]. In other societies, the native speakers may not make a lexical
distinction between various narratives, and it would then be the
investigator's task to discover distinguishing features, if any, that
are not verbally expressed. Or again, the investigator may prefer not to
concentrate on the simultaneous occurrence of myths and other tales, or
be unable to do so, but may rather make a study of the transformation
of a myth into a non-mythical tale[4]. Lévi-Strauss (1971a) has shown how
a myth transformed itself into a romance, a legend, and an historical
narrative (see above). Dumézil (1970) has demonstrated how Nordic myths
were deliberately transformed *via* an intermediate stage into a romance
by a single, known author.

   Besides, having their intrinsic interest, all three studies serve to
delimit the field of myth by exploring the boundaries between myths and
other texts. To cite one more linguistic parallel that I think is
enlightening, this delimitation of myth resembles the way the value of

each sign within a group of comparable signs is determined by the value
of the neighbouring signs (Saussure 1931:159, 160). As a further
contribution on the same theme I shall present, in the final pages of
this essay, yet another situation. Not a synchronic description of the
co-existence of myths and other texts, nor a diachronic study of a
spontaneous or deliberately created transformation, but an example of
what Marcel Mauss called "myth penetrating a legend".

It will soon become clear that the case we are about to discuss is
rather awkward, for Malay society - it is from Malaya that our example
is drawn - is staunchly Muslim, and Islam is inimical to myths. The
myth in question is actually a pale reflection of a myth embedded in a
literary work. Still, we need not despair; there is something to be
learned even from the least promising material.

In the southern Malayan kingdom of Johor (Johore) a high official
compiled the *Sejarah Melayu* or Malay Annals, the earliest known version
of which dates from either 1536 or 1612 (there is a difference of opinion
on this point). In the present article I shall refer to the English
translation of this version (Brown 1931). It deals mainly with the
history of the Malay kingdom of Malaka (Malacca) in the fifteenth
century. This part is preceded by an account of events prior to the
founding of Malaka, and ends with a description of the capture of the
city by the Portuguese in 1511 and its immediate results.

There are reasons for calling the first part of the Annals (dealing
with the pre-Malaka and earliest Malaka periods) legendary, the second
part historical[5]. The first part deals with persons and events to which
the compiler of the Annals and his contemporaries had no direct access:
neither by documentary evidence nor by a chain of orally transmitted
traditions connecting the Annalist with his subject matter. For the
second part, the Annalist did have access to his material through these
two channels, so that it is also not surprising to find at least the
main characters of this part appearing as recognizable human beings with
distinctive traits. (There is also outside evidence to confirm a notable
portion of the latter part of the Annals, e.g. inscribed tombstones of
several Malakan personages.)

Now the legendary part contains a myth - at least, a pale reflection
of one - as follows. Three princes, descendants of Alexander the Great,
had lived beneath the sea. They come to land on the island of Sumatra,
near Palembang, on the south-east coast. Two of them depart, the third
is proclaimed King by a supernatural herald. The local chief of Palembang

then enters into a solemn contract with the King, so that the chief's
descendants will be the subjects of the King's descendants in perpetuity.
The chief stipulates: "The descendants of your humble servant, shall be
the subjects of Your Majesty's throne, but they must be well treated by
your descendants. If they offend, they shall not, however grave their
offence, be *disgraced or reviled* with evil words: if their offence is
grave let them be put to death...". The King agrees, provided "that
your descendants shall never be disloyal to my descendants, even if my
descendants oppress them or behave evilly". The descendants of the first
King eventually become the rulers of Singapura (Singapore), and after-
wards of Malaka (Brown 1931:24-27).

The motif of this compact pervades the Annals, and it would appear
to have functioned as the national myth of Malaka, at least in the eyes
of the higher officials and court circles. (A fuller account is given
in De Josselin de Jong 1964.) One episode may serve as an example. A
daughter of a Treasury officer became the mistress of one of the Kings
of Singapura. The other palace women accused her of misconduct, where-
upon the sultan "ordered her to be publicly exposed at one end of the
market". Her father felt deeply humiliated, and said: "Even if my
daughter is guilty of misconduct, let her merely be put to death; why
humiliate her like this?" (Brown:51). The mythical contract has been
broken, and the Treasury officer, thereby absolved from his duty of
loyalty, betrays Singapura to the Javanese.

The sultans of Malaka, as depicted in the Annals, are far from being
ideal figures: at least one of them is singularly inept as a ruler, and
one of the most competent is portrayed as a thoroughly nasty individual.
Whatever their failings and misdeeds, however, as they abide by the
mythical contract they are able, supported by the loyalty of their
subjects, to withstand the might of Java, Siam, and China. One of the
lessons of the Annals appears to be that, if both parties will persist
in honouring the contract, they will even be able to re-take Malaka from
the Portuguese (De Josselin de Jong 1964:240).

So here we find, in the earliest legendary part of the Annals, a tale
with the characteristics and the social function of a myth. This myth
pervades the later legendary portion and the main, historical part of
the work. One of the prominent characters in the Malaka history is Hang
Tuah. The Annals describe his successes as a diplomat and as a naval
commander, but do not conceal his human weaknesses either: he is not
above petty jealousy and intrigue. This Hang Tuah later became the hero

of a Malay romance, probably written in the eighteenth century: the
Hikayat Hang Tuah or Romance of Hang Tuah.

Compared with the prototype in the Annals, the Hang Tuah of the
Romance has been 'mythologized' in a very imprecise sense - 'legend-
arized' would be a better term. His birth is heralded by a supernatural
portent; his death, if death it was (see below) is shrouded in mystery.
There is an intimate connection between his magic dagger, his health,
and the well-being of the state: after he looses his weapon he is often
ill, and the decline of his powers prepares the way for the Portuguese
capture of Malaka. He is the ideal Malay warrior and courtier, and in
this respect he is 'mythical' in a more precise sense: he abides by the
mythical contract in all circumstances, being absolutely loyal to the
sultan in spite of dire provocations. The most spectacular manifestation
of this loyalty is his confrontation with Hang Jebat, to which we shall
return presently.

What we observe at present is that the mythical theme, that had al-
ready 'penetrated' the legendary and historical accounts of Singapura
and Malaka, comes to its climax in the Romance, one or two centuries
later.

The concluding passages of the Romance say that after the first,
unsuccessful, Portuguese attack, the sultan, Hang Tuah, and two other
chief ministers leave Malaka and settle far in the interior, where they
take up the life of hermits and ascetics. Malaka falls to the second
Portuguese onslaught, and as for the sultan and Hang Tuah, "one never
heard of them again; whether they have died or simply disappeared, no
one knows except God alone". But what looks like a later postcript is
more positive, saying: "no one has ever heard of Hang Tuah again, but
he is not dead, for he was a mighty warrior and also a saint. People say
he is still living at the source of the Perak river ...''

In later time this theme gained ground, and it became an established
belief that Hang Tuah is still living in a mysterious hiding-place from
which he will come forth in the hour of greatest need; he will not allow
"the Malay people to vanish from the face of the earth". I know from
personal experience that in Malayan rural areas in the nineteen-fifties
this was still believed by many and doubted by a few. Doubted, but not
dismissed: even for sceptics the survival of Hang Tuah was a problem to
be discussed, not an old wives' tale to be rejected out of hand.

The figure of Hang Tuah, mythologized in the stricter sense of the
word in the Romance, appears to have acquired an added dimension and an

even more supernatural character in subsequent oral traditions: he became
the mythically based national hero.

In 1956 and the years immediately after, a remarkable series of
events (described more fully in De Josselin de Jong 1965) brought about
a drastic reversal of Hang Tuah's fortunes. In that year a film *Hang
Tuah*, made in Singapore, was brought into circulation, and was seen by
an estimated audience of seven million. It followed the Romance rather
than the Annals, with an important exception. The film did not have the
Romance's dying fall: the decline of the hero's powers, the loss of the
city and kingdom, and the withdrawal to a hermit's abode in the
interior. Instead it ended with the Hang Tuah versus Hang Jebat episode
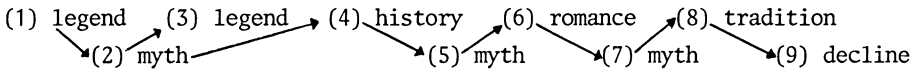mentioned above, which we shall now describe in some detail.

Hang Tuah, still at the height of his career, is calumniated before
the sultan. The sultan believes the slanderous reports, and orders Hang
Tuah to be put to death, but the chief minister manages to keep him
alive in hiding. Hang Jebat, a reckless young madcap and a friend of
Hang Tuah's, avails himself of the opportunity to carry on an intrigue
with the sultan's ladies-in-waiting and even barricades himself with
them into the palace, defying anyone to drive him out. All attempts to
do so fail, until the minister admits having kept Hang Tuah alive. Hang
Tuah is then ordered by the sultan to drive out Hang Jebat, and after
an epic battle succeeds in killing his friend. For this exploit he is
naturally restored in the sultan's favour. The film ends with Hang Tuah's
soliloquy, which does not occur in the Romance: he has done his duty as
a subject towards his sultan, but he has killed his friend. Was he right
or was he wrong?

What answer the general public was giving to this question soon
became apparent. The success of the film led to a vogue for having the
actors who had played the parts of Tuah en Jebat re-enact their battle,
in historical costumes, on the stage. At the many performances I
witnessed, the audience invariably cheered on, not the mythologized
national hero, but Hang Jebat. The reasons for this change of heart were
made explicit in many essays and articles, stage and radio plays and
historical novels on the Hang Tuah — Hang Jebat theme that were written
in the 'fifties and 'sixties. They need not concern us here (they are
discussed in De Josselin de Jong 1965:147-154); the general tenor is
summarized in an article dated August 1958: "Hang Tuah's blind, un-
principled obedience is logically indefensible", while "Hang Jebat is
a first foreshadowing of the character of our present generation".

(Kassim Ahmad 1958:381).

In other words, the Malay author is contrasting two periods in Malay history. In the first one, the Ruler is sacral, is bound to his subjects by a mythical compact, is legitimate in himself and is the only source of legitimate power for others. For that period, in Kassim's own words, Hang Tuah is the "appropriate hero". In the Malay societies of our time, the sultans have lost these attributes, and the "hero" is the man who, like Hang Jebat, decides for himself whether or not he shall submit to authority.

The 'life-cycle' of the Malay myth we have been discussing could be diagrammed as follows:

(1) legend   (3) legend→ (4) history   (6) romance   (8) tradition
   ↘(2) myth────────────→(5) myth   ↘(7) myth   ↘(9) decline

(1) In the earlier legendary part of the Annals we find
(2) the text of the myth of the compact between ruler and subjects, which
(3, 4) 'penetrates' the later legendary and the main, historical portions
        of the Annals, and must therefore have had
(5) the cultural function of a myth for the society in which the Annals
     were compiled. The myth is concentrated in
(6) the hero of the Romance, who is the embodiment of the mythical
     contract. He
(7) acquires further mythical qualities, as the supernatural preserver
     of the Malay people, in
(8) the oral traditions that make him live on to the present day, until
(9) a rapid decline sets in.

In other words, we have been trying to find "the mythical and archaic residuum" in various works of literature (Lévi-Strauss 1963:632), but not in order to further the structural analysis and explanation of a myth, or of myth in general. The present essay was an exploration along the boundaries of a myth, in the hope of finding out the range - the *valeur*, in De Saussure's terminology - of a myth. This range is established through the mutual delimitation of mythical and non-mythical texts.

It is clear that studying a myth in a relatively recent, and even contemporary, Muslim and 'modernized' social context has its draw-backs, the most obvious of which in this case is that only one version of the

'primeval contract' myth, and that a literary version, was available. Still, even the most unfavourable data may yield something that helps us to understand, if not a myth directly, at least the contrastive meeting of myth and non-myth.

To summarize. We began by considering several definitions or circumscriptions of myth that may be considered representative of anthropological opinion generally. They are not all equally effective in discriminating myths from non-mythical texts. For Lévi-Strauss two important features are the timelessness of myth and the lack of *rendement* it shares with other manifestations of *pensée sauvage*. We noted that this leads to a tangential problem: is this absence of an instrumental aspect also true of political myths? May we even call certain myths 'political'?

Meanwhile we are left with a greater problem. The definitions described are nominal. They state, or imply, as their starting point that 'it is a useful convention to define myth in such-and-such a manner'. However, Lévi-Strauss' researches in particular lead to the conclusion that myths have certain inherent qualities; that they do not constitute a conventionally defined category, but that they define themselves. But how?

In part II we take a different point of departure. As the structural principle of concentrating not on elements in isolation but on the relations between them has proved successful within the domain of myth, it should also serve to distinguish the domain of myth from that of non-myth. We attempt to do so by studying a Malayan myth in its relation to legend, history, and oral tradition. That this attempt, at its present stage, is unsystematic is partly due to the nature of the data.

NOTES

1 Roger Bastide (1968:1054) agrees with M. Leenhardt and J. Poirier that a myth is *not* necessarily a text or tale: a myth can also take the form of drawings or paintings, sculpture, or dance. The present essay is only concerned with myths expressed by means of a natural language.

2 Therefore 'myth' in part II of this article is to be understood in terms of the provisional definitions described in part I.

3 Myths, in this case, (a) are sacred, (b) are eminently true, (c) deal with characters and events only occurring in tales, (d) have the function of justifying or sanctifying rules and practises. It is to

be noted that feature (b) is shared by myths and *libwogwo*, feature
(c) by myths and fairy-tales.

4 Or *vice versa*. In a recent article, "The Dynastic Myth of Negri
Sembilan", I show how a set of traditional tales became a myth.

5 The transition - not sharply demarcated - is around page 60 in
Brown's translation.

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JAVANESE TERMS FOR GOD AND SUPERNATURAL BEINGS AND THE IDEA OF POWER

1. FAMILIAR AND UNFAMILIAR RELIGIOUS CONCEPTS

The Javanese people, particularly those who adhere to the Kejawèn relig-
ion,[1] have a system of belief in which all elements and concepts are dual-
istically viewed on the basis of various principles of differentiation, one
of which utilizes the contrast between familiar and unfamiliar. Super-
natural beings are therefore also divided into these two categories in
this system, those associated with the early Javanese Hindu-Buddhist
pantheon and mythology, i.e., the ancestral and local spirits, belonging
to the familiar category, whereas the supernatural beings who are
associated with Islam belong to the unfamiliar category.[2]

Kejawèn Unfamiliarity with Islam

The Kejawèn unfamiliarity with Muslim concepts, and particularly with
Muslim supernatural beings is, of course, not difficult to explain. In
contrast to the Hindu-Buddhist religious concepts which have influenced
the indigenous Javanese religion probably from as early as the third or
fourth century A.D., and which are therefore deeply rooted in the
indigenous system of religious belief, Islam has affected the heartland
of the Javanese civilization only quite recently, i.e., for about three
centuries. After the fall of the capital of the Hindu-Buddhist Javanese
empire of Majapahit in the Brantas Delta area, near the present-day
Javanese city of Majakerta, in the early 16th century, the communities
and principalities in the interior of Java, although not completely
immune to Muslim influences, were apparently able initially to preserve
their pre-Islamic Javanese cultural tradition.

My view of the Central Javanese attitude towards Islam differs from
the picture drawn of the spread of Islam in Indonesia in general, and
Java in particular, by a number of other scholars in the field of
Indonesian studies, especially the American ones among them. One leading
scholar, for instance, saw the process as one whereby a religion " .....
cut off from its centers of orthodoxy in Mecca and Cairo, vegetated,
another meandering tropical growth on an already overcrowded religious

landscape ....." (Geertz 1960:125). The view that the kind of Islam that
came to Indonesia (and hence also to Java) was one which, unlike the
orthodox Islam from Mecca and Cairo, had picked up many mystical elements
in Persia and India, and was therefore congruent with the contemporary
Javanese traditional world view, is of course correct. The view that
Islam in Java meandered seemingly uncontrolled, however, is very mis-
leading.[3]

For the whole of the 16th century, Islam must still be regarded as the
culture of foreigners, as it was the religion of the population of the
ports and trading centers of Java's North Coast area, called by the
Central Javanese the Pasisir Area. This population was, at least from
the Central Javanese viewpoint, dominated by foreigners, such as Arabs,
Persians, South Indians, and others. These foreigners had an unfamiliar
way of life. Thus Islam was considered an alien religion at that period.
And thus it did not "vegetate", an uncontrolled "meandering ..... growth"
in Javanese society.

Even when, in the latter half of the 16th century Muslim influences
from the north-eastern coastal region of Java succeeded in penetrating
Java's interior owing to the emergence of a Muslim-oriented principality
called Pajang, at the headwaters of the Solo River in Central Java, Islam
must have continued to be considered alien, as there was not enough time
to introduce it among the population of the area and to allow it to
penetrate Central Javanese culture and tradition. The reason was that
the people who brought Islam were unable to establish themselves long
enough here, as in the last decade of the 16th century a rapidly emerging
Central Javanese kingdom, Mataram, located to the west of Pajang, in the
fertile basin of the Opak and Praga Rivers, in the middle of the Sumbing-
Merapi-Merabu volcanic complex, succeeded in attacking Pajang and
consequently in keeping the further political penetration of Islam under
control.[4] This, however, did not prevent Mataram's ruler from paying lip-
service to Islam, for the sake of maintaining good economic and political
relations with Muslim powers outside Java.

With the rise of Mataram in the first half of the 17th century, and
the simultaneous decline of the Javanese coastal ports during the same
period, the opportunity for Islam to impress itself on the major centers
of Javanese civilization by political force was also removed. So the
majority of Javanese in the heartland of the Javanese civilization
continued to view Islam as a remote and alien religion.

This situation lasted until the second half of the 17th century, when

the political supremacy of Mataram declined as a consequence of internal
quarrels over the succession. Its subsequent rulers became more and more
dependent on the Dutch East India Company in Batavia, which often lent
them military assistance to suppress rebellions of rival candidates for
the succession and in return claimed large portions of Mataram's
territory, which thus gradually passed into the hands of the Dutch in
the course of the first half of the 18th century. In 1755 Mataram was
divided into three small vassal states of the Dutch East India Company,
and when in 1799 that company went into liquidation, these Javanese
vassal states came under the direct control of the Dutch colonial
government.

   Socio-political instability then gave rise to cultural poverty and
impotence and inability to resist a steadily advancing Muslim culture
as Javanese intellectuals and poets at the Central Javanese courts, who
had hitherto always set the standards of contemporary Javanese culture,
were finally brought face to face with Islam.

2. THE ACCEPTANCE OF ISLAM
Muslim Missionary Activities in Rural Java
Moreover, the way in which some American scholars of Indonesian Studies
visualize the process of the acceptance of Islam by the Javanese in the
interior is very misleading. It is obviously inaccurate to assume that
"after the fifteenth century, the [Javanese] rulers assumed Islamic
titles, kept Islamic officials in their entourage, and added Islam to
the panoply of their attributes" (Anderson 1972:58-59). Although the
assertion by the same scholar that Islamization of the rulers of Java was
superficial and that it "does not seem to have caused major alterations
in their way of life and outlook" (Anderson 1972:59) is correct, Islam
definitely did not spread rapidly in the interior of Java after the 15th
century, and the Central Javanese rulers did not accept it, to add it
"to the panoply of their attributes", without resistance.

   Not until the period between the 17th and 18th century did Islam
spread to the interior of Java. This started first in the rural areas as
a result of the zeal of Muslim missionaries. The latter apparently made
use of the pre-Islamic institution of the self-sufficient religious
training community, consisting of a religious teacher, his family, and
a few dozen of his students, who lived in a somewhat secluded spot away
from the village community, near the edge of a forest. It appears that
they converted the old pre-Islamic training communities into Muslim

pondhok pesantrèn schools, which until today still form small, self-
sufficient communities throughout rural Java. These consist of a compound
with dormitories, workshops and a mosque, where a religious teacher and
his students live, work, study and hold religious gatherings and
ceremonies.

These communities, established along the main river valleys in the
course of the second half of the 17th century and the first half of the
18th century, were the centers via which Islam penetrated the areas
dominated by the Central Javanese courts. In the latter areas the pre-
dominantly pre-Islamic culture had thus far been able to survive.

Several of the best-known Muslim missionaries became canonized in
Javanese folk belief. This popular belief in the semi-historical nine
"apostles" of Islam, the Wali Sanga, according to Th.G.Th. Pigeaud
probably developed in the 17th century (1967:150-152). The utterances
and teachings of the most famous Muslim missionaries of that period must
have been preserved for posterity by their students and their
descendants. Their number was fixed at eight or nine, forming a kind of
"Round Table of Saints", who were all contemporaries. The number nine was
probably inspired by the Hindu-Javanese concept of the eight Lokapala
deities guarding the eight points of the universe, with the ninth in the
center.[5]

The congruence of Muslim mystical ideas with the contemporary general
Javanese world view doubtless facilitated the institutionalization of the
pondhok pesantrèn communities in the rural areas. However, there is ample
evidence that the spread of mystical Islam in the course of almost two
centuries even here did not take place without resistance.[6] Moreover,
pesantrèn and *santri* communities seldom dominate a Javanese village
community in its entirety, and usually isolate themselves as exclusive
social units, rather than integrating into the larger community.

The Acceptance and Incorporation of Islamic Concepts in Court Circles
The process of the penetration of Islam into court circles seems to have
met with even greater resistance. The integration of Muslim concepts and
institutions into the Central Javanese court tradition seems to have
occurred not until the second half of the 18th century.

Facing the advance of Islam from the rural areas and the imposition
of Dutch political power from above, the Central Javanese court was un-
able to maintain its former isolation. Javanese intellectuals and poets
of the second half of the 18th century, the guardians of the Javanese

pre-Islamic cultural tradition, were obliged to accept Islamic concepts,
and to incorporate them into the Central Javanese cultural tradition.
This process has been studied by an Indonesian philologist, S. Soebardi,
who among other things has edited and translated a number of manuscripts
representing different versions of a long Javanese poem, the *Serat
Cabolèk* (Bibliotheca Indonesica 10),[7] which was written by the court
poet Yasadipura I[8] at the end of the 18th century. Soebardi has indicated
a passage in the book which illustrates the resistance the spread of
Islam met with, and how it was finally at the end of the 18th century
that one of the afore-mentioned guardians of Central Javanese culture
was obliged to give up his resistance to the advancing Muslim
civilization. Yasadipura the elder, being well aware of the inability
of the Javanese court tradition to resist the growing influence of Islam,
made a compromise in an effort to preserve at least the essence of
Javanese cultural values and ideals. In the *Serat Cabolèk* he proposes
the acceptance of Islam, on condition, however, that the Javanese
consider the religion of Allah and the *shari'ah*, or Muslim law, only as
a formal guide, or as a *wadhah* (container) for Javanese culture, while
letting their inner spiritual life adhere to the essential values and
ideals of Javanese culture, namely the search for spiritual purification
and perfection, as well as the attainment of the Divine Unity, or the
ultimate experience of the unity of Man and God. Soebardi has thus
correctly pointed out the important fact that the ideas of poets such
as Yasadipura I at the end of the 18th century prepared the way for the
basically dualistic view of Kejawèn religion with respect to Islam. Islam
had to be accepted, but only in its outward manifestation; the content
and essence had to remain Javanese (Soebardi 1975:45-53). Although
focussed more particularly on the mystical tradition, Soebardi's analysis
also sufficiently illustrates the general attitude of the Kejawèn
Javanese towards Islam in the broader sense.

   Another illustration of the way in which the Javanese have in-
corporated Islamic concepts into their court tradition is provided by
the syncretic idea on the left- and right-hand lines in Javanese royal
genealogies. The left-hand line (*alur pangiwa*), according to the Javanese
conception of the cosmic order, constitutes the line linking the Hindu-
Buddhist gods, the Pandawa heroes and Rama of the *wayang* epics, the
nature gods, and the ancestral spirits, down to the Central Javanese
kings; the right-hand line (*alur penengen*), on the other hand, comprises
the holy *walis*. In the Javanese conception of history, the separation of

the two lines occurred immediately after creation, but their original
unity was re-established by a marriage of a member of the Central
Javanese royal house with a descendant of the *walis* (Pigeaud 1967 I:151).
In connection with this idea of the re-established unity between the
pangiwa and *panengen* lines of descent, the 19th-century kings of Central
Java instructed their court poets to write a history of the nine *walis*
in which the unification theme was incorporated.

3. KINSHIP TERMS AND OFFICIAL TITLES
Kinship and Power Relations
The dualistic view which differentiates the Javanese Hindu-Buddhist
religion from Islam is also reflected in the terms of reference or
address and titles for God and supernatural beings. Javanese etiquette
always requires the use of honorific terms or titles to refer to or
address other people. The omission of such terms or titles (*njangkar*)
is permissable only where a person is referring to or addressing another
person whom he considers a very close friend or someone occupying a sub-
ordinate position.

In referring to or addressing superiors or equals with whom one is not
on intimate terms these titles and terms are obligatory. In a like way
the Javanese utilize honorific terms and titles to address or refer to
God and supernatural beings in exclamations, prayers, or ordinary
conversation. Different terms and titles are used for supernatural beings
from the Javanese Hindu-Buddhist religion and for those of Islam, however.

The relationship of man to the Hindu-Buddhist gods, the heroes of the
wayang epics, the nature deities, the ancestral spirits, and the spirits
of local saints is conceived of by the Javanese as a relationship to
senior but intimate kin, whereas the relationship to the Allah of Islam,
to Muhammed, Allah's prophet, and to the other prophets, the *walis*, and
the Muslim saints is considered as one to powerful but distant beings.
Consequently the Javanese consistently use the kinship terms *hyang*,
éyang, kyai, nyai, or *mbah* to refer to or address the deities or spirits,
and the titles for kings or high officials, such as *gusti, kanjeng,* or
sunan[9] to refer to or address Allah, the prophets, and the *walis*. The
supreme eternal spirit of the universe, for instance, is called Sang
Hyang Guru; the latter's destructive aspect is called Sang Hyang Bathara
Kala; the spirit of the ocean is called Eyang Lara Kidul, or Nyai Lara
Kidul; the local spirit of a particular area is called Mbah Untung, and
so on. Allah, on the other hand, is called Gusti Allah; His prophet is

called, or addressed as, Kanjeng Nabi Muhammad; the individual *wali*s
are called Sunan Kali Jaga, Sunan Bonang, Sunan Giri, Sunan Ngampel,
etc.[10]

Muslim Supernatural Beings and Power
Although Islamic Supernatural beings have become integrated into the
Javanese system of belief alongside the pre-Islamic ones, a distinction
between the two categories thus is maintained by the difference in the
terms of address. These have now become institutionalized in the Javanese
language, and are uttered automatically in conversation and in
exclamations. The question as to when these terms may have become
institutionalized is difficult to answer, and requires a special study.
It is obvious, however, that with these terms the Javanese associate
Allah, the prophets and the saintly Muslim missionaries with high office,
high rank, and power.[11]

4. THE JAVANESE IDEA OF POWER
At this point it may be appropriate to comment on the traditional
Javanese idea of power as envisaged by a number of scholars of Indonesian
Studies, especially B.R.O'G. Anderson in his well-known essay on the
subject (1972). According to these scholars, the Javanese consider power
as a concrete existential reality, which exists independently of its
possible users. They maintain that, in contrast to Europeans, who
consider power as an abstract secular aspect of a human relationship
which has a heterogeneous source and no inherent limits and is morally
ambiguous, the Javanese think of power as a homogeneous, constant,
intangible, divine energy which animates the universe and is thus with-
out inherent moral implications as such (Anderson 1972:4-8).

In my opinion, traditionally oriented Javanese, too, think of power
in terms of an abstract quality, or an aggregate of abstract qualities,
just as Europeans do. The difference lies in the fact that, unlike the
Europeans, they attribute these qualities, which they call *kawibawan*,
not to particular types of human relationship, but to specific persons.
These qualities are the human qualities which are idealized by the
majority of the members of society and which therefore have deep moral
implications.[12] Three of these qualities are universal human virtues,
and must therefore also be relevant in the European conception of power.
For example, a human being who in the eyes of the people is just and
righteous (*adil tan pilih sih*), possesses great wisdom (*wicaksana*), and

is generous and bountiful (*bèrbudi tan pamrih*), possesses some of the
important requirements which will enable him to become powerful. This
obviously does not differ very significantly from the European conception
of power as a human relationship whereby certain persons or groups of
persons are obeyed by others, willingly or unwillingly, due to their
ability to dispense justice, to show exceptional wisdom, or to display
great wealth.

Traditionally oriented Javanese, like Europeans, are well aware of the
fact that the possession of physical strength (*patohan kadigdayan*), or
the ability to mobilize and organize physical strength, constitutes a
principal source of power. Early as well as more recent Javanese history
provides ample examples of kings or other leaders planning or evolving
rational strategies for the accumulation or organization of concrete
physical strength, while the pursuit of power on the exclusive basis of
the power of some magic heirloom or mysterious weapon, or through
rigorous asceticism actually only occurs in legends, *wayang* stories and
myths.

There is indeed one basic difference between the traditional Javanese
and European conceptions of power which relates to the fundamental
problem of the source of power. This in turn affects the way in which
each conceives of the problem of the quest for power, the acquisition
and preservation of power, and the problem of succession to positions
of power. The Javanese of the time of the early as well as the more
recent Javanese kingdoms and of the period of colonial domination
regarded power strictly as a quality possessed by sacred kings, feudal
lords and princes, authoritative foreign administrators and despotic
high-ranking officials. They experienced it only in the form of arbitrary
orders or instructions, which flowed downwards from the top. And they
learned to accept the belief that the source of the power possessed by
such extraordinary, foreign, or high-ranking persons was heredity,
divine appointment, or some other incomprehensible, mysterious histori-
cal condition or event, which they had come to accept as decreed by fate.

Legitimation of power by means of democratic election is therefore
irrelevant for traditionally oriented Javanese. For them power is an
ascribed quality which is obtained through inheritance or by divine
favour. Consequently the quest for power does not necessitate efforts
to gain public support and approval, while the pursuit of popularity
through public appearances, and so on, comes to constitute a hindrance
rather than a useful means towards the acquisition of power. In

traditional Javanese societies the power of a leader is enhanced by
keeping aloof from the people, by remaining distant and hidden from
view, or through the mere fact of being a foreigner. However, the image
of a just and righteous, immensely wise, and exceptionally generous
king, leader or high-ranking administrator requires a constant effort
of preservation and intensification by means of the appropriate
ceremonial acts and rites, wherein material objects, incantations, and
acts symbolizing the qualities of power and authority play a key role.

In addition to the afore-said physical attributes which symbolize the
profane aspects of power and authority, an important attribute that re-
inforces the rituals for the preservation and intensification of power,
according to the traditional Javanese point of view, is magical energy
(*kasektèn*). Although kings and leaders are believed to possess such
magical energy, it is an error, however, to consider *kasektèn* as the
main and most important source of power and authority, or, as Anderson
has done in his above mentioned essay (1972:7-19), to identify *kasektèn*
with power. Many Javanese individuals are considered to possess the same
kind of *kasektèn* as that possessed by the legendary claimant to the
throne Ken Arok, or by such legendary heroes as Arya Penangsang or
Untung Surapati. And those who are believed to be able to accomplish
extraordinary feats are not only respected individuals such as religious
teachers, curers and *dhukun*s, but also the common folk dancers of
Ponorogo (East Java), the *warok*s, and even thiefs and criminals.[13] No
Javanese, however, will regard the latter individuals as being in
possession of the necessary power which will make them eligible for
leadership, or potential just, wise, and generous kings.

5. CONCLUSION

The use of royal and official titles and terms of address and reference
for Allah, the prophets, the saints who brought Islam to Java, and other
supernatural and legendary Muslim figures has indicated that in the
Javanese system of belief Allah and those other beings are conceived of
as a king or as high-ranking officials. As a result they are attributed
qualities which in the traditional Javanese conception support the
components of power.

The Kejawèn Javanese unfamiliarity with Islam and Islamic concepts
coincides with that very same traditional Javanese conception of power
which implies unfamiliarity. Powerful individuals are attributed
universal qualities such as justice, wisdom and generosity; they

naturally also possess the major component of power, i.e., the ability
to mobilize and organize physical force. Unlike the European concept of
power, however, the traditional Javanese concept omits the component of
public approval. Moreover, a king or leader should even avoid as much
as possible exposing himself to the public, since this may taint his
holiness and thus damage his charisma.

In European industrial democratic societies, public approval, rather
than charisma, forms an important component of power. For here the main
source of power is public support, rather than descent, divine appoint-
ment, or a particular sacred historical mission. The authority of the
leader is legitimated by public election and legal procedures, rather
than through ritual intensification. In Javanese traditional society
such ritual intensification has to take place repeatedly; on such occa-
sions sacred objects which symbolize authority occupy a central position.

In conclusion, the above discussion may be summarized in the following
diagram, comparing the components of power and the required qualities of
leaders according to the European and to the traditional Javanese concepts.

EUROPEAN INDUSTRIAL SOCIETIES		JAVANESE TRADITIONAL SOCIETY	
Components of power	Required qualities of a leader	Components of power	Required qualities of a leader
Public approval	Popularity Possession of rational capacity and intellectual expertise Embodiment of community norms and ideals	Charisma	Proper descent Divine appointment Having a sacred historical mission Possession of *kasektèn*
Power — Authority Charisma	Acquisition of legitimacy through legal procedures Possession of the symbols of authority Possession of spiritual qualities	Power — Authority	Embodiment of community norms and ideals Acquisition of legitimacy through ritual intensification Possession of sacred symbols of authority
Power in the restricted sense	Ability to mobilize and organize physical strength	Power in the restricted sense	Ability to mobilize and organize physical strength

NOTES

1 The term *Kejawèn* refers to the variant of Javanese Islam which in Indonesian studies is usually called the *Abangan* religion. The term *Kejawèn* or *Agami Kejawèn* more often used by the Javanese themselves, means 'Javanese religion' (from *Jawi* = Java; and *agami* = religion). The term *Abangan* was first used in an early article on Javanese customs, world view, and religion by a Dutch missionary, C. Poensen (1870:312). Here, however, the term *Bangsa Abangan* (Red People, or non-puritan Muslims) was used in contrast to *Bangsa Putihan* (White People, or puritan Muslims). C. Geertz was the first in academic circles to introduce the terms *abangan* and *santri* to designate the two variants of Javanese religion in his book on the subject (1960). At present the term *abangan* in many areas of Java, particularly Central Java, is a degrading term for Javanese who do not take Islamic doctrines and norms seriously. It can be used jokingly, but otherwise may offend people. The term *santri* formerly simply meant 'religious person'. Such religious persons used to take up residence in a particular ward of the town where the mosque was located. Subsequently communities of *santri* people living in particular wards developed, and came to be called *kauman*.

2 The Javanese conceptualization of Islam as an alien religion has also drawn the attention of another Dutch missionary, B.M. Schuurman, who in his dissertation *Mystik und Glaube in Zusammenhang mit der Mission auf Java* (1933), with special reference to Javanese mysticism, drew a distinction between a Javanese *einheimische mystische Strömung* based on the Hindu-Javanese religion, and a Javanese *ausländisch-geprägte Mystik* based on Muslim principles. See also the approving comments on this distinction in a lengthy review of the book by the Dutch mission advisor H. Kraemer (1934).

3 Moreover, the metaphor of an "overcrowded religious landscape" is hardly to be taken seriously. I wonder whether an "overcrowded religious landscape" really does exist in any culture at all.

4 For the history of Central Java in the 16th century, see De Graaf and Pigeaud's book on the history of the early Islamic states in Java (1974).

5 This concept is still preserved today in that of the *Debata Mawa Sanga*, the Nine Gods, in the Hindu-Dharma Balinese religion.

6 This part of the social history of the spread of Islam in rural Java requires a special study involving more specifically the intensive study of the 16th-18th century Javanese *pondhok pesantrèn* literature, supported by a deeper understanding of the world view and social structure of *pesantrèn* communities in particular, and of *kauman santri* society in general.

7 The *Serat Cabolèk* is a long poem consisting of 15 cantos (one of the manuscripts representing one particular version of the poem even comprising 23 cantos), each of which contains an average of 30.8 stanzas of 18-65 lines. One version of the poem totals 709 stanzas (Soebardi 1975).

8 Yasadipura I (died 1803 A.D.) was court poet during the reign of two Mataram kings, i.e., Paku Buwana III (1749-1788 A.D.) and

Paku Buwana IV (1788-1820 A.D.). His son, Yasadipura II, was also a court poet, who has written such books as *Panitisastra Jarwa* (1819 A.D.).

9 *Hyang* means 'ancestor'; *èyang* is the Krama term for 'grandfather' or 'grandmother'; *kyai* means 'old man'; *nyai* means 'old woman'; and *mbah* is the Ngoko term for 'grandfather' or 'grandmother'.

10 *Gusti* is a term of address for a king or queen; *kanjeng* is a term of address for a regent; *sunan* is a title for a king.

11 This does not mean that the non-Islamic supernatural beings are less powerful than those associated with Islam; the non-Islamic supernatural beings are, however, more familiar, associated more with the day-to-day affairs of the Javanese family and household, so that communication with them assumes a less formal character.

12 Although the moral values and norms themselves naturally differ from those visualized by scholars such as Anderson and others.

13 A notorious criminal in the mountainous area of Celapar in South Central Java, where I did field work in 1958, boasted of having acquired *kasektèn* by rigorous asceticism in the same sacred spot (*pertapan*) as that where the local folk hero, Untung Surapati, is believed to have practised asceticism. According to local belief he must therefore have acquired the same *kasektèn* as that possessed by Untung Surapati. However, the local population did not regard him either as a hero or a leader.

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C.H.M. NOOY-PALM

DE ROL VAN MAN EN VROUW IN ENKELE RITUELEN VAN DE SA'DAN-TORAJA (SULAWESI, INDONESIE)

Inleiding

In de cultuur van de Sa'dan-Toraja nemen rituelen een belangrijke plaats
in. Door deze plechtigheden tracht men het contact met de hemel tot
stand te brengen en zich van de gunst van de goden van de bovenwereld te
verzekeren. De rituelen zijn volgens de mythische overlevering van de
Sa'dan-Toraja in de hemel ingesteld en door de voorouders naar de aarde
gebracht. Tijdens enkele belangrijke rituelen wordt de gehele mythische
geschiedenis van de 'stam' door de priester gereciteerd; soms beperkt de
priester het reciet tot een enkel fragment.

   Diverse personen vervullen een functie in de plechtigheden. Meestal
zijn dit mensen van aanzien, maar soms ook zijn ze van eenvoudige komaf.
Zo vervullen ook bepaalde mannen en vrouwen een rol in het ritueel. De
gedragingen van man en vrouw zijn in deze plechtigheden veelal anders
dan in het dagelijks leven, daar hun handelingen vaak doortrokken zijn
van een bepaalde symboliek. Dit artikel, dat begint met een korte
beschouwing over de cultuur van de Sa'dan-Toraja, heeft mede deze
symboliek tot onderwerp. De beschrijving van de rituelen wordt vooraf-
gegaan door een korte uiteenzetting van de cultuur van de Sa'dan-Toraja.

1. *De Sa'dan-Toraja; woongebied en bestaansmiddelen*

De Sa'dan-Toraja (aantal ongeveer 320.000) wonen in het noordelijk deel
van het zuidwestelijk schiereiland van Sulawesi, een van de grotere
eilanden van Indonesië, dat vroeger Celebes genoemd werd.

   Hun woongebied, Tana Toraja (oppervlakte ongeveer 3.200 km^2) bestaat
grotendeels uit een plateau (500-900 m boven de zeespiegel). Hieruit ver-
heffen zich steile kalkrotsen en ook enkele hoge bergen, zoals de Sesean
(2.176 m). Het bergland wordt doorsneden door de Sa'dan-rivier. Aan deze
stroom hebben de Sa'dan-Toraja hun naam te danken. Kortheidshalve wordt
in dit artikel van Toraja gesproken, een naam waarmee zij zichzelf aan-
duiden.

   In het hieronder volgende wordt de *ethnographic present* gebezigd,

hoewel de cultuur van de Toraja sinds de laatste vijfenzeventig jaren wijzigingen heeft ondergaan. In het begin van deze eeuw (omstreeks 1905) werd het Nederlandse gezag daadwerkelijk gevestigd.

Van meet af aan heeft het Christendom veel invloed gehad op de cultuur van de Toraja. Dit kwam mede omdat het onderwijs in handen van de zending was. Deze zending (de Gereformeerde Zendingsbond in de Nederlandse Hervormde Kerk) heeft zich in 1913 in Tana Toraja gevestigd. Kort vóór de Tweede Wereldoorlog kreeg de Rooms-Katholieke Missie toestemming in Tana Toraja het Roomse geloof te verbreiden. Ongeveer 65 % van de bevolking is thans Christen (overwegend Protestant); 35 % hangt nog het oude geloof aan, *Aluk To Dolo*, 'het geloof van de mensen van vroeger' of 'het ritueel van de mensen van weleer'. Door de gestadige vooruitgang van het Christendom functioneren in sommige streken, bijv. in Kesu', de oude rituelen moeilijk of zijn zij geheel verdwenen. In andere streken, bijv. in het gebied van de berg Sesean, is nog veel van de oude religie in stand gebleven.

De autochtone cultuur zou men als megalitisch kunnen kenschetsen. Ter herinnering aan een overledene van aanzien werden een of meer monolieten opgericht.

Evenals in vele andere megalitische culturen was het koppensnellen gebruikelijk[1]. Dit geschiedde wanneer een voornaam hoofd overleden was, wanneer een epidemie was uitgebroken of indien het een wraakoefening betrof.

Niet alleen bijzettingsrituelen waren een kostbare aangelegenheid; ook voor andere feesten, die mede dienden om de feestgever en zijn groep aanzien te verschaffen, moest de groep zich uitgaven getroosten.

De bestaansmiddelen zijn voor het merendeel nog traditioneel. Ongeveer 90 % van de Toraja leeft van de landbouw. De rijst wordt als het belangrijkste gewas beschouwd; voorts worden mais, maniok, bataten en bananen geteeld. De suikerpalm levert suiker en palmwijn. Sinds de vorige eeuw is koffie het grootste uitvoerprodukt. De koffie is als *cashcrop* ook van betekenis voor rituelen: een goed koffiejaar impliceert dat men geld kan besteden aan het vieren van feesten. Deze feesten worden na de rijstoogst gehouden.

Het toerisme is vooral na 1970 toegenomen. Het vormt thans een belangrijke bron van inkomsten voor het gewest.

Als huisdier houdt men de waterbuffel, het varken, de hond, de kat, het hoen[2]; voorts ook paarden, ganzen en eenden. De waterbuffel is een statussymbool; hij wordt slechts zelden gebruikt voor het werk op de

velden. De karbouw is ook het symbool van dapperheid en vechtlust.

Als technieken kent men de kunst van het smeden van goud, zilver en ijzer, het weven, het vlechten en het pottenbakken. Het smeden is het werk van mannen, evenals het timmeren, het vervaardigen en inkleuren van houtsnijwerk, aangebracht op de wanden van huizen en rijstschuren en het vervaardigen van houten poppen, die een overledene voorstellen. De andere hierboven vermelde handvaardigheden geschieden door vrouwen.

Het zware landbouwwerk wordt door mannen verricht. Vrouwen helpen bij het uitplanten van de rijst en bij het oogsten (in het district Sangalla' wordt ook door mannen geoogst).

Vrouwen hebben de dagelijkse zorg voor het gezin. De naam voor moeder, *indo'*, wordt ook in overdrachtelijke zin gebezigd voor sommige functionarissen die een 'verzorgende' functie hebben. Zo is de titel van een van de *adat*hoofden van het district Kesu' *pekaindoran*, 'als een moeder' (zorgende voor de gemeenschap). De rijstpriester heet *to indo' padang*, 'de moeder van het land'.

Man en vrouw hebben niet alleen hun eigen taak in de samenleving, ook hun aard wordt verschillend geacht. De sexen kunnen zich ieder onderscheiden op hun eigen terrein. Mannen dienen bijv. dapper te zijn in de strijd. Vrouwen worden gewaardeerd als zangeressen of danseressen. Overigens zijn bepaalde kwaliteiten, die van een persoon verwacht worden, niet alleen afhankelijk van sexe, doch ook van iemands stand en positie. Kennis van de *adat*, geduld en tact worden vooral van *adat*hoofden verwacht. Een priester dient grondige kennis te hebben van de religie en het ritueel, waarin hij functioneert. Slaven dienen ijverig te zijn.

2. *Het traditionele wereldbeeld; de adatgemeenschappen*
De voorstelling van de wereld

Welk beeld hebben de Toraja van de kosmos en hoe plaatsen zij zichzelf in deze kosmische voorstelling? Volgens de Toraja bestaat de kosmos uit de boven-, de onder- en de middenwereld. De middenwereld wordt bewoond door mensen, goden en geesten; de boven- en onderwereld door goden en geesten. In de bovenwereld verblijven de tot godheid verheven voorouders en een aantal godinnen en goden, waarvan *Puang Matua*, 'de Heer die oud is', de voornaamste is. Hij heeft de mens, *Laukku'*, alias *Pong Mulatau*, geschapen (*Laukku'*: de kreet van een zuigeling; *mula*: eerst, *tau*: mens). Verder zijn door *Puang Matua* de karbouw, het hoen, de kat en de hond, de katoen, de gekookte rijst, de giftige *ipo*-plant (gebruikt voor het pijlgif), het ijzer en de 'kleine regen' geschapen uit het stofgoud, dat

hij in de hemelse blaasbalg had gedaan (zie hiervoor de overleveringen uit Kesu' en uit Tikala, waarvoor wij verwijzen naar Van der Veen 1965:85-91 en Van der Veen 1976:425-427). De voorvader van de eerste slaaf is volgens de overlevering uit Tikala eveneens uit de goddelijke blaasbalg geschapen, evenals de *burake*-priester en de andere priesters, met uitzondering van de dodenpriester.

De in de hemel uit de blaasbalg ontstane haan, Puang Maro, 'Heer Dwaas' geheten, en de kip van de bovenwereld, Lua' Kollong, 'Zij met de Lange Hals', pleegden incest, wat op de eerste mens als een schuld drukte; hij werd krankzinnig. Een van de goden, Labiu-biu, ontstak toen een fakkel en bracht een offer, waarop Laukku', de mens, genas (Van der Veen 1976:427). Deze eerste mens huwde Indo' Gori-gori, 'Moeder Kleine Porceleinen Pot'. Uit het huwelijk werd Manurun diLangi' geboren, 'Hij, die uit de hemel neerdaalt' (op aarde). Verschillende offers en rituelen werden ingesteld, zoals het ziekte-genezende *maro*- en het grote *bua'*-ritueel. Langs de hemeltrap daalde Manurun diLangi' neer op aarde, op het eiland Pongko'.

Hij stelde de rituelen uit de bovenwereld ook op aarde in (Van der Veen 1976:430-431). Manurun diLangi' huwde met Marrin diLiku, 'De Vrouw uit de Kolk' (Van der Veen 1976:433). (Het thema van het huwelijk van een uit de hemel neergedaalde mens of halfgod met een 'watervrouw' komt ook elders in Tana Toraja voor en is een veel voorkomend mythisch gegeven op Sulawesi; vrouwen worden met - het land vruchtbaar makende - water geassocieerd, mannen met de hemel.)

De nakomelingen van het echtpaar pleegden incest op een plaats die Rura heette. Puang Matua ontstak in woede over deze bloedschande, stiet de hemeltrap omver en veroorzaakte een zondvloed, waardoor de mensen omkwamen, op een enkele na: de priesters van het *bua'*-ritueel en Londong diLangi', de 'Haan van de Hemel'. Daar door het omverwerpen van de hemeltrap de verbinding met de bovenwereld verbroken was en de betrekkingen met Puang Matua verstoord waren, werd mede als een verzoenings- en reinigingsritueel, het tweede *bua'*-feest op aarde gevierd[3].

De wereld van de mensen (*padang* of *lino*) ligt tussen boven- en onder-wereld. Deze aarde heeft een 'kop' (*ulu*, het woord betekent ook stroom-opwaarts, nl. van de Sa'dan-rivier) in het noordoosten gelegen, en een 'staart' (*engkok*), die in het zuidwesten ligt, stroomafwaarts van de Sa'dan-rivier. In dit laatste gebied ligt het dodenrijk Puya, dat de zielen van de overledenen door een gat in de aarde via een tunnel berei-

ken. In het dodenrijk is Pong Lalondong, 'Heer Haan', de belangrijkste
god: hij berecht de zielen van de overledenen.

De adatgemeenschappen

Het gebied dat door de mensen bewoond wordt, is verdeeld in een groot
aantal territoria, *adat*gemeenschappen, die gewoonlijk met de naam
lembang, prauw, aangeduid worden. De naam 'prauw' is een metafoor en
refereert aan de (acht?) prauwen, waarmee de voorouders uit het legenda-
rische eiland Pongko' (het eiland, waarop de voorouder uit de hemel
neerdaalde) vertrokken en naar Sulawesi overstaken. Aangekomen op de
vaste wal, volgden zij vermoedelijk de loop van de rivier de Sa'dan;
zij vestigden zich in Tana Toraja. De Toraja namen in de loop van de
tijd in aantal toe; zij vermeerderden zich "als een uitstoelende bamboe",
zoals het in de litanieën heet (Van der Veen 1965:181). Zij verspreidden
zich steeds meer over Tana Toraja. Ramages van verschillende genealo-
gische herkomst woonden in één gebied; zij vierden gezamenlijk één
groot ritueel, het *bua'*-ritueel, in één territorium. De bewoners van
deze *bua'*-kringen sloten zich vaak aaneen tot een groter gebied. Zo
ontstonden de verschillende territoria (*lembang*), waarin Tana Toraja
verdeeld is. De *lembang* zijn verschillend van aard: sommige van deze
gebieden vertonen meer de structuur van een staat, zoals de drie in het
zuiden en oosten van Tana Toraja gelegen prinsdommen, de Tallulembangna,
de Drie Prauwen, geheten. Deze gelijken meer op de Makassaarse en
Buginese staatjes. Ook Kesu' is ingewikkelder van structuur: het is een
federatie van drie gebieden èn van nog enkele kleinere territoria die
zich later bij Kesu' voegden. Een van de drie grotere gebieden is
Nonongan, waar de belangrijkste familie afstamt van de vrouwelijke
voorouder Manaek. Om deze vrouw is een geschiedenis verweven (zie Van
der Veen 1965:60, 61 en 63). Zij wordt als zeer belangrijk beschouwd;
haar status wordt vergeleken met die van een *Puang* (prins of prinses)
van de Tallulembangna en dit verleent Nonongan een aparte positie in de
federatie Kesu'.

Het doel van het bovengenoemde grote *bua'*-ritueel is de zegen van
de goden van de bovenwereld af te smeken over mens, dier en gewas (dit
laatste betreft voornamelijk de rijst). Het initiatief tot het vieren
van zo'n ritueel kan genomen worden door iedere vooraanstaande man in
de samenleving, als hij rijk genoeg is om de kosten van het feest te
dragen en als hij zich in zijn initiatief gesteund voelt door de gemeen-
schap.

Een *bua'*-gemeenschap bestaat uit een of meer dorpen (gewoonlijk uit
één dorp). Een dorp kan in tweeën gedeeld zijn, in 'hoog' en 'laag',
die in Kesu' respectievelijk ressorteren onder een 'Vorst' en een
'Vorstin'. Deze beide functies worden meestal door mannen bekleed. De
deling van het dorp kan nog verder gaan, nl. in vieren. Ieder dorps-
deel is voorts verdeeld in buurtschappen, *saroan*. Het aantal van deze
saroan staat niet vast. De bewoners van de buurtschappen moeten elkaar
bijstaan bij de bewerking van de velden; de *saroan* hebben ook een taak
bij de vleesverdeling tijdens grote rituelen.

3. De standen en het verwantschapssysteem

Bepaalde functies in het grote *bua'*-feest worden vervuld door personen
die daartoe krachtens de traditie zijn aangewezen. Deze zijn vaak de
dragers van (erfelijke) titels. Bij de erfopvolging geeft men veelal
de voorkeur aan mannen boven vrouwen, hoewel vrouwen niet in principe
van de opvolging uitgesloten zijn.[4] Hierdoor ontstaan *status lineages*,
met een patrilineaire tendens, binnen de (grotere) ramage (het begrip
status lineage is ontleend aan Goldman; zie Goldman 1970: 420-421, 424).
In een *bua'*-territorium wonen leden van meer dan één ramage. De ramages
worden *ma'rapuan* of *tongkonan* genoemd. (*Tongkonan* heeft daarbij overi-
gens ook de betekenis van het 'huis' van de ramage, zie hieronder.)
Gewoonlijk is aan een beperkt aantal *tongkonan* een bestuurlijke
functie verbonden, bijvoorbeeld in één *bua'*-kring één aan *tongkonan* A
en één aan *tongkonan* B. De titelhouder van A en de titelhouder van
B behoren tot een verschillende ramage. De *bua'*-kring viert dus zijn
eigen *bua'*-ritueel (dit feest komt in wat volgen gaat nog uitvoerig
ter sprake). De gemeenschap vormt een eigen rechtskring. Belangrijker
rechtszaken worden echter op *lembang*-niveau beslecht.

Het verwantschapssysteem van de Toraja vertoont overeenkomst met het
ramage-systeem van de Polynesiërs. Na zijn neerdaling uit de hemel
stichtte de voorouder (*to manurun*) een huis op aarde, een *tongkonan* (af-
geleid van *tongkon*: gezeten zijn). Dat huis heeft een bepaalde naam en
is het rituele en sociale centrum van de ramage. Bij groei van de groep
vindt afsplitsing plaats: een nieuwe ramage ontstaat; deze zou men kun-
nen aanduiden als een subramage (*rapu*). Het ontstaan van deze nieuwe
rapu wordt gemarkeerd door de stichting van een nieuwe *tongkonan*. Men
kan derhalve in de familiegroep een hoofdtak en zijtakken onderscheiden,
respectievelijk met oudere en jongere *tongkonan*.

Het is niet noodzakelijk dat de oudste zoon of - eventueel - de

oudste dochter voor de erfopvolging in aanmerking komt. De karakter-
eigenschappen van de kandidaat bepalen de keuze. De titelhouder wordt
door de ramage gekozen en de dorpsraad - of een hoger 'bestuurscollege' -
bekrachtigt deze benoeming. De bovengenoemde groep van titelhouders
en van functionarissen, die een rituele èn een bestuurlijke functie
hebben, zou men kunnen aanduiden als 'adel'. De Toraja-samenleving is
nl. gestratificeerd en kent als grove indeling die in adel, vrijen en
slaven: de *to parengnge'*[5], de *to makaka* en de *kaunan* (Kesu')[6]. Elders
luiden deze benamingen soms anders (zie Tangdilintin 1975:15-17 en
beneden).

De sociale stratificatie wordt groter naarmate men van het westen
van Tana Toraja naar het oosten gaat. In de door een *Puang* (prins)
bestuurde gebieden komt boven de stand van de *to parengnge'* nog die
van de *Puang* en zijn naaste familieleden. De stand van de vrijen is
vaak weer verdeeld in *upper* en *lower to makaka*.

Niet alleen stand doch ook rijkdom geeft aanzien. Vaak zijn 'rijk
zijn' en 'van adel zijn' synoniem. In Riu (een landstreek in Tikala)
onderscheidt men dan ook de volgende standen:

a. de *to makaka* (elders - Kesu' - de tweede stand, doch hier de hoogste);
   zij hebben karbouwen en wonen in een *tongkonan*. Zij bezitten *sawah*s
   en mogen het initiatief nemen tot het vieren van een *bua'*-feest;

b. de *to sugi'*, de rijken; hoewel iets lager in de sociale rangorde dan
   categorie a hebben ook deze *to sugi'* dezelfde velden etc. en mogen
   ook zij het *bua'*-feest vieren;

c. de *to bongko*; zij bezitten geen karbouwen, dit dier mag door hen ook
   niet geofferd worden. Alleen het varken mag door hen als offerdier
   gebruikt worden;

d. de *to mase-mase*; deze stand bezit niets behalve kippen.

De categorieën c en d mogen niet het initiatief tot het vieren van
een *bua'*-feest nemen.

Een vrouw van de adelstand of een vrouw uit de stand van de vrijen
mag niet 'naar beneden' huwen. De kinderen, voortkomend uit het huwelijk
van een man van adel of een man uit de stand van de vrijen met een slavin
behoren altijd tot de stand van de moeder. De adel is geassocieerd met
de bovenwereld, met kostbare karbouwen en met de metalen goud, zilver
en koper; de kleuren zijn geel en wit. Mensen van adel wonen in *tongkonan*
die belangrijk zijn en waarin heilige weefsels en bepaalde ornamenten
bewaard worden. De slaven, hoewel ontstaan in de bovenwereld, horen thuis
in de westelijke helft van de kosmische ordening; hun buffel is de

geelachtig grauwe; zij zijn geassocieerd met klei (Potto Kalembang, het
poppetje van klei, dat in de bovenwereld geboetseerd werd, is de
vrouwelijke voorouder van de slaven) en met het werken als van een
karbouw in de *sawah* (Van der Veen 1965:137).

4. *Priesters*

De priesters functioneren in de rituelen; zijn staan de *adat*hoofden in
hun rituele taken bij en vervangen deze eventueel. De samenleving kent
een groot aantal priesters. Wij noemen allereerst de *to mebalun* ('hij
die inwikkelt'). Het lijk wordt in doeken gewikkeld; dit is de taak van
de dodenpriester. Hij functioneert in dàt gedeelte van het dodenritueel
waarin de dode als nog niet gereinigd wordt beschouwd. Hij wordt ook
wel *burake bombo* (voor *burake*, priester, zie beneden; *bombo*: ziel van
de dode) of *burake matampu'*, 'de heer van het westen' genoemd.

In vele territoria behoort de dodenpriester tot de slavenstand. De
rijstpriester, de *to indo' padang* ('de moeder van de aarde') houdt zich
bezig met het rijstritueel. Ondanks de vrouwelijk aandoende titel is de
rijstpriester altijd een man. De *to indo' padang* behoort tot de lagere
to makaka. De *to indo' padang* moet zich verre houden van de doodssfeer,
die schadelijk wordt geacht voor de rijst (zie paragraaf 5). Hij moet
daarom, indien mogelijk, dodenfeesten vermijden.

Een andere priester is de *to ma'dampi*, de man die de zieken geneest,
de medicijnman. Medicinerende vrouwen kent men niet, behalve in het
district Balepe'.

De *to minaa* is een priester die in vrijwel alle rituelen optreedt,
met uitzondering van dàt gedeelte van het dodenritueel, dat nog sterk
beladen is met de doodssfeer, die uitgaat van de nog niet ritueel
gereinigde dode (dit is de beginfase van het dodenritueel).

Men wordt *to minaa*, omdat men een vader heeft die *to minaa* is of
omdat men door een droom tot het priesterschap geroepen wordt. *To minaa*
betekent: 'rijk aan gedachten'. Er zijn *to minaa*, die een formidabele
kennis bezitten van de geschiedenis van de Toraja, van mythen en gene-
alogieën, van het ritueel en van litanieën. Daarin worden zij geëvenaard
door sommige *adat*hoofden. Een *to minaa* kan een *adat*hoofd in zijn rituele
taken vervangen, als dit hoofd zich niet genoeg thuis acht in de
litanieën. *To minaa* behoren meestal tot de stand van de *to makaka*; in het
district Ranteballa (in Luwu' gelegen) mag ook een *kaunan to minaa* zijn.
Meestal zijn deze priesters mannen, doch in Pangala' en Nonongan kan ook
een vrouw het *to minaa*-schap vervullen.

De belangrijkste priesters in de Toraja-samenleving zijn de *to burake*.
De naam *burake* betekent: impotent of hermafrodiet. Men onderscheidt
twee soorten *to burake*: de *to burake tattiku'* en de *to burake tambolang*.
Beide benamingen zijn ontleend aan vogels: de *tattiku'* is een klein vo-
geltje (soort onbekend), de *tambolang* is een ooievaar[7]. Daar de ooievaar
een veel grotere en indrukwekkender vogel is dan de *tattiku'*, ligt het
voor de hand aan te nemen, dat de *to burake tambolang* belangrijker is
dan de *to burake tattiku'*. Dit zou men inderdaad zo kunnen stellen. De
to burake tattiku' is een vrouw; meestal een oudere vrouw, die
geen kinderen meer kan krijgen. De *to burake tambolang* is volgens de
Toraja een hermafrodiet, "van onderen man, van boven vrouw", zo wist
men te vertellen. Niettemin valt de nadruk op het vrouwelijke aspect
van de *burake tambolang*: dit blijkt o.a. uit het dragen van vrouwen-
kleding door deze priester. Van der Veen (1924:396) deelt mede, dat de
burake tambolang mannen zijn, die zich in vrouwenkleren kleden en die
eventueel, vaak op latere leeftijd, met een andere man gaan samenwonen.
Voordien zijn zij vaak op normale wijze gehuwd en hebben eventueel
kinderen. Soms 'huwt' een *to burake tambolang* met een *to minaa*, en
ook hieruit blijkt weer, dat de nadruk bij deze priester op het vrouwe-
lijke aspect valt. De *burake tambolang* functioneert sinds lang niet meer.

Van der Veen deelt mede, dat reeds in de twintiger jaren niemand zich
meer tot het *burake tambolang*-schap geroepen voelde (Van der Veen id.)[8].
Een attribuut van de *burake* (zowel van de *tambolang* als van de *tattiku'*)
is de *garapung* of *garatung*, de slingertrom, een kleine trom zonder
steel, voorzien van twee snoeren met een kraal aan het uiteinde. Het
slagvlak van dit instrument is overtrokken met de huid van de python-
slang, een dier dat veel op *sawah*s voorkomt en in verband wordt gebracht
met het water (= het symbool van leven en vruchtbaarheid). De slang zelf
is het symbool van onsterfelijkheid (A.C. Kruyt 1923/24:320-323). De
garatung wordt door de priester veelvuldig gehanteerd op het grote *bua'*-
feest bij het aanroepen der goden (*pangalukan*); verder kondigt de *burake*
haar komst aan met dit instrument. Dit geschiedt vooral in de oogsttijd.
Men geeft de priester dan 12 bossen rijst, waarvan er twee teruggegeven
worden, die tot zaairijst zullen dienen. De *burake* zegt dan:

"Namemba'ka' tu pare	"Moge de rijst overvloedig zijn
naponno alang	de rijstschuur gevuld
nakianak tu tau	de mensen kinderen ontvangen
nakianak tu tedong	de buffels jongen
nakianak tu bai	de varkens jongen
nakianak tu manuk."	de kippen zich vermenigvuldigen."

De naam Tumba' die vele *to burake* als voorvoegsel voor hun naam
voeren betekent: opspringen of een dans in trance opvoeren, waarbij men
telkens opspringt. Het woord duidt aan, dat men een relatie met de
bovenwereld tot stand wil brengen (mogelijke verklaring: opspringen om
te trachten de hemel te bereiken). De *burake*, althans de *tambolang*,
geraakt gedurende de tijd, dat hij/zij zich tot het priesterschap
geroepen voelt, in trance: "Omtrent de *burake tambolang* deelde de *to
minaa* Ne' Panda mij het volgende mede: Dit ambt gaat niet over van
ouder op kind. Het zijn mannen, die als *burake tambolang* optreden. Zij
worden daartoe door de *deata* geroepen. Die roeping maakt zich kenbaar
door bijzondere verschijnselen. Het lichaam van zo iemand gaat trillen,
hij geraakt in extase, drukt zich het zwaard in de buik, hij kan het
lichaam in een bamboe waterkoker en in een stenen watervat doen ingaan
en daarin rondzwemmen. Zijn lichaam wordt dan, zoals de *to minaa* Ne'
Kendek van Saloe (Kesoe') het uitdrukte, opnieuw gevormd door de *deata*,
en tot een vrouw herschapen. Het proces dat met zo iemand plaats heeft,
wordt *naaloek deata* genoemd: 'be-*adat* door de goden'. Een zoon van zulk
een *burake tambolang* (namelijk een zoon van hem uit zijn huwelijk,
voordat hij *burake* werd) kan ook zulk een roeping ontvangen, en als
burake gaan optreden; maar ook ieder ander kan daartoe geïnspireerd
worden. Deze toestand van extase kan 3 tot 4 maanden duren en dan wordt
zo iemand weer normaal. Geschiedt dat niet vanzelf, dan wordt hij op een
maro-feest behandeld en wordt door manipulaties en plechtigheden, die
daarbij onder leiding van den *to ma'dampi*, den medicijnmeester, plaats-
vinden, zijn geest weer tot de orde geroepen." (Van der Veen 1924:395).

De *burake*, en dit geldt vooral voor de *tambolang*, is de hoogste figuur
in de samenleving. Na zijn overlijden wordt deze priester niet bijgezet
volgens de ritus van de westzijde, zoals dit met alle andere doden gebrui-
kelijk is, doch volgens die van de oostzijde. Het stoffelijk overschot van
de *burake* wordt niet, zoals gebruikelijk, door een deurtje aan de westkant
uit huis gedragen, doch door het driehoekig gevelstuk aan de noordelijke
zijde van de woning, het gedeelte, dat zich onder de nok bevindt en dat
als sacraal beschouwd wordt en geassocieerd is met de bovenwereld.

De *burake tambolang* en de *burake tattiku'* treden in verschillende
landschappen op. De *tambolang* functioneert in Sangalla', Mengkendek en
Ma'kale, in Madandan, Buntao', Kesu' en een deel van Nonongan.

De *tattiku'* treedt in de volgende landschappen op: Riu, Tikala,
Pangala', Bori', Dende', Piongan, Banga, Talion, Malimbong, Balepe' en
in een deel van Nonongan.

'Hermafroditische' priesters functioneren ook bij de Buginezen (de
bissu) en bij de Mamasa-Toraja (*bingsu*). Op de relatie van deze pries-
ters en de *burake* van de Toraja kan echter in dit bestek niet nader
worden ingegaan.

5. *De rituelen*

Door rituelen tracht de mens het evenwicht in de kosmische orde te
bewaren en de betrekkingen met de bovenwereld te onderhouden. Sinds het
incestueuze huwelijk, dat volgens de mythe in Rura plaatsvond, zijn deze
betrekkingen verstoord.

In de rituelen treden veel functionarissen op. Hun rol is die van
middelaars tussen mensen en goden. Deze functionarissen zijn de reeds
genoemde priesters en *adat*hoofden. Ook bepaalde vrouwen vervullen een
rol in rituelen, waarbij zij in relatie staan tot de bovenwereld. Wij
komen deze vrouwen nog tegen bij het grote *bua'*-ritueel.

De Toraja leggen grote nadruk op de verdeling van de rituelen in
tweeën, naar de windstreken oost en west. Het oosten is geassocieerd
met de goden, het westen met de voorouders van weleer, voorouders, die
in het (zuid)westen op aarde verblijven en die blijkbaar nooit de hemel
hebben kunnen bereiken. De rituelen van de oostelijke sfeer heten *aluk
rampe matallo* (*aluk*: ritueel, *rampe*: zijde, *matallo*: opgaande zon). De
rituelen van de westzijde zijn de *aluk rampe matampu'*, de rituelen van
de zijde van de ondergaande zon. In deze laatste categorie vallen het
dodenritueel en het koppensnellen. Alle andere rituelen vallen in de
oostelijke helft. Deze zijn:
- het rijstritueel;
- het ritueel tot heil van het land (= de rijstvelden), *bua' padang*
  (*bua'* = werkzaam zijn, i.c. om een ritueel te verrichten; *padang* =
  land; dit ritueel wordt wel het kleine *bua'*-ritueel genoemd) en alle
  overgangsriten, behalve het dodenritueel. Het dodenritueel van de
  burake-priester (van de *burake tambolang* zowel als van de *tattiku'*)
  valt echter wèl in de oostelijke sfeer;
- het ziekte-genezende *maro*-ritueel;
- exorcistische rituelen;
- het *merok*-feest, een feest tot welzijn van de ramage;
- het grote *bua'*-ritueel (zie hierna).

Oostelijke en westelijke rituelen, leven en dood, worden streng
gescheiden. Alles wat met rijst te maken heeft, wordt verre gehouden
van de doodssfeer. De weduwe of de weduwnaar en andere rouwende familie-

leden mogen gedurende een bepaalde fase van het dodenritueel geen rijst
eten. Wij maakten al melding van de taboes, waaraan de rijstpriester
onderworpen is. Niettemin zijn 'rijst' en 'dood' niet geheel gescheiden.
Hoe verder het dodenritueel vordert, hoe meer er elementen in het
ritueel ingevoerd worden die toch met rijst te maken hebben. Dit neemt
niet weg, dat de rituelen van de oost- en de westzijde complementair
zijn. Wanneer alle riten voor een dode van aanzien door de familieleden
vervuld zijn en het dodenritueel zijn voltooiing heeft bereikt, stijgt
de overledene op naar het firmament en maakt daar deel uit van een
constellatie, die waakt over de rijst.

Een dodenritueel van hoge orde (Nonongan)
Wanneer een vooraanstaand persoon sterft, wordt hij niet meteen begraven.
Over het tijdstip van de bijzetting, over de grootte van het ritueel,
over het aantal te slachten karbouwen en over de plaats waar het doden-
ritueel plaats zal vinden wordt door de familie lang gediscussieerd. Dit
kan maanden, soms jaren duren; zo wist een volwassen Toraja te vertellen,
hoe zijn grootvader vóór zijn geboorte gestorven was en hoe hij diens
bijzetting eerst als volwassene had meegemaakt. Erfeniskwesties spelen
bij dergelijke uitgestelde begrafenissen uiteraard een rol.

   Gewoonlijk wordt de allerhoogste vorm van het dodenritueel in tweeën
gevierd, met een tussenpoos van minstens één, soms twee jaar. Het
dodenritueel is tamelijk inspannend; het is ook kostbaar. Men kan in de
bovengenoemde pauze op adem komen en opnieuw sparen voor de benodigde
karbouwen. Bij alle bijzettingen houdt men echter vast aan de regel, dat
voor de overledene diè vorm van bijzetting wordt gevolgd, die in zijn
moeders familie gebruikelijk is (*aluk susu*). Dit betekent, dat voor
iemand die afstammeling is van een voornaam persoon en een slavin, nooit
een dodenritueel van hoge orde gehouden kan worden.

   De dodenriten zijn aan stand gebonden; in principe echter zijn de
riten voor mannen en vrouwen gelijk. Alle doden, van welke stand ook,
worden na hun overlijden in doeken gewikkeld door de *to mebalun*. Deze
geeft de overledene ook 'te eten', d.w.z. hij brengt offers aan de
dode; hij zet eten voor diens ziel (*bombo*) gereed. Dit geschiedt op
bepaalde tijdstippen. Behalve deze dodenpriester treden de volgende
functionarissen in een dodenritueel op:
- de *to ma'peulli'*, een slavin, wier taak het is de maden uit het
  stoffelijk overschot te verwijderen. Deze taak wordt thans niet meer
  vervuld;

- de *to ma'pemali*, een nauwe verwante van de overledene, die zich aan
  allerlei taboes moet onderwerpen. Zij houdt, evenals de *to mebalun*
  en de weduwe en weduwnaar, de wacht bij de dode; zij mag gedurende de
  eerste zeven dagen van de rouwperiode geen rijst eten;
- de *to balu*, de weduwe of de weduwnaar;
- de *to ma'kuasa*, een mannelijke functionaris, die evenals de *to*
  ma'pemali verbodsbepalingen in acht moet nemen ten aanzien van het
  eten van rijst en die zich bezig houdt met het regelen van diverse
  onderdelen van het ritueel.

Het eerste gedeelte van een dodenritueel met een 'pauze' heet *aluk pia*,
'kind-ritueel'. Deze benaming kan op verschillende manieren uitgelegd
worden: dit gedeelte van het ritueel is 'klein', minder omvangrijk dan
het tweede gedeelte (in theorie althans). Er worden tijdens deze eerste
fase minder buffels geslacht.

Voor een ritueel van hoge orde worden veel karbouwen geslacht,
minstens 24, doch het getal kan ook oplopen tot 80 of meer. Deze buffels
vergezellen de doden naar het zielenland *Puya* en zijn een teken van de
status van de overledene. Van deze karbouwen zijn er een paar, die een
bepaalde rol vervullen. Zo wordt op de dag dat de dode ritueel sterft,
een karbouw geslacht die *ma'karu'dusan* heet, 'hij die sterft'. Het dier
is, zoals zal blijken, nauw geassocieerd met de overledene. De over-
ledene, die eerst in het achterste vertrek van het huis opgebaard lag,
in de richting oost-west, wordt dan naar het middenvertrek overgebracht.
Hij wordt in de richting noord-zuid neergelegd, met het hoofd naar het
zuiden gekeerd (voor die tijd was het hoofd naar het westen gewend[9]).
De bovengenoemde buffel wordt gedood, zodra de overledene wordt over-
gebracht; tegelijk slaat men op de trom. De dode die voordien als 'de
zieke' aangeduid werd, is nu 'overleden'. Vrouwelijke familieleden
beginnen bij het stoffelijk overschot te weeklagen (*ma'bating*). Men
plaatst vervolgens een aantal bamboes boven het stoffelijk overschot,
eveneens in de richting noord-zuid; hieraan hangt men kledingstukken
van de overledene (bijv. zijn *sarong*, baadje en zijn broek, indien het
een man betreft), ook worden vier *kandaure* (kralen versierselen) op-
gehangen, in iedere windstreek één.

Het stoffelijk overschot, omwikkeld met doeken, zodat het de vorm
heeft van een rolkussen, wordt uiteindelijk met een rode doek over-
trokken. Gouden krissen en een heilig weefsel (*maa'*) worden op deze
dodenrol aangebracht. De *to balu* (de weduwe of de weduwnaar) neemt

plaats bij het hoofdeinde van de overledene. Bij het hoofdeinde staan ook
twee *dulang*s (houten etensschalen op hoge voet) en een *sirih*stel. Verder
worden in het vertrek ook andere sacrale weefsels gehangen. De belang-
rijkste rite na het overbrengen van het stoffelijk overschot naar het
middenvertrek is het *ma'batang* (*batang* = stam, waarmee bedoeld wordt 'de
kern' of het voornaamste gedeelte van de eerste fase van het doden-
ritueel). Op de *rante*, een plein, een apart daartoe gereserveerd terrein,
waar de dodenriten gedeeltelijk plaatsvinden   worden twee karbouwen
geslacht. Dit zijn buffels, die volgens traditie geslacht moeten worden
en die als offer dienen. Daarnaast slacht men nog vele andere buffels
(en varkens) die door de familie als geschenk zijn aangevoerd. Deze
dag wordt beschouwd als de 'grote dag' van het *aluk pia*-ritueel. Familie-
leden komen, fraai uitgedost - in het zwart - hun opwachting maken. Zij
voeren geschenken mee, buffels, varkens en palmwijn. In de nacht die
hierop volgt, om ongeveer drie uur 's morgens, wordt de dode tijdelijk
in een soort trog (*rapasan*) geplaatst. Deze *rapasan* gelijkt op een
rijstblok. Met het woord *rapasan* worden ook doodkisten aangeduid, die
in rotsrichels geplaatst zijn. Een dergelijke vorm van bijzetting is
thans niet meer gebruikelijk, men kist zijn doden niet meer. Mogelijk
is dit plaatsen van de dode in een 'kist' een survival van een vroegere
vorm van bijzetting, toen men nog een kist gebruikte voor het stoffelijk
overschot. Vanuit de *rapasan*, ongeveer middenonder, is een pijp geplaatst,
die steekt in een pot van klei, die de vorm heeft van een vrouwenborst.
Dit artefact is een bestanddeel van de rite, die *ma'pasusu*, 'het plaatsen
van de moederborst', heet en waarbij het voorwerp onder de *rapasan* aan-
gebracht wordt. De plechtigheid verwijst waarschijnlijk naar het feit dat
voor een dodenritueel diè ceremonieën gevolgd moeten worden die van
moederszijde gebruikelijk zijn. Dat betekent dat (overleden) kinderen,
voortgekomen uit het huwelijk van een slavin en iemand van hogere stand,
alleen volgens eenvoudige rituelen bijgezet kunnen worden.

De volgende dag gaat men over tot het zwart verven van de kleding van
de rouwenden, hetgeen door de *to mebalun* geschiedt. Zoals wij zagen
draagt men reeds vóór het *ma'bolong* zwarte kleding. De rite is dan ook
te beschouwen als een symbolische handeling, die de rouwkleur kracht
bijzet. Hierbij wordt een hoen geofferd. Op het hierboven genoemde plein
worden nu een aantal staken geplaatst, een in het noorden van deze *rante*,
een in het zuiden, een in het westen en een in het oosten. Aan iedere
staak worden een *borak* (een weefsel van ananasvezel) en een versiering,
gemaakt uit de zwarte vezels van de arenpalm (*induk*) gehangen.

De staken zijn bedoeld als een afgrenzing van het dodenterrein. Degenen,
die binnen dit gebied komen, dienen hun hoofddeksel af te nemen als een
eerbewijs voor de dode.

De daarop volgende dag vindt het *ma'baa manuk*, 'het brengen van een
hoen', plaats. Er worden een varken en een hoen voor deze rite geslacht.
De poten en de veren worden in een open gevlochten korf geplaatst,
waarin men ook de twee *dulang*, het kopje, de zonnehoed en het *sirih*tasje
van de overledene plaatst. Na het *ma'baa manuk* worden de *borak* en de
versiering van *induk*-vezels van de vier bamboe-palen afgehaald; zij
worden vervangen door jonge takken van de suikerpalm. Hiervoor offert
men ten oosten van de *tongkonan* een varken voor de goden en ten westen
van het huis een zwijn voor de voorouders.

Na dit eerste gedeelte van het dodenritueel volgt de genoemde rust-
pauze. Vandaar de naam van zo'n groot bijzettingsritueel: *dirapa'i*, een
dodenritueel met een pauze (waarin men stil is). Deze onderbreking kan
een jaar of langer duren.

Na deze pauze wordt het ritueel opnieuw opgenomen voor het tweede ge-
deelte[10]. Als taken van aanvang van het ritueel slaat men op een trom.
Tot die tijd hebben de *to balu* (weduwe of weduwnaar), de *to ma'pemali*
(het familielid dat de taboebepalingen in acht neemt) en de *to mebalun*
(de dodenpriester) de wacht gehouden bij de overledene en zich aan de
verbodsbepalingen gehouden, zoals bijv. die, welke gelden ten aanzien
van het eten van rijst gedurende de rouwperiode.

Vervolgens wordt het stoffelijk overschot vanuit het huis naar
de rijstschuur overgebracht. Men draagt de dodenrol onder gehos uit de
woning via een opening of een deur in de westkant en plaatst het
stoffelijk overschot op het vloertje onder de rijstschuur. Ook de *to
balu* en de *to ma'pemali* nemen daar plaats, evenals de dodenpriester als
hij officieert. Voor de schuur is een pop neergezet, die de overledene
voorstelt. Deze *tau-tau* krijgt, evenals de overledene, 'te eten': de
dodenpriester plaatst een schotel met voedsel bij de *tau-tau*.

Aan de lijkbaar is inmiddels hard gewerkt. Dit is een constructie, die
gelijkt op een Toraja-huis in miniatuur. De baldakijn is dakvormig. De
stijlen, waarop het 'dak' rust, zijn fraai versierd. De dodenrol wordt
nu gedecoreerd met uit bladgoud uitgeknipte figuren. Wanneer de 'grote
dag' van het tweede gedeelte aanbreekt, gaat men in optocht naar de
rante ('de slachtplaats voor de karbouwen'). De stoet is als volgt
samengesteld:

a. de *to ussoboi rante*, 'hij die als eerste de *rante* betreedt'. Deze

functionaris is een *kaunan*. De slaaf heeft als taak de weg als het
ware vrij te maken en te reinigen van kwade invloed;

b. de *to dibulle tangnga*, 'zij die in het midden gedragen wordt', een
vrouwelijk familielid;

c. de *to balu*, de weduwe of weduwnaar;

d. de *to ma'pemali*, de verwante van de overledene, die allerlei taboes
in acht moet nemen;

e. de *to mate*, de overledene;

f. de *tau-tau*, de effigie;

g. de *tandi rapasan* ('de steun van de *rapasan*'), een bepaalde buffel,
die op zijn rug een *maa'*-kleed draagt (*maa'*: een heilige doek). Deze
buffel draagt de ziel van de dode naar het zielenland;

h. hierna volgen vele andere karbouwen.

De baldakijn met het stoffelijk overschot wordt flink op en neer
bewogen; dit geschiedt ook met de zwarte, op een tent gelijkende con-
structies, waarin zich respectievelijk de *to dibulle tangnga*, de *to balu*
en de *to ma'pemali* bevinden. Wanneer men op de *rante* is aangekomen,
wordt het stoffelijk overschot uit de baldakijn gehaald en geplaatst in
een andere constructie, een lijkentoren, die eveneens op een huis
gelijkt (*lakkian*). De weduwe (of de weduwnaar) en de *to ma'pemali* houden
weer de wacht bij de dode. Ook de *tau-tau* wordt rechtop in deze *lakkian*
geplaatst. Inmiddels zijn op het feestterrein een of meer *menhir*s op-
gericht. Deze oprichting vindt plaats in de nabijheid van de *menhir*s
die bij vorige bijzettingsrituelen als een memento mori zijn opgericht.
Bij ieder van de grote stenen wordt een staak geplaatst, waaraan een
kostbare karbouw wordt vastgebonden. Deze buffels zijn geschenken van
familieleden en vrienden; zij worden kort daarop geslacht. Inmiddels
is op het plein ook een grote stéllage opgericht, die *bala'kaan* heet.
Het platform dat boven in deze toren is aangebracht, wordt door de *to
minaa* benut voor het verdelen van vlees; ieder van de aanwezigen, die
daarvoor in aanmerking komt, krijgt een stuk vlees toebedeeld. Deze
stukken zijn volgens de traditie voor iedere persoon voorgeschreven.
Ook de voorouders krijgen stukjes vlees toebedeeld door de *to minaa*.

De plechtigheid eindigt met de overbrenging van het stoffelijk
overschot naar het hooggelegen rotsgraf, dat men in een steile wand
heeft uitgehouwen. De *tau-tau* wordt òf voor deze tombe geplaatst, òf
men zet de pop bij als 'nieuw aangekomene' in een rij *tau-tau*. Deze
tau-tau zijn vaak opgesteld in een in de rotswand uitgehouwen nis,
waarin men een railing heeft aangebracht. De dodenpoppen zien vanuit de

hoogte neer op het land, waar de mensen wonen en werken. De ziel van de
dode gaat eerst naar het zielenland Puya, gevolgd door de kudde buffels,
die op het dodenfeest zijn geslacht. Daarna stijgt de dode via de berg
Bamba Puang (deze berg bevindt zich in het ten zuiden van Tana Toraja
gelegen landschap Enrekang) ten hemel. De ziel van de overledene kan
ook langs een palmboom omhoog klimmen.

Het grote bua'-feest

Van de rituelen van het oosten behandelen wij hier het *bua'*-feest en wel
om verschillende redenen. Allereerst is niet alleen de rol van de man,
doch vooral die van de vrouw belangrijk in dit ritueel. Voorts kan men
het grote *bua'*-feest beschouwen als een eindritueel, dat verschillende
andere rituelen in zich opgenomen heeft. Het bevat zowel elementen van
het *merok*-feest (dat door Van der Veen beschreven is in zijn *The Merok
Feast of the Sa'dan Toradja*) als van het *maro*-ritueel. Verder beschikken
wij ook over een verslag van de riten van het *bua'*-feest, zoals deze
weergegeven zijn door een echtpaar uit Tikala. Daar het een gecompli-
ceerd ritueel betreft, hebben wij gemeend het van de hieronder volgende
inleiding te moeten voorzien.

  Het grote *bua'*-feest beoogt het welzijn van mens, dier en gewas "om
de rijst goed te doen gelukken en aan mensen en dieren gezondheid te
geven" (J. Kruyt 1921:48). Het ligt ook in de bedoeling van het ritueel,
dat de mensen toenemen in aantal. Het heeft ook het karakter van een
dankfeest. Er werd reeds opgemerkt, dat dit ritueel een slotfeest is,
een eindritueel, dat alle andere rituelen afsluit. Het grote *bua'*-feest
mag eerst dan gehouden worden, als alle doden in de *bua'*-kring bijgezet
zijn. Het grote *bua'*-feest heeft daarom ook een reinigend aspect.

Het feest wordt in één *bua'*-kring gevierd. Een man van aanzien, een van
de ramage-hoofden in het territoir, is de initiator en de feestgever,
doch ook de leden van andere ramages in het gebied doen mee. Deze feest-
gever, de *ampu bua'*, de heer van het *bua'*-feest, moet een rijk man zijn,
want het betreft hier een kostbaar ritueel. Hij wordt echter, wat de kos-
ten betreft, bijgestaan door de leden van zijn eigen ramage en van andere
rapu. Het *adat*-hoofd en enkele andere titelhouders in de *bua'*-kring
vervullen een functie in het ritueel. Zo wordt in Kesu' het gebed, dat
gehouden wordt vóór een karbouw wordt geofferd ter gelegenheid van het
bua'-feest, uitgesproken door het voornaamste hoofd van de *bua'*-kring,
de 'vorst'. De litanie, waarmee de buffel wordt gewijd, wordt opgezegd

door de 'vorstin'.

Ook de *burake* (*tambolang* of *tattiku'*, al naar gelang de landstreek)
en enkele vrouwelijke familieleden van de feestgever functioneren in
het ritueel. Deze laatsten kunnen volwassen vrouwen of meisjes zijn.
In het district Tikala (omvattende de streken Bori' en Riu) zijn het
volwassen vrouwen, in Kesu' zijn het meestal jonge meisjes. De vrouwen
of meisjes verblijven in huis en mogen de aarde slechts bij uitzondering
betreden, bijv. als zij zich gaan baden (hiervoor is een speciale put
gereserveerd). Daar het ritueel zich over een of meer jaren uit kan
strekken, duurt de periode van seclusie vaak lang. Zij zijn aan allerlei
verbodsbepalingen onderworpen: zo mogen zij niet in aanraking komen met
hen die rouwen. Hun voedsel mag uitsluitend bestaan uit gekookte rijst,
vis die in *sawah*s gekweekt is, vlees van buffels, varkens en hoenderen,
mits deze niet voor of op een dodenfeest geslacht zijn. Zij koken hun
eigen voedsel (J. Kruyt 1921:73). De voornaamste onder deze meisjes of
vrouwen is de *to tumbang*. De naam betekent: zij, die omhoog springt,
waarmee men waarschijnlijk wil aanduiden, dat men een relatie met de
bovenwereld tot stand wil brengen (cf. par. 4, de *burake tambolang*). Deze
to tumbang houdt de wacht bij de *anak dara*. Dit is een constructie, die
uit 8 bamboes bestaat. Zowel de vier buitenste als de vier binnenste bam-
boes zijn in een vierkant opgesteld. De buitenste bamboes zijn omgeven
door een heilige *sarita*-doek en door een franje van jonge bladeren van
de suikerpalm. (Men vraagt zich onwillekeurig af, of er een verband be-
staat tussen deze bamboes en die welke boven een overledene worden aange-
bracht, zie pag. 152.) Het voorwerp bestaat verder uit een bundel blade-
ren en een bananenboom, waaraan een vruchtentros hangt. De bladeren hebben
een bijzondere betekenis in de cultuur van de Toraja: zij zijn verkoelend
en er gaat een heilzame of kwade invloeden afwerende werking van deze
bladeren uit. Dit laatste geldt ook voor bladeren van de drakenbloedplant
(*Cordyline terminalis*), die vanwege hun rode kleur met bloed en leven
worden geassocieerd; de bladeren worden in vele riten van het oosten ge-
bruikt. Ook deze bladeren maken deel uit van de *anak dara*. De *anak dara*
is een speer. Ondanks dit laatste, mannelijke, attribuut wordt de *anak
dara* als een vrouw beschouwd, als de vrouwelijke geest van het grote
bua'-feest. Gezien de bananentros is hier ook sprake van een vruchtbaar-
heidssymbool.

Als andere naam voor *anak dara* wordt het woord *tumba'* gebezigd; uit
deze naam blijkt een zekere identificatie met de *to tumbang* (beide namen
betekenen hetzelfde).

De *tumba'* is vastgebonden aan de stijl, die in het midden van de
tongkonan staat en wel aan de noordzijde van deze stijl (J. Kruyt: 1921:
53). De *to tumbang* houdt de wacht bij de *anak dara* (de benaming *tumba'*
wordt in de latere fase van het ritueel vervangen door *anak dara*).

Op het *bua'*-feest worden een of meer karbouwen geofferd (in Kesu'
een dozijn); voorts behoren varkens, hoenderen en honden tot de offer-
dieren. De kleur van deze dieren is voorgeschreven; voor de hoenderen
is deze geel of geelbruin, dit zijn kleuren die geassocieerd zijn met
de bovenwereld. Voor een enkele rite, het *ma'pallin*, een rite die een
exorcistisch karakter heeft en die in Kesu' in de beginfase van het
feest plaatsvindt, wordt een zwart hoen geslacht (zie Van der Veen
1965:156-158).

Voor het *bua'*-feest worden veel voorwerpen vervaardigd. Dit zijn,
behalve de bovengenoemde *tumba'* of *anak dara*, de *banaa* en de *bua'* (voor
deze voorwerpen wordt naar de volgende paragraaf verwezen), de met
karbouwenhorens versierde draagstoelen, waarin de *to tumbang* en haar
escorte rondgedragen worden en de *gorang*, een hoge stellage (zie pag.
164 en foto 2).

*Beschrijving van het grote bua'-feest, zoals dat gehouden wordt op de
helling van de Sesean,*
volgens informatie van Ambe' Ne' Bidang en Indo' Lai' Banne, alias Ne'
Tumbang, een echtpaar uit het dorp Pollo Tondok, aangevuld met eigen
waarnemingen en opmerkingen. Vooraf iets over deze twee informanten.

Ambe' (= vader) Bidang en Indo' (= moeder) Lai' Banne zijn afkomstig
uit bovengenoemd dorp, dat ligt op de helling van de Sesean. De mede-
delingen van het echtpaar geven geen complete beschrijving van het
ritueel; voor een volledig verslag wordt verwezen naar het artikel van
J. Kruyt (zie J. Kruyt 1921:45-71 en 161-172). Zij brengen in hun
verhaal alleen datgene naar voren, wat zij als belangrijk beschouwen.
Zij hebben zelf het *bua'*-feest, dat vrij zelden gevierd wordt, enkele
malen bijgewoond (de benaming Ne' wijst er op, dat de betrokkenen al
grootouders zijn). Indo' Banne heeft in dit *bua'*-feest de rol vervuld
van *to tumbang*. De hieronder gegeven informatie is voor een groot deel
van haar afkomstig. Haar mededelingen worden door ons, voor zover dat
nodig geacht wordt, van een toelichting voorzien.

Voordat men het feest gaat vieren, belegt men een familievergadering,
sitama to ma'rapu. Hierbij wordt een varken geslacht, dat niet als offer

dient, doch dat door de aanwezige *rapu*-leden wordt opgegeten. De
volgende dag worden drie varkens geslacht: één is bedoeld als offer
voor alle *deata* (de goden), dit zijn de goden van de bovenwereld; één
wordt opgedragen aan alle *nene'*, dit zijn de voorouders, die in het
zuidwesten verblijven; het derde zwijn dient als offer voor de *lenten
retok*, dit zijn de gezamenlijke *nene'* (*to matua*) en *deata*. Het laatste
offer dient als voorzorg, men is nl. bang een categorie van deze *nene'*
en *deata* over het hoofd te zien; het offer dient als een soort veilig-
heidsstelling. Van de geofferde dieren worden, als gebruikelijk,
slechts kleine stukjes, van bepaalde delen afkomstig, afgenomen. De
offerspijs wordt op een blad, in de regel een stuk bananenblad, aan de
goden etc. aangeboden. Na het offer volgt de *gelong bate bua'*, het
bezingen van de *bate* (vlag), die opgesteld wordt ten behoeve van het
bua'-feest. De *bate* bestaat uit een bamboe-*tallang*, waaraan men een
doek hangt, die in de regel rood van kleur is. De bamboe is aan het
uiteinde versierd met enkele bladeren van de drakenbloedplant. De naam
bate is waarschijnlijk afgeleid van *batik* (= gebatikte doek); de doe-
ken (of de doek), waarmee de bamboe versierd is, zijn meestal rood van
kleur. Men slacht 24 hoenderen op het erf en maakt een *pesung* (= een
offer neergelegd op een blad van de banaan of van de drakenbloedplant);
dit keer gebruikt de *to minaa* die het offer opdraagt geen stukken bananen-
blad als onderlegger voor de offerspijs, doch het rode blad van de *Cordy-
line terminalis*. De rite (*ma'bate*) is geassocieerd met de kleur rood en
met het hoen als offerdier; ook voor het omhouwen van de bamboe-*tallang*
is een hoen geofferd. Eigenlijk betreft het hier geen rite, doch een
ingelast ritueel. De *bate* wordt nl. vervaardigd voor het *maro*-ritueel,
een ritueel dat dient om ziekten te genezen of epidemieën te bezweren.
Ziekte is, volgens de Toraja, het gevolg van een overtreding; meestal
ligt de oorzaak in een incestueuze verhouding tussen broer en zuster,
of tussen neef en nicht. Het prototype van een dergelijke verhouding
was de sexuele omgang tussen de haan en de hen in de bovenwereld, die
siblings waren (zie pag. 143). Later werd deze overtreding door de
mensen op aarde in Rura herhaald.

Het *maro*-ritueel, voorafgaande aan het *bua'*-feest, kan men zien als
een exorcistische rite om de atmosfeer te zuiveren. Zowel de *to minaa*
als degene, die de bamboe omgehouwen heeft, krijgen een deel van de
geslachte hoenderen. Andere delen van deze dieren gaan naar acht vrouwen
die een rol spelen in het *bua'*-feest. Dit zijn de *to tumbang*, de *banaa*,[11]
de *rante bua'* ('de *bua'*-vlakte' = het feestterrein), de *datu bua'* ('de

prinses van het *bua'*-feest'), de *ponno bua'* ('de volte' = de inhoud van
de *bua'*), de *sirri' bua'* ('het ontzag verwekkende van de *bua''*) en nog
twee secondanten.

De *tumbang* is de voornaamste vrouw van deze groep, zij is een nauwe
verwante van de feestgever. De acht vrouwen worden *to sanda karua*, 'de
voltallige acht' genoemd. Na het aanwijzen van degenen, die tot de vol-
tallige acht behoren en na deze *to sanda karua* hun portie kip te hebben
gegeven, gaat men over tot het opstellen van de *bate bua'*, waarvoor een
hoen en een varken worden geslacht en de *to minaa* het offer opdraagt.

Wat na het opdragen van dit offer geschiedde werd door de informanten
niet meegedeeld, doch gewoonlijk raken mensen bij dit soort riten in
trance bij het zingen van liederen, de *gelong* of de *gelong bate*. Het
zijn steeds dezelfde personen die in trance geraken, zij zijn 'dol,
buiten zinnen', evenals de 'Dolle Haan', 'Heer Dwaas' uit de boven-
wereld.

Na afloop van de *gelong bate* nodigen leden van de ramage de *to burake*
uit op het feest op te treden (*ussumba' to burake*). In het gebied van
de Sesean officieert de *to burake tattiku'*. De priesteres (die al van
het komende verzoek op de hoogte is) slacht een hoen en biedt de leden
van de ramage die haar komen uitnodigen een maaltijd aan. Zij gaat met
haar gasten naar de *tongkonan*, die het middelpunt zal zijn van het *bua'*-
feest en zij versiert dit huis met de jonge bladeren van de suikerpalm,
zodat deze woning als het ware een 'rok', een omhulling, krijgt van
deze bladeren. Zij neemt vervolgens weer wat bladeren van de suikerpalm
en vervaardigt daarvan een mandje, dat doorregen wordt met witte, rode,
gele en zwarte bladeren. Het mandje heet *talimbung* (= ronde mand, ver-
vaardigd uit de bladeren van de suikerpalm) of *bua'*. Deze *bua'*, een
symbool van de volledigheid, compleetheid, van het *bua'*-ritueel, wordt
geplaatst onder de nok van het huis, het meest sacrale gedeelte van de
woning. Voor deze *bua'* wordt een varken geofferd. In het middelste
vertrek van de *tongkonan*, in de *sali*, wordt ook een varken geofferd. In
het zuidelijkste vertrek, in de *sumbung*, offert men een hond, die *asunna
palallo* wordt genoemd. Dit is dus een offer, dat valt in de zuidelijke
of zuidwestelijke sfeer. De hond hoort kennelijk thuis in die sfeer.
Hierna haalt men de bamboes voor de *anak dara* (= *tumba'*). Er wordt een
varken geofferd, dat aan de *deata* wordt opgedragen. De *tumba'* wordt nu
versierd: *didodoi daun induk, disambi sarita, dipatakinni to napa*
(= als met een *sarong* omhuld met de bladeren van de suikerpalm, met
een *sarita*-doek omgeven, versierd met sacrale voorwerpen. Deze (niet

allemaal sacrale) artefacten zijn: de *sarita*, een speer, een mesje, een
schotel, een kopje, een *sirih*-tasje etc. Behalve de speer zijn deze
voorwerpen accessoires van vrouwen. Er werd reeds op gewezen dat speer
het enige 'mannelijke' element in de constructie is. Het aanbrengen van
de speer duidt waarschijnlijk op het feit dat man (de speer) en vrouw
(de *anak dara*) een complementaire eenheid vormen.

Men geeft vervolgens een hoen wat palmwijn te drinken. Wanneer dit
dier wat dronken raakt, draait men het driemaal om de *tumba'*.[12]   Dit
wordt beschouwd als het teken, dat het feest onder leiding van de *to
burake* begonnen is.

De volgende dag vindt de eerste rite plaats, waarbij de 'voltallige
acht' (*to sanda karua*) optreden. Zij zitten in een kring met de voeten
naar binnen. Een heilige *sarita*-doek (geassocieerd met de vrouwelijke
kant van de samenleving) wordt om hen heen gedrapeerd als teken dat zij
allen bij elkaar horen. Op hun voeten legt men een rijstwan. Hierop
wordt rijst gestrooid als teken van welvaart, voorspoed en overvloed.
Op de wan worden ook kleine geledingen bamboe, gevuld met varkensvlees,
neergezet.

Men bouwt nu aan de voorzijde van de *tongkonan*, waarin de *anak dara*
(de bundel bladeren etc. omgeven door een *sarita*-doek) opgesteld is, een
bankje (*laa'*). Voor deze *laa'* wordt een bamboestaak opgericht, van de
soort bamboe die *ao'* (= Indonesisch: *bambu aur*) heet. Hij wordt versierd
met een *sarita*-doek (N.B. deze bamboe is een andere dan de reeds genoem-
de *bate*). De bamboe fungeert als een offerhouder, waaraan delen van het
later door de *to minaa* geofferde varken zullen worden opgehangen.

De *burake* krijgt nu haar loon, bestaande uit rijst en geld, terwijl
men daarna ook aan 'de velen' (= 'het volk') in het dorp rijst en geld
geeft. De 'voltallige acht' hebben inmiddels kleefrijst in een bamboe
gekookt. Voordat zij deze rijst kookten, hebben zij een offer gebracht
aan de *nene'*, de voorouders van het zuidwesten. De bamboe met de kleef-
rijst wordt door ieder van de acht als een soort staf (in de rechter
hand) gebezigd. Zij stellen zich nu op in een rij met de *to tumbang*
voorop. De linker polsen van de *to sanda karua* zijn door één *sarita*-
doek met elkaar verbonden. Hun optreden heeft een ritueel karakter; de
rite heet: *ma'tekken piong sanglampa*, 'het als een staf bezigen van
de *piong sanglampa'* (= één bamboe-geleding, gevuld met kleefrijst).

De acht krijgen nu een geschenk (*metena*), terwijl een hond en een
hoen geofferd worden. De *burake* spreekt de volgende woorden uit:

'nakua kadanna burake tiannamo bua' di palumpunna samaa', hetgeen
vrij vertaald luidt: 'hiermee is de eerste fase van het *bua'*-feest ten
einde'. Eerst na het oogsten van de *padi* vat men het tweede gedeelte op.

Voor het opnieuw opvatten van het *bua'*-feest wordt de *to burake* geroepen.
Voor het *umba'rui suru'* (*umba'rui*: vernieuwen; *suru'*: uitkammen; dit
uitkammen of reinigen duidt er op, dat het hier een reinigingsoffer
betreft) wordt een varken geslacht. Wat van het vlees van dit dier wordt
als offer aan de goden aangeboden. Zowel de *tumba'* als de *to tumbang*
krijgen een nieuwe *sarong*, en wel een die vervaardigd is uit de jonge
bladeren van de suikerpalm. Aan de noordzijde van de *tongkonan* wordt een
platform aangebracht, dat *tangdo'* heet. Voor het *unsabu' tangdo'*, 'het
inwijden van de *tangdo''*, wordt weer een zwijn geofferd. Een tweede
varken wordt door de *to burake* mee naar huis genomen; dit dier dient
waarschijnlijk als betaling voor haar diensten.

De volgende rite is het *mantanan lolo*, 'het begraven van de navel-
streng', een gebruik dat ook plaatsvindt na de geboorte van een baby.
Men begraaft deze navelstreng (*lolo*) in een mandje aan de oostzijde van
het huis. In dit geval heeft het 'begraven van de navelstreng' een
symbolische betekenis: het grote *bua'*-feest wordt als het ware opnieuw
geboren. Voor deze rite worden een kip en een varken geofferd.

Tijdens het tweede gedeelte van het feest vindt ook een spectaculaire
dans plaats, *ma'dandan*. De jonge mannen van de *rapu* dragen als onderdeel
van hun danskostuum (dat verder vrij sober is) een stel echte karbouwen-
horens. Tussen deze horens zijn oude, vaak heilige doeken gespannen, die
versierd zijn met muntjes uit de V.O.C.-tijd. De hoofdtooi is zo zwaar,
dat een secondant nodig is om de tooi op het hoofd te plaatsen. (De
dans staat blijkbaar in een reuk van heiligheid, want voor ieder stel
horens dat gebruikt wordt, worden een karbouw en een kip geslacht.) Voor
de dans zelf wordt verwezen naar Claire Holt (1939:66-69, fig. 65 t/m
68). De dans eindigt met een optocht van de dansers, voorafgegaan door
de *to burake* en de *to mano'bo*. (Deze laatste functionaris heeft eveneens
horens op het hoofd, doch geen echte.) De functie van de *to mano'bo* is
de weg vrij te maken en te zuiveren van alle kwade invloeden (cf. de
to ussoboi rante in het dodenritueel). Inmiddels is ook de *to tumbang*
uit huis gedragen; tesamen met de andere vrouwen, die 'de voltallige
acht' uitmaken, wordt een kring geformeerd, waarbij de voeten naar binnen
gekeerd worden. De rite met de rijstwan op de benen wordt herhaald. Om
de vrouwen wordt een heilige *sarita*-doek gestrengeld. (Waarschijnlijk

Foto 1.
De hemelvogel en de karbouw: *bullean* (draagstoel) op het grote *bua'*-feest te Batu Kamban (*lembang* Suloara). De draagstoel is versierd met jonge bladeren van de suikerpalm. Op de voorkant zijn karbouwenhorens aangebracht. De vogelkop stelt het hoen voor, dat in de Bovenwereld verblijft, Lando Kollong, 'Zij met de Lange Hals'. Op de vogelkop zijn bladeren van de *tabang* (Cordyline terminalis) en een bosje rijst aangebracht.   *Fotoarchief KIT (1970)*

geldt de doek ook als symbool van de eenheid van de *to sanda karua*. Wat
de wan beduidt is niet geheel duidelijk: men zou verband kunnen leggen
met de *to sanda karua*, die de belangrijke vrouwen van de *rapu* zijn en
met de rijst, een gewas, dat als het voornaamste beschouwd wordt. Het
'wannen' - in feite wordt er niet gewand - zou ook op een ceremoniële
reiniging kunnen duiden.)

Inmiddels zijn er enige belangrijke voorwerpen vervaardigd. Dit zijn
de *bullean* en de *gorang*. De *bullean* is een draagstoel; voor ieder van
de voltallige acht wordt een *bullean* gemaakt. De draagstoel is van hout;
twee lange bamboes aan weerszijden aangebracht, dienen om de *bullean* te
dragen. Aan de voorzijde van de draagstoel is een plank aangebracht, die
versierd is met fraai houtsnijwerk. Aan weerszijden van de plank zijn
echte karbouwenhorens aangebracht. Aan de voorkant van de *bullean* is een
lange bamboe bevestigd, die eindigt in een vogelkop. Aan de 'nek' van
deze vogel zijn bosjes *padi* bevestigd. De vogel stelt waarschijnlijk
'de kip met de lange hals' uit de bovenwereld voor. Door het aanbrengen
van de vogelkop en door de aangebrachte versiering van jonge bladeren
van de suikerpalm doet de draagstoel aan een vogel denken (zie foto 1).

Voor de beschrijving van de *gorang* wordt naar foto 2 verwezen. Deze
kolossale toren wordt midden op de feestplaats (*rante kala'paran*) neer-
gezet. Vaak zijn de palen van de *gorang* versierd met sacrale *sarita*-
doeken. Hoog op de toren is een groot platform (*laa'*) aangebracht. Dit
platform kan men door middel van een trap bereiken. Het aanbrengen van
de *laa'* op de toren is een plechtigheid, waarbij de *to burake* en de
to ma'gandang aanwezig zijn (of ter gelegenheid van het plaatsen van de
laa' geofferd wordt, werd niet vermeld). Het betekent, dat over drie
dagen de 'grote dag' van het grote *bua'*-feest kan beginnen. (Meestal
betreft het twee feestdagen.) Op de grote dag neemt allereerst de *to
tumbang* in de draagstoel plaats: zij loopt daarbij over een 'brug' van
rode *tabang*-bladeren, die van haar huis naar de draagstoel leidt. Rechts
van de 'brug' (en over de *bullean*) wordt rijst gestrooid. De *to tumbang*
is feestelijk gekleed met een heilige *maa'*-doek op het hoofd; een franje
van jonge bladeren van de suikerpalm hangt over haar gele rok. Ook haar
gezellinnen dragen feestelijke kleding (zie foto 3). Nadat ook de andere
to sanda karua in hun *bullean* plaats genomen hebben, vindt de rondgang
om de *gorang* plaats (zie foto 2). De feestplaats wordt door de *to burake*
en de *to mano'bo* weer 'gezuiverd'. ('*Metamba-tamba burake nadoloan to
mano'bo dipatikinni' to napa ussarrinni batu-batu*', 'Roep de *burake*,
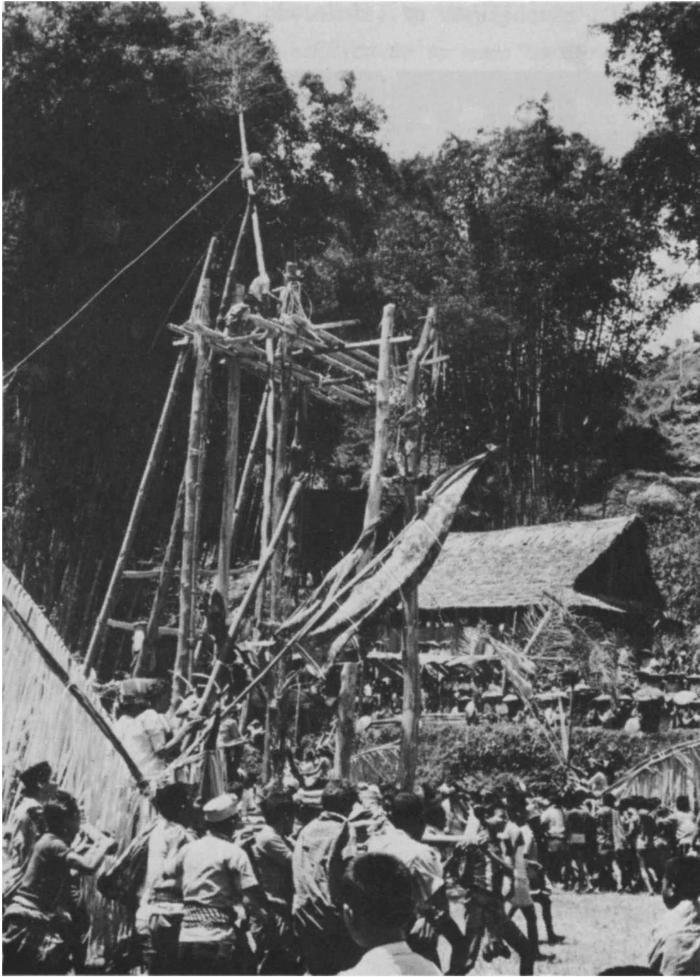voorafgegaan door de *to mano'bo*, die zich de heilige zwaarden aangegord

Foto 2.
De *bullean*, de draagstoelen waarin de *tumbang* en haar
gezellinnen zitten, worden met grote snelheid rond de
gorang gedragen. De *gorang* is 8-10 m hoog. Hij bestaat
uit zes stijlen, twee van *buangin* en vier van *uru*-hout
(*uru:* Michelia Celebica). De trap van de *gorang* bestaat
uit drie stijlen van bamboe-*betung*, waarop negen treden
zijn aangebracht. In het midden van de *gorang* is een
staak opgesteld, de *lumbaa langi'* die uit één bamboe *ao'*
(*aur*) bestaat. Hieraan is een korfje bevestigd, waarin
een witte kip zit. Ook hangen vijf bosjes (Indonesisch:
ikat) *padi* aan de staak. In het midden van de *gorang*
staat op de grond een stenen vat voor het stampen van
rijst, waarin de *lumbaa langi'* is geplaatst. Beneden te-
gen de *gorang* staat een vlonder, de *ruma-ruma lentennan*.
Bua'-feest te Batu Kamban, *lembang* Suloara.
Fotoarchief KIT (1970)

Foto 3.
De gezellinnen van de *tumbang* op het grote *bua'*-feest
te Batu Kamban. De *dodo* (sarong) en de *bayu* zijn uit
geel katoen vervaardigd. Over de sarong dragen zij re-
pen *pusuk*, de jonge bladeren van de Arenga saccharifera,
de suikerpalm. Twee van de drie vrouwen dragen op het
hoofd een krans van vruchten van de *tarrung*. Om de hals
dragen de vrouwen de *manik ata*, om de polsen armbanden
waarvan één vervaardigd uit schelp.

Fotoarchief KIT (1970)

hebben teneinde de stenen (= obstakels) te verwijderen'. Deze vrije
vertaling wil zeggen, dat de *burake* en de *to mano'bo* de weg vrij
gemaakt hebben voor de *to tumbang* en haar gevolg.)

Iedere draagstoel is inmiddels door een dozijn mannen opgenomen en
achter elkaar aan worden de draagstoelen in steeds sneller vaart rechts-
om de toren gedragen; de *bullean* worden ook iets op en neer bewogen,
zodat de inzittenden het gevoel hebben dat zij zweven. Men gaat hiermee
door tot de mannen vermoeid raken.

's Middags vindt de wijding van de te offeren karbouw plaats (*passura'
tedong*; *sura'*: wijden, *tedong*: karbouw), hetgeen door de *to minaa* ge-
schiedt. De buffel wordt ten noordoosten van de *gorang* vastgebonden. De
to minaa reciteert de geschiedenis van de stam (en van de karbouw), een
reciet dat urenlang duurt en alleen door een *to minaa* van hogere rang
gehouden kan worden.

Vervolgens vindt een ommegang met fakkels plaats om de gorang. De
toortsen, bestaande uit bamboes gevuld met kokosolie, worden door mannen
gedragen. Men gaat rechtsom om de *gorang*, achter elkaar.

De volgende dag (soms geschiedt dit op de middag van dezelfde
dag) vindt het prijzen van de mannen in de *bua'*-kring plaats. Een aantal
to minaa (zes tot tien) bestijgen de *gorang* en gaan op de *laa'* staan. In
zijn rechter hand heeft iedere priester een touw of een lijn, in zijn
linker hand een koperen bel (*bangkula'*). Het andere uiteinde wordt door
een man vastgehouden die op de grond staat. Terwijl zij de koperen bel
luiden, prijzen de *to minaa* de mannen (*ma'singgi'*, zie foto 4). Daar de
priesters allen tegelijk hun loftuitingen over de mannen uitstorten, is
er in feite weinig van te verstaan. Doch degene die geprezen wordt,
schijnt het wel degelijk te verstaan, want als hij zich niet genoeg
geprezen acht, trekt hij aan de lijn. Enkele dappere mannen staan niet,
doch hebben plaatsgenomen in een *bullean* (zie foto 5). De tegenover hen
staande *to minaa* prijzen hen. Later op de dag wordt ook de lof van
kinderen gezongen (eigenlijk betreft het hier meer het toedienen van
vermaningen dan loftuitingen).

Aan het einde van het feest vindt in de vroege morgen het *lumbaa langi'*
plaats. In het midden van de *gorang* is een bamboestaak geplaatst; aan het
uiteinde hiervan hangt een korfje met een witte kip er in. Mannen van de
stam trachten via een lijn, die van de bamboe afhangt, het korfje naar
beneden te trekken. Wie dit gelukt, wacht een lang leven en veel voor-
spoed. Men dient de lijn echter wel in noordoostwaartse richting te
trekken.

Foto 4.
De *to minaa* bezig met het prijzen van de mannen van de stam, waarbij zij zich bevinden op de acht meter hoge *gorang*. *Bua'*-feest te Batu Kamban, *lembang* Suloara.   *Fotoarchief KIT (1970)*

Foto 5.
Drie *to barani* tijdens het *ma'singgi'* (prijzen) op het grote *bua'*-feest
van Batu Kamban. Zij houden de zwaarden rechtop in de rechterhand. Links
Ne' Reman met een *rara'* en een *manik ata* om de hals; de twee andere *to
barani* dragen alleen *manik ata*. Het zich tooien met deze vrouwelijke
attributen en het plaatsnemen tijdens het lofprijzen op de draagstoel,
waarin de *tumbang* tijdens het *bua'*-feest worden rondgedragen, zijn ver-
moedelijk van een grotere betekenis dan alleen een hommage aan de vrou-
wen van de *ramage*. Aan de *bullean* is een speer gebonden, waardoor het
touw steekt, welks uiteinde door de *to minaa* op de *gorang* wordt vastge-
bonden (cf. de speer, die aan de *anak dara* is bevestigd).
Fotoarchief KIT (1970)

Het grote *bua'*-ritueel eindigt met de 'bijzetting' van de *anak dara*
in de *barana'*. De man, die de *anak dara* draagt, gaat voorop, gevolgd
door de *to burake*, de *to ma'gandang*, de *to tumbang* en haar gezellinnen.
De bamboes van de *anak dara* worden niet in de boom geplaatst; men brengt
deze naar de *sawah* van degene, aan wie het huis behoort waar de *anak
dara* heeft gestaan.

Het *bua'*-feest en een dodenritueel van hoge orde vertonen in veel
opzichten overeenkomst. Bij beide rituelen wordt een lange rustpauze in
acht genomen. In beide gevallen vinden de slotriten plaats op een plein,
waarop een hoge stellage (respectievelijk de *gorang* en de *bala'kaan*)
opgericht is. In beide rituelen moet een vrouw, respectievelijk de *to
tumbang* en de *to ma'pemali*, zich aan langdurige verbodsbepalingen onder-
werpen. De priesters, die in deze beide rituelen een rol spelen, zou
men oppositioneel tegenover elkaar kunnen plaatsen: de *burake* (*tattiku'*
of *tambolang*) die ook wel 'de heer van het oosten' genoemd wordt, is dan
de rituele tegenhanger van de *to mebalun*, de lijkeninwikkelaar, waarvan
een van de andere benamingen luidt: '*burake* van het westen'.

6. De symboliek van de sexen in de cultuur van de Toraja
Man en vrouw in de rituelen
In de symboliek van de samenleving vormen man en vrouw een complementaire
eenheid "as life is impossible without the unity of male and female"
(Schulte Nordholt 1971:411). Deze eenheid valt echter in twee delen uit-
een, in een vrouwelijke en in een mannelijke helft.

In vele Indonesische godsdiensten wordt de vrouw in verband gebracht
met de benedenwereld, met het westen (of het zuiden) of met de linker
helft van het wereldbeeld; dit geldt bijv. voor de cultuur van de
bewoners van Nias, voor de Atoni van Timor (zie hiervoor respectievelijk
Suzuki 1959 en Schulte Nordholt 1971:408). De indeling in boven- en
onderwereld, rechts en links, mannelijk en vrouwelijk is echter in vele
samenlevingen minder gefixeerd dan aangenomen wordt. Niet altijd is de
vrouw (en is 'vrouwelijk') in verband te brengen met 'het westen' of
'links'. Bij de Bali-aga, de 'autochtone' bewoners van Bali, woont de
balian, de priesteres, weliswaar in de linker helft en het dorpshoofd
in de rechter helft van het dorp, doch dit neemt niet weg, dat men de
balian moeilijk kan associëren met links, (zuid)west of de onderwereld.
De goden van de bovenwereld bedienen zich van deze priesteres als
medium om hun wensen kenbaar te maken aan 'deze wereld'.

De associatie met de bovenwereld is nog duidelijker bij de priesteres

van de Bare'e-Toraja. Zij is geen medium, haar eigen identiteit verliest
zij niet; zij neemt het initiatief tot het contact met de bovenwereld en
maakt reizen door het luchtruim. Dit wordt duidelijk gemaakt in de
volgende passage, ontleend aan een litanie van de Bare'e-Toraja. Evenals
de 'priestertaal' van de Sa'dan-Toraja zijn dergelijke litanieën vol
metaforen en parallellismen, voor een leek moeilijk te begrijpen, hetgeen
de sfeer van geheimzinnigheid, waarmee de priesters zijn omgeven,
vergroot.

> "Wind, steek op en voer mij mede,
> Bliksemstraal, verlicht mijn schreden.
> Blaas me o wind, door het luchtruim heen,
> Bliksemstraal, beschijn mijn schreën:
> Voer ons op in snelle vaart,
> Breng ons aanstonds hemelwaart." (Adriani 1932:14).

Ook bij de Sa'dan-Toraja nemen de priesteressen een plaats in de samen-
leving in, een plaats, die geassocieerd is met de bovenwereld en de
oostelijke helft van de rituele tweedeling. Dit blijkt uit de functie
van de *burake*-priesteressen in het grote *bua'*-ritueel (het bovenstaande
geldt zowel voor de *burake tattiku'* als de *burake tambolang*). De
priesteressen vervullen niet alleen een rol in dit feest, ook andere
vrouwen, waaronder vooral de *tumbang*, zijn belangrijk. Het grote *bua'*-
feest wordt door de Toraja ook een feest van en voor vrouwen genoemd.

Uiteraard spelen vrouwen èn mannen hun rol in de rituelen. Deze rollen
zijn vaak verschillend: een man vervult de rol van held in de samen-
leving. Hij tooit zich in de rituelen vaak met de horens van de karbouw,
'de vurige buffel met de rechtop stekende horens' (Van der Veen 1976:
431), het symbool van dapperheid en vechtlust. De man hoort bij de hemel,
vanwaar hij afkomstig is (*Manurun diLangi'*). De vrouw is, evenals bij de
Atoni van Timor, "..... the symbol of fertility, of the soil and of
cooked food" (Schulte Nordholt 1971:353). De vrouw is geassocieerd met
het leven gevende water. Haar domein is de keuken (N.B. deze is bij de
Toraja gesitueerd in de oostzijde van het huis, want gekookt voedsel,
vooral gekookte rijst, hoort thuis in de sfeer van de rituelen van het
oosten). Maar vrouwen zijn niet alleen een symbool van water, doch ook
van de bovenwereld.

De bovenstaande symboliek geldt ook met betrekking tot de rituelen:
in het grote *bua'*-feest is de man de dappere, de 'koppensneller', de
vrouw het symbool van vruchtbaarheid. Daarnaast is echter ook de vrouw,
meer nog dan de man, in dit ritueel geassocieerd met de bovenwereld; dit
geldt met name voor de *to tumbang*.

Soms is de rol van de mannen en de vrouwen in een ritueel niet
verschillend van karakter en geven de vrouwen een imitatie van de rol
van de mannen. Dit blijkt uit het koppensnellersritueel. Zo doen de
vrouwen mee aan het snellersritueel, niet alleen doordat zij, passief,
zich aan taboes onderwerpen en zich van allerlei dingen onthouden (ze
mogen niet slapen = waakzaam zijn, het vuur niet uit laten gaan; elkaar
niet ontluizen = aan elkaars hoofd zitten), doch ook door actief mee
te doen aan de *memanna*-dans. In deze dans bewegen mannen en vrouwen
zich rondom het huis van de verslagene (waarheen het lijk werd gebracht),
wiens dood gewroken moet worden. Zowel mannen als vrouwen dragen oude,
versleten kleren, doch de mannen hebben het haar opgemaakt als dat van
een vrouw en de vrouwen dragen de haardracht van een man. Beide sexen
hanteren een bananenblad als schild en een bamboe als zwaard. Men slaat
telkens op de palen van het sterfhuis, volgens A.C. Kruyt om de ziel van
de gevallene vooruit te sturen, opdat hij zich vast een slachtoffer zou
kiezen. Kruyt zag dit als het aandeel van de vrouwen in de dans (A.C.
Kruyt 1923/24:264).

In verband met het bovenstaande is nog een andere uitleg mogelijk.
Niet alleen dat de vrouwen zich een mannenrol, nl. die van koppensneller,
gingen aanmeten, de mannen op hun beurt hielden zich bezig met een
activiteit die gewoonlijk met vrouwen wordt geassocieerd, nl. het
oogsten. De mannen oogsten hoofden! Dit is ook bij de Atoni van Timor
het geval. De gesnelde koppen werden later in huis of aan de voorgevel
van de rijstschuur opgehangen. De gesnelde kop wordt in enkele Toraja-
gezangen (in zangen, gezonden op het *maro*-ritueel) vergeleken met kokos-
noten[13]. De gesnelde kop wordt met vruchtbaarheid in verband gebracht.
Dood en leven horen bij elkaar, en de gedachte, dat uit de dood het leven
voortkomt, komen wij niet alleen tegen bij de Atoni (cf. Schulte Nordholt
1971:422), zij is ook bij de Toraja aanwezig. Men vergelijke Schulte
Nordholt: "To some extent war in all its aspects is a reversal of the
usual order. Or perhaps it is more correct to speak of a complementary
order. When the *meo* prepares himself ritually for the headhunting raid,
sexual intercourse is taboo. Woman is no longer the source of life, or
of the *smanaf*, but the *meo* himself has to reap the harvest of death,
namely the *nitu*" (Schulte Nordholt 1971:422).[14]

(Het taboe van sexuele omgang tijdens de voorbereiding van een snel-
tocht, zoals boven vermeld, geldt ook voor de Toraja.) Men zou misschien
nog verder kunnen gaan en er op kunnen wijzen, dat het zich als man
verkleden van de Torajavrouwen tijdens het koppensnellersritueel, een

compensatie is voor het zich aanmeten van de rol van 'oogster' door de
mannen in dit ritueel.

De hierboven weergegeven bijzonderheden van het koppensnellen zijn
uiteraard slechts enkele details uit dit ritueel. Voor een uitgebreide
beschrijving van het koppensnellen bij de Sa'dan-Toraja wordt verwezen
naar A.C. Kruyt (1923/24:422). Uit het bovenstaande blijkt dat de vrouw
niet uitsluitend geplaatst kan worden in de westelijke helft van de
kosmische ordening. Op zichzelf is het 'westelijke' ritueel, het doden-
ritueel, sterk met de vrouw geassocieerd, gezien de benaming die men
daaraan geeft, nl. 'het ritueel van de moederborst'. Ook is het een
vrouw die de meest onreine taak in dit ritueel vervult, nl. het
verwijderen van de maden uit het lijk. Dit laatste kan echter ook
in een ander kader worden geplaatst. Taken en functies die als onrein
beschouwd worden vallen nl. toe aan de slavenstand. In de meeste streken
behoort de dodenpriester tot de slavenstand en ook de hier genoemde
to ma'peulli' is een slavin. Deze associatie van de vrouw met het
'westelijk' ritueel neemt echter niet weg dat de vrouw ook een voorname
plaats heeft in oostelijke rituelen.

Is in de bestuursrechtelijke sfeer de plaats van de man hoger en
belangrijker dan die van de vrouw (cf. de 'Vorst', die in het 'hogere'
dorpsdeel woont en de 'Vorstin', die in het 'lagere' gedeelte woont),
in de rituelen ligt dat anders. In het allerhoogste ritueel, het grote
bua'-ritueel, dat gericht is op het contact met de bovenwereld en dat
het welzijn voor mens, dier en (rijst)plant beoogt, worden de voornaamste
rollen vervuld door een priesteres, de *burake tattiku'*, of door een
hermafroditische priester, de *burake tambolang*, en door een vrouw van
hoge rang, de *to tumbang*.

De hermafroditische priester
De *burake tambolang* is zowel man als vrouw; de priester verenigt de
kosmische dualiteit in zijn persoon (Eliade 1964:351). Deze priester is
genoemd naar een zwart-witte vogel (een ooievaar; de kleuren zwart en
wit zijn symbolisch te duiden: nacht en dag, onder- en bovenwereld). De
polariteit wordt in het pantheon van de Toraja vervuld door twee goden,
Puang Matua, die in het zenith troont en Pong Tulakpadang, die de aarde
in evenwicht houdt. Beide goden houden dag en nacht in balans (zie Van
der Veen 1965:27-29, 43, 169). De dag is wit, de nacht zwart. Men kan
deze *burake tambolang* van de Toraja zien als een figuur, die de
dualiteit in zijn persoon verenigt. Hij/zij is de voornaamste mens op

aarde, op de tussenwereld. Zijn naam, 'de priester van de zwart/witte
vogel' (ooievaar), is de symbolische aanduiding van deze dualiteit.

De vereniging van man en vrouw in één persoon leidt niet tot een
nageslacht: de priester is *burake*, impotent. Hij/zij is het einde en
niet het begin van de kosmos. De priester functioneert in een ritueel,
dat het hoogste is en als het ware alle rituelen in zich opneemt: het
grote *bua'*-ritueel. De *burake tambolang* verblijft tijdens dit feest
(tezamen met de *tumbang* en haar gezellinnen) in de *waringin,*
de *Ficus religiosa* (deze boom is mogelijk op te vatten als het symbool
van de kosmische boom of wereldboom, die de drie werelden verbindt). De
waringin is het 'wereldcentrum' waar aarde, hemel en onderwereld elkaar
ontmoeten (Eliade 1964:492). De takken van de boom, waarin de *burake* en
de *tumbang* verblijven, stellen de bovenwereld voor. De priester brengt
de verbinding met de hemel opnieuw tot stand; zo herstelt hij de
verbintenis, die door toedoen van de mens verbroken werd.

Doch de betekenis van de *burake tambolang* stijgt hier bovenuit. De
priester, die zowel man als vrouw is, symboliseert de kosmische eenheid.
Hoewel hij als persoon impotent wordt geacht en geen nageslacht kan
verwekken, is de priester degene, die dank zij zijn litanieën de macht
bezit de veestapel te doen vermeerderen, de rijst te doen gedijen en de
mensen kinderen te laten krijgen. Hij symboliseerst niet alleen het
kosmisch evenwicht en de totaliteit van de werelden; door de werkzaam-
heid van de *tambolang*, zelf impotent, is het voortbestaan van mens, dier
en gewas, indertijd door de oppergod geschapen, verzekerd.

NOTEN

1 Tot 1905 werd in Tana Toraja gesneld, met uitzondering van de drie
  in het zuiden en oosten van Tana Toraja gelegen prinsdommen Ma'kale,
  Mengkendek en Sangalla'.

2 De buffel, het varken, het hoen en de hond zijn de belangrijkste
  offerdieren. In het *merok*- en het grote *bua'*-ritueel horen de drie
  eerstgenoemde dieren als offerdieren bij elkaar.

3 Volgens sommige versies van de mythe was dit de eerste maal, dat het
  bua'-feest gevierd werd. De bovengenoemde mythe is afkomstig uit het
  berggebied van de Sesean in het landschap Tikala; voor een volledige
  versie wordt verwezen naar Van der Veen's vertaling van deze *Ossoran
  dao mai langi'* ('Overleveringen vanuit de hemel'), in geregelde volg-
  orde meegedeeld door de priester Ne' Mani' (Van der Veen 1976). De
  in Kesu' (en Nonongan) circulerende scheppingsmythe wijkt wat af van
  de bovengenoemde, doch komt overigens, wat betreft de voorstelling
  van de bovenwereld, in grote trekken met bovengenoemde mythe overeen.

Voorstellingen betreffende de onderwereld verschillen in Tikala (en het gehele gebied van de Sesean) van die van Kesu'. Voor de mythe uit Kesu' verwijzen wij naar Van der Veen 1965:45-47; voor die uit Tikala naar Van der Veen 1976:418-438.

4 Meestal wordt de opvolg(st)er van een belangrijke titel gekozen uit de ramage van vaderszijde, daar belangrijke functies de neiging hebben zich in deze groep te vererven. Hierdoor krijgt men een unilineaire afstamming binnen deze ramage.

5 De *to parengnge'* zijn 'zij die een last dragen', d.w.z. zij die de verantwoordelijkheid dragen voor de gemeenschap. *Rengnge'* is de benaming voor de wijze waarop vrouwen hun last dragen, nl. in een mand, waarvan de draagband om het voorhoofd is geslagen. De mand rust op de rug.

6 De naam *kaunan* werd zelden in de nabijheid van slaven geuit. Men bezigt liever verhullende benamingen voor de onvrijen. De slavernij is sinds de vestiging van het Nederlandse gezag opgeheven. Niettemin bleef het instituut nog lang daarna in stand.

7 De *tambolang* is een zwart-witte ooievaar; de tekening van deze vogel is ongeveer dezelfde als van 'onze' ooievaar, alleen is wat wit is, zwart en omgekeerd.

8 Tumba' Upa', de laatste *burake tambolang*, is in 1976 gestorven; hij was aan lager wal geraakt en hield zich bezig met dobbelen. In rituelen trad hij sinds lang niet meer op. Door de hoge kosten, aan het grote *bua'*-feest verbonden, bijv. in Kesu', wordt dit ritueel sinds 1922 niet meer gevierd. Dit zijn juist de landstreken, waar de *to burake tambolang* optrad.
   Tumba' Upa' werd onderhouden door een gezin dat hem dankbaar was, omdat hij deze man en vrouw, een kinderloos echtpaar, door zijn gebeden kinderzegen verschaft had (*tumba'*: opspringen; *upa'*: zegenrijk, welvaart brengend).

9 De richting van de nok van een *tongkonan* is noord-zuid. Het noorden en het oosten zijn, zoals reeds uiteen werd gezet, de richtingen van de goden, de *deata*. De offers voor hen legt men daarom neer in het noorden van het huis, of in het noorden en oosten op het erf. Dienovereenkomstig legt men de offers voor de *nene'*(*to matua*) neer in het zuiden en in het westen op het erf. In de *tongkonan* worden offers zelden in het zuiden geplaatst, doch dit is wel de windstreek die met de doodssfeer wordt geassocieerd.

10 Dit gedeelte van het dodenritueel heeft geen speciale naam.

11 Eigenlijk: de *kampa banaa*, de hoedster van de *banaa*, een sacraal voorwerp waaraan deze functionaresse haar naam ontleent. Ne' Bidang en Indo' Lai' Banne gaven noch over de functie, noch over het artefact enige uitleg. De *banaa* is echter een belangrijk attribuut: het is een mandje, dat bij de *anak dara* opgesteld staat. In het mandje zijn een ei, wat gestampte rijst en drie gele kralen gelegd.

12 Het is niet duidelijk of dit hoen, dat zich door de palmwijn niet normaal gedraagt, het symbool is van 'Heer Dwaas' van de bovenwereld.

13 Deze gezangen zijn door dr. H. van der Veen vertaald: de *Gelong Maro*

Ne' Nora (de *Maro*-zang van Ne' Nora) en *Gelong Maro* Sangayu' (de
Maro-zang van Sangaju') zijn opgenomen in Van der Veen 1979.

14 *Meo*: koppensneller; *smanaf*: ziel; *nitu*: ziel van een dode.

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            het Koninklijk Instituut voor Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde, 49.
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N.G. SCHULTE NORDHOLT

THE INDONESIAN ELECTIONS: A NATIONAL RITUAL[+]

I. Introduction

As an interested observer living and working in Central Java for a
number of years, I have had the opportunity of observing at first hand
the two elections held so far under the New Order regime. One can hardly
avoid asking such questions as: What is the use of these elections if
by all kinds of manipulations the results are fixed anyway? Are such
elections valid? They were very costly[1] and virtually the whole public
administration was fully occupied with the preparations for more than
six months. Thus one could enquire further: If the results were fixed
in advance anyway, why spend so much energy and money? Would it not have
been better to use these resources of the struggle against poverty?

Obviously, the official government reply to these sceptical questions
would be a flat denial. The two elections were declared to be necessary
and were regarded as successes, having been conducted by free and secret
ballot.

In more objective commentaries[2] shortcomings were admitted, but on
the other hand it was stressed that in the relatively short history of
the new Republic of Indonesia such matters as free elections have not
yet had time to become common or regular. According to these commentaries
the most important thing is that in any case elections should be held
every five years, as a guarantee for future elections. It is hoped that
they eventually will evolve into a democratic institution.

Although this realistic standpoint is understandable, a different,
and perhaps even better, approach would be to explain the elections from
another point of view. Javanese society is still strongly governed by

etiquette, and external behaviour is ritualized to a considerable degree.[3] The ideals of harmony and solidarity, which belong to the basic principles of the *Pancasila* state, and the daily reality of tensions and conflicts, give rise to a dualism of form and content, of formal behaviour and concrete acts: there is external conformity and inner individuality. Reality moves on two different levels. The upper represents the world of ideal behaviour patterns: a direct, free and secret ballot. But separated from this by a deep chasm is the everyday world of bribery, intimidation and intrigue. This lower level of reality, in which everyone is caught, is ethically unjustifiable and so must remain hidden. In this way, not one of the more than 1,000 complaints brought forward during the election campaign came before a judge.

Another and very recent occurrence may clarify further what I mean by the two levels of reality. On April 25, 1978, the most famous Balinese painter, the old I Gusti Nyoman Lempad, died in Ubud, Bali, allegedly at the age of 121. At the same time an extraordinary rite, called *Panca Wali Krama*, was being conducted at the holiest of Balinese temple complexes, Besakih. This ritual feast, which continued for over a month and is held only once every ten years, is not supposed to be disturbed by any evil occurrence, e.g. death. Thus in the words of Lempad's son: "..... ayah dinyatakan masih tidur. Tanggal 9 Mei itu baru meninggal, dan tanggal 12 Mei mayatnya dibakar" ("..... father is declared to be still asleep. He will only die on the 9th of May, and his body will be cremated on May 12"; *Tempo* 6-5-'78, p. 48). *Dinyatakan* (declared) has exactly the same stem, *nyata*, as the word *ke-nyata-an* (reality). Hence we see the reality of death being "denied" in favour of a reality of a higher level: the *Panca Wali Krama* rite. Even though this example comes from Bali, it is nevertheless possible to posit that the point of the story is valid for Javanese society as well. The following concrete example shows how the two levels of reality are still experienced in Java also. If the father of an engaged girl dies, her marriage will frequently be solemnized in all haste. In this way the dead father is imagined to be still acting as witness. The reality of death is "denied" for the sake of the well-being (harmony) of the marriage. (Another deciding factor here is that for a considerable length of time after a death no feasting is allowed.)

In much the same way the reality of the tensions and clashes of the election campaign were "denied" by the President shortly after the elections in favour of a reality of a higher order: the ideal type of

national unity. In this perspective the national elections might be seen
as "a rite with the purpose of restoring the wholeness of chaotic society
and nature".[4] The chaos which had become manifest in a terrifying way
during the campaign had to be overcome. Or, as it was written in an
editorial in the daily *Kompas* (25-3-'77): "..... after the 'katharsis'
of the campaign, on May 2nd (election day) there must be a reconciliation
in order to develop the country in a unified way". Doesn't the (Greek)
word *katharsis* also refer to an initiation rite?

In the last chapter[5] of what may perhaps be called his life work, or
in any case his academic masterpiece, the author of *The Political System
of the Atoni of Timor* responds to Clifford and Hildred Geertz' criticism
of the so-called *Leiden School*. Without considering himself to be a
student of this school[6] H.G. Schulte Nordholt supports several views[7]
put forward by Dutch researchers, most of whom were formerly civil
servants like himself.

On the basis of his study of the Atoni he posits: "In the political
system there appears at one time to have existed some congruence between
the system of symbols, the cosmic order and the political structures"
(Schulte Nordholt 1971:472). When, in this connection, he deals with
the place of the Atoni within the societies of Indonesia as a whole and
tries to establish relationships with other cultures within the same
"field of ethnological study",[8] he accepts Geertz' criticism that it
may have been possible for scholars of the past, on the basis of shallow
speculation, to come to facile generalizations about the influence of
symbolism and a cosmic classification system on the socio-cultural
reality of Java. Nevertheless, he also poses the following rhetorical
question: "All this has become extinct in Java, but whether these ideas
no longer constitute one of 'the driving forces which inspire the em-
pirical' remains to be seen"[9] (Schulte Nordholt 1971:472). It is my
present intention to go into the above question more closely in the
light of events on the political level in Central Javanese society.

In order to avoid misunderstanding, let it be stated at the outset
that in this essay the "driving forces" are not conceived of as deter-
mining powers. I am inclined to think more in terms of a power like an
undercurrent, which is invisible on the surface or is initially unob-
served because of another power, such as a wind blowing from a different
direction. I realize that the search for such "driving forces" might
give this essay a cryptic character, which could detract from the
strictly scientific nature of the analysis. Nevertheless, is concealment

not characteristic of Javanese society?

In this essay I shall attempt to elucidate those "driving forces"
which are symbolically loaded and perhaps have their roots in the
"cosmic order" of old Java. With this search for traditional classifi-
catory principles, which even in a rapidly changing society may persist
for a long time, I shall be following in the footsteps of the scholar
in whose honour this volume is being compiled (Schulte Nordholt 1967,
especially pp. 17-20).

II. *The National Elections*

Since Indonesia became independent in 1945 its people have participated
in only three national elections. The first one was held in September
of 1955 and is generally regarded as a true and free election. This
election took place during the political period which is referred to
as *Zaman Liberal* (the democratic period) and which belongs to the so-
called Old Order (*Orde Lama*).

In brief, it can be said that the period of the New Order has been
characterized by a far-reaching simplification of the political system.[10]
In contrast to the 1955 elections, where there were more than 100 poli-
tical parties (although only four of these were numerically large),
only ten parties were allowed to contend in the elections of 1971. The
Partai Komunis Indonesia (*PKI*) was outlawed. The *Masyumi*, though tightly
controlled, was able to participate in a new form under the name *Parmusi*.
Seven other parties, among which the *Partai Nasional Indonesia* (*PNI*)
and the *Nahdlatul Ulama* (*NU*), were from the period of the Old Order.

The tenth contender, the *Golkar*, was not a formal political party
but rather a fusion of 'functional groups' (*golongan karya*). In the
new reality this *Golkar* organization became the government party. It
dated from the last stages of the Sukarno era, was anti-communist, and
was given a new lease of life by the army in 1970. Because there is a
stipulation that all civil servants drawing a salary from the govern-
ment (or a semi-governmental organization) must declare exclusive loyalty
to the *Golkar*, it is not surprising that the people identify the *Golkar*
with the government. Just as the *PNI* was identified with the President
and the corps of civil servants in the days of Sukarno, so the *Golkar*,
since the beginning of the 1971 campaign, has represented the Suharto
government. The *Golkar* has done very little to correct this officially
incorrect identification. On the contrary, the *Golkar* has claimed all
the successes of the New Order for itself. It was therefore no surprise

that in 1971 the *Golkar*, by fair and foul means (bribery and intimida-
tion), obtained a resounding victory, receiving 63 % of the vote. Out
of all the other nine parties, only the *NU* (the conservative, tightly
organized Islamic party, which is found mainly in rural areas) was able
to maintain itself at its 1955 level (ca. 18 %).

After 1971 the simplification procedure was continued by fusing these
nine parties into two groupings. On the left, the *PNI* and four small
parties (including the Catholic and Protestant parties) were forced to
form the *Partai Demokrasi Indonesia* (PDI). On the right, the four Islamic
parties (among them were two large and ideologically different parties,
the *NU* and the *Parmusi*) had to build a new political organization called
the *Partai Persatuan Pembangunan* (PPP), i.e. the United Development
Party. Thus we see left and right wings with the government (*priyayi* =
officials) at the centre.

In 1967 General Dharsono of the army's Siliwangi division in West
Java had suggested a two party system. While this suggestion was favoured
by certain army circles it was rejected by the Central Javanese army
authorities as being in conflict with the Indonesian character. They had
no desire for a dualism with potential polarization, but wanted a dual-
unity principle with two wings (the *PDI* and the *PPP*), where the govern-
ment party (the *Golkar*), with the army in the background, could guarantee
the unity of the state.

The *Golkar* won the 1977 elections with almost the same percentage of
votes (ca. 63 %). This was due in part to mutual tensions within the
newly formed parties, but moreso to the renewed, although somewhat more
refined, tactics that had successfully been employed by the *Golkar* in
1971. The *PDI* barely gained 8 % of the vote, while on the right the new
Islamic party received almost 30 % of the vote. In a few provinces, and
notably in the capital Jakarta, this party even obtained a majority of
the votes.

This is the way the elections went. Obviously, many factors influenced
these results. It is hard to determine which ones were the most decisive.
All of the following factors are rational explanations.

A) Intimidation had considerable influence. In those areas where the
PKI previously had its bases, the *Golkar* obtained a large percentage
of the vote (sometimes 100 %).

B) Without doubt bribery took place. It is interesting to note that
this practice points to a type of patron-client relationship. Those per-
sons who were bribed, such as *hajis*, *kiyais*, pastors and student leaders,

always appeared to have a certain measure of influence.

C) There were rumours about the militant activities of certain Islamic groups who hoped to bring about an Islamic State by means of violence and terror. Whether or not these rumours were true, they greatly influenced large Christian populations outside Java. They were, among other things, responsible for the fact that the *PDI* did not obtain the number of votes expected in view of the number of previous *Parkindo* (Protestant) and *Partai Katolik* votes. These Christian circles reasoned that it was better to support a government party which they were sure would guarantee them freedom of religion than to support the old *PNI* and thus possibly make the *PPP* (the Islamic party) the party with the most influence.

D) In 1977 there was an obvious lack of leadership in the *PDI*. Civil servants had declared their loyalty to the *Golkar*. These declarations were perhaps not as strong as they were in 1971 but they were firm enough to prevent civil servants from openly campaigning for another political party. It became more and more a compulsory responsibility of civil servants to form, right down to the village level, the executive apparatus organizing the election. Extra work was encouraged by financial rewards.

E) Even though political parties (the *Golkar* excepted) were not allowed to set up organizations at the village level (in accordance with the strategy of "floating masses"), the Islamic party (the *PPP*), unlike the *PDI*, was able to maintain itself despite great moral, and even physical, pressure. This reality is explained primarily by the fact that via the *pondok*s and *pesantren*s (Islamic schools with hostels) the religious leaders, especially in rural areas, have great influence. The *PPP* was able to mobilize itself politically via religious channels. Because pressure from the *Golkar* was less keenly felt in Central Java than, for instance, in East Java, the following were the results there: *PPP* 30 %; *Golkar* 50 %; and *PDI* 20 %.

F) The *lurah*, the head of a village, and all village officials, being the lowest level of the central government hierarchy, were all expected to be loyal to the *Golkar*. There are strong indications[11] that the *lurah* determined, to a great extent, election results at the village level. I was told by a *lurah* that he was not concerned about the choice of a political party because there were no clearly defined party programmes anyway. What was important was the maintenance and continuation of his influence within the village. This could be achieved most easily under

the shadow of the *waringin* tree, which is the *Golkar* symbol. Such an
attitude of "safety first" could well be characteristic of rural areas
in Java, where there is still a strong feeling that "politics are for
the city". This idea was strengthened by the experiences in the past,
when political matters were brought to the village by city people with
drastic consequences for the villagers: most of the victims of the
period from 1965 to 1967 fell in rural areas!

   G) The election procedure itself, which is almost identical to the
election of a *lurah*, forced the people to vote in small local units. A
voting district consisted of approximately 350 voters. Naturally this
helped to determine the results, for people feared that in spite of
guaranteed freedom in voting, failure to honour their declarations of
loyalty might be detected.

   After summarizing these factors (A-G), which all rationally explain
the final result, I would like to close this section by pointing out
some more culturally conditioned considerations, which played a role
in the election and its final result *as well*. On the basis of the above
mentioned factors one could say that the election results, in general,
were not a consequence of choices based on a particular party programme
or the political conviction of the individual voter. A political consensus
took place on a higher plane of reality. On such a level symbols and
symbolic acts have far-reaching effects.

   For example, in examining the way in which the Vice-President, the
Sultan of Yogya, conducted his campaign in Central Java, one cannot avoid
noticing similarities to the way in which princes of earlier times toured
through their districts. As in past times, so on this occasion paper
money was distributed liberally. The palace regalia, including a golden
(yellow) *payung* (umbrella), were carried along in the Sultan's entou-
rage.[12] His attendants were all dressed in yellow jackets, a symbol of
the *Golkar* keepers of the peace. Even more important is the fact that in
the villages one of the names of the Sultan, Dorojatun, was stressed
because, as it is often said: "Does not a certain Dorojatun precede the
coming of the *Ratu Adil* (the just king)?" The significance of the Sultan's
symbolic acts should also not be underestimated. In front of a crowd of
more than one hundred thousand people he demonstrated with a large bamboo
stick how not to strike the right or the left but the middle one of the
three election boards. And when the Sultan let others in his entourage
do the speech making for the *Golkar*, and limited himself to simple ritual
acts, he was appealing to a public whom he knew would understand his

symbolism. When he asked the public what the symbol of the *Golkar* was, they responded with the resounding answer *Beringin* (*waringin*, i.e. banyan tree). Likewise, he formed the V symbol and asked how many fingers there were. This was followed by a resounding "two" from the masses, two being the *Golkar*'s running number.

In searching for traditional classificatory principles of Javanese society, however, we must remember that it is also possible to interpret the above and many of the following examples as variations on a more or less universal phenomenon of sanctioning new developments by calling on old existing patterns. This is all the more true here because it is often said that reasoning by association[13] or means of parallels, rather than through analysis, is characteristic of Javanese thinking.

Colour symbolism was also evident. Care must be taken, however, with the interpretation of the effects of such symbols. In *Golkar* parades the colours yellow and white were dominant. Both represent the centre, or the ruler's power. Orange was also seen. The *waringin* tree is the party symbol and its green colour symbolizes prosperity (fertility). But it is also the holy (wishing) tree which dominated the *alun-alun* (square) in front of the prince's or regents' quarters. It is the symbol of justice, authority, and protection and provides shade for those who come to the ruler for aid.

In *PPP* parades green flags with a picture of the black *Ka'bah* were displayed: the colour and symbol respectively of the Islamic party. But black and white (= *putih*) also appeared in their parades. Black and red (= *abang*) were the dominant colours of the *PDI*. These are the colours which from ancient times have been the hallmark of the left wing. Farmers traditionally wear black clothes but during the election campaign mostly students and the unemployed young were dressed in black and waved red flags in *PDI* parades. The *banteng* (bull), taken over from the old *PNI*, functioned as the party symbol and signified steadfastness and vigorous strength.

During the campaign many references were made to the three party symbols: the *Ka'bah*, the *waringin* tree and the bull's head. The latter two are also found in the national *Pancasila* symbol. While the *Ka'bah* is new, it had tremendous attraction because of its sacral significance for every Muslim. It was only in a later phase of the campaign that the symbolic meaning of the *waringin* was exploited.

By means of a lottery[14] the *PPP* drew the number one, the *Golkar* number two and the *PDI* number three. A series of finger signs fired the imagi-

nation and the V sign for victory was an obvious one for the *Golkar*.
Once this was established all kinds of associations were made and used.
The most clearly enunciated reference to the fundamental principle of
Javanese society, the dual-unity principle, was uttered during a speech
in Purbalingga, Central Java, where a *Golkar* speaker[15] made the follow-
ing comparison. "Everywhere in the world we find a dualism (*serba dua*)
between good and evil, north and south. Man originates when the male
sperm meets the female egg. When these two come together, unity origi-
nates." A clearer reference is hardly imaginable, yet for the sake of
honesty it must be added that the audience did not understand the sym-
bolic depths of this expression, for from their midst there were cries
of "porno"! This example must be interpreted with care. It might simply
be a sanctioning method, used after the event. But in the Javanese way
of thinking it *cocok* (fits) extremely well in this search for classifi-
catory principles.

By making better transportation available, the *Golkar* was able to
organize bigger and more frequent parades. But to everyone's surprise
the *PDI* also drew large masses, at least in Central Java and among young
people. The *PPP* initially abstained from such demonstrations in the
towns and busied itself with influencing the rural areas more intensively.
During such parades many cheers and slogans were shouted and sung. Poli-
tical positions were ascertained more clearly from these cheers than
from official speeches, which in most cases were screened in advance
and limited by all sorts of conditions.[16]

Perhaps the absence of party programmes and concrete alternative pro-
posals brought about a campaign which remained in the sphere of demon-
strative parades intended to suggest mass support. But these parades
also reinforced the current power base. According to the Javanese idea
of power, its external manifestations are an affirmation of the fact
that someone (in this case Suharto) still has a tight grip on power.[17]
On the other hand, clashes and skirmishes affirm the fact that the
ruler's power has already been transferred to another. Therefore, no
skirmishes should take place during the election of a President in March
1978 at the general session of the People's Congress (*MPR*). These sessions
cannot be called successful in a democratic sense but were considered
successes *because* no disturbances occurred. In 1966, however, such dis-
turbances were necessary in order to "prove" that power had, in fact,
already been transferred to Suharto.

In general, *PPP* criticism of the government was launched mainly from

an ethical-religious angle: the irresponsible practices by which the
government raised taxes (lotteries, etc.); the general moral decline
(decadence, steam baths); etc. In short, the *PPP* said that the govern-
ment was *haram* (impure) and not *halal* (pure). Great stress was laid on
the first of the five principles of the *Pancasila*, belief in Divine Omni-
potence, which was undoubtedly interpreted to mean *Allah*, as indicated
by the *Ka'bah* symbol on the flag. In this manner strong pressure was
put on everyone who considered himself a Muslim, i.e. ca. 90 % of the
population.

The *PDI* brought forth criticism from a socio-economic perspective.
Their main theme was social justice, the fifth principle of the *Panca-
sila*. The *Golkar* clearly appealed to all five principles of the *Panca-
sila* and thus appeared to be a totality representing the whole populace.

During the first month of campaigning the *PPP* unexpectedly defended
itself often and courageously at the national level against the intimi-
dation tactics of the *Golkar*, and the *PDI* received a better response
from the population than initially expected. After this the *Golkar* pre-
sented itself more aggressively in its verbal expressions and during
parades. In Central Java this brought about some cooperation between the
PPP and the *PDI*. They organized, for example, combined parades. In these
parades the character of their slogans and cheers were changed. Whereas
previously their slogans recommended their own parties, they now became
united frontal assaults on the *Golkar*. One of these slogans (the immense
popularity of which is due in part to sound associations) can be literal-
ly translated as follows:

"Suk-suk pèng	"Pierce-pierce (*pèng* has no meaning, it is used merely for rhyming)
sing tengah gĕpèng	the middle one is dented
disundang bantèng	gored by the bull
diblegi Ka'bah	crushed by the *Ka'bah*
ora bisa obah."	cannot move itself."

The *Golkar* noted this development with great concern and for the
first time, as a result of this election campaign,[18] there was open
reference to polarization tendencies in society. It was said that tri-
partite division of political power was never intended to create such
polarization. The *Golkar* now claimed to be the mediator between the two
poles. It pointed to the disastrous consequences for the country if the
bull was allowed to gore the *Ka'bah* directly. "Fortunately the *Golkar*
can function as a buffer! She will, of course, be attacked from both

sides, but she is big and strong and unites both sides within herself and therefore will never be defeated." Another clear example of the centre being interpreted and functioning as the whole is the advice which was given to the population at meetings held towards the end of the campaign. "Now that it has become so hot (i.e., the political climate, as a result of the intense campaign) it is good to be under the shady branches of the large *waringin* tree!"

As in 1971, it was a quiet week (*minggu tenang*, a term which is used in universities to refer to the study period prior to examinations) that preceded election day. The election itself was generally very quiet and passed almost entirely without incident. The day was like a holiday and a solemn atmosphere prevailed. The population went to the polls in their Sunday best. After that most people stayed home and the day was unusually quiet. On the whole the election was considered to be a success *because* hardly any disturbances occurred. The voting was carried out with solemnity, like a ritual act.

Tempers, especially those of the *PPP*, were not so quickly cooled, however, and for a whole month the *PPP* used threatening language which demanded that all trespasses be dealt with or they would withdraw. A non-cooperative stance prevailed and this was a strong reminder of the colonial period. The critics were silenced only when the President himself, at the beginning of June, stepped in and proclaimed that anyone who still doubted the validity of the election results was in fact guilty of desecration against the people (*rakyat*). In this connection it is undoubtedly the sacral meaning of the term *rakyat*[19] that is meant.

A short while later the meaning and place of opposition within Indonesian culture was discussed openly in a national newspaper.[20] This discussion originated with and was stimulated by General Widodo, who was at that time the highest military authority in the whole of Java. Without doubt he was referring to the non-cooperative attitude of the *PPP*, but on the other hand he also came out against the idea of opposition, saying that it has a polarizing effect. Actually, he could only accept opposition-in-unity:[21] criticism launched against the government by the opposition can never destroy this unity; the limits of tolerance (*tenggang rasa*)[22] are determined by Indonesian culture itself; and power leads to self-acknowledgement, necessary corrections may come from "within" but not from the outside in a confronting manner.

Closely related to ideas on the limits of *tenggang rasa* (tolerance) are opinions concerning *sopan santun* (good manners) in the Javanese

emotional world (*rasa* = sense, feeling). A striking example of such opin-
ions was the official government reaction to the student demonstrations
of January 1978. After the students from Bandung (Institute of *Technology*
- not surprisingly!) published a white paper, which was directly addressed
to the President, all student activities were banned. The first reason
for this was that the students had exceeded the bounds of *sopan santun*,
which are embedded in the *Pancasila*.[23]   None of the students' arguments
were disproved; they were categorically denied!

III. *Traditional Classificatory Principles Inspiring the Present Political Constellation?*

Many of the above examples of symbols and symbolic acts can easily be
understood as a specific variation on a more or less universal phenomenon
by which new developments are interpreted in accordance with existing
patterns. I believe, however, that the above outline of political develop-
ments during the New Order also shows that the specific form in Central
Java was at least partly inspired by calling into play, in an associative
manner, traditional classificatory principles. Two structural principles
seem to emerge. The first one, the dual-unity principle, is seen in the
conscious striving towards a new political classification. There was a
progression from the chaos of 100 parties to a system with three parties,
while at the same time a two party system was consciously rejected. As
we saw in the above section, not only was the 1967 suggestion of the
Dharsono group considered to be in conflict with the character of the
Indonesian people, but during the last campaign the army only began to
interfere openly when polarization between the two political parties,
with the *Golkar* in the centre, became evident.

This tripartite division, therefore, should not simply be seen as the
general phenomenon of left-wing versus right-wing with the government in
the centre. We have already seen that one wing (the Islamic group) em-
phasized the first pillar of the *Pancasila*, while the other wing, the
PDI, emphasized the fifth pillar. The *Golkar*, in the centre, did not
seek an in-between position, as a centre party in a democratic parlia-
mentary system would, but instead explicitly claimed to represent the
totality of all five pillars. In doing this, the *Golkar* hoped to over-
shadow the two wings.

There also emerges, quite subtly, a comparison between the structural
divisions which the *Orde Baru* regime adheres to and the traditional struc-
tural principles as they were propounded by J.P.B. de Josselin de Jong

in his inaugural address (1935:15-19).[24] On the basis of kinship rela-
tionships he reconstructed an asymmetrical connubium of at least three
clans, which were subdivided into two phratries. One phratry provided
wives and the other received them. The middle clan, which was again
divided into two, united both functions within itself and thereby repre-
sented both totality and unity. This tripartite division is characterized
as a binary opposition and can be represented as follows:
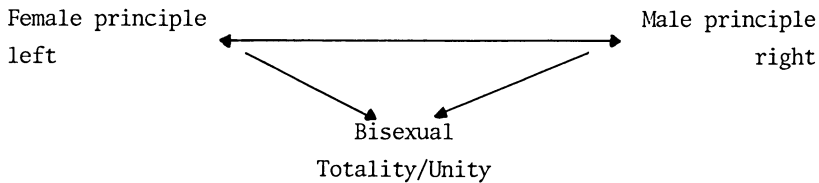
Female principle ←————————————→ Male principle
left   right
Bisexual
Totality/Unity
(*Punokawan, Semar*, the clowns in the *wayang*)

De Josselin de Jong found support for this theory, especially with
regard to ancient pre-Hindu Javanese society, in the works of W.H.
Rassers[25] and in F.D.E. van Ossenbruggen's article entitled 'Java's
monca-pat: Origins of a Primitive Classification System'.[26]

According to the analytical method of thought usually applied in
scientific discourse, it must be noted immediately that we are here con-
cerned with a supposition. Archaic structures can no longer be proved on
the basis of the present. However, an interesting study by Koes Sardjono
(1947:83) demonstrates convincingly that one can detect the binary oppo-
sition in the *wayang* stories in which *Semar*, as a culture hero belonging
to both parts, at the same time represents the totality. The relation-
ship between the binary opposition and the *moncopat* division rests on a
supposition, even though it seems to be an acceptable one when one con-
siders the possibility of development into *moncolimo*. Both in the tri-
partite division of the binary opposition and the fivefold division of
moncopat, the centre represents the totality and unity.

Historical sources[27] confirm that *moncopat* was the classificatory
principle for the traditional Javanese classification system. This clas-
sification system no longer functions in the same way, however, in pre-
sent Javanese society. But within the circles of Javanese mysticism it
is still found in the expression *sedulur papat, pancer limo* (four broth-
ers, *sedulur papat*, with the fifth, *limo*, as the forbear, *pancer*, forming
a unity).[28]

This system will probably no longer be found in the federal, coopera-

tive relationships between villages. But an informant from a mountain village south of Pemalang was able to give a crystal clear definition of the term: the four outer hamlets of his village, united by the central hamlet, the *krajan*, the place where the *lurah* lives. The informant said that he had learned this from his forbears who for many generations had belonged to the village council. There is no doubt that the *moncopat* division is represented in the architecture of the old *kraton*. According to Rendra[29] it is also found in the building of the Borobudur (before, of course, a tourist complex was built next to it for commercial purposes).

The strongest indication that the *moncopat* classificatory principle is still applied in Javanese society today is found in the *Pancasila*. A serious difficulty faced by scientific analysis here, however, is the fact that Javanese authors do not usually elaborate on the cultural roots of the *Pancasila* idea, in much the same way that informants usually say that they know about their customs through *naluri*, tradition. For example, Prof. Notonagoro of Gadjah Mada University, who is one of the most outstanding authorities on the *Pancasila* philosophy, declared in an academic lecture that the five elements which are included in the *Pancasila* are not new phenomena which emerged at the beginning of the Republic of Indonesia, but are a legacy for the people of Indonesia from former times. They were genuinely existing and living within the soul of the Indonesian society, people and nation (1967 (1978):24).

A more elaborate example is found in a speech given by General Widodo (also referred to above) on October 28, 1977 during a conference for Christian students in Kaliurang, Yogya (*Kartika*, a newspaper, November 4, 1977).[30] Using modern sociological terms such as 'structural functionalism', Widodo presented an interpretation of the relationship between the *Pancasila* and the religions of Indonesia. As he sees it, the structural-functional approach regards nations as organisms. The various elements within such a society are mutually related and harmonious; he used the expression *symbiosis mutualis*. This structural-functional approach requires the ideology found in the ideal type of society created by our ancestors (*para leluhur kita*): the *demokrasi asli* (original democracy), which was the political principle of the ancient "village-republic". This *demokrasi asli* was based on a fundamental desire or need for harmony. And in his words, the present *Pancasila* philosophy is nothing but a new expression of this ancient idea of harmony and tolerance. Within the *Pancasila* framework, which is like a *symbiosis mutualis*, the

religions of Indonesia can (and must) coexist in harmony. This interpre-
tation does not depart from the *sedulur papat, pancer limo* idea of Java-
nese mystical thought. The *Pancasila*, which is analogous to the *pancer*
(forbear, also plummet), is regarded as the backbone which binds together
all variations, including the religious - compare the *sedulur papat*, the
four brothers.

General Widodo's view is not his alone. It corresponds with the gene-
rally accepted interpretation of the *Pancasila* as propagated by Prof.
Notonagoro, and is taught as a compulsory subject at the military academy
and military colleges. It is therefore legitimate to conclude that gene-
rations of military leaders will have a uniform view.[31] *If* we assume
that the *Pancasila*, based on the *moncopat* classificatory principle, is
a further application of an older tripartite division, which in turn is
based on the binary opposition principle, *then* an association with the
present political constellation of a dual-unity becomes more acceptable.

In order to understand the present political constellation better it
is necessary to refer to a second basic principle which still functions
fully in Javanese mysticism. This is the *Kawula-Gusti* (subject-monarch)
relationship.[32] In mystical circles this relationship refers to oneself
(a servant) and the Almighty. Selo Soemardjan (1962:173, 185-194), how-
ever, gives an excellent empirical example of how a prince (*Gusti*) from
Yogya, during the 1930's, led a socio-political movement, the *Pakempalan
Kawula Ngayogyakarta* (*P.K.N.*, later the *Gerindo* party), in accordance
with the *Kawula-Gusti* principle.

This same principle can be extracted from a polemical article written
by Sukarno at about the same time (1927). He said that the three most
important powers, nationalism, Islam and Marxism, must be brought to-
gether in order to form a national unity[33] that could strive towards
the independence of the Indonesian people, *rakyat*. In her introduction
to the English translation of this article, Ruth McVey (1970:4-6) points
to the spiritual meaning of *rakyat*, which she feels was, for Sukarno,
the messianic equivalent of Marx' proletariat. Sukarno liked to refer
to himself as *penyambung lidah rakyat* (the extension of the tongue of
the people = *vox populi*). Being the "tongue" of the people, Sukarno, as
Gusti, stood in a mystically loaded relation to the people, *kawula*, and
thus he was able to introduce his Guided Democracy. He lacked, however,
the concrete organization needed to mobilize the people politically. The
New Order, under President Suharto, has this organization in the *Golkar*,
the civil facade behind which the army, *ABRI*, hides. Both during the

period of Guided Democracy and now during the *Orde Baru*, the *Kawula-
Gusti* relationship was and is used, even though officially there is no
longer such a movement as the *P.K.N.* But is it not true that during the
last election campaign the Sultan of Yogya, as *Gusti*, appealed to the
*kawula*s of Central Java in order to get their votes? (Note that in the
expression *Kawula* comes before *Gusti*). This vertical dimension, which
brings the small man (*wong cilik*) into the picture, also explains why,
at the village level, the national elections are dominated to a great
extent by the *lurah*. As Kartohadikoesoemo points out (1965:2), tradi-
tionally there existed a mythical relationship (*ikatan batin*) between a
lurah and his fellow villagers. Even today the concept *manunggaling
kawula lan Gusti* (the unity between servants and monarch) is applied when
harmony between villagers and their government (the *lurah* and higher
officials) is meant. An example of this is found in a report on a village
close to Surakarta.[34] And is there not a connection between the *kraton*,
where the *ratu* resides, and the *kerajaan*, the residence of the *raja*
(king), which also refers to the *lurah*'s area of residence, the *krajan*?

Below I have attempted to place both the dual-unity principle and the
Kawula-Gusti relationship in a framework so as to bring some aspects of
Javanese society into focus. This effort should not be regarded as a mo-
del to be used for the building of scientific theory. It does not pretend
to be anything more than a graphic expression of the ideas put forth in
the few sentences following it.
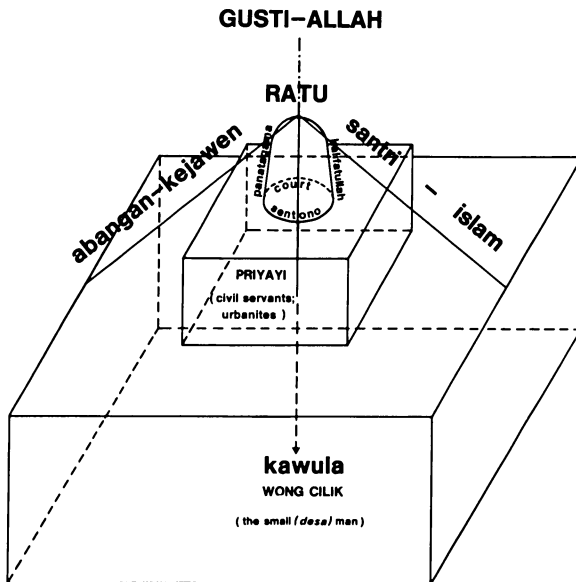
Suggestions made by Prof. Resink enabled me to recognize the Borobudur profile in this sketch. The hierarchical stratification of society comes to the fore here. The large, lowest layer consists of *wong cilik*, the foundation of the temple, which is partly buried underground. Who takes note of the masses of landless farmers (*buruh tani*)? Above them are the *priyayi*s, who in the past formed the lower nobility, and are now nearly all civil servants. On the basis of the present rice policy, can it not be said that the farmers support the urbanites?[35]

At the top is the glory of the prince's *stupa*, which is surrounded by his retinue (*sentono*). Again, there is a parallel between the *istana*, the palace of the President, and the *kraton* (court) of former times. In earlier days the Javanese and Arabic titles of the prince were *Panatagama* and *Kalifatullah*, respectively. All *Hamengku Buwana*s have used both titles. In the person of the prince (government) the *abangan-kejawen* and *Santri-Islam* wings of society are united via the *Kawula-Gusti* principle.

A picture of the two traditional wings in Javanese society, the *kaum abangan* and the *kaum putihan-Santri*, comes into view. But due to the strong, dominant government party, backed by the physical power of the army, not much room is left for *aliran* allegiances based on ideological differences, as described by Geertz in the 1950's. The boundaries of opposition, especially as far as ideology is concerned, are fixed and only *within* the framework of the *Pancasila* are differences of opinion allowed (*tenggang rasa* = tolerance), preferably concerning problems of a practical nature.

These traditional wings, although they are easily associated with the two political parties, the *PDI* being on the left and the *PPP* on the right, must not be regarded as a mere dual division because they cannot be separated from the overarching unity: the government, i.e. the *Golkar*. This government, applying the *Kawula-Gusti* principle, has obtained a large political allegiance.

The search for "driving forces, which still inspire the present", can now be drawn to a close. In the Indonesian political game (especially in Central Java) traditional classificatory principles are called into play in an associative manner. In this way the political scene is permeated by ritualistic characteristics. Democratic parliamentary criteria for a direct, free and secret ballot do not form the touchstone by which the success of an election is judged. *If* a national election is carried out in all solemnity and almost without incident, *then* the Suharto government calls it a success. When the ritualistic aspects of Indonesian elections

are explained, the behaviour and actions of the *dramatis personae* are
more clearly understood.

NOTES

1 According to newspaper sources (e.g., *Kompas* 9-4-'77) the officially
  allocated amount was approximately $ 150,000,000. But it was estimated
  that this would increase up to approximately $ 250,000,000. A figure
  of $ 50,000,000 was officially budgeted for incentive payments to
  civil servants. From *Golkar* sources I have learnt that considerable
  sums of money were made available to the party through manipulations
  in the acceptance of tenders for government projects. In this way
  project budgets were increased by at least 10 to 15 %.

2 *Sinar Harapan*: 18-4-'77, an editorial; Mubyarto: *Kompas* 31-3-'77;
  Alfian: *Sinar Harapan* 23-4-'77; Deliar Noer: *Kompas* 25-8-'77.

3 In my opinion there is a close correspondence between what E. Zürcher
  notes about the Chinese situation (1977:178, 180, 182) and the situa-
  tion in Java. The ideas developed in this paragraph show a marked
  similarity to those of Zürcher on the Chinese situation.

4 Van Akkeren (1970:10). The author of the book quoted here also bases
  his views on the ideas of Rassers and Van Ossenbruggen. Especially
  the first two chapters of this excellent book give a good insight into
  the world of "old Java". Unfortunately, this book has not received the
  attention it deserves from social scientists. I acquired the basic
  idea elaborated in this essay by reading these first two chapters.

5 'The Atoni in the Indonesian Culture', Schulte Nordholt 1971:407-473.

6 Cunningham rather too casually classes him as a member of this school,
  although Schulte Nordholt himself denies this (1967:29). But P.E. de
  Josselin de Jong (1972), on the basis of this study, also regards his
  views as being in the Leiden tradition, which began before the time
  of J.P.B. de Josselin de Jong but was strengthened by him.

7 Among others, Grader, Rassers and Van Ossenbruggen.

8 J.P.B. de Josselin de Jong (1935). For the present contribution the
  Indonesian translation was used (1971, Jakarta: Bhratara).

9 The words in quotation marks refer to Schärer's view, mentioned pre-
  viously.

10 Due to the length of this contribution I can only give a rough sketch
   here. For further reading I suggest, among others, Karl D. Jackson
   and Lucian W. Pye (1978), and R. William Liddle (1977). For the latter
   period also see the articles in *V.U.-Magazine* (Dec. 1973, Jan. 1974,
   Feb. 1975, Nov. 1977) and the daily *Trouw* of Oct. 25, 28 and 29, 1976.
   For these elections see, among others, R. William Liddle (1973) and
   Kenneth E. Ward (1974).

11 In another article I hope to explain this matter in more detail.

12 Prof. Resink wrote the following: "The *keliling* (tour) of the Sultan through the Javanese areas during the election campaign must have had a strong appeal to many people; this tradition goes back to the royal tours of the Majapahit era. When the Sunan made such a journey in the 1930's, he drew such crowds that the government recalled him from Malang" (letter 2-1-'78).

13 Compare Soemarsaid Murtono's comment about Javanese projective or correlative thinking (1968:20-21). This way of thinking is similar to the poet and playwright W.S. Rendra's interpretation of it (personal interview 1-10-'76). He contrasts associative thinking, using the *citra* (image), with analytical thinking, which uses the *lambang* (symbol), as, e.g., the = (equal) sign points to causality.

14 There is no reason to assume that the drawing of lots was conducted dishonestly, even though it is possible that this "action" was based on *mufakat* (agreement). In any case, the *Golkar* would not want to be no. 1 for tactical reasons, i.e., it would not want to emphasize its numerical majority. Actually, within the *Demokrasi Pancasila* the idea of majority versus minority is not recognized. Again, all this is just an assumption, but one which could strengthen this line of reasoning if it were to be confirmed by those concerned.

15 *Sinar Harapan* 23-4-'77 (pp. 1, 16). The speaker was K.H. Thohir Widjaja who, according to his own testimony, was the *Gatutkoco* of the *NU* during the campaign of 1955. This is one of many examples of the breakdown of the old *aliran* ties and the ability of the *Golkar* to establish new alliances.

16 The following so-called 4-P prohibitions did not allow one: to talk about the *Presiden*; to discredit a civil servant (*pejabat*); to speak evil of other religions (*pengasut*); or to endanger the unity (*persatuan*) of the state.

17 Cf. Anderson 1972:13-19.

18 Kol. Leo Ngali, *Sinar Harapan* 18-4-'77, pp. 1 and 8.

19 According to Koes Sardjono (1947) *Semar*, the most important character in each *wayang* performance, not only symbolizes the *rakyat* (people), but also has a sacral meaning in the world of deities.

20 See Widodo 1977a, 1977b, 1977c; Wibisono 1977; and *Kompas* 21-7-'77.

21 Cf. Anderson's comments on "unity-in-opposition" (1972:15 ff.).

22 Widodo 1977c.

23 *Suara Karya* 24-1-'78.

24 The pages are based on the Indonesian translation.

25 Especially his study 'Siva and Buddha in the East Indian Archipelago' (written in 1926 and included in Rassers 1959 as chapter II), which deals with a myth concerning an initiation rite. The elder of two brothers, *Gagang-aking*, represents the religion of Siva in Javanese society, while the younger brother, *Bubuk-sah*, represents Buddhism.

26 The meaning of *moncopat* is four units which together make up one
holy (*kramat*) unity. The location of the four with regard to the
centre is like that of a cross pointing to the four points of the
compass. The first part of the term (*monco*) means strange or differ-
ent (in a different direction) and the syllable *pat* is thought to be
etymologically related to *empat* (four) but also to *rapat* (meeting),
being together in one place. This form .:. is regarded as a *lambang*
(symbolic sign), and is the basic principle of the traditional Java-
nese classificatory system, which not only orders the political
aspect (the relationships between different villages) but also other
aspects of social life. This symbol, however, should not be taken
as a static one. It can be developed, for example, to *moncolimo*
(*limo* = five), in which case another four villages would be located
in the same directions as the first four villages but farther removed
from the centre. These villages, together with the first five, would
form a unity, for example, for irrigation projects, theft and barter-
ing at markets held in each village in turn (*pekan* = a five day week).
The market day in the *krajan* is always held on the day *paing* (nine).

27 Soetardjo Kartohadikoesoemo (1965:66-68). Soemarsaid Murtono (1968:
101-102) believes it likely that the *moncopat* division was known as
early as 1365, when the *Nagara krtagama* was written down.

28 In this expression the four brothers signify the fact that the birth
of a child (the fifth) is always accompanied by amniotic fluid, the
womb and milk from both breasts.

29 In an interview on 1-10-'76.

30 General Widodo also elaborated on this same theme in an earlier
speech addressed to the alumni of the *Himpunan Mahasiswa Indonesia*
(*HMI*), the Indonesian Islamic Student Federation. This was reported
in *Kompas* on 21-7-'77.

31 This argument would obviously be strengthened if this opinion could
be confirmed through interviews with the most important generals
involved in the political developments of the last twenty years.
There are also many generals (probably Dharsono and especially non-
Javanese officers) who probably do not reason along these lines. On
the other hand, an affirmation from Lieut.-Gen. Ali Murtopo, Head
of the Department of Information, who is generally regarded as one
of the chief architects of the present political constellation, would
mean welcome support of my assumption. I have not as yet had the
opportunity of interviewing him. I have learned, however, that General
Widodo has approved of an earlier version of this article (oral com-
munication from R. Utomo). Another fact which supports my argument
is that Prof. Notonagoro's interpretation of the *Pancasila* was not
only used to formulate the Presidential Instruction on the *Pancasila*
(*Instruksi Presiden* no. 12 *Tahun* 1968), but also forms the basis of
what is usually referred to as *buku hitam*, a black covered pocket
book which, like a holy book, must be carried in the pocket of the
uniform of all military personnel (Departemen Pertahanan dan Keamanan,
1972).

32 For a detailed description of this concept, and especially its con-
nection with political relationships, I refer to Soemarsaid Murtono's
work (1968:14-26).

33 This article provides ample evidence of the existence of symbolically
loaded motifs behind the striving. The first sentence commences with
a reference to the mythical past. "Like the son of *Bima*, who was born
in an age of struggle, Young Indonesia now sees the light of day ...".
This son is *Raden Gatutkoco*, the wild, powerful and popular *wayang*
figure with whom Sukarno undoubtedly identified himself. But he uses
the name *Bima* because this character, after having found his own iden-
tity (*aku*), symbolizes the integrated personality (*keutuhan*) and
unity in the *wayang* story. Sukarno ends his article with a cryptic
reference to his own role in calling upon another figure from the
myth, namely *Ibu Pertiwi*, who symbolizes not only fertility but also
unity. He asks the rhetorical question: "... does not Mother Indonesia
(*Ibu Pertiwi*) also have a son who can become the champion of this
unity?" He is conscious of the fact that this unity is based on the
principle of reciprocity (which is also the basis for the asymmetrical
connubium) because he continues the question above with the words:
"We must be prepared to receive, but we must also be ready to give.
This is the secret of Unity."

  In the context of this essay, it is interesting to note that until
recently, despite the expressed wish of Sukarno, this epitaph had
not been engraved on his tomb. Recently however, on the birthday
(24-1-'78) of the *PDI* in Solo (one of the bases of the old *PNI*),
General Murtopo promised that this would be done. It is extremely
likely that this promise was an attempt to reconcile the *PDI* after
the election and the subsequent leadership changes in order to
strengthen the *Golkar* against the *PPP* in the discussions of the *MPR*
(People's Congress) held in March of 1978.

34 *Laporan Desa*, Makamhaji, Kartasura (Village Report, Makamhaji, Karta-
sura), p. 49: "Dengan demikian merupakan suatu bukti bahwa hubungan
Pemerintah dengan masyarakat sangat harmonis. Yang berarti benar-
benar tercipta manunggaling kawula lan Gusti." ("Therefore it proves
that the relationship between the government and the people is
harmonious. This means that the unity between the servant and the
monarch has really been established.")

35 Obviously, the whole problem of the recently increasing horizontal
stratification of Javanese society, due to certain capitalistic
developments in agricultural policy, is not sufficiently covered by
just this one sentence. I am only pointing out the presence of this
aspect within the society.

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PH. QUARLES VAN UFFORD

WHY DON'T YOU SIT DOWN?[+]

Sadrach and the struggle for religious independence in the earliest
phase of the Church of Central Java (1861-1899)

Introduction

The role of Christianity in the context of the expansion of Dutch
commercial and political interests in the Dutch East Indies is complex.
Many interesting though sometimes contradictory perspectives on this
matter have been developed. It is therefore very difficult to speak in
general terms about the relationship between the spread of Christianity
and the economic and political penetration of colonial society.

   Firstly, conversion to the Christian faith has been regarded as one
aspect of submission to the political and economic dominance of the
Dutch.

   From the outset the Dutch took a broad view of their role. The in-
structions to the Governor General Pieter Both in 1606 contained an
article which stated that not only the honour of the nation and the
profit of the *V.O.C.* (Dutch East India Company) but also the glorifi-
cation of Christ and the salvation of the non-Christians should be
aimed at (*Encyclopaedie van Nederlandsch-Indië* 1919:656). In this res-
pect the Dutch of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries followed a
different course from, for instance, the British East India Company,
which kept the affairs of Christ and Caesar apart (Van Boetzelaer 1946:
6). This does not mean that religious ends took precedence over poli-
tical or commercial interests — on the contrary. Moreover it is clear
that at the end of the rule of the *V.O.C.*, Christianity was in a deplor-
able state (Locher 1948:28-34; Van Boetzelaer 226-237). It had become
evident, however, that Dutch penetration involved at least the possi-
bility of missionary efforts. Van Leur's thesis that the spread of Dutch
interests contributed to the spread of Islam is well-known (Van Leur

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[+]In the contacts between Sadrach and Dutch Christians, sitting on a
chair became a symbol of how the relationship was perceived.

1955:111-116, 143-144). Resistance to Christianity was one of the ways
of opposing Dutch expansion, not only in the sixteenth and seventeenth
centuries, but also much later, as the history of various churches in
Indonesia tells us (Müller-Krüger 1968, passim). Christianity had
clearly become connected with Dutch presence.

Secondly, stress has been laid on the role of the Christian faith in
the context of the development of new institutions, especially those of
an educational nature. Examination of these processes has shown that
conversion to Christianity did not necessarily lead to acceptance of
Dutch domination. Christianity was regarded not only as the religion
of the Dutch, conversion being considered as *masuk belanda* ('entering
Dutch society') but also as the religion with the book (Kruyt 1907:121).
In many areas becoming a Christian meant an opportunity to learn to
read and write, as well as access to new jobs and greater mobility.
Becoming a Christian also implied an adoption of new values, and orien-
tation towards wider circles. Through this process Christians were
exposed to the inequality imposed upon them by colonial society. Con-
version to Christianity was often related to a desire for development,
not infrequently leading to dissatisfaction and sometimes revolts against
colonial society.[1] The revolt of Thomas Matulesia (known as Pattimura)
in 1817, first on Ceram and later in Saparua is an early example. One of
the interesting features is that the insurgents against the restoration
of Dutch colonial rule in the Moluccas were led by "staunchly orthodox"
Protestants, who legitimized the revolt by invoking biblical themes. One
of the main causes of the dissatisfaction was the fear that the educa-
tional system would be dismantled by a Dutch withdrawal of state subsidy
(Enklaar 1963:48-56). This process of development did sometimes bring
Christians into conflict with colonial society. In other cases it led
to its acceptance (Kraemer 1925). There was a great variety of reactions,
depending on many factors. Thus it is difficult to make any general
statement about the relationship between Christians and colonial society
from this perspective.

The relationships between Dutch and Indonesian Protestants provide in
my opinion an interesting third perspective on the study of the role of
the Christian faith in colonial society. Colonial society was not just
an external entity to which Christians - Dutch or Indonesian - were
connected. It is also possible to study the relationship between colonial
society and the Christian community by looking at the internal relations
between Dutch and Indonesian Christians within the Christian community.

From this viewpoint, the *Protestantse Kerk van Nederlands-Indië*, known
simply as 'the Protestant Church' or *Indische Kerk*, is a most interesting
case. During the nineteenth century, private missionary organizations
from overseas started large-scale work in the Dutch East Indies alongside
this state-supported church. One can study to what extent the relations
between missionaries and their flock, especially newly converted Indone-
sians, stemmed from colonial attitudes of cultural and political superi-
ority and from economic dependence, and so on. In missionary literature
the problem of the social and cultural as well as economic and political
dependence of Indonesian Christians on their western patrons came to the
fore only after 1920 (Kraemer 1958). Problems of independence and natio-
nalism were becoming more apparent at that time. It is, however, very
worthwhile to study the beginnings of the relationship between missionary
societies and missionaries on the one hand and newly formed Indonesian
Christian communities on the other. Study of the earliest history of some
of the Indonesian churches shows that the adoption of a new faith did
not lead to an acceptance of a subordinate position within existing
Christian institutions. Rather Christianity did in some cases become one
of the vehicles of opposition and protest.

I will try in this essay to analyse the first phase of the activities
of the *Nederlandsche Gereformeerde Zendingsvereeniging (NGZV)*, the Dutch
Reformed Missionary Society, in Central Java. The *NGZV* started work in
the north of Central Java in 1861. After some time it came into contact
with a group of Javanese Christians, which had been formed in the late
sixties, especially as a result of the efforts of a Javanese called
Sadrach. This group, known in missionary literature as *Sadrachs Kring*
(Sadrach's circle) became the largest in Java in the last quarter of the
nineteenth century and lasted well into the twentieth. The period from
1867 to 1899, when the Dutch missionary society and *Sadrachs Kring* co-
operated, albeit not without serious crises, until the relationship
finally broke down, is most interesting. It provides a unique opportunity
to study a Javanese movement which was Christian yet never accepted
domination by a missionary society with which it cooperated. L.W.C. van
den Berg has called it nationalistic *'in dubbel opzicht'* (in two respects),
firstly in that it refused to accept that the adoption of the Christian
faith implied assimilating to the Dutch way of life and secondly in that
it rejected the paternalistic authority of the missionary society and
the missionaries (Van den Berg 1907:235-270). So this example of early
missionary efforts and of the conflict they gave rise to may contribute

to a fuller understanding of the role of the Christian faith in a colonial
context at the end of the nineteenth century.

I will argue that the Sadrach movement can be placed in the wider con-
text of a general religious opposition to Dutch colonial domination in
Java at the end of the nineteenth century. This was not so much a resist-
ance to the overall political and economic power of the Dutch, but rather
a rejection of colonialism as it was emerging at that time, with the Dutch
Christians dominant and the Javanese Christians subordinate. This struggle
of the Sadrach movement fits into the third above-mentioned perspective
on the study of the relationship between the Christian religion and
colonialism. At the same time, by examining the Sadrach movement and its
struggle for religious independence, I hope to add to the existing know-
ledge of religious protest movements in Java at the end of the nineteenth
century (Drewes 1925; Sartono 1966 and 1973). The struggle against the
tutelage of both the Protestant Church and the missionary society should
in my opinion also be seen as one of several examples of religious oppo-
sition to and protest against colonial society at the time (Sartono 1973:
87-90).

Early Javanese Protestantism

Compared to some of the outer regions, Java was first exposed to Protes-
tantism relatively late. Until 1814, when one of the first full-time
missionaries, Kam, worked in Surabaya for a brief period on his way to
the Moluccas, not much effort had been put into the conversion of the
Javanese people. In this respect the *V.O.C.* had not paid much attention
to Java, as, for instance, the famous clergyman Valentijn had complained
before (Valentijn 1724 IVb:7). Except for some isolated cases in the
neighbourhood of Batavia - in Tugu and Depok - the rural population had
not been exposed to missionary endeavours (Coolsma 1901:14-15 and 75-79).
These two Christian communities consisted mostly of people from outside
Java, living in considerable isolation from their surroundings (Rienks
1976). Not even one Muslim had been converted to Christianity in the
first 125 years of the Christian community of Depok (Coolsma 1901:76).

After the restoration of Dutch colonial authority in 1815, the reli-
gious policy of the government underwent a great change. The role of the
government regarding religion became 'neutral' (Furnivall 1967:218-219;
Van Boetzelaer 1947). This meant, *inter alia*, that religious organiza-
tions were not allowed to become active without special permission from
the government. This was the start of a continuing battle, for in prac-

tice it implied a severe restriction. Missionary work outside traditional
Christian regions was - if at all - only gradually and reluctantly made
possible. The government in Batavia was especially careful about Java.
The main reasons were fear of possible negative reactions from the Mus-
lims and the fear "that those who do so much for us now and submit them-
selves so humbly will feel too much our equals ... if they become Chris-
tians" (Van Rhijn 1851:169-178). Reverend Van Rhijn, who wrote this in
1847 when on a journey "in the Indian Archipel for the benefit of the
evangelical mission", did much to change the viewpoint of the Governor
General. The latter had stated that the government in The Hague was
afraid that the whole fabric of the political system would be affected
by missionary activities (Van Rhijn 1851:574-575). In those years, how-
ever, a few missionaries were admitted to Java, the first in 1851 to
do some work in the neighbourhood of Surabaya.

Thus, apart from some isolated communities not far from Batavia,
Indonesian Christians could only be found in the main cities. Almost
none of them were Javanese. There was a great gulf between Christianity
and rural Javanese society, especially as the Protestant Church was con-
trolled by the government, being more its administrative branch for
Protestantism than a church (Van Boetzelaer 1946:303-305). The main
interest in the various disputes regarding the internal structure of
this Church was not directed towards the relations with Indonesians.
Interest in missionary work on Java was almost totally absent when the
first new groups of Christians among the Javanese were being formed.[2]
Their existence was not linked to any offical missionary effort.

It is important to note the great gap between the official institu-
tions of Christianity and rural Javanese society. This resulted in most
cases in the lack of any trickle of Christianity from the centre out to
the periphery. There was no connection between Christian officialdom
and the first Javanese Christians. The earliest history of the churches
of both East and Central Java involves no missionary efforts 'from
above'. The leading figures who established the first groups of Chris-
tians did not represent official religious institutions in any way.
Rather they were either marginal Europeans, breaking their links with
Dutch society in various ways, or they were Javanese following in the
line of rural Javanese religious leaders, preferring, however, a differ-
ent *ngelmu* (faith, wisdom). Van Akkeren, analysing the earliest phases
of Christianity in Java in the nineteenth century, places Javanese
Christian groups in the dichotomy of left and right (Van Akkeren 1970:

147-188). Left refers, for him, to the *abangan*-variant of Javanese
society. These Christians saw themselves as part of Javanese rural
society, emphasizing unity at the local level, not only among themselves
but also in relation to their surroundings. Their orientation was more
towards the establishment of a community of Javanese Christians than
the establishment of a new Christian institution, like the church. By
'right', Van Akkeren means *santri* thinking and institutions. For the
Christians this meant an emphasis on vertical links between the urban
centres of the church and rural periphery, in both confessional and
organizational matters.

The first Christian leaders and founders of Christian groups were
certainly not 'transmitters' of systems of belief from the centre, the
official church. They belonged to the *abangan* or left category, as de-
fined by Van Akkeren. Coolen, in East Java, broke away from his European
background and settled in a new village, Ngoro, which he founded by
clearing the woods and leasing the territory from the government (Nor-
tier 1939; Van Akkeren 1969). There he started to attract Javanese, who,
on becoming Christians, were allowed to till the land. It is also impor-
tant that he was very careful not to link his community to the Protestant
Church. He strictly avoided the practice of baptism, which could have
brought him into conflict with the official church. He also strongly
discouraged his followers from being baptized by outsiders.[3]

Kiyai Ibrahim Toenggoel Woelloeng was one of the first Javanese to
start a Christian Javanese community in Central Java. He had travelled
extensively in Java and, with his wife, had withdrawn to the slopes of
the Kelut volcano in East Java for contemplation. There he had one day
found a copy of the Ten Commandments under his mattress, whereupon he
went out to seek more information about this document and came into con-
tact with various people, among others Coolen in Ngoro, and Jellesma,
the first missionary to live in Surabaya (Adriaanse 1899:40-50). There
he was baptized. Having travelled around in East Java, he later returned
to his native region near Japara, settled down, cleared land and started
preaching his new *ngelmu*. He avoided the Mennonite missionary, P. Jansz,
who was living in Japara. He did not want to work for him and made a
clear distinction between the *Kristen Djawa* (Javanese Christians) and
the *Kristen Blanda*, the followers of the Dutch missionary. According to
contemporary missionary sources, he was considered an extraordinary man,
who literally stood up to the Dutch, as he did not observe 'normal'
etiquette when in contact with them (Van Akkeren 1969; Van den Berg 1907:

245-249). He was not only a *guru ngelmu*, but also a *dukun*, or healer. His
Christian faith found expression in these different Javanese roles, as
a *guru* in the tradition of the Javanese teachers, and as a *dukun* using
Christian *rapal* (formulae) when addressing his followers (Drewes 1925:
184). In the same way as Coolen, Toenggoel Woelloeng withdrew from con-
tact with the established Christian institutions, both mission and Pro-
testant Church. The various efforts of Jansz to establish cooperation
with him were thwarted by Toenggoel Woelloeng, who feared that it might
lead to subordination, threatening his local prestige as teacher and
healer. In this he was supported by Mr. Anthing, then judge in Semarang,
who perfectly understood and supported this unwillingness to submit to
Dutch domination in matters of religion (Coolsma 1901:140-142).

*Sadrach and the establishment of a Javanese Christian community in
Central Java*
Sadrach, the main figure in the earliest phase of the Javanese Christian
church in Central Java, came from the same tradition as Toenggoel Woel-
loeng. His background, however, had been affected not only by Javanese
mysticism but also by *santri* influences.

   Born in the village of Dukuhsekti in the neighbourhood of Demak about
1841, Radin, as his original name was, was of ordinary stock.[4] Orphaned
at an early age, he was brought up by a local Islamic teacher, who later
sent him to Jombang, to the *pesantren* Tebuireng, a well-known religious
school. He stayed there for some time, during which he visited the vil-
lage of Mojowarno, founded by some of the earliest Christians in East
Java. There he met Jellesma, the missionary who had come from Surabaya
in 1851. Later Radin moved on to another *pesantren*, Gontor, in Ponorogo,
where he received religious instruction and also learned to read and
write Arabic. His period of learning was not yet over. Moving back to
Semarang from East Java, he went to live among the Arab community and
became the apprentice of a man who was both fortuneteller and *dukun*. His
zest for religious training and knowledge, however, was not confined to
that. Coming into contact with a missionary newly arrived in Semarang,
Hoezoo, he took catechumenical courses as well. Thus he availed himself
of the opportunity to become familiar with many religious traditions.

   While studying in Semarang, he met one of the *murid* (followers) of
Toenggoel Woelloeng, who had been a Javanese *guru ngelmu* in his own
right before being 'killed' by Toenggoel Woelloeng.[5] The man took him
to the village of Bondo, where he met Toenggoel Woelloeng. This was most

important for Radin Abas, not only because he felt the power of this
guru, but also because he learned of several people who were greatly to
influence his later life. Firstly, Toenggoel Woelloeng enjoyed good re-
lations with the above-mentioned Mr. Anthing, now vice-president of the
High Court of Justice in Batavia. Secondly, he also knew two ladies,
Mrs. van Oostrom en Mrs. Philips, who lived in Bagelen and who privately
were trying to evangelize among the Javanese. After staying at Bondo for
some time, Radin moved on to Batavia and was invited to live in the house
of Mr. Anthing, where he received further religious instruction. There,
in 1867,[6] he was baptized and received a new - biblical - name, Sadrach.
He first worked as an assistant evangelist (*hulpprediker*) in the neigh-
bourhood of Batavia, but then returned to Java, first to Bondo and there-
after to Purworejo - in the southern part of Central Java - to Mrs.
Philips. There began a new and important stage of his life, and at the
same time a most significant phase in the history of the Church of
Central Java.

Looking at Sadrach's early life history, one is struck by the fact that,
although only 26 or 27 years old upon arrival in Purworejo, he was al-
ready an extraordinary man. His time had not only been devoted to the
learning of various religious traditions, Islamic, Javanese mystic and
Christian, but he also had come into contact with proponents of each of
them, and had received elaborate instruction. Speaking Arabic, Malay,
Dutch and Javanese, he had come to know both rural, *santri* and Christian
religious thought. Having had so many contacts on several levels, he was
later able to confront difficult situations, as we shall see. Therefore
it is very difficult to put him in either of the two categories distin-
guished by Van Akkeren. Although he revered Toenggoel Woelloeng, Sadrach
was by no means influenced by rural religious values only, but was al-
ready versed in two of the urban-centred religious traditions.[7] Sadrach
is in this respect clearly distinct from other early Javanese Christian
leaders in whose tradition he has been placed (Drewes 1925:182-188). His
journey to Purworejo is a case in point. Sadrach associated himself with
the evangelizing efforts of two ladies and did not start by setting up
his own religious circle as others had done before. Thus his first step
may indicate a desire to bridge the gap between Dutch Christianity and
the Javanese, however marginal these two ladies may have seemed to the
official church.
    Upon arrival at Mrs. Philips' house in 1869 he became her assistant.

He was not the only one, as some of her Javanese servants were already
assisting her in her evangelizing efforts among the Javanese in Purworejo.
He travelled around making converts in the regency of Bagelen. Although
his successes during this time must be largely ascribed to his own efforts,
he did not establish himself as an independent teacher. As the number of
adherents grew, Mrs. Philips sought the help of the Reverend Troostenburg
de Bruyn of the Protestant Church in Purworejo who baptized a group of
Javanese. There was good cooperation during the first years, with Sadrach
working on the outside, trying to induce people to become Christians,
Mrs. Philips giving religious instruction every Sunday in Purworejo, and
the minister baptizing in the church. Sadrach is in this respect clearly
different from both Coolen and Toenggoel Woelloeng, who shunned the
church. During these first years there was no hesitation about becoming
associated with the Protestant Church. Upon baptism the converts became
members of the church. This cooperation ended a few years later. This was
caused by opposition from the church-council in Purworejo, which deplored
their minister devoting so much of his time to Javanese.

His positive attitude however, did not make him the agent of either
Mrs. Philips or Mrs. Van Oostrom later in Banyumas, or indeed of the
church. In 1870 Sadrach moved to a new home in Karangjasa, a village
south of Kutoarjo. He still accepted the role of assistant to the two
ladies, but in practice had already become the leader of the various
groups of Christians in Banyumas and Bagelen. He was open to links with
the outer world, cooperating for instance with the first missionary from
the Dutch Reformed Missionary Society (*NGVZ*), who also baptized some ad-
herents in those years. When Mrs. Philips died in 1874, Sadrach became
the virtual leader of his group, acquiring a new name, Soerapranata,
befitting his new position. He was at that time the leader of some 3,000
Javanese Christians (*De Heidenbode* 1885).

The role of Sadrach as leader of his group of Javanese Christians was
not primarily defined by supralocal institutions. He acquired his prestige
as a religious leader in the villages. Being well educated, he endeavoured
to prove his religious superiority in a direct confrontation with *gurus*
who had acquired local notoriety and had gained some following. This was
the way Toenggoel Woelloeng had established himself and Sadrach followed
his example. He sought contacts with them and entered into religious
debates, sometimes lasting several days. It was understood that at the
end one of the contestants would bow to the other's superiority and be-
come his follower. Sadrach engaged in these religious disputes on various

occasions. Sometimes it was Sadrach, who soon became well-known, that
was challenged. A Javanese *guru* living in Kedu heard of him. He had hun-
dreds of followers. "This *guru* now heard tales about Sadrach, and well
knowing the power of his own *ngelmu* and trusting his knowledge of Java-
nese mythology he said: 'I trust myself regarding the man Sadrach. I
want to be measured with him and if I have to submit I will kneel (*sembah*)
for him and follow him, but if I win, Sadrach will be my follower.'
Sadrach accepted (.....) The combat was attended by great numbers; it
lasted for three days before the battle was over. At last Sadrach won
and Kjahi Wigoena was beaten (.....) and became a Christian and of course
hundreds of his flock followed his example." (*De Heidenbode* 1897:268-271).

In this way large groups came under his religious leadership, some of
santri background, most, however, *abangan*. In some cases Sadrach succeeded
in incorporating groups expecting the return of the *Ratu Adil*, the 'right-
eous king'. This of course resulted in sceptical reactions on the part of
Dutch missionaries, who were much afraid of syncretism, fearing that the
message of Christ would be seen from this Javanese messianic perspective
(Adriaanse 1935:328-335 and 360-368).

His role as religious leader in this way derived largely from his per-
sonality. It was Sadrach who possessed the superior *ngelmu* (faith or
knowledge). In the eyes of his followers he did not represent the Christian
church they knew to be foreign. It is unclear what the motive for Sadrach's
move to Karangjasa was. It has been said that he wanted a quieter place
that would allow him to contemplate (Sumanto Wp 1974:30; Adriaanse 1899:
68-72). Since Karangjasa was also known to be full of dangerous spirits,
Sadrach proved his power and strength by settling there.

In Karangjasa he cleared some ground, leased it and built a house. This
became the geographical centre for his religious followers and furnish-
ed proof of his spiritual strength. Although Sadrach still accepted the
leadership of Mrs. Philips and Mrs. Van Oostrom in the first years of his
stay in Karangjasa until they died, he became the *guru kuasa*, the 'power-
ful teacher' who had proved his own strength in the eyes of his followers.
Every day people came to his house or to the *pendopo*, asking advice both
for themselves and for their Christian community, and receiving religious
instruction and admonition regarding the conduct of life. Sadrach enter-
tained a wide range of personal relationships. He was honoured as a *guru*,
receiving as gifts "eleven ells of cotton, a rixdollar and three cocks"
from his pupils, his children (Ingwersen 1915:326). This was their *doewit
pangandika*, their gift in return for the words spoken to them, or *doewit*

piwulang, when receiving instruction (Adriaanse 1899:426). These gifts
to the *guru* should be seen as an aspect of their esteem; they were not
obligatory or regarded as payment.

At the same time, visits from the various Christian communities to
Sadrach became more organized. *Sesepuh* (elders) or the *imam,* the local
religious leaders of congregations, assembled in Karangjasa every *Selasa
Kliwon.*[8] These gatherings partly fitted into the *guru-murid* pattern.
Many local religious leaders were pupils of Sadrach. This was because
some organization was necessary as Sadrach's circle expanded. Later, some
decentralization became necessary, and regional organizations of the
Christian communities were set up. In the eighties, groups of Christians
were found not only in the residencies of Bagelen, Kedu and Banyumas, but
also in Yogyakarta, Pekalongan, Cheribon and Semarang. In 1887 a synod
encompassing all local congregations was set up on the provincial level
(Van der Linden 1937:175). This was the result of cooperation between
Sadrach and J. Wilhelm, one of the missionaries of the Dutch Reformed
Missionary Society. Whatever the background, it should be noted, however,
that a most unusual phenomenon had been created, a large supralocal
organization under the leadership of Sadrach; covering in 1887 70 local
and 7 regional structures. It was especially in rural areas that it was
established. The congregations were seldom founded in cities like
Purworejo, which was the centre in the first years after 1867, and later
Yogyakarta.[9] This is unusual because social groups extending on such a
large scale through rural Javanese society are rare, as territoriality
is the most significant principle of rural Javanese social organization
(Jay 1969:188-238).

Sadrach's circle was independent of the Christian church, which was
mostly found in the cities, and besides, was not just an object of the
activities of the Dutch missionary society, as we shall see. Sadrach,
having received extensive religious instruction in *pesantren* and from
Christian missionaries, established a large Christian church without a
power base in the urban centres. It fitted into rural patterns of reli-
gious leadership. Within the supralocal structure the loyalty of the
followers of Sadrach was intensely personal. The local religious leaders
derived their prestige from their regular contact with Sadrach in
Karangjasa.

The struggle against religious tutelage

The church or circle of Sadrach was not insulated from outside contacts.[10]

In the first place, it was important for Sadrach to gain some sort of
official status and approval from the government. The government regula-
tions did not clearly indicate the status of Javanese Christians. Indeed
they were very ambiguous. As Indonesians, the Javanese Christians were
placed under the supervision of 'princes, regents and chiefs'. The Java-
nese civil authorities were responsible within their areas for law and
order among the Javanese. As Christians they were put under the authority
of the Dutch civil service. The Dutch government was responsible for
such Christian institutions as the Protestant Church. The missionary
organizations also needed Dutch permission for their work (Furnivall
1967:378-380). The Dutch administration also guaranteed religious free-
dom (Kraemer 1958:102). So it was quite unclear who was responsible for
the Javanese Christians in Central Java who were outside the formal
authority of any official Christian institution. The Sadrach movement
could easily be jeopardized by this lack of clarity about its status.
Its life was endangered in various ways.They could not count on a posi-
tive attitude from the administration. The conversion of Javanese was
often looked upon with suspicion. As we have seen, the baptism of Java-
nese by the *Indische Kerk* in Purworejo ended after some time. Earlier,
in Surabaya, it had been up to the resident to decide whether it could
take place at all (Van Akkeren 1970:71-77). It was feared that Javanese,
upon baptism, would ask for Dutch nationality and receive exemption from
various sorts of taxes and obligations. At the same time it was feared
that this would lead to unrest and dissatisfaction. These contradictory
arguments indicate above all the ambiguities in which Javanese Christians
found themselves.

From this point of view it was understandable that Sadrach should move
from Purworejo to Karangjasa after working with Mrs. Philips. If he
wanted to establish himself as an independent leader, conspicuousness
in the residential capital was not an asset.[11] In Karangjasa he could be
clearly the leader of his converts, while at the same time his connection
with Mrs. Philips would give him some protection. The same was true of
his relationship with the Protestant Church, in which, until 1874 some of
his followers had been baptized. This might help to legitimize his posi-
tion and work in the eyes of the government. On the other hand, it allow-
ed him to set up a religious centre in Karangjasa for his followers.

First the decision of the council of the Protestant Church in Purworejo
and later the deaths of Mrs. Philips and Mrs. Van Oostrom, ended his con-
tacts with the Dutch. This was important because his success as a reli-

gious teacher was not confined to one area only. In the seventies groups
of Javanese Christians were formed in the three southern residences of
Banyumas, Bagelen and Kedu. It was impossible for Sadrach to secure his
leadership by fostering good relations with all the Javanese regents
involved. When possible he did so.[12] But this was not enough. Sadrach was
obliged to look for new contacts with the outside world.

The *NGZV* was founded in 1859 by orthodox Protestants in the Netherlands,
unhappy with the liberal atmosphere in church and missionary circles.
Looking for an opportunity to start missionary work in the East Indies,
they considered doing so in the Moluccas. However, they received a re-
quest for support from the missionary society in Batavia to which Mr.
Anthing was attached and which had started to evangelize in the neighbour-
hood of Batavia.[13] The first missionary, A. Vermeer, was sent to Java and
settled in Tegal in 1862. He found two missionary assistants employed by
the missionary society in Batavia. Vermeer did not receive a missionary
education before leaving Holland. It was not clear what the *NGZV* expect-
ed from him. His missionary efforts in those first years were confined
to the care of a small group of Christians. He undertook no evangelizing
efforts himself. Vermeer, as well as two other missionaries sent to Java,
Stoové and Bieger, agreed that their approach should be indirect. "By
taking the Javanese into his house, feeding and educating them, the
missionary will find an opportunity to preach the gospel ..... the
missionary can and may not go into the houses; he must work indirectly,
like the government ....." writes one of them (Lion Cachet 1896:512). It
was difficult for them in those first years to do otherwise, as they were
unable to speak Javanese. At the instigation of the resident of Tegal,
Vermeer moved on to a piece of land in Muaratua bordering on the sea,
erected a house and some further buildings and settled with the small
Christian community and some foster children.[14] This was not an unusual
thing to do and was quite common among other missionaries too, as it
forestalled difficulties with other Javanese (Jansz 1874). The board of
the *NGZV*, however, became quite annoyed that, contrary to their expec-
tations, the evangelization was not undertaken by the missionaries in a
more direct way. Moreover, the financial burden of feeding, housing and
educating a small community was more than they could bear. So when it
became known in Holland that, in the southern part of Central Java, small
groups of Christians were being formed, Vermeer was asked to go there.
After consultation with Hoezoo in Semarang, he left for the residency of
Banyumas in 1867 in order to take care of the Christians there. He settled
in Purbolinggo, which was not in the direct neighbourhood of Mrs. Van

Oostrom in Banyumas, because he understood that "she would like to remain
leader of her Javanese Christians" (Pol 1922:139). However, contrary to
the expectations of the *NGZV*, his missionary strategy was the same as be-
fore, as he took his large household with him. Nevertheless he came into
contact with various groups of followers of Sadrach and was asked to bap-
tize them. But as he had not yet mastered the Javanese language, contacts
were restricted (Coolsma 1901:167-170; Lion Cachet 1896:549-560). On
'baptizing journeys' he was guided by Sadrach, who introduced him to his
followers and made a smooth administering of the sacraments possible
(Van der Linden 1947:16). This made it clear that Vermeer was no more
than an ordained minister, working under the auspices of Sadrach in the
congregations. His own main interest was in his large household, which
absorbed most of his attention and money. He left Java in 1876, partly
because of conflicts with the board of the *NGZV*.[15]

It was two years before a new missionary from the *NGZV* came to the
southern residencies of Central Java. In 1878 Bieger left Muaratua and
settled first in Kutoarjo, not far from Karangjasa, and later in Purworejo.
This seems to have been his own initiative. Neither his move to this part
of Java, nor the goals he set himself there seem to have been supported
by the board of the *NGZV*.[16]

It was not his wish to engage in the direct missionary efforts which
the board in the Netherlands expected of its missionaries. Bieger set
himself a different objective. He saw Sadrach not as an independent
religious teacher, but as the assistant, even servant of Mrs. Philips.
The fact that she had died some years ago did not affect the role of
Sadrach in his eyes. Sadrach was to him as well as to the resident "one
of the servants of Mr. and Mrs. Philips, who had become frightfully
influential among his people".[17] Bieger clearly saw himself as the man
who should take over leadership from Sadrach and assume the same position
as he had had in Muaratua. Shortly after his arrival, he made two jour-
nies in one year, visiting many of the congregations in the region and
baptizing 1,000-1,500 Javanese.[18] This indicated that Sadrach was not
unwilling to cooperate with Bieger in the same way as he had done with
Vermeer before. But this was not what Bieger had in mind. He claimed
that Sadrach should become his servant and hand over his position.[19]
Sadrach, who had until then been willing to accept the authority of the
missionaries in matters of administering the sacraments, was not prepared
to submit whereas 'he was put in a chair' in the house of Mr. Anthing.
It was not a religious problem, "but about *pangreh*", i.e. administrative
authority (Adriaanse 1899:90-95). He was not willing to surrender that

and he could count on the fierce loyalty of his flock.

Bieger, however, turned to the resident of Bagelen and asked for help.
The latter had been confronted with comparable problems during this time
in connection with the *tarekat* of H. Abd al Kadir, who had established
various 'schools' in Central Java, including one in Bagelen (Sartono
Kartodirdjo 1966:161; Adriaanse 1899:98-101). The authorities had become
quite sensitive about Javanese religious groups, because of the possi-
bility of political disturbances. So it is not surprising that the resi-
dent was open to Bieger's complaints about Sadrach. The *Koloniaal Verslag*
flatly states that the resident, on hearing accusations that Sadrach
urged resistance to vaccination 'immediately takes the necessary measures,
whereupon (Sadrach) promises to refrain from exerting any influence upon
his congregations' (*Koloniaal Verslag* 1882 K, III, a). The resident did
so in March 1882. He went to Karangjasa where he had ordered a meeting
with Sadrach together with all the elders of his church. Accompanied by
a large staff including the pastor of the Protestant Church as well as
Bieger, the resident declared the latter to be the head of the congre-
gations. Somewhat later Sadrach was taken into custody and held in
Bieger's house.[20]

It is clear that Bieger had not been acting in accordance with the
wishes of the *NGZV*. In his attitude towards Sadrach as well as in the
steps he took against him, he acted in close collaboration with the civil
service and the Protestant Church. He even wished to become its assistant
preacher (*Koloniaal Verslag* 1883 K, III, a). However, his was not an
ultimate victory. This promotion had to be agreed upon by the council
of the Protestant Church in Batavia, which advised the Governor General
in these matters. The whole affair regarding the transfer of authority
to Bieger was also being studied. In 1884 the G.G. made it known that
Sadrach must be restored to his original position: "It was not considered
advisable to cut forcefully the ties between the congregations and their
chosen native leader" (*Koloniaal Verslag* 1884 K, III, a). This most im-
portant decision cannot be fully explained yet. Some considerations, how-
ever, must have been important. Instead of avoiding disturbances of law
and order Sadrach's removal from the scene had created conflict. First
of all, there was conflict between Bieger and the Javanese congregations.
Their loyalty was not to the Calvinist confession, despite the work done
by earlier missionaries, but to Sadrach personally. Not even the inter-
ference of the administration was able to change that (Adriaanse 1899:
133). This loyalty was found not only among the peasants, but also among

the most influential leaders in his group. As late as 1922 the influen-
tial *guru* Wigoena, whom we mentioned earlier as having had a large fol-
lowing in Kedu in his own right before becoming the follower of Sadrach,
not only withstood the government, but later also spurned advances from
the Roman Catholic Church and - again - the Dutch Reformed Mission
(Merkelijn 1941:88-97). Secondly, Sadrach was not altogether alone among
the Dutch either. In Mr. Anthing he had a powerful protector. There is
no written evidence that there was any direct communication between the
two during this affair. The conflict was, however, well-known in Batavia
and Mr. Anthing had much prestige among Dutch Christians, some of whom
had to advise the government in this matter. He was a strong supporter
of the establishment of indigenous churches, free from missionary tute-
lage or government interference. It is very likely that he intervened,
as it is clear that he entertained an ongoing concern for and relation-
ships with influential Javanese Christian *gurus*.[21] At the same time the
intervention of the government in church and missionary matters was under
severe criticism from both orthodox as well as liberal Protestant circles.
The former resident of Timor, I. Esser, for instance, made his criticism
very clear (Esser 1883:273-275; Esser 1885:272-275; Adriaanse 1899:110).
And, as the evidence about who had indeed been behind the resistance to
vaccination proved thinner than the resident of Bagelen had assumed, the
decision of the Government in Batavia was understandable.[22] Sadrach him-
self also skilfully enabled the government to take this stand by declaring
that he was willing to cooperate with J. Wilhelm, a newly arrived *NGZV*
missionary (Van der Linden 1937:138). Through this statement he made it
clear to the government that the major issue was no more and no less than
that of missionary or church tutelage and the loss of religious freedom.

By accepting cooperation with Wilhelm, Sadrach would be able to restore
his own position vis-à-vis his followers. Indeed his prestige would even
become greater. Also the acceptance of Wilhelm would make the issue not
overtly political. This gesture made it possible for the government to
avoid becoming too enmeshed in a church and missionary affair.

The restoration of Sadrach to his former position had a great impact.
Shortly thereafter, Bieger returned to Holland and the criticisms of
various people, other missionaries of the *NGZV* as well as the pastor
of the Protestant Church, were not taken seriously any more. Both the
government and Sadrach were satisfied with this solution. The period
which followed showed a gradual increase in the popularity of the church.
The regular letters about its progress to the board of the *NGZV* in the

Netherlands make that clear (*De Heidenbode* 1883-1889 passim). Wilhelm
did not question Sadrach's position - he paid a visit to Sadrach in
Karangjasa, which Bieger had previously refused to do - and clearly and
visibly honoured him by offering him a chair in his house in Purworejo.
Again it was his personal conviction rather than missionary policy which
influenced the relationship. Wilhelm accepted the right to exist of a
Javanese Church headed by Sadrach. It was this church that he was serving
as a missionary. In April 1885 the church leaders gathered in Karangjasa
and adopted an official name: *Golongané Wong Kristen Kang Mardika*, the
Fellowship of Free Christians, free not only from the *Indische Kerk*, as
a reformed missionary later assumed (Van der Linden 1937:171), but also
free from the administrative tutelage of the Dutch Reformed Mission. It
implied that, in matters of religion, Christian Javanese had established
themselves as an independent group. Wilhelm was willing to accept that
and thus was able to gain influence in matters of faith. There his
authority was acknowledged. In a period when missionaries, after the
creation of independent Christian communities in Central and East Java,
were quite successfully gaining the upper hand in both administrative
and confessional affairs, he was a marked exception (Van Akkeren 1970:
108-109). As a convinced Calvinist Presbyterian, he was content to re-
gard the local groups professing Christ instead of the Islamic faith
as regular churches. These should certainly be fostered and guided, but
they were not different in this respect from the Dutch churches in the
Netherlands. After the earlier conflicts the cooperation between Sadrach
and Wilhelm was close. It provided Sadrach with a Dutch ally for when
the independence of his church would be endangered again. The cooperation
would make the church look more 'normal' in the eyes of Dutch society.
For Wilhelm it was a unique opportunity to evangelize and guide the
various congregations according to his conviction.

What this cooperation meant to the members of the church is difficult
to establish. Their first loyalty was to Sadrach, as had become evident
during the earlier conflicts. Wilhelm's role could therefore only become
more extensive, because it was clear to the church-members that Sadrach
accepted him. When the *Golongané Kristen Kang Mardika* was founded, a
central board was established to which Wilhelm was admitted. Although
Sadrach's role as *guru* implied that the Christian faith professed by the
members of the congregation came through him, Sadrach at the same time
permitted Wilhelm to play an important role as teacher and pastor, giving
sermons, advising the congregations on their conduct, catechizing, etc.

The impact of this, however, is uncertain, as Wilhelm had to divide his
attention among a great number of congregations in various regions. Hence
his involvement in the daily life of the congregations could not be great.
He also stressed the self-reliance of the congregations, being unwilling
to pull financial strings in order to enhance his influence. Therefore
the cooperation between Sadrach and Wilhelm did much to improve the in-
dependence of the church at both the local and provincial level.

This cooperation ended in 1891. Although the board of the *NGZV* had
proved to be satisfied with the cooperation until 1890, their attitude
began to change (*De Heidenbode* 1891:254-256). For the first time since
its foundation, a serious attempt was made in 1890 to formulate prin-
ciples of reformed (*gereformeerd*) missionary policy. A. Kuyper distin-
guished four main features, two of which were directly relevant to the
relationship between Sadrach and the *NGZV*: firstly, the Javanese Chris-
tians should be brought into the structure of the 'mother-church';
secondly, the 'heathen' way of life should be transformed to accord with
Christian standards (Kuyper 1890:5).

The board of the *NGZV* decided for the first time to send a deputy to
Java with a full mandate (Pol 1922:164). This deputy, F. Lion Cachet,
was sent not only to review the situation and settle disputes among
certain missionaries, his mission was also a preparatory step towards
the takeover of the work of the *NGZV* by the Reformed Churches in the
Netherlands. His highly elaborate description of the yearlong journey
clearly indicates that, even before arrival in Batavia, he was resolved
to end the existing relationship between Sadrach and Wilhelm. He imme-
diately put Sadrach 'in his proper place', by refusing to see him upon
arrival, and only visiting him after some considerable time. Lion Cachet
also describes how he avoided staying with Wilhelm after arrival in
Central Java, fearing that he would be forced to confront Sadrach in
Wilhelm's house (Lion Cachet 1896:240-243). His attitude is evident from
his very detailed description of all the places and churches he visited.
It was not possible for him to see more than 'churches in embryo' needing
the lasting care and guidance of many missionaries. Sadrach was to be
replaced. For Lion Cachet Karangjasa had become *Karangdosa*, the stone of
stumbling and rock of offence (Lion Cachet 1896:372).

A most tragic conflict arose which opposed Wilhelm to the other mis-
sionaries, Lion Cachet, and an 'independent' advisor, P. Jansz. Sadrach
was not involved directly in this dispute. It was finally agreed that
Sadrach should be regarded as a false teacher and that there could no

longer be any cooperation with him. The state of affairs in the "groups
of baptized Christians" was regarded as "heartbreaking". The final agree-
ment also stated that there was no church in the true sense: "Some halms
of rice here and there, overgrown by *alang* cannot be called a *sawah*".
Wilhelm, who stood alone, yielded and signed (Lion Cachet 1896:835-839;
840-842). He died not long afterwards. The emphasis on subordination to
the mother-church and on intensive and prolonged guidance from the mis-
sionaries in cultural, administrative and confessional matters became
the main focus of future policy.

The *Golongané Wong Kristen Kang Mardika*, however, remained unaffected.
Sadrach, who, before this dispute arose had received official religious
recognition as *inlands hulpprediker*, kept his old position. The breach
with the Dutch Reformed Mission became irreparable when Sadrach came
into contact with the Apostolic Society in Magelang and received a
position in this officially recognized church. The Dutch mission could
harm him no more. Only on his death was the relationship to change again.

At the beginning of this essay we stated that conversion to the Christian
faith has often been connected with the broader process of political and
economic penetration. The relationship between the two processes is,
however, very complex. Although conversion and acceptance of Dutch domi-
nation in some cases went together, just as resistance to Christianity
often was one of the manifestations of the struggle against Dutch pene-
tration, it is clear that no simple general thesis can be put forward.

In the nineteenth century the government in Java was certainly not
in favour of missionary efforts among the population. The Protestant
Church at that time was not permitted to engage in such efforts. And
after 1850 the government only slowly and most reluctantly granted per-
mission to missionary organizations to operate in some residencies.

The first groups of Javanese Christians which emerged in the middle
of the century cannot be regarded as having resulted from outside inter-
vention. Indeed some grew out of the scattered activities of individual
Europeans, but more often they were set up by Javanese religious teach-
ers. Apart from the early and not very successful activities of the
first Dutch missionaries, who were mostly operating in cities, conversion
to Christianity in the eighteen-sixties and seventies was not linked to
Dutch churches or missionary work. The Sadrach movement fits the pattern
in this respect. However, there are also some differences with respect
to other groups of Javanese Christians. As the groups of *Kristen Djawa*

came into much closer contact with the work of Dutch missionaries in the last quarter of the nineteenth century, this led in many cases to a different situation. The famous Christian village of Mojowarno, for instance, came under much more intensive missionary leadership, which was active not only in matters of confession and church administration but also in the daily conduct of village life. So in many cases a greater integration of the missionaries and the Javanese was achieved. This growing integration can be seen also as the gradual emergence of Dutch dominance and Javanese subordination within the Christian community.

It is in this respect that the main difference becomes visible. One of the distinctive characteristics of the Sadrach movement was a long and successful struggle against Dutch dominance. In this regard Sadrach must be seen not only as one of the early Christian leaders, but also as one of several religious leaders who resisted Dutch dominance at the time. This fact was important for his following. Sadrach had established himself as *guru kuasa*, a 'powerful teacher': his teaching, even he himself was often placed in the context of *Ratu Adil* expectations. Not only did his flock tend to regard Christ as the coming 'righteous king' in these terms, but it was said that Sadrach himself was going to play a role in the restoration of Javanese society and the expulsion of foreign intruders (Adriaanse 1899:145-148; 182-186; Drewes 1925:182-188). It was quite clearly a Javanese movement, emphasing the cultural identity of Javanese rural society, adapting itself to the *adat* of the various regions and not trying to change it (Adriaanse 1899:151-157; 374-379; Soetopo 1971:61-66). Conversion to the Christian faith was not a break. No new Christian colonies were established in the Sadrach movement. The people were part of their villages and remained so. Thus the Sadrach movement brought about a very interesting combination of religious change and cultural continuity, an essential part of which was the struggle against Dutch church and missionary tutelage. It was both one of the causes and the results of its strength. It was in its success in the struggle against Dutch religious domination that the Sadrach movement, at the end of the nineteenth century, clearly distinguished itself from other protest movements. One of the causes may be that Sadrach himself was an extraordinary man. His early life history shows that he had come to know various people within the Dutch Christian community and in several cases received instruction and guidance. He came to know the constraints and possibilities when dealing with the Dutch. So when Sadrach moved from Purworejo to Karangjasa he was not only able to establish

himself as a *de facto* independent *guru*, he also very skilfully succeeded
in protecting his position in dealing with the Dutch. There was a great
gulf between official Christendom and Javanese rural society. However,
Sadrach knew them both and was able to act accordingly. The unique com-
bination of a struggle for religious independence and a willingness and
ability to cooperate when necessary sets the Sadrach movement apart at
the end of the nineteenth century in Java.[23]

NOTES

 1 Wertheim has emphasized the role of education fostered by the missions
   and churches in this respect. See Wertheim 1963:205-206. A first at-
   tempt to write a history of nationalism among the Protestants was made
   by Simatupang a.o. 1967.

 2 After 1816 the *Protestantsche Kerk* was not permitted to engage in
   missionary work. Van Boetzelaer 1946:378-381.

 3 Kraemer suggests that his illegitimate children, who could not be
   baptized, were also a factor. Kraemer 1958:78.

 4 Sumanto Wp 1974:11 and 15. This Indonesian book does not only refer
   to the earliest missionary sources that have also been used here, but
   adds oral information from Indonesians who have kept alive the oral
   tradition concerning Sadrach. Neither Coolsma nor Adriaanse gives
   his year of birth or is specific about his birthplace.

 5 The Javanese word *mati* is used when one is convinced that someone
   else has a superior faith or knowledge in religious matters. Upon
   conversion the old person dies and a new name indicates the renewal
   of life.

 6 Adriaanse 1901:50. Coolsma refers to a statement of Hoezoo's that
   Sadrach had been baptized in Mojowarno in 1866. Coolsma 1901:172.
   This appears unlikely, however, when we look at his various contacts
   and periods of learning, especially in Semarang.

 7 Adriaanse argues convincingly that, contrary to other opinions, there
   was no split between the two when Sadrach left Bondo again in 1867.
   Adriaanse 1899:49-50.

 8 Selasa (Tuesday) and Kliwon, the fifth marketing day according to the
   Javanese calender, fall together every 35th day. Selasa Kliwon is
   regarded as bringing fortune.

 9 Adriaanse drew a map in which the spread of the various congregations
   can be seen.

10 The words 'church' and 'circle' have a confessional dimension in
   missionary literature. Both words reflect positively or negatively
   the writer's attitude towards Sadrach as leader of a 'regular'
   Christian church.

11 This is not an explanation of his move; it must, however, be regarded as an important aspect of it.

12 Adriaanse investigated accusations concerning financial matters brought by Dutch missionaries against Sadrach. He spoke about them to the regent of Kutoarjo, who declared them to be untrue. At that time there was an open conflict between the *NGZV* and Sadrach, in which this regent did not take sides with the Dutch missionaries. Adriaanse 1899:431.

13 There is some irony in the fact that Mr. Anthing not only contributed to the religious education of Sadrach and 'put him in a chair' and that 'his' missionary society invited the *NGZV* to come and work on Java. A short description of the work of this man is given in Kraemer 1958:99-101.

14 Lion Cachet 1896:491. The resident had chosen a piece of land close to the sea because Christ had preached on the borders of the waters and his first ·disciples were fishermen.

15 It is possible that Vermeer tried to establish more intensive contacts. In 1883, he wrote that Sadrach did not want European interference. It is more likely, however, that since he wanted to come back into *NGZV* service, this was an attempt to excuse his earlier way of working.

16 Lion Cachet speaks of Bieger's own wish to leave Muaratua. According to Adriaanse it is unclear who supported Bieger's intentions. Lion Cachet 1896:282-291; Adriaanse 1899:82-83.

17 'Jaarlijks Overzicht van het zendingswerk in onze Overzeese bezittingen.' In: *De Macedoniër* 1st ed. 1883:56.

18 'Jaarlijks Overzicht van het zendingswerk in onze Overzeese bezittingen.' In: *De Macedoniër* 1st ed. 1883:57-58.

19 Bieger does not speak of Sadrach as an 'assistant' (*assistent*) but as a 'servant' (*bediende*).

20 Adriaanse 1899:101-107. Lion Cachet, who usually gives very extensive descriptions, does not write about this episode. Neither does *De Heidenbode*, which otherwise gives a regular account of the missionary activities.

21 A letter from Mrs. Anthing to the editor of the missionary magazine *De Macedoniër* after the death of her husband gives evidence for this. *De Macedoniër* 3rd ed. 1885:28-33.

22 The *Koloniaal Verslag* of 1881 states that the opposition to vaccination was caused by the preaching of a missionary of the *NGZV*!

23 The article of Claude Guillot included in the Bibliography was published when this essay was already finished. Unfortunately it is not possible to make some critical comments on Guillot's argument about the interrelationship between the earliest spread of Christianity on Java and plantation economies.

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POLITICAL STRUCTURE AND COLONIAL CONTROL IN SOUTH SULAWESI[+]

In his discussion of the synthesis between old and new in Noimuti (north
west Timor) Professor Schulte Nordholt remarks: "Everything is new: the
political community itself, the religion and the ruler, but it has all
been fitted into the existing categories of Timorese thinking" (Schulte
Nordholt 1971:451). This observation must cause a certain uneasy self-
questioning in anyone who presumes to try and write the history of people
from other cultures. For it is clear that in Noimuti it would be all too
easy for an unwary observer, ignorant of 'the categories of Timorese
thinking', to fall into serious error. He could see the settlement as a
totally 'new' community, a product of the Dominican mission. This would
be the most likely misinterpretation, because the elements of European
origin would be immediately recognizable to most outsiders, and hence
dominant. But in theory the opposite mistake could also be made, of
noticing only the Timorese pattern, not the new elements, so that Noimuti
would be seen as typical of the region.

   Protection from this kind of error can only come with an awareness of
the pitfalls inherent in cross-cultural research. Most historians will
never feel called upon to analyse classificatory systems or even kinship,
but they must be aware that these and other elements of social and
political structure can also be highly relevant variables. Much
historical writing on Asia has been placed within a common and easy
framework of simple dichotomies: 'continuity and change', or the now
less fashionable 'modernity and tradition'. The problem with such
analyses is, that they demand a clear base line: if the historian is to
discuss change, where is his starting point? Usually, it is a short and
static account of 'the traditional situation' on 'the eve of colonial

rule', with very little, if any, information on the flexibility, dynamics
of change and possibilities for growth which did or did not exist in the
indigenous system. When the first European ships sail into the bay the
switch is thrown and the dead mechanism comes to life: history begins.

The consequent 'change', or 'modernization' is seen in terms of the
addition of new - mostly Western - elements or their replacement of old
ones. The individual elements accumulate and, presumably when there are
enough of them, the group, place or state is sufficiently 'modern' or
'Europeanized' to be comfortably discussed within the terms usual for
Western social and political analysis. Occasional reference may be made
to persisting traditional elements, but they are often seen simply as
survivals, and their continuing existence is not placed properly in
context and examined for function and relevance. In other words - though
it seems to be stating the obvious - any community, society or state
should be studied as it is, as a structure of relationships, on several
levels, which provides an organizational and interpretative framework.

While most historians now working on Indonesia, for example, do try
to understand the principles of social and political organization, very
few attempt to discuss the deeper structures. In his discussion of the
classificatory system of the Atoni Professor Schulte Nordholt describes
the ways in which they organize and express their view of the society
in terms of the categories of their own system of symbols. In his account
of Noimuti, referred to above, Professor Schulte Nordholt demonstrates
the flexibility of the Timorese system, its ability to incorporate and
absorb new elements. At the same time, he observes that the Atoni lack
historical perspective, and see their own culture as static; "it is
only fit and proper that it should remain constantly the same now and
for ever, from primordial times until all ages to come" (Schulte
Nordholt 1971:448).

Several points emerge from this section which are of great interest
to the historian. One such point is that an apparently unchanging
society, with a long established and persisting structure and an a-
historical view of the past, may nonetheless have adjusted to change
and accepted new elements by incorporating them into the existing
structure. From this follows also that within an apparently fixed
and balanced structure, where nothing may change, a lively political
life can continue, with competition, victory and defeat being translated
into shifts in rank and status for individuals, as winner replaces
loser, but in the same place in the system. Another point is that

indigenous categories of thought will influence acceptance or rejection
of new elements, depending on their congruence with the existing system.

   The purpose of this essay is to consider aspects of political
organization in South-west Sulawesi (Celebes) and their relationship to
colonial administrative change after the Dutch conquest of 1905-1906. It
must be stressed at the outset, however, that this is an exploratory
paper on work in progress; my accounts of indigenous structure and
administrative politics are based on a preliminary survey of archive
material and an orientation visit to the region of four months duration.
Consequently, my conclusions here are tentative, and intended more to in-
dicate possible research directions than to attempt a final comment on the
complex interplay of indigenous political structure and colonial regime.

   South Sulawesi's image is based on the reputation of its predominantly
Makassarese/Buginese population. Although not particularly numerous -
they totalled about two million in 1930 - the Makassarese and Buginese
were renowned for their aggressive character, reflected in their
individual willingness to use violence to defend their honour, their
frequent collective recourse to arms in the competitive inter-state
rivalry typical of the peninsula, and also in their success as sailors
and traders. The stereotypic Buginese or Makassarese was a fierce
warrior, brave sea-farer and fanatical Muslim who would tolerate no
check upon his pride and freedom. But at the same time, the region was
regarded as extremely 'feudal', as its kings and princes seemed to have
tremendous power over their passionately loyal followers. It was, then,
a region of organized states, of which Makassarese Gowa and Buginese
Bone were the two best known. It was also characterized by interaction,
competition and participation in politics, trade and religion (Chabot
1950, Kooreman 1883, Errington 1977). As such, it presented a very
different face to the world than did the small communities of Timor.

   Historiographically, too, South Sulawesi stands in strong contrast to
the a-historical Atoni. It is well known for its relatively rational and
objective indigenous historical tradition. Diaries giving careful
chronological accounts with precise dates were held by courts, chronicles
record possible explanations but reserve judgement. The atmosphere is of
reasonable men tracing the past, and as such provides the Western reader
with a reassuring sense of familiarity, a relief compared with the
charged symbolism and sacred forces concentrated in other Indonesian
historical literature, such as the *babad* of Java (Noorduyn 1955,

Noorduyn 1965, Zainal Abidin 1971). Even in conversation, the direct
frankness and willingness to express strong opinions of the Buginese
and Makassarese seem to indicate a straightforward commitment to the
world of men and material things.

Such a commitment does of course exist, but it would be a mistake
to assume that this means that the western student can simply ignore
the cultural differences. An interested observer's first enquiry about
political organization produces a detailed account which seems complete
and factual (supported as it often is by a diagram). But further
investigation shows that what is usually given is not necessarily an
existing system at a given time and place, but rather an account of how
that particular state should always be. Whether it is Gowa or Bone or
Soppeng or Luwu or another kingdom, a description of political
organization is a depiction of the formal ideal of the state. More
questions may eventually reveal all sorts of deviations, but they are
regarded as intrinsically less important and less interesting than the
structure as it should be.

During my research it became apparent that it would be useful to
differentiate between three levels of political organization. At the
most abstract, there was the image of the ideal order; this was usually
the first account given, it was often felt to be enough, and people often
spoke as if it were reality. The second level, which I will call the
political system, was the actual institutionalized constellation of
offices and ranks which provided a rudimentary central organization and
base for the royal household, as well as formalizing the ties to subject
villages, vassals and allies. The third level was that of actual power
relationships, the concentration and dispersion of power within various
offices and under different titles. All three levels were inextricably
related: the political system was a partial realization of the ideal, an
extrapolation from the theoretically complete, and the image served to
express relationships and legitimize the system. The power relationships
too were articulated and legitimized by their recognition through
absorption into the system and hence by linkage to the ideal. The
existence of such levels is not, of course, peculiar to South Sulawesi,
but occurs in many societies - including the Netherlands or the United
States.

The image of the ideal order provides a frame of reference for the
organization and evaluation of political behaviour in South Sulawesi.
As such, it is perhaps comparable to the Atoni classificatory system,

but the relationship between image and reality is much looser in the
more complex and cosmopolitan Buginese/Makassarese society than with the
Atoni. Moreover, in South Sulawesi relatively large scale states
developed long ago, probably in the fourteenth century; there was contact
with the Portuguese in the sixteenth century, followed by conversion to
Islam after 1605 and then the expansion of Dutch power out of their base
in Makassar (after 1667). For most of the peninsula Holland was a power
to be reckoned with during the nineteenth century, and the formal
imposition of colonial rule came after the 1905-1906 conquest (Harvey
1974, Couvreur 1929, archive material). As a result of all these contacts
and parallel internal development it is not possible to make a direct
comparison between the Atoni and the Makassarese/Buginese.

   Nevertheless, it is possible that research directed towards this goal
might produce interesting results. For South Sulawesi is in East
Indonesia, and during casual conversations remarks were made which had
intriguing suggestions of implicit categorization: elaborate accounts of
old Makassarese state organization with male and female elements in
reciprocity and balance, division of power within Soppeng between a
dynamic active leader and a passive female ruler. But since my research
was directed towards events during the colonial period any comments on
this deeper level of meaning would be purely speculative. In the
following pages I hope to show how Dutch attempts at administrative
reorganization were limited by the indigenous political structure, which
in some cases permitted the desired changes, and in others ensured their
failure.

   Directly after their defeat of the South Sulawesi states (which
resulted in the death of the ruler of Gowa and exile of Bone's king)
military rule was introduced. The emphasis during this period was on
establishing and maintaining control, little attention was paid to the
niceties of administration; the general idea was that the states would
eventually come under Dutch direct rule, once the various bands and
guerilla groups had been crushed. But by 1916 colonial thinking had
changed; it was decided to rule through the 'native chiefs', but without
a central court. The state remained, but the ruler was replaced by the
colonial *Controleur*. This was economical, and ran less risk of political
upheaval. In 1926, again following general policy which was veering
towards a hard conservatism, a further change took place. The old states
were to be re-created; their central establishments of king, ministers
and council were gradually reborn with the Dutch as midwife, in the hope

that they would form an alliance with the colonial regime against
trouble-making nationalists, democrats or religious leaders. The next
major shift in colonial policy came after the second world war, when
the returning colonial officials tried to create a more democratic and
responsive indigenous regime (archive material).

This is the general background in colonial policy. In South Sulawesi
itself there is little interest in this aspect of twentieth century
history. For local historians it is only the story of the struggles
against the Dutch which form a worthy successor to the accounts of the
rise and fall of rulers and kingdoms given in the well developed classic
and modern historiography of the region. But in fact the mundane details
of colonial administration also contain hidden insights and comment on
the indigenous development of the region's political history. The thread
can be followed through from the traditional histories to the documents
of the Dutch officials.

The archetypical Buginese/Makassarese state history begins with the
arrival on earth of a *tomanurung*, one who 'descended' and so was, at
least by strong implication, of divine descent. In a typical story, a
group of village heads, attracted by signs of cosmic disturbance such
as great storms, hear of a marvellous yellow clad being, usually
accompanied by followers bearing attributes. The village heads beg this
marvellous being to become their ruler, and an agreement is made between
the two parties. It is this element of agreement, often called a
'contract', which is one of the unique elements in South Sulawesi
political traditions (Andaya 1975, Friedericy 1929, Abd. Razak Dg.
Patunru 1964, Abd. Razak Dg. Patunru 1969).

An example will serve to make this clear. In Gowa accounts the local
headmen (*gallarang*) speak thus to the *Tomanurung*:

"We have made you our king, and we have become your slaves. You
become the cord onto which we hold, and we become the *labu* (water
container) that hangs from you. If the cord breaks but the *labu* does
not fall and shatter, then we become traitors; your weapon cannot
stab us, nor can you die by our weapons. Only the gods can take our
lives, and only the gods also can put you to death. You order and we
obey, but when our hands carry a load our shoulders will not take any,
and if our shoulders are already burdened our hands will no longer
carry a load. You are the wind and we the leaves of the tree, but you
can shake down only the dry and withered leaves. You are water, and
we are a floating trunk in the stream, but only a flood is able to
carry it away. Our children and wives, if not in favour with the
state, will also find no favour with us. We make you king over us,
but you are not king over our possessions. You are not to take our
chickens from their perches, nor our eggs from our baskets. If you
wish to purchase something from us, you buy what is fitting that you

buy; you trade what is suitable for you to trade, and you ask for
things that is correct for you to request, and we will give it to
you, but you are not to take things away from us. The king is not to
decide on any matter concerning domestic affairs without the
gallarang, and the *gallarang* are not to decide anything concerning
war without the king" (Mattulada 1978:174, slightly paraphrased here).

Such a tradition, with its strong emphasis on the mutual dependence
between ruler and chiefs, and on the limitations of power, is an
interesting insight into a state as a balancing of interest groups. The
tomanurung stories are also fascinating in that they seem to give a
glimpse of the process of state formation - at least in a dramatised
form. Moreover, the division of responsability and power between ruler
and headmen is also the key to the central element in South Sulawesi
political structure, the relationship between the *hadat* (council of
headmen, such as the *gallarang* described above) and the king.

A schematic representation of a typical South Sulawesi kingdom is of
a ruler at the apex of a state which is a confederation of units, often
a confederation of confederations. The king governs by consensus,
following consultation with the *hadat* on internal matters affecting the
core of the kingdom, usually the cluster of original villages (or small
village federations) whose headmen made the contract with the *tomanurung*
and comprise the *hadat*. If the state has grown at all, it has usually
done so by a process of conglomeration. As the power of the ruler grows,
neighbouring kingdoms, federations or villages join in, either as a re-
sult of conquest or because their leaders choose to ally themselves with
a waxing force. In each case, the original rulers or chiefs remain in
charge of internal affairs, but fall under the authority of the dominant
king in the event of war or 'international' confrontations.

This is the typical pattern for Buginese Bone, where the seven
original headmen formed the *hadat Aru Pitu* (seven princes) of Gowa,
with its *gallarang* joined in the *Bate Sallapang* (the nine banners; a
hadat of nine), while in ethnically more complex areas such as Luwu, the
confederate nature of the state includes representatives of the ruling
elite (basically a Buginese ethnic variant) in the *hadat* as well as
Toraja headmen representing the bulk of the population. Alongside the
central power holders of ruler and *hadat*, in each state there were also
various officials, such as the chief minister the *Tomarilaleng* (Bone;
in Gowa *Tumailalang*), a considerable figure in all states. In some
kingdoms, such as Soppeng, the leading official, the *Aru Bila*, had most
power, and the ruler was referred to as 'sleeping' (archive sources and

interviews).

Since most South Sulawesi kings were of *tomanurung* descent they had
the 'white blood' of the high nobility, and a continuing preoccupation
of all members of the nobility was to preserve or increase their level
of this 'white blood', the expression and proof of their right to
command. Consequently, there was a constant struggle for men to acquire
wives as well-born as possible, and to ensure that their women did not
marry beneath themselves, since in the Buginese/Makassarese bilateral
kinship system the mother's birth counts as much as the father's in
calculating the precise degree of nobility of the child. A result of this
was that, by the early twentieth century at least, the aristocracy and
ruling houses had such an elaborate network of marriage and blood ties
knitting them together, that they formed one great family. Parents
looked outside their own kingdoms to find a spouse of suitable birth.
Since the *gallarang* or headmen, and many of the vassal rulers, were not
of *tomanurung* descent or high nobility, rulers did not marry with the
hadat families, or at least this seems to have been the original
practice. In some kingdoms, however, or at any rate in Bone, the line
between ruler and council blurred. A combination of factors (including
the relative smallness of the land area and population controlled by the
Aru Pitu) enabled a seventeenth century Bone king to centralize power
and overcome the *hadat*'s separate identity. His descendents intermarried
with council families, so that rulers, *hadat* and ministers were all
related and all noble. But in other states, such as in Gowa, Mandar or
Soppeng, there was no intermarriage; it was discouraged or even
explicitly prohibited. Here the balance was maintained, and one result
- in Gowa at least - was that the ruling family jealously preserved its
purity and enforced its special privileges with iron determination.

This discrepancy in marriage alliances is a clue to the flexibility
with which these apparently fixed systems could alter in order to ac-
commodate change. The shifts were also expressed in the seating
arrangements at ceremonies: in Bone, where birth was similar and family
ties united *hadat* and ruler, the stress in ranking was on the degree of
'white blood', and the *Aru Pitu* of the *hadat* had no fixed places. If the
head of one of the villages who formed the core area died, his
successor's place in ceremonies was not necessarily the same - it
depended on blood, not on his place in the *hadat*. But in Gowa, where no
intermarriage had occurred, the seniority of *Bate Sallapang* members
depended on their ancient ranking and did not change: seating

arrangements were always the same, depending on the position of the
district, not on the birth of the incumbent.

During the period of Dutch rule in South Sulawesi the existing
political system had to adjust to drastic changes. In some cases,
innovations could be absorbed, in others not. In 1905, for example, just
after the conquest of Bone, the new regime decided to rationalize
administration by making the *Aru Pitu* of the *hadat* into district heads.
The step was a failure, because the *Aru Pitu* had no territorial authority
beyond the cluster of villages around the capital. In the course of time
they had fused into the centre, and their power lay in their relation-
ship with the *Arumpone* (king), not in any local power base. So they were
impotent when confronted by the entrenched authority of the existing
village chiefs. But the same step in Gowa turned out to be a success.
The *Bate Sallapang* (in theory nine, in fact six, *hadat* members) had
remained purely territorial chiefs, with great authority in their
extensive districts, but separate from the royal family. When they were
appointed as colonial district chiefs, it was more or less a recognition
of their status, and they were of course effective.

By 1927, however, a reassessment of colonial administrative policy
had occurred, and the *Aru Pitu*, who had proved such weak district
officers, were brought back to the centre and given specialized
functions, a quasi-ministerial responsibility. Once again they formed a
governing council in the capital, and proved to be able and respected.
But such a step was not possible in Gowa, where the relatively low birth
and territorially restricted prestige of the *Bate Sallapang* precluded
any attempt to establish them as an over-arching superstructure governing
the local chiefs.

An example of elementary miscalculation also occurred in 1910, when
the Dutch failed to observe the simplest rule of South Sulawesi politics:
that blood hierarchy parallels the ranking of power. In 1910 the colonial
regime decided to improve administration by creating a new district
around the Gowa capital, and appointed quite a high born man, Karaeng
Karuwisi, as official. The scheme was a total failure, as there was such
a concentration of pure nobility around the court that the Karaeng was
always being confronted by people of 'whiter' blood, to whom he must
defer. Another clear failure to appreciate the realities of the political
system occurred in Wajo, where chiefs of great prestige, the *Ranreng*,
were chosen as the leaders of a new territorially defined bureaucratic
organization. But while the *Ranreng* had spheres of influence, personal

followings, land, and prestige, they had never had a territory they ruled
directly. Their followers were scattered through the land. Consequently,
they never succeeded as 'district chiefs', the Dutch were simply calling
upon an authority that was not there.

During the 1930s colonial policy was directed towards tightening
control and preventing any nationalist challenge by strengthening and
recreating the traditional states. In 1931 a king was appointed again in
Bone, the last one having been deposed after the war of 1905-1906, and
in 1936 Gowa also received a ruler, the first since 1906. The general
thrust of Dutch concern was to prevent any challenge to these kings. In
effect this continued a trend noticeable in colonial policy since the
political intervention of the Netherlands became effective - if indirect
and partial - after 1860. For, partly because they were unaware of the
checks and balances and moderating influence of indigenous political
ethics and kinship within the South Sulawesi systems, and partly because
an autocratic state was easier to control, the Dutch strengthened kings
and queens and gave them more power over their chiefs and people,
widening the gap between the rulers and the ruled, and so indirectly
encouraging arrogance and insensitivity.

In 1942 Netherlands rule in South Sulawesi was interrupted by the
Pacific War, and the Japanese occupation lasted till 1945. Then the Dutch
returned, and their attempts to reestablish their rule in South Sulawesi
were both ruthless and bloody. But among the more peaceful efforts to
ensure stability was a belated attempt to make the political system more
responsive to popular needs, more democratic. Here the Dutch found that
they had to contend with the legacy of their earlier policy, their
strengthening of the authoritarian character of the South Sulawesi
rulers. Just as they had appealed to tradition to legitimize changes in
administration before the war, so too in 1946 did the Netherlanders turn
to the old chronicles (*lontara*) to justify further innovation. They
wanted to soften the rulers' power by introducing a sort of prime
minister, so, using old titles from the *lontara*, in 1946 they introduced
in Gowa the *Paccalaya* and the *Tumabbicarabutta*, and in Bone the
Makkedannge Tana. But once again this manipulation of the political
traditions was somewhat imposed and artificial, for whereas the dynamic
of the old system was a decentralization of power, remodelled by the
Dutch into an authoritarian bureaucratic 'feudal' state, the 1946 changes
aimed at creating a centralized constitutional monarchy (Chabot 1950,
Friedericy 1929, Andaya 1975, archive material and interviews).

During interviews in South Sulawesi the political system of the
various states was always described in full detail, with accounts of the
functions attached to various offices, and the whole panoply of ranks.
When asked, for example, how many members were in the *Bate Salappang*
during the colonial period, the answer was always 'nine', although in
fact there were not nine but six during this period. Similarly, if asked
about the *Makkadannge Tana*, most informants would identify it as an
ancient office, without mentioning that it had been in abeyance for over
a hundred years before it was recreated by the returning Dutch in 1946.
Such mistakes are simple enough, but are indicative of a more significant
trend: a tendency to see the theoretical state structure as proper, as
what a state should have, without enquiring too deeply whether in fact
these offices did exist, or whether or not they functioned as theory
specificed.

We return then to the central distinction between the image of the
ideal order, the actual political system and power relationships. If the
ideal expressed in the *tomanurung* 'contract' (and reinforced in such
politico-moral classics as the *Latoa* (Mattulada 1975)) depicted a
relationship between *hadat* and rulers centred upon co-operation and the
sharing of burdens, with mutual respect for each other's separate spheres,
the reality of power relations was one of tension and competition.
Nevertheless, the basic truth was there, in that power sharing between
the two elements - king and *hadat* - remained central. In Bone, however,
the power struggle was resolved by Aru Palakka's centralization of power
by the end of the seventeenth century and *hadat* and ruler began to fuse
into one (Andaya 1975). Despite this growing together the two elements
of the ideal image were retained, although the power equilibrium altered.

Colonial manipulation of South Sulawesi political systems was obvious,
because the demands made upon them by the Dutch regime were far in excess
of indigenous expectations. This does not mean that manipulation was new,
but simply that it went beyond the normal boundaries and was more clumsy
and ill-informed. Within the highly competitive world of indigenous
politics there was a continual flow of feed-back and translation as
changing power concentrations were reflected in shifts in position within
the political system and legitimized by rank or titles which referred to
the ideal order. The Netherlanders, however, were outside the cultural
consensus and moral community of the indigenous elite, and often used
apparently traditional elements or titles to mask innovations drawn from
a very different culture, that of Europe and colonial *realpolitik*.

During the first two decades of Dutch rule use of the indigenous political system was fairly crude and simple, a local application of the well established principle of working through the *volkshoofden* (people's chiefs). But by the late 1920s manipulation was much more thoroughly grounded and intelligent, drawing as it did on the accumulated expertise of officials and students of *adatrecht* (customary law). The procedure seemed to be one of gathering accounts of the political system - primarily from aristocratic informants depicting the ideal image - and then selecting elements from that model for either alteration or introduction. Thus, the *Aru Pitu* were recast as district officers, with no success, but later built into effective ministers with specific central responsibility. The *Tomarilaleng* were, in the 1920s and 1930s, intended to be useful aids for the rulers, while the reintroduction of assorted ranks (*Paccalaya, Makkedannge Tana, Tumabbiccarabuta*) in the 1940s was intended to stimulate the state's new democratic impulses. These stratagems were, in the first two cases, attempts to make use of old elements by giving them new roles; in the last instance it was the introduction of new elements into the political system, but with the hope of legitimizing them by calling on the *lontara* accounts of ancient states.

But one of the problems inherent in such redefinition of the elements of a structure is that the very process of redefinition, of allotting new content, can so disturb the relationships between elements that the structure itself begins to change. In a colonial situation there is also a more general and fundamental threat to the political structure, because power is appropriated by the alien overlords, while they may prop up or reorganize the state organization. In South Sulawesi it seems that the initial Dutch destruction of the states nucleus - the ruler and his household - may have had little permanent effect, as it was a mere twenty years before the kings returned, with their panoply carefully recreated. It is possible that a more serious disturbance was the colonial re-inforcement of royal authority and attempts to isolate the court from the free interplay of political growth and competition. The period of the 1940s was particularly destructive, where Dutch attempts to co-op members of the various royal dynasties and rapidly polarizing loyalties added to the demoralization of occupation and an especially violent revolution.

The legacy of the colonial use of the South Sulawesi political systems seems to have been a movement away from the personal, decentralized indigenous states towards a more authoritarian and functionally

differentiated form of government. The apparent specialization of the
pre-colonial states existed more as an image of a representative,
balanced system, where each element had its place, rights and
responsibilities than as an institutionalized reality. Many people in
South Sulawesi today, following the usual pattern of feedback between
image, system and power give an account of the ideal model which
reflects the theory of today's politics. So stress is laid on the idea
of contract, on democratic representation within the old states,
while there is a tendency to doubt the implicitly divine origins of the
tomanurung.

   The political system of South Sulawesi was, like most systems, a
flexible container which could accommodate changing power relations and
legitimized them by referring to an ideal image of how states should
be organized, how political leaders should behave. For a true
understanding of the history of the region it is necessary to take into
account not only the fluctuating competition of power politics, and not
merely the ideal model or array of titled offices, but the interaction
and mutual influence between all three because they are, ultimately,
different facets of the same phenomenon. Idealized models of proper
states, encompassing elements of contract, representation, consensus,
balance, the division power and so on are interesting in themselves,
but a historian - by definition interested in process - should test the
model against events and examine its effect on actual behaviour.
Conversely, the influence of conceptions of political life and
behaviour, categories of thought, can only be ignored at the risk of
making one of the misinterpretations outlined at the beginning of this
essay.

   In his study of *The Political System of the Atoni of Timor* Professor
Schulte Nordholt displays a continuing interest in the historical
dimensions of Atoni life and thought. Indeed, he remarks that the book
'aims to be a sample of the type of historiography with which for the
greater part a start still has to be made, namely Indonesian
historiography on the basis of colonial sources' (Schulte Nordholt 1971:
159). He has succeeded in fulfilling his aim, as the book presents the
Atoni in centre stage; they could be placed there so surely because of
the author's intimate knowledge and understanding of Atoni culture,
which in turn was given the essential diachronic dimension through
extensive study of the colonial sources. Because of his sound scholar-
ship, in both the disciplines of anthropology and history, and because

of his freedom from that 'enormous condenscension' which so often
limits accounts of the history of 'little people' (Thompson 1970:13),
Professor Schulte Nordholt has written a book in which both the dignity
of his subjects and the enlightenment of his readers are given their
full weight.

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J.M. SCHOFFELEERS

THE STORY OF MBONA THE MARTYR

I. Introduction

1. *The cult organisation*
Mbona is the name of a person, who is believed to have lived in southern
Malawi several centuries ago, and who has since become the object of
wide-spread cultic veneration. There still exists a shrine complex
bearing his name not far from the township of Nsanje, and the story of
his life and death is in one form or other known to a great many people
in this part of Malawi and adjoining parts of Mozambique. The shrine
consists of a patch of forest in which there are three circular huts of
normal proportions, one of which is known as 'Mbona's house', while the
two others are said to belong to his 'wife' and her personal maid. Near
the entrance one finds a small settlement which contains the huts of
those whose task it is to guard the shrine against stray cattle, bush
fires, and intrusions on the part of unauthorized persons. Animals living
in Mbona's forest are regarded as his 'children' and are on no account
to be molested. The shrine complex has two extensions in the form of a
hill, called Malawi, some five kilometers due west, and a pool, called
Ndione, which lies in a marshy area about the same distance due east.
Ritual actions at the shrine vary from simple offerings and libations
made by small local groups to elaborate ceremonies involving the entire
population of the district, the culminating event, occurring every five
years on average, being the rebuilding of Mbona's house. All these
rituals are performed in respect of communal calamities such as droughts,
floods and epidemic diseases, the religious treatment of private
suffering being the province of other agencies.

    The principal functionaries in the Mbona organisation, i.e. those who
carry responsibility for the maintenance of the shrine and the
performance of ritual, are two chiefs whose territories border on the
shrine area. They are the ones to be approached, when outlying chiefdoms
request some ritual service, and they are also the ones who convene the
assemblies preparatory to such major events as the rebuilding of the

shrine. Chiefs who do not belong to the organisational apex are
generally responsible for the collection of tribute and offerings within
their own territory, but a number of them also have a hereditary right
to carry out certain ritual functions at the shrine. Actually, as I have
shown elsewhere (Schoffeleers 1977), the cult operates under a dual
system of authority, represented on the one hand by the chiefs just
mentioned, and on the other by a spirit medium. The latter is not
officially appointed and, in theory at least, anybody can claim that
position. Whether or not such a claim will be recognized depends on the
amount of popular support that he or she can muster. The relationship
between the chiefs and the medium is, generally speaking, one of tension
and conflict, which is expressed among other things by the fact that
they continuously criticise each other's actions. Being dependent on un-
organized popular support, the medium can only assert his authority in
situations when emotions run high for a certain length of time, and it
is only on such occasions that he can successfully act as the spokesman
of the population vis-à-vis the chiefs. The effective mechanism which
makes it possible for the medium to become possessed and to pit his
authority against that of the chiefs are the spates of fantastic rumour,
which tend to occur at times of generalised crises (Schoffeleers 1977:
272-274).

2. *The historical background*

The Mbona cult in its present form originated almost certainly in the
years just before and after 1600 A.D., when the local population went
through a particularly traumatic period of external warfare and internal
oppression, caused by the rise to power of a line of paramount chiefs,
known by the dynastic name of Lundu (Schoffeleers 1979a). The principal
aim of the founder of this line seems to have been the total elimination
of rival power centres within his territory, notably an ancient rain
shrine and a secret society of masked dancers, both of which were
controlled by clans which regarded themselves as the first occupants and
rightful owners of the land. The persecution of these clans came to an
end in the year 1622, when Lundu was defeated by a rival paramount with
the aid of a Portuguese army drawn from the trading towns on the Zambesi,
but few of the autochthones remained behind to see that day. Many had
been killed by Lundu's men, while not a few had fled to establish their
homes elsewhere.

We have reason to assume - and this is also what the Mbona text about

to be presented implies - that Lundu, after the elimination of the autochthonous rain cult, came to rely on the cult of his own royal ancestors. Secular and ritual power were thus combined in one office instead of being the province of mutually hostile parties. Actions of this kind are known to have been common in African history (cf. Schoffeleers 1979b:29), and there appears to be no special reason to mistrust the Mbona stories in this respect. After Lundu's defeat, however, a new cult emerged, viz. that of the martyr Mbona, which put an end to Lundu's sole and uncontested control of the central ritual activity of rain-calling. This new cult, as far as can be ascertained, functioned essentially under the same kind of dual authority as that which can be observed to-day. It is as yet impossible to say with any degree of certainty how it came into being, apart from stating that its organisational centre was established in the immediate neighbourhood of the shrine which had been destroyed by Lundu. It is therefore not to be excluded that the name Mbona refers, among other things, to some prominent functionary at the old shrine who was murdered on the occasion of its destruction.

3. *Form and content of the Mbona stories*
The story of Mbona's life and martyrdom has no specific liturgical function, nor is there some standard version or a person who might be regarded as its official narrator or interpreter. It is therefore not surprising that it exists in a great many versions, which vary considerably in style, content and elaboration. Still, all of them have in common that they recount the occurrence, at some time in the distant past, of an exceptionally severe drought, out of which developed a series of dramatic events. These events, again, are usually structured in the form of a three-stage plot, as follows: 1) Mbona, although an outsider to the political and religious establishment, succeeds in ending the drought and is for that reason honoured by Lundu's subjects. 2) Lundu, motivated by fear for his position, has him killed, but Mbona, now revealing himself as a supernatural being, strikes back and kills Lundu's warriors. 3) Mbona then orders a cult to be established in his honour in which both the Paramount and his subjects are to participate, and which thus serves as a public and symbolic expression of reconciliation.

Readers, familiar with V.W. Turner's four-stage model of social drama (see i.a. Turner 1974:78) will observe that the first stage of that model, described as "a breach of some social relationship regarded as

crucial in the relevant group", appears to be lacking. This, however, is only apparently so, because it is summarized in the drought theme. The crucial element here is the culturally established relationship between a community and the natural environment on which it is ultimately dependent. In many pre-industrial cultures, including that of the population of the Lundu Paramountcy, that relationship seems to be established on a logic according to which the proper course of nature depends on the proper course of society (cf. Homans 1975:127). Thus calamities such as droughts are routinely interpreted as following from some serious disorder within the community. While the Mbona stories do not specifically state what kind of disorder was involved at that particular point of history, they nevertheless imply that it was connected with some serious abuse of power on the part of Lundu, for the essence of the story is that his power came to be curtailed by the rise of the new cult.

Although the Mbona stories appear to be rooted in a one-time historical event, they nevertheless also reflect on a political structure which, in its essentials, continued until quite recently. Among the characteristic features of this structure were a sharp differentiation in wealth between chiefs and commoners (cf. Chafulumira 1948:8-9) and the absence of any institution such as secret societies (Horton 1971: 113, Schoffeleers 1976) capable of directly questioning or challenging a chief's doings. The histories of Lundu and some of the other chiefs have been described by a knowledgeable author as "records of arrogance and exploitation matched by duplicity and cunning" (Price 1974:45). Although chiefs had to be careful not to alienate their subjects too much for fear that they might go to other chiefdoms, the situation was nevertheless one in which threat and fear were never far from the surface (cf. Chafulumira 1948:9-10), and it is this, too, that the Mbona stories seem to reflect.

4. *Details on the text to be presented*
The text of the Mbona story, which follows, was collected in August 1967 at the village of Misomali in the chiefdom of Chapananga, which forms part of the administrative district of Chikwawa. The narrator was a small farmer in his fifties, who had received three years of basic school education and was a member of the local Catholic Mission. Misomali village is about thirty-five kilometres by road from the headquarters of the Lundu Paramountcy and about 125 kilometres from the Mbona shrine.

It is necessary to mention these details, since they help explain
certain peculiarities in the text. Before presenting it, however, some-
thing remains to be said about the local kinship system, which provides
the general setting of the story, as the conflict between Lundu and
Mbona is cast in terms of a conflict between a mother's brother and a
sister's son.

Both Lundu and Mbona belong to the Mang'anja tribe, which is
historically and culturally related to the Chewa of central Malawi. The
Mang'anja system of kinship and marriage, like that of the Chewa, may
be described as matrilineal and uxorilocal (see Tew 1950:30-50, and
Marwick 1965). Under this system, Lundu, as a mother's brother, would
be responsible for Mbona's behaviour and well-being. Furthermore, cross-
cousins, and more especially, maternal cross-cousins, traditionally
being preferred marriage partners (Tew 1950:44; Marwick 1965:121-124),
Mbona would also be Lundu's classificatory son-in-law. Finally,
inheritance and succession moving from a person's younger brothers to
his sisters' sons, Mbona would be one of Lundu's potential successors.
Not infrequently, the relationship between a mother's brother and a
sister's son is fraught with tension and conflict, which may ultimately
lead to accusations of sorcery. Although the present version of the
Mbona story - in contrast to a number of others - does not specifically
mention sorcery, the fact that such an accusation was made is neverthe-
less implied. It is Lundu and those close to him, who accuse Mbona of
sorcery and thereby justify their behaviour towards him. The conflict,
however, appears to be more than a lineage quarrel, for the story makes
it clear that the survival of the entire population is at stake. This
is graphically illustrated by the fact that Mbona has the power to make
the seasonal rains come, while Lundu has not. If regular rains, as
pointed out above, may be taken as symbolizing social peace and well-
being, the struggle between Mbona and Lundu is one which concerns the
entire community.

II. An annotated text of the Mbona story

Mbona's parentage

1.   Although Mbona was one of Chief Lundu Mankhokwe's sisters' sons,
      the chief did not quite regard him as such, because Mbona had no
      father: He was born without a father and spoken of as an
      adulterous child, the way Our Lord Jesus was.

Lundu is the dynastic name of the paramount chiefs of the Lower Shire
Valley of Malawi; the name Mankhokwe is sometimes mentioned as that of

the founder of the dynasty. The structural dominance of the maternal
line in the Mang'anja kinship system has for one of its effects that
the name of Mbona's father is rarely mentioned. This in its turn may
lead, particularly under the influence of Christianity (cf. Schoffeleers
1974), to the idea that Mbona was born of a virgin. The narrator uses
the theme of virgin birth quite effectively to explain why Mbona was on
one and the same count despised by his uncle and favoured by God. This
appears to be in line also with V.W. Turner's observation that the
'submerged' and jurally weaker side of kinship - in the Mang'anja case
a person's paternal line - is often associated with the supernatural
world (Turner 1969:113-125).

Lundu's rain dance

2.   In days gone by, when the rains were late, Chief Lundu Mankhokwe
        used to call upon his entire family and other people as well to
        make preparations for the beating of the drums and the
        performance, by himself, of the rain dance. The most important
        drum was called Kamango. While dancing, he would leap in the
        direction of each of the four winds, pointing [his ritual dagger]
        in the same direction. In those days God's spirit dwelt in him,
        which is why he would always make a sacrifice to God, Creator of
        all things, when a drought or some other calamity threatened his
        country.

The rain dance (*mgwetsa*) is always performed after the sacrificial act
(*nsembe*) referred to in the last sentence. The account suggests quite
clearly that, in the period before the founding of the Mbona cult, the
paramount combined both the highest secular and the highest ritual
office in his person. This, as has been explained in the introductory
section, is to be regarded as a departure from general Malawian usage,
according to which rain-calling was the province of the autochthonous
shrines. The word *mulungu*, here translated as 'God' in line with present
usage, actually has a much wider range of referents such as 'sky',
'rain', 'thunder', 'lightning', spirit', 'spirit world' and 'spirit
manifestation' (see i.a. Macdonald 1882:i, 67, and Scott 1892:403). The
root meaning of the word *mzimu*, here rendered as 'spirit of ...', appears
to be 'spirit being' or 'spirit manifestation' (cf. Scott 1892:415),
these two meanings being expressed by different noun classes. Under
Christian influence, however, it has also acquired the meaning of 'soul'
and, with the addition of the adjective *woyera* (lit. 'white'), of 'Holy
Spirit', the latter coming closest to what the text seems to convey.

3.   One year, when Mbona was still a young man, there occurred a most

> frightening drought. Lundu's people came to their chief, saying,
> "We beseech you, chief, have all your people assembled so that,
> together with you, they can make a sacrifice, as has been our
> custom whenever the rains failed to come". The chief complied
> with the request of his people, arranged for an assembly, and
> had the rain drums brought out. [This done], he set about dancing
> the way he used to whenever rain was scarce, leaping forward,
> backward and upward, and pointing his dagger at the four winds,
> but God remained unmoved. His spirit kept away from Chief Lundu.

Droughts are not uncommon in the Lower Shire Valley but, due to the
presence of large marshy areas and the possibility of cultivating these,
when there was a dry spell (cf. Morgan 1953), they seldom had a
disastrous effect. The real threat came, when a drought coincided with
war or serious internal disorder, forcing people to take refuge in the
hills and forests, away from the marshes. It is that kind of situation
the text seems to refer to.

Mbona's childhood

4.   Mbona was somebody who, already when a child, could do quite
      astonishing things. When going to play with his friends on the
      river bank, he would [for instance] fashion clay figurines, which
      he then made come to life. The moment he spoke, those clay animals
      would live and walk about. His friends, of course, were not a
      little surprised and, back in their village, they said to their
      parents, "What that friend of ours does in unbelievable. When-
      ever he wants there to be a goat or a cow, that animal simply
      grows out of the clay things he fashions with his hands".

This is only one of several such stories. Mbona is also said to have
possessed the power of making food come from the sky, when he and his
little friends were famished after many hours of goat and cattle herding.
Other versions again mention that, from his early childhood, he was
already an expert in every profession, including tailoring. It is quite
possible that the themes of the clay figurines and the food from the sky
are biblical borrowings, but the possibility that they were part of a
pre-Christian tradition is not to be excluded.

The rain dance of Lundu's sisters' sons

5.   When Lundu's rain dance proved unsuccessful, those close to him
      said, "Chief, we can only conclude that the spirit of our God
      has deserted you. We do know, though, that the self-same spirit
      must now have descended upon one of your sisters' sons. Therefore,
      tell all your sisters' sons to dance, one after the other, so that
      we may decide which one has the spirit of God". The chief there-
      upon called those of his sisters' sons whom he thought to be
      likely candidates for succession after his death. All of them
      came and all of them danced, but to no avail. Lundu then turned
      to his chiefs, saying, "Chiefs and all of you who have gathered

here, you have seen with your own eyes that none of my sisters'
sons has the spirit of God, which means that none of them will
be able to take my place when I shall be dead, for all have
danced but none of them was successful".

The wholesale failure of the Lundu lineage in regard to the rain dance

seems to imply that the social disorder, symbolized by the drought theme,

was not just attributed to a person, i.e. Lundu Mankhokwe, but to the

system, which he and his lineage represented.

Mbona called in

6.   The chiefs on their part were quite aware that Mbona, too,
        belonged to Lundu's house despite the fact that he had no [known]
        father. In those days, illegal children, even if they were a
        chief's sister's sons, were not allowed to succeed their uncle.
        Therefore, when Lundu heard their request [that Mbona also] be
        given a chance to perform the rain dance, he said, "Are you
        suggesting that Mbona should dance, too? How could he possibly,
        since he is a fool, a good-for-nothing, and an adulterous child,
        who can never succeed to the chieftainship?" Still, some of them
        persisted, saying, "With due respect, chief, but Mbona must
        dance". The chief thereupon gave in and, calling Mbona's mother,
        said, "Mother, your son will be the last to dance at our place
        of assembly. Tell him therefore to come and perform".

The invectives 'fool' (*chitsiru*) and 'good-for-nothing' (*chopanda nchito*)

would seem to refer to Mbona's behaviour rather than his illegitimate

birth. What Mbona had done to earn these ephithets is not made clear,

apart from the fact, mentioned in paragraph sixteen of the present text,

that he still slept in his mother's house despite his age.

7.   The woman went to her son and told him that he was to dance, but
        Mbona answered, "Mother, do you really mean that I should dance?
        Am I not the one whom they always think of as the lowliest of
        all?" To this his mother replied, "You are right; they do regard
        you as the lowliest of all, which is why you will dance last of
        all". But Mbona said, "I am scared more than I can say, for, when
        I dance, dreadful things will happen, and they will kill me as
        well as yourself". His mother then said, "That is of no
        importance, my son. We may have to suffer, but those remaining
        behind will find peace".

The role of Mbona's mother in this particular version is reminiscent of

and may indeed have derived from the traditional Roman Catholic view of

the role of the Virgin Mary in the life of Christ. Mary, too, is often

portrayed as having encouraged her son to undergo his passion for the

sake of mankind. The word 'peace' (*mtendere*) connotes absence of social

conflict as well as absence of natural calamities, which, as stated

earlier on, are considered to be causally related.

8. Thereupon Mbona said, "All right, I shall obey. Now, take some
    castor seeds, cook them, collect their oil and pour it into a
    small gourd". He then forged two large daggers of the type called
    kandranga, and he also made himself a kind of large waist-belt.
    The oil he used to polish the daggers till they were smooth and
    shining.

Kandranga daggers are used for ritual purposes only. They are about one
foot long, and their handles and sheaths are made of two kinds of wood,
black and reddish in colour respectively. The blade, made of iron and
highly polished, is considered 'white'. The front side, made of the black
wood, is adorned with geometrical carvings, whereas the reddish back side
is plain. The whole evokes the image of a stylized human figure. The
context in which this type of dagger is used further suggests that it
may possibly be interpreted as a symbolic representation of the cosmos
and the seasons. The handle and the sheath could then be taken to refer
to the sky and the earth, while the black and the red side would
symbolize the wet season (dark clouds) and the dry season (bush fires).
The blade, dividing the two sides while linking the top part with the
bottom part, would be a suitable symbol for lightning, which divides the
seasons and links heaven to earth. To appreciate this last statement it
is necessary to know that thunderstorms occur particularly at the
beginning and end of the wet season.

Castor oil (*nsatsi*) plays an important role in many rites of passage.
Its use as a polish in this part of the story has therefore in all
probability more than just utilitarian significance.

Mbona's dance

9. Before he began his dance Mbona sent the following message to
    Chief Lundu: "Chief, tell your people to keep all children between
    the age of five and nine locked up in their mother's hut". Chief
    Lundu thereupon sent messengers to all corners of his country so
    as to make it known to all that children between the age of five
    and nine be locked up in their huts, and that on no condition
    should they come outside. If they did, the most dreadful things
    would happen to them. When those messengers had done as they were
    told, they reported back to their chief, saying, "We have told
    every family in this country to take care of their children
    between the age of five and nine".

The Mang'anja have little use for and consequently little notion of age
as measured in years. One should therefore not take the specification
'between the age of five and nine' too literally. The injunction seems
rather to refer to the pre-puberty age-group with the exception of babies
and toddlers still on their mother's back. Why this reference to pre-
puberty and, by inference, to asexuality, should be made is something

that needs further consideration. If the symbolism of the rain-dagger and of lightning in general refers also to sexual congress - which on all accounts it does - little children may be thought of as symbolically incongruous or even antithetical. Babies and toddlers are, if properly medicated, allowed to sleep under one roof with their parents, while children above that age are not. If they would be near, when their parents sleep together, they would be stricken by a disease called *mdulo* (cf. Marwick 1965:66), the symptoms of which are commonly described as being akin to those of tuberculosis.

10. This done, Mbona let it be known to those assembled that he was on his way and that the rain drums be beaten forthwith. As soon as the drum Kamango began to roar, Mbona strutted out, and the view he presented was so awe-inspiring that not a few people became terrified. Even the chiefs, including Lundu himself, took fright, when they saw the things he had tied around his waist and the gourd which he held in his hands. And right they were, for the things Mbona carried with him were quite fearful. Everywhere, people began to ask each other, "Who is this man? Who is he? Please, brethren, tell us!" All had to admit, though, that it was Mbona whom they saw moving into the meeting ground.

The fear of the bystanders was caused by the objects Mbona carried on his person, and which they recognized as the paraphernalia of a powerful sorcerer. The implication is that of a total transformation of Mbona's personality as suggested by the fact that the audience did not immediately recognize him.

11. Having come to the centre, Mbona made a deep bow, touching his eyes with [the palm of] his hand. Following this, he stood upright and addressed the chiefs, turning to Lundu in particular. "Chief [so he said] did you tell every household to take care that all children between the age of five and nine be locked in their huts?" The chief answered, "Yes, all have been locked in." To which Mbona replied, "Thank you for doing this."

12. Once again, the drum Kamango began to roar, and Mbona started dancing, leaping forward, backward and upward, just like his uncle Lundu used to. But as soon as he pulled his dagger, pointing it to the south first, lo and behold!, the same moment lightning flared, and when he pointed it to the west, a terrific flash of lightning hit the earth. Thereupon, the women raised their high-pitched, long-drawn cry, and even the men rejoiced despite their fear, for they were now certain that the spirit of God, after having left Lundu, had come to dwell in Mbona, one of his sisters' sons. Finally, after Mbona had pulled his dagger once more, rain began to fall in torrents.

The death of Lundu's son

13.   When the little children in their mothers' huts heard the mad
       ululating, they grew restless, wanting to get out. They longed to
       see Mbona dance, although he himself had said he did not want any
       children near. Meanwhile, Mbona continued pulling his dagger,
       pointing it to the west, and each time thunder and lightning would
       ensue. While all this was going on, one of Lundu's children, born
       to the house of his junior wife, managed to get out, [wanting to
       see] what was happening. But alas!, a flash of lightning split him
       asunder, and the child was killed on the spot. When people saw in
       what manner the child had been killed, they were terrified, but
       abundant rains came to the whole of the chiefdom.

The fact that the child, who was killed, was a son of Lundu's junior wife
has special significance. The junior wife ideally belongs to a younger
generation, and she is theoretically in a position to become the senior
wife of a chief's successor. Oral history and folk stories abound with
tales of junior wifes conniving with potential successors to poison the
ruling chief. The complexity of the drama described here can only be
appreciated, when it is further remembered that the woman was in a sense
Mbona's wife-to-be, since in the eyes of the populace he had now become
the chief designate.

Mbona's persecution

14.   The dance being over, Mbona went home, while Chief Lundu stayed
       behind with all his chiefs to mourn his dead child. When the
       mourning period was over, he went to the hut of his junior wife
       to end the rites, but she would have none of it, saying, "No,
       thank you, I do not want to. I have no desire to sleep with you
       because of your sister's son having deliberately killed my child.
       All I want is a divorce, and, if you do not agree, you will have
       to have Mbona killed, for I do not want to set eyes on him again.
       So, no sleeping together now!" Having thought about this, Lundu
       answered that he might find people willing to kill Mbona. Those
       who showed themselves willing, assembled in the house of the
       chief, where they decided to strike at the first cockcrow.

During a mourning period, those involved are not supposed to sleep
together until after the final rites, when the chief mourner sets them
free by having intercourse with his own wife or, in case she is dead,
with one of his relatives. The woman, however, may refuse, if she is of
the opinion that certain conditions such as the payment of death dues,
have not been satisfactorily met. Since failure to complete the rites may
cause considerable inconvenience and embarrassment, a woman's refusal,
as in the present case, may be used as a means to exercise pressure upon
the chief mourner and his relatives.

15.   When Lundu's junior wife was inciting her husband, Mbona heard

every word she said, and he told his mother, "Mother, did I not
warn you that we would be in great danger after my dance? This
very night murderers will come to kill both you and me. Do not be
upset, though. Pack our things and some food so that, when those
killers come to our door, they will find us gone." His mother
took a large basket into which she packed everything they would
need on their journey. Mbona, too, made himself in readiness,
collecting his bow and arrows as well as a spear.

16.   At the first cockcrow, the assassins arrived and surrounded the
        hut of Mbona's mother, for, although Mbona had already grown up,
        he still slept in the same hut as his mother. Putting the door
        slightly ajar and seeing that they were already all around his
        mother's hut, Mbona said to her, "Mother, lift our luggage onto
        your head so that we may go; our enemies have come." Thereupon,
        the two of them left the house, unseen by those who had come to
        kill them. Once outside, they put the door back into position and
        fastened it to its post. Those who had come after Mbona now forced
        their way in, but, finding nobody inside, they said, "*Haaa*, Mbona
        has fled, together with his mother!" It was decided there and then
        to track them down, but it would be some time before they were
        able to lay hands on him.

The first cockcrow is also the time at which major sacrificial ceremonies
such as those at Mbona's own shrine are performed. There being no reason
why Mbona's enemies should not have struck at dead of night, the idea
suggests itself that the narrator consciously or unconsciously refers to
a sacrificial act.
Mang'anja boys above toddler age sleep in a separate hut, it being
considered both indecent and dangerous to continue spending the night
in their parents' hut. The fact that Mbona does not follow this rule
puts him, socially speaking, on a par with a child of pre-puberty age.

17.   Mbona travelled at great speed until he reached a place called
        Chididi, where he made a paddy field. He then proceeded to
        Karonga, where he made a pigeon house full of pigeons, which can
        be seen there to this day. He also went to Nyakalambo, which is
        a large forest in which there are animals of every kind under the
        sun, among them countless snakes and monkeys, all of them harm-
        less. Travelling further, he came to a place marked by a large
        flat rock, Mbona laid his spear and arrows on that rock, while
        his mother put down her basket. Kneeling with his mother, Mbona
        then dug a water-hole in that rock and drank from it. The
        imprints of his knees and the basket can still be seen there.

The verb *-lenga*, rendered here as 'to make' is also used to convey the
meaning of creation in the strict sense of the word, which is what the
narrator probably wants to say. Pigeons feature in a number of versions
of the Mbona story, but they are usually associated with the sacred pool,
where he is said to have died. In a more general sense, pigeons among the

Mang'anja seem to evoke associations with the spirit world. The theme of
the harmless animals actually refers to the sacred forest surrounding
Mbona's shrine, where no animal may be killed and where it is said that
no animal will ever harm man. Apparently, the narrator is not familiar
with the geographical lay-out of the area, as he assigns these various
features to the wrong places. A place called 'Mbona's water-hole' still
exists, and the fact that a variety of wild rice grows there may account
for the story of the paddy field (cf. Price 1953).

> 18.   On that rock, too, Mbona bade farewell to his mother, who
>   proceeded to a place called Chitundu in the land of the
>   Portuguese. People there use to make offerings in her honour,
>   whenever there is a drought or some other calamity. The year
>   Mbona's mother shaves her head, there will be a major drought.
>   In the land of the Portuguese they know Mbona's mother as
>   Chitundu, whereas in Malawi they call her Salima.

According to this version, Mbona's mother became a territorial spirit
in her own right somewhere in Mozambique ('the land of the Portuguese').
The name Chitundu is variously used to refer to a) Mbona's wife (although
he has none in the present version); b) his mother; and c) a powerful
male spirit, who is held responsible for the occurrence of destructive
storms. The same name also appears in an early Portuguese document as
that of a fierce war leader, who was active in the Lower Shire Valley
and adjoining territories around 1600 A.D. In all probability, it is
this person whose name lives on today as that of the spirit of storms
(cf. Schoffeleers 1979a). The fact that this name should be applied to
two different persons of cultic significance is probably more then mere
coincidence. However, elaboration of this point, important though it
seems to be from a historical viewpoint, would take us beyond the
limitations of this paper.
Raincallers are invariably said to wear their hair long and unkempt 'so
as to make it resemble a dark cloud'. Shaving it would mean chasing the
clouds away as it evokes the image of a brazen sky.

> 19.   Mbona in his turn went to the country of Chief Malemia, south of
>   the hill called Malawi. While on his way, he came to a large rock
>   boulder which is known as the Chipeta Tattoos, because the tribal
>   tattoos of the Chipeta people have been carved on its surface.
>   From that rock, which is also still in existence, he went to
>   Malemia's chiefdom.

The Chipeta, like the Mang'anja, may be considered as a subdivision of
the Chewa. Their territory lies to the north-west of the Lower Shire

Valley. The so-called tattoo marks are actually a number of long,
undulating grooves, somewhat resembling a magnified finger print.
According to a number of versions, it was Mbona himself who carved these
tattoos to commemorate the country from which the Mang'anja people
originated. There is general agreement among historians that the present
Chipeta area was one of the major dispersal points of the Chewa prior to
1500 A.D.

Mbona's death

20.   While all this was happening, his enemies continued in hot
        pursuit, and, when Mbona came to a water called Ndione, they
        finally managed to capture him. They wanted to stab him with
        their spears and shoot their arrows at him, but he said, "If you
        really intend to kill me, spears and arrows will be useless. Use
        the rind of sugar cane, a maize stalk, or a blade of grass, and
        cut my throat with that." When they went looking for these things,
        Mbona told them, "Let us go to the Ndione stream, so that you may
        kill me properly". They then took him to that place and cut his
        throat with a blade of grass. An enormous gush spurted from his
        throat into the stream which came to be filled with his blood.
        Along the lower reaches of that stream there is a pool with a
        great many fish.

According to the majority of known versions of the Mbona story, Mbona is
captured on the slopes of Mount Malawi, where his enemies make an un-
successful attempt at killing him. Mbona then tells them that he can
only be killed on low-lying ground. The present narrator, being un-
familiar with the local geography, seems to have missed this point. The
powerlessness of iron and its symbolic opposition to vegetal matter is
a key theme in all versions. So far, I have been able to think of three
possible interpretations: a) It may refer to the general opposition
between nature (vegetal matter) and culture (iron); b) It may refer to
a series of oppositions relating to the relationship - within the
Mang'anja social and economic organisation - between agriculture and the
iron industry. Iron being mined in the hills and agriculture being
largely confined to the valley floor, this would also be in line with
the fact that Mbona is taken from a hill to the plain; c) It may refer
to the opposition between war (iron) and peace (agriculture) or, more
generally, between social disorder and social order, in which case it
could possibly be interpreted as a symbolized protest against Lundu's
warfare and the social disturbance which this entailed.

The sacred pool plays an important part in the spates of rumour preceding
the possession of the medium by Mbona, one of the first rumours always
being that the waters of the pool have turned red. This being taken as

a sign that some calamity will befall the country, the stream of rumours
then focuses on the examination of a range of possible causes (cf.
Schoffeleers 1977:272-274).

There are many stories about the fish in Mbona's pool. Most of these
mention that a person is allowed to catch no more than one or two. Should
he be greedy and catch more, he will drag up a heavy club which will
batter him to death. This may be a way of stating that fishing in Mbona's
pool should not be monopolized by a particular lineage as fishing grounds
usually are. In this way, even the less fortunate will have a chance of
obtaining fish at times of scarcity. Fish, like pigeons, are also in a
general way associated with the spirit world, as spirits are said to
dwell in the waters and have the whitish or greyish colour of fish. The
connection is made more specifically in the stories of some old people
in the valley who maintain that, when they saw Europeans for the first
time, they concluded that they were either spirits or fish, or both.

Mbona's shrine

21.   Although Mbona died in the flesh, his spirit did not die and is
        still alive. [One day] a certain medium said, "Brethren, the
        spirit of our kinsman Mbona wants us to build him a house at
        Khulubvi. Nobody may come with more than one reed stalk, whether
        dry or fresh!" All did as Mbona had ordered. Chiefs Tengani and
        Maere each put in a door post and held it in position until the
        other poles were put in place. Mbona's house is of the *dzira* type,
        which means that it is circular in shape. As to the roof, this
        had to be made on the ground over the head of Chief Lundu
        Mankhokwe. All kept to these rules. When the circular wall of the
        hut was finished, a message was sent to Lundu to inform him of
        the progress made and to remind him that the roof had still to
        be made. When the roof was completed, it would be lifted onto
        [the lower part] of the hut.

In the more usual versions, Mbona's killers cut off his head, taking it
to Khulubvi, which lies on the flat land between the marshes and the
hills. Following this, Mbona's spirit manifests itself by causing a
thunderstorm in which his assassins perish, and by taking possession of
a medium, who then states that Mbona wants a shrine, a wife and a
regular sacrifice.

The building of the shrine had to be the work of the entire population.
Hence the injunction that nobody was to contribute more than one reed
stalk. Whether or not that injunction was ever followed to the letter,
is not known, but the mere fact that people keep repeating it seems to
point to a deep-seated awareness of the communal character of the cult.
The rules prescribe that the circular roof be built on the ground, and

that somebody has to act as its centre pole, while it is being made.
This would mean that the rafters are arranged around him in such a way
that their top ends rest on his head, while their bottom ends rest on
the ground. The radius of the circle thus formed being something like
eight feet, and the roof once finished being quite heavy, one wonders
whether that rule is to be interpreted literally. It may be that the
person standing in the centre has to hold a pole in position, which
carries the weight of the roof. The chief acting as the centre pole, or
holding it, is in reality Tengani, whose capital lies some twenty
kilometres north of the shrine, and not Lundu as stated here. The Lundu
incumbents, being wife-givers to Mbona (see next paragraph), are subject
to the usual rules of avoidance operating between parents-in-law and
their daughter's husband, and are therefore not supposed to come anywhere
near the shrine.

Mbona's wife

22.   When the house had been built, Mbona wished for a woman to gladden
        his heart. He made this known to the medium who forthwith sent a
        messenger by the name of Kambalame ('Little Bird') to Chief
        Tengani, informing him that Mbona wanted a wife. Tengani in his
        turn sent the man through to Lundu, for it was Lundu's duty to
        find a woman to live with Mbona at Khulubvi.

23.   Lundu, however, not knowing what to do, said, "How can I find an
        elderly woman to be sent to Mbona?" A few practical men then
        suggested he take one by force, which is what happened. Carrying
        a large piece of cloth with them, [Lundu's men] threw it over a
        woman and forced her to go with them to Khulubvi. Mbona happened
        to be pleased with her, and people gave her the name of Salima
        ('She-Does-Not-Hoe'). He bought her two kinds of cloth: One
        black, the other white. Salima wanted to be visited only by
        smaller children. This is the meaning of the two kinds of cloth:
        The black cloth meant a year of plenty, during which people would
        reap a big harvest. The white cloth, on the other hand, meant
        drought, and the year Salima dressed in white there would be much
        famine.

The woman sent to live at Mbona's shrine has to be past procreation.
Informants usually rationalize this by saying that younger women may be
given to vain talk and thus reveal what goes on during their nocturnal
encounters with Mbona, or they may be seduced by young men, in which case
they commit sacrilege. The matter, as one may suspect, appears to be
considerably more complex, for Mbona who, according to the present
version, has shown no sexual inclinations during his lifetime, becomes
endowed with them after his death. Then, in order to satisfy them, he

chooses a woman who may be considered past them. The only documented
case of wife capture in connection with the Mbona cult dates from 1862
(Wallis ed. 1952:93). This may also have been the last occasion on which
this happened, for the shrine was destroyed and the cult temporarily
discontinued in 1864. Nowadays the office of Salima is revived for a few
days only each time the shrine is rebuilt.

The interpretation of the white and the black cloth poses a bit of a
puzzle. There are three explanations one can think of: a) Salima never
dressed in white; people only said so, when there was a drought; b) She
did sometimes dress in white as a form of protest against the way she
was treated or against the way the cult was being conducted; c) She
dressed in white, whenever there was too much rain so as to make the sun
appear again. There is some evidence from other shrines that white cloth
was being used that way.

The rain ritual

24. When the rains were late, the medium said, "Mbona is angry,
    because you no longer think of making libations like you used to
    in days gone by. Come, let us go about it!" Kambalame then took
    the message to Tengani, and Tengani in his turn sped him on to
    Lundu.
    Each family gave some grain, especially maize on the cob. This
    would be shelled and some of it left out in the open without any
    water being added. At night rain would fall in torrents, drenching
    the grain and making it sprout. When waking up, all would rejoice,
    because the potsherds had been filled with water from the sky.
    When the beer was fermenting, everybody would be at peace, for
    they knew that the rains would not be long in coming.

The actual brewing of the beer is preceded by the making of malt. To
this end, part of the grain is left to soak in water for a few days.
When it has sprouted, it is dried in the sun and pounded to a malt,
which is then added to the brew. The general idea behind this passage
is that the grain used for malt making should be soaked by the scattered
showers which herald the onset of the wet season. The steady showers are
to fall immediately after the ceremony, when the great rain song is being
sung (see next paragraph).

25. Once it was ready for consumption, the beer would be taken to
    Khulubvi as an offering to Mbona, their great spirit. His priest,
    whose name was Maere, would then intone the following hymn:
    "*Cho, cho, cho,*
    The *mnjale* tree cannot be climbed!
    The *mnjale* tree cannot be climbed!
    From the leaves of the sacred forest;
    Leaves of the sacred forest;

Women do not fashion head pads!
Women do not fashion head pads!

On their way back from the ceremony, the following song was appropriate:

"Little cloud here,
Little cloud there!
Which of you little clouds
Relieves itself,
Relieves itself of rain?"

The one to lead this song was [the shrine guardian] Chilamwa. When it rang out, the whole of Lundu's land would be drenched in rain.

People participating in the rain ritual - as indeed in many other rituals - have to be 'cool' (*ozizira*), i.e. they have to abstain from sex for at least a day. It is this injunction to abstain from sex, which appears to be conveyed by the song of the *mnjale* tree. The *mnjale* (*Sterculia Appendiculata*) is a tall tree which has a smooth whitish bark and no lower branches. Sexual congress often being referred to by the verb *-kwera* ('to climb'), it follows that the *mnjale* tree, which cannot be climbed, would provide a suitable metaphor for sexual abstinence. The same idea seems to be conveyed by the passage on women's head pads. Used to facilitate the carrying of loads on the head, these pads are normally circular with a hole in the middle. Hence their suitability as a sexual symbol. Women often fashion them in a rough-and-ready way from tufts of grass or bunches of leaves, but they cannot do this in Mbona's forest, as there is a strict rule that its plant life, like its animal life, must be left untouched.

26.   When pouring their libations, they would also call out the names of the great ones, who died long ago. They would say, "Mbona give us rain! We your children are suffering for lack of rain!" They then called out the names of those long dead to intercede for them with Mbona, their God.
        In those days, rain would always come at the appointed time. When people said it was time to plant, their crops would grow without fail; their harvest would be abundant, and the country knew nothing but peace and prosperity.

The final statement, viz. that in the golden past rains always came on time, is characteristic of many versions of the Mbona story. That past is believed to have ended with the coming of the Europeans, roughly in the middle of the last century.

III. A note on martyr cults

We have, in the title of this paper, referred to Mbona as a martyr. This
has been done on purpose so as to draw attention to a phenomenon, which
is seldom thought of in connection with preliterate cultures, for
martyrs, in the accepted sense of persons who are held to have given up
their lives in the service of a communal cause and who on that account
receive cultic veneration, are usually associated with historical
religions and militant secular ideologies. Despite their frequent
occurrence, however, martyr cults have as yet received little
anthropological attention, which is to be regretted as they appear to
provide useful clues with regard to the interpretation of certain forms
of human behaviour. Whether the veneration of Mbona as a martyr developed
independently from traditional Mang'anja thought patterns, or whether
it is to be regarded as a borrowing from either Christianity or Islam,
is a question which cannot, for the moment, be satisfactorily answered,
although there is evidence (cf. Schoffeleers 1966:367-375) that this
may have been the case. More directly important, though, is the question
what causes martyr cults to develop and what message they contain for
their adherents.

    In regard of this question, it may be necessary to distinguish
between what I shall call 'common martyrs' and 'redemptive martyrs'. In
either case, the concept of martyrdom seems to imply the existence,
within a common field of political action, of two sharply divided and
opposing factions. Martyr cults would then typically, though not
necessarily, develop within the weaker group on which they would have
a mobilizing effect, for martyrs are at one and the same time epitomes
of suffering and signs of hope. One difference between redemptive
martyrs and common martyrs would be that the former, by their death,
bring about a new moral and social order, while common martyrs testify
to the validity of a moral and social order which in principle already
exists, but which finds itself threatened by hostile elements. A
second difference would be that the concept of common martyrdom is not
inherently antithetical to the use of violence by the martyr's
adherents, while the concept of redemptive martyrdom is, despite the
fact that the martyr's followers may come to hold different ideas. The
crucial idea in this case is that the redemptive martyr undergoes his
death voluntarily despite the fact that he has the power to immobilize or
even physically destroy his enemies. This is evident, for instance, in
the account of the arrest of Jesus of Nazareth, when he berates one of

his followers for using violence - ''All who draw the sword will die by the sword'' - and when he states that God would promptly send more then twelve legions of angels to his defense, were he to ask for it (cf. Matthew 26:51-53). Similarly, Mbona has to tell his enemies how to kill him, since man-made weapons had proved powerless against him (see paragraph 20 above). It would therefore seem that one of the fundamental messages conveyed by the Mbona cult, in line with other such cults, is that of a total rejection of violence. In view of this, it may be more than just coincidental that the Mbona officers, in their earliest recorded dialogue with a Christian missionary, drew his attention to this particular point (cf. Shepperson and Price 1958:59-63). When they did so, they had in mind the behaviour of the Whites and other foreign intruders, who had not shunned the use of guns, when making their way into the valley, but there can be little doubt - as the whole Mbona story reflects this theme - that this rejection of violence also referred to the arrogant and exploitative behaviour of the chiefs vis-à-vis the commoners.

The conclusion may then be that the Mang'anja commonalty, after having lost its secret societies, which were definitely an instrument of violence (cf. Marwick 1965:54, 235-236) and an effective means of curbing abuse of power on the part of the chiefs (Horton 1971; Schoffeleers 1976), adapted itself to this loss by developing a cultural ideal - projected in the Mbona myth - which stressed both the desirability of peaceful relationships and the self-destructiveness of violence. It is this ideal which is emphasized time and again by the medium, when he formally confronts the chiefs, and which, according to the older Mang'anja, kept their country together over the centuries.

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P.L. GESCHIERE

CHILD-WITCHES AGAINST THE AUTHORITY OF THEIR ELDERS

Anthropology and History in the Analysis of Witchcraft Beliefs of the
Maka (southeast Cameroon) [+]

Amidst all the theoretical debates and fireworks which have stirred the
anthropological world in the past few decades, a fundamental
reorientation is taking place without much clamour: an increasing number
of anthropologists has come to consider historical studies as an integral
part of their anthropological research. This reorientation is surprising,
not only because it marks a clear departure from the basic principles of
classical anthropology dating back to the 1920s and 1930s, but even more
so because this historical approach became prevalent rather suddenly, and
more or less simultaneously in almost all the various branches of
anthropology: in political as well as in religious anthropology, in the
study of lineage societies as well as in peasant studies. The relation
between anthropology and history has always been a rather turbulent one.
After the bold historical speculations of the evolutionists and
diffusionists, the functionalist condemnation of history as being
'particularizing' and consequently unscientific, gained general
acceptance in the 20th century. In 1938, the historian Maitland may have
written that anthropology had to choose "between being history and being
nothing" and in 1961 no less authoritative an anthropologist than Evans-
Pritchard did express his agreement with this sentiment. However, at that
time this insight apparently remained unconvincing for most
anthropologists.[1] In the 1960s in the Netherlands, there was still the
widespread view that, at most, anthropologists should concern themselves
with 'social change'; this obviously referred to something quite

different from the age-old vocation of the historian. It was not until
the beginning of the seventies that the 'historicizing' reaction took
seed here in the Netherlands. Nevertheless, there were also several
anthropologists in this country who never lost sight of the significance
of the historical perspective: one of Schulte Nordholt's merits is un-
doubtedly the fact that, in his publications as well as in his lectures,
he never failed to emphasize the inter-relationship between anthropology
and history.

In this article, I shall try to show that the words of Maitland quoted
above also hold true for symbolic anthropologists. The analysis of
symbolic concepts and actions, in this case the witchcraft beliefs of
the Maka, can also benefit from a historical perspective: symbolic ex-
pressions and acts should also be studied within the framework of the
historical changes taking place at the time. This is clearly illustrated
by the events involving the *mbati*, a type of child witchcraft which led
to a state of panic in several Maka villages in the early seventies. In
this *mbati*, the Maka express their reaction to the far-reaching changes
by rearranging their old conceptions of witchcraft. At the same time,
this rearrangement is determined by the structure of these witchcraft
conceptions themselves.

Change and Continuity in the Maka Region
The Maka live in the marshy jungles of southeast Cameroon.[2] Until 1900,
their organization had typical tribal characteristics. It was a strongly
segmented society. Small patrilineages each constituted their own
village (rarely more than 100 inhabitants) and each claimed its own part
of the jungle. There were no fixed positions of authority above the
village level, and even within the village authority relationships were
rather unstable. The village elders did have a certain degree of
authority in the council of all the able-bodied men; this authority was
based on their ability to speak in public and their knowledge of the old
traditions. Within his compound every elder could demand obedience from
his direct descendants. In everyday practice, however, this authority of
the elders was restricted by strong levelling tendencies: the very real
possibility of the family groups splitting up, the threat of jealousy
and witchcraft, the strong emphasis on the right of self-determination
of every able-bodied man, and so forth.

The establishment of German colonial rule around 1900 (replaced by the
French during the First World War) brought about some fundamental

changes. The Maka love of liberty, their resistance to every form of
governmental control and their unfamiliarity with taxes or labour-levies
forced the colonial authorities to reorganize completely the region. The
patrilineages were resettled into larger villages along the new roads,
under the supervision of village chiefs. Through these new functionaries
- whom the French completely incorrectly referred to as *chefs
coutumiers* - the Maka were subjected to the usual range of official
measures: the levying of taxes, *corvées, cultures forcées* (the
compulsory cultivation of cash-crops). Particularly after 1945, this
resulted in far-reaching changes within the Maka communities: the
cultivation of market crops (coffee and cocoa) finally got going and
this created new inequalities within the villages. Moreover, a small
educated elite group emerged, due to the fact that a few boys from the
village had obtained diplomas enabling them to attain relatively
lucrative official positions.

In spite of all these changes, the old organizational principles have
retained their importance, at least within the villages: with their show
of eloquence, the village elders still dominate the discussions in the
village council, and the outcome of the large village palavers is still
determined by the traditional kinship coalitions. It is of particular
importance that the old levelling tendencies - the incessant gossiping,
the close connection between jealousy and witchcraft, the segmentary
tendencies of the kinship idiom - still impose drastic restrictions on
the authority of any leader within the village.

The old conceptions of the occult powers have equally retained great
importance not only to the ordinary villagers, but also to the educated
elite in the cities. This facet of the Maka world view is a rich and
complex one. To the Maka, the domain of the *mindjindjamb* (witches) is a
kind of shadow world which looms behind social relations in all their
aspects. An investigation of these conceptions is anything but simple.
The witchcraft idiom of the Maka certainly does have a structure all its
own, but it is also characterized by a large range of contradictions and
inconsistencies. Moreover, the Maka seem to be able to incorporate all
kinds of elements of other traditions - either of the neighbouring tribes
or of the Europeans - into their own world view with the greatest ease.
In this article, it is only possible to refer to a few of the central
themes inherent in the Maka conceptions of these hidden powers.

The Hidden World of the Djambe (Witchcraft)

The central notion in the Maka conceptions of the hidden powers is *djambe*. My informants were a bit unclear about just exactly what a *djambe* looks like. They sometimes vaguely referred to a vicious grey little creature. However, one thing is certain: the *djambe* lives in the belly of a person. The Maka are willing to believe that anyone - man or woman, young or old, rich or poor - may have a *djambe* in his or her belly. Certain individuals - the real *mindjindjamb* (possessors of *djambe*) - manage to develop their *djambe* and this gives them extra powers: they get "an extra pair of eyes" with which "they can see the things that fly through the air at night". They can also leave their own bodies and fly around at night or take on all kinds of deceptive shapes (animals, natural phenomena).

The nocturnal meetings of the witches (*shumbu*) are a veritable obsession of the Maka. When the owl hoots, a witch is supposed to transform himself into a pale spirit (*djim*) which leaves the body and flies along 'invisible threads' to a hidden meeting place. There the witches indulge in all sorts of practices, which the Maka consider to be shocking but at the same time quite adventurous: they engage in ruthless contests, but they also have enormous celebrations, where men make love to other men and 'even' women make love to each other. However, the most important motive for flying to the *shumbu*, is the witches' lust for human flesh. In itself, this tendency towards cannibalism is nothing unusual to the Maka. Before the colonial conquest, it was a generally accepted custom in this area to eat the enemies who had been defeated. However, what is shocking is that the witches prefer to eat their own relatives; this was also completely unacceptable in the pre-colonial Maka culture. In this respect the rules of witchcraft constitute a reversal of the normal relations in the daylight world. According to my informants, a witch mainly has power over his immediate surroundings, in other words over his relatives. Before a witch is admitted to the *shumbu* (witches' meeting), he or she first has to offer the other witches a victim to eat. In most cases, a witch has no other choice but to deliver one of his relatives to the other witches. They 'eat the heart' out of their victim's body. The next morning, the victim is ill and if no assistance is forthcoming he or she is certain to die. In this way, the witchcraft idiom contains a negation of the central norm of the old Maka culture: the solidarity between kin. The witch introduces violence and betrayal into the only nucleus where this was absolutely forbidden for the Maka:

the family.

In this sense, the witch is unequivocally evil and the *djambe* an anti-social power. In practice, however, the Maka often don't have such a 'black or white' view of the *djambe*. In general, my informants translated the term *djambe* as *sorcellerie* (witchcraft/sorcery), but on closer examination it turned out that this translation was often too narrow. In other contexts, the term *djambe* is used in a much more neutral way to refer to a special kind of energy, a special power. It appeared that most of the villagers were of the opinion that *djambe* is an important pre-requisite for success in every field of life. In the past, no warrior would venture into the *dombe* (war/vendetta) if he wasn't sure of his *djambe* armour. Even today, spectacular success - in the cultivation of modern cash crops or in the competition for good grades at school - is always attributed to someone's *djambe* powers. And how would a leader be able to maintain his power if he were not supported by the *djambe idjouga* (the hidden power of authority), in the face of unruly young men or attacks by other leaders?

It is difficult to view the *djambe* conceptions of the Maka within the dichotomy good/evil or social/anti-social. For instance, if my informants hinted that some rich farmer or prominent official undoubtedly owed his success to his strong *djambe*, they did not immediately assume that he also flew through the air wreaking havoc like a *djimbulu* (a spirit of the night). On the contrary, men like these were assumed to be in control of their *djambe* and thus able to succeed in life. But in all these cases, there always was a real possibility that the basic urge of the *djambe* - the lust for flesh, the killing of one's own relatives and the conspiracies during nocturnal meetings - would come to the surface. This gives the *djambe* belief an extremely ambiguous meaning with respect to day-to-day relations. Speculations about the *djambe idjouga* (power of authority) of some prominent elder can, for instance, serve to enhance his authority. But at the same time, these *djambe* connotations can make such a person extremely vulnerable. When things go badly, he will be immediately open to all kinds of malicious gossip. For example, if the elder in question were to fall ill, people would immediately start whispering that he was simply getting his just deserts and that it was now his turn to suffer from witchcraft attacks. If there were many deaths among his close relatives, it would be said that the old man obviously felt his powers decreasing and, for that reason, devoured his own relatives like a real *djindjamb* (witch) etc. *Djambe* becomes all the

more elusive because the rumours about the hidden powers have so few
concrete effects in the daylight world of the Maka. The most important
sanctions against witchcraft are to be found in the domain of that very
witchcraft. If someone feels he is being attacked by witches, he will
either try to defend himself by means of his own *djambe* powers or by
summoning the assistance of the *nkong* (specialist). The only reason a
nkong can offer protection is that he (or she) is a witch himself - a
witch who has developed his *djambe* to such a degree that he is able to
defeat all the other witches. In spite of the constant allusions to
witchcraft, very little evidence of it is actually seen in daily life.
Everything is presumed to take place in the nocturnal shadow world of
the witches: that is where they are supposed to even the score.

   It is precisely in this respect that the events involving the *mbati*,
a new kind of child witchcraft, followed a different pattern. The panic
caused by this hitherto unknown form of occult aggression was apparently
so great that steps had to be taken in the daylight world as well.

A Case: A Gang of Mbati Boys Upsets the Village and is Punished
In the late 1960s, the first rumours started circulating in the Maka
region about a new kind of witchcraft, the *mbati*. According to my
informants, the Maka had hardly ever heard of this *mbati* before; it was
said to be an infectious kind of witchcraft which had come from the
north (some of the informants were of the opinion that the *mbati* came
from the Mvele, others thought it came from the Kaka). The unusual thing
about the *mbati* was that only young boys who had never slept with a woman
were able to have this power. Older people could never swallow the *mbati*;
young girls with a *mbati* in their belly would die of it when they had
their first menstruation. Late in 1970 and early in 1971, there were
large-scale *mbati* incidents, one after the other, in three villages in
the canton where I was living. In Logbood, one of the larger villages in
the canton (585 inhabitants) it initially didn't go any further than a
few rumours. But by the end of 1971, this village also has a real *mbati*
affair.

It all began when Mpwam, a twelve-year-old boy, came running out of the
woods, weeping, and told his mother that his friends had threatened to
force the *mbati* into him. On the following Saturday, the elders of the
village summoned the people to a meeting to discuss this matter. They
had invited Elunga, a female *nkong* (specialist) from a near-by village,

because she was known for her ability to combat the *mbati*. This woman
Elunga had gone to Nanga Eboko (in the Mvele region) to receive special
training from an even greater *nkong*. This learning period had cost her
35,000 CFA ($ 230,00), but it did 'prepare her' (in her own words) for
the emergence of the *mbati* in the Maka region.

Upon her arrival in Logbood, Elunga began her work by questioning
Mpwam in public. He told her how he and his friends had gone to the
woods to set traps for animals. Suddenly his friends had gathered around
him and told him about their *mbati*. They had said that they wanted to
give him the *mbati* too, but he refused. Then they had threatened him:
they set a buffalo upon him, but he stood his ground. Then they had
shown him a panther, and he still refused. In the end, they had even
summoned a lion (an animal which is not found in this part of Cameroon)
and that was when he finally gave in. The oldest of his friends,
Ndjezzié, had shown him a cord and tied three knots in it, as a sign
that it was forbidden for him to ever betray them. At that point, Mpwam
had become so frightened that he ran away.

Mpwam's three friends were then called upon to step forward and after
some hesitation, they began to tell about their evil deeds. Ngoam led
Elunga to his mother's kitchen, where he than took a half-burnt splinter
of bamboo out of the ground next to the door; he had concealed it there
to rob his mother of her fertility. Ndjezzié and Nkal then confessed
that they both wanted to kill their mother and father because they never
gave them enough to eat. They also took Elunga to the toilet behind the
schoolhouse, where they showed her another splinter of bamboo. This one
had been hidden there to prevent the pupils in the senior year from
passing their final examination (the three boys had only attended school
for a few years themselves).

In the general commotion following these confessions, the affair
suddenly took an unexpected turn: Elunga's dog began to bark terribly,
Elunga herself turned white as a sheet and insisted upon leaving at
once. She claimed that all her powers had been drained: the boys, with
their *mbati*, had suddenly taken her unawares, when she wasn't paying
attention. If her dog hadn't warned her, it would have been the end of
her. After Elunga's departure, there was an air of uncertainty. However,
one of the village elders, Zanga, told everyone to go home: the boys
would have been frightened enough by now.

But the next day Bega, Nkal's father, was taken seriously ill (Nkal
was one of the three boys who had confessed to possessing a *mbati*). At

first everyone thought Bega had jaundice, but when he grew so thin that
they began to fear for his life, his wife understood that the *mbati*
powers apparently had not yet been appeased. She went to her brothers
in Zaf (18 miles away), where she took her brother's advise. Then she
borrowed 1,000 CFA ($ 6.50) and went to consult a less well-known *nkong*,
Nkungele, from the near-by village of Wadjisse.

 Nkungele took the money and informed Bega's relatives that Bega was
to be brought to him at once. Nkungele examined Bega; the first thing
he did was reassure him: "You did not bring out (*wos*) your *djambe* your-
self, so you won't die of it." He then stated that Elunga had not
finished her task and that he would come to Logbood to disarm the *mbati*
boys once and for all.

 The next day, Nkungele arrived in Logbood. He also began by
questioning the boys. All three of them repeated their confessions, but
this time a lot more was revealed. They began to mention the names of
certain adults who had spurred them on. The first one they mentioned
was Sumu, Mpwam's grandfather, whom the whole village already knew to
be involved with witchcraft. As a *bugia*, Sumu was said to have repeated-
ly transformed himself into a monster in order to frighten little
children. According to the *mbati* boys, Sumu changed himself into his own
owl (*tsige-tsige*, the bird of the witches) at night, and then gave them
their instructions. Sumu, a man in his seventies on the verge of
senility, was (fortunately) not in the village; he was staying with one
of his sons-in-law in town and wisely did not return to the village
until several months later.

 The charges against Kool were of a more serious nature. Nkal, the
mbati boy referred to above, stated that it was impossible for him to
undo the spell which had caused the illness of his father Bega. For it
had been Kool (a member of the same family as Bega and Nkal) who had
ordered him (Nkal) to kill Bega and he (Nkal) was not strong enough to
resist Kool's *djambe*. Everyone already 'knew' that Kool was a strong
witch; he was said to have the *zjé*, which could be shot at someone's
shadow in order to kill him. Kool vehemently denied the charges but
Nkal's 'confession' and Nkungele's confirmation that he had 'seen' what
Kool had done were extremely incriminating.

 This wave of confessions turned out to be contagious. When Nkungele
proceeded to question Zaf and Mpom, two brothers whom everyone knew to
have a malicious *djambe*, they began to confess their evil deeds as well.
They also claimed to have been spurred on by an older man who was a

member of their family (and who, fortunately, was also not present at
the time). Their confessions, however, were even more shocking: they
claimed to have killed three people in the past year with their *mbati*,
including their own father and a former village chief. Moreover, they
even claimed to have attacked the present chief (they were closely
related to him on their mother's side of the family). They claimed to
have buried a bamboo splinter in his yard so that his new house, a
construction of very ambitious design, would never be completed and his
wives would not give birth to any sons (the chief had three wives, six
daughters but, to his great sorrow, not a single son).

Once again, the palaver took an unexpected turn. Three gendarmes
happened to be passing by on their way to the next village to settle a
matter there. They asked what the reason was for the meeting. When they
heard the children actually confess to having wanted to kill Bega, they
seized the boys. Nkungele (the specialist) protested that he could solve
the matter: the boys would have to spit out their knotted cord and then
their *mbati* would disappear. But the gendarmes stated that they would
get that knotted cord out of the boys themselves; they threw the boys
on the ground and proceeded to beat and kick them. When the boys were
completely battered (their clothes torn, black and blue spots, but no
open wounds) Nkungele again intervened; he would take it from there. The
gendarmes left with the grim parting words that they would refer the
entire matter to the *sous-préfet*.

Nkungele than began to dispel the evil powers in his own way. Every-
one was invited to contribute some kind of meat. Bega and the chief, as
the main targets of the danger, each contributed a sheep and several men
(mainly of the immediate kin of the *mbati* boys) contributed chickens.
The animals were slaughtered and the boys were served enormous quantities
of meat, prepared with generous amounts of oil (Nkungele did help him-
self to a lot of the meat). The boys had to keep eating until they almost
choked. Then Nkungele took them to the toilet behind one of the houses,
he gave them some herbs to make them vomit and a little while later
returned triumphantly with the five knotted cords: the boys had thrown
up their *mbati*. A number of other cleansing rites were then performed:
their heads were shaved, they were taken to the river, where Nkungele
washed them, they had to leave their clothes there and were forbidden to
look back on their way home.

Nkungele stated that the power of their *mbati* had been removed for
good. Several days later Bega did, in fact, recover and from then on

Nkungele's fame as a *nkong* was to surpass Elunga's.

But the whole affair still had many repercussions. In the first place, the *sous-préfet*, who had been informed of the matter by the gendarmes, quite unexpectedly summoned Zaf and Mpom (the two boys who had confessed to actually having killed people with their *mbati*) and Kool, who was considered to be the main instigator. By way of a warning, the gendarmes gave Zaf and Mpom a good beating. The two boys then sought refuge with their mother's brothers in a different village. According to some informants, they did not dare to return to Logbood because they feared the wrath of the chief. According to other informants it was because they now felt so vulnerable to the other witches: Nkungele had taken away their power, their *mbati*, but they were still in reach of the other witches; after all, they had once ventured on to the path of the *mindjimbulu* (witches).

For Kool, the consequences were more serious. At first he refused to confess, so that he was beaten by the gendarmes until he finally did confess. Then they released him with the warning that if he ever did it again, he would be imprisoned. He returned to the village at night, half crawling. For three days and nights, he slept on the ground beside his bed to regain his strength.

Nonetheless the *mbati* affair did not seem to have any lasting consequences for Kool or the *mbati* boys. When I left the village two years later, all of them were once again functioning quite normally within the village community. At most people were quicker to make allusions to their witchcraft.

Old and New Aspects of the Mbati

To what degree can the *mbati* be viewed as something new in the *djambe* domain of the Maka? It immediately becomes clear that some of the symbols in the *mbati* stories do not come from the *djambe* idiom of the Maka themselves. For instance, the knotted cords which the boys threw up, apparently as a symbol of their *mbati*, do not appear anywhere else in the Maka conceptions. An even clearer borrowing is the lion which the *mbati* boys used to frighten their friend and make him swallow the *mbati*. That animal is not indigenous to this part of Cameroon at all, nor does it figure in Maka folklore.

However, in more essential respects the *mbati* is in line with the old witchcraft idiom of the Maka. That is not only evident from various elements in the *mbati* conceptions (the assumption that the *mbati*, just

like other forms of the *djambe*, lives in the bellies of the boys; the
idea that, after their confessions, the boys should have their heads
shaved, just as in other cleansing rituals and so forth). More important
is that the functioning of the *mbati* belief within the village society
is also in line with the old patterns. For instance, the *mbati* danger is
dealt with in the same fashion as older forms of the *djambe*. Apparently
all the villagers agreed that the *mbati* should be combated by the forces
of the *djambe* itself, personified by Nkungele, the *nkong* (specialist).
After the boys had thrown up their *djambe*, it was no longer considered
necessary to punish them. That the boys were nonetheless thrashed was
only because the gendarmes happened to be passing by. They are outsiders
and their interference made the villagers, including the elders and the
witchcraft specialist, clearly uneasy.

    Even the eruption of a new form of witchcraft like the *mbati* is in
itself characteristic of the way the *djambe* belief functions within the
Maka society. For the Maka, there is nothing new to an eruption like
this. When I left the Maka region in 1973, the *mbati* epidemic was
apparently on the decline. During that year, there were no new *mbati*
cases in the canton. However, just before my departure, rumours began to
circulate about a new force, the *koolekwak*, even more destructive than
the *mbati*. From letters I received, I learned that in the next few years,
at least four villages each went through their *koolekwak* affair. New
notions like this usually spread in an inscrutable way. It proved im-
possible to find either the source of the *mbati* or of the *koolekwak*. In
each village people said it had come from a near-by village (in these
cases mostly to the east or to the north) where the mysterious forces
had manifested themselves earlier. Rumours about shocking disclosures
in neighbouring villages apparently create fertile grounds for the belief
in new forms of witchcraft within one's own village.

    As was stated above, the Maka *djambe* belief has a very flexible
character: borrowings from other cultures - from neighbouring tribes,
nowadays also from white people - are easily grafted on to the
traditional witchcraft conceptions. This is certainly not a characteris-
tic of the Maka culture alone: there are, apparently, many African
cultures which show a striking flexibility in this respect.[3] In the case
of the Maka, this trait has a clear structural background. In this
society witchcraft phenomena are not controlled by a clearly defined
group of authorities (as is the case with e.g. the Azande). Moreover,
the witchcraft specialists among the Maka - the *onkong* - are involved

in vehement competition with each other. Each *nkong* boasts that he (or she) has special and preferably unknown forces in the hope of enlarging his circle of clients. It is often assumed that *onkong* have no scruples about launching new forms of witchcraft in order to reap new profits, in conjunction with their witch allies. The victim can only summon the protection of the *nkong*, who can 'see' that particular form of witchcraft. The *nkong* distributes the presents received from his client among his witch conspirators, who will then lift their spell and so on. In witchcraft matters, the Maka are always on the lookout for new weapons. There is a continuous struggle in the *djambe* world: rumours tell of cunning attacks, defeats and victories. Just like in the fights of the daytime world, new tactics and new weapons are supposed to be the most effective: they have the advantage of surprise.

Nonetheless, even if the *mbati* did not signify a real transformation of the *djambe* belief, it still must contain some important new elements. Otherwise, it would not have created such a general panic in the Maka villages. To the villagers, two particular aspects of the *mbati* were new and consequently very frightening. Firstly, the horrible confessions of the boys. Public confessions are very uncommon among the Maka. Usually, a witch will at most hint at his successes in the *djambe* or admit his nightly escapades in private to the *nkong* (specialist). However, the *mbati* boys boasted of their successes in front of the whole village community and without any restraint. Still more anxiety was roused by another aspect of the *mbati*: this is the only form of *djambe* which youngsters can terrorize their elders with. As my neighbour sighed, "These days everything is upside down. When I was young, we learned that children had every reason to fear the elders and their knowledge of the hidden world of the *djambe*. But apparently, nowadays little boys are the masters even in this field."

In the rest of this article, I shall explore the wider meanings of these new aspects. A comparison with an article by Brain may provide some insight into the motives of the child-witches and the historical reasons why their horrible confessions met with the credulity of the adults (Brain 1970). A deeper question is why long-term processes, such as the crumbling of the authority of the elders, specifically manifested themselves among the Maka in an eruption of child witchcraft. In this respect, Mary Douglas' contemplations on the relationship between social structure and symbolic order may offer inspiration.

The Horrible Confessions of the Child-Witches and Their Motives

What made the *mbati* boys confess to fantastic outrages in front of the whole village community? This behaviour on the part of the Maka youngsters is not without parallels. Brain (1970) discusses occurrences among the Bangwa (W. Cameroon) which show a striking resemblance to the *mbati* cases among the Maka. The emergence of child-witches among the Bangwa is connected with an old distinction between children "of the Gods" and those "of the sky". The latter suddenly increased in number among the Bangwa towards the end of the sixties. They engaged in practices similar to those of the *mbati* boys, they confessed their crimes as eagerly, implicitly accusing adult 'allies' and in some respects their witchcraft required the same treatment.

Brain mainly tries to discover what motives inspired these boys. He observes notably a tendency towards exhibitionism. The boys notice that their confessions and accusations confirm all kinds of fears and premonitions in the minds of the adults. But they mainly discover that their confessions have suddenly made them the centre of attention, which stimulates them to tell increasingly fantastic stories. In this respect, Brain refers to similar occurrences in our own culture: a similar kind of exhibitionist exaltation was characteristic of the child-witches of Salem, who caused such a tumult in the North American Puritan community at the end of the seventeenth century with their blood-curdling accusations. There the children also found a ready and willing audience, because their fantastic stories affirmed the dark suspicions of the adults (cf. the famous play by Arthur Miller).

In addition, Brain devotes particular attention to a more materialistic motive. According to him, it is not a mere coincidence that the eating of meat was such a central theme in the confessions of the child-witches. In Bangwa society, children are usually given the left-overs of the adults' meal. Meat, fish and gravy are things they rarely get to eat. The pent-up hunger for meat and their rage about their scanty portions would not only have driven the children to witchcraft but also to their confessions: in the case of the Bangwa as well, the curing of the child-witches also often involved eating a copious meal with a great deal of meat.

Both of these motivations certainly play a role in the behaviour of the *mbati* boys. In the Maka village, children of this age group (approx. 8 to 12 years old) do have very good reason to aggressively draw attention to their own interests. Their experiences at this age are in

sharp contrast with the security of the first few years of their life. In infancy, Maka children are pampered and coddled in all kinds of ways. They are nursed for a long time, sometimes for more than a year and a half (for one year after the birth of a child, the Maka woman must abstain from any sexual contact whatsoever; this means that there are always at least two years between the births of her children). During this period, the children live in practically constant contact with the body of their mother.

When the child is about four or five years old and is considered able to walk around independently, a drastic change takes place. The children are then expected to take care of themselves and the mother devotes her attention to the next baby. Children are expected to make themselves useful to the adults in any number of ways. Children who refuse to do this are either quickly disciplined or fail to receive much care and attention. This is clear, for example, with respect to food. In many Maka households, meals are cooked quite irregularly; a woman might prepare a copious meal one day, but the next day she will count on another woman, e.g. a neighbour of hers, having something left over for her. Most children always find something to eat in their mother's kitchen (a few bananas or something like that). Nevertheless, if a child does not want to go around hungry regularly, he will often have to supplement his diet himself, for example by performing services for other adults and by hunting or picking something himself.

Children of the age of the *mbati* boys often feel neglected. This is why it is no wonder the *mbati* witches showed a clear tendency towards exhibitionism. The enthusiasm with which they related their horrible confessions made it clear how much they enjoyed finally being the centre of attention again. In the course of the *mbati* palaver, there was a clear escalation: the boys tried to outdo each other with even more shocking statements; this finally culminated in the confessions of Zaf and Mpom, who claimed to have actually killed three people and to have even attacked the village chief.

The appetite for meat may play an even clearer role in the child witchcraft of the Maka than of the Bangwa. To the Maka, it is absolutely necessary (apparently more than in the Bangwa case) that a *mbati* witch eats large quantities of meat after his confession: only then can the boy throw up his *mbati*. That prospect was apparently the dream many children had in mind. It is very significant in this respect that in the excited stories that later circulated among the boys, mention was always

made of how much meat and gravy the *mbati* witches had devoured; one boy
would have eaten as many as five chickens and a quart of gravy before he
threw up his *mbati*.

> In the case described above, this motivation was explicitly stated
> in the confessions of Ndjezzié and Nkal. Both of them stated that
> they had tried to kill their father and their mother with their
> *mbati*; they gave as a reason that "they never got enough to eat", and
> what they got was mostly "just bananas or manioc leaves, but never
> meat."[4]

It must also be kept in mind that the children of the Maka (unlike
the children of the Bangwa) really did not have much to fear after their
confessions. If the gendarmes had not unexpectedly interfered, the *mbati*
boys would have been left alone after they had thrown up their witch-
craft. The Maka hardly have any sanctions to punish their witches in the
daylight world.

A Deeper Cause: The Declining Authority of the Elders
However, such explanations, in terms of the motives of the child-witches,
are, also in Brain's view, clearly not sufficient. After all, the most
important question is not why the boys made their confessions, but why
the villagers tended to believe these fantastic stories and why they
were even thrown into a panic by them. In this respect it is logical to
look for a historical explanation. In the past, the position of Maka
children must never have been all that easy, but until recently child-
witches like the *mbati* boys were completely unheard of in the Maka
region. Therefore, a study of the historical background and the recent
changes is required if one wants to understand the dynamics of the
symbolic order.

The statements by my informants quoted above make it clear just what
kind of changes are involved here. The *mbati* was a shock to the
villagers because, to everyone's surprise, it suddenly appeared that
young boys could stand up to the elders in the world of the occult
powers. This is why the customary sanctions - a visit to the *nkong*, a
secret counter-attack by witchcraft - were apparently not sufficient in
this case; this is why a more extensive ritual was necessary in order
to avert the threat to the village community. The *mbati* was a threat to
a fundamental principle in traditional Maka society: the belief in the
powers of the elders. My informants viewed the *mbati* epidemic as just
one more sign that the authority of the elders within the village was
undermined.

The present-day ambivalence of the position of the elders, the traditional authorities in the Maka villages, is not a new phenomenon. It is the result of a long-term process which I described on an earlier occasion as the confrontation between the tribal order and the authority of the state (Geschiere 1978). In the case of the Maka, this is an extremely complex process because there are such fundamental differences between the old and the new organization patterns. The strongly segmentary and equalizing nature of the tribal organization forced the new colonial authorities to take drastic measures after the occupation of the region. A complete reorganization seemed necessary in order to incorporate the Maka into the new economic and political order. This gave the state organization an extremely hierarchic and autocratic character. In spite of this, the old tribal organization principles still retained a great deal of their significance within the villages. In actual practice, the elders certainly have not lost their role as leaders within the village: at the large village palavers they still play first fiddle, thanks to their eloquence and their knowledge of the traditions. In confrontations with other groups (e.g. funerals or when marriages are being arranged) the elders are still the ones who act as the representatives of the group. Within the family, it is still the norm that a son is absolutely obedient to his father.

Nevertheless, the colonial conquest after 1910 did stimulate a number of processes which slowly but surely undermined the authority of the elders. For instance, the penetration of the money economy into the village community led to a direct weakening of the control of the elders over the circulation of bride prices and women. And it was precisely this control which had formerly provided a concrete basis for the authority of the elder over the younger men of his group. Moreover, due to increasing state interference in village affairs, the traditional knowledge of the elders can no longer guarantee them a position of complete authority in the village. This knowledge does still play a role when it comes to settling conflicts between family groups, arranging funerals or inheritance disputes. In addition, however, an increasing number of modern issues have to be dealt with: orders of the *sous-préfet*, difficulties involving the cooperative or problems with respect to the functioning of the school and so forth. The elders may express their opinions on modern affairs like these with great eloquence. But they do discover that, to an increasing degree, they have to share their authority with younger leaders who have been better educated and have a

greater knowledge of developments outside of the village - e.g. the
party leaders in the village or the *évolués*, members of the urban elite
who originally came from the village.

    As might be expected, the elders complain bitterly about the behaviour
of the youngsters: they have no respect at all for age and for the old
Maka traditions but only have faith in the knowledge of the white men
and of the Hausa (a Muslim group which plays a decisive role on the
national level). As my oldest informant put it: "In the old days, we
used to follow the elders everywhere they went in order to learn the
wisdom of the forefathers from them. But nowadays what boy takes the
time to listen to my stories?" The anxiety about these changes is clearly
manifested in the belief in the *mbati*: apparently the youngsters no
longer have to behave as the pupils of the elders even in the domain of
the *djambe*.

Child-Witches and Witch-Cleansing Movements
Of course this connection between the emergence of child-witches and the
decline in the authority of the Maka elders is not so surprising. Brain
(1970) and Bednarski (1970) view it as more or less self-evident
(respectively for the Bangwa of West Cameroon and for 17th century
Salem), that the spectacular performances of children in witchcraft
cases must be a result of the weakening of the old organizational
patterns. However, observations like this remain somewhat gratuitous
because they do not say much about the internal logic of this connection.
It is certain that the *mbati* can only emerge among the Maka because of
the doubts as to the authority of the elders. But this does not answer
the question as to why *vice versa* this weakening of the position of the
Maka elders manifests itself specifically in large palavers about child-
witches. This question is all the more relevant since the weakening of
the gerontocracy elsewhere in Africa coincides with quite different
developments in the realm of the hidden powers. Especially in Central
and Southern Africa, in the course of the past forty years witch-
cleansing movements have been emerging here and there. Most observers
stress the fact that these movements are also connected to the weakening
of the gerontocracy: the witch-denouncers are nearly always young people
and their activities are practically always directed against the
authority of the elders in their society.[5]

    Rey's analysis of one of these witch-cleansing movements offers an
interesting comparison with the Maka data (Rey 1971:434, 458). Rey's

example comes from the area of Mossendjo (Congo-Brazzaville, right near the Gabon border), not too far from the Maka region. And there are a number of similarities: it is part of the same jungle; before the colonial conquest, the social-political organization was of a segmented nature similar to that of the Maka (though the positions of the chiefs were more clearly institutionalized in the Mossendjo area). Thus the behaviour of the French colonial officials coincided in Rey's area with similar problems: shortage of labourers, forced labour-recruitment, forced cultivation of cash-crops, etc.

Nevertheless, quite different developments appear to have taken place in the realm of the hidden powers. In the area around Mossendjo, in the fifties the young organized a witch-finding cult which had a large following. Rey sees a direct connection between this movement and the growing insecurity of the elders, the traditional leaders. According to him, the elders in this region were also aware that their authority was waning due to political-economic developments. In order to compensate for this loss, the elders were increasingly inclined to resort to threats of witchcraft. This would have been the most important cause of the sharp reaction on the part of the young: through the instrument of a witch-exposing oracle, they consciously attempted to emancipate themselves from the pressure of the elders and their hidden powers.

This suggests the question as to why the declining authority of the Maka elders did not coincide with witch-finding movements like this. Why did it lead here rather to an eruption of child-witchcraft, enabling little boys to stand up to the elders in the very realm of witchcraft itself?

Of course this connection is influenced by a number of factors. For instance, in an economic sense it does seem relevant that the authority of the Maka elders has probably never been all too oppressive.[6] In a political sense, the intervention of the state is a significant factor. There are indications that the new government in Cameroon has always been on the alert for the development of alternative religious movements. It is striking that in Cameroon hardly any independent churches were founded and that movements like the Jehovah's Witnesses were very effectively banned.

However, it is clear that political-economic factors like these are not directly translated into symbolic conceptions. The specific structure of the witchcraft conceptions themselves must also have had an influence in this connection. In this volume on symbolic anthropology, it seems

proper to explore this level of explanation further. To what degree can
the specific pattern of the Maka conceptional order explain why the
weakening of the old authority relationships was more apt to coincide
with the appearance of child-witches than with witch-cleansing movements?
In this respect inspiration may be found in Mary Douglas' speculations
on the manner in which various types of social structures are expressed
in various cosmological orientations. Her work, after all, also does
justice to the inherent logic of such cosmological orientations.
Especially her suggestions on the divergent tenors of 'witchcraft' and
'sorcery' conceptions can be useful to us (cf. notably Douglas 1970a).

Various Tendencies in Witchcraft and Sorcery: The Maka and Mary Douglas'
Interpretations
Douglas' reasoning leads to the conclusion that 'magic' - the use of
this term is hers, not mine - can assume widely divergent meanings
depending on the social environment. Her interpretations will be used in
this section, first to further explore the general tendency of the Maka
witchcraft idiom and then to explore in what form social changes may
express themselves in that witchcraft idiom.

  Two very different characteristics of magic may be deduced from
Douglas' work. Shortly summarized: in some cases "magic serves to invest
established institutions" and in other cases "to invest (personal - P.G.)
leadership".[7] This difference is related to her distinction between two
types of small-scale societies: on the one hand the "small group",
characterized by a sharp and unequivocal demarcation of the group and by
an unclear or ambivalent division of roles within the group ("strong
group" and "weak grid" - Douglas mainly mentions African examples of this
type). On the other hand the 'Big Man' society, characterized by an
unstable composition of the social units as well as by sharp but strictly
regulated competition between the leaders ("weak group" and "strong grid"
- Douglas mainly mentions Melanesian examples of this type).

  In the small group societies, magic mainly expresses itself in the
form of "witchcraft"; Douglas uses this term to refer to an uncontrolled
and destructive use of the hidden powers. Characteristically, witchcraft
is closely related to Evil here. This type of society has a strong
moralistic cosmology, in which the contrast is stressed between good and
evil. Witches are viewed as a threat to everything that is good in the
society. In daily life, belief in the hidden powers mainly manifests it-
self in recurrent witchcraft accusations; these accusations can lead to

condemnations, to the elimination of political leaders or, if necessary, to a redefinition of the group, so that, once again, the internal solidarity is guaranteed (Douglas 1970a: 88, 148).

   With respect to the 'Big Man' society, Douglas prefers to speak of "sorcery"; by this she apparently means controlled, purposeful use of the hidden powers. In this type of society, the distinction between good and evil is less significant; the religious conceptions here have more of a pragmatic tint. The most important preoccupation is success in the competition between the leaders, the 'Big Men'. In this connection, sorcery plays an important and generally accepted role. The use of the hidden powers is certainly not unequivocally bad. On the contrary, "there is no disapproval of men who use magic to further their own cause" (Douglas 1970a:157). Douglas is less clear as to just how the belief in hidden powers will manifest itself in this kind of society in the daylight world. However, it seems logical that in this context rumours about success in sorcery and allusions to it are the main manifestations. Here the appropriate reaction to a 'magic' threat seems to be a counter-attack with the same weapons rather than to make accusations. In a society where sorcery is a normal tool of leaders, there is hardly any point to accusing someone of manipulation of the hidden powers. After all, such an accusation in these societies hardly would rouse any moral indignation. (Cf. also Forge's view on sorcery/witchcraft, and footnote 9 below.)

   As might be expected with this type of grand classification, it is not easy to fit the Maka case into it. There is probably no society which does not contain elements of both of Douglas' characteristics of 'magic'. In the case of the Maka, the first problem is that the central concept of *djambe* is difficult to classify in terms of Douglas' distinction between 'witchcraft' and 'sorcery' (see also Douglas 1966: 122 ff.). The Maka certainly believe that the possessors of the *djambe* may use their power in an uncontrolled, destructive manner (this is how Douglas characterizes witchcraft). But in addition, it is an invariable theme in the Maka conceptions that someone can learn to control his *djambe* and use it in a constructive manner (this is how Douglas characterizes sorcery). It has previously become clear that the Maka believe that the *nkong* (specialist) is able to protect the victims of the witches precisely because he has been taught by his teacher how to control his *djambe*. In the same way, other people have learned to use their *djambe* in order to achieve victories at war (in former times) or

success in the cultivation of cash-crops (nowadays). By controlling his *djambe* powers, a leader can also outwit any opponent at the talks in the village council with the *djambe idjouga*, the hidden power of authority.[8]

Thus the *djambe* belief of the Maka cannot be unequivocally classified in Douglas' distinction between 'witchcraft' as a morally reprehensible category (typical of the 'small group' society) and 'sorcery' as a pragmatic, acceptable tool of practically every leader (as in the 'Big Man' society). It was already noted earlier that dichotomies like good/ evil or social/anti-social are not very relevant to the Maka view of *djambe*. Certain things that the witches do - particularly the nocturnal feasts - rouse intense disgust in the Maka. But this indignation about the *djambe* certainly does not necessarily mean in the case of the Maka that "to convict a rival of witchcraft is to finish him politically". And this is precisely the kind of statement with which Douglas characterizes the moral significance of witchcraft in the 'small group' society (Douglas 1970a:88). On the contrary, the Maka believe that no leader can maintain his authority if he does not know his way around in the hidden world of the *djambe*.

Mpal, in 1971 a man of about sixty, told me with some bitterness about how, in the colonial period, he had not been appointed *chef de canton* because of his inexperience in the *djambe*. Le Blanc, the colonial official at that time, had been a good friend of his; he had actually already appointed him (Mpal) as *chef*. But afterwards the elders of the canton had taken Mpal aside; they had spoken to him and had discovered that he was not at all familiar with the ins and outs of the *djambe* (Mpal must have hardly been thirty years old at the time). Then the elders had told Le Blanc that Mpal would certainly be destroyed by his new official position. The white man took their advice and appointed Zjé as *chef*. When I spoke to Zjé in 1971, he still giggled as he made all kinds of allusions to how his *bagoul ba boud* (nocturnal hunters of men) had eliminated one opponent after the other for him.

So in daily life, the significance of the *djambe* to the Maka is much more similar to Douglas' second characterization: it is viewed as a pragmatic acceptable tool that is frequently used in political competition. It may very well be true that the *djambe* in itself is evil; the Maka truly regret that the *djambe* has ever entered the world of people. But given this fact, in practice it will, sooner or later, be necessary for practically every individual to seek support in the domain of the *djambe* in order to withstand his opponents.[9] "There is no sin, only stupidity", is the way Douglas characterizes the view on sorcery in the 'Big Man' society (Douglas 1970a:164). This does indeed express the tenor of the excited stories of my Maka informants about the nocturnal

escapades of the witches. These stories were about violent
confrontations, surprising ambushes and snares and sensational victories.
In these gossip stories the witches are certainly not only marginal
figures, but also include prominent leaders: respectable village elders
or awe-inspiring modern politicians.

The sanctions which the Maka have against the *djambe* may offer a more
concrete base for our exploration. In this regard, there are also certain
similarities to Douglas' characterization of 'witchcraft' as something
morally reprehensible which rightfully provokes accusations and
condemnations (just as in the 'small group'). Nevertheless, in day-to-
day practice the behaviour of the Maka seems to coincide more, in this
sense as well, with Douglas' version of sorcery as a pragmatic, normal
resource which is to be combated with the very same weapons (just as in
the 'Big Man' society). Formal witchcraft accusations are sometimes made
by the Maka; there also exist special oracles for the purpose of un-
masking witches (e.g. a ritual whereby a venom-tooth of a snake is put
in someone's eye). But in practice procedures like this are virtually
never put into use. Specific accusations of witchcraft are frequently
expressed by the villagers in day-to-day life (e.g. if someone is over-
come by rage, also often at funerals). But if a formal village palaver
is organized because of this kind of gossip, then the accusers usually
take back their words. In the few palavers where it does come to a formal
accusation, the village leaders decide that both the accused and the
accuser are to consult an oracle. However, I never witnessed a single
case where the oracle was actually consulted.[10]

The Maka belief in the *djambe* does not primarily manifest itself in
public accusations, but rather in a constant stream of rumours and
gossip, which have very tangible effects. In former times, witchcraft
accusations could lead to fissions of the local groups. Apart from that
the Maka have (and had) no concrete sanctions against witchcraft (such
as executions, punishment or expulsion from the group). A real
condemnation of an individual witch is impossible within the Maka
society, if for no other reason than that the members of the immediate
family practically always continue to protect the accused, even in the
face of general indignation about his presumed escapades in the *djambe*.

As has been mentioned above, the Maka seek protection from the *djambe*
rather elsewhere, namely within that very *djambe*. It is hardly possible
to combat a witch by means of sanctions in the daylight world. Rather,
the victim has to seek support in the hidden world of the *djambe* itself.

If someone falls ill, he will go to the *nkong* (specialist). For the very
reason that he himself possesses a strong *djambe*, the *nkong* can 'see'
which witches are attacking his client; and he can stop these witches
from doing so, sometimes by threatening them with his own *djambe* powers,
sometimes by pacifying them with a gift (which is naturally paid for by
the client). Once the spell has been lifted, the Maka do not consider it
necessary to punish the witch. However, if the victim dies, so that ir-
reparable damage has been done, the members of the immediate family will
mumble that the culprits will get what they deserve. The Maka view it as
self-evident that this revenge will take place again in the world of the
witches themselves: the immediate relatives will either summon their own
djambe powers or call in the assistance of a renowned *djimbulu* (witch).
This is precisely the reason why the increasing interest of the Cameroon
national authorities for witchcraft rumours is somewhat confusing to the
Maka. The interference of the gendarmes - as in the case cited above,
where the *mbati* boys were beaten up - frightens all the parties involved,
the accusers as well as the accused. It disrupts the web of rumours and
gossip surrounding the *djambe*. In the opinion of the Maka, these rumours
and accusations should not have any clear, tangible consequences. If, at
a later date, someone else dies, then outsiders will often mumble that
the witches have apparently evened the score. In this sense, the Maka
domain of the *djambe* is a circular, self-regulating system, in which the
authorities of the daylight world have no role to play.

Consequently, from Douglas' distinctions, the conclusion can be drawn
that the *djambe* belief of the Maka bears a greater similarity to the
'sorcery' pattern of the 'Big Man' society than to the 'witchcraft'
pattern of the 'small group' society. This is evident from the following
points:
  - *djambe* is ultimately a morally reprehensible power (just as in the
    'small group'), but in day-to-day life it is viewed in a rather
    pragmatic manner as an inevitable tool in dealing with competition
    (just as in the 'Big Man' society);
  - protection against the *djambe* threat is to be found in the hidden
    world of the *djambe* itself (as in the 'Big Man' society) rather
    than in public accusations or condemnations (as in the 'small
    group').
This conclusion is rather surprising: it is actually the opposite of
what might have been expected. With respect to its social structure,
Maka society, with its strict patrilineal system would seem to belong
rather to the 'small group' type than to the 'Big Man' society. With

her distinctions, Douglas mainly aims to show that differing types of
social structure are expressed in differing cosmological orientations.
The Maka now seem to present an incongruous picture: a 'small group'
society where conceptions about the hidden powers prevail which would
be more appropriate to a 'Big Man' society.

This paradox seems to be mainly a result of the problems involved in
applying Douglas' general distinctions. Upon further examination, it
appears to be doubtful whether the Maka social organization really offers
a clear example of a 'small group'. Even in the social structure of the
Maka, there are also many similarities to the organization patterns of
the 'Big Man' society.

> In the framework of this article, only a few comments on this topic
> will have to suffice (see also Geschiere 1978). The composition of
> the local Maka communities is indeed determined by patrilineal descent
> and this does seem to be characteristic of the 'small group'
> (according to Douglas, characterized by the 'strong group', i.e.
> clearly demarcated social units). Nevertheless, the question remains
> as to whether there was a basis in Maka society for a highly developed
> group solidarity in an economic sense as well (in Douglas' opinion,
> close economic cooperation is a prerequisite for a witch-fearing
> cosmology typical of the 'small group', in which the witch is viewed
> as a threat to the group and, consequently, as a bringer of evil).
> Traditionally, the Maka had land in abundance, so it must have been
> quite easy to split up the small patrilineal groups. Indeed this
> process took place quite frequently. The important role of hunting in
> the pre-colonial economy, in addition to the subsistence agriculture,
> must have reinforced the semi-nomadic character of this society. More-
> over, ever since 1750, the Maka groups were constantly dislodged and
> dispersed by invasions of the Beti-Bulu-Fang group.
> Even within the group, the economic inter-dependence must have
> been rather weak. In the field of agriculture, the production and the
> control over the harvest is (and was) not centrally organized, not
> even within the extended family. Each woman is in charge of the
> production on her own gardens and decides what is to be done with the
> produce. Cooperation takes place on the basis of personal initiative
> and personal preferences. The same holds true for hunting, which was
> the most important productive activity of the men in pre-colonial
> times. The authority of the family elders was not based on their
> control over the production but on their roles as representatives of
> the group in the exchanges of prestige-goods and bride-prices with
> other groups.
> Therefore, if a man wanted to become an elder with authority over
> an extensive group of descendants, it was necessary to build up a
> network of contacts with other groups. In this respect, the Maka are
> willing and eager to utilize the flexibility of their idiom of
> affinity and of matrilateral kinship (they 'discover' 'sons-in-law'
> and 'mother's brothers' everywhere, etc.). In practice, such 'family-
> ties' often turn out to be extremely vague or fictive kinship
> relations: the exchange of goods appears to be more important for
> starting and maintaining relationships than the actual genealogical
> tie. Moreover, a wide network of relations used to enable a man to
> attract new dependents (*milwa*): if a young man thought his kin weren't

helping him sufficiently (e.g. to accumulate enough bride-wealth), he
could place himself under the guardianship of a *tsji* (rich man),
hoping to obtain a bride through the exchange relations of his new
'father'.

Viewed in this perspective, some traits of the 'Big Man' principle
do indeed emerge. In Maka society, leaders have to prove their worth
by means of personal achievements. This necessitates the creation of
a vast network of external relations by means of continuous exchanges.
To the Maka, the unity of the group is never to be taken for granted.
The degree of solidarity within the patrilineal segments always
depends on the personal authority of the elder. This authority has to
be continuously proved by the elder in confrontations with leaders of
other groups or rivals within his own group.

Child-witches, Witch-cleansing Movements and the Tenor of the Djambe Belief of the Maka

Back to our original question: to what extent can the specific pattern
of the *djambe* belief explain why the weakening of the gerontocracy
manifests itself among the Maka in the specific form of eruptions of
child-witchcraft? On first sight, the application of Douglas' interpre-
tations seems to be of little avail: the result is somewhat confusing,
to put it mildly. Nonetheless, one point in her interpretations can offer
us a solid foothold: it can be deduced from her distinctions (even though
she herself never states it explicitly) that the importance of formal
witchcraft accusations must vary considerably from one society to the
next and that this can offer a useful indicator of the impact of witch-
craft/sorcery within a given society. If witchcraft is mainly viewed as
a morally reprehensible act, the logical reaction will be a formal and
public witchcraft accusation. If involvement in the occult powers is
viewed more pragmatically, accusations carry less weight; then the
appropriate reaction will be a counter-attack with the same powers.

Consequently, the relative importance of public accusations may offer
a useful starting point for comparative studies of witchcraft. Un-
fortunately this aspect seems to have been somewhat neglected until now:
maybe a more coherent pattern would emerge from the study of African
witchcraft if this aspect had received more systematic attention. Of
course, public accusations often constitute one of the few concrete
aspects of witchcraft behaviour and that is a rare luxury to students of
witchcraft. But there are deeper reasons why this aspect deserves
systematic attention. As stated above, public witchcraft accusations are
certainly not of the same importance in all societies. In the literature,
it is often disregarded that witchcraft beliefs may influence the social
relations not only through accusations but also through other forms of

communication, e.g. gossip or - a seary topic for most Westerners -
direct threats and real dangers. So, in the comparative study of witch-
craft, it seems logical to distinguish societies in the first place with
reference to the various mechanisms through which the belief in the
occult forces manifests itself in the daylight world. For instance, the
relative importance of formal, public witchcraft accusations can offer
a clue to the general tenor of the witchcraft belief within a society -
as was deduced above from Douglas' interpretations. Incidently, Douglas
herself sometimes seems remarkably careless in dealing with this
distinction. In her introduction to the ASA monograph - which even
has the word 'accusations' in the title - Douglas does not hesitate
to simultaneously discuss systems in which accusations and moral indig-
nation are prominent and others in which public accusations are of little
significance because nearly everybody is supposed to be familiar with
the world of the hidden powers.[11]

At any rate, the negligible role of public witchcraft accusations
among the Maka may clarify our original issue: it may explain why the
weakening of the elders' authority manifests itself among the Maka in
child-witchcraft rather than in witch-cleansing movements. Douglas
(1970a:146, 147) stresses that witch-cleansing movements mainly develop
in what she refers to as the 'small group' society, where witchcraft is
viewed as evil and witchcraft accusations are numerous. This inter-
pretation also suggests how little these witch-cleansing movements are in
conjunction with the witchcraft idiom of the Maka. The Maka modern youths
also do complain about the suffocating pressure of the elders, while
alluding to the hidden threat of the *djambe* powers of these elders. But,
to the Maka youths, that is no reason to start a witch-finding cult.
Instead, they take advantage of the new opportunities to leave: if they
settle in the cities, at least they are out of the close range of the
elders. After all, there would be no point to the Maka youths denouncing
the witchcraft of the elders. What sense would accusations like these
make in a society where it is generally accepted that a prominent member
of parliament regularly roams among the *mindjim* (the spirits of the
witches and the dead) to replenish his powers? The Maka symbolic order
doesn't offer the young men much ground for accusing their elders of
witchcraft. As was noted earlier, to the Maka the appropriate answer to
a *djambe* attack is apparently not an accusation but a counter-attack with
the *djambe* itself. That was exactly what the *mbati* boys did. In this
sense, the *mbati* does fit into the specific logic of the Maka *djambe*

belief: the new powers of the *mbati* suddenly enabled little boys to
withstand the elders with their own hidden weapons.

In this context, still another difference between child-witchcraft
and witch-cleansing movements can be clarified. In the latter type of
movement, it is mainly young men (sometimes also young women) who are
active. The *mbati* boys, on the contrary, were still children (not older
than 13). That seems to be related to the difference in impact between
these forms of witchcraft behaviour. The witch-finding cults, stressing
accusation, exposure and punishment, always imply a political protest.
In Douglas' terms, they are an "instrumental" expression of witchcraft
beliefs: by means of the exposure of witches, the young men try to combat
the obsolete authority claims of the elders. The child-witchcraft, on the
other hand, remains on an "expressive" level (Douglas 1966:13). The
mbati boys can hardly be suspected of a conscious attack on the
authority of their elders. The confessions, and their general acceptance
by the adults, are more expressions of a general feeling that the old
relationships are affected. Viewed in this perspective, it no longer
appears to be accidental that the Maka believe the *mbati* can only possess
boys who have not yet slept with a woman. Precisely because the *mbati*
boys are still sexually immature - i.e. still 'marginal' to the social
order - they are the appropriate 'mediums' to denounce the decay of
social relations. Child-witchcraft does not contain a deliberate protest.
Since formal accusations are of little significance to the Maka, the
witchcraft beliefs can hardly inspire actions against witchcraft as such.
Here again, the circular self-perpetuating character of the Maka *djambe*
belief becomes evident. The actions of the *mbati* boys remain within the
framework of the witchcraft idiom: the deterioration of the elders'
authority is expressed in *djambe* terms without invalidating the basic
connection between *djambe* and authority.[12]

These last observations particularly require further elaboration. It is
certain that the Maka association of the *mbati* with little boys and with
sexual immaturity has wider symbolic meanings than those gone into above.
Therefore, further analysis of the *mbati* would require an exploration of
the wider Maka views, specifically on children and sexuality. However,
that would be too ambitious an enterprise for the present article.

The above can indeed offer no more than a first exploration of the
relation between social changes and the symbolic order in Maka society.
Nonetheless, even this modest analysis clearly shows that the symbolic

order of the Maka and its dynamics should be studied against a histori-
cal background. One of the leading themes in Schulte Nordholt's study
on the Atoni of Timor emerges from the Maka materal as well: the con-
ceptual patterns are rearranged in accordance with the changing power
relations, but at the same time these rearrangements are shaped by the
structure of the symbolic order itself. The *mbati* is an expression of
long-term processes which have corroded the authority of the elders,
without completely destroying it yet. On the other hand, the fact that
these changes are expressed in the specific form of fantastic confessions
by child-witches is also a consequence of the structure of the Maka
conceptions themselves.

NOTES

1 Maitland, F.W., *Selected Essays*, 1936:249; quoted from Evans-
  Pritchard 1961:46.

2 The Maka live in the jungle of South Cameroon on the upper waters of
  the Nyong and the Doumé just to the south of the border between the
  jungle and the savannah. Probably about sixty thousand people belong
  to this group (including the emigrants to the towns). The Maka speak
  a Bantu language (Guthrie classifies them as A 80 - together with
  their neighbours to the south, the Djem, and the Ngoumba, who live
  close to the Cameroon coast). The Maka call themselves Mê-ká; the
  French auhorities also referred to them as Mákya or Makàa.

3 Cf. Richards (1970:166) on the Bemba of Zambia and Brain (1970:177)
  on the Bangwa of West Cameroon.

4 In general the eating of meat seems to be virtually a kind of
  obsession to the Maka: in all kinds of fairy-tales, the desire for
  meat (often human flesh) is a recurrent theme. A special aspect of
  the age group of the *mbati* boys is that they get to eat even less
  meat than the other villagers.

5 Cf. Richards (1970) and Willis (1970).

6 Even in pre-colonial times, there was no pooling of the yields of
  farming or hunting under the control of the elders. Even then, each
  producer could decide for him or herself what to do with his or her
  product (cf. p.291).

7 Douglas 1970a:179. It is not superfluous to draw attention here to
  the fact that I *derived* the following characteristics of magic from
  Douglas' work. Douglas herself uses the distinction cited here between
  "sorcery" and "witchcraft" in the framework of rather vague, general
  comparisons. In *Natural Symbols* (1970; cf. also *Purity and Danger*,
  1966:122 f.) she distinguishes four types of societies in terms of
  various combinations of strong/weak group and strong/weak grid. In
  each type witchcraft/sorcery has different manifestations. I have
  tried to discover the consequences of her insights with respect to

the comparison of the 'small group' with the 'Big Man' society. This
comparison seems to be especially relevant to the case of the Maka.
The outcome of this comparison with respect to the point of witch-
craft/sorcery is not explicitly expressed by Douglas, but it does
seem to be a direct consequence of her distinctions.

8 The older distinction, more commonly used by anthropologists, between
witchcraft and sorcery, as Evans-Pritchard formulated it, does not
unequivocally apply to the Maka *djambe* conceptions. Following the
model of 'his' Azande, Evans-Pritchard describes a witch as someone
who possesses an inherent power; this in sharp contrast with a
sorcerer who makes use of external tools. In the case of the Maka,
the distinction between the *djambe*, a power *inside* someone's belly,
and *miedu*, 'charged' objects, is not very sharp. Someone who
possesses a *djambe* will often use *miedu*; *vice versa*, someone's *miedu*
would be more effective if he had a well-developed *djambe* at his
disposal. Nonetheless, this distinction is not without analytical
significance with respect to the Maka conceptions; to a certain
degree, it coincides with the most important dichotomy in the *djambe*
idiom, the dichotomy between 'inside' and 'outside'. In the *djambe le
djaw* (witchcraft inside the house, i.e. within one's own group)
witches mainly put their faith in their own *djambe* powers. In the
djambe le domb (witchcraft of warfare, i.e. in the confrontation with
outsiders) their own *djambe* powers become less effective. "The further
the witches fly from home, the more power their *djambe* loses; they be-
come like trees without roots, that fall over at the slightest bit of
wind". In the confrontation with outsiders, their own *djambe* has to
be reinforced by all kinds of *miedu* (charged objects) or by the *djambe*
powers of a specialist (the *nkong*, who also works extensively with
miedu).

9 Compare Forge's characterization of the attitude of the Abelam (N.E.
New Guinea) to the hidden powers: "Supernatural aggression of one type
or another is commonly found an integral and expected part of the
political process. This is not to suggest that sorcery and witchcraft
are considered good of themselves - indeed their existence is
universally deplored - but given that they exist, it is vital for
every group to have access to both protective measures against, and
active means of supernatural aggression, with which it can redress
the balance and maintain its position relative to other groups" (A.
Forge 1970:258). I did not read this passage until after my field
work, but the drift of it is quite similar to the impression that my
Maka informants gave me. This similarity between the Maka and the
Abelam, a typical 'Big Man' society, fits in with the line of reason-
ing of this article.

10 Cf. the following data: in one rather large village (585 inhabitants)
I attended all the village palavers for a period of ten months (these
palavers were held at least once a week, sometimes twice or three
times). There were only four cases of formal witchcraft accusations
(in the sense that one or more persons were specifically accused of
witchcraft). In all four cases, the village leaders decided that the
accuser and the accused person(s) should consult an oracle to
determine the degree of truth in the accusations. In three cases, it
did not go any further than this (all kinds of excuses were made about
why an oracle was not consulted: it was too expensive, it was too
time-consuming to have to travel somewhere to consult a specialist

etc.). There was only one case in which a formal witchcraft accusation was investigated by a *nkong* (specialist); that was the *mbati* affair described above, which was unusual because it introduced a new and consequently alarming form of witchcraft. This picture coincides with supplementary facts about palavers in three near-by villages.

11 Cf. Douglas 1970b:XXVII (e.g. the passages on the Abelam). There is the same problem in Van Wetering's comparative study on witchcraft. On p. 223, Van Wetering formulates a general proposition on the relation between witchcraft and the accumulation/levelling of power: "When we speak of the accumulation of power, we have in mind an accusation by a more powerful person of a less powerful person. Levelling of power refers to the opposite". Thus the impression is given that the witchcraft belief solely influences the power relations by means of accusations. However, Van Wetering then goes on to discuss examples (e.g. the Abelam) where accusations are hardly of any importance, without clearly distinguishing these cases from the others. Yet especially in a comparative analysis of the significance of witchcraft for the accumulation or the levelling of power, it would seem to be of essential importance to distinguish whether withcraft is combated by a public accusation or by a counter-attack with the same weapons. In the latter case, where the moral indignation about witchcraft is apparently less powerful, the possibility of accumulating power by means of witchcraft will always be very real.

12 A similar connection between changes in the power relationships and the patterns of the witchcraft conceptions is also evident in Maka society with respect to other points. The most far-reaching breakthrough in the authority relationships among the Maka themselves was undoubtedly the emergence, ever since 1945, of a small educated elite of government officials and politicians. Thanks to their position within the new state organization, the power of the members of this new elite far exceeds the traditional boundaries of the egalitarian Maka culture. Nevertheless, the old *djambe* conceptions still retain their relevance to the new elite positions though with one important difference: in this modern context the *djambe* has lost its traditional levelling impact. According to the old stories, even the most feared warrior or the most respected leader could be taken off guard by the *djambe* of an ordinary villager. The members of the new elite only fear the *djambe* attacks of other members of the elite. They have so much support in the domain of the *djambe* that, except for rare exceptions, they are considered to be immune to the *djambe* attacks of ordinary peasants. In this way, the rearrangement of the *djambe* idiom emphasizes the new power of the political Maka elite.

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A. DROOGERS

AN AFRICAN TRANSLATION OF THE CHRISTIAN MESSAGE

Changes in the concepts of spirit, heart and God among the Wagenia of
Kisangani, Zaire [+]

Introduction
In his study of the Atoni political system, Schulte Nordholt (1971)
stresses the dynamism inherent in structures. Within a culture, different
structural principles working in opposite directions cause a dynamism
even without external influences changing the system; ".... structural
totalities are always both in a state of development and in some sort
of developed state'; ...."'system' is never to be understood in the sense
of a closed, perfectly integrated whole, but rather as a composite of
structures realized through different structural principles and there-
fore not harmonious in their functioning, and never in a state of
equilibrium" (1971:12, 16).

   Structural principles determine the relative position of elements

within a culture and therefore the nature of their relation to each
other. They serve as rules for arrangement in patterns, and establish
the character of these relations. They make for relations of e.g. in-
separability, hierarchy, rivalry, preference, convergence to a center,
unification, superiority. The result is not a harmonious whole of fitting
patterns, but a dynamic system of forces often working in opposite
directions (cf. Schulte Nordholt 1971:392-397). In the course of time
the outcome of this process of structuring and restructuring may vary.
"So man builds his house anew every generation, and on the basis of the
same structural principles the 'construction' may be different each
time." (Schulte Nordholt 1971:15.)

Nowadays, the new generations have an added number of structural
principles at their disposal, since cultural contact introduces
principles from Western cultures. The dynamism already present in
the conditions of a relatively closed culture receives new impulses.
Though the newly introduced principles may contribute to the change,
they may also be surprisingly reminiscent of principles traditionally at
work. This will facilitate the adoption of foreign cultural influences.
Moreover, there is even more dynamism since there is not only a supply
of new principles but also of new elements to be arranged in ever new or
renewed patterns.

I assume symbols, as expressions of reality which make communication
possible, to be the units which serve together as elements in a
pattern. Culture, then, is the human capacity to arrange and rearrange
symbols into patterns whose composition is determined by structural
principles. In my study of the Wagenia boys' initiation (Droogers 1974),
written under Schulte Nordholt's supervision, I tried to show how this
ritual had changed in the course of time. During the initiation ritual,
the novices became acquainted with traditional structural principles,
not through explicit education, but as it were effortlessly in play, since
these principles were at work in the ritual context. The boy's passage
from the position of a child dependent on the mother, to that of a man
within the men's group was the primal theme of the ritual. Thus the boy
was introduced to the way generations were patterned, to the opposition
between men and women, to the preference for patrilineal relatives over
and against matrilateral relatives. As the cooperation between kin groups
changed between initiations and even in the course of one initiation, he
learned about the vulnerable balance between autonomy and cooperation.
Leaving the village, passing by the river for circumcision and living

for some time in a forest camp, he was familiarized with the structure
of Wagenia cosmology. Training for the wrestling matches, he experienced
the rivalry between the Wagenia of the left bank and those of the right
bank. Going through the initiation ritual, he went through the sequence
of ritual symbols arranged in time and space, many of which he was to
come across in other Wagenia rituals in the course of his life, since
there was a basic pattern of symbols recurrent in each Wagenia ritual.

Moreover, the transition from tribe to nation had its impact on the
initiation ritual. The most striking example of this reorientation was
the integration into the ritual, at a fitting place, of an imitation of
the military parade the Wagenia had so often seen in town on national
holidays. On this occasion, the boys were organized in a hierarchy
appropriate to military and political life in the nation. While Wagenia
tradition only knew a weak and simple hierarchy, it was extended to match
the national example.

I found it useful for analytical purposes to distinguish   between
transformations - not a change in pattern but in the symbols constituting
the pattern - and structural change - in which the pattern changes by a
restructuring of the same symbolic elements and/or by a change in the
number of these elements (Droogers 1974:12, cf. Leach 1964:5, Schulte
Nordholt 1971:12). An individual symbol may be replaced by a cluster of
symbols, without necessarily changing the pattern of which it was part.
A change in the number of symbols therefore does not always involve a
change in the general pattern, but may be restricted to a change within
the position of one composing symbol. This was the case e.g. when, in
Wagenia initiation, the imitation parade took the place of a much
simpler welcoming ceremony for new novices in the camp. The general
structure of the initiation ritual did not change. One of the composing
elements just took on a more complex character. A transformation occurred
in the general course of the ritual. In this way, the potentially
destructive foreign influence had been neutralized and given a place
within the traditional context. Dealing with old and new symbols, the
Wagenia succeeded in adapting their ritual to the changing times, while
at the same time achieving a certain measure of continuity. Yet, the
introduction of the imitation parade also brought about a structural
change when, after the novices left the initiation camp, they performed
the parade for their mothers, thus adding a new item to the ritual programme.

I have alluded, in some detail, to my study of Wagenia initiation,
not only to show how Schulte Nordholt influenced that part of my work,

but also because the same ideas will guide me in the present article, just as they have guided me when, in 1976-77, I returned to the Wagenia in order to study religious change. When I now report on that research, I will focus on three major concepts in present-day Wagenia religion: spirit, heart and God. Though in traditional Wagenia religion, other concepts played an important role as well, I will concentrate on these three, since they had Christian parallels and became even more important in comparison with the other traditional religious symbols. I would like to show whether and how these three traditional religious concepts have changed under western, predominantly Christian influence, and, *vice versa*, how the Christian message, as it was understood by the Wagenia, was modified under the influence of their tradition. If I speak of Christian and Christianity, I am referring to the form in which Christianity was brought to the Wagenia. The same questions which guided me in the initiation research will turn up here as well, this time applied to the study of beliefs: What symbols are used? Which structural principles are at work? Are the changes which take place of a trans-formational or of a structural nature?

In terms of the model adopted here, the missionary situation was one in which the foreign culture had sent advocates of its religious beliefs to the Wagenia, thereby implicitly propagating its structural principles. They met with the problem of translating from one language into another and, what is more, from one culture into another. There was often a large gap between the message as preached and the message as understood, even if the same words were used. Homonyms are the translator's archenemies. The problem in translation is not so much to find the right word, but to find the right meaning. More often than not, the words from the Christian vocabulary were adopted but the meaning attached to these words tended to be of a traditional nature. Since use was made of the local language, traditional culture was at an advantage.

If, for example, 'charity' is translated into Kigenia as *mobóto* (cf. *kobóta*, give birth to), there may arise a misunderstanding in that this charity is restricted to one's kin, to whom *mobóto* is traditionally the right attitude. If one has the habit of dividing people into kin and non-kin, to be helped or to be distrusted respectively, the understanding of the Christian message may be that charity is a prerogative between kin. But Christianity demands a revolution in the way of thinking by claiming that charity must be extended to all people, kin and non-kin alike. Instead of thinking in terms of opposition, one has to think in

terms of inclusion. Contrasting structural principles are at work.

Thus, even if the terminology seems correct, the traditional way of thinking and the structural principles governing it have not necessarily been changed. Especially when we discuss the concepts of heart and spirit, this will become clear. The traditional concept of God was not so powerful as to hamper the communication of the Christian message, though here too tradition influenced understanding. By the addition of new elements to the almost empty concept of God, it obtained a more complex nature, a change which in terms of our model was comparable to what happened to the welcoming ceremony in initiation.

Moreover, there are more specific questions. Thus I ask myself whether and, if so, why Christian beliefs have by now been accepted by the majority of the Wagenia. Another aim of the present research is to offer an example of spontaneous Africanization of Christianity to those African theologians in search of a more artificial Africanization of Christian beliefs and institutions (Droogers 1977). The question of whether the common traditional background of Christians from different churches may serve ecumenical purposes is also of an applied anthropological nature.

At the outset, I would like to make clear that I fully agree with Geertz' modest approach: "Cultural analysis is intrinsically incomplete. And, worse than that, the more deeply it goes the less complete it is" (1973:29). Meanings are elusive and impenetrable objects of study. Once the anthropologist has focused on man as a semantic creature, a meaning-maker (Crick 1976:2, 3), he will find it far more difficult to write in a generalizing style. Moreover, one should not forget that anthropologists are also semantic creatures.

So if this seems to be an oversimplified and generalized report, the reader should be well aware that the rules discovered are also subject to exceptions, and that for the sake of the conciseness of the report deviations and single peculiarities have been omitted. Besides, I can only present a small part of my material. Since I worked with informants from different churches, as well as with informants who do not attend church at all, there is a measure of variation between the opinions expressed by them. Not all Wagenia share the ideas presented below as Wagenia beliefs. The same symbols are understood by different individuals to have different meanings. One finds Wagenia Baptists who, in their statements, speak the same language with the same meanings as their British counterparts, while in the same church one may also encounter

some who express a predominantly traditional outlook even though they
use a Christian idiom. Yet, my assertions in this article hold true
for the majority of the Wagenia. In another article (Droogers forth-
coming) a quantitative differentiation is offered.

   This report on religious changes among the Wagenia should be read
with the preceding qualifications in mind. It opens with a short
paragraph in which the Wagenia will be presented to the reader, after
which separate paragraphs follow on spirit, heart and God, central
concepts of present Wagenia religion. The article ends with some
conclusions related to the problems raised in this introduction.

Wagenia

There are about 10.000 Wagenia living on the two banks of the Zaire
River, just upstream from the city of Kisangani. Further upstream, there
are other groups also called Wagenia, but our research was done among
those of Kisangani, actually the most downstream group. I spent most of
my time among Wagenia living on the right bank. Until the early 1960s,
the Wagenia economy was mainly based on fishing done in the waterfalls
and rapids characteristic of this part of the river. A sudden rise in
the water level confronted the Wagenia with a decline in the importance
of fishing for their living. Besides, the population had grown to such
a degree that more mouths had to be filled than the river could feed.
A circumstance which caused further complications was that the amount of
fish in the river proved to be limited. Not only nature but also the
size of the ever smaller meshes of the Wagenia nets was to be held
responsible for this fact.

   The combination of all these factors forced the Wagenia to turn to
the nearby city for subsistence, a situation for which they were not
prepared since the love of fishing had kept many a child out of school.
Most Wagenia men had to find unskilled work in town, where up to then
only an educated minority of Wagenia had found employment. In 1977,
three quarters of the working men were employed in town. The majority of
them continued fishing in their spare time. The women, many of whom are
petty traders in the markets, often brought a larger contribution to the
household income than their husbands. Generally speaking one might say
that many Wagenia have deeply felt the economic crisis of the last
decade, with its extensive inflation, since their position was on the
lower levels of the economic pyramid.

   In the meantime the Wagenia living area has become surrounded by the

ever expanding urban districts. In many ways, the Wagenia have become
city-dwellers. However, their part of the city distinguishes itself from
the other districts by its ethnical homogeneity. While becoming integrated
into urban life, they have continued to live in the tribal context.

Thus, the social structure is still one of patrilineal kin groups,
which have recently been subjected, more than before, to segmentation as
a consequence of population expansion. A kin group is partly defined by
the fact that its members address the same spirits of the dead, though
segmentation does not necessarily lead to a change in the ancestral
spirits invoked. More important is the fact that patrilineal kin live
together (except when lack of space or fear of sorcery make it
impossible) and that they communally possess river sites where members
fish in turn, sharing at least part of their catch with their near kin.
But several of these sites are still out of use, since the old water
level has rarely been reached again. Marriages make for a common bond
between most of these kin groups. Despite the predominance of patri-
lineages, matrilateral kin play a definite role at regular occasions.

Traditionally the various kin groups each had a chief, although
these functionaries had very little real authority. These chiefs had no
specific religious role. Nevertheless, the Wagenia have no other
religious specialists. If a diviner or healer has to be consulted, the
Wagenia go outside their tribe.

The Belgian administration installed a chief for all the Wagenia, but
after independence this official lost his importance. Nowadays the
Wagenia belong to administrative units of the urban district, both on the
right and the left bank.

As to the religious life of the Wagenia, which is the main subject of
this article, the actual contents of the traditional religion will be
described in the course of the paper. What I offer here is a short
review of the missionary history among the Wagenia, and some characteris-
tics of the churches.

At the turn of the century, Roman Catholic and (British) Baptist
missionaries started their work around the Falls. It should be noted that
no missionary stations were founded in the Wagenia area. The Catholics
stood under the pastoral care of priests from the town of Kisangani, and
the Baptists were dependent on the Yakusu mission station of the Baptist
Missionary Society, some twenty kilometres downstream.

In 1952, the Salvation Army began working among the Wagenia. Quite a
few Baptists from one of the villages crossed over to the Salvation Army,

partly because of the fact that the officers were Belgians and therefore
closer to the administration (personal communication Dr.J.F. Carrington),
partly because the Salvation Army offered a revival of the routine church
life. The Baptist church in that village was turned into a hall for
Salvation Army meetings.

The fourth of the churches I included in my research is the
Kimbanguist Church (*Eglise de Jésus-Christ sur la terre par le prophète
Simon Kimbangu*) which originated in the 1920s among the Bakongo in the
Lower Zaire. On the national level, this church had worked in secret ever
since it was founded and forbidden, and it only became officially
recognized in 1959. Among the Wagenia some people had taken part in the
Kitawala movement, an African adaptation of the Jehovah's Witnesses'
Watch Tower, which had relatively more followers among the neighbouring
tribe of the Bakomo (see e.g. De Mahieu 1976, Greschat 1967). When this
movement became the target of severe measures on the part of the
authorities, and when at the same time a Kimbanguist leader came into
contact with these Wagenia-Kitawalists, they converted to Kimbanguism
and became the first members of this church among the Wagenia, shortly
before public freedom was permitted.

In 1972, an Anglican Church was founded among the left bank Wagenia,
partly with former Baptists. There are also some Wagenia who consider
themselves Jehovah's Witnesses, while a few others are Muslims, taking
part in the religious life of the Arabisé neighbours living almost on
the Wagenia's doorstep. These last three categories of believers have
been left out of consideration in my research.

As to the personnel of the different churches, this varies per church.
Except for the Kimbanguist Church, white pastors or priests have led the
churches for shorter or longer periods ever since their foundation. The
Roman Catholic parish is still led by a white priest. The Baptist Church
and the Salvation Army have been led, after the initial period,by
Zairean pastors or officers, some of them Wagenia. The Kimbanguist
Church for a long time had a Wagenia pastor, but is now more often served
by Zairean non-Wagenia pastors.

I should add some figures in order to give an idea of the importance
of the four churches which the research centered on. I estimate that
about one-half of the adult Wagenia are at least nominally Catholic,
while one sixth claim to belong to the Baptist Church. Smaller numbers
belong to the two other churches. The Kimbanguist attendance in church
services averages around 50, while the other three churches on the right

bank have about 200 church-goers each Sunday.

Spirit (mosombô)

Mosombô is said to be composed of heart, shade and breath, though it
seems to be more than and different from the sum of these three
components. At death heart, shade and breath form a new body, which does
not weigh anything and cannot be touched and which lives on as *mosombô*.
During his life, a person has a *mosombô*, after death he is a *mosombô*. In
the next paragraph we will turn to the Wagenia concept of heart. Shade
is taken as an image of the total person, and has therefore recently
also been used for the picture of a person. Sorcerers may fetch the
shade of a person and thus kill him, but this is also said with respect
to heart and *mosombô*. The word shade is also used for the image of the
sorcerer which the diviner may show when consulted about the death of a
person. It is believed that in a dream the shade leaves the body and
wanders around, reporting his experiences upon his return into the body.
Since sorcerers are active during the night, the shade of a person runs
the risk of being caught. Shade, like heart, should be understood
symbolically. Each person has two hearts and two shades, as it were,
one visible, one invisible. Breath, the third concept which *mosombô* is
composed of, is understood as a sign of life and is supposed to stop at
death. But it is also the seat of the voice and is therefore supposed
to live on after death, as *basombô* sometimes speak to or even through
their living descendants.

Traditional Wagenia beliefs about *mosombô* concentrate on life here
and now, with its fortune *and* misfortune, with its morally good *and* bad
people. Morally bad is very often (though not exclusively) identical to
being a sorcerer, and if the Wagenia speak of murder, they almost always
mean 'through sorcery'. To the people, sorcery explains much of the
misfortune that may beset them, especially in a situation of poverty,
and even more so if this situation is becoming worse instead of better
(Droogers, forthcoming).

Sorcerers work against the interests of their kin group, and more
often than not they seek their victims among their own kin. Their
attitude is the opposite of *mobôto*, the solidarity between people of
common birth.

Sorcery manifests itself in two forms among the Wagenia. Both types
of sorcerers use medicine. *Kokubva* is the innate form of sorcery, though
it is not necessarily passed on from parents to children. Once a person

is endowed with it, he cannot escape it, and acts as a sorcerer even if
he would prefer not to. A person with *kokubva* has a fire in the stomach
which serves as a lamp during the night by coming out of the mouth.
These sorcerers kill for the sake of killing, jealousy being the main
motive, since they are supposed to be deprived in some way. On the other
hand, their victims are richly blessed (children, money, fish, etc.).

The second form of sorcery is more recent and non-hereditary. It is
called *fónólí* and is said to have come from other tribes. The victim is
reanimated after death, is then devoid of volition, and has to work for
his murderer. In this case the victim is the deprived one, as he is the
one who suffers most as a result of what might be called the 'under-
developing' situation. The sorcerer is richly blessed. Especially people
whose wealth cannot be explained in any other way are suspected of having
used *fónólí* and letting revived people work for them. *Fónólí* seems to me
to be an adaptation of sorcery beliefs to the modern situation, where a
few are incredibly rich and many suffer. Besides, it is the logical
counterpart of *kokubva*. Whether deprived or not, everybody may be
either a sorcerer or a victim.

Sorcery in general is called *isombó* by the Wagenia, a name sometimes
also used for only the first kind of sorcery. It is striking that *isombó*
has the same radical as *mosombó* (spirit). This might (partly) be
explained by the fact that bad people (i.e. sorcerers) are said to become
bad spirits (*basombó bábea*) after their death. Just as they cannot
escape their fate of being a sorcerer during their life, they inevi-
tably become bad spirits after death. Sorcerers and bad spirits are
supposed to cooperate. Both are said to be naked, and to stink. They are
both active during the night. They do not show *mobóto*, solidarity between
kin.

In that respect, they differ from morally good people who become good
spirits (*basombó báfoa*) in the afterlife. Their common interest is their
kin group and the kin solidarity. To be good is essentially to do good
to your kin. To do good is sometimes equated to having a good *mosombó*.
A person's own *mosombó* protects him from evil, and guides him to live
a morally perfect life, just as a sorcerer is led by his bad spirit. It
is also said that sorcerers and bad spirits may send a bad spirit to
make somebody suffer or to have him do wicked things. In the same way,
a child cursed by a parent is said to have a bad spirit. He will lead
a life of suffering, at the same time bringing misery to others as well.
To grow angry is equated to receiving a bad spirit. Nightmares are

supposed to be sent by bad spirits who, in this way, announce their
intention to kill the person in question.

Good spirits, either anonymous or known by name, sometimes help people,
for example when someone escapes from danger, such as being bitten by
a snake or scorpion. Then it is said, "it is a good spirit". This may
also happen when many fish are caught. When people have been quarreling
and then become reconciled, it is said that a good spirit has entered
them.

Thus, though there is an afterlife where *basombó* live on, the
accent is very much on life before death. It seems that ideas about
afterlife are important only insofar as they reinforce explanations
about misfortune before death. Since there are sorcerers, there are also
bad spirits, therefore there are also good spirits. But there does not
seem to have been a belief of preparing for a pleasant life after death
by leading an impeccable life before death. One led a morally good life
partly because the risk of losing all progeny was too great: if a person
was killed by a sorcerer, his relatives would seek to kill the sorcerer
or his kin, while the victim was supposed to seek revenge as well. Of
course this latter idea is only valid for the oldest form of sorcery.
Revenge medicine was put into the grave. It is believed that complete
Wagenia villages have disappeared in this way.

In order to make clear what changes have occurred in the Wagenia
religion, I should also report Wagenia traditional beliefs on the life
basombó lead after death. Though they may approach at any hour of the
day and sometimes are spoken to at their graves or seen in the forest,
they are believed to live in the river under the water which is their
sky. They have their own village or villages, and go on fishing as
before. Some informants locate these villages upstream. Sometimes it is
said that they are found near whirlpools and that every person passing
by has to throw one piece of everything in his canoe into the water.
Otherwise the canoe would not pass.

The world under the water is traditionally subdivided in two 'worlds'
or 'tribes', one for the good and one for the bad spirits. It is some-
times said that the bad spirits are not allowed to enter the villages
where only good spirits live, and are condemned to wander around outside
the villages. Several accounts have been given to me by and about nearly
drowned persons, who paid a visit to this world under the water. One
person fell onto a roof and heard people in the house say, "there is a
chicken on the roof". Another heard the drums of the villages playing.

A third had a conversation with some *basombó* who released him after-
wards. There are also several cases of people who with the help of
basombó escaped out of traps in the water, e.g. against the strong
current.

   Basombó influence the lives of living people in several ways. They
speak through spirit possession, dreams and visions. Spirit possession
(*kokélesa*, to make fall) is of an involuntary nature and affects women
more often than men. When the possessed lies unconscious, one or even
more spirits speak through his or her mouth, very often expressing
opinions on matters of family life. Dreams are often interpreted as
visions, and even if this is not the case, they are understood to contain
true events.

   Spirits have either a good or a bad influence on the wealth and health
of the living. If their impact on the living is a bad one, this may be
explained as a warning to lead a better life, but also as just malice.
The latter is attributed to bad spirits, the former to good ones.
Warnings may take the form of punishment on certain occasions, like when
relatives 'refuse' each other, when incest or adultery is committed, or
when fish is stolen from nets or traps. Good *basombó* help their living
kin, seeking to continue a solidarity behaviour of *mobóto*. They may
heal sickness, warn against sorcerers, announce good news, stimulate
people to take a certain step, or give advice in family affairs. They
may feel lonely and come to seek company among the living, attracting
them with the life the good spirits lead. They may ask for food or for
a drink to be put on the grave or at the corner of the house. The most
common characteristic of good spirits is that they save or heal, which
in Kigenia is one word: *koónda*.

   Living people may therefore invoke the help of *basombó*. They address
the most recent dead of their kin group, either calling them by name or
addressing them as 'fathers' in general. These invocations are not made
at random, but are related to specific occasions. There are no strict
formulas though certain phrases keep recurring. These invocations refer
mainly to health, progeny, fishing, trade and certain situations where
risks are involved (e.g. travel, cutting trees in the forest, bad
weather).

   When a *mosombó* presents himself in one of the ways mentioned above
(spirit possession, dreams, visions), often the word *ikto* is used to
refer to him or her. *Ikto* has a connotation of danger, as it involves
certain risks to come into contact with a spirit. Therefore *ikto* was

often translated by my assistants as 'devil', 'demon'. Bad spirits are
said to beat people with their breath and thus kill them if other spirits
do not save them. The word *ikio* is also used for people who are supposed
to be a reincarnation of a certain ancestor. As white people have the
colour of the spirits (white or red), they sometimes were viewed as
ancestors coming back to their progeny. Thus I was seen as an *ikio* of
the Wagenia village where we had our house, especially as I was
interested in what people did and gave presents to them.

What were the consequences of the confrontation of these traditional
beliefs with the Christian message, both for the traditional Wagenia
religion and for Christianity? The first change to note is that in the
churches the words *mosombó* and heart have been adopted in the religious
vocabulary, whereas *ikio*, shade, and breath are hardly ever spoken of,
an exception being *ikio ábea*: satan. "God saves our *mosombó*. Preaching
is food for the *mosombó*. You have to stick with your *mosombó* to the
affairs of the church. There is a bad *mosombó* in your heart stopping you
from going to Jesus."

The second change is that life after death has come to play a more
important role in religious beliefs than it seems to have done in the
traditional view. The notion of a judgement on the dying has been
introduced. At their death, people either go to the right of God's or
Jesus' hand and become good spirits in heaven, or they are turned to the
left and become bad spirits burning in hell (*kaya* = fire). This
introduces a new motive to lead a good life. Besides, heaven is hoped for
as the opposite of a miserable life led on earth.

Not so much was added to the traditional definition of a morally good
or bad life. A new aspect of course was 'working for the Church', which
means attending church services, contributing to the collections, and
being active in other church work as well. Moreover the church condemned
some sexual customs (premarital intercourse, polygamy, easy divorce,
aphrodisiacs). Notwithstanding the Christian influence, 'killing' has
remained equivalent to 'sorcery', which is condemned by most Christians,
not because it is nonsense but because it is so dangerous.

A third change has been the integration of beliefs about the Holy
Spirit and Satan into the traditional framework. In translation the word
for bad spirit (*mosombó ábea*) is used for Satan, whereas the word for
good spirit (*mosombó áfoa*) nowadays also indicates the Holy Spirit.
Sometimes the Swahili word *shetani* for bad spirit is used to mean
'Satan'. Satan has entered as a third and even leading partner into the

companionship of sorcerers and bad spirits. Because of hell's fire he is as black as bad spirits are. He is their chief. He enters into living people, guiding them and deciding for them, as a bad *mosombó*.

The Holy Spirit is not in all respects the opposite of Satan. He is not always cited as the chief of the good spirits. As a good spirit, he is sometimes classified with the good spirits on the same level as or under the angels, and thus he is not seen as the third person of Trinity, to be classified above the angels. Sometimes he is seen as Jesus' spirit after resurrection. Jesus is then supposed to have obtained the new body of a *mosombó*.

It is interesting to note that the Holy Spirit is said to have a colour, white or red, the colour of the good spirits, or more often a clear, clean colour, as opposed to the dirtiness and blackness of Satan and bad spirits.

The Holy Spirit protects against sorcerers and bad spirits, 'Satan's children'. He chases bad spirits out of the body of sick and bad people. The Holy Spirit is a good spirit who helps living people to lead a morally good life so that they will become good spirits after death, and also in order to protect them from damage by bad spirits and sorcerers. As one informant put it: "In our church we cannot talk about sorcery, but if we pray for the Holy Spirit we pray for help against sorcerers". The Holy Spirit is the Christian equivalent of the protecting good spirit in the traditional view.

In passing I should make an exception for the Kimbanguists who see their prophet and church founder Simon Kimbangu as the Holy Spirit, an unofficial view which only recently became generally adopted among Kimbanguist believers. But even so, this opinion is structurally not very different from traditional ideas about *mosombó*.

A fourth change concerns the integration of good spirits into the heavenly forces at God's disposal. It was said that if the Wagenia invoke *basombó*, as a matter of fact they pray to God who listens too. The Wagenia know this nowadays, but they say that even in the pre-colonial time, the Wagenia believed that *basombó* served God. Anyway, what is new today is that in the address of the invocations to the 'fathers', God is often mentioned also. Informants assured me that if *basombó* help, they receive the strength to do so from God. 'They are God's soldiers', one informant said. They help only if God allows them and commands them to do so. Viewed in this way, they may even be asked to give help in becoming a good Christian. Among the responses to a question in the

survey as to what one had asked for the last time he had invoked the
basombó, twelve answered 'for help to be a good Christian'. It is also
possible to ask the spirits for things of modern life, like work or a
diploma. Their sphere of influence is not restricted to traditional life.
God may also send spirits to give people a message about their faith.
Thus I heard of one case of spirit possession in which a man was urged
to let his wife go to the Salvation Army. Spirits have been heard to
sing hymns, even though they themselves did not attend church during
their life. Some have described to their living kin the life in the
village of the *basombó* (now equated to heaven). I know of only one case
of spirit possession during a church service, in which the spirit
speaking through the mouth of a man commanded baptism for the possessed
person.

   Last but not least, an important change is the change in cosmology.
Whereas traditionally all the spirits are under the water of the river,
the Christian influence has led people to situate the village of the
good spirits above the sky. In this way, the opposition between above
and below was introduced into Wagenia views on afterlife. Bad spirits
are seen as having stayed under the water, either burning in the hell-
fire, or going on to lead the life they traditionally led.

Heart (*motéma*)

When I started inquiring into the Wagenia concept of heart, I was struck
by the difference from Western ideas on the matter. These latter ideas
are aptly summarized in the entry on heart in *The Concise Oxford
Dictionary* (Sykes 1976:496): "Seat of the emotions, esp. of love opp.
head as seat of intellect". To the Wagenia, this opposition between
heart and head has no relevance, since the capacities we ascribe to the
head are in their view seated in the heart. The most striking example
is the expression 'you have no heart' which means to us: you are merci-
less, without feeling. To the Wagenia the meaning is: 'you do not seem
to think clearly, your behaviour is contradictory and unreliable'. An-
other expression is: 'you have two hearts', which means: 'you have
contrary thoughts and wishes, you are in two minds (!), you are full of
doubt'. A second heart is sometimes seen as the conscience of a person,
his private counsellor. To do something 'with *one* heart' means: to do it
without hesitation, with all one's might. 'To send one's heart' is to
think of something or somebody. 'To stick to one's heart' means to take
time to think something over, to reflect on a problem. A person with

'a long heart' has patience, which a person with a short heart lacks.
The heart is also the seat of the memory. 'The heart has gone far away'
means that one is absent-minded, forgetful. 'If my heart does not forget'
means: 'if I do not forget to think of it'. A bad spirit in the heart
may mean, as we saw before, that one is morally bad. But another meaning
is that one is mentally ill, that a person has lost his mind (!). In
short, to the Wagenia the heart is the seat of reflection.

Yet, this is not the only characteristic of the heart. The heart may
also have feelings, like love, anger, rancour, grief, repentance, shame,
joy and even hunger. A 'hard' heart is brave, persistent, whereas a light
heart is fearful, afraid. The heart definitely also has a moral component.
Somebody's heart leads him to do good or bad things. A person with a bad
heart is almost always a sorcerer, though not exclusively always.
When a certain woman in a church prayer had made a kind of indirect
public confession that she was a sorcerer, apparently to end all the
accusations and gossip, I asked one of my informants whether he thought
the woman had actually stopped. His answer was: 'I cannot see what is
in her heart'. At one time during an interview, it was said that the
heart is the chief of *mosombó*, shade and breath. A person's will is
associated with his heart, as may also be clear from our preceding
remarks on the heart as the seat of reflection.

If we now turn to the consequences which this conception of heart may
have had for the understanding of the Christian message, we should be well
aware that Christian beliefs partly follow the opposition between heart
and head, yet have also integrated Old and New Testament ways of
thinking about the heart. In the Christian view the heart is the seat of
faith. It is the heart that should be given to God. The heart is also
closely associated with moral considerations. Sins are in the heart.
Buttrick (1962:549, 550), Douglas (1962:509, 510) and Pop (1958:215)
describe the biblical views on the heart. The heart represents the whole
person in the totality of his will, feelings, actions. It is the ruling
centre of the person. Love, joy, sadness, despair, courage, reflection
and wisdom are recurring features of the heart. Thus, it is under-
standable that in the Christian faith there have remained many
references to the heart, if only in the religious language of the Bible.

In view of these many references, and also taking into account the
Wagenia traditional views on the heart, it is not too difficult to conclude
that the Wagenia were predisposed to understand fully what was meant.
Even if the Christian message has come to them via European thought and

may have borne the marks of that influence, they could not have had
much trouble understanding the original connotations of the concept of
heart. Even if these were not preached to them, they nevertheless heard
them in the message brought by the missionaries. Maybe, by an ironical
freak of culture, the pupils understood the message better than the
teacher. They sometimes went even further, e.g. when in a sermon the
expression 'poor in spirit' (Math. 5:3) was rendered in Kigenia as 'poor
in heart'. A favourite expression in interviews was 'God is the heart',
which did not mean something like Tillich's God, deep down in us, but:
"I am converted, my heart does what God wants it to do, it speaks in the
name of God". The heart is the medium of faith. Of course some less
faithful people said 'Satan is the heart'. It was also often said that,
to God it is only the heart that counts, which was often a plea for a
faith kept up without attendance of church activities. In view of the
expressions 'with one heart' and 'you have two hearts' and their
traditional meaning, it is understandable that it was said that one
should love God with one heart. Moreover, it explained why some people
said 'My heart refuses the affairs of God, but I don't know why'. This
latter idea was also expressed by saying: 'I do not know what bad
spirit/Satan is in my heart'.

     In response to the question of why one should love one's neighbour,
not only biblical texts were quoted, but the heart was also often
mentioned: 'God gave us a heart to forgive' (instead of keeping rancour),
'I got a heart to love people', or simply 'my heart wants it'.

     As in the Christian view the moral aspect of the heart was also
familiar to the Wagenia. Sin is dirt in the heart, even stinking dirt,
to be washed away. This may happen at baptism or by 'the blood of Christ'.
The Wagenia are familiar with the idea of washing away dirt and stench,
as this is what happens traditionally after burials and initiation. A
Christian should obtain a clean (sometimes white) heart. Therefore the
Holy (good or clean/clear) Spirit must come into the heart so that a
person becomes morally good. Our hearts feel grief about our sins. This
grief is very much related to the belief that God judges a person at his
death. Hymns mentioning judgment day, either at the end of one's life or
at the end of time (that was neither clear nor important), were very
popular, especially in the Baptist church and in the Salvation Army. As
burials are interdenominational mass ceremonies attended by hundreds of
people from all churches, this popularity is reinforced, also because the
occasion matches the theme. During a service in the Baptist church, one

pastor called these hymns 'songs which cut off the blood in our hearts'.
They were also seen as hymns with a strong converting power. People are
stimulated to 'prepare' their hearts, and the word used has connotations
of construction, education and even creation. At death, the heart brings
the memories of all the good and bad acts of the deceased before God who
then gives his judgment. 'Save (heal) your heart' is then almost identical
to 'go to heaven'. One informant therefore thought that the hearts of bad
people die with their body, because they become bad spirits, which are
not allowed into heaven. A person with a good heart has no fear of death.
If there is a drizzly rain during a burial, this is called 'rain of
the heart of the person' as if he used the rain as his carriage upwards
to heaven.

It may be clear that this association of heart with judgment day is
new to the Wagenia. The idea of invoking the spirits about one's heart
seemed less natural (or: cultural) than to pray to (the Christian) God
about one's heart. One informant put it this way, "To the spirits of the
dead one prays about one's body, but to God we pray about body *and* heart".
This clearly shows how traditionally the importance of the *basombó* was
for this life and not the afterlife, partly because there was no notion
of judgment, partly because the idea was that a bad person inevitably
remained a bad person. Yet I should add that in the survey about two-
thirds of the respondents said they prayed to the *basombó* about their
hearts, whereas almost all the respondents said they prayed to God about
their hearts. Maybe the fact that the ancestors were prayed to about the
hearts of the living was a symptom of Christian influence on traditional
religion. The circumstance that invocations to *basombó* were made at
specific occasions, all of them of a material nature, also hints in this
direction.

God (Mokongâ na Mbâli)

Implicitly much has already been said in the preceding pages about changes
in the concept of God. In this last paragraph before the conclusion, the
changes in the concept of God, either traditional Wagenia or Christian,
will be discussed in a more explicit, systematic way. I will first
describe the traditional ideas on God and the influence they have had
on the understanding of the Christian God, coming from the outside. Then
I intend to investigate whether and in which way the traditional dualism
of good and bad relates to the monism of God the Almighty. This monism
also manifests itself in the supposed presence of God's power in the

ever expanding world of the Wagenia. As the dualism of good and bad plays
a role both in tradition and in the Christian message, I will also show
how the Wagenia have understood what Christianity has told them about
sin, forgiveness, suffering and heavenly recompense. This brings me to
a discussion of the image the Wagenia have of Jesus.

The traditional name the Wagenia give to God is Mokongá na Mbáli.
These names, together or independent of each other, are also found, with
slight variations, in neighbouring tribes, sometimes as the name or
names of God, but also as the names of the first ancestor and his son
(Droogers 1974:42). Yet, to the Wagenia this last version is unknown
and they seem to have no knowledge of the use of these names in other
tribes. Not much was known about this traditional God. Wagenia tell two
myths which explain the origin of suffering in the world. In both myths,
God plays a role. In one of them God gives men the choice between two
words which they have never heard before. When they choose, unfortuna-
tely they find they have opted for the word 'misfortune', whereas
the other choice would have brought them 'happiness'. In the other
myth, man is more responsible for his choice. God forbids him to open
the door of a certain house. Man becomes curious, opens the door and
finds all the sicknesses and afflictions that are to be his lot from
then on. Except for these two myths, only briefly related here, hardly
any more was known about God.

He was seen, though, as the 'proprietor of the world', as it was said
in one song, which might be understood as a way of saying that he had
created the world and everything in it. Though informants nowadays claim
that the pre-colonial Wagenia also saw God as creator, hardly any further
proof can be found in the oral tradition. As one informant said, 'the
ancestors have not taught us the matter of God'.

I have the impression that traditionally God was scarcely prayed to
except in certain circumstances which all seem to be related to what was
then the outside world of the Wagenia. Some examples given were about
dangerous situations outside the Wagenia territory, on foreign grounds
where other spirits of the dead live. Intertribal warfare was another
example. This view of the extra-tribal world as God's territory was of
course confirmed when the missions brought the message of the Christian
God. God was shown to be known in the whole wide world. 'The whole world
speaks one language', one informant said admiringly when we were
discussing ideas about God. The notion of God was also called upon as
an explanation of differences in race and language. In a way, this

confirms Horton's assumption that "acceptance of Islam and Christianity is as much due to the development of the traditional cosmology in response to other features of the modern situation as it is to the activities of the missionaries" (Horton 1971:103). As I have written elsewhere (Droogers forthcoming), this is only one of the reasons which may explain the acceptance of Christianity. As we will also see in this article, another reason is the influence increased suffering has had on the urgent need to call upon God. God is a new address for those seeking help, to be added to those already available.

The Christian knowledge about God has led to a Christianization of traditional ideas in the sense that even pre-colonial Wagenia are supposed to have had Christian ideas. We saw this already when we spoke of God as creator, of prayers to the ancestors about the heart, and of spirits as 'God's soldiers'. In the same manner, God is said to have created all creatures in Obiatuku, the region upstream where the Wagenia say they have come from. God is believed to have instituted certain traditional healing rituals, and it was he who made the poison work which was used in divination by administering poison to a token animal in order to establish who was guilty of sorcery. Yet other informants state that God was not prayed to by the Wagenia in former times and that they did not address him in order to pray for life after death.

The most striking example of this 'backward projection' of Christianity into tradition is the almost general conviction that Mokongá na Mbáli means God and Jesus, and that thus, under another name, the Christian God and his son were already known to the pre-colonial Wagenia. The double name of the traditional God was a fortunate coincidence which influenced and facilitated the understanding of the Christian God. Thus, almost all the respondents in the survey said the traditional God and the Christian God are one and the same. The fact that all the Wagenia in the different churches share the traditional view may explain the lack of dogmatic exclusiveness in the churches (perhaps an exception must be made, for reasons not dealt with here, for the Kimbanguist Church). Differences between churches were almost always reduced to variations in liturgy, hardly ever to dogmatic differentiation. This was even valid for Islam, known to the Wagenia through their Arabisé neighbours.

The circumstance that God was viewed as the first two persons of the Holy Trinity may help to explain the relative neglect which the concept of the Holy Spirit seems to have suffered among the Wagenia. We already

saw that there was confusion about the place of the Holy Spirit within
the hierarchy, either above, alongside or under the angels. If the Holy
Spirit was viewed as the *mosombó* of Jesus, this reinforced the reduction
of the Trinity to a binary father-son God. I should add that this
reduction is by no means general, and that especially in church services
I often heard people pray to God: Father, Son and Spirit.

Anyhow, God is generally believed in by the Wagenia. In the survey,
only one respondent out of 322 said he never prayed to God. Of the others,
71 % said they prayed to God daily. I should stress that belief in God
is certainly not restricted to the church congregations. About a third
of the respondents to the survey never went to church. I also asked for
the frequency of prayer to the spirits of the dead: of 69 % who said
they prayed to the ancestors, about a third said they did so every day.
There was no clear relation to church attendance.

Another thing worth mentioning here is that Christianity was and is
also brought to the Wagenia in other languages than Kigenia, and that
therefore new names of God were introduced (Swahili: Mungu, Lingala:
Nzambe), but without adding new meanings. In the churches, for some time
no reference was made to the Wagenia name of God, but this seems to have
changed in the last 15 years or so. God was again referred to as Mokongá
na Mbáli or just as Mokongá. These names may be heard especially in the
Baptist Church and a bit less in the Salvation Army.

As we have seen, the Wagenia traditional religious ideas mainly
centre around the opposition between good and bad, between good spirits
and bad spirits. This contrast is logically preceded by the question of
where suffering comes from. Sorcerers and bad spirits conspire together
to make good people suffer. Though revenge is hoped for, sorcery is seen
as an overpowering cause of misfortune.

When God was preached to the Wagenia, they were faced with a new
choice in their changing religious classification: was he to be
classified on the good side, or should he be seen as the powerful
instance *above* both good and bad. In view of the statements made by my
informants and by the respondents to the survey, this choice has still
not been made, and one may find examples of both alternatives. In any
case, traditionally God was too empty a concept to have been seen as
above good and bad, notwithstanding the myths about the origin of good
and evil.

As the creator, God is supposed to have created both good and bad.
Therefore even the power of the sorcerers is said to come from God. "If

somebody prays to God that he desires to become a sorcerer, he will
become one", an informant said. But as to the question of where sickness
comes from, the answer is not so clear. Some say: from God, who just
like the good spirits warns the living in this way. Others say that
sickness comes from the sorcerers or the bad spirits. They are even able
to let people die before the day God has settled. Therefore they are
more powerful than he is. It is said of sorcerers that they *steal* people.
Thus there are sicknesses for which God can offer no help, and for which
the patient should consult a diviner-healer who might trace the
affliction to some sorcerer, and subsequently offer a remedy.

In this discussion, others put forward that God only *permits* sorcerers
to work. Otherwise sicknesses would not even occur. But ultimately he is
the sorcerers' superior and their judge. If sorcerers intend to kill
somebody, God may summon them before him in order to ask for a
justification. Besides, even sorcerers die. One may pray to God for help
against sorcerers: "Lord (chief) God, I am poor, I am not rich (like the
sorcerers), if somebody wants to kill me with bad medicine, this means
that you agree", an indirect and modest way of challenging God to prevent
the sorcerer's success and thus to show that he has *not* agreed. In this
way God's almightiness is saved from doubt caused by misfortune.

People mainly pray to God in order to ask for material benefits. As
the almighty creator, he is supposed to be able to give, and somebody who
suffers certainly has reason to seek help. God is the proprietor of the
world and should therefore be able to give what people ask for. He guards
his people (and to express this, the same word is used as when it is
said that an amulet guards somebody). He even determines, at birth, the
course of somebody's life, including the cause of his death. One
Catholic thought that the moment of consecration is the best for prayer,
because then God is near, and he will give what you ask him for.
Medicine and even invocations of spirits are helpful only 'if God allows
it to work'.

In two senses, there is a close relation between suffering and sin.
First of all, somebody who suffers may be subjected to this because he
is being punished for his own sins. I was told of a man who had lost his
fingers because he was a thief. Either God or the ancestors may have
been the cause of this sanction. But secondly, suffering and sin are
related because in the case of sorcery suffering is caused by the sin of
another person, the sorcerer. For this, the sorcerer will be judged at
his death. Sorcery is seen as the major sin, for which according to many

of my informants there is no forgiveness. But the idea of punishment in
the afterlife is also valid for minor sins.

At this point, I should make it clear that most Wagenia speak of sin,
(*kobêa*, 'the evil') not as a mentality or a perpetual state, but as a
specific category of acts. "If we say that man in general is bad, this
is only said in order not to deceive God in case one actually does a bad
thing", according to one of my informants. In this way, lip-service was
paid to the idea that man by definition is sinful. But it was only said
as a precaution for the (rare) case in which one actually committed sin,
sorcery being the exception because there man was at his worst. Seen in
this manner, sin is only a general attitude in the case of sorcery.
Otherwise sin is a number of bad acts: theft, adultery, fighting,
insulting, deceit. It was sometimes said that for each sin, there
existed a separate village of bad spirits.

This inevitably leads us to the conclusion that in the Wagenia view,
there are people without sin. If one combines this with the idea that
God has predetermined the course of one's life, this means that,
converted and non-converted alike, the Wagenia believe that one is born
either to be good or bad and remain so for the rest of one's life, and
afterwards to become either a good spirit in heaven or a bad spirit in
hell. For 'faith' the Wagenia use a verb which means 'to accept'. This
allows for an interpretation of faith as a one-time event which auto-
matically influences what happens after that event. The opposite is to
'accept' Satan. Pardon is reserved for minor trespassers only. "God can-
not make good spirits out of bad people", one of my informants said,
thinking of sorcerers. And another said, "Even with God, bad people
become bad spirits".

The consequence of this way of thinking is that those who make others
suffer in this life, will suffer after their death, while those who
suffer now may hope for a better life after death, except perhaps if
they suffer because of their sins. The church counsels people to behave
in a proper way. In a sermon it was said that the church is 'the school
of the rules and laws'. There people learn how to live in order to reach
heaven. As we saw above, apart from marriage, these rules do not differ
much from what the traditional Wagenia also believed to be characteristic
of a good Mugenia. The most important new dimension the church may have
introduced with success is that charity bypasses kinship boundaries.
Though old terms were used in order to translate 'charity' and
'neighbour', taken from kinship vocabulary, I would not like to deny that

real Christian love, disregarding the limits of kin group or tribe, is
found.

Since God helps people to lead a good life, he is often spoken of as
a (the) good spirit, which, as was mentioned above, was also a term used
to refer to the Holy Spirit. He is the proprietor whom one will meet at
the end of one's life. It is a very popular idea now that after death
one receives the wages for what one has done during life. Life in heaven
is viewed as being similar to the life of a rich man, with the difference
that the rich man still has to think of his death.

Working for the Church is important in order to pave one's way to
heaven. Part of this work for the Church is contributing to the collection
in the church service. With the exception of the Roman Catholic church,
this is often done in the form of a contest between men and women,
either of whom try to give more than the other sex. A very popular song,
sung both in the Baptist church and in the Salvation Army, runs like
this: "bring out your money for the work of God, it is your saving in
heaven". During the collection this is repeated over and over again.
This song is sometimes taken in a very literal sense. Until recently it
actually happened, that people were buried with their church membership
card, which stated what they had paid as a contribution. There was also
a popular story of a woman who had almost died, but was reanimated. In
the meantime, she had seen heaven and noted that everybody was housed
according to what they had given on earth. The amount of heavenly money
in the possession of the saved was also determined by the amount they
had given in church. It was also striking that at one moment during a
collection, the audience was exhorted to think of their death. On
another comparable occasion, a word was used which traditionally stands
for fish caught after an invocation to the ancestor spirits: that was
what one was to find in heaven. Yet it was also denied that in this way
one could *buy* heaven. If you bring your money, you show your faith and
that will bring you to heaven. "The membership card that brings you to
heaven is your heart", it was said. But some estimated that by giving
large amounts of money, one might obtain a *better* place in heaven.

I should note in passing that, in general, the churches do more
to reduce suffering by escapism than by attacking causes of suffering
here and now. Even in the Salvation Army, this tendency was present. Of
course the causes of misfortune are often of a political nature, and
most Wagenia have very little insight into these causes. Moreover, it is
less harmful to attribute suffering to sorcery. Besides, how can the

poor help the poor? At one time, though, there was a Wagenia association
called *Union Chrétienne de Charité* which had Christian charity as its
goal. But in 1972, during the reorganization of church life under govern-
ment pressure, this association was forbidden. It was considered to be
not an association but an illegitimate church, since it held church
services every Friday afternoon. Most of the other churches did nothing
to prevent the 'Union' from disappearing, since it was seen as a
competitor.

After everything that has been stated above it is not surprising that
Jesus is viewed as the Saviour, *Moóndesi*, as somebody who saves, taken
in the Wagenia meaning, which may also imply healing, ending misfortune.
He is sometimes depicted as a great 'diviner-healer' (the same word,
motya, is used). One informant summarized Jesus' life and death in this
way: "he was a very great *motya*, he was a competitor to the other *metya*
because of his success, and also because he charged nothing, therefore
they killed him". Yet, more orthodox views on Jesus' life could also be
heard. In general, Jesus was viewed as the proof that God could 'save'.
He was also very much viewed as the one who prepares the places in heaven
and who judges the dead, together with his Father.

Conclusion

The preceding information on the changing Wagenia religion may be
summarized under four headings: space, time, actors, behaviour. The
Wagenia traditional religion and Christianity both distinguish patterns
of related categorical symbols under each of these four headings. Besides,
the categories under these headings are related in the same way as words
in a sentence: there and then actor A behaves in manner b. This sentence
may be concretized in either similar or different ways by Wagenia
traditional religion and Christianity. Each of the patterns under the
four headings, including the structural principles ruling them, will now
be described in more detail. In each case, the common traits and the
differences between Wagenia tradition and Christianity, as well as the
outcome of the encounter of the two religions, will be discussed, with
reference to the distinction between transformation and structural
change.

As to *space*, the structural principle in vogue in Wagenia tradition
led to a horizontal axis on which the triad village - river - forest
was arranged. There was only a vertical dimension in that the spirits of
the dead live under the river water. The Christian cosmology shows a

vertical axis with from top to bottom heaven - earth - hell. As a
consequence of the contact with Christianity many Wagenia nowadays
combine the two axes, as they situate the village of the good spirits
above the sky in heaven, whereas the bad spirits are still located under
the water or in hell. A structural change took place.

The way in which *time* is subdivided for religious purposes in Wagenia
tradition is related to the pattern of spatial categories. The caesura
coincides with death, which brings about a relocation in space. On the
level of the actors, the distinction in time before and after death is
parallelled by that between living man and the spirit of the dead. Since
the spirits of the dead may influence the life of the living the caesura
is not a sharp one. In a way, life goes on after death. As a consequence
life before death seems to have traditionally been of more interest than
life after death. Life here and now, with its fortunes and more
particularly its misfortunes, is what counts. To be saved means to sur-
vive here and now, and for that purpose the help of the spirits of the
dead is invoked. The two categories of time are related by a continuity
for pragmatic and manipulative purposes. Kinship is stronger than death.

In Christianity, death also serves as a caesura in time, but here
there is a contrast rather than a continuity. Except perhaps in the Ro-
man Catholic Church, there is no belief in the influence of the dead on
the lives of the living. Here, to be saved refers to life after death.
Especially if life is full of misery, the afterlife is something to be
longed for. Life in heaven is of a much better quality.

Again, comtemporary Wagenia seem to have combined two principles,
looking for help from the dead and at the same time seeking to escape
from affliction by dreaming of heaven. The fact that modern life has
failed to bring progress· for most Wagenia, and is often of a lower
quality, has certainly helped to bring about this combination of
continuity and contrast. The adoption of these two structural principles
again caused a structural change.

If we now turn to the *actors* in religious life and the way they are
related, traditional Wagenia religion and Christianity both distinguish
between God and man. Yet in the traditional view, God is almost
irrelevant, he is absent except perhaps outside Wagenia territory. Though
he is man's proprietor and therefore arranged above man, he is not
supposed to influence man's life. In the Christian view, however, God is
active and influential. He is clearly placed above man, sometimes very
far above him. The ideas about God are much more elaborate. He is a

trinity. He judges man at death.

In the traditional view in a way the spirits of the dead seem to take the place above the living, which God has in Christian beliefs. Like him they are active and influential. They are not the proprietors of man, but since they were the ones who introduced the Wagenia way of life, they are the proprietors of custom. If people act against the traditions, the spirits of the dead intervene. On the contrary, in the Christian opinion the dead are much more on the same level as the living, and if they are believed to have influence, it is only of minor significance.

As a result of Christianization, a structural change seems to have taken place in which an active and influential God is at the top of a clear hierarchy, though there is no general agreement as to the absolute-ness of his influence on sorcerers. Below him the angels have been inserted, and on the same or the level below that, the spirits of the dead, which are traditionally superior to the living. The vague duality of Mokongá na Mbáli was parallelled by that of the Christian God as father and son: a transformation took place. The position of the third person of the holy trinity is less clear: either between Jesus and the angels or with the spirits of the dead. The ever expanding world facilitated the adoption of the idea of an active God. Whereas the spirits of the dead represented an infinity in time, the concept of God expressed an infinity in space. The growing amount of misery the Wagenia have to live through also helped to change the concept of God.

The tenacity of the belief in spirits is to be explained not only by their useful assistance but also by the dramatic quality of events in which they revealed themselves: spirit possession, dreams, visions. The circumstance that the spirits' messages and appearances also came to contain Christian elements only contributed to the survival of belief in spirits.

The link between the spirits and living men is made by the concept of *mosombó*, which makes for continuity despite death. Tradition views man as composed of *mosombó*, heart, shade and breath, in which *mosombó* some-times seems to encompass the other three. Yet, while *mosombó* is most important after death, the heart is central before death. The Christian view on man ignores shade and breath, but adds the head, even if this part of the person is not as important as in secular Western culture. As far as I can see, the only effect of Christian influence on this point has been that in the churches, *mosombó* and heart are central

concepts to the exclusion of shade and breath. But outside the churches, the traditional view on the components of the person still preponderates. There no structural change has occurred in this respect. As to the concepts themselves, it should be noted that the structure of beliefs on heart has remained intact, at the same time coinciding with biblical opinions. Beliefs on heart were biblical *avant la lettre*. The teaching about the Holy Spirit has added new elements to the concept of *mosombó*.

Religious beliefs about *behaviour* are dominated by the opposition between good and bad. In the traditional view, this opposition is stronger than in Christianity. "Once a sorcerer, always a sorcerer" expresses a more definite contrast than "every sinner may convert". In the traditional opinion, badness is defined as a series of acts, whereas Christianity stresses badness as a general human mentality. Only sorcery seems to confirm this Christian view. Where Christian charity has been adopted as a virtue, a structural change has taken place in that the opposition between kin and non-kin has lost its importance in this respect. Both tradition and Christianity view the quality of the after-life as a result of the moral quality of life before death. Yet in the traditional view, this idea plays an important role in the sense that the dead continue their good or bad influence after death, in an even more effective way. In general, traditional ideas about good and bad behaviour seem to have lost nothing of their strength, but I do not exclude that in the course of time, some Wagenia have adopted a more Christian view. The Christian notion of a judgment has become very popular, though. The left-right distinction which is associated with it is familiar to the Wagenia (Droogers 1974:256).

From what has been said above, it may be clear that the spontaneous Africanization of Christianity goes deeper than the superficial changes sometimes associated with it: drums in the church, fables in the sermon, dresses in African style, flowery religious language. Behind this facade of objective behaviour one has to search for basic structures of thought. This is what I have tried to do in this article.

Confronted with Christian views and belief patterns, the Wagenia have in general reacted by combining traditional and Christian patterns. The potential dynamism already present in the religious options made in the traditional culture (on the one hand the idea of an afterlife, but on the other hand essentially this-worldly; a concept of God, but a minimal one) developed fully with Western influence, including Christianity, as a catalist. Common structures and principles facilitated adoption.

Differences may have led to refusal, though not necessarily so (cf. the
concept of God). Combination was more likely to occur than substitution,
even though the former led to syncretism whereas real conversion was
often thought of as a substitution. If a substitution took place this
was either because the traditional concept was not important (e.g. God)
or not all the Wagenia opted for a substitution (e.g. charity). More
often than not Wagenia tradition was the criterion by which the
adoption or refusal of patterns and principles was decided. The Wagenia
were converted on their own terms. It was not a question of integrating
African cultural elements into Christian structures of beliefs but more
of integrating Christian elements into an African pattern. The fact that
Christianity was adopted on such a large scale was not a result of the
eventual success of Christian opposition against tradition, but was
largely a consequence of the presence of common structural principles,
at work in both religious orientations. Besides, the widening of the
horizon and the growth of affliction have played a role in this process
of Christianization, which in a sense is more one of Africanization.

   Therefore, if African theologians are looking for inspiration, they
will find this, above expectation, at the grassroots of the churches.
Once they search for structural principles which Christianity and an
African tradition have in common, they will certainly gain a better
understanding of the way Africans have understood and will understand
the Christian message. I hope to have shown in the paragraph on the
concept of heart to what surprising discoveries this may lead. Even the
understanding of the Holy Spirit may offer promising prospects. In some
respects African cultures seem to be predisposed to a better understand-
ing of biblical language than European cultures were!

   As to the question about the influence of a common tradition on
ecumenical attitudes, raised in the introduction, it would follow from
our discussion of the present Wagenia religious situation that, at least
on the level of beliefs, ecumenism is easy to attain, though this is
valid only within the context of one tribe. A common tradition, a widely
accepted concept of God, and a scarcely doctrinary approach seem to make
for a good ecumenical future. Burial ceremonies stimulate the contact
between Christians from different churches. The *Union Chrétienne de
Charité* served this goal as well, for as long as it existed. Yet there
is the complicating social factor. Though the members of one family
frequently belong to different churches, boundaries between kin groups
are often at the same time more or less denominational frontiers. Certain

churches have the reputation of recruiting their members mainly from villages known for their preference for those churches. It also means that people are brought together in churches, partially because of their previous social relations. The networks of a few church members opened my eyes to this aspect of the adoption of Christianity. Again we find a congruence of structural principles, this time social in nature.

The above bird's-eye view of present-day Wagenia religious life has briefly shown the vast richness of cultural dynamism in the case of a relatively small African tribe. Though generalization from this one example is not called for, I have the strong impression that similar tendencies occur with local variations in other African cultures south of the Sahara. At this point I will not present a survey of the scarce literature on this issue, but confine myself to hazarding this hypothesis.

What this paper in honour of Professor Schulte Nordholt also hopes to have shown is that his approach to cultural dynamism by studying structures and structural principles is not only of value in the study of a political system, but is also promising for the study of religion. As the study of religious phenomena often involves a problem of translation (e.g. when may the words 'sacrifice', 'prayer' etc. be used?) and, moreover phenomena may not be isolated from their context, a solution to these problems should be looked for here. Just as the science of religion and its phenomenological method involve comparison, so the Wagenia had to compare their traditional religion with Christianity, whether they did this consciously or not. Their capacity to understand another religious orientation was based on the common human characteristic of culture, taken in the sense defined above: the human capacity to arrange and rearrange symbols into patterns whose composition is determined by structural principles. This may also be viewed as the basis of the scientific study of religion on a comparative level. It is valid for both the believer and the scholar. As this approach starts from the worldwide common nature of man, translational problems caused by Western-Christian terminology have been avoided. Moreover, phenomena are studied as parts of patterns, and not in isolation.

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