Downloaded by [UQ Library] at 04:35 21 November 2014

In Memory of Pierre Clastres

The Stranger-King

*or Dumézil among the Fijians**

MARSHALL SAHLINS

I BEGIN WITH CERTAIN HISTORICAL AND RITUAL INCIDENTS WHICH, TAKEN together, amount to a Polynesian philosophy of social life. The great classicist Georges Dumézil suggests that the ideas of political sovereignty in this philosophy are similar to structures he has found in ancient Indo-European civilizations. I will go on to make the comparison. Since the advent of a foreign ruler and his absorption by the indigenous people is a main theme of both traditions, their juxtaposition may also help explain the singular honour you do me by these rites of investiture as the anthropological carnival king of the ANZAAS Jubilee celebrations. The whole organization of the present occasion seems a case in point, especially considering that the assembled representatives of the *tangata whenua* are themselves, for the most part, descendants of the famous British *heke*. Successive invasions of foreign princes likewise mark the Polynesian and Indo-European theories at issue. My only grounds for trepidation are that these invasions signify a progressive domestication of the stranger's *mana*, passing by way of his symbolic or actual death and subsequent rebirth as a local god. While I am grateful beyond expresssion for the extraordinary title you bestow upon me, I can only hope your generosity will not go this far.

Consider, for example, what happened to Captain Cook. For the people of Hawaii, Cook had been a myth before he was an event.[1] He descended upon

* Presidential Address, Anthropology Section, ANZAAS Jubilee Congress, Adelaide, 12 May 1980.

[1] Hawaiian myths of the return of the god Lono, with whom Captain Cook was identified, date from the second and third decades of the 19th century, 40 to 50 years after Cook's voyage (Hiram Bingham, *Residence of Twenty-one Years in the Sandwich Islands* (New York 1849, 3rd ed. rev. 1855, repr. 1969); L. C. de S. de Freycinet, *Hawaii in 1819: A Narrative Account*, trans. from *Voyage autour du monde pendant les années 1817-1820* (1839) by E. Whiswell, Marion Kelly ed. (Honolulu 1978), 73; George Byron, *Voyage of H.M.S. Blonde to the Sandwich Islands, in the Years 1824-1825* (London 1826), 19-22; William Ellis, *Polynesian Researches: Hawaii*, repr. of Vol. 4 of *Polynesian Reserches* (1842 ed.) (Rutland and Tokyo 1969), 134-5; Otto von Kotzebue, *A New Voyage of Discovery Round the World in the Years 1823, 24, 25 and 26* (London 1830), II, 160-9). There is debate about the antiquity of such myths, and about the traditional form of the annual Makahiki or New Year ceremony to which they refer. Clearly, certain aspects of the myths in their late form have been elaborated to account for Cook's advent. On the other hand, the myths make allusion to—indeed incorporate relations and incidents from—the epic legends of Cook's royal predecessors in the capacity of Lono from Hawaii Island, notably Lonoikamakahiki and Kalaninuiiamamao, and probably also La'amaikahiki of Kauai and Oahu. The authenticity and antiquity of this epic corpus is much less debatable, and in structure as well as detail the legends embody the same theory as is represented in the Makahiki rites, as well as in the late Cook-Lono myths. Beyond that, the New Year ceremony associated with the November rising of the Pleiades, of which the Hawaiian Makahiki is a local version, is pan-Polynesian, even Austronesian (cf Maud W. Makemson, *The Morning Star Rises*, New Haven 1941). Likewise the Orpheus-Eurydice and Demeter-Persephone motifs, which speak to the cosmological drama of seasonal life and death enacted in the Makahiki, are found elsewhere in Hawaiian and Polynesian myth (cf E.S.C. Handy, *Polynesian Religion*

the Islands from invisible lands beyond the southern horizon: the traditional home of great gods, legendary kings and many cultural good things. Like certain royal predecessors, Cook broke through the borders of heaven, Kahiki—a place (or set of places) considered also as an original cultural time, since it was the natural reproductive space. The Hawaiians received Cook as a reappearance of their own year-god Lono, known especially as the patron of agriculture. It did not prevent them from killing him on 14 February 1779.[2]

'The dying god', as Sir James Frazer would have called it: Cook's death was *sequitur* to a general Polynesian theory of cultural and cosmic reproduction. No sooner dead, Cook was installed as a divine predecessor by the Hawaiian ruling chief. Not 48 hours later, two priests stole out to the *Resolution* bearing a piece of Cook's hindquarters. Handing it over to the British with expressions of great sorrow, they asked when Lono (Cook) would come back to them.

The incidents attending Captain Wallis's arrival at Tahiti in 1767 suggest another aspect of the same Polynesian theory: the capture of the god/chief is mediated by the gift of woman. The Tahitians came off to the *Dolphin*, first European ship to anchor there, and threw banana stalks upon her decks. The plants were signs of their own persons. Called 'man-long bananas' (*ta'ata o mei'a roa*), they were used to supplement the victims in great chiefly rituals of human sacrifice. A few days later, making a feint of enticing the British with a display of their naked women, Tahitian warriors showered the decks of the *Dolphin* with volleys of rocks. And just as the *mana* of the sacrificed Cook devolved upon Hawaiian kings as a sign of their legitimacy, so the pennant Wallis left on the beach of Matavai was woven into the sacred loin cloth (*maro 'ura*), insignia of Tahitian royalty.[3]

At about the same date, according to local genealogical traditions, a similar scene was being staged thousands of miles to the west: the Fijians of the Lau Islands were installing the first of their present dynasty of ruling chiefs. The

(Honolulu 1927), 81-2). From all this, one may judiciously conclude that Cook's appearance in Jan. 1778 and again in Nov. 1778 had specific mythical and ceremonial precedents, probably quite like the versions recorded around 1820.

[2] The principal published sources on Cook's visit include: John Beaglehole (ed.), *The Journals of Captain James Cook on his Voyages of Discovery, III: The Voyage of the* Resolution *and* Discovery *1776-1780*, Pts 1 and 2 (Cambridge 1967); William Ellis, *An Authentic Narrative of a Voyage performed by Captain Cook* (London 1782); [John Rickman], *Journal of Captain Cook's last Voyage to the Pacific* (London 1781); James Cook and James King, *A Voyage to the Pacific Ocean . . . in His Majesty's Ships* Resolution *and* Discovery (Dublin 1784); John Ledyard, *John Ledyard's Journal of Captain Cook's last Voyage*, J. K. Munford, ed. (Corvallis 1963) and H. Zimmerman, *Zimmerman's Captain Cook: An Account of the Third Voyage of Captain Cook around the World, 1776-1780*, E. Michaelis and C. French, trans., F. W. Howay, ed. from Mannheim 1781 edn (Toronto 1930). A somewhat more detailed treatment of Cook's career as the Hawaiian god Lono, based on these and other accounts, may be found in M. Sahlins, *Historical Metaphors and Mythical Realities: Structure in the Early History of the Sandwich Islands Kingdom* (Ann Arbor 1981).

[3] On Wallis's experiences in Tahiti see: Samuel Wallis, 'An Account of a voyage round the world, in the years 1776, 1767, and 1768', in Robert Kerr (ed.), *General History and Collection of Voyages and Travels*, XII (Edinburgh and London 1824), 120-241; George Robertson, *The Discovery of Tahiti. A Journal of the Second Voyage of H.M.S. 'Dolphin'* (London 1948); Teuira Henry, *Ancient Tahiti* (Honolulu 1928), 11. On the *maro'ura* and the famous portrait of Cook, also subject of contention among the Tahitian chiefs, see Douglas Oliver, *Ancient Tahitian Society* (Honolulu 1974), 1215-16 and passim.

Downloaded by [UQ Library] at 04:35 21 November 2014

event was analogous to the treatment of Cook or Wallis because at his own accession the Fijian chief is symbolically poisoned, and in this way captured and domesticated as a god of the indigenous people. The poison is in the sacred offering, the drink made from the kava plant that consecrates the chief. Kava is the pre-eminent offering of the ancient *lewe ni vanua*, 'members of the land', to the ruling chief, always himself a foreigner by origin. Myth tells that kava first grew from the dead body of a child or young chief of the native people—in the Tongan version, very much like the Lauan, the child had originally been sacrificed for the chief's food. The stranger-king thus consumes the land and appropriates its reproductive powers, but only to suffer thereby his own appropriation.[4]

To borrow the title of a recent work by Pierre Clastres, it is 'Society Against the State'.[5] These Polynesian incidents suggest there is something true and essential in Clastres' controversial thesis of populist resentment. Granted, Clastres formulated the idea by reference to the modest developments of chiefship in lowland South America, and there is much to criticize in the notion that the people could reject in advance, by 'intuition' and 'premonition', the kind of political society they had never experienced. Still, the Tiv of West Africa, reflecting on their own comparable political circumstances, say that 'men come to power through devouring the substance of others'.[6] In the same vein, one of the most respectful salutations a lowly Fijian commoner can offer a ranking chief is ' "eat me" '![7] It is thus not surprising that the negation of power Clastres asserts for tribal South America is echoed even in the divinity with which the Polynesians—in the same way as the classical Indo-Europeans—did hedge their kings. 'The chiefs of Hawaii were termed gods, because of the death of a subject', observes a native sage.[8] But, says another, 'Some of the ancient kings had a wholesome fear of the people'.[9]

Clastres also happened to develop his argument in the context of a different native philosophy of power: the quaint Western concept that domination is a spontaneous expression of the nature of society, and beyond that, of the nature of man. This was not always the average scholarly opinion. The origin of the state in conquest, theory well known from the works of Gumplowicz and Oppenheimer, was at least faithful to ancient European doctrine—the legend of Romulus, for example—in that it could comprehend power only on the condition that it originated beyond society and was violently imposed upon the

[4] Cf A. M. Hocart, *Lau Islands, Fiji* (Honolulu 1929), 67ff. The origin myth of kava and the thesis of kava as poison are discussed below.

[5] Pierre Clastres, *Society Against the State*, Robert Hurley, trans. (New York 1977).

[6] P. Bohannan cited in Georges Balandier, *Anthropologie Politique* (Paris 1967), 72.

[7] J. Waterhouse, *The King and People of Fiji* (London 1866), 338.

[8] P. W. Kaawa, 'The ancient tabus of Hawaii', trans. from the newspaper *Ku'oko'a*, 25 Nov., 2 Dec., 9 Dec. 1865, Honolulu, Bishop Museum Library, Thrum Collection, Ka Hoomana Kahiko, xxix.

[9] David Malo, *Hawaiian Antiquities*, N. B. Emerson, trans. (2nd ed. Honolulu 1951), 195.

Downloaded by [UQ Library] at 04:35 21 November 2014

general will. But this native conception of power as foreign to society has latterly given way to a variety of others—Marxist, biological, the social contract—alike in their understanding of political authority as an internal growth, springing from the essence of human social relations or dispositions.

I do not offer a competing historical theory, since it should be clear that I am not talking about what 'actually happened'. Yet what I am talking about—indigenous schemes of cosmological proportions—may be even more significant historically. The fate of Captain Cook suggests that such schemes are the true organization of historical practice, if not true memories of primordial events. On the other hand, it is possible that fashionable social science discourses on the origin of inequality are also, in certain respects, versions of the myths they purport to explain.

The latest sociobiology, for example, merely internalizes as human nature the opposition between power and culture characteristic of the received folklore. These *ad hoc* claims of a continuity between dominant apes and one or another current species of political despotism seem truly, as Clifford Geertz says, 'a mixture of common sense and common nonsense'.[10] For the affinity we commonly sense between power and nature is itself a social construction, passing by way of their mutual opposition to civil society. Power and nature are alike as what is beyond and apart from the norms of ordinary culture. Bent on a privileged appropriation of words and things as hierarchical values, rather than as reciprocal means of human communication, power is the negation of community, and so is ideologically banished to the kingdom of natural forces. Since this is where our sociobiological colleagues find it, they suppose it to be the birthplace.[11]

My main purpose will be to examine, in a loose typological frame, certain Polynesian analogues of the same theory. I say 'analogues' because the conception of divine kings we find in Hawaii or Fiji also happens to preside over the subterranean history of our own democracies—whence also emerges periodically the king's cosmic antithesis, 'the laughing people'.[12] Still the comparison might hold little interest were it not for another claim that can be made for it. I hope to show, necessarily in a summary way, that the anthropological concept of 'structure' is not most usefully set forth in a Saussurean mode, as a static set of symbolic oppositions and correspondences. In its global and most powerful representation, structure is processual: a dynamic development of the

[10] 'A wary reasoning: Humanities, analogies and social theory', lecture presented at the University of Chicago, 15 Dec. 1979.

[11] Balandier quotes P. Valéry: 'The political acts upon men in a manner which evokes "natural causes"; they submit to it as they submit to the *caprices* of the sky, the sea, the terrestial crust'. The analogy, Balandier comments, 'suggests the distance at which power places itself—outside and above society'—op. cit. 125.

[12] Marc Bloch, *Les rois thaumaturges* (Paris 1961); Ernst H. Kantorowicz, *The King's Two Bodies: A Study in Mediaeval Political Theology* (Princeton 1957); Mikhail Bakhtin, *Rabelais and His World*, Helene Iswolsky, trans. (Cambridge Mass. 1968).

Downloaded by [UQ Library] at 04:35 21 November 2014

cultural categories and their relationships, amounting to a world system of generation and regeneration. As a programme of the cultural life process, the system is steeped in time and change. Structure is the cultural life of the elementary forms. Yet precisely as this diachrony is structural and repetitive, it enters into dialogue with historic time, as an heroic project of encompassing the contingent event.

The political dimensions of the structure in question, the ideology of external domination and social usurpation, are well known to anthropological studies of archaic states and proto-states. The famous works of Sir James Frazer and A. M. Hocart on divine kingship document a world-wide distribution of the same basic scheme of power, from the Fiji Islands and the Americas through India and the Classical World.[13] Luc de Heusch has brilliantly synthesized its description from several parts of Africa.[14] Heusch calls upon the studies of Dumézil for certain descriptive concepts, and Dumézil for his part finds fundamental aspects of Roman sovereignty repeated in Polynesia, Dahomey and pre-hispanic Mexico, as well as ancient Ireland, India, Persia and Scandanavia. 'It is not even among the Indo-Europeans', Dumézil writes, 'that these facts are most clear or complete'. To study them from 'the point of view of general sociology', it would be better to look at the Polynesians or the Indians of Northwest America, and the best commentary on the accession of the ancient Hindu king Prthu 'is perhaps furnished by scenes which, only recently, marked the succession of the sovereign in the Fiji Islands'.[15]

To take the viewpoint of a general sociology: in all the aforementioned civilizations, basically composed of kith and kin, diverse lineages and clans, the ruler as above society is also considered beyond it. As he is beyond it morally, so he is from the beyond, and his advent is a kind of terrible epiphany. It is a remarkably common fact that the great chiefs and kings of political society are not *of* the people they rule. By the local theories of origin they are strangers, just as the draconic feats by which they come to power are foreign to the conduct of the 'real people' or 'true sons of the land', as Polynesians might express it. The stranger-kings, we shall see, are eventually encompassed by the indigenous people, to the extent that their sovereignty is always problematical and their lives are often at risk. But it is just such conditions that motivate a naturalistic theory of power. By his own nature outside the home bred culture of the society, the king appears within it as a force of nature. He erupts upon a

[13] James Frazer, *Lectures on the Early History of Kingship* (London 1905), *The Golden Bough* (3rd ed. London 1911-15); A. M. Hocart, *Kingship* (Oxford 1969 [1927]), *Kings and Councillors* (Chicago 1970 [1936]).

[14] Luc de Heusch et al., *Essais sur le symbolisme de l'inceste royal en Afrique* (Brussels 1958), *Le pouvoir et le sacré* (Brussels 1962), *Le roi ivre ou l'origine d'état* (Paris 1972).

[15] Georges Dumézil, *L'Héritage Indo-Européen à Rome* (4th ed. Paris 1949), 41-2. Dumézil is probably referring to the Fijian 'coronation ceremonies' described by Hocart in *Kingship*. See also G. Dumézil, *Mitra-Varuna* (Paris 1948), *Les dieux soverains des Indo-Européens* (Paris 1977), among his many works on Indo-European structures. I make no demarcation here of a Frazerian sort between magical kings and priest-kings; we shall see that the two constitute complementary functions of the same system.

Downloaded by [UQ Library] at 04:35 21 November 2014

pastoral scene of peaceful husbandry and political equality (or at least limited authority), which the nostalgia of a later time may well recall as a golden age. Typically then, these rulers do not even spring from the same clay as the aboriginal people: they are from the heavens or—in the very common case—they are of distinct ethnic stock. In either event, royalty is the foreigner.

Fijians often complain that their ruling chief is a *kai tani*, a 'different person' or 'stranger' in the land; or else, he is just a *vulagi*, a 'guest', term that Hocart also analyses as 'heavenly god.' ' "The chiefs . . . came from overseas" ', Hocart was told by an Oneata man, ' "it is so in all countries of Fiji" '.[16] Here, in very condensed form, is a typical Fijian myth of the origin of the current ruling lineage:

> A handsome, fair-skinned stranger, victim of an accident at sea, is befriended by a shark who carries him ashore on the south coast of Viti Levu. The stranger wanders into the interior where he is taken in by a local chieftain, whose daughter he eventually marries. From this union springs the line of Noikoro ruling chiefs, the narrator of the story being the tenth descendant in that line. He and his clansmen are called 'The Sharks' (Na Qio).[17]

It is all as in the Hawaiian proverb: 'a chief is a shark that travels on land'.[18] Luc de Heusch quotes Saint Just to the effect that 'between the people and the king there can be no natural relation'. Yet the idea was not entirely revolutionary. Many peoples had long before concluded that power is not inherent in humanity. It can only come from elsewhere than the true community and relationships of men. In this classic sense, power is a barbarian.

It is typically founded on an act of barbarism—murder, incest or both. Heusch calls this 'the exploit', a feat mythically associated with the ancestor of the dynasty, and frequently re-enacted at the installation of each successor. The very negation of kinship behaviour, this original violence is the complement of Clastres' thesis—as also of the ideas of illustrious predecessors, who likewise made much of the conflicting principles of State and Civil Society, *Gemeinschaft* and *Gesellschaft*, *Civitas* and *Societas*. Power reveals and defines itself as the rupture of the people's own moral order, precisely as the greatest of crimes against kinship: fratricide, parricide, the union of mother and son, father and daughter or brother and sister.

Downloaded by [UQ Library] at 04:35 21 November 2014

[16] Hocart, *Lau Islands* . . ., 129.

[17] Condensed from A. G. Brewster, 'The Chronicles of the Noikoro Tribe', MS, Suva, National Archives of Fiji, CS2195 FSB2. In another paper (M. Sahlins, 'Raw women, cooked Men and other great things of the Fiji Islands', *Social Analysis*, in press) I analyze a similar myth from the same general area, to the conclusion that the immigrant who drifts ashore and is given the chiefdom is by nature a dangerous cannibal. Nayacakalou points to the foreign origin of chiefship in several areas he had worked in, though he does not claim it universal in Fiji, as is asserted here. R. R. Nayacakalou, *Leadership in Fiji* (New York 1975).

[18] E. S. C. Handy and Mary Pukui, *The Polynesian Family System in Ka-'u, Hawaii* (Rutland and Tokyo 1972), 129.

Speaking still from the most general point of view, it is not significant that the exploit may be 'merely symbolic', since it is symbolic even when it is 'real'. By certain versions of the legend, Romulus killed Remus for stepping over the furrow he had traced in (Mother) earth to mark the walls of the future Rome. The East African king acts out the same homicidal/sexual associations when, having won a fratricidal war of succession, he mates with his half-sister. Zeus did no better to his father Cronos and his sister Hera, but then he had Cronos's own example to follow. The Hawaiian dynasty of sacred chiefs began with the legendary incest of a father and a daughter; it effectively ended in historic times with the sacrifice of King Kiwala'o by his (classificatory) brother Kamehameha, who thereupon married his victim's daughter.[19] And as Oedipus, whether myth or complex, has again the same structure, perhaps no more need be said about the power of signs to function as signs of power.

It is more important to notice that power is not represented here as an intrinsic social condition. It is a usurpation, in the double sense of a forceful seizure of sovereignty and a sovereign denial of the prevailing moral order. Rather than a normal succession, *usurpation itself is the principle of legitimacy.* Hocart shows that the coronation rituals of the king celebrate a victory over his predecessor. Hawaiians say, 'Every king acts as a conqueror when he is installed', for if he has not actually sacrificed the late king, he is usually presumed to have poisoned him. His predecessor dead, the Hawaiian heir-apparent must then remove himself for a certain period, not only as protection against the pollution of death but from the chaos that ensues. During this interregnum, the social order dissolves. Men wear their loin cloths on their heads, and chiefly women fornicate in public places with commoners they would otherwise despise. After 10 days, the king returns to a ritual of installation which puts end to the reign of confusion by reimposing the tabus, the separations of sacred and secular that restore the proper distinctions among persons and the objects of their exisence. In Victor Turner's terms, *communitas*, the undifferentiated state of collectivity, returns to the differentiated order of *societas*: 'antistructure' is resolved again into structure.[20]

Such mythical exploit and ritual chaos is common to the beginnings of dynasties and to successive investitures of divine kings. We can summarily interpret the significance something like this: to be able to put the society in order, the king must first reproduce an original disorder. Having committed

[19] The legendary progenitors of the Hawaiian chiefs were Wakea and Hoohokuokalani (or Hoohokukalani), his own daughter by Papa. The story is a humanized counterpart of the Maori myth in which the god Tane generates mankind by mating with a woman fashioned from the *mons veneris* of Papa or Earth, Tane's mother. Hawaiian and Maori legends typically contrast in this way, as epic and mythical versions respectively of the same themes—analogously thus to the contrast in genre Dumézil observes for Roman and Indian traditions. *L'Héritage* . . ., 179f; *Les dieux soverains* . . ., 60f.

[20] Victor Turner, *The Ritual Process* (Chicago 1969).

Downloaded by [UQ Library] at 04:35 21 November 2014

his montrous acts against society, proving he is stronger than it, the ruler proceeds to bring system out of chaos. Recapitulating the initial constitution of social life, the accession of the king is a re-creation of the universe. The king makes his advent as a god. The symbolism of the installation rituals is cosmological. Hence the Frazerian equation between the life of the king, the well-being of society and the concordance of cosmic forces.

Social scientists often see in all this a mystification of power, framed in the interests of the rulers. Yet as a 'dominant ideology' it is at least equivocal, since as in the instance of Captain Cook, or anthropological analogues of the Priest of Nemi, it may also authorize the people to 'sit upon the ground and tell sad tales of the death of kings'. But to speak of an interested ideology in the first place is to sadly impoverish the description of these facts. The rationalization of power is not at issue so much as the representation of a general scheme of social life: a total 'structure of reproduction', including the complementary and antithetical relations between king and people, god and man, male and female, foreign and native, war and peace, heavens and earth.

The political appears here as an aspect of the cosmological: the expression as human battle of transformations between life and death that are universal. Yet the political is not merely a reflex of the natural, as Frazer thought. Nor is it the other way round, the death (or pseudo-death) of the king a political catharsis in the trappings of a cosmic ideology, as functionalist theory has it. Again, the system is not adequately characterized by familiar structuralist notions of a transposition between the parallel codes of culture and nature. Lévi-Strauss remarks that the Polynesian conceptual scheme is specifically unlike the so-called totemism by virtue of the continuity, the consubstantiality, posited between supernatural, natural and human beings.[21] It is a universal system of common descent, hence of differential homologies rather than homologous differences. Here, then, the logical relations between the several planes of cosmos and culture are not merely metaphoric, or even metonymic in the sense of physical contiguity. Proportions such as king:people::heavens:earth are statements about commonalities and differences in the nature of things, a veritable ontology. This helps explain why representations in terms of male and female, sexual reproduction and birth, kinship and genealogy are so pervasive—sex, as Hocart says somewhere, is the sign of sex. One could say that for Polynesia at least, genealogy is to the *pensée étatique* what 'totemism' is in the *pensé sauvage*. No other logic so felicitously combines the necessary operations of classification, transformation and instantiation.

Let us take seriously Dumézil's suggestion that the installation rituals of the Fijian chief are a clue to the system of the Indo-Europeans. Frazer had already set certain terms of the comparison. The legends of the Latin kings from

[21] C. Lévi-Strauss, *Totemism* (Boston 1963).

Downloaded by [UQ Library] at 04:35 21 November 2014

Romulus to the second Tarquin, as the Greeks from Tantalus and Pelops to Agammemnon, show consistent similarities in the philosophy of polity. The king is an outsider, often an immigrant warrior prince whose father is a god or a king of his native land. But, exiled by his own love of power or banished for a murder, the hero is unable to succeed there. Instead, he takes power in another place, and *through a woman*: princess of the native people whom he gains by a miraculous exploit involving feats of strength, ruse, rape, athletic prowess and/or the murder of his predecesor. The heroic son-in-law from a foreign land demonstrates his divine gifts, wins the daughter, and inherits half or more of the kingdom.[22] Before it was a fairy tale, it was the theory of society.

So before Romulus, at the beginnings of the Romans in Italy, came Aeneas the Trojan, whose landing was opposed by armed natives under King Latinus. Livy (*Hist. Rome* I, 1) gives two versions of what follows, one warlike and the other peaceable, but both ending with Aeneas receiving Lavinia, daughter of King Latinus, and the unification of foreigners and natives as one people under the immigrant king. By the telling of Dionysius of Halicarnassus, the original treaty was a compact of the respective gods. The indigenous Latins gave land to the Trojans in return for aid in war. Each party thus contributing of its essential nature, together they were able to make a viable whole. But as the nature of the Latins is reproductive wealth, on the marital plane the founding exchange was assymetrical: the aborigines are wife-givers. Setting the example, the two kings

> united the excellance of the two races, the native and the foreign, by ties of marriage. Latinus gave his daughter Lavinia to Aeneas. Thereupon the rest also conceived the same desire as their kings; and combining in a very brief time their customs, laws and religious ceremonies, forming ties through intermarriages and becoming mingled together in the wars they jointly waged, and calling themselves by the common name of Latins, after the king of the Aborigines, they adhered so firmly to their past that no lapse of time has yet severed them from one another (Dion. Halic., *Rom. Antiq.* I, 60).

On the other hand, Latinus's gift of the woman Lavinia to the foreign king involved the combined peoples in a war with the Rutulians. The Rutulians were incited to rebellion by the rejected suitor of Lavinia, Tyrrhenus (of Dionysius's telling, i.e., Turnus of the *Aeneid*). Tyrrhenus was a nephew of the wife of Latinus, Amita—whose own name thus suggests a frustrated father's sister's daughter marriage. Since father's sister's daughter marriage is a form of reciprocal exchange, the wife-takers of one generation becoming the wife-givers of the next, the entire episode suggests a transformation from an indigenous reciprocity between king and people to an hierarchical flow of women in favour of the stranger-king.

[22] Cf Jean-G. Préaux, 'La sacralité du pouvoir royal à Rome', in de Heusch, *Le pouvoir* . . ., 103-21.

Downloaded by [UQ Library] at 04:35 21 November 2014

Consider also the adoption of the aboriginal name 'Latins' as the appellation of the now unified people. This is likewise common Fijian usage. At the several structural levels from the 'clan' (*mataqali*) to the village, on up to the 'land' (*vanua*) and the confederated chiefdom (*matanitu*), the group as a whole is designated by the name of its indigenous and subordinate segment: such is the origin of 'Tubou', capital village of Lau (itself the proper name of the hinterland islands of the chiefdom), or of 'Cakaudrove' and 'Verata'; the same again is found in the ceremonial titles of ruling chiefs ('Burebasaga' in Rewa, 'Matanikutu' in Naitasiri, etc.). A kind of inverted marking rule, which makes the inferior social term nevertheless the generic concept of the totality, this taxonomic procedure expresses literally the encompassment of the king and the contradictions of his sovereignty. The land belongs to the 'true people' (*tamata dina*) of the place, as they truly belong to it, relationships perfectly captured in the Fijian term *i taukei*, which may be alternately translated as the 'owners' and the 'indigenous occupants'.

To return to the Latins, Romulus, child of the sacred woman (vestal) of Alba and the war god Mars, would go on to found Rome on the model of the original Trojan invasion. Numitor, the Alban king, maternal grandfather of Romulus and Remus, takes care to send off with these two his own rebellious subjects. The twins themselves had an 'unsociable love of rule' (Dion. Halic., *Rom. Antiq.* I, 85), and when they divided their party in two with the intention of stimulating rivalry, it led to famous discord, with results fatal to Remus. This failure of dualism—noncomplementary at that—is a motivation of the tripartite and hierarchical structure that eventually characterizes the Rome founded by Romulus.

Raised as a rustic herdsman, leader of a youthful robber band, fratricide, Romulus establishes the city by a ruse: an improvized agricultural festival that attracts the indigenous Sabines of the countryside (indeed, the mountains), whose daughters he carries off. In the ensuing war the Romans are nearly beaten: through the betrayal of a woman, Tarpeia, whose love of riches allows the Sabines to take the citadel. (Riches, of course, are the economic counterpart of the powers of growth and agricultural fertility, hence indicative, as Dumézil observes, of the female side.) By the miraculous intervention of Jupiter, Romulus stays the rout and produces a stalemate, upon which the Sabine women, daughters to one army and wives to the other, intervene to effect a reconciliation. Plutarch (*Lives*, Romulus) signifies the synthetic term produced from their conjunction by a more powerful combinatory logic than the complementary exchange that had united the Trojans and the Latins. (We shall see the analogue in Fiji: the two elementary categories of the polity invert their natures.) So the Romans, Plutarch says, adopted the armour, i.e. the military techniques, of the indigenous Sabines; while the Sabines took over the

Downloaded by [UQ Library] at 04:35 21 November 2014

Roman names for months, i.e., the ceremonial/agricultural calendar, of the invading warriors. But above all, the Romans now gain the means of their own reproduction in the Sabine women and their dowries, and all live happily ever after in the Eternal City.

There will be further structural permutations necessary to guarantee this immortality. But they are best discussed after bringing into comparison certain of those scenes, alluded to by Dumézil, which 'only recently marked the succession of the sovereign in the Fiji Islands'. Dumézil had in mind Hocart's description of the Lauan and Bauan installation ceremonies (*veibuli*), and I similarly rely on these and notices of comparable rites from eastern Fiji. The investiture of the Tui Nayau as ruler of Lau (Sau ni Vanua) is now our best source, thanks to the attention to traditional forms at the most recent performance, in July 1969. It will be the focus of the ensuing discussion.[23]

I pass over the preliminary installation of the chief as Tui Nayau at Nayau Island, though its significance will be taken into account. The ensuing investiture of the Tui Nayau as paramount of Lau consciously follows the legend of an original odyssey which brought the ancestral holder of the title into power at Lakeba, ruling island of the Lau Group. The chief thus makes his appearance at Lakeba from the sea, as a stranger to the land. Disembarking at the capital village of Tubou, he is led first to the chiefly house (*vale levu*) and next day to the central ceremonial ground (*rara*) of the island. At both stages of this progression, the pretender is led along a path of barkcloth by local chieftains of the land.[24] In Lau, this barkcloth is prescriptively a type considered foreign by origin, Tongan barkcloth. Later, at the kava ceremony constituting the main ritual of investiture, a native chieftain will bind a piece of white Fijian tapa about the paramount's arm. The sequence of barkcloths, together with the sequence of movements to the central ceremonial ground, recapitulate the correlated legendary passages of the Tui Nayau from foreign to domestic, sea to

[23] Descriptions of the Lau and Bau installation ceremonies—the latter pertaining to the Vunivalu—are found in Hocart, *Lau Islands* . . ., and *Kingship*. Further texts on the Bau rites also include A. M. Hocart, 'The Heart of Fiji', MS, Wellington, Alexander Turnbull Library, mf University of Chicago Libraries; A. R. Tippett, *Aspects of Pacific Ethnohistory* (Pasadena 1973), 91 ff. Hocart also supplies information on Vanua Levu installations in his *The Northern States of Fiji* (London 1952), and for several other areas in his Fijian field notes (MS, Wellington, New Zealand, Alexander Turnbull Library, mf University of Chicago Libraries). On Moala, see M. Sahlins, *Moala* (Ann Arbor 1962), 386-8. Records of the 1969 investiture of the Lau paramount (Tui Nayau/Sau ni Vanua), including official programmes, photographs and a bilingual report in *Na Tovata* II:5 are deposited in the David Seidler Collection, Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington. By far the most useful account was generously supplied to me by Mr Steven Phelps of Cambridge University from his own field notes, taken down in 1978 from participants in the 1969 ceremonies. I warmly thank Mr Phelps for his invaluable collegial help—without which this analysis would be much poorer.

[24] In photographs of what appears to be the second stage of these ceremonies, the movement from the chief's house to the ceremonial ground, the chief is also being escorted by elderly women, even as two rows of women are seated alongside the barkcloth on which the group is proceeding. This is only one of numerous ritual details signifying the birth (= appearance) of the chief through mediation of the women of the land. Again, the presence and shouts of assembled warriors at the chief's disembarcation the night before suggest the capture of the immigrant sea-king by the indigenous people. Below, I give other salient details of the rituals which make such points in different ways. I mention these here to give an indication of how much I simplify and selectively highlight the symbolic riches of the Lauan installation ceremonies.

Downloaded by [UQ Library] at 04:35 21 November 2014

land and periphery to centre. The Fijian barkcloth that in the end captures the chief represents his capture of the land: upon installation, he is said to hold the 'barkcloth of the land' (*masi ni vanua*).

The barkcloth thus has deeper significance. In general ritual usage, barkcloth serves as 'the path of the god'. Hanging from the rafters at the rear, sacred end of the ancient temple, it is the avenue by which the god descends to enter the priest. The priest, for his part, is a representative of—in certain locales, he is the *malosivo*, the original and superseded chief of—the indigenous people, those the Fijians call 'owners' (*i taukei*) or 'the land' (*na vanua*), in contrast to immigrants such as the chief who comes by sea. Since the stranger-king is himself a triumphant warrior and cannibal, which is to say a god descended upon the land, the installation represents a transposition of sacred temple ceremonies in another key. In Lau, as in Moala, the leaders of ancient priestly groups (*mataqali*) play the central roles of escorting the pretender upon the ceremonial ground and officiating at the installation kava. And this Tui Nayau whom they usher to the throne of Lau is the successor of parricides. Legend tells of the origin of the title in bloody exploits: the slaughter of a younger brother by the son of the elder, followed by an equally cruel revenge by the son of the younger on both the murderer and his father.[25]

There is still more to the barkcloth. This barkcloth which provides access for the god/chief and signifies his sovereignty is the pre-eminent feminine valuable (*i yau*) in Fiji. It is the highest product of woman's labour, and as such is a principal good of ceremonial exchange (*solevu*). The chief's accession is

[25] Various legendary versions of the origin of the present Lau dynasty may be found in A. C. Reid, 'The fruit of the Rewa: oral traditions and the growth of the pre-Christian Lakeba state', *Journal of Pacific History*, XII (1977), 2-24; Laura Thompson, *Southen Lau, Fiji: An Ethnography* (Honolulu 1940), 162; Hocart, *Lau islands* . . .; Solomone Dranivia, '*Nai tukutuku mai na gauna makawa*', Suva, Fiji Museum, Methodist Overseas Mission 164, xerox of orig. in the Mitchell Library, Sydney; C. R. Swayne, Lau Papers, Cambridge, Cambridge University Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology; and Hocart, Fijian field notes, 2765f, 2792f, 3155f, 3167f, 3207f. The more mythically told advent of the original chiefly line (Tui Lakeba) is recounted in Lorimer Fison, *Tales from Old Fiji* (London 1904), 49-58; the story has the same structure as the Lau historical legends, if related in a more fabulous genre

The eventual victory of a junior chiefly line over the senior is a standard feature of the Lau royal traditions, as it is in many (all?) areas of Fiji. Also typical is the repetition of the drama of usurpation at several different stages of the chiefly saga, right down to recent times. Certain of these struggles usher into power new descent stocks (*yavusa*) thus a succession of dynasties; others entail changes in the line of royal succession within the ruling 'clan' (*mataqali*). Superseded chiefly stocks (*malosivo*) appear in the present organization of Lakeba as leaders of indigenous 'land' groups, often with priestly functions. The deposition of a senior line by a cadet frequently represents the domestication of the chiefship: the replacement of a more terrible ruler, inclined to eat his own people, by one disposed rather to feed them (e.g. Pokini and Qilaiso in the Lakeba tradition). Hocart has taken note of this displacement of human sacrifice and cannibalism to external relations of the society as a structural feature ('Sacrifice', *Encylopaedia of the Social Sciences*, XIII (New York 1936). Finally, successive legendary usurpations may also signify shifts in the political value of different chiefly marriage patterns at different stages of the social formation. The original stranger-princes are linked by marriage to native 'owners': they are wife-takers and sister's sons to the indigenous people (*vasu i taukei*). But later displacements of the rule to other stocks or to junior lines are often predicated on advantageous external alliances. Those who now come to power are thus the sister's sons or 'great nephews' (*vasu levu*) of powerful outside chiefdoms. So while the Lau chiefs were originally *vasu* to the land people of Lau, later chiefs were successively *vasu* to Cakaudrove, Bau and Tonga. The trend continues: the present heir-apparent would be *vasu* to Rewa.

Downloaded by [UQ Library] at 04:35 21 November 2014

mediated by the object that saliently signifies women. The same is enacted, we shall see, at the epiphanal climax, when the ruler drinks 'the kava of the land'. If the chief then detains 'the barkcloth of the land', it is because he has appropriated the island's reproductive powers.

Just as the ancient Indo-European king is the magical son-in-law, so the Fijian ruler is the sacred nephew, descended from the sister's son of the indigenous people (*vasu i taukei*). This founding relationship—already noted in the story of the chiefly sharks of Noikoro—is general in Fijian myth and genealogy. The original transfer of power to the immigrant prince is signified in the surrender of a native woman of rank. Likewise in historic practice: when a Fijian group is defeated in war, they make submission by presenting to their conqueror a basket of earth (the land) and daughters of their own chiefs. The line of conquering chiefs becomes the sister's sons of the conquered people.

'All the chiefly clans of Fiji', writes Rokowaqa, brilliant ethnographer of his own people, 'they are of female ancestry' (*Ko ira kece na mataqali Turaga e Viti, era sa vu yalewa*). Hence they are the 'hand of the feast' (*liga ni magiti*), i.e., feast-givers to the people, for it was the ancestress who cooked food (*baleta nona dau vakasaqa kakana na vu yalewa*). The gender opposition *in this context* is to the indigenous subjects: they are of the male line, 'hand of the club' (*liga ni wau*), i.e., the chief's guardian-warriors.[26] Chiefs and people here are figured as female and male sides, respectively, of the same line. Thus the usage that long puzzled Hocart, that the Fijian nobility are styled 'child chiefs' (*gone turaga*), while the native owners of the land are the 'elders' (*qase*). The relation is one of offspring to ancestor, as established by the gift of the woman. Notice, however, that it carries another message, since the chiefly immigrants could have been conceived, even by Fijian idiom, as wife-takers to the people's wife-givers, or 'the side of the man' to the native 'side of the woman'. But everything happens as if the people's own standpoint is the archimedean point of the cultural universe.

All this suggests why Fijians also say, 'the chief is our god'.[27] The paradigmatic ritual privilege of the sister's son is to seize the offerings made to the god of his mother's brother's people.[28] The uterine nephew thus takes the role of the god: the one who consumes the offerings. He is 'sacred blood' (*dra tabu*) as Moalans say. If the ruling chief is usurper of the land through the acquisition of an indigenous princess, it follows that his lineage usurps the place of the people's god.

[26] Epeli Rokowaqa, *Ai Tukutuku kei Viti* (Suva n.d.), 63; cf Hocart, *Lau Islands . . .*, 236.

[27] Hocart, *Kings and Councillors*, 61; idem, 'On the meaning of *Kalou* and the origin of Fijian temples', *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute*, XLII (1912), 447; Niko Rabuka, '*Ai sau ni taro ni ka me kilai*', *Na Mata*, Nos 250-1 (1911), 156.

[28] A. M. Hocart, 'Chieftainship and the sister's son in the Pacific', *American Anthropologist*, XVII (1915), 631-46; *The Northern States . . .*; *Kingship*.

Downloaded by [UQ Library] at 04:35 21 November 2014

Hence the distinctive duality of the god-head in traditional Fiji, consisting on one hand of the ancient invisible gods of the land and, on the other, their visible instantiations in living chiefs. The pantheon is not a direct reflection of the temporal power, as in a segmentary ancestral cult. For the great gods that governed the fate of the collectivity, the principal war gods in particular, were not direct lineage ancestors of the reigning chiefs. Spirits rather of the original chiefs and/or sources (*vu*) of the indigenous lineages, the major gods belonged to the native land people, who accordingly were their priests. During the cult, the indigenous deities became manifest by entering (*curumi*) the priest. But otherwise and continuously, they were visibly present in the ruling chief, who as uterine nephew of their worshippers had superseded them in this world. Naming the gods of the several village temples, the Tokatoka paramount said to Hocart, 'all these are my names'.[29]

Nor did the chiefs' divinity signify merely an occasional and ritual privilege. Documents from the earlier part of the 19th century tell that before Christianity the enormous quantities of foods and goods brought for ceremonial exchange (*solevu*) from other lands were presented not to the persons but to the gods of the recipients.[30] Nearly everything we call 'trade' and 'tribute' was at that time sacrifice. If the goods then fell to the ranking chief of the group, it was exactly by his divine right as sister's son, right established through the initial transfer of the woman. One is reminded of Hocart's dictum: 'There is no religion in Fiji, only a system that in Europe has split up into religion and business'.[31]

Also relevant is Brother Hazelwood's observation, 'their gods are cannibals, just like themselves',[32] since the initial acquisition of the woman by the stranger-king is a social mode of consumption. Like many other peoples, Fijians equate sexual possession with consumption of the woman.[33] Divine and ferocious cannibal from outside, the chief eats the land in the transposed and benign form of marriage.[34] Just as Romulus founded his kingdom by the capture of the Sabine women, so the Fijian ruler, likewise terrible warrior of divine descent, acquires his domain by taking the land's female (reproductive) virtues.

[29] Hocart, Fijian field notes, Wellington, Alexander Turnbull Library.

[30] John Hunt, Fiji Journals, 11 Feb. 1840, London, School of Oriental and African Studies Library, Methodist Missionary Society Papers (Box 56); R. B. Lyth, 'Tongan and Fijian Reminiscences', Vol. I, MS, Sydney, Mitchell Library.

[31] Hocart, *Kings* . . ., 256.

[32] J. E. Erskine, *Journal of a Cruise among the Islands of the Western Pacific* (London 1967 [1853]), 247.

[33] Thus in Vanua Levu, sexual intercourse may be figured as 'eating vagina'; Buell Quain's male informants told him they salivate when they see a beautiful woman—*Fijian Village* (Chicago 1948), 322n.

[34] Indeed, if a feast brought to the chief by a subject people is deemed insufficient, it is only polite form that they offer to include thier own persons in it—'the men are the feast'.

A little basket [the feast] lies here in the presence of you-two [the chief], and a weak branch of a stump [the kava root] which I put down in the presence of you-two. There is nothing to eat with it. Be gracious; if it is not enough we are its supplement. The men are the feast. Hocart, 'The Heart of Fiji', MS, Wellington, Alexander Turnbull Library (a formula of prestation to the Roko Tui Namata).

Downloaded by [UQ Library] at 04:35 21 November 2014

And to the god/chief, then, falls the people's offering of first fruits, *i sevu*—a term that also serves for the ceremonial prestation of kava (*i sevusevu*).

Notice that in all these genealogies, myths, and rites, Indo-European or Polynesian, we have to do with cultural categories, abstract but fundamental conceptions, represented in persons. The alleged actions of these persons display the right relations between the categories, a process of their combination and organization. Anthropologists call this a 'structure', but the term should not be taken for a synchronic scheme of contrasts and correspondences—e.g. the chief is to the people as the foreign is to the native, the sea is to the land, the wife-takers to the wife-givers, and so on. Just as time and sequence are essential to telling the myth or performing the rite, so too the structure is a generative development of the categories and their relationships. In the event, new and synthetic terms are produced, and elementary categories change their values.

Abstractly, the life of society is generated through the combination of opposed yet complementary qualities, each incomplete without the other. Hence the privileged role of the metaphor of male and female. The immigrant sovereign is a ferocious male: virile young warrior and penetrator from the outside. Great creator and procreator (the Hawaiians had songs celebrating the qualities of the chief's genitals), he is often associated with the sun and the heavens. The indigenous people are, *at the intial moment*, 'the side of the woman'. They are associated with the powers of earth and underworld, with growth and the peaceful arts of agriculture. So, as the Sabines, they are associated with wealth (*opes*); or, most generally, with that which nurtures the godly seed and transforms it into social substance. But we can already see in this the seeds of social contradiction. The underworld is the site of death as well as telluric source of life's sustenance, and male power can have no issue or effect until it is encompassed by the woman. Hence the ambiguous power of the woman, who, as Maori articulate it, transforms the death of the man (detumescence) into the life of the tribe (birth). That Fijian barkcloth, woman's good, which provides the path for the god also functions in everyday life as a loincloth, concealing—culturalizing—the primary site of male power. There is a contradiction latent in the chief's appropriation of 'the barkcloth of the land'. As Hocart puts it, barkcoth is used to 'catch' the spirit.[35]

Speaking to Indo-European conceptions, Dumézil names the opposed forces in play *celeritas* and *gravitas*, and these Latin terms perfectly fit in the Fijian case. *Celeritas* refers to the youthful, active, disorderly, magical, and creative violence of conquering princes; *gravitas*, to the venerable, staid, judicious, priestly, peaceful, and productive dispositions of an established peo-

[35] Hocart, *Lau Islands* . . ., 237.

Downloaded by [UQ Library] at 04:35 21 November 2014

ple. In the initial moment of their combination *celeritas* prevails over *gravitas*, as the invaders capture the reproductive powers of the land to found their kingdom. But the same creative violence that institutes society would be dangerously unfit to constitute it. Rather, the combination of *celeritas* and *gravitas* generates a new term, the sovereign power, itself a synthesis of the war function and the peace function, will and law, the active kingship and the ceremonial.

This duality of the sovereign authority is a condition of the 'general sociology' of all such kingdoms, Polynesian as much as Indo-European. The king is able to rule society, which is to say to mediate between its antithetical parts, in so far as the sovereign power itself partakes of the nature of the opposition, combines in itself the elementary antithesis. The Fijian chief is both invading male and, as sister's son, the female side of the native lineage. Notorious cannibal on the one hand, whose anger (*cudru*) is always feared, he is on the other hand immobilized: he 'just sits', Fijians say—i.e., in the house, as a woman—'and things are brought to him'. In fact, the warrior-functions of the ruling chief devolve as soon as possible upon a youthful heir, a son whose roving, killing, and womanizing prowess is a cultural prescription. Or else, or in addition, the *gravitas* and *celeritas* powers of sovereignty are divided between senior and junior lines of chiefly descent. But it is not so much the organization of the diarchy to which I call attention. More than a duality, this determination of the sovereignty is an *ambiguity* that is never resolved. It becomes an historical destiny.

Romulus originally shares power with the Sabine king Tatius. And although he presumably kills Tatius, he himself disappears without issue, saving his own apotheosis, and is succeeded by the judicious Sabine, Numa. The disappearance and apotheosis already indicate certain of the contradictions. Romulus (by one version) is the victim of the sacrifice he himself offers at the altar of Mars. Mysteriously taken up to heaven at the moment of sacrifice, he becomes the god Quirinus, who is in fact the god not of kings but of the populace. We shall see in a moment that the original Polynesian chief is likewise his own sacrificial victim and the lost god of his people. In any event, Numa, Romulus's Sabine successor, weans Rome from war and founds the priesthood and the cult, means of civic order. Numa's reforms represent the more general popular interest which he, as member of the indigenous people, is able to incarnate. Thereafter, the Latin kingship will alternate between *celeritas* and *gravitas*, magical war kings and religious peace kings.

But this alternation between the opposed poles of State and Society is only one of the many other cycles of its type, set on various temporal dimensions. In a cycle of shorter duration, each year the reign of the sovereign Jupiter is inter-

Downloaded by [UQ Library] at 04:35 21 November 2014

rupted by a popular Saturnalia when all order is put in abeyance.[36] In the Saturnalia, the Lupercalia, their carnival successors and analogous annual festivals of traditional kingdoms elsewhere, a further permutation of the original structure appears. At this time of cosmic and social rebirth, *celeritas* and *gravitas* exchange places: the people become the party of disorder and the celebration of their comunity is a so-called ritual of rebellion.[37] A festival of the lower orders, it is the celebration, then, of the 'material bodily lower stratum', as Bakhtin calls it[38]—precisely what we call 'earthy'. Inversion combines with subversion, and even perversion, in a scene of general license, revelry and the interchange of social roles. Master and slave become equals, perhaps reverse their positions. The king is put to flight (*regifugium*) or ritually slain. In the anthropologically famous case of the Swazi *incwala* ceremonies, his capital is pillaged and he is branded with sacred insults as the enemy of the people. In parts of Europe and Polynesia, as well as Africa and the Near East, the reigning monarch is replaced by a mock king or superseded god of the people, who regains the queen of the land and presides over the revelries.[39]

At the Hawaiian annual ceremony of this type, the Makahiki ('Year'), the lost god *cum* legendary king Lono returns to take possession of the land. Circuiting the island to collect the offerings of the people, he leaves in his train scenes of mock battle and popular celebration. At the end of the god's progress, the Hawaiians perform a version of the Fijian installation ceremonies. The reigning king comes in from the sea to be met by attendants of the returned popular god hurling spears, one of which is caused to symbolically reach its

[36] And should we not notice the longer historical duration in which monarchy is superseded by republic, to be replaced in turn by a totalitarian imperialism—or even the repetition of the cycle in modern European history?

[37] Max Gluckman, *Order and Rebellion in Tribal Africa* (London 1963).

[38] Bakhtin, op. cit.

[39] Recall the remarkable tripartite comparison Frazer operates in the second edition of *The Golden Bough* between the Hebrew festival of Purim, the Babylonian festival of Sacaea and the passion of Christ. The juxtaposition of Matthew xxvii. 26-31 with Dio Chrysostom on the mock king of Sacaea dramatizes the point-for-point resemblance—minus the appropriation of the woman in the Christian version:

> Then released he [Pilate] Barabbas unto them: and when he had scourged Jesus, he delivered him to be crucified. Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the common hall, and gathered unto him the whole band of soldiers. And they stripped him and put on him a scarlet robe. And when they had plaited a crown of thorns, they put it upon his head and a reed in his right hand: and they bowed the knee before him, and took the reed, and smote him on the head, and after that they had mocked him, they took the robe off from him, and put his own raiment on him, and led him away to crucify him.

Compare this treatment of the 'King of the Jews' with the king of the Sacaea (by Frazer's rendering of Dio Chrysostom):

> they take one of the prisoners condemned to death and seat him upon the king's throne, and give him the king's raiment, and let him lord it and drink and run riot and use the king's concubines during these days, and no man prevents him from doing just what he likes. But afterwards they strip and scourge and crucify him—Frazer, *The Golden Bough* (London 1900), III, 187.

Frazer's insertion of the crucifixion in this context of renewal ceremonies came under considerable attack; in the third edition of *The Golden Bough* (1911-15) he professed the interpretation uncertain and relegated it to an appendix—cf Richard M. Dorson, *The British Folklorists* (Chicago 1968), 285-6. It is noteworthy for present purposes, however, that the Sacaea scene he once thought so like the crucifixion appears in the one-volume edition of 1922 in direct connexion with the Makahiki festival of Hawaii, as a ritual of the same type—Frazer, *The Golden Bough*, abridged (New York 1963 [1922]), 328-9.

Downloaded by [UQ Library] at 04:35 21 November 2014

mark.[40] The rite is called *kāli'i,* which could be glossed 'to strike the king' (*kā i ali'i*). Thus killed by the god, the king enters the temple to sacrifice to him and welcome him to 'the land of us-two'. But *kāli'i* also means 'to be kingly' or 'to act the king', and myth relates (legend of Kawelo) that the ritual of the spears is sign of the king's victory. The death of the king is thus the moment of his re-ascension, of his reconquest of the land and the incorporation of his divine predecessor, so in the end it is the god Lono who is sacrificed. Just as the provisional king of carnival must eventually suffer execution, the image of the returned god is soon after dismantled, bound and hidden away—a rite watched over by the ceremonial double (or human god) of the king, one of whose titles is 'Death is Near'. Thereupon, the real usurper, the constituted king, resumes his normal business of human sacrifice.[41]

Now it happens that the Hawaiian god with whom Captain Cook was identified was this lost god/king, Lono. It also happens that Cook was killed at a date closely corresponding to the traditional end of the Hawaiian Saturnalia. Cook came to Hawaii at the Makahiki time, and even circumnavigated Hawaii Island in the prescribed clockwise direction of Lono's procession, to land at the temple in Kealakekua Bay where Lono begins and ends his own circuit. Cook took his leave almost precisely on the day the Makahiki ceremonies definitely close, even promising the King he would return the next year. But on his way out to Kahiki, the *Resolution* sprung a mast, and Cook committed the ritual fault of returning unexpectedly and unintelligibly. The Great Navigator was now *hors cadre*, a dangerous condition as Leach and Douglas have taught us, and within a few days he was really dead—though the priests did afterwards ask when he would come back. It was a ritual murder. Upwards of a hundred Hawaiians, many of them chiefs, rushed upon the dying god to have a part in his end.[42] But then, a lot of kings of traditional states have met a similar fate. Hocart quotes a Fijian: 'few high chiefs were not killed'.[43]

> What infinite heart's ease
> Must kings neglect that private men enjoy! . . .
> What kind of god art thou, who suffer'st more
> Of mortal griefs than do thy worhsippers?
> (Shakespeare, *Henry V*)

Sovereignty never shakes the contradictions of its locus. For the Fijian ruler, all this might have been foreseen at the moment of his installation, when Society took some pains to protect itself against the State. Indeed, at the rituals of installation, the chief is invested with the 'rule' or 'authority' (*lewā*) over the

[40] Malo, op. cit., 150; K. Kamakau, 'Concerning ancient religious ceremonies', in A. Fornander, *Fornander Collection of Hawaiian Antiquities and Folklore* (Honolulu 1919), 42-5.
[41] Valerio Valeri, *Ai Kanaka: le chef Hawaiien et son sacrifice* (Chicago, in press).
[42] Cf Sahlins, *Historical Metaphors . . .*
[43] Hocart, *Lau Islands . . .*, 158.

Downloaded by [UQ Library] at 04:35 21 November 2014

land, but the land itself is not conveyed to him. Specifically the 'soil' (*qele*) is reserved to its 'native owners' (*nai taukei*). By traditional custom, the chiefly lineage is landless except what it has received in provisional title from the native owners, i.e., as marriage portion from indigenous groups or by request as sister's son.[44] The chief has no corner on the means of production, nor can he compel his native subjects to servile tasks, such as providing or cooking his daily food, which are obligations rather of his own household, his own line or of conquered people (*nona tamata ga, qali kaisi sara*). As for the social contract entailed in the installation ceremonies, Rokowaqa gives an excellent account:

> The Ratu or Tui or Rokotui [—alternative titles of the ruling chief—], his solemn duty is the rule [*lewā*] of the land. They [i.e., the native owners] give such to him so that they can rely upon him as the source of their life [*me vu ni bula vei ira*], as source of their prosperity [*me vu ni sautu*] and as source of their increase [*me vu ni tubu cake vei ira*].
> The thing that they give to him to rule [*lewā*] is *the name of the land* [*na yacana ni vanua*]; but as for the land itself [*ia na vanua*], the people they are members of the land [*lewe ni vanua*], and the soil and everything stands with [or remains] with them [*ia na lewa ni vanua, na qele kei na veika sa tu kina*][45] (my emphasis).

Yet even more dramatic conditions are imposed on the sovereignty at the time of the ruler's accession. Hocart observes that the Fijian chief is ritually reborn on this occasion, i.e., as a domestic god. If so, someone must have killed him as a dangerous outsider.

He is indeed killed by the indigenous people at the very moment of his consecration, by the offering of kava that conveys the land to his authority (*lewā*). Grown from the leprous body of a sacrificed child of the native people, the kava the chief drinks poisons him. Versions of the Tongan and Rotuman myths of the origin of kava, widely related in eastern Fiji, are here ritually recapitulated.[46] Sacred product of the people's agriculture, the installation kava is

[44] Cf Hocart, op. cit., 97, 98; idem, *Caste* (London 1950), 88; idem, 'The Heart of Fiji', 441, MS, Wellington, Alexander Turnbull Library; 'Notes of Proceedings of a Native Council, Held at Mualevu, on the Island of Vanuabalavu, in the Months of November, December, 1880 and January 1881', *Proceedings of the Native Council of Chiefs, Sept. 1875—26 August 1960*, 55, mf, Suva, Central Archives of Fiji and the Western Pacific High Commission.

[45] Rokowaqa, op. cit., 78 (my emphasis).

[46] Tongan myths of kava are extensively analysed by Elizabeth Bott ('Psychoanalysis and ceremony' and 'A rejoinder to Edmund Leach', in J. S. La Fontaine(ed.), *The Interpretation of Ritual* (London 1972), 205-38, 277-82) and Edmund Leach ('The structure of symbolism' and 'Appendix', in La Fontaine, op. cit.); on Rotuma see C. M. Churchward, 'Rotuman legends', *Oceania*, IX (1938-39), 465f; John Gardiner, 'The natives of Rotuma', *Journal of the Anthropological Institute*, XXXVII (1898), 515f. The version recorded by Hocart for Lau is quite similar to the Tongan legends, as might be expected. There is in Hocart's unpublished writings a statement, somewhat puzzling however, that the child of the land from whose body kava grew was a young man rather than a daughter of the people as in Tonga (transformation paralleled by the presence of male kava-servers in Fiji, female in Tonga). Hocart's field notes of the myth (Fijian field notes, Wellington, Alexander Turnbull Library, 3220-2) leave the sex unspecified, the reference being merely to a child (*luve*) of a couple who lived in the interior bush (*lekutu*). But the original manuscript of his Lau ethnography, titled 'Windward Islands of Fiji', identifies this child as a son (A. M. Hocart, 'The Windward Islands of Fiji', MS, Wellington, Alexander Turnbull Library). In the Cakaudrove-Natewa myth reproduced in Hocart's *Northern States*, 127, the victim and source of kava is not only male, but a young chief of the

Downloaded by [UQ Library] at 04:35 21 November 2014

brought forth in Lau by a representative of the native owners (*mataqali* Taqalevu), who proceeds to separate the main root in no ordinary way but by the violent thrusts of a sharp implement (probably, in the old time, a spear). Thus killed, the root (child of the land) is then passed to young men (warriors) of royal descent who, under the direction of a priest of the land, prepare and serve the ruler's cup. (Rokowaqa, writing of Bauan custom, says the *ta yaqona* or cupbearer on this occasion should be a *vasu i taukei e loma ni koro*, 'sister's son of the native owners in the centre of the village'.)[47] Traditionally, remark, the kava root was chewed to make the infusion: the sacrificed child of the people is cannibalized by the young chiefs. The water of the kava, however, has a different symbolic provenance. The classic Cakaudrove kava chant, performed at the Lau installation rites, refers to it as sacred rain water from the heavens.[48] This male and chiefly water (semen) mixes with the product of the land (female) in the womb of a kava bowl whose feet are called 'breasts' (*sucu*), and from the front of which, tied to the upper part of an inverted triangle, a sacred cord stretches out toward the chief. The cord is decorated with small white cowries, not only a sign of chieftainship but by name, *buli leka*, a continuation of the metaphor of birth—*buli*, 'to form', refers in Fijian procreation theory to the conceptual action of the male in the body of the woman.

The sacrificed child of the people will thus give birth to the chief. But only after the chief, ferocious outside cannibal who consumes the cannibalized victim, has himself been sacrificed by it. For when the ruler drinks the sacred offering, he is in the state of intoxication Fijians call 'dead from' (*mateni*) or 'dead from kava' (*mate ni yaqona*), to recover from which is explicitly 'to live' (*bula*).[49] This accounts for the second cup the chief is alone accorded, the cup of

land (status of Natewa as *bati* relative to the Cakaudrove kingdom) at the zenith of his manhood. The stranger-king is thus poisoned by the original chief of the people. I am inclined to believe that this transformation of the Tonga-Rotuma myths is authentically Fijian, but the evidence is not conclusive, since the Cakaudrove-Natewa story bears suspicious traces of the passion of Christ. As briefly described below (in the present text), the full interpretation of the myth requires consideration of the ritual of kava-serving, with which the identification of the kava *cum* child of the land as original (male) chief would be consistent. For other eastern Fijian variants of the kava myth—which, however, do not definitely resolve this question—see Mary Wallis, *Life in Feejee, or, Five Years among the Cannibals* (Ridgewood 1967 [1851]), 347-8; Waterhouse, op. cit., 340; Hocart, *The Northern States* . . ., 99.

The displacement of the protagonists' homeland—if not also the scene of the events—to the east, usually Tonga, in the Fijian myths, is likewise consistent with Fijian political theory. It seems no simple case of myth (or kava) diffusion, since strong motivation can be found in the Fijian system for the association between a foreign chiefship and the origin of kava-drinking.

[47] Rokowaqa, op. cit., 40.

[48] Hocart, *Lau Islands* . . ., 64-5.

[49] There is further motivation of the same in the kava taken immediately after the chief's by the herald (*matanivanua*), a representative of the land people. This drinking is 'to kick' (*rabe*) the chief's kava. *Raberabe*, the same duplicated, means 'a sickness, the result of kicking accidentally against a *drau-ni-kau*' (A. Capell, *A New Fijian Dictionary* (4th ed., Suva 1973), 168). As in the origin myth, where the herald tastes the kava first to see if it is poison, this land chieftain is able to take the effects on himself: *drau-ni-kau* is the common name for 'sorcery', and sorcery is a notorious power of land people. For kava as poison in Tonga, see Bott, op. cit.

Downloaded by [UQ Library] at 04:35 21 November 2014

fresh water.[50] The god is immediately revived, brought again to life—in a transformed state.

Having moved from the sea to the land, the foreign to the indigenous, the chief is now encompassed by the people. True, the axis of his divinity rotates from the earthly plane to a position above: gifts of mats brought by people of the land make up his elevated seat upon the ceremonial ground.[51] But at the same time, he has been domesticated and humanized, brought from the natural periphery of society to its centre. This metamorphosis is the essential power of woman: transformation by encompassment of a natural force, at once creative and destructive, into cultural substance. Subsequent rites of the installation will carry through the metaphor of the chief's birth and initiation, at all stages under the ceremonial aegis of the native people. Henceforth, the chief and his lineage will be 'people of the centre of the village' (*kai lomanikoro*). Here the ruler 'just sits'. Marked off by his sacred tabus—which as Freud (following Frazer) observed,[52] function as much to protect the people against the Polynesian chief as vice versa—he is condemned to a quasi-isolation.

So do *celeritas* and *gravitas* change places as the structure unfolds. If the chief is brought to the centre of the society, where he 'just sits' in all his state, the ancient inhabitants become his war 'dogs' (*koli*, the metaphor is known in Fiji). They are his *bati*, term that signifies at once the 'border' and the 'warrior'. It also means the 'tooth (that bites the cannibal victim)'. For instead of eating the people, the chief must now send for human sacrifices from outside and share them with the people. At the conclusion of the Bau investiture, the Vunivalu rewards the indigenous chieftain who installed him with the gift of a cannibal victim.[53] Taken in war from beyond the land (*vanua*), in the privileged instances from notorious warriors and chiefs of rebellious subjects or traditional enemies, such victims are of the nature of the chief himself—terrible outside gods. The chief, poisoned and reborn as a domestic god, must now give feast to the people *on bodies of his own kind*. Having consecrated the victims in raw form, the chief distributes a certain portion of the cooked bodies to the native owners, particularly to priests and other chieftains of indigenous lineages, thus sharing with them the divine benefits. This helps explain certain 19th century reports of the unusual treatment accorded to the most honoured or hated enemies, in-

[50] A standard feature of the origin myth of kava is that two plants grew from the dead body of the land child: the kava root (apparently from the head) and a stalk of sugar cane (apparently from the genitals). A rat was seen to nibble the kava, which caused it to reel crazily, upon which it chewed the sugar cane and was able to recover. The juice of the sugar cane is its 'water' (*wai*).

[51] At Cakaudrove, the mats of the chief's sitting-place are laid down by members of a true land group (*vanua sara*). Hocart, *The Northern States* . . ., 93-4.

[52] Sigmund Freud, *Totem and Taboo* (New York n.d.).

[53] Hocart, *Lau Islands* . . ., 70. The Levuka people who install the Vunivalu of Bau (as Tui Levuka) are 'true sea people'. But in the installation, they play the role of the indigenous 'land' side, as they are indeed the original occupants or owners (*i taukei*) of Bau Island—cf Tippett, op.cit., 91f.

Downloaded by [UQ Library] at 04:35 21 November 2014

cluding parodies of chiefly kava or installation ceremonies.[54] Hence also the beautiful chant recorded by the English missionary Thomas Williams, wherein the corpse is made to say, as he is dragged to the place of sacrifice by triumphant warriors and mocking women,

Yari au malua,	Drag me gently,
Yari au malua,	Drag me gently,
Koi au na saro ni nomu vanua.	I am the champion of your land.[55]

Cooked men have been given by the ruling chief in return for raw women of the land.[56] Lévi-Strauss did not invent these exchange equivalencies; Fijians themselves so represent them.[57] For the chief had already been obliged to make the same transaction with his own person. At the final rites of the Lauan installation, after certain ceremonies of purification, the ruler is once more escorted along a path of barkcloth. But this time by warriors of the most distant and indigenous village of the island, who are singing the traditional chant of victory. Is it the victory of the newly-crowned king? The song these warriors sing as the chief passes between their lines is the same they chant over the body of a cannibal victim.

I conclude by taking notice of a final structural permutation. We have seen that the conjunction of chief and people, sea and land, generates a synthetic term, the sovereign power: itself male and female, a combination of *celeritas* and *gravitas*. This permutation gives the system a vertical dimension, the chief above as well as within, but it also motivates its horizontal expansion to include a necessary third term. The fully constituted global structure is a tripartite pyramidal scheme, composed of the same three functions Dumézil determines for Indo-European civilizations, if not exactly in the same arrangement. The totality also develops by the dialectic process Dumézil sometimes adopts to describe it.[58]

The Fijian ruling chief, once transformed into a local god, inhibits his cannibalistic disposition with respect to the native owners, instead procuring victims from the outside whose distribution is reward for the people's offerings to

Downloaded by [UQ Library] at 04:35 21 November 2014

[54] E.g. W. Endicott, *Wrecked among Cannibals in the Fijis* (Salem 1923), 59-60; William Diapea, *Cannibal Jack: The True Autobiography of the White Man in the South Seas* (London 1928), 19-20; Fergus Clunie, *Fijian Weapons and Warfare* (Suva 1977).

[55] Thomas Williams and James Calvert, *Fiji and the Fijians*, 2 vols. (New York 1859), 163. Lyth recorded another chant referring to the cannibal victim in the same vein: *Sa bobo na matana* The eyes are closed, / *Sa yadrana no lomana* The mind is awake. / *Sa vei ko qāqā?* Where is the hero? / *Sa laki yara*. Gone to be dragged (to the oven). / *Sa vei ko datavu?* Where is the coward? *Sa laki tukutuku*. Gone to tell the news.
R. B. Lyth, 'Reminiscences', MS, Sydney, Mitchell Library (B548), p. 326.

[56] 'Cooked men' is here used discritically. Dead male enemies constitute the privileged as well as unmarked sense of *bakola*, 'cannibal victim'. They also appear to have been exclusively destined for sacrifice, on the Polynesian sacrificial principles of first things and identity of nature between the offering and the god. Historical accounts make clear, however, that women and children were also eaten, at least in the 19th century.

[57] Hocart, *Lau Islands* . . ., 129.

[58] Dumézil, *Mitra-Varuna*, 76.

him—raw women and the raw first-things of agriculture. The displacement of strife and cannibalism to an extramural field of Mars calls forth a third category, analogous to the third Roman tribe of militant Etruscans. In Fiji, these people are likewise 'foreign' by opposition to the 'land' (*vanua*), now composed of chief and people, with whom however the foreigners are united in a 'government' (*matanitu*) of higher order. The foreign warriors are of two general classes: allied villages or lands beyond the chiefdom borders (*bati* [*balavu*]), who retain a certain autonomy; and the more fully integrated 'sea people proper' (*kai wai dina*) living within the ruling chief's own land. True sea people are the most prominent assassins; they are the notorious 'dangerous men' (*tamata rerevaki*). The Levuka people of Lau, the Butoni of Koro and Cakaudrove and the Lasakau fishers of Bau are famous examples—the last being fishers of turtle by ceremonial occupation, but fishers of men when the chief has need for human sacrifices.[59] Always of outside origin and condition, considered 'different people' (*kai tani*) even when long established within the chiefdom, such warriors are attached to the paramount's service by founding gift of a royal daughter. As the ruling chief is initially sacred nephew to the native cultivators, so his foreign assassins are in origin sacred nephew to him.[60]

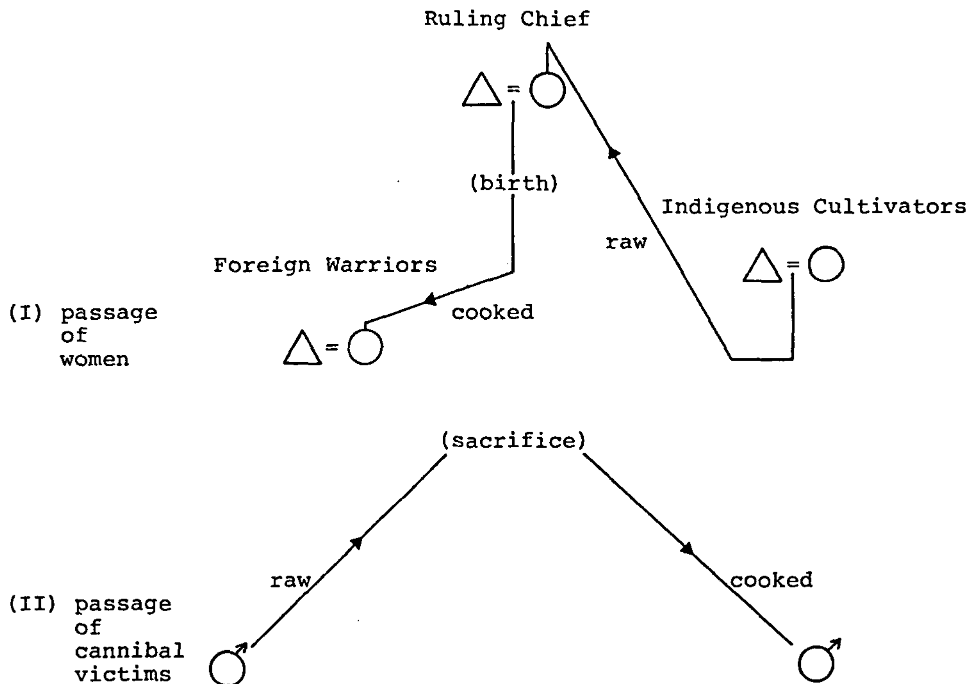
The whole thus makes up an elaborate cycle of the exchange of raw women for cooked men, marked at certain points however by transformations which preserve the distinctions between categories and their hierarchical relationship. For at the birth rituals of the royal child, both the mother—the raw woman the chief had obtained from the native people—and her offspring are symbolically cooked.[61] If this enculturates them, incorporates them from the natural-

[59] *Dau ni ika, dau ni tamata* ('fishers of fish, fishers of men'): the phrasing is again Fijian (cf Hocart, *The Northern States . . .*, 120-1).

[60] I specifically refer to these initial transactions of marriage as 'founding relations' in order to avoid the implication that the flow of women continues empirically in the same direction, in the way of an elementary system of asymetric marriage (MBD marriage). The founding marriages are charters of the relationships between the triad of basic categories (indigenous land people, chiefs and foreign warriors or fishers). So when Hocart asked the people of Wailevu, for example, if they ever married women from a certain line of chiefs, they remarked, 'He is seeking confirmation of the border [*bati*, land ally] relationship [*i vakadinadina ni bati*—Hocart, 'The Heart of Fiji', MS, Wellington, Alexander Turnbull Library. But marriages in this direction may or may not be repeated regularly, depending on the political situation. On the other hand, once established the rights and obligations of the relationship can be activated in another modality, i.e. through transactions in whale teeth especially. I should also note that the present discussion is confined to the essentials of the chiefdom formation, its basic categories. Within any of the three mentioned, especially the native owners, there is a further and elaborate division of statuses (*i tutu*) and functions (*tavi*), discussion of which would carry us beyond the objectives of this paper.

[61] The 'cooking' of the royal child—and also of the mother—is my interpretation of certain episodes of eastern Fijian birth rites pertaining to noble offspring. Especially notable is the *tavu deke*—'roasting small fry' [?]—of Bau and the analogous ceremony reported for southern Lau: Ratu Deve Toganivalu, 'A History of Bau', MS, transcript, Suva, National Archives of Fiji, F62/247; Thompson, op. cit., 84-5. The *tavu deke* is a feast marking an unusual ritual purification of the child. On the second or fourth day of life, the royal infant is held in the steam issuing from a bowl of water that had been heated with fired stones. Essentially that is the way food or bodies get cooked in an underground oven. Further, Raymond Jarré ('Marriage et naissance chex les Fidjiens de Kandavu', *Journal de la Société des Océanistes*, II:2 (1946), 79-92), records of Kadavu birth ceremonies that after a summary bath—local analogue of the *tavu deke*—the child is annointed with oil perfumed by sandalwood and *malawaci* (*Streblus anthropophagorum*). *Malawaci*, as the Latin name suggests, is a plant closely associated with cannibalism: its leaves are used to wrap the body for baking, then are

Downloaded by [UQ Library] at 04:35 21 November 2014



RAW WOMEN/COOKED MEN: FOUNDING RELATIONS OF THE *MATANITU* ('GOVERNMENT').

Downloaded by [UQ Library] at 04:35 21 November 2014

spiritual world, it also means that the daughter passed on by the chief to his foreign killers is reduced to human dimensions. In exchange, the foreign warriors bring the chief raw bodies; or, if they fail to fill the ceremonial quotas, they must seek victims from their own kinsmen (in other communities), on pain of making up the deficiency with their own persons. The victims are also identified with the chief as sacrifier; but again, these offerings are cooked and reduced in spiritual value before they are shared with the indigenous cultivators—whose gift of a raw woman had initiated the entire cycle (see Figure). The transformations between raw and cooked, natural and cultural, thus sustain the hierarchical as well as the intermediate position of the chief: above and between his land people and his sea people, his cultivators and his fishers (or sailors), his domestic subjects and his foreign allies, his internal guardians and his external assassins.

More: the exchange of raw women against cooked men is paradigmatic of the entire chiefdom economy. Fijians make an extensive classification of material things parallel to the basic dualism of native land people and im-

eaten along with it (Capell, op. cit., 133). Besides all this, a smouldering fire is kept burning near the mother and infant for 10 days in the rear, sacred section of the house of confinement, and the doors of the house are shut. The atmosphere is described by Toganivalu as excessively warm.

migrant sea people. Plant food, flesh food, liquids, utensils, domestic furnishings and personal ornaments are likewise differentiated into land things and sea things: complementary products whose combination is indispensable to a complete cultural existence.[62] The same, then, can be said of the ruling chief who, at once or alternately land and sea himself, functions as supreme mediator of the material interchange and great generator of the cultural totality. An immigrant by origin, he is a sea person relative to the people of the land, hence purveyor of sea and foreign goods in exchange for indigenous land products. On the other hand, relative to his immigrant assassins, the 'true sea people', the chief represents the 'land' (*vanua*), and transfers to his sea allies the agricultural and craft products of the native owners. In combination with the alternative land/sea status of the sovereign, a simple rule guarantees this continuous reduction of the triadic scheme to binary exchange: that no one can consume the special products of his own labour (his *salu*) in the presence of members of the opposite category. The rule, moreover, becomes general because the ruling chief is virtual in the transactions between any two groups of the polity even if he is not actually present (as giver and receiver), since the relationship between the parties is transitively determined by their respective relationships to the chief.

All this means that the total scheme, in its true mode of movement, is more than any given and static set of contrasts. Here I make my general point about theoretical practice. A structural analysis would not be worthy of the name were it content with some extended table of parallel binary oppositions, or even with the proportions of the classic A:B::C:D form derived from such a table. There is a great ethnographic industry in these Saussurean proportions. Yet consider the Fijian proposition, men:women::culture:nature::chiefs:people. The statement is valid, but only as a simplified reduction or particular moment of the global structure, taken from a specific local context or perspective. It cannot be a sufficient description of the structure, since it is always falsifiable by similar proportions, also valid but propounded from a different vantage point, in which all the categories change their signs. So it is likewise true for Fiji that men:women::nature:culture::people:chiefs. I believed that such local reversals of value are general conditions of structure, not sufficiently taken into account for example in popular studies of the status of women.[63]

It is also commonly concluded that many of the key cultural categories are 'ambiguous', 'contradictory' or 'logically unstable'. The conclusion leads to the further observation that the categories can be disambiguated by referring them

[62] Rokowaqa, op. cit., 37-9.

[63] 'In Fiji two contradictory statements are not necessarily inconsistent. They appear to us contradictory, because we do not understand the shades of meaning, and because we do not know, without much experience, the point of view from which each is made'. Hocart, *The Northern States*, 61.

Downloaded by [UQ Library] at 04:35 21 November 2014

to different contexts. Yet such conceptions of structure, i.e., as a set of contextualized propositions laid out seriatim, will neither exhaust the logic nor specify it. All these context-bound formulations are merely contingent representations of the cultural scheme: provisional cross-sections of it, taken from some interested standpoint (whether of observer or participant). The logic of the whole lies in the generative development of the categories, by which alone may be motivated all static and partial expressions of it. Only by the internal diachrony of structure can we comprehend 'ambiguity' in such logical forms as synthesis, or the contextual determination of values as a determinate valorization of contexts. Such is the cultural life of the elementary forms.

PACIFIC HISTORY CONFERENCE, 1982

The next Pacific History Association Conference will be combined with that of the Australian Historical Association and will be held from 26-28 August 1982 at the University of New South Wales, Sydney. Dr Norman Douglas of the Department of General Studies at that university is the PHA conference organiser. Those interested in attending should inform him as soon as possible of accommodation needs and topics of papers. The suggested themes for the conference are 'Decline and development' and 'The reassessment of historical orthodoxy'. General inquiries and applications for membership of the PHA should be directed to the secretary, Robert Langdon, Pacific Manuscripts Bureau, Australian National University, Canberra.

Downloaded by [UQ Library] at 04:35 21 November 2014