THE CRISIS OF OBJECTIVITY IN ANTHROPOLOGY:

a consideration through romanticism and surrealism

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ABSTRACT

One of the central concerns in recent anthropological theory has been the status of objectivity. In the influential writing of James Clifford, it is argued that anthropology needs to recognise that it can only establish 'partial truths' and that holistic and integrated disciplinary approaches are untenable. The re–evaluation of the subjective brings any concept of objectivity into question. Clifford's work has had such an influence that it suggests a generalised crisis is perceived in relation to how anthropological conceptions of objectivity have been established. The thesis will consider this question by looking back to aspects of the romantic tradition. It will especially consider surrealism in anthropological perspective and will question the way in which Clifford has founded his subjectivism in his understanding of surrealism. It will be argued that surrealism sought its own standard of objectivity which issued out of romanticism and needs to be considered in such historical perspective. It will be further argued that romantic concepts of objectivity have been systematically distorted by positivism, something which has had important consequences for the history of anthropology. This was particularly so in that romanticism provided anthropology with a methodological tool, in the concept of empathy, against which positivist and empiricist inductive methodologies based on intensive fieldwork have reacted. This entails a re–consideration of the nature of anthropological evidence and its effects, particularly in the way we construct images of other people. The aim will be to show that it is only through an understanding of the process of reciprocity that takes account not only of the nature of otherness but also our notions of the familiar that a genuine anthropological objectivity can be established. It will be argued that the current idea of a reflexive anthropology is inadequate to engage with all the implications of such an approach.

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The way in which the anthropological discipline has developed has often been presented by anthropologists themselves retrospectively, with the present being used as the touchstone from which to present the past as a linear process that legitimates the current self-perception of the discipline. A classic example of such partial readings of history is Adam Kuper's *Anthropology and Anthropologists*, a work that represented at the time of its publication, very much a view of anthropological history that of current thinking.

In the past few years such a simple view of the past has been questioned by much thoughtful

work on the constitution of anthropology as a discipline, especially by the admirably scholarly work of George Stocking, which has problematised the issues involved in several ways.

One of the issues Stocking has raised relates to the importance of Romanticism as anthropology was beginning to take form at the turn of the nineteenth century. Romanticism had provided the conceptual basis for the new intellectual disciplines of linguistics and folklore studies and had considerable influence on the development of anthropology. In particular, it was within the framework of German romanticism that anthropology developed the first methodological tool specific to the discipline in the concept of empathy.

As Romanticism degenerated, particularly in its scientific endeavours, during the nineteenth century, a counter philosophy, positivism, established itself. Romantic methodology was brought into disrepute and empathy was rejected as a concept in favour of a methodology that favoured the careful separation of subject and object and asserted the methodology established by Newtonian natural science as the only one legitimate for the human sciences.

Anthropology developed against this positivist background and, in order to establish its own status as a science, needed to divest itself of its romantic roots. To this end it sought methodological means that would fully accord with positivist strictures. In this way it denied part of its own tradition and looked towards the idea of encounters with other peoples as its disciplinary rationale. A 'science of man' may have been how it defined itself, but it soon became reductive of this definition, effectively becoming a 'science of other peoples'. Within these terms it established an approach based upon extensive fieldwork among 'other people' in order to collect data from personal experience that would provide the empirical framework for its study of mankind.

In this first chapter, these questions are re-examined within the perspective of Romanticism. It is argued that anthropology did not divest itself of Romanticist concerns as cleanly as it might have wished and that in denying romantic approaches it was denying potentially fruitful avenues of research. It has furthermore given its critics a stick with which to beat it, since in tying itself so firmly to positivist concerns it has also tied itself to ideological difficulties relating to the way in which other people are perceived in the Western world, for, within the terms of positivist methodology, the possibility of reciprocity and interchange of ideas with the object of its study is severely circumscribed. Indeed, positivist methodology becomes impossible if the object of investigation answers back. The 'crisis of objectivity' this implies will be the central concern of the thesis.

Chapter Two: the context of surrealism

The idea of a 'crisis of the object' has long been a central concern of surrealism, defined as such during the early thirties.

Unlike anthropology, surrealism saw itself as being directly descended from romanticism; in open revolt against the postulates of realism, surrealism also sought to bring positivism into question. Its trajectory has therefore followed a diametrically different course to that of the discipline of anthropology, yet its concerns are often very much anthropological in nature.

The thesis will thus take a particular focus on surrealism as a means to consider different approaches to anthropological questions from those formulated within the discipline itself. To do so it is necessary to examine the framework of surrealism itself, in order to gain a clear insight into what distinguishes it from anthropology. This chapter will therefore cast a sociological eye over the context of surrealism to give the necessary background to the concerns of subsequent chapters.

Chapter Three: Surrealism and anthropology

This chapter will draw direct links between surrealism and anthropology. It will look briefly at the the context of the French anthropological tradition to distinguish it from the development of the Anglo/American anthropological tradition. In turn, the distinction between French anthropology and French surrealism will be examined. It will then consider the question of methodological approaches within surrealism and especially its perception of the 'crisis of the object'. This will lead into a consideration of surrealism and travel with particular reference to as a negation of ordinary experience. Again, the intent will be to draw a distinction between surrealist and anthropological approaches and will consider the question of whether a surrealist approach to ethnography, as advocated by James Clifford, has any validity.

Chapter Four: Reality, Imagination and the Object

Leading on from the argument developed regarding surrealism and travel, this chapter will consider the idea of the journey in different aspects: as a journey of the individual through life; as travel to different cultures; and as travel within one's own psyche. This will lead to a discussion of the nature of reality and the imagination. The discussion will take its starting point from surrealist conceptions of the imagination and its ontological status. The central issue to be discussed will be that of the way in which imagination, in objectifying itself, becomes 'real'. This process of concretisation through objectification is most readily apparent in language and a discussion will follow in which the surrealist conception of language is considered in relation to romanticism and specifically the distinction drawn between symbol and allegory. This will be related to romantic ideas of empathy.

Chapter Five: Representation in post-modernism

This chapter will look at the nature of the post-modernist critique. It will especially consider Said's *Orientalism* and develop an argument connecting the idealist and subjectivist concerns in Said's work with those generally found in post-modernism, exemplified by Baudrillard, Fabian and Clifford. The argument developed will be that in abandoning objective criteria, post-modernist criticism denies any form of reciprocity with the object. It will be argued that it is not the process of objectification itself that is at fault, as post-modernist criticism generally asserts, but the methodological framework within which such objectification takes place. Post-modernist criticism is thus mis-directed: in confusing essence with appearance it thereby misunderstands the nature of the object. The valorisation of the subject that post-modernism proposes tends in the process to vulgarise subject and object relations and to deny the reality of the object as object and to seek to devolve the status of subject to all relationships. It will be argued that the consequence of such an endeavour is to mystify social relations in a way that causes the object not to be transformed into subject but rather to be appropriated by the subject. It is only by a consideration of the nature of reciprocity that such issues can be brought into focus.

Chapter Six: The Voice of the Other

To consider the nature of reciprocity, we need first to look at what otherness means to be other. This chapter will look at aspects of Latin American reality to try to locate elements of reciprocity. It will consider Latin American literature as a means by which Latin American anthropologists have addressed anthropological themes outside the institutional context of anthropology. It will be argued that what we see in Latin America is a need to relate to anthropological themes in a way that cannot be encompassed within the traditional confines of the anthropological discipline (which has been defined by Europe). They have thus been displaced to the realm of literature. To discover the basis of a genuine anthropological reciprocity within the Latin American context, therefore, it is necessary to engage with the way in which such themes have been treated in literature.

In a similar way, the question of negritude will be considered as a sort of counter-Orientalism, in which the exotic image constructed by Europeans is transposed by the people exoticised by such images to provide a radical critique of their own relation *vis-à-vis* the European. It will be argued that even so, a movement like negritude remains trapped by European norms from which it cannot escape simply by means of such reversal. This question will be taken up by looking in detail at the relation of Martinique and Haiti in their social, historical, political and cultural links with Europe.

Chapter Seven: Surrealism and the Other

In this chapter we will look at surrealism and its relation with the other. The surrealists saw themselves as being the 'other' within European culture and sought to establish their own tradition, based in great part on a strong anti-colonialism. The extent to which surrealism directed its efforts against European society made it attractive to intellectuals and artists in the 'Third World'. The international spread of surrealism will here be considered to examine the reciprocal elements involved in a specific relationship. To this end the way surrealism unfolded respectively in Japan, Egypt, Mexico, Martinique and Haiti will be separately considered. This will lead into a discussion of the nature of the constitution of otherness when the question of reciprocity is taken into account.

Chapter Eight: Selfhood, objectification and European consciousness

The final chapter will examine the nature of the European 'self' against which notions of the other are established. It will look at the constituents of the idea of 'European consciousness' in historical and phenomenological perspective. It will especially consider the way in which the idea of the self was constructed in Europe and contrast this with that of 'other cultures'. From this angle surrealist ideas of identity are examined and the notion of the primitive and what it means in contemporary discourse will be questioned. This will be set in the perspective of objectification to argue that neither traditional positivist approaches, nor those made fashionable by reflexive anthropology are adequate to deal with all the factors involved in the reciprocal relation between ourselves and the 'other'.

INTRODUCTION

1.

The question of representation has become a central theme in recent anthropological debate and has been given particular stimulus by the publication of the volume *Writing Culture*.[1] Grounded in the vogue for post-structuralist textual criticism, the direction that the debate has taken has often followed a contentious, and occasionally acrimonious, course.[2]

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[1] James Clifford and George E.Marcus, (1986) *Writing Culture: the poetics and politics of ethnography*, Berkeley: University of California Press.

[2] For an example of this see the article by Steven Sangren, 'Rhetoric and the Authority of Ethnography: "Postmodernism" and the Social Reproduction of Texts' with comments, *Current Anthropology* Vol 29, no 1, June 1988, pp. 405/437.

This debate involves several strands of vital importance in the constitution of the anthropological discipline, but the issue centrally at stake appears to revolve around the nature of the object of study in anthropological discourse. The extent of this 'crisis of the object' manifests itself today around questions of reflexivity and subjectivist positioning that denies the privileged status of the objectivity that anthropology, when it sought to establish itself as a science along positivist lines, proclaimed as its aim.

2.

Anthropology today continues to be defined - if only by want of an alternative definition and by the etymology of the word - as 'the science of man', even though it long ago definitively turned its back on that branch of philosophy that in the eighteenth century was called 'anthropology' and which concerned the study of what constituted the human being as an entity. Instead, as it has taken form through the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, anthropology in its various branches (physical, social, cultural) has taken as its subject matter people who are perceived as being in some way 'other' from 'us'. This category of otherness may be problematic, and the 'other' may have been conceptualised in different ways in anthropological discourse, but until recently the issues raised by this problematic had not been subject to systematic debate.

It once seemed likely that anthropology would become the study of 'primitive' peoples, but this has now become untenable for a number of reasons connected primarily with the difficulty of defining what 'primitive' actually means and, even if definable, how it can be studied. The loci of study have thereby shifted. First, to deal with peoples who, whilst still being 'exotic' in the eyes of most Europeans, could certainly not be regarded as 'primitive'. With time, the study of people closer to 'home' has become more acceptable, to the extent that anthropological studies of people who live in the anthropologist's own society are by no means uncommon. Almost invariably, however, such studies are concerned with a group of people marginalised or in some way cut off from the actual context of the anthropologist's own way of life. This has occurred to such an extent that one wonders whether the methodological separation of self and other is not something that is inherent to the anthropological discipline itself. This is a philosophical question of some complexity - indelibly connected with the nature of the subject - that we shall consider in the course of the thesis. Such separation of self and other raises, however, some other questions relating to the nature of the relationship that are deeply troubling to anthropologists. In what remains perhaps the most devastating of the accounts of disillusioned anthropologists, Edmund Carpenter's *Oh What a Blow that Phantom Gave Me!*, the author has gone so far as to see anthropology as irrevocably trapped within a paradigm which does not so much study the object as inevitably destroy it in the very process by which it creates it. The effect is to establish anthropology almost as the Golem which wreaks havoc no matter what the intentions of the person who animates it.

For these and other reasons, the very concept of a 'science of man' is today open to question. Some anthropologists have even tried to deny the idea of anthropology as a science (even a human science) at all. A recent debate[3] has directly discussed the question of whether anthropology is a science or an art. Yet is an 'art' of other people any more satisfactory than a 'science'? And what are the objective criteria to discuss a concept such an 'art'? The assumption in this thesis will be that anthropology ought to assert its status as science, and that it is mystificatory to seek to subsume it under the rubric of 'art'. At the same time, however, the category of 'science' should not be taken for granted, but should be recognised as being problematic. As such, particular ideological configurations of what constitutes 'science' should above all be held up to scrutiny.

When anthropology established itself as a discipline during the latter part of the nineteenth century, the dominant intellectual framework was that of positivism, which had established itself during the nineteenth century in reaction to romanticism. Although in some ways anthropology was a reaction against the more mechanical aspects of positivism, it did not question positivist methodological assumptions and suppressed, more or less systematically, anything that might have associated it with romanticism, even though romanticist concerns were central to its subject matter. It will therefore be an aim of this thesis to re-evaluate the romantic contribution to anthropology and to question the way in which positivist models of natural or human science have imposed themselves into the frame of the anthropological project.

3.

The element of positivism that has been most important for the history of anthropology is the idea of the separation of observer from the thing observed. Positivist science seeks to establish the truth of the object of study independent of the subjective concerns of the observer and bases its methodology on the assumption that such a separation is possible. The possibility of attaining such an aim has been discredited by several branches of the intellectual disciplines, most notably, perhaps by quantum physics and gestalt psychology. Yet if such findings have served to undermine the foundations of a positivist scientific epistemology, they have not always filtered down to affect the way in which researchers have approached their material. This division between subject and object has remained a persistent criterion of judgement for the legitimation of knowledge in the sciences, to the extent of becoming almost a myth of contemporary society.[4] The difficulty is that theoretical attempts to engage with such problems can often lead to an even greater confusion, frequently leading in the

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[3] see Michael Carrithers, 'Is Anthropology art or Science' and comments *Current Anthropology* Vol 31, no 3, June 1990, pp. 263/282.

[4] One of the many ironies of this situation is that in the natural sciences theoretical advances since Einstein have meant that the Newtonian principles upon which positivism based its understanding of the natural sciences have been almost completely discarded.

opposite direction and resulting in a subjectivism whose methodological basis is even more dubious than that of positivistic objectivism.

Although this question has always been at the forefront of anthropological theory, and despite the fact that the nature of anthropology makes positivist assumptions especially problematic, particularly from a moral point of view, the positivist framework as such has rarely, until recently, been questioned. Whether modelled upon natural science models or on those appropriate to the humanities, anthropology has always tended to legitimate its research in terms of its 'objectivity'.

In specifically anthropological terms, Jacques Maquet has written that anthropology results from "an activity in which a subject thinks about an object distinct from it and says something about the object. The object is supposed to have an existence independent of the subject (i.e. to be 'real') and what is said of it is supposed to correspond to the object (i.e. not to be projected onto it by the subject). The aim of the knowledge-seeking activity - as opposed, for instance, to its artistic or ethical activities - is objectivity, that is to say, conformity with the object."[5] As Maquet makes plain, however, quite apart from the perceptual difficulties involved, such an aim is hardly compatible with the nature of anthropology as an ethical discipline. Inevitably the ethnographic encounter is subjective, or has subjective elements: the object of study always responds to and acts in the knowledge of being studied. In such a situation, also, emotional and affective ties are almost inevitably established that affect such supposed 'objectivity'.

It is against such a background that in recent years an anthropologist like Dan Sperber can challenge the idea that anthropology is fundamentally different from, for instance, literature: "Even though they make lesser use of the imagination and a greater one of experience, ethnographers achieve relevance in the manner of novelists".[6] Although Sperber would agree that anthropology is a discipline with a quite different epistemological basis from literature, he has insisted that it cannot be understood except as "an interpretive discourse. It is not about things but about the anthropologist's understanding of things".[7]

Such doubts about the nature of representation have created a sense of insecurity within the anthropological discipline. Inevitably, taking fellow human beings as subject matter, questions of morality interpose into the research framework and, with the emergence of post-modernism in the social sciences, these doubts appear to have risen so much as to have a paralysing effect on research so that theoretical debate remainstrapped in its own methodological circle.

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[5] Maquet, 'Objectivity in Anthropology', *Current Anthropology*, (1964) p 53.

[6] Sperber, *On Anthropological Knowledge*, p 34.

[7] *Ibid.*, p 92.

In connexion with the nature of subject and object in recent anthropological discourse, the relation of anthropology and surrealism has often been raised. This seems to be singularly appropriate, since the question of the object was a central surrealist concern and within surrealism there is revealed an interest in anthropological themes that presents a contrast to the way in which anthropology has constituted itself as a discipline, particularly since surrealism has always seen itself within the romantic current of thought and has set itself against positivist and realist models.

Still, the way in which surrealism has been brought into this debate is somewhat unsatisfactory since, in the work of James Clifford, surrealism has been used to legitimate an overtly subjectivist approach to anthropology. This involves some distortion of the surrealist argument for surrealism has always sought to objectify human social relations and has viewed subjectivity as a trap to be avoided.

Surrealism has also established relations with non-European countries in a way that helps to throw light on the relation between anthropological subject and object. The thesis will therefore take surrealism (and in the process will seek to re-evaluate the romantic tradition within anthropology) as a point of departure to look at themes on objectivity and the nature of reciprocity in the way that subject/object relations are conceptualized. I hope that this way of looking at the problem, will have the same effect that Margaret Mead hoped for in introducing the *Primitive Heritage* volume that she edited with the surrealist writer Nicolas Calas, of whom she wrote that he was "neither reared on Swiss Family Robinson, oversuckled on an outworn dependence on *The Golden Bough*, not taught to despise Frazer for the wrong reasons. Together, I realized, we might put together a book that would restore the sense of wonder earlier generations drew from accounts of primitive and exotic men".[8] In a similar spirit, I hope that the consideration of surrealism here will provide a similar illumination of both anthropology and surrealism. Thus, the aim will not be to write an anthropology of surrealism as such (although this will necessarily enter into the study), but rather to try to delineate cross-references to the way in which the the subject is perceived anthropologically.

Surrealism is also important in helping us to bring the issue of self and other into focus, since the methodological approach of surrealism does not necessarily imply the separation of self and other, at least not in the same terms as those ecountered in anthropology. In this sense, then, the use of surrealism here is exemplary, in that, since the self can only be aware of itself through the other, the subject through its sojourn in the object, shifts in anthropological thinking not only reflect movements in the wider culture but are often best understood from a perspective outside the discipline itself.

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[8] **Mead/Calas, *Primitive Heritage*, p xxxI.**

CHAPTER ONE:

ISSUES IN THE HISTORY OF ANTHROPOLOGY

The sciences are separated only from a want of genius and sagacity - the relationships between them are the intellect and stupidity entangled and moved apart. The most eminent truths of our day we owe to such combinations of the long separated elements of total knowledge.

Novalis

Introduction

This chapter will take a general look at Anglo-American anthropology and the way in which it has taken form as a discipline. This will be done to foreground the discussions that follow about the nature of representation and the relationship of the subject to the object. The question to be especially considered is why certain types of data are legitimated while others are considered to be unacceptable. This will lead to a discussion of the consequences that follow from the way in which anthropology projected its own self-image through the way in which it collected data and established its own methodological approach.

We noted in the introduction that anthropology has been defined as the 'science of man'. As it emerged and defined itself as an independent discipline at the end of the nineteenth century and

the early part of the twentieth century, anthropology lay at the confluence of several different disciplines: biology, archaeology, economics, history, philosophy, linguistics, psychology, religious studies and sociology. It has also directly concerned itself with aspects of other disciplines: law, art and literature. Indeed there can, by definition, be no sphere of human activity that is irrelevant to anthropology. This might incline one to believe, along with Pierre Mabille, that it must be 'the science of sciences, or, more accurately, their synthesis'. Few anthropologists, however, would make such a claim. Indeed most seem to have seen the breadth of anthropological concerns more as a curse than a blessing and in defining their discipline have rather sought to limit the range of its concerns. The emphasis has taken different forms at different times, contingent to some extent upon political realities, but the overriding concern appears to have been with the perceived institutional position of anthropology and the need to maintain its integrity as an independent discipline.

In the introduction we also noted how anthropology had sought to legitimate itself as a positivist science. Yet in its early thematic development, anthropology in both Britain and the United States can be seen to have emerged from trends in German idealist philosophy against which positivism set itself. In particular the influence of romanticism, pervasive especially in the establishment of folklore studies, had a considerable impact on the course by which anthropology charted out the terrain appropriate for its study. That this influence has largely been repressed in later anthropology is a question we shall look at later in the chapter. For the moment, however, we will look at the nature of the positivist reaction against idealism, and against romanticism in particular, and the reasons why anthropology has sought to establish itself so firmly within the positivist tradition.

Without going too deeply into the history of ideas we should note that the philosophy of positivism was associated with the sociologist Auguste Comte (1798-1857). Comte was reacting to the intellectual turmoil which followed the French Revolution and which took its most radical form in romanticism. The relations of romanticism with the French Revolution are complex and remain controversial. These issues are beyond the scope of our discussion here, but we should mention the fact that one of the undoubted effects of the French Revolution was to bring into question the totalising project that is characteristic of romanticism. For Comte, romanticist methodology was collapsing into a confusion in which intellectual rigour was being lost. We should note in passing that romanticism in France was something of a negligible movement that never had the intellectual rigour it achieved in Britain and especially in Germany, where it was allied to German idealist philosophy. In reaction to the grandiose aims of Romanticism, Comte wanted to establish sociology that would be modest in its aims. Empirically based, it would not try to penetrate into the heart of things. Rather it would take its starting point from the natural sciences, seeking to establish a basis for the human sciences that would be equally as rigorous in its methodological approach.

The central tenet of positivism, at least in terms of its importance in anthropology, is concerned with the nature of observation: as we noted in the introduction, it assumes a commensurability between the observer and what is being observed. In the late nineteenth century, the possibility of such correspondence was hardly questioned and it was generally assumed that,

perception and reality being one, whatever followed from an accurate empirical examination of a phenomenon automatically achieved the ontological status of 'truth'. Since then, the fundamental positivist position has been brought into question in the twentieth century by several findings, but most notably by those of quantum physics and gestalt psychology.

Quantum physics was to show conclusively that there is no such thing as a pure correspondence between observer and the thing observed. The very process of observing something changes the nature of what is being observed. Observation cannot, therefore, as positivist science would require, be passive: it always has an active component which must make the notion of 'objectivity' problematic at best.

Furthermore, if quantum physics was to show that the presence of the observer affects the nature of what is being observed, gestalt psychology was to show, equally conclusively, that the process of observation itself was by no means unproblematic. In observing something, the perceptual framework through which observation is established is not a direct sensual relation, but is informed through a series of complex operations. At the simplest level, the eyes do not 'see' the object that they look at; rather they construct it from fragmentary messages sent to and analyzed by the brain.

If such findings have served to undermine the foundations of positivist scientific epistemology, they have not always filtered down to affect the way in which researchers approach their own research. This is perhaps not surprising, since theoretical attempts to engage with such problems can often lead to a greater confusion, cutting away the foundations and then being surprised when the house falls down. A house with faulty foundations can nevertheless still function as a place of habitation, although it ought not, perhaps, be held up as an ideal place to live.

In Anglo-American anthropology we can discern two central traditions, both based upon positivistic assumptions. The emphasis has changed at different times, but has tended overall to incline anthropologists either to seek to establish a framework that would legitimate anthropology as a science with a methodology as precise as that of the natural sciences, or towards an approach that would emphasise the links that anthropology has with the humanities. In this latter respect it would be the methodology of history that would provide the touchstone for a consideration of the subject.

Both approaches have endeavoured to fix anthropology and to establish thereby an identity that would legitimate it as a discipline within the university systems in Britain and the United States. Both approaches have also viewed anthropology as a way of thinking about other people and have sought to establish a line of descent relating to the process of distantiation this requires. From this perspective, the father of anthropology is generally seen as being Herodotus and the pre-history of the anthropological discipline has been traced through writers who have written about their travels. In this way an evolutionary sequence is established whereby, through a logical process, a science is established that becomes more and more systematic as it develops, until it divests itself of subjective factors and can thus be entitled to take its place alongside other sciences based upon objective principles. Such a lineage denies factors which have undoubtedly been important in the development of anthropological ideas. As we have noted, it has also necessitated the denial of the

romanticist concerns of anthropology, concerns which are often admitted only with an apparent sense of embarrassment. We will therefore look at the history of such concerns in the development of early anthropology and in particular try to obtain a perspective on the importance of the Romantic tradition in the overall context of the anthropological project.

Anthropology and the Romantic Tradition

According to Raymond Williams, the standard 18th century definition of anthropology was as follows: "Anthropology includes the consideration of both the human body and soul, with the laws of their union, as the effects thereof"[1]. It will immediately be apparent that while this definition goes against the grain of anthropology as it came to be defined during the nineteenth century, it is a definition that is in tune with romantic approaches.

As with surrealism, which we shall consider in detail later, romanticism was fundamentally a social phenomenon that affected the sensibility of life across a wide range of intellectual disciplines, as well as having a general effect upon society as a whole. Above all, romanticism was based upon the idea of the integration of man and cosmos. It was thus a totalising philosophy. It was also dynamic, insisting that the researcher should be affected by the phenomenon studied. Through self-knowledge, a person would act upon the world. In this respect, anthropology based upon the eighteenth century definition would appear to be a particularly appropriate arena for romanticist research. In claiming Jean-Jacques Rousseau as the founder of anthropology, anthropologists as diverse as Claude Lévi-Strauss and Stanley Diamond have acknowledged the basis of theoretical anthropology in romanticism, even if such genealogical attribution is problematic.

But if this philosophical lineage is not straightforward, there would seem to be little doubt that in subject matter the beginnings of the anthropological endeavour are to be found in folklore studies which emerged as a reaction against the Enlightenment and became one of the central thematic concerns of romanticism. Although folklore was not defined as such until 1846, the roots of such study are to be found in the 'Ossian controversy', which was one of the first manifestations of what can be seen as a specifically romantic sensibility. The conceptual basis for folklore study was provided by Herder and given a further philosophical impetus by Schlegal who brought to attention to the fact that cultures outside the mainstream of European culture had their own qualities that were not reducible to Eurocentric value systems. This gave to folklore studies a philosophical legitimation which was possible only in the context of the Romantic rejection of the norms of classicist aesthetics that had previously been unchallenged. It was the collection of folksongs established by Brentano and Achim von Arnim, based upon their travels through Europe in 1804, which led to several ambitious attempts to document folk culture, culminating in the momentous collections of the Grimm

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[1] Raymond Williams, *Keywords*, (1976) Fontana p 38.

brothers and, later, those of Andrew Lang.

The tradition of folk studies has now separated out into a discipline quite distinct from anthropology and one which seems to be, if anything, treated rather contemptuously by anthropologists and not to have attained full legitimation as a separate academic discipline. Indeed, folklore studies appear to have remained to some extent a rather amateurish subject (or at least one in which the dichotomy between amateur and professional is not clearly distinguished) despite the undoubtedly important theoretical work that has been achieved, most notably perhaps by Dumézil. Yet work as diverse as that of Eliade and Lévi-Strauss undoubtedly belongs as much to the realm of folklore studies as to anthropology. There would seem to be little doubt, therefore, that folklore continues to hold an important place in the evolution of anthropological ideas.

It is also clear that the nineteenth century German anthropological tradition developed directly out of romanticism. Fritz W. Kramer[2] has argued convincingly for the way in which romanticist concerns became vulgarised during the nineteenth century and sees a clear split between Creuzer, who still belongs to the romantic movement, and Bastian, in whom the ideological assumptions have moved towards positivism to foreground Bastian's aim of understanding culture well enough to be able to dominate it. Thus, argues Kramer, the German anthropological tradition utilised the romantic notion of understanding through 'empathy' in a way that completely perverted the sense that this concept had for romanticism.

The questions involved here are somewhat difficult to evaluate due to the disparate nature of the topic. Despite recent excellent historical studies of the context of the development of the anthropological discipline by Ian Langham and George Stocking, we still lack a detailed study of the way in which anthropology separated from romanticist concerns. This is complicated further by the fact that little research has been done into looking at the cultural reasons for the degeneration of romanticism in the nineteenth century. In so far as anthropology as an overall subject is concerned, it is apparent that both physical anthropology and sociology are for various reasons inherently marginal to romantic concerns. In physical anthropology, the necessary emphasis on quantitative data means that the discipline is, almost by definition, a specialist subject, something which makes it, if not hostile, then undoubtedly wary of romanticist concerns. Sociology, too, although primarily for historical reasons (sociology being the discipline that emerged directly from Comtian philosophy), is unable to cope with the range of data necessary for the total project that was romanticism. This does not apply to anthropology as a whole, however, and indeed the social and cultural branches of anthropology can perhaps justify themselves logically only by accepting, or at least not denying, such a totalising project.

As Ian Langham has argued, the paradigmatic shift in British social anthropology occurred

    [2] Fritz W. Kramer, 'Empathy - Reflections on the History of Ethnology in Pre-Fascist Germany: Herder, Creuzer, Bastian, Bachofen, and Frobenius', (1985) Dialectical Anthropology 9, pp 337-347.

in the early years of the twentieth century. It is now somewhat axiomatic to say that British social anthropology came of age with the systematization of fieldwork as participant-observation. Langham has placed this moment earlier than generally thought, and has argued that the key figure in the shift was not Malinowski but Rivers. This contention may be open to question, but it is not of direct concern to the point being argued here. However, Langham also argues, perhaps more persuasively, that Rivers was the person who was instrumental in effecting a shift in the subject matter of social anthropology, away from studies of religion towards the study of kinship and social organisation. A process that corresponds to what Kuhn, in his study of the development of scientific disciplines, has identified as a pattern of scientific maturation whereby 'puzzle-solving' becomes sharply distinguished from the 'problem-solving', which is characteristic of philosophy rather than science. It will also be noted that such a shift is also a shift away from the qualitative study of data demanded by romanticism towards the quantitative evaluation of data required by positivism.

British social anthropology has since followed a fairly consistent course that would establish it as a particular science in the positivistic empiricist tradition, with the main point of contention, as noted above, being whether its appropriate methodological approach would be based upon that established by the natural sciences or by historiography. In establishing this scientific approach, it has tended towards the fetishisation of fieldwork as the essential pre-requisite for a professional career within the discipline. We shall examine some of the consequences that follow on from such fetishisation later in the chapter. Here we will confine ourselves to noting that, paralleling our comments about the shift of paradigms, that such fetishisation necessarily reduces social anthropology to a highly specialised discipline and unquestionably problematises the notion of a 'science of man', if this is what anthropology still endeavours to be. It has also led to the identification of the discipline with the flow of the colonial enterprise, something which has created difficulties for the self-identity of the discipline in the wake of the collapse of the colonial enterprise. Although romanticist concerns have remained present in British social anthropology, they have done so almost as a sort of degenerate survival. We will examine this point in a moment. Before doing so, however, we will look at the rather different evolution of US cultural anthropology, whose relation with romanticism reveals a closer set of interests and mutual concerns.

If romanticist concerns seem to have been jettisoned from the British social anthropology tradition with little regret or sentimentality, the same is not the case in the United States. Boas himself was steeped in the German romantic tradition with which he had almost a love/hate relation.[3] Aware that the romantic tradition did not run counter to scientific endeavour, he nevertheless distrusted its influence, which he seems, like Comte, to have considered to be potentially confusing. Such ambivalence seems to have been transmitted to his students, several of whom had a similarly ambivalent relation to elements of romanticism both in their personal lives and in their professional

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[3] Boas once gave a splendid definition of science that has clear romantic, even surrealist, overtones: "the ice-cold flame of passion for seeking truth for truth's sake", quoted by George Stocking in *Race, Culture and Evolution*, p 274.

activities.

We know that though both Sapir and Ruth Benedict wrote poetry they did so in a rather surreptitious way, almost as a clandestine activity. This appears to bear witness both to the fact that, at the time, such 'subjective' activity was frowned upon in the scientific community, but also to the fact that anthropology was not able to satisfy their respective needs to communicate - in fact both had, even though neither were original poets, a genuinely lyrical sensibility and their poetry is far from negligible. At the same time, both of them could react strongly at times against the introduction of 'poetic' or romantic concepts into anthropology. In *Patterns of Culture*, for example, Benedict writes: "The romantic Utopianism that reaches out towards the simpler primitive, attractive as it sometimes may be, is as often, in ethnological study, a hindrance as a help".[4] With such statements, one has the impression that she is trying to convince herself as much as us.

In America, whether anthropology was to be considered as a natural or a human science became a live issue and an anthropologist such as Kroeber who, like Boas, was brought up against the background of the German Romantic tradition, put up great resistance to the idea that anthropology should be considered as a natural science. The whole ideology behind the Culture and Personality school of American anthropology - and its opposition to the eugenics school - was based upon the assumption that anthropology could only be a human and not a natural science. In this context it is noticeable that the link between anthropology and poetry has been especially close in America.[5]

Stanley Diamond has said that he chose to become an anthropologist because "it was the next best thing to poetry". Elsewhere, professional anthropologists such as Nathanial Tarn, Gary Snyder and Armand Schwerner have abandoned anthropology for poetry, while the literary ambitions that sustain much of the tradition of symbolic anthropology, most notably the work of Clifford Geertz, is readily apparent. The anthropology/poetry review *Alcheringa* (1971/77) was a further testimony to this relation, as was the 1981 issue of *Dialectical Anthropology*, which was devoted entirely to anthropology and poetry. Poetry, of itself, is not specifically tied to the historical circumstances of romanticism, but an interest in poetry in general tends to imply an interest in the more totalising aspects of anthropology that is characteristic of a leaning towards a 'romantic' sensibility. In this general sense the romantic impulse in anthropology itself is deeply etched.

For romanticism, of course, means different things in different contexts. If we have confined

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[4] *Patterns of Culture*, p 32.

[5] This contrasts strikingly with British anthropology, where cross-fertilization with poetry (and indeed any link with literature) appears to have been negligible - aside from activities surrounding the Mass Observation Movement and marginal figures in British anthropology like Geoffrey Gorer and Tom Harrison. The novels of Bruce Chatwin represent an isolated recent example of an interesting cross-over between literature and anthropology.

ourselves until now to the specific concern with the influence of the Romantic movement as it took form from the middle of the eighteenth century to the first decades of the nineteenth century, the influence of romanticism in a wider sense upon anthropology has remained considerable.

In terms of this more general sense of the word, Eric Wolf has noted that the repression of the romantic motive in anthropology became acute with the Second World War and then the Cold War, stating that "this shift led to a feeling that, far from being able to remake the world, all one could do was to cultivate a tiny garden..."[6] Wolf is here using the term romanticism in a wider sense than we have considered thus far, but his comments underline the uneasiness with which romanticism in anthropology is perceived and, as such, the process to which he is referring is part of the more generalised repression of romanticism we have been discussing.

In this wider, more populist, context romanticism passes beyond the bounds of its historical context to define a more generalised sensibility that can be seen to be anti-scientific and anti-rational. This aspect has not been so much repressed in anthropology as uneasily marginalised. It is not easy to deny that the anthropological project has 'romantic' underpinnings. The wish to invest the so-called 'primitive' with a value in itself is patently a romanticist impulse, deriving from a disillusion with technological society and responding, in part at least, to a need to discover other, more humane, forms of society. In this sense one might even say that anthropology, particularly in its ethnological aspects, is very much a romantic project. The very impulse that leads one to study people in faraway lands is, according to Robin Horton, for instance, fundamentally 'romantic', and he seeks to discuss romanticism in anthropology in terms that would integrate such 'romantic', but also, as he at least sees them, irresponsible elements, within the fundamentally rationalist framework that he sees as the only one appropriate to anthropology as a whole.

This article is important in that it seems symptomatic of the way in which romanticism is usually considered within a discipline like anthropology . He would like to establish romanticism as an important element of anthropological research, but one which always needs to defer to models of scientific positivism. He defines romanticism as "that paradoxical source of bad interpretation and good data".[7] As such he believes it needs to be 'tamed and harnessed'. Yet this understanding of romanticism is very much a vulgarisation of Romanticism as a socio/cultural movement which, as we have seen, was not hostile to science, but rather sought to integrate science with art. It is an understanding of romanticism that is the product not of romanticism itself but of the positivist reaction to it.

What we learn from a consideration of romanticism in relation to anthropology appears to me to be rather different from the lesson Horton would draw. Rather that finding romanticism irresponsible from the scientific point of view, we discover the extent to which positivism has imposed

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[6] Eric Wolf, *Anthropology*, (1974) p 15.

[7] Robin Horton, 'Lévy-Bruhl, Durkheim and the Scientific Revolution' (1973) in Horton and Finnegan (eds.) *Modes of thought*, p 304.

its hegemony over scientific methodology during the past century and a half, in the process distorting the nature of the romantic project.

The great fear that positivism has is of the unbounded ambition of romanticism. To some degree this fear is well-founded[8], but what is less acceptable is the way that positivism has dissembled evidence about romanticism to establish its own hegemony as the only scientific means appropriate for a discipline like anthropology.

Romanticism did not eschew scientific principles. Nor did it deny the necessity to seek objective criteria for the evaluation of data. Indeed it sought to establish itself on two fundamental methodological principles: "The first, governing relationships between the self and the world, states that the world should be made central and primary and that to this end the self should endeavour to suppress its inevitably biased subjectivity. The second, which concerns the relationship among subjects, states that all peripheral or 'eccentric' viewpoints are of similar value and complement one another..."[9] Such principles are predicated on the view that reality is inherent in appearance, rather than, as positivism would argue, that reality was the contrary of appearance. As such, for romanticism, the cardinal principle for any form of research is to respect the integrity of phenomena studied and to exclude abstractions that emerge from one's own thoughts. There is then a need to view any phenomena from all sides, to trace all that borders it, all that is related to it and whatever follows on from it. One must also recognise the independence of the object of study from the position of the investigator and not appropriate phenomena to enhance the reputation of the investigator.

It will be seen that the first of these principles was taken over by positivism, but the second was ignored altogether. Contrary to its own ideological claims, then, we can see that the reaction of positivism to romanticism still owed something to concepts the romantics themselves had formulated.

During the course of the thesis we will examine some of the implications that follow from looking at anthropology from a more specifically romantic perspective. What we need to emphasize at this point, and which will become clearer later, is that romanticism does not necessarily collapse into subjectivist incoherence. As we have said, romanticism was founded in a search for objective criteria with which to observe the world that are in some ways more precise that those developed by positivism, even if, being more ambitious, they are also more problematic. We should not, therefore, dismiss romanticism for its 'subjectivism', but recognise that its objective criteria were different from those laid down by the positivist ideology of objectivism. This factor will be given a clearer focus when we discuss surrealism, but what should be apparent at this point is that the ascription of such subjectivist and irrationalist consequences for anything that would challenge the supposedly impersonal norms of critical rationalism is an example of the arrogant way in which positivism has

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[8] The archetypal romantic scientist is Dr. Victor Frankenstein. But we ought also to remember that the perception of the dangers of Frankenstein's work came not from a positivist perspective but from Mary Shelley, a woman who was part of the English romantic circle and deeply imbued with its spirit

[9] Marshall Brown, *The Shape of German Romanticism*, p 57.

imposed its hegemony in the sciences during the nineteenth century. If nothing else (and we hope that it will reveal rather more) a consideration of Romanticism does enable us to frame the ideological assumptions of positivism and provide us with an alternative methodological framework with which to consider questions of scientific validity. Had Romanticism retained any scientific validity during the nineteenth century, then it is also clear that the obsession with racial questions and the sterile debate between diffusionism and evolution in the development of anthropological ideas would have gained another perspective, for Romanticism tended to assume, as Herder wrote, that societies were 'equal in necessity, equal in originality, equal in value, equal in happiness'.[10]

Representing the Other: anthropology in it methodology

Representation is an issue that has only really come to be perceived as problematic in anthropology in recent years, with the end of colonialism. Although anthropology may not have been precisely the 'child of imperialism', as sometimes claimed, it undoubtedly took form in the context of imperialist expansion and it was only the establishment of a colonial administration that made anthropology as we know it today possible. Without the backing of such an administration anthropologists would never have obtained either the funds or the logistical backup to spend long periods studying alien societies.

The struggle to establish anthropology as an autonomous discipline took place over a long period and involved various strands of endeavour. As positivism established its hegemony in the sciences, so these heterogeneous strands were denied in favour of a seamless evolution.

In Britain anthropology had emerged from three main areas of concern. As we have seen, folklore studies was one area. Humanitarian concerns and the activities of the anti-slavery lobby and the Aborigines Protection Society was another. The third involved various scientific activities over a range of disciplines, for what we now think of as anthropological themes were most specifically,

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[10]. This is not meant to imply that Romanticism could not be twisted towards racist assumptions. The oft-made association of nazism with romanticism obviously implies the opposite and, indeed, Herder's concept of culture was utilised to provide a legitimation for racist ideology, even though he had himself explicitly stated that race was methodologically an illegitimate category. Equally, it is clear from the context of Herder's argument that in his concept of culture he is arguing against any idea of cultural, let alone racial, superiority. Furthermore, what was basic to Herder's concept of culture was the fact that, though each culture unfolds in its own unique way, progress could only occur through interrelation and multiplicity. Although it might be argued that the way the question of race was raised related to the degeneration of romanticism, nevertheless within the actual framework of romanticism itself it is difficult to see how race as a concept could ever have been taken seriously, since to do so would have been to renounce the heart of the romantic idea. There can be little question that, even if we can see the roots of racism in romanticism, but romantic methodological criteria could not have allowed racial questions to unfolded in the way they did in the nineteenth century since, if reality is inherent in appearance then there can be no definitive answer to any question. It therefore required the absolutist standards of positivist methodological validation to create the atmosphere in which the racial question could take on such a virulent form.

perhaps, dealt with in philosophy and biology.

In order to gain a perspective into the establishment of anthropology as it is known in the twentieth century, we need briefly to consider the process whereby the discipline itself took form. In this respect the institutionalization of anthropology did not take academic form until well into the twentieth century, even though Tylor had been appointed as a Reader in Anthropology at Oxford in 1886, rather grudgingly and under pressure from Pitt-Rivers. According to George Stocking, by the end of the century there were probably no more than a dozen people who devoted themselves professionally to anthropological study and of these only Tylor was involved in training others for the anthropological discipline. It was, furthermore, assumed that the basis for anthropological research would depend on a clear methodological distinction between those in the field who collected data and who did not necessarily have anything to do with anthropology as such, and the anthropologists who analysed such data. Although now dismissed as 'armchair anthropology' such a division of labour was not in Victorian times seen as a problem and there were justifiable methodological reasons for it. Indeed it may be that it is the very lack of such a division of labour in the twentieth century that has been responsible for what Sperber has perceived as the disparity between the finds of ethnographic data and the theoretical return that anthropology has delivered from such data.

Nevertheless, as anthropology began to gain an institutional impetus in academia, this division of labour began to break down. For various reasons, ethnographic fieldwork soon became established as a necessary condition of the anthropological discipline in Britain, giving it its own particular flavour, a flavour that was certainly unique among academic disciplines that maintained the locus of their research in the confines of the university system. But by breaking the division of labour and by placing a value in itself on the researcher collecting his own data, the anthropological discipline was at the same time imposing considerable limitations on its area of study: it led to an emphasis on the particular at the expense of the general and reduced the data available for study to what could be personally collected. Could any methodology arising out of such pre-conditions ever satisfy the grandiose pretensions of establishing a 'science of man'?

It has often been stated by commentators that fieldwork represents a rite of passage by which the student is turned into a fully fledged anthropologist. The connexion appears above all to be made to imply that the fieldwork technique, in itself, provides a sufficient methodological grounding to become an anthropologist, to the extent that everything then falls into place for anthropology's claim to scientific status. Although the initiation analogy is often made in a rather ironical way by anthropologists and, as Ian Langham reports, an anthropologist as eminent as Meyer Fortes objected 'strenuously' to the term 'rite of initiation' being used in connexion with the anthropological discipline,[11]there is definitely still a sense within the discipline as a whole that the fieldwork

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[11] Langham, *The Building of British Social Anthropology*, p 330.

experience of itself imparts a status that distinguishes anthropologists from non-anthropologists.[12]
As a historian of anthropology, Langham strongly defends the use of such a phrase, perceiving,
correctly in my view, that anthropology has used the analogy in an ideological way to legitimate itself.
For as Ladislav Holy wrote, "...fieldwork is seen as a distinguishing and defining feature of social
anthropology: however else anthropology could be defined, to do anthropology meant to study a
specific community through long-term participant observation. Correspondingly, doing fieldwork in this
way became to be seen as a 'unique and necessary experience, amounting to a *rite of passage* by
which the novice is transformed into the rounded anthropologist and initiated into the ranks of the
profession' (Epstein 1967). This value is clearly signified in the pejorative sense in which the term
'armchair anthropologist' has been used..."[13] As Holy is aware, the terminology used here, raises
some questions for discussion.

We will examine this question here not so much to cast doubt on the fieldwork experience
itself, but to challenge the assumption that the fact of fieldwork in and of itself functions to provide an
anthropologist with a grounding in the discipline sufficient to constitute an 'initiation'. Although on a
manifest level I suspect most anthropologists would not challenge the fact that it does not do so, yet
in practice, the assumption that it does remains pervasive throughout the discipline.

The first difficulty relates to the actual status of the fieldwork 'ritual'. In what does it consist?
There is necessarily no prescribed form that the fieldwork must take and the ritual input involved
would therefore appear to be different from that constituting an initiation ritual, which is always rigidly
controlled. There is, furthermore, no restriction placed upon what the ethnographer ought to find in
the field; indeed, the more unexpected the findings the more successful the fieldwork is likely to be
considered. This is quite different from an initiation ritual in which both the state from which the
initiate passes to the one into which he will be changed is carefully defined. True, it may be said that
the aim is to turn the student into an anthropologist. But in this respect, anthropology is no different
from any other academic discipline. In fact, fieldwork in some sense is essential for any original
research. Whether such work is done in libraries, in laboratories or in other societies, is not relevant
to the fact that the material needs to be collected and the student has to engage with it. At the level
of methodology anthropology is indistinguishable from any other academic discipline and if one is to
speak of initiation rituals, then it would be more appropriate to do so in relation to the whole process

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[12] On this question see the responses of the anthropologists studied by John Wengle. 'Cathy',
for instance, whom Wengle considers to be an example of the 'typical' fieldwork experience, says
"Part of the experience is just getting through a really difficult situation. I did it. And it gave me a
sense of validation as an anthropologist. It was a different experience in ways I never expected. My
self-image, self-confidence, insecurity, survived some threat. I got through that..." (Wengle,
Ethnographers in the Field: The Psychology of Research, p 65). In another, more problematic case,
Wengle was struck by the stridency of his subject's insistence on the transformative elements of the
experience and from the quotations he gives it appears that she was clinging to this idea as essential
to her own sense of identity.

[13] Ladislav Holy, in R.F. Ellen, *Ethnographic Research: A guide to General Conduct,* (1984)
London: Academic Press p 18.

of conferring status in academic disciplines. In this respect a prescribed ritual is set down, of which fieldwork is one of the optional (although expected) components in anthropology. In all cases, however, it is other factors, usually the thesis, that will determine whether or not the student is to be accepted into the 'fraternity'. Like any other academic research, anthropological work is judged relative to the standards and expectations raised by previous work in the discipline - what the student did or did not do during the fieldwork is relevant only in so far as it relates to such standards and expectations. The particularity of the fieldwork experience itself is not something that will be judged. For instance, no consideration will be taken of the level of the researcher's integration into the community in which the fieldwork was done. For the most part there is no criterion by which such an activity can be judged. Yet it remains noteworthy that even where aspects of fieldwork experience might be subject to examination - such as language proficiency - this is not done. In this respect, then, it is difficult to see how the specificity of fieldwork fundamentally distinguishes anthropology from other academic disciplines.

A further objection to the initiation ritual analogy is that the purpose of an initiation is to take the subject from one state to another. Such an intent would appear to be very much at odds with the aim of anthropological research in so far as it has sought scientific status on the basis that subjectivist concerns should be minimised. Furthermore, if we accept that it is not fieldwork that provides the specific ritual point of entry into the academic discipline of anthropology, then it would appear that such an exercise might only serve to provide a test of character, or therapeutic exploration in self-awareness, for the benefit of the anthropologist. Even though such an idea seems to becoming fashionable with the rise of a 'reflexive' anthropology, there would appear to be an inherent contradiction between such an approach and the traditional subject matter of anthropology. It is difficult to see how the intrusion of subjectivist concerns into the framework of the study can fail to bring into question a legitimate anthropological approach, since such concerns must act to diminish the presence of the object of study relative to the subject and consequently invalidate what one would have thought was the whole rationale of the ethnographic project in the first place. But even in such terms, it would seem to be more accurate to describe such a fieldwork approach less as an initiation ritual than as a trial by ordeal.

But even if a reflexive attitude towards anthropology is taken as valid, this still does not address the epistemological difficulties raised by anthropological fieldwork and its mode of representation. Indeed, it might be argued that the fashionability of the reflexive approach merely serves to displace such epistemological difficulties.

What is certainly true is that fieldwork provides anthropology with a unique tool for the analysis of social phenomena. There would seem to be little doubt that field research does mark anthropology off from other academic disciplines [14] in a way that can be very positive. Fieldwork

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[14] Although this is not entirely true: archaeology, botany, geology and zoology all depend on fieldwork research, though anthropology might still be distinguished, if we accept that, as Richard Cornell's famous story asserts, man is 'the most dangerous game'.

is hazardous, both in a physical and a emotional sense; it is also a *total* activity. For a certain period of time, the ethnographer is tied to the 'laboratory' - and cannot go home for the evening when he gets tired of the experiment. As such the experience of fieldwork certainly forces the anthropologist, to an extent that will obviously depend on the sensitivity of the particular anthropologist, to question his own personal values as well as the values of his own society. These are all positive factors. But their limits should be recognised and the question remains as to how such particularities are to be integrated into the anthropological discipline?

The aspects of fieldwork we have raised above can be given force by a consideration of the particular mode of participant-observation established by British social anthropology which requires, as a principle, the anthropologist not simply to observe the society to be studied but also to participate within the society without actually 'going native'. Such a methodological approach may not have created too many difficulties in the colonial period when the relation of the anthropologist to the society was strictly defined in a way which served to fix it in a fairly stable state so that it was possible to 'participate' in the society without calling into question one's own identity. But with the ending of the colonial relation, the status of the anthropologist within the society became unclear and thus rendered the ethnographic relation extremely problematic.

In his study of the psychology of fieldwork, John Wengle has emphasised the pathological elements involved and it would not be difficult to make out a case for the experience itself as being psychologically abnormal. Or rather that the two injunctions of observing and participating in an alien culture are incompatible from a psychic point of view, especially when the time that one will spend there is severely circumscribed. Bourdieu has spoken of 'participant observation' as a "contradiction in terms".[15] One takes his point, but it is not so much the idea of 'participant observation' itself that is contradictory as the context in which it takes place. To some extent we are all 'participant observers': in our everyday lives we are always both participating within our own society and making observations upon it. Both are aspects of our species-being: we need to be able to interact with other people in a spontaneous and unselfconscious way, but we also need to detach ourself from such closeness to reflect on our situation in society. The interplay between the two is not at all contradictory, but is complementary in the way in which we live our lives. What is peculiar about the concept of 'participant observation' in the context of ethnographic fieldwork is that it is consciously elaborated as a calculated technique. It is also presented as being in some way problematic. This is so because the situation in which it occurs is so: it involves integration into an alien social and cultural environment - a situation chosen by the ethnographer specifically to study the chosen people. It is a situation in which the ethnographer cannot, paradoxically enough, ever participate and observe in a normal way, since he knows beforehand that the society he studies is one which is and will remain alien to him and also because he is equally alien to the people he studies. To collect sufficient data, too, he must act in an unusual way, being excessively nosey and pushy: he must

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[15] Bourdieu, *The Logic of Practice*, p 34.

cultivate the acquaintance of people he would not ordinarily mix with, must be polite to people he dislikes. And, no matter how much he becomes integrated into the community, the actual period of his stay is limited to a certain period of time, generally determined beforehand.

It is here that the claims of 'participant-observation' as having the effect of an initiation ritual lie. For unlike the journalist or the traveller passing through, whose activities require no commitment to the people among whom he lives and who thereby does not need to adapt; unlike the exile or the immigrant, who does not know how long he will be living within the alien society and who needs to adapt to the needs of the new society, the ethnographer must make an adaptation knowing that the situation is somewhat artificial: soon he will have to return to his own society. In this respect the fieldwork experience is analogous to the liminal state in initiation, but again, unlike initiation, the process is uncontrolled. Despite the fact that socialisation within a society is always a difficult process, few specific precautions appear to be taken, at least in terms of the research methods proposed and experienced, to help such adaptation, even though many anthropologists admit to a period of 'adjustment' after prolonged stays in the field. The fact that this is not recognised as being a great problem seems to be a recognition not that the risk to the psyche is not great, but that most anthropologists have been able to accommodate such a risk. For one might argue that the situation that participant-observation places the ethnographer in is fundamentally a schizoid state, and that to do it properly would probably, as happens to the journalist in Sam Fuller's film *Shock Corridor*,[16] result in insanity.

The question that concerns us here, however, is not whether or not fieldwork is a healthy activity, but the consequences that follow from participant-observation being used as the primary form of data collection for, on the one hand, the way in which anthropology constructs its images of other people, and, on the other hand, for the overall project of anthropology.

Any sort of fieldwork necessarily reduces the research project. It tends towards a concentration on the particular at the expense of the general. Due to the intensive nature of anthropological fieldwork this problem is exacerbated, the more so because anthropology has far more need of a theoretical perspective than other fieldwork-based disciplines (none of which indeed have been as dependent on fieldwork as an operational technique). The particular technique of participant-observation also necessarily establishes a dualistic frame of reference in which the anthropologist is led to view everything from a double perspective which privileges, in different ways, the society studied in relation to the society from which the anthropologist is coming. This double perspective is difficult to hold in mind. It may act positively in the case of particular anthropologists,

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[16] In Fuller's film, a journalist, determined to win the Pulitzer Prize, feigns madness to be admitted to a mental asylum where an unsolved murder has taken place. He solves the murder but thereafter lapses into his assumed behaviour and has to be re-admitted to the mental asylum for real. The central question addressed by the film is whether it is possible to 'live a lie' in a social situation without becoming alienated from one's own personality. It is a film that gives a very vivid portrayal of the constituents of the ethnographic encounter, even if its actual situation is somewhat different from that usually encountered in anthropology.

but this is not something that should be taken as given. It needs to be seen as a problem and addressed as such.

Obviously, fieldwork research is essential to the anthropological discipline. As an operational technique, and providing the anthropologist is aware of the limitations such a technique places on the research, the idea behind participant observation is rich in possibilities and achievements. We could here reverse our own argument and argue that the very limitations we have enumerated about participant-observation are in fact its great strengths. This much can be conceded. It does force one to confront otherness, to learn to stand outside one's own perspective and perceive another order of life. But if ethnography is necessary to the anthropological discipline, is it necessary to the career of every anthropologist? What is being argued against here is the assumption that the fieldwork experience in itself provides a grounding sufficient to enable anthropology to establish itself legitimately as a scientific discipline. Rather, can it not be seen that as the cornerstone of the anthropological discipline it serves to diminish the overall anthropological project in a way that is highly unsatisfactory, unless, that is, one wants to reduce anthropology to being a specialised discipline that deals solely with localised problems and eschews general statements. Ironically, then, fieldwork, which was set down as necessary to establish the scientific credentials of the discipline, threatens, in the current world, to lessen the scope of anthropology to a position in which it will only be able to make a subjective comment on a particular social encounter and by so doing risks being unable to satisfy one of the most basic of scientific criteria, that is, the capacity to transform particular insights into general theoretical understanding.

The emphasis upon fieldwork as the *sine qua non* of anthropological research was imposed at a time when anthropology was just being established as an academic discipline. It served to give a focus and a specificity to the study of anthropology that helped to legitimate it as a separate discipline: anthropologists were people who went out in difficult conditions to 'study the natives'. This also served positivist and empiricist criteria of scientific study. The anthropologist studied other people in the same way that the natural scientist studied natural phenomena. It served, furthermore, to provide a political legitimation of the discipline in the context of colonial expansion: anthropologists could be useful to the colonial administration in dealing with the natives (even if anthropologists were not always happy in such a role, nevertheless it did serve their purposes to the extent that it meant, at the very least, that colonial administrations were less hostile to the presence of anthropologists).

But the problematic that fieldwork involves is more deep-seated than this. The question remains as to the extent that fieldwork as an operational technique, in terms of participant observer, functions within the discipline. The bringing into question of the established golden age myth of the Malinowskian fieldworker working in harmonious rapport with the natives has brought epistemological factors into play which are difficult to cope with in the framework of traditional anthropological enquiry.

The consequence has been that anthropology since the sixties has been marked by a persistent sense of crisis, to the extent that an anthropologist as eminent as Lévi-Strauss even foresees the end of anthropology as an independent discipline. In recent years, wilting under the

strain of post-modernism, the crisis, particularly in the realm of representation, has become acute. The impact of the volume *Writing Culture* and the whole 'literary turn in anthropology', as Bob Scholte has termed it, is a recognition of how deeply felt the problem is.

Paul Rabinow, considering the influence of literary models in anthropology, has discerned a change of emphasis between the work of an anthropologist like Clifford Geertz who is drawn to literary models, and a James Clifford who approaches anthropology from outside. He writes: Geertz is "directing his efforts to reinvest an anthropological science with the help of textual mediations. The core activity is still social descriptions of the other, however modified by new conceptions of discourse, author or text. The other for Clifford is the anthropological representation of the other. This means that Clifford is simultaneously more firmly in control of his project and more parasitical. He can invest his questions with few constraints; he must constantly feed off the other's texts"[17]. It is certainly true that Clifford's sensibility is that of a literary critic rather than an anthropologist and to this extent the distinction Rabinow is drawing is justified. But the general conclusion he is drawing here - that the fieldwork experience necessarily gives anthropological representation a different (less parasitical) authority - raises a number of questions.

Although James Clifford has made his name in anthropology with his later theoretical writings, he first came to attention with his excellent study, based on his doctoral research, of the French ethnographer/missionary Maurice Leenhardt. For this project Clifford lived in Paris. He spoke to people who knew Leenhardt. He read books and consulted archives. He constructed an image of the man from what he learned. Now this is exactly what any ethnographer actually does. The fact that his subject was an individual rather than a society does not alter this fact. After all, studies of particular individuals are not unknown in ethnographic literature, of which Marjorie Shostak's *Nisa: The Life and Words of a !Kung Woman* provides a fine example. Admittedly Clifford was not able to speak with the subject of study, since he was no longer alive, but this does not change the nature of the research, since ethnography extends in time as well as in space. Yet, *Person and Myth* is clearly not ethnography. This is so because the focus of the study makes its overall concerns ones that are perhaps more appropriate to literary criticism than anthropology. Which is not to say that it would not be possible to do an 'ethnography' of Leenhardt, but this would require not a difference of research methodology, but a different focus on the material - Clifford would need to contextualise Leenhardt's life in relation to a whole nexus of societal relations that would make the subject less Leenhardt's own life and work, but that wider context. This is not what Clifford is interested in doing. He is looking at Leenhardt's life both to understand the man in his spatial and temporal context and to draw from this study some general conclusions. His critical approach may thus be said to be for the most part literary, rather than anthropological: his work is not social description, but a critical appraisal of one man. Yet it also impinges strongly upon and could even be said to represent an important contribution to anthropological literature. That it is so is a further criticism of ethnographically based

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[17]. Rabinow, 'Representations are Social Facts', in *Writing Culture*, p 242.

anthropology that seems to be very circumscribed in the tools it has to deal with its own historiography and theoretical concerns.

Rabinow describes Clifford as an 'ex officio scribe' of anthropology, a designation that is accurate in as far as it goes, but, as Rabinow leaves the statement hanging in the air, he implies that textual evidence in less valid in anthropological terms and that by not directly confronting the Other, Clifford is in some sense involved in an activity qualitatively quite different from anthropology (even though Rabinow appears to undermine his own argument by stating that Clifford does participate as an observer in the anthropological milieu). Although Rabinow is acutely sensitive to the relation between text and representation of a social event, what he appears to be unwilling to take on board is the possibility that the fieldwork context itself can be, in some cases, reductive of the overall anthropological project. Rabinow's argument in this context appears to result from a desire to retain the disciplinary authority which is perceived as being given by the fieldwork experience and of which anthropologists still seem to feel the need: that one needs to assert that it is more parasitical to engage with texts than with real people seems to give evidence of a certain sense of insecurity.

The discussion here hinges on the question of whether or not the process of fieldwork itself provides a sufficient grounding, quite apart from the anthropologist's own subjective experience of the field, for someone to be considered an anthropologist. Is ethnography to be viewed as the defining characteristic at the root of the anthropological discipline?[18] It is for this reason that the image of a rite of passage is attractive, since initiation, by its very process, effects a change in the status of the individual who has undergone it.

If we consider individual fieldworkers here we can perhaps gain a greater insight into this question. Sidney Mintz has called Alfred Métraux the 'fieldworker's fieldworker' and it is true that Métraux appears to have been born to fieldwork as few other anthropologists have been. However, does the quality of Métraux's work depend on his fieldwork technique? Métraux appears to have been an extremely adaptable person with strong affective qualities that gave him the ability to fit into most social situations. His anthropological work thus flowed naturally from his own personality: he naturally responded to people in an anthropological way and it is debatable whether particular fieldwork techniques did anything to help this process (indeed Métraux was not specifically trained as an anthropologist). On the other hand we could consider someone like Ruth Benedict, who found fieldwork extremely trying and whose reputation is based upon non-fieldwork based projects. Was fieldwork a help to Benedict's development as an anthropologist, or did it actually retard it and prevent her from establishing herself until later in her career?

It is worth pointing out here that the vast majority of those who have provided anthropology with its most crucial theoretical models (Marx, Weber, Durkheim, Simmel) never did any fieldwork. Even today the importance that thinkers like Foucault have shows how anthropology must generally

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[18] The question of exactly what ethnography is itself by no means clear. It is defined, both by the Oxford and Chambers dictionaries as the "scientific description of the races of [men] (Oxford) [the earth](Chambers)", a definition that must rank as one of the more obscure in the language.

look for its theoretical models outside anthropology as such. There is nothing surprising in this: in most other intellectual disciplines there is a divide between those who are good at data collection and analysis; others who are good at making comparative connexions and creating theoretical models. It is exceptional to find someone who is adept at both. To expect that anthropological theory can be generated directly out of one's own fieldwork data appears somewhat simplistic, but is necessarily assumed by the emphasis that anthropology still places on the fieldwork encounter. The contrary is, perhaps, closer to the truth: that the very proximity to the material that fieldwork entails serves at the same time to make it difficult to stand back from the material with the distance that is necessary to make connexions between different source material.

At the same time, is anything to be gained from a debate that concentrates primarily on processes of writing? Is to do so not merely to displace the problems involved to a level of practice that is secondary? What appears to be more important is to consider the actual nature of anthropological evidence and the way different forms of evidence affect the way in which the scientific endeavour of anthropology can take a more effective form. This is a qualitative task.

A personal note may be perhaps helpful at this point. As someone who was drawn to anthropology purely through an interest in theoretical questions it raised and with absolutely no interest in doing a fieldwork study of 'another people', it was something of a surprise to me to discover the emphasis that was placed upon fieldwork in the anthropological discipline. I was immediately struck by what seemed to me the arbitrary nature of this emphasis and also by the restrictive framework it provided for the consideration of issues that interested me. Although I am in a fortunate position of being able to do research on these problems, I am also conscious of the fact that this research will probably not qualify me to be considered as a fully-fledged anthropologist. That anthropology can take for its subject matter only material that can be obtained in alien societies through a technique of data gathering that assumes such alienness has never interested me and seems to have the danger that the anthropologist might tend to think of such a society as exclusively representing the ethnographic experience, an experience quite independent of his daily experience of living. Unlike Métraux, one could easily fall into the trap of believing there was no continuum between the two. Furthermore it leaves anthropology wide open to the sorts of controversies that have erupted over the revelation of Malinowski's diaries and Derek Freeman's debunking of Margaret Mead's Samoan ethnography.

The other ethical question raised in this respect concerns the attitude of the anthropological discipline as a whole towards the subject of its study. Vine Deloria Jr's *Custer Died For Your Sins* may not be terribly well argued but the facts presented are sufficient in themselves certainly bring the moral question of anthropological fieldwork into focus. To inflict such numbers of badly prepared students who are often inadequately educated in the social skills and needs of other cultures on indigenous peoples seems to represent a gross case of negligence. Fieldwork research spread so widely can only lead to indigestible quantities of data being collected which both lead to sterility in the anthropological discipline itself (it seems significant that very few major American anthropologists of

the past thirty years have studied North American Indians) as well as effecting the structure of the indigenous societies themselves. The joke that the average American Indian family consists of two adults, two children and one anthropologist is one that contains a warning that must be heeded about the structure of anthropological research. It is not enough to say that anthropologists in such a situation may be a nuisance but do not do any real damage, since they are part of a whole process of imposition that has a qualitative and generally detrimental effect upon indigenous cultures. Although this may be the most extreme example, it represents the logical conclusion of the fetishisation of fieldwork in anthropology: logically to obtain their degree all undergraduates should do some fieldwork, but to do so would be to undermine the whole basis of anthropological knowledge, as well as being an unnecessary imposition on the hospitality of other people.

The need for fieldwork in anthropological research arose from a range of exigences that all led in the direction of the legitimation of the discipline in intellectual discourse. It provided anthropology with its very own 'laboratory', in which it could carry out the experiments which it saw as being necessary to establish the scientific credentials of an intellectual discipline. Today such exigencies have changed. Intensive participant-observation is becoming increasingly difficult due to frequent hostility both from the home government, which above all wants 'value for money', and the native governments, often justifiably wary of the consequences of anthropological research. It is very clear that anthropology needs to extend its range of operational techniques for, if fieldwork has come to assume such importance because, as George Stocking has stated, there was a "feeling that ethnographic categories were somehow inadequate, and that what was needed was a new body of data unencumbered by theoretical assumption"[19], today we can perceive the opposite picture, in which there is such a disproportion between the data amassed by fieldwork and the theoretical application of such data, that it is necessary to explore anthropological questions in a wider context.

In the present context of anthropological knowledge, there would seem to be a great need for anthropology to examine its own sociology of knowledge and consider the need that it serves in contemporary society, in which knowledge of the 'primitive', whatever that may mean and even if still possible, can hardly be regarded as its primary task.

Much of the critique of ideas of ethnographic fieldwork we have made may be seen as being banal and commonplace, but it has been necessary to try to give a focus to the critique of anthropology that will be developed through the thesis, which will attempt to re-consider romanticist concerns within the anthropological context, with particular look at surrealism as a means by which to bring such concerns into focus.

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[19] Stocking, *Observers Observed*, p 94.

CHAPTER TWO:

THE CONTEXT OF SURREALISM

> *It's spring - the needle goes wild in the compass.*
> Jacques Prévert

Introduction

Surrealism and French ethnology were both established in the same turbulent era and responded to some of the same exigences. The years following the First World War were ones of great upheaval in France, especially in the cultural sphere. We will look at some of the ways in which the correspondences between surrealism took form in the next chapter. In this chapter we will consider the nature of surrealism itself and the way it responded to changing historical circumstances through its history. We will also take a glance at surrealism sociologically and try to give a focus to the question of what exactly surrealism is and what it represents within the context of Western society. In so doing it is hoped to suggest contrasts and points of contact between surrealism and anthropology. In particular it will set the scene for a consideration of issues of subject and object and the nature of objectivity in surrealism which will be developed in the next chapter.

As a movement surrealism took form between the years from 1922 to 1924. It had its birth in 1919, with the publication of Breton's and Soupault's *Les Champs magnétiques,* and had evolved out of Paris Dada, as the negation of the Dadaist negation.

Dadaism was an extreme response to the carnage and waste of the First World War. It had first surfaced in neutral Zurich during the war and had spread to Berlin, New York, Cologne, Barcelona and finally to Paris in 1919. It extolled the values of pure negativity in responding to the crisis of European consciousness brought on by the First World War. Surrealism from its beginnings aimed to deepen this crisis and provoke the conditions necessary for the establishment of a new society based upon different values to that of the discredited culture. At the same time, surrealist revolt was not simply a destructive response to what was perceived as the barbarity of Western civilisation. If it had emerged directly out from the negativity of Dadaism, it was also the heir to the rich romantic tradition, and emerged as much from the nineteenth century French symbolist movement as from Dada.

The word 'sur-réalisme' appears to have been coined around 1915 by Albert-Pierre Birot and had been taken by Apollinaire to describe his play *Les Mamelles de Tiresias.* As a word, it had a quality about it that helped to define a mood of the period. Several attempts were made to utilise it as a definition for particular activities before the group that had gathered around André Breton in the wake of the disintegration of Dada managed to give the word a meaning precise enough to act as the foundation for a particular movement and sensibility.[1]

By 1924 a sufficiently coherent platform for collective activity had been established, which was expressed by André Breton in the *Manifesto of Surrealism* published in that year. Centred very much in Freudian psychoanalysis, the Manifesto placed a revolutionary value in the idea of automatic writing (initiated by *Les Champs magnétiques*) which was seen as providing the means by which one could destroy the bourgeois notion of literature and put the writer in touch with the more profound sources of creativity hidden within the unconscious psyche. The sources of romanticism were invoked and the imagination was given an exemplary quality. The first issue of the movement's journal, *La Révolution Surréaliste,* under the editorship of Benjamin Péret and Pierre Naville, appeared in December of the same year and was soon followed by the first important group declaration, issued 27th January 1925 and bearing twenty six signatures. Its central demand was for the 'complete

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[1] The etymology of the word is complex in the context of the period. The prefix sur- in French literally means 'above' or 'over', but also serves where one would, in English, use the term 'super-'. At the beginning of the century, Nietzsche's concept of the 'übermensch' had gained currency and was translated by the word 'surhomme' - the title, indeed, of a novel by Jarry that was one of the most direct precursors of surrealism. In the 1930's, Herbert Reed tried to establish the phrase 'super-realism', and more recently A.C. Graham (in *Reason and Spontaneity*) has argued for the same word. Such a translation would certainly be erroneous, since it divests the word of the more subtle shadings of the French word. But also it does not correspond with the use the surrealists themselves have made of it, which is dialectically 'beyond' as well as 'above' realism (i.e. it is not merely 'superior' to it). Indeed, in no sense, it seems to me, do surrealists seek to imply that surrealism is a superlative form of realism: to the contrary it conceives itself as exploring areas of which realism refuses to accept the existence.

liberation of the mind *and all that resembles it.*'

The recent publication of the day-book kept by the Bureau of Surrealist Research through 1925 has enabled us to see the everyday conflicts that emerged in the early period of the surrealist adventure. Looking through these notes it is sometimes surprising that the group survived at all, and that it did so is primarily due to the fact that André Breton decided to take a firm hand with surrealist activity in order to give it a greater overall cohesive systematisation. He took over the editorship of *La Révolution Surréaliste* from issue no 4, dated 18 July 1925, an issue that also contained an insulting letter from Breton to Joseph Delteil, which represented the first expulsion from the group.

In many ways the key figure in surrealist activities prior to this had been Antonin Artaud who had sought to push the group to the limits of the exploration of their inner lives, although in a collective context that would emphasise the bringing into question of the notion of the self. Breton had already perceived the dangers in following such a course when, in 1923, he had put an end to the sleepwalking sessions that had threatened to end in suicide or murder. And during 1925 social issues imposed themselves and came to impinge strongly on surrealist concerns, to the extent that Artaud began to become isolated. To maintain the cohesion of the group and prevent it from degenerating into disparate activity, Roger Vitrac and Philippe Soupault had been expelled for, respectively, their ambitions in the theatre and literature. It was in early 1927, however, that the most significant early expulsion took place, when Artaud was accused of seeing "in the Revolution only a metamorphosis in the inner conditions of the soul..." An expulsion undoubtedly with significant ideological implications: surrealism was breaking with the philosophical idealism that had characterized the Manifesto and the early period of its history.

It had been political exigences that had caused the surrealists to question the idealist basis of their work, as well as the need to prevent it from degenerating into preciosity. The effect of the Bolshevik Revolution had not penetrated deeply into Parisian intellectual life until this time, and indeed Aragon had described the Russian Revolution as a 'vague ministerial crisis'. In 1925, however, the Moroccan War had broken out, in which France was engaged in one of the earliest fights against indigenous anti-colonialist movements. The surrealists declared themselves in support of the Rif and against France, stating unequivocally that for them 'France no longer exists'. This position brought them close to the French Communist Party, which had equally taken an anti-colonialist line on the war, and to marxism in general. A rapprochement was sought, primarily through the Clarté group, a splinter communist group with whom the surrealists actively collaborated. The necessity to respond to such political exigences was felt by the whole group, but the form that such rapprochement should take, and in particular the appropriate surrealist response to dialectical materialism, was to lead to disagreements and see first a split with Pierre Naville, who defected to the Trotskyist opposition in 1927 over the relation of art and revolution, and then the wholesale disruption of the group in 1929.

The political situation in 1929 was extremely complex. In the Soviet Union the consolidation of Stalin's position and the rise of the left opposition had complicated the answer to questions that, a few years previously, had appeared to be very straightforward: was one for or against the Soviet

Union? Was one for or against communism? In 1929, too, the PCF was riven with internal dissention which was lead to the withdrawal of those in the leadership, such as Boris Souvarine, who were sympathetic to collaboration with the surrealists.

But the split in 1929 cannot be explained in simple terms and involves multiple strands of contention about what the Surrealist Group ought to be and what it had become. It would be a study in itself to look fully at all of these issues, for they embraced political commitment and ideological questions, as well as questions of personal loyalty and morality (complicated by the fact that Breton was in the process of divorcing his wife Simone, who had played an important part in the group activities and was respected in the circle to the extent that personal loyalty to her rather than Breton led to several withdrawals[2]. What concerns us here is less the actual crisis than the manifest effect it had on the way the group evolved.

Breton took the offensive, issuing a Second Manifesto of Surrealism in which several members of the group were attacked in the most uncompromising terms. The real significance of the Second Manifesto, however, was to provide a philosophical basis for surrealism which defined the nature of surrealist research and the way in which it would develop during the next few years.

If the First Manifesto had been written under the sign of Freud, the motivating spirit of the Second was undoubtedly Hegel. An insistence on the dialectical method now transforms the idealism of the First Manifesto. The romanticism is deepened but also treated critically and surrealist aims are established with a precision lacking in the First Manifesto. The overall surrealist project is defined in these terms: "Everything tends to make us believe that there exists a point of the mind at which life and death, real and imaginary, past and future, communicable and incommunicable, high and low, are not perceived as contradictions. It would be vain to attribute to surrealism any other motive than the hope of determining this point. It is clear, moreover, that it would be absurd to ascribe to surrealism either a purely destructive or a purely constructive character - the point at issue being precisely this: that construction and destruction can no longer be brandished against each other. It becomes clear also that surrealism is not interested in taking into account [anything...] that has not for its ultimate end the conversion of being into a jewel, internal and unseeing, with a soul that is neither of ice nor or fire." This Hegelian dimension of surrealist activity, emerging from the political concerns of the movement and the rapprochement with marxism, was supplemented by what might

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[2] It is here worth mentioning - as much in the light of the questions raised in the first chapter about the way in which evidence is constructed as anything else - that Breton's divorce has had a lasting impact on our perception of surrealist history. For many years, Maurice Nadeau's book *The History of Surrealism* was the only authoritive source for a general history of surrealism and it remains the most detailed history covering the whole period from 1919 to 1939. This book was published in 1945 and Nadeau had collected most of his material during the war years. He therefore had no access to Breton himself, nor to many of his closest associates. His main informant appears to have been Raymond Queneau who was most affected by Breton's divorce, since he was married to Simone Breton's sister, Janine. In the 1940's, Queneau still had a certain amount of rancour towards Breton. Nadeau's book, although even handed for the most part, is inflected through Queneau, and thus our perception of surrealist history is often distorted from that perspective.

seem to be a movement in the opposite direction, towards deeper research into surrealist tradition and in particular sources of occult belief. Breton demanded the "profound, veritable occultation of surrealism",[3] which was intended a double sense - first as a call to explore the occult tradition, particularly alchemy, but also as a demand that surrealism itself should, if not disappear, at least seek to be invisible to the eyes of the vulgar who would corrupt it with worldly concerns. A dialectical movement, also, acknowledging the interplay between private and public and internal and external.

By March 1930 the crisis had more or less resolved itself and 21 surrealists declared themselves in solidarity with Breton. A fresh cause of division arose soon thereafter, however,when Louis Aragon, until then Breton's right hand man, started to become seduced by Stalinism after attending the Kharkov conference for writers and artists in 1930. Aragon wavered in his affiliations for some time, before deciding definitively in favour of the PCF against surrealism in 1932 (he went on to become one of the most consistent defenders of the Stalinist line in France until his death in 1982).

The Aragon affair further strained relations between the surrealists and the PCF which deteriorated slowly through a number of incidents during the early thirties and became definitive in 1935, since which time the surrealists have been unyielding in their opposition to Stalinism.

Otherwise during the thirties the Surrealist Group remained relatively cohesive in terms of membership, although significant defections (Caillois and Tzara) and expulsions (Eluard for Stalinism and Dali for general opportunism) did take place.

The Second World War brought an end to group activities. Several members of the group were on Nazi wanted lists and the group dispersed with only a few members remaining in Paris. A considerable number sought refuge in the Americas and activity was continued, most notably in New York and Mexico City. In Paris itself, clandestine activity did continue, co-ordinated by Noël Arnaud and Jean-François Chabrun. Even though daily group activity along the lines established in the pre-war period was obviously impossible, it is remarkable how much work was accomplished. A heavy toll was paid, however: eight members of the group died at the hands of the Nazis.

Breton returned to France in 1946 and the group was re-constituted on much the same basis as in the pre-war period, although not without some traumas. Only two of those who participated in the war-time activities, Adolphe Acker and Henri Pastoureau, joined Breton's group. The others re-grouped as the 'Revolutionary Surrealist Group', formed in conjunction with the Belgian Surrealist Group and directly oppositional to Breton's group. The main bone of contention was - once again - Stalinism. By 1946 Breton and most of those who had been in exile were implacably opposed to Stalinism, which they saw as unredeemably counter-revolutionary and totalitarian in its aims. For

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[3] If this double concern seems disjointed, it should be recalled that such concerns are by no means alien to other marxists of the period. The work of Walter Benjamin, who was familiar with surrealism, was moving in a similar direction, and more particularly the research of Ernst Bloch is concerned with exactly the same sources of occult illumination as providing a necessary complement to the manifest marxist will to transform the world.

those who had remained in France, though, the picture was rather different. The Communists were the heroes of the resistance. The Show Trials, the betrayal of the Spanish Republic, their manipulation of the Popular Front, were all but forgotten and not even a matter for debate. It was not until David Rousset created a scandal by exposing the reality of the concentration camps in 1947 that the PCF's ascendancy came to be challenged. By their uncompromisingly anti-Stalinist stance, given particular prominence in their 'Rupture inaugurale' declaration that defined the surrealist aims in the post-war era, the surrealists were out on a limb in the tenor of the time. As Noël Arnaud was later to acknowledge, Breton was absolutely correct in his assessment of the situation. Collaboration with the PCF was as impossible as it had been in the mid-thirties and the Revolutionary Surrealist Group was soon to collapse, leaving Breton's group as the acknowledged representative of surrealism in France. Even so, it took a considerable time for the group to gain a cohesion and the following years were a period of great inner turmoil.

First Roberto Matta was expelled in October 1948 for "intellectual disqualification and moral ignominy". The reasons for this expulsion were personal rather than ideological, but were to lead to the expulsion a week later of Victor Brauner and his younger friends (Alexandrian, Bouvet, Jouffroy, Rodanski and Tarnaud) who were accused of organising 'fractional activity'. This had been preceded by the withdrawal of the two Egyptian surrealists Georges Henein and Ramses Younan, who accused Breton of trying to recuperate surrealist tradition rather than confront contemporary problems. It was in 1951, however, that the most serious crisis took place, known variously as the 'Carrouges' or 'Pastoureau' Affair (although Maurice Hanry suggested rather impishly that it should have been called the 'Breton' affair).

Like the 1929 crisis, the 1951 affair has considerable ramifications which we shall consider subsequently. In many ways it is more difficult to deal with than that of 1929, since no ideological reason for the crisis is readily apparent.

Whatever the reasons were, the effect was to completely re-constitute the group under Breton's authority. Apart from Breton himself, only Benjamin Péret, Jehan Mayoux and Jean Ferry remained from the pre-war group and Ferry was soon to take his distance. From that time the group remained remarkably cohesive and we find that the majority of members in 1951 were still involved in the Surrealist Group when it was dissolved in 1969. Breton himself died in 1966.

From the Second World War until the time of its dissolution, the French Surrealist Group was involved in a quest for what was described in their journal La Brèche as "the poetic revaluation of thought". In many ways the central figure around which surrealist thought revolved in this period was the utopian thinker, Charles Fourier, who was seen by the surrealists as opening up the possibility for an approach to the contemporary moral impasse and lead to the introduction of a new moral sensibility. The 1965 International Surrealist Exhibition, 'L'Ecart absolu' was dedicated to Fourier and his spirit was very much in evidence in the other main exhibitions, which provided a focus for surrealist concerns of the period, in 1959, devoted to eroticism and in 1968, devoted to the 'pleasure principle'. 1968 was a crucial year in surrealist history. It began full of promise with the participation

of the group at the Cultural Congress in Havana, an extremely important forum for the question of cultural reciprocity between Europe and the 'Third World', and reached a culmination with the Prague Spring and near revolution in France. The events both in Czechoslovakia (the 'Principle of Pleasure' exhibition was organised by the Czech group and travelled from Prague to Brno and Bratislava through February to May) and in Paris had a strong surrealist component, but any revitalization of surrealism this might have brought was crushed with the entry of the Warsaw Pact troops into Prague on 21 August 1968. The collective declaration issued by the surrealists in September 1968, although defiantly titled 'They Can't Kill the Spring', reads in retrospect as the last cry of a drowning man. From that point, the Paris group seems to have rapidly disintegrated and a tract issued in March 1969 bore witness to the collapse of the group. Its dissolution was formally announced by Jean Schuster in his article 'Le Quatrième Chant', published in *Le Monde* on 4th October 1969, which gave the main reason as the "absence of any internal cohesion".[4]

I hope this potted history of the French Surrealist Group gives us the bare-bones to look more closely at the context in which surrealism emerged and to try to draw out some of the themes relevant to anthropology.

Surrealism in Sociological Perspective

We have noted how surrealism took form in a period of considerable turmoil. The First World War had created a loss of confidence in the values of the society that had been responsible for such a wasteful and meaningless carnage. In France the land itself remained scarred by the minefields and trenches that remained behind long after the hostilities had ended.

This 'crisis of consciousness' had already taking form in the pre-war period and can be traced to the decadence of the *fin-de-siècle* period. Throughout Europe, in the early years of the century, intellectual and artistic movements proliferated. Although some of such groupings, such as cubism, simply represented the concretization of a particular style in art, others, such as the different forms of futurism in Italy and Russia and expressionism in Germany, raised socio-political concerns within their intellectual framework. The most radical of such movements was undoubtedly Dadaism which took form in 1915 in Zurich and from which, as we have seen, surrealism was later directly to emerge.

Such intellectual ferment was paralleled by socio/political problems that saw the rise of revolutionary socialism that presented a challenge to the capitalist world hegemony that was to become especially acute with the triumph of the Bolshevik Revolution. The fact that Lenin was living

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[4] Although this was not a clean break. Attempts were thereafter made to re-constitute the group. In fact the immediate consequence appears to have been that the group split into two distinct entities, one known as the BLS group after the title of the journal they published (*Bulletin de liaison surréaliste*), the other the Coupure group. Neither group appears, however, to have continued to meet on a daily basis.

only a few blocks away from the Dada cabaret in Zurich tends to suggest a symbolic link between the intellectual and political upheavals.

We have noted how surrealism represented the 'negation' of the Dadaist negation. For all of its radical questioning of bourgeois values, Dadaism had seen itself as a part of the developing European avant-garde that is now reified as 'modernism'. As it took form, however, Paris Dada soon began to react as much against the traditionally marginal role assigned to artists in bourgeois society as against the values of that society itself. It is this fact, which became even clearer with surrealism, that above all perhaps marks surrealism off from the intellectual movements that preceded it and, indeed, from those that followed it.

The symbolic gesture was to cease to meet at the fashionable left-bank literary cafés. Instead they sought out unpretentious cafés, generally on the right-bank, well away from areas where intellectuals traditionally congregated. The Dadaist and later surrealist 'headquarters' became the Certá, a cafe in the Passage de l'Opéra which, being in the centre of the Paris business and shopping centres, was frequented by a nondescript crowd of office-workers, shoppers and strollers. Although cafés have taken on an enormous importance in the daily life of the surrealists, as they have for other Parisian intellectuals, the surrealists seem to have gone to great trouble to find cafes for which the main criterion appears to have been that they wouldn't encounter other intellectuals, but where the clientele would be congenial, comprising for preference a mixed bag of the working-class, the dispossessed and various marginals. A certain taste for decrepitude, for the unwonted and the out-of-place was part of a general surrealist inclination that was less for such qualities in themselves than as places where the unexpected was to be expected and where the promise of revelation was always present. The preferred area was, in Nadeau's words, "the Montmartre of suspect boulevards swarming with the odd fauna of whores and their pimps, the crowd of those who pretend to enjoy themselves. Encounters here were astonishing: circus people (the Cirque Médrano was only two stops away) accompanied by trapeze girls with their eyes 'elsewhere'..." But this can assigned less to a sort of inverse snobbism than to a generalized distaste for the closed nature of Parisian intellectual circles. For Paris is a very small city in which, unlike New York or London, everyone knows everyone and one tends to be judged by who one is 'in' with. Surrealism needed to create its own space and break with the Parisian cliquishness and the parochialism that asserted Paris as the 'centre of the world'. As Thirion was to write: in the literary quarters "the clever skill with which people presented themselves as painters or literati seemed to spoil the element of chance in advance and took away any sense of anticipation".[5] This was thus a tactical decision: they had no objection to the more literary cafés for personal meetings. But group meetings never seem to have been held there. In discussing the life of surrealist cafés, Robert Benayoun has said that the rendezvous would usually be changed for rather trivial reasons - a boorish or too familiar waiter, a bad-tempered cashier or due to the fact that 'stockbrokers, philatelists or actors' had meetings in the same café. They also

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[5] Thirion, *Revolutionaries Without Revolution* p 136

objected to cards or music being played.[6]

Their final choice of cafe, which served them from 1954 until the dissolution in 1969, was the Promenade de Vénus, in what was then the working-class Les Halles district. It was chosen, according to Benayoun, because, apart from the charm of the poetic quality of the name, it was central, strategic, comfortable, magnetic and itinerant. It appears to have been a personal taste to choose unpretentious cafes, for it seems that none of the Surrealist groups have ever met together at the fashionable Montparnasse or Montmartre venues (although the dissident group around Desnos and Bataille did meet for a time at Aux Deux magots, but this cafe did not become fashionable until after the war when it became famous as Sartre's favourite place. What the surrealists seem rather to have been seeking was an environment in which they could establish a moral community. They sought out areas in which there was a sense of community feeling. This seem to have responded to a very strong need within most of the surrealists to break the aura surrounding the status of artists and intellectuals in contemporary society, an aura that is probably stronger in Paris than anywhere else. This fact does distinguish the surrealists from the vast majority of other intellectuals, who have generally tended, at least collectively, to cling to their status as a breed apart, whether they consider themselves as vanguard or traditional artists. While artists and intellectuals have always created their own particular communities centred around their own artistic and intellectual concerns, the surrealists always wanted something else: a sense of community, not to establish solidarity for common artistic activity, but founded in a moral sensibility.

At this point it is necessary to consider what exactly is meant by 'surrealism'. For my purposes it is necessary to consider surrealism in an extremely wide perspective. Surrealism is not a definable activity: by its very nature it is proteiform and to be defined, as the definitions of surrealism given by the surrealists over the years (which are appended to the thesis) make clear. Surrealism is always to be defined not by what it is but what it will become. It is thus definable only if we consider it as being transcendent of its own ontological category. As such it has something in common with the tao or the gnosis in, respectively, Taoism or Gnosticism. This, of course, makes it difficult to deal with methodologically or to clearly define the individuals who actually comprise the category of 'surrealists', since surrealist activity is not, by definition, reducible to what people actually do. For my purposes I intend to treat the subject in the following way: 'surrealism' is understood to comprise all those groups formed internationally that have called themselves 'surrealist' and have become recognised as such by the surrealist groups elsewhere; all those who have participated on the margins of such groups, in sympathy and critical relation (what Roger Caillois called 'complicity and divergence') with such groups; and all those lone individuals who have situated their own work in relation to surrealism and have been accepted as surrealists by the various groups. Generally I have tended to assume that participation in a Surrealist Group is enough for one to consider the

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[6]. Benayoun, *Le Rire des surréalistes* p 54

subsequent work of the writer to be still within the orbit of surrealism after his withdrawal from the group, unless a clear disjunction is apparent in the nature of his subsequent work - the clearest case of this being Aragon. But if a there is a continuum in such work, then it seems to me that the author must be considered to be a surrealist, since were he not to be so considered it would invalidate the surrealist quality of his work as when he was a member of the group.

Although there have been numerous surrealist groups in several countries, the starting point for a consideration of the collective impetus of surrealism must be the Paris Surrealist Group which functioned actively from 1924 until 1969 (although it would be more accurate to see this as two separate groups, the first of which functioned from 1924 until 1939, the second from 1946 until 1969).

The creation of intellectual movements is essentially a phenomenon of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries which reflected a change in the perception of the position of artists within their culture. Previously intellectuals and artists had tended to be solitary and individualistic figures and such artists who did work together did so not on any collective basis, but in terms of a master and apprentice relation. To be sure, there had always been a tendency for intellectual figures with a message, and generally a charismatic personality, to initiate social movements. The names of Luther, Calvin and Loyola immediately come to mind here. Also, the guild mentality of many craftsmen did draw artists together for financial or stylistic reasons. It is only with the dawn of romanticism, however, that an urge for artists and intellectuals to work together collectively becomes apparent. The establishment of the Athenaeum circle in Jena by the Schlegel brothers in 1798 is probably the first attempt artists and intellectuals made to try to work together collectively.

Similar groups formed throughout the nineteenth century, with a greater (the Parnassans, the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood) or lesser (symbolism, impressionism) degree of organisation. However, it was during the inter-war years of the twentieth century that such movements proliferated.

In looking at surrealism sociologically, Albert Souvy has argued that what differentiates surrealism from previous movements is its programmatic nature. Earlier movements did not issue manifestos and define their work so clearly. This is not entirely accurate. Both the Italian and Russian futurists did issue manifestos and the manifesto became something of a Dadaist trademark. It is, however, true that the surrealist manifestos defined surrealist activity with more precision than those of earlier groups. Where surrealism is undoubtedly to be distinguished from earlier groups, however, is in its longevity and in its concentrated nature

From 1924 until 1969, with the exception of the war years, the French Surrealist Group met every weekday (with a summer break - although the members of the group often went on holiday together). In the early years the meetings were twice daily - at lunchtime and then in the evening - but at some point seem to have been reduced to one meeting in the evening, between 6 and 8. The numbers attending varied from half-a-dozen to sometimes around fifty. The aim was that there should be about a dozen active members of the group, to keep its activity as intimate and intense as

possible, but without establishing any set structures or conditions of membership.

How do we define the nature of the Surrealist Group? Jochen Noth has precisely defined the way in which the Surrealist Group differs from any political group: "A political party whose actions are led towards the exterior, places at its heart a form of discipline that easily, and perhaps fatally, becomes a domination by the activists over the subjects. In surrealist revolt the process is reversed: the group is not a tool, but creates a sort of space for communication in which can be created a space of internal exchange, a process which replaces in great part the old communication of artist in relation to society: in great part the surrealist refusal consists in a refusal of society itself, but through a social organ that is the group."[7]

In a similar vein, Jules Monnerot has considered the Surrealist Group to be more of a secret society than an art movement.[8]

In seeking to classify the Surrealist Group, Monnerot rejects most established collective forms. He insists that 'clan', 'band' or 'sect' would be inappropriate terms to use. Monnerot considers that the only appropriate term might be the English one of a *set*, which he defines as a chance union without obligations or sanctions in which anyone can be denounced at any time and for any reason by any other member. As such it remains in the form of an imperfect realization of an ideal form, of a *Bund* (that is, of a society opposed both to that based on contract [*gesselschaft*] or that based on kinship relations [*gemeinschaft*])). The *set* as distinct from the *Bund* has no stable structures and can potentially collapse at any moment. It is an aggregation based not upon obligations but upon elective affinities.

As a free association united in a common cause but with no fixed principles and actively hostile to any form of proselytisation (indeed always seeking to prevent entrance to camp followers) can the Surrealist Group be viewed in the context of the history of secret societies? This question can be brought into relief by a consideration not of the Surrealist Group itself, but of the groupings set up around Georges Bataille which functioned between 1937 and 1939, Acéphale and the College of Sociology which, issuing from surrealist collective concerns, were defined directly in relation to the idea of a secret society. Since we have little specific information on the activities of Acéphale, we will concentrate on those the College of Sociology.

Roger Caillois, who had been one of the founders of the College of Sociology, specifically saw the College as a secret society in the tradition of monastic and military orders, Templars and Assassins, Jesuits and Freemasons. What seems to characterise all such orders was their conspiratorial nature: they were all societies for initiates, structurally reliant upon initiation rituals that would make access to the society difficult and, once such access had been obtained, withdrawal from the society would be even more difficult, in some cases impossible. Despite their attraction towards conspiratorial models, the College of Sociology was in this respect no more a secret society than the

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[7]. Jochen Noth in discussion in Ferdinand Alquié, *Entretiens sur le Surréalisme* p 514

[8] see Jules Monnerot, *La Poésie moderne et le sacré*

Surrealist Group was, since it was to be, as its inaugural declaration states, "as free of access as the established scientific community". In fact the feeling conveyed is that structurally the College of Sociology had far more in common with a conventional educational establishment than with a secret society, the difference being that whereas an educational establishment is hierarchically founded on a distinction between students and academics (tested by means of examinations and aggregations), dedicated to the pursuit of disinterested knowledge with absolutely no obligation for the participant to act on any findings resulting from the study, the College of Sociology would abolish the distinction between students and academics, would be dedicated to the pursuit of *interested* knowledge which would involve a requirement that the researcher should act on the findings of the research, and there would be no salaries involved. Within the College there would be no hierarchical structure, but the participants would have a sense of privilege in the very fact of their participation in the sacred conspiracy (a Communion of the Strong, to take the title of a book to be published later by Caillois). In this sense, the College would not seem to have strong connexions with the tradition of the secret society, many of the basic ideas of which, such as the need for initiation rituals, it did not share. It was a secret society only in its conspiratorial character, although it might be argued that this character was little more than a romanticisation of the project since, apart from Bataille and Caillois, none of the other participants seem to have taken such claims very seriously.[9]

"I am not for adepts," wrote André Breton in one his poems that might, one feels, have been addressed to the activity of the College of Sociology. Although in the Second Manifesto, Breton had called for the "profound, veritable occultation of surrealism" and elsewhere had said "We must keep the public out", nothing was more foreign to his nature than the assumed hierarchical structure of the College of Sociology. In calling for the occultation of surrealism, he was seeking an activity that would remain hidden from the eyes of the vulgar and the fashionable. Never once, however, did he succumb to the temptation to impose conditions of acceptance into the Surrealist Group. Nor did he seek to push surrealist activity in any one particular direction which would establish a collective rationale for group activity. This seems to be the crucial difference, at the organisational level, between the activities of the Surrealist Group and those of the College of Sociology. The Surrealist Group was consequently always more than the sum of its parts, always pressing beyond its own boundaries. The College of Sociology, on the other hand, was constrained by the framework placed around it by its participants and there could never be room for breaking down that framework. Its raison d'être would be disqualified in such a case. The Surrealist Group, however, was always a place of encounter open to all possibilities. There was no restriction placed on its members as to the direction its activities should take. Breton rather sought to establish the Surrealist Group as a place of encounter that would be available only to those able to perceive its existence. Like the Grail Castle, only the chosen would actually be able to see it. Reference to the grail legend, probably the

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9 Indeed even Bataille was dubious about placing the College of Sociology in the tradition of secret societies, particularly in ascribing to it a conspiratorial character.

surrealists' own favourite myth, is extremely suggestive in relation to the activities of the Group itself. Julien Gracq has contended that the Surrealist Group functions in the same way as the Round Table of Arthur's court: as a point of departure from and into the world. As such it takes form as an elective community established by a shared sense of mystic vocation.[10] Jean Ferry is even more suggestive in a story that is clearly based upon his own experience as a member of the Surrealist Group in which he describes a very secret society which it is difficult and perhaps even impossible to join, to the extent that many people spend their whole lives vainly trying to do so. On the other hand, many people are members of it without being aware of the fact, perhaps even without knowing of the society's existence. Others, who might think of themselves as leading members of the society, do not in fact belong to it at all. Here we can see the illumination of what Breton meant by occultation: the creation of a society that would be at once so secret it would be impossible to penetrate it and yet at the same time so limpid that anyone could at any moment discover its most intimate mysteries. As Gracq pointed out, the idea of a secret society was an almost necessary temptation to surrealism, but it represented more a symbolic gesture towards closure than any great desire for secrecy.[11] Indeed, it almost seems that the idea of a secret society was often invoked to prevent cliques developing within the group.

For, like the Arthurian court, the Surrealist Group would function in quite a different way from a secret society. The 'secret' (the Grail, surrealism) would remain external to the activities of the group itself. To see the Surrealist Group as an end in itself would be to defeat the whole purpose of surrealism. There would thus be no initiation ritual for entrance to the group, but each member would be under an unspoken obligation to uphold the values of the group and would be subject to denunciation at any time and possibly to immediate expulsion from the group. Such expulsion would involve no punishment or anathematising of the person involved, but would be necessary to protect the integrity and vitality of the group. In theory no one was immune from such denunciation.[12]

All this, of course, is the contrary of the basis of the secret society, to which the process of initiation is of crucial significance and provides a means whereby one demonstrates one's worthiness to be a member of the society. However once having established such worth, one no longer has anything to prove and can be expelled only by means of an equally complicated procedure and then only for grave misconduct that threatens the basis of the secret society, which thus has a reality of its own that the members must protect and the cardinal virtue is loyalty to the group. The surrealist, like the Arthurian knight, has no loyalty to the group; in fact has a duty to push the activities of the

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[10]. Julien Gracq *André Breton, quelques aspects de l'auteur* p

[11] Gracq *ibid* p

[12]. In practice, at least from 1951 onwards, Breton was probably immune from such denunciation, but this was because, like Arthur, he had established such prestige in the group that such a denunciation would have been unthinkable. To maintain such prestige, however, Breton's actions remained severely circumscribed within the moral framework surrealism had established.

group to the limit, in the process threatening the dissolution of the group at any moment. Again, like the Arthurian fellowship, the Surrealist Group cannot, indeed must not, without betraying its nature, become more important than the members that constitute it. To be accepted within the group one has to be chosen, one does not choose. In this respect we can perhaps give a clearer distinction between the Surrealist Group and the College of Sociology in that the former was a *fellowship* based upon mutual affinities, while the latter was a *brotherhood* based upon complicity and virility (although such virility was of a purely intellectual type).

If the Surrealist Group can never transcend the activities of those who comprise it, the surrealism itself, like the Grail, must always transcend such activity. What, then, is this surreal*ism* to which the individual surrealists and collective Surrealist Groups have allegiance?

The Belgian surrealist Marcel Mariën has written: "This word [surrealism] arouses so much confusion that it is impossible, when facing triumphant psittacism, to defend the strict, complicated principles which define the surrealist spirit. Furthermore, these principles are in many respects incommunicable. By this I mean that its no use striving to understand them from outside, to translate them into a language outside the experience itself - internal daily experience"[13] The reality of surrealism must therefore be by definition an ideal type in the Weberian sense, but an ideal type created not by the researchers studying surrealism, but by the surrealists themselves. This must take form through the quest for the 'Supreme Point' that Breton defined as being the aim of all surrealist activity. At the same time there was never any wish to actually attain such a point, since to do so would be to renounce life itself. As Breton explained: "I have spoken of a certain sublime point in the mountain. There was never any question of my going to live at that point. It would, besides, have at that moment ceased to be sublime and I myself a man".[14] In a similar vein, Aragon defined surrealism as "at best a notion that slips away like the horizon before the walker, for like the walker it is a relation between the spirit and that which it will never attain". And again, as the French Surrealist Group declared in 1947: "Surrealism is that which *will be*."

The quest for the location of this point is what can be said to characterise the surrealist beyond all other disagreements. Most histories and studies of tend to emphasise the arguments and splits that have taken place within surrealism. What, however, seems to be striking is the contrary - by how few serious splits there have been and by how little lasting rancour has been generated if one considers the level of concentrated collective activity involved. Certainly compared, for instance, to the contemporaneous Psychoanalytic Movement, the Surrealist Movement has remained remarkably cohesive and there have been no splits to compare with those between Freud and Jung or Adler, and nothing comparable with the rancour generated by the expulsion of Lacan from the

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[13]. *Transformaction* no 3 (1967) p 34

[14]. Breton *L'Amour fou* p 171. This is not to imply that the supreme point is conceived as being metaphorical in nature. To the contrary, it is reality in its pure form. But to actually bathe in that pure form would be to renounce the materiality of life, which is essentially imperfect in nature. "Perfection", as the surrealists always defined it, "is laziness."

Psychoanalytic Association. Indeed, there seems not to have been a single surrealist of importance who has later renounced his or her surrealist activity - not even Louis Aragon (who is considered the arch-renegade in surrealist circles) renounced his surrealist past but claimed it was part of his development towards the light of socialist realism and Stalinism. As Michel Leiris has explained in a recent interview: "You know, people are astonished that surrealist histories often seem frightful, full of exclusions and anathemas. But that came from the fact that surrealism was a passional movement. We treated each other as lovers who argue and drag each other through the mud".[15]

The one constant in the history of the French Surrealist Group was the presence of André Breton who, until his death in 1966, attended group meetings virtually every day, signed most of the tracts issued by the group and was responsible for the publication of the Surrealist Manifestos. Bearing in mind the particular quality of surrealist circles, how do we account for the special position of Breton in the history of surrealism?

Called the 'Pope', the 'Magus', the 'Arbiter' of surrealism by various enemies and critics, consideration of Breton's position certainly reveals a more subtle presence. Virtually all those who have participated in the Surrealist Group, no matter how bitterly they quarrelled with Breton, are agreed that his position was never one of a 'pope'. Octavio Paz, rarely a man to use vituperative language, described such a designation as an "ignoble epithet popularised by certain swine".[16] The words the surrealists themselves use to characterise Breton's position seem to be words like 'magnetism ', 'illumination','reflexion'. Jean Schuster says that nevertheless Breton had "an authority which, contrary to a leader's, aims at the development of ideas through mental stimulation and not their petrification through the intimidation of others".[17]

Even so, the history of the French Surrealist Group followed the course of a human life, with the enthusiasm of youth being followed by middle-age consolidation and then by decline and death. While Breton did not overtly outline this course, it seems clear that his life helped to define the course that was taken.

As we have noted, at the beginning of the Surrealist adventure, it was Artaud rather than Breton who was the dominant personality in the group. Indeed, judging from the daybook kept by the Bureau of Surrealist Research, it appears that Breton was not fully convinced of the desirability of continuing the Surrealist Group at all, and there are several entries in which he threatens to withdraw, often complaining about the laziness of colleagues and the neglecting of simple tasks. It was only with issue number 4 of *La Révolution Surréaliste* that he took over the editorship and imposed a

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[15]. interview in *Le Nouvel Observateur* 20/26 May 1988 p 63

[16] Paz *Alternating Currents* p 53

[17]. Schuster 'La Quatrième Chant' in *Tracts Surréalistes et Déclarations Collectives* p 291. Perhaps the best sketch of Breton's personality and particular qualities has been given by André Thirion in *Revolutionaries Without Revolution* p 173/4

tighter discipline on surrealist activity. Antonin Artaud was an extremely troubled individual and he had a forceful but dogmatic character. As Breton was later to acknowledge Artaud had given surrealist activities an urgency and powerful impetus, and such vitality is witnessed by the first three issues of *La Révolution Surréaliste*. But Breton recognised that such furious activity was liable soon to burn itself out. In any event it did not provide a basis for sustained collective activity.

From the time that Breton took over the editorship of the journal, he was certainly the central figure of the Surrealist Group. However, such position was sustained by no authority inherent in him as an individual. It is difficult to see any charismatic quality in his leadership which was rather maintained by his resolve of purpose. It was above all his moral intransigence that gave him authority, an intransigence that was such that he was prepared to break with his closest friends if he felt they had behaved in an unacceptable way. Aragon was later to say: "People tended to judge AB too hastily by appearances: that commanding air of his, and the impression he gave of always being in the majority."[18] Yet it is apparent that Breton's authority was always on the line during this period. He could take nothing for granted. André Thirion has noted that during the crisis of 1929, it looked for a time that everyone would desert Breton and perhaps establish a group without him.[19] It is apparent from some of the comments, and especially by the tone, of the Second Manifesto, that Breton feared the establishment of an alternative Surrealist Group. Indeed he accuses Georges Bataille of trying to form such a group. Bataille always denied any such intention but it does seem that those disaffected surrealists who gathered around him would have liked to have formed a separate group to challenge the authority of Breton's group. That this never actually occurred seems to bear witness more to the lack of organisational capabilities among the dissidents than any lack of will. Bataille is probably the only one who had the intellectual calibre to challenge Breton's authority and there seem to be no reason to doubt that he is telling the truth when he says that he had no interest in doing so. It is clear that, at least up to the war, Breton's authority was purely nominal. Although he had the power to make decisions on behalf of the group, his authority was sustained only providing he made the correct decisions.

After the war, however, we see a different position emerging. We have noted that the re-establishment of the group had been subject to much turmoil in this period which culminated in the 'Carrouges Affair' of 1951. The crisis broke when Henri Pastoureau, one of the old guard of the group, objected to the presence of Michel Carrouges, a Catholic intellectual who had published a sympathetic and intelligent, if tendentious, study of surrealism entitled *André Breton et les données fondamentales du surréalisme* (1948). Carrouges's study was subject to criticism on a number of counts. The objections began with the title and the prominence that was given to Breton's name. More substantial, was the criticism that Carrouges had sought to treat surrealism, if not precisely as

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[18]. Aragon quoted by Simon Watson Taylor in the preface to the English translation *Paris Peasant* (Cape 1968) p 15

[19]. Thirion *Revolutionaries Without Revolution* p 190

a Christian heresy, at least as a movement was not at root hostile to fundamental Christian precepts, whilst he ignored the commitment both to atheism and to social revolution. Since the Surrealist Group had just re-affirmed its complete rejection of Christian ideas in a broadside entitled 'A la niche les glapisseurs de dieu', aimed specifically at those who would equate surrealism with Christian heresy, Carrouges's work certainly seemed to be out of line with surrealist thinking, yet Breton defended Carrouges as being someone sympathetic to surrealism. When Carrouges gave a lecture on surrealism at a meeting of Catholic intellectuals, however, Pastoureau and a group of other surrealists took the opportunity to create a disturbance. In the repercussions that followed it was discovered that Carrouges had lied to Breton about his participation in a Catholic propoganda film and he was expelled from participation in the Surrealist Group. Things did not end there, however, and Pastoureau found himself, for reasons that are not at all clear, under criticism for his actions.

There followed a vitriolic polemic which is well documented but the import of which is very difficult to discern. To my mind the most significant thing in the polemic was that at one point Breton, apparently for the first and only time in surrealist history, pulled rank, saying that if his position was not accepted he would dissolve the Surrealist Group altogether. When the dust had settled, Pastoureau, along with Acker, Harfaux, Henry, Hérold, Jean, Lebel and Waldberg had either been expelled or withdrew from the group. This constituted almost the whole of the pre-war 'old guard' and meant that the group had virtually been created anew. To emphasise the extent of the changes the group went through during this period, of the 14 collective declarations issued from 1947 to 1954, signed by a total of 113 individuals, only two (Breton and Péret) signed both the first 'Freedom is a Vietnamese Word' (April 1947) and the last 'Ça Commence Bien' (September 1954). Furthermore, following the Carrouges Affair, with the exception of Breton the only survivors from before the war were Péret, Mayoux and Ferry (Ferry himself withdrew in 1954, while Mayoux, living in Ussel, attended group meetings only infrequently). Otherwise, the nucleus of the group consisted of two Czech exiles (Heisler and Toyen), Adrien Dax, aged 38, who lived in Toulouse, and a number of much younger members: Nora Mitrani (aged 30); Jean-Louis Bédouin (21); Robert Benayoun (22); Jean Schuster (22); Georges Goldfayn (18); Gérard Legrand (24); Michel Zimbacca (27) and José Pierre (24). The predominance of youth should be noted. Noteworthy, too is the fact that, apart from Heisler and Mitrani who died in 1954 and 1961 respectively, all were still actively involved in the group up to the time of its dissolution in 1969.

In reading the documents around the 1951, one is struck by Breton's uncharacteristically bullish behaviour. He almost seems to have deliberately behaved in such a way that he knew would offend the older members of the group. One has the impression that he was determined to take the opportunity to re-constitute the group on a new basis that would take account of the changed post-war situation and he feared that the survivors of the pre-war period would be an encumbrance, insisting on moral exigences, notably in the political sphere, that Breton no longer saw as being relevant. It may also be that he wanted to give youth its chance. He always emphasised his faith in youth and it may be that he considered the political situation had changed so radically that it was necessary to

start again with young people who were unprejudiced by concerns of the thirties and the war years. Such speculations must remain for the most part unsubstantiated until more research is done into this period of surrealist history. What concerns us more here is the manifest effect that the upheaval had on the evolution of surrealist activities.

Jean Benoît was later to draw a distinction between the inter-war and post-war Surrealist Groups, noting that "two generations succeeded each other. The first came naturally to surrealism, the second was attracted by surrealism".[20] More than this, though, the second generation was not only attracted by surrealism, but also by the personality of Breton himself. This in itself stamped the post-war Surrealist Group with the personality of Breton in a way in which the inter-war group had never been, even though Breton was to become far less active personally in the group after 1951. The first generation were surrealists by a natural process of evolution; they did not have to think about what surrealism was and their own place within it. They themselves defined surrealism, which was commensurate to their own beings and everyday practice. Surrealism could only become what they made of it. They had no loyalty towards it or to Breton. For the second generation, however, surrealism was pre-existing: it had its own tradition into which they needed to fit. They could enrich, advance or, most difficult of all, re-make it, but they could not ignore it and follow their own path independently of surrealist history. To do so would obviously be to define oneself as not being a surrealist. They therefore had to confront something external to themselves and separable from them and did not have the same freedom to create it that the first generation had. This was emphasised by the fact that Breton remained in the group as what was undoubtedly an authority figure, even if he did not choose to exercise such authority. It is also apparent that all those who joined the group after 1951 felt a loyalty to its tradition to the extent that the protection of the surrealist heritage was in most cases stronger than their urge to re-invent it.[21]

What also undoubtedly changed after 1951 was Breton's position within the group. Whether it had been his intention or not, once he had dispensed with Pastoureau and his friends, he had ensured that his authority within the group was unchallengeable. None of the newcomers was likely to have the confidence to challenge Breton on a major point. The fact that Breton never actually had to invoke such authority directly does not show that it did not exist, but rather how strong it was. The next fifteen years witnessed a period of unaccustomed harmony within the group with only one active participant (Simon Hantai) actually being expelled, on grounds that were unequivocal. There was another expulsion, however, one that is perhaps the most controversial in surrealist history, and which

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[20]. Jean Benoît in the surrealist enquiry *Rien ou Quoi?* (March 1970) p 141

[21]. This is something that reaches its logical conclusion in the activities of ACTUAL, established by several of the surrealists, with Jean Schuster as its director, precisely for the purpose of documenting the 'true' heritage of surrealism. In part this was established to counter what was then the admittedly very poor scholarship that passed for surrealist research. In the 1980s, however, research into surrealism, particularly in France, has improved so substantially that the work of ACTUAL overlaps with it.

is very revealing in the context of this argument. This was of Max Ernst, expelled in 1953 for having accepted the Grand prize for painting at the Venice Biennale.

The expulsion of Ernst was singular in several ways. First, it seems to be the only time someone who was not actually an active member of the group was actually expelled. Ernst was being expelled not so much from the Surrealist Group as from the Surrealist Movement as a whole. Furthermore, both Arp and Miró accepted prizes at the same Biennale without being expelled (although both were censured). As was the case with Matta and Brauner (the two other most significant post-war expulsions) the decision was unilaterally taken by a group vote, rather than the initiative being taken by Breton personally (indeed both Breton and Péret voted against the expulsion). Now this may seem to be more democratic, as Jean Schuster has sought to argue (though whether it is democratic to 'try' someone without giving them the chance to put their case or appeal against the verdict [for the decision was taken unilaterally] is a moot point), but the surrealists otherwise never seem to have sought democratic legitimation for their actions. In fact the 'democratic' alibi seems to have been established precisely to camouflage the fact of Breton's ultimate authority. While it may be true that Breton, out of loyalty to an old friend or for whatever reason, genuinely did not want to see Ernst expelled, the fact that he was prepared to bow to the majority tends to suggest that he was pleased that the group would take such a decision against his wishes, almost like a father proud of his independent child. But the fact that the expulsion had to be performed in such a high-handed, even bureaucratic, way, shows that no-one within the group had sufficient authority to take decisions as Breton had previously done. In fact it is perhaps not going too far to suggest that Ernst represented a sort of surrogate victim who could be sacrificed without affecting the cohesion of the group. It would seem, however, that the real target may have been internal tensions within the group which could not be resolved since no one had the authority to confront such tensions except Breton, who no longer was interested in doing so. This is to some extent conjectural, but it does seem to be borne out by the way in which the Surrealist Group disintegrated into internecine strife as soon as Breton died. One certainly has the impression that fifteen years of suppressed tensions were suddenly being released.

Of course, if we are right in conjecturing that Breton wanted to see the Surrealist Group re-constituted on a different basis in the period after the war, then logically he ought himself to have withdrawn from group activities and left the group to take its own form independently of his presence, which must have been intimidating. It is not to diminish Breton if we suggest that it was his vanity that prevented him from doing this. He may also have felt that there needed to be at least some continuity between the inter-war and post-war periods and that he could provide such continuity. The history of the French Surrealist Group since his death has shown, however, that his presence certainly had an inhibiting effect on the group. Of course, it may have happened that had he withdrawn in 1951, the group would have disintegrated then. But this risk is inscribed in the nature of the surrealist endeavour which does not seem to admit of any value in allowing phenomena to outlast their own natural timespans. Here Breton might be seen as forgetting Schlegal's key romantic maxim that 'only

that which annihilates itself is of value' and in this respect it is tempting to extend the Grail analogy and see the Surrealist Group as no longer being Arthur's vibrant Round Table, but as having become the Grail Castle, isolated in its purity and lost in the time and space of a wasteland while it is presided over by a sterile Fisher King and his knights who live only for illusions of lost glories. Although such an image would not be entirely fair, it is one that contains an element of truth.

In looking at the history of the French Surrealist Group in this way, we have sought to contextualise the 'institutional' frame of surealism to give a focus to the contrast to be drawn between it and that of anthropology. The analogy could be taken further and we could directly relate the history to the way in which anthropology has constituted itself as a discipline. To do so, however, would be to take us too far from the central issues of the thesis. If this chapter has represented something of a detour from the main theme of the thesis, it has been necessary to locate the contrast with the history of anthropology and to provide a background against which we are seeking to contrast approaches within surrealism with those within anthropology. If we have not made the contrast particularly explicit, it is because the institutional framework within which anthropology works is well enough known not to require re-formulation here, particularly since this is not the central issue in this thesis. What we have tried to do here is to describe the framework of surrealism in order to give a foundation for the insertion of surrealism into the terms of anthropological debate. In the next chapter we will look at the links between anthropology and surrealism more closely without, however, seeking to draw the comparison too rigidly, since, as will be apparent from what we have said above, the aims and direction of surrealism are very different from those of anthropology. It is not, then, to be a matter of judging one against the other, but of looking for contrasts as a means of illuminating both surrealism and anthropology.

It should also be emphasised that the French Surrealist Group has simply been the most active and most clearly defined of numerous surrealist groups that have existed around the world. In taking it as an exemplar we are not seeking to minimise the importance of such other groups, but rather looking at the group that has undoubtedly generated the most interest and critical consideration. Nor should it be thought that the Surrealist Group represents the sum total of surrealist activity. We will be looking at other groups and individuals connected with surrealism later. There are also other elements involved in considering a sociology of surrealism which will be dealt with later in the thesis. For now, however, we will turn to consider the relationship between surrealism and anthropology in more specific terms.

CHAPTER THREE:

SURREALISM AND ANTHROPOLOGY

Show me the wise man in love with the Cyclops woman
And I'll make of him my equal
Benjamin Péret

Links between surrealism and anthropology

In the first two chapters we have considered various aspects of the sociology of anthropology and then of surrealism. This has been done less to draw a comparison between the two (we have taken different aspects of the two traditions for study) than to give a general background and to bring out elements in the two traditions that will be developed throughout the thesis.

In the introduction, we noted how anthropologists had often used surrealism as a counterpoint to their own activities as anthropologists. Edmund Carpenter, announcing that his account is going to follow a different path than that usually encountered in anthropology, stated: "The notes that follow belong to the world of surrealism where events are experienced from within, not observed from

without"[1]. More specifically, Georges Balandier has drawn a direct relation with surrealism in defining his own aims in anthropology, which he states ought to have "a revelatory function [which] generates a return to oneself and a deviation by means of the Other. It enables the subjects to have better access to themselves and their roots; to allow their muted words to be heard; to take account of, and responsibility for, their differences. It illuminates our own world by means of comparison... But this ethnology is also revelatory of those who practise it; it impels them to greater truthfulness by forcing them to take off the masks which are imposed on them by social conventions. [...] Ethnological knowledge of this kind is never neutral, but committed, and the task of expression is a necessity."[2]

For surrealism the task of expression is always a necessity. The idea of disinterested knowledge is anathema, as is anything institutionally controlled and defined. On the question of day-to-day living the surrealists have shown themselves to be intransigent. To be required to undertake specific research for the purposes of professional advancement must always run against the grain of surrealist sensibilities. (Which is not to say that all individual surrealists have not, to some degree, had to compromise with the need to make a living: this is not what is at issue, but the fact that to do so is never to be considered as something to be sought for itself.) This must make surrealism fundamentally different from the university discipline of anthropology which is forced within the constraints of the university system to offer inducements for career advancement not based upon the fact that the anthropologist must feel an inner necessity to do the research he wants to do. It is this fact, rather than anything specific to anthropological approaches to the world that brings surrealism into conflict with it.

The question of surrealism and anthropology has been brought into anthropological debate particularly following the publication of James Clifford's article 'On Ethnographic Surrealism' in 1981.[3] Although this article has been subject to some astringent criticism from Jean Jamin[4] (which Clifford himself acknowledges as a 'corrective' to his own approach), it has been much quoted in anthropological writings as an authoritative examination of surrealism in the context of anthropology.

Although Clifford's article does contain some interesting material, his approach to surrealism itself it so far off-beam as to muddy rather than clarify the picture and has had the unfortunate effect of distorting the nature of the debate that has followed.

The error that Clifford makes is one that is common to superficial commentators on surrealism. He sees surrealism as making a concentrated assault upon reality in favour of something

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[1] Edmund Carpenter, *Oh What A Blow That Phantom Gave Me!* p 67

[2] Georges Balandier "'Terre Humaine' as a literary movement" (1987) *Anthropology Today* Vol 3 no 1 p 1

[3] in *Comparative Studies in Society and History,* no 23 (1981). Reprinted, with some modifications in Clifford, *The Predicament of Culture.*

[4] Jamin, 'L'Ethnographie mode d'inemploi: De quelques rapports de l'ethnologie avec la malaise dans la civilisation' (1986) in J. Hainard & R. Kaehr (eds. *Le Mal et la douleur* p

more heterogeneous and confused. In terms of a scientific discipline like anthropology, he sees the surrealist response as being one of subversion and an ironic lack of respect. In this latter respect, Frances Slaney has recently, and in my view rightly, come to the defence of anthropological authority against such a maverick form of 'subversion'. She argues that there is nothing inherent to surrealism that makes it any the less prone to making ethnocentric judgements and that its (supposed) 'ethnographic' approach is as suspect, if not more so, than traditional anthropological ones.[5] This seems, however, rather like arguing over a void, since I suspect that in this argument the surrealists themselves would most likely side with Slaney. At any rate, it is manifestly false to see surrealism as attempting to subvert anthropology: its attitude towards scholarship has always been respectful and even supportive.[6] Nor have they ever made any attempt to advocate an alternative 'ethnographic' approach. Although, later in the chapter, we will look at questions raised within 'ethnographic' accounts made by surrealists, it should be made clear at this point that no sort of approach would ever be advocated as one appropriate to surrealism, any more than they ever advocated an appropriate 'surrealist' style in painting or writing: indeed, to try to draw one out is to be false to the spirit of surrealism.

For Clifford, though, surrealism is a 'strategy', consciously directed against some sort of seamless 'reality' that he never actually defines. I suspect from the terms he uses that he is transposing what he himself dislikes - which is the kind of objectified representation that is predominant in anthropology - to the context of France in the twenties and thereby makes an assumption that what surrealism was attacking was the same thing. This doesn't seem to me to be a warrantable assumption. Moreover, Clifford confuses *reality* (an ontological category) with *realism* (an ideological construction). The surrealists had no quarrel with the former and their critique of the latter was extremely complex. Certainly, it was on quite a different level from that which Clifford would like to emphasize. It is, at best, extremely simplistic to see surrealism as seeking to invoke a relativistic perspective in which the reality of culture would be turned upside down: "for every local custom or truth there was always an exotic alternative, a possible juxtaposition or incongruity. Below (psychologically) or beyond (geographically) ordinary reality there existed another reality".[7] Such a dualistic schema would hardly find favour with the surrealists. To the contrary, it was always, above everything else, the fusion of realities that was the primary concern of surrealism. They were not interested in 'exotic' worlds: they were interested in the world as a whole and they resented above all the way in which rationalized reality portioned everything out and created an excluded category of being, which was condemned precisely as being 'exotic' or 'primitive'. Thus it is quite erroneous to see surrealism as valorizing "artificial arrangements susceptible to detached analysis and

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[5] Slaney, 'Psychoanalysis and Cycles of "Subversion" in Modern Art and Anthropology', (1989) *Dialectical Anthropology*, 14 pp 213/234.

[6] as the current activities of ACTUAL show.

[7] Clifford, *The Predicament of Culture* p 120/121.

comparison".[8]   Similarly, the surrealists did not view collage techniques of juxtaposition and re-arrangement as being, in themselves of any value. To be understood, surrealist collage must be seen as an attempt to draw out, on analogical principles, the world's hidden unity. Clifford could therefore hardly be more wrong when he sees the essence of the affinities of surrealism and anthropology as follows: "Ethnography cut with surrealism emerges as the theory and practice of juxtaposition. It studies, and is part of, the invention of and interruption of meaningful wholes in works of cultural import-export".[9]

If Clifford conflates reality with realism, the connexion he draws between surrealism and anthropology, and especially with ethnography, is still more spurious. Surrealism and anthropology are quite separate things. It makes no sense either to set one off against the other or to draw false analogies between them. It is possible to use one to illuminate the other, either by applying an anthropological approach to the study of surrealism, or by applying surrealist concepts towards a critique of anthropology, which is partly what I have sought to do in this thesis. But it is not legitimate, in my view, to treat them interchangeably and use the one against the other. If one wishes to criticise anthropology through surrealism, then it must be recognised that one is utilising a different value system. And vice versa. To see surrealism, as Clifford does, as though it had a better ethnographic approach than anthropologists have developed is absurd: the surrealists had no ethnographic approach, for the simple reason that they were not doing ethnography. To contrast surrealism with anthropology can be valuable, but one must not lose sight of the special characteristics of the two ideas. In a like manner one could look at anthropology through philosophy and vice versa, but if one was to subsume the one into the other the argument would necessarily collapse into confusion and not be able to throw any illumination. If anything, the gulf between anthropology and surrealism is wider than that between anthropology and philosophy. And if anthropology has cast its net wide in seeking to establish a 'science of mankind', surrealism's aim is wider still, being nothing less than the transformation of being. Joseph Jablonski has been very clear in defining the relation of surrealism to science: "...surrealism does not surrender its arms, critical or other, to the representatives of the special sciences. Surrealists make use of the special sciences because they provide useable data, ideas, and techniques. This does not mean that surrealism itself has been converted to a purely scientific world view. Valid as science may be, it has no claim to deal with all the random data and all the phenomena that man must confront; and so surrealism has developed its own ways of approaching the multiple indeterminisms."[10]

In an article specifically considering the relation of surrealism to anthropology, the Czech surrealist Vratislav Effenberger saw anthropology as emerging in periods in which political and

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[8] *ibid.* p 119

[9] *ibid.* p 147

[10] Joseph Jablonski personal communication 12 October 1987.

religious ideologies begin to decompose and responding to a need for fresh perspectives on consciousness. Effenberger sees surrealism and anthropology as parallel responses to such a need, seeking to "establish new points of departure to bring together new perspectives on our consciousness of existence"[11]

Such comments emphasise, I think, the inadequacy of Clifford's interpretation of surrealism. Since his article has been rather influential, it has served rather to mystify the contribution that surrealism can make to the debate about representation. For Clifford would like to utilize surrealism to help to legitimate his own position, which derives from, and sees surrealism through, the distorting mirror of post-modernism. In actual fact, in the way in which it evolved in its cultural context in France, post-modernism has little in common with surrealism. The surrealists' own attitude towards it has essentially been one of indifference, though Jean Schuster in a recent interview has stated that one of the tasks of a functioning Surrealist Group in France today would be to combat post-modernism, though "probably by ignoring it".[12]

We need, therefore, briefly to consider the development of anthropology in France and the relationship of the Surrealist Group to it.

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[11] Effenberger, 'Surrealism and Contemporary Civilization', in *Change* 25 (1975) p 117

[12] He particularly objected to its 'perennial spirit of emulation, its desire to occupy the terrain and wave the latest flag' (interview with Paul Hammond in *New Statesman* 4 December 1987). Although it is true that post-modernism has claimed Artaud and Bataille as its ancestors, it is generally been hostile towards surrealism. For their part, according to José Pierre, the surrealists had always dismissed post-structuralism in its beginnings as being "pedantic and boring, but of little consequence" (note in *Tracts Surréalistes et déclarations collectives* p 424). There has, nonetheless, been the occasional skirmish between the surrealists and the post-structuralists. A broadside ('Beau Comme BEAU COMME) was issued by the surrealists in 1967 against what were seen as distortions in Marcelin Pleynet's book on Lautréamont, in which post-structuralism was ridiculed for its obsession with texts, seen as a return to literary models that the surrealists had long abandoned. In 1972, a declaration by the Maintenant Surrealist Group (Goldfayn, Ivsic, Le Brun, Legrand, Peuchmaurd, Toyen) contemptuously noted in passing how the champions of 'écriture' were 'muck-spreading the subjective' ('Quand le surréalisme aurait cinquante ans' (1972: Paris: Maintenant). Another incident took place in 1974, when Jean-Louis Houdoubenne protested in the name of post-structuralism against a lecture given by the surrealist Jean-Louis Bédouin with the extraordinary slogan: 'NO to revolt - LONG LIVE the revolution; DOWN with Surrealism - Long live the Avant Garde for Mao Tse-tung thought'. Bédouin's response was to dismiss the 'Papermaoists". An interesting article by Robert Lebel in 1978 assessed the overall surrealist position on post-structuralism (see 'Les machines langagières' in V.Bounoure (ed) *La Civilisation Surréaliste* pp 73/79). For a good account of the way in which surrealism has been appropriated to the post-modernist cause in Britain, see David Macey: *Lacan in Context.*

The French anthropological Tradition

Ethnology came late to France. Although the roots of an anthropological approach can be found in Montaigne and Rousseau, and though the Société de l'Observation de l'Homme had been founded at the end of the eighteenth century, ethnological research soon became rather unfashionable and throughout the nineteenth century anthropology exclusively meant physical anthropology, although it is true that in practice rich ethnological work was being done by a range of marginal figures as different as the missionary Maurice Leenhardt and the anarchist Louise Michel. In institutional terms, ethnology seems to have formed part of oriental studies, which remained the discipline in which most early French anthropologists received their training (even as late as 1938, Michel Leiris, preparing his doctorate at the Ecole des Hautes Etudes, did so under the Orientalist Louis Massignon), but it did not concretize as a specific discipline until well into the twentieth century.

What had developed in nineteenth century France, out of Comtian positivism, was a strong sociological tradition. This flowered with the establishment of the *Année Sociologique* and the rise of the Durkheimian school. It was not until after the First World War that ethnology as such became a central concern, although the work of Robert Hertz had led the way into anthropological themes earlier.

The publication of the volumes on primitive mentality of Lévy-Bruhl gave a stimulus for a systematic approach to ethnology and the Institut d'Ethnologie at the University of Paris was formed in 1925 by Lévy-Bruhl together with Marcel Mauss and Paul Rivet. Thus for the first time there was a centre for the study of ethnology as a specific subject in France (although the first doctorate was not to be granted until 1943).

Despite the creation of the Institut, it was the museum (particularly the Musée d'ethnographie du Trocadéro [later the Musée de l'Homme]) rather than the university that sustained ethnological research until after the Second World War. This is especially so in respect of the key ethnographic expedition prior to the war - the Dakar-Djibouti expedition (1931/33) - which was to lead to a vast collective project to study Dogon and Bambara culture that continued until the fifties.

Mary Douglas has noted one of the effects that such a bias has occasioned, for while British anthropologists tend to look to understand the meanings that appearances conceal, French anthropology has tended to be concerned with the nature of such forms[13]. French ethnology, at least during this period, was primarily concerned with the collection and quantifying of data, the main consideration of the Dakar-Djibouti expedition being the 'booty' to be brought back (some 3600 cultural items) and tended to spread itself over space rather than concentrate on the determinants of small scale societies. A concern that also emphasises the different orientation of the two colonial powers, for where the British policy of confederation and indirect rule required a knowledge of the colonial subjects and their culture, the French policy of assimilation and direct rule did not. As Roger

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[13]. Mary Douglas *Implicit Meanings*

Bastide has pointed out, the French colonial attitude, based upon an assumption that the spread of reason was for the universal good, made the sort of activist anthropology we see in Britain which engaged with the native cultures, impossible in the France of the period. Furthermore, although Mauss was keen to encourage fieldwork, it was not then considered an essential pre-requisite for anthropological study, and even today it does not have the importance it has in Britain. James Clifford has also noted that it is difficult to discern a specific fieldwork methodology in French anthropology that corresponds to the idea of participant-observation. Rather, French ethnographers have developed individual ways of treating the fieldwork experience which would not always have been considered as such by their British colleagues. It has often been questioned, for instance, whether the 'fieldwork' of Lévi-Strauss can really be regarded as such. Indeed, the evident distaste that Lévi-Strauss displays in *Tristes Tropiques* both for the idea of travel itself and for the fact of writing about it would doubtless be inconceivable for anyone brought up in the British tradition.

It will be noted that both anthropology and surrealism developed in France at the same period. James Clifford has drawn links between them on the basis of similar thematic concerns which are certainly not as straightforward as Clifford would like us to believe, although such links are undoubtedly present. The official publication of the Musée d'Ethnographie au Trocadéro was edited by Bataille and became a mouthpiece for dissidents from the Surrealist Group as well as publishing strictly ethnological research. In the late thirties the College of Sociology, a marginal surrealist grouping, had a strong anthropological content and is of importance in the development of French anthropology.

We have seen that the political context in which both surrealism and anthropology developed was extremely volatile. The surrealists had unequivocally given their political support to the left, and although most anthropologists were likewise supporters of socialism, neither individual anthropologists nor anthropology as a discipline had questioned the framework of colonialism, or the ideology of the spread of reason. It is this fact that above all separates surrealism politically from anthropology in this period.

As Jean Jamin has argued, in an article written directly in response to Clifford, far from identifying with the establishment of an anthropological discipline in France, the surrealists would most likely - had they thought about it - have considered it "the result of a mistake, if not treated it with contempt".[14] For surrealism, ethnography might have been considered as "a suspect science, in as much as the first fieldwork expeditions of French ethnology were undertaken not only with the agreement of the Colonial Ministry, but also unfolded in particularly spectacular - not to say publicity seeking - circumstances which had much in common with expeditions of exploration and conquest".[15]

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[14]. Jean Jamin *op.cit.* p 45

[15]. *ibid.* p 53

Methodology

In endeavouring to consider surrealism anthropologically the question of methodology arises. If one seeks to define the nature of surrealist activity, one comes across a series of negatives. It is not a literary or artistic movement, it is not a science; it is not an ideology, a party, or a secret society. Or rather, if it is any of these things, it is not reducible to any of them. It is a community, but a community that is so diffuse that it cannot be treated in terms of what its members actually do, since those activities are not confined to what its members do within the community (that's to say that no distinction is made between what they do within the community from what they do within the larger society of which they are part). It is a sensibility, but a sensibility with no fixed attitudes as such. It is an attitude, a way of living, that is in process of continual change. Although it imposes no conditions on its members it remains bounded by a certain shared - if largely unspoken - perspective. As such it is apparent from a consideration of surrealist writings as a whole that methodological criteria are being respected. To try to draw these out, we can best look at some of the surrealist critical writings.

Jules Monnerot has defined the central dilemma of sociology in very clear terms. He points out that the sociologist who studies, for instance, revolution cannot do so adequately unless he actually becomes a revolutionary, but if he does indeed become a revolutionary then he would cease to be a sociologist. A methodological separation of roles is thus essential: "John's anger and my understanding of John's anger are distinct to the point of incommensurability."[16] One can only make assumptions about John's anger based upon one's own experience of anger. In this respect the human sciences establish a different relation vis-à-vis the object of study from that of the natural sciences, since the latter can never understand a phenomenon. It can only establish as great an explanatory framework as possible. To 'understand', on the other hand, is a characteristic of the human sciences. Monnerot sees this as the central issue that Durkheim refused to face. In fact he claims that Durkheim is only of value when he breaks his own methodological rules: "Durkheim confounds the two orders of comprehension and explanation when, evoking the 'corrobori' in the light of what he *understands* of the *crowd-psychological-situation*, he passes inductively from the comprehension appropriate to the coincidence of social and religious concerns to a theory of religion as an expression of the social."[17] This causes him to lose sight of the fact that "behind the idea of 'collective consciousness' is not the truth of a thing but the truth of a lived-state and affective situation".[18] This causes Durkheim to lose sight of what it is that constitutes society: he conflates the phenomenonology of what a society is with both its noumenon and its essence. In other words,

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[16]. Monnerot, *Les faits sociaux ne sont pas des choses* p 41

[17]. *ibid.* p 51

[18]. *ibid.* p 51

he makes of it an abstraction. Jealous of the natural sciences, Durkheimian sociology is established as a closed sociology, "closed to biology, closed to psychology, closed to history, closed to comprehension".[19] It arbitrarily isolates 'social causes' from the totality of social life and banishes all particuliarity and all history. Society becomes reified, given its own reality in which there are no longer 'societies' but only *the* society, which is thereby abstracted as a thing in itself with universal properties.

Although Monnerot's critique of Durheimian sociology was published after he had left the Surrealist Group,[20] it very much emerges out of his surrealist research and is consistent with reflections by other surrealists on the question of methodology. So although it would be misleading to try to establish a specific 'surrealist' methodological approach, we can still look for methodological approaches within surrealism to see whether they respond to any systematic criteria and to what extent such methodological approaches are of value in relation to anthropology.

Monnerot's approach is guided by the concrete. This, above all, appears to be the starting point of all surrealist research. Abstract thought in itself, in accordance with their materialism, is alien to a surrealist view. Nicolas Calas has insisted on this point: "From concrete to concrete again, from matter to new materiality, such is order that the artist's thought must follow, if it is not to lose itself in vain abstractions."[21] From this perspective, Calas rejects anything that begins from a metaphysical, artistic or ethical standpoint. As examples of such a false methodological approach, Calas cites the psychoanalytic research of Adler and Jung, the first of which is faulty because Adler begins with a social framework, the second because Jung begins with a metaphysical one. They represent two poles of a fundamental methodological error. Adler displaces psychic mechanisms to the realm of the social, while Jung displaces social mechanisms to the realm of the psychic. In so doing both establish, like Durkheim, an abstract point of departure which cannot be questioned in its owns terms. On the other hand, Calas sees Freud as an exemplary figure in that he establishes his psychoanalytic theory entirely in the concrete, recognising his own position in relation to the subject of study.[22]   At

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[19]. *ibid.* p 71

[20] It might be argued that it is inappropriate to consider Monnerot within the context of surrealism. His bizarre personal trajectory, which led him to become an ideologist for fascism in the 1960's, makes him something of an embarrassment to surrealism. Yet although he was to some degree writing from outside surrealism in the forties, it seems to me that his work in the forties is still fully within the surrealist tradition. He did, in fact, take part in the major surrealist exhibition 'Le Surréalisme en 1947' and, within the terms of reference taken by this study, I feel it is essential to consider his books from this period, which are all major works, as being fully within the orbit of surrealist criticism.

[21]. Calas, *Confound the Wise*, p 107. Although Calas uses the word 'artist' here, it is clear that he means any form of research.

[22]. One might note that though Freud was dogmatic in asserting how crucial the idea of infantile sexuality or concepts such as the Oedipus Complex or the Primal Horde are for psychoanalysis, these are concepts that, no matter how much they may be open to question, emerge from within the data itself and can be questioned within the methodological framework that Freud himself sets up. That

this point Calas's critique of Adler and Jung is remarkably similar to Monnerot's of Durkheim: both Calas and Monnerot see the error as being to reduce social or psychic phenomena to abstractions. The aim is always to engage with the concrete - a concern that one finds again and again in surrealist writing. To be based on concrete reality, according to Calas, it is necessary that the researcher must recognise his own subjectivity in relation to the material and also recognise the essential subjectivity of any theory emerging out of the research. To understand a theory we must recognise that our intent is always pre-eminent: no experiment can ever prove the correctness of a theory since, by its very nature, an experiment can only work within the frame of the terms of reference we place upon it. An experiment cannot then show the correctness of a theory, but can be judged only within the terms of reference so established to be either a success or failure. We need nevertheless to remain conscious of the framework we are establishing. In recognising the subjective element in research, though, Calas still does not argue for the subjectivity of the result of such research. To the contrary, like most surrealists, he seems to see a collapse into subjectivity as the enemy. But the trap of subjectivity is only revealed in relation to the false assumption of objectivity. Objectivity is always possible providing one is clear about one's own frame of reference, which is always subjectively established. The great danger is to believe that objectivity can be established in absolute terms and have reference beyond the confines of the particular argument. René Alleau expressed the surrealist understanding on this point with great clarity: "All human sciences are subjective and it is the lucid and sincere recognition of that basic subjectivity that determines the degree of relative objectivity they can attain."[23]

The first task for the experimenter, then, is context: "I believe we cannot study a phenomenon such as art without situating it in relation to causes and effects, that is to say as a process."[24] As such the two essential factors in criticism are first to situate the object in historical context and then to "make an evaluation according to the poetic needs of the present".[25] In working with concrete reality the aim must always be, according to Calas, to "materialize the dream". It is this aim that seems above all to motivate surrealist criticism and present us with one of the determinants for the evaluation of research. An affective relation to the material must be established. Breton put the issue in these terms: "Criticism must be a matter of love."

In a like manner, Roger Caillois was to take up the issue of classification and to advance a notion of 'diagonal science' which seems significant from a surrealist point of view. Caillois took issue with specialization in the sciences and in particular with the way in which systematization was used as a modular justification for such classification. He notes that all classification distorts. It

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is, his concepts are not imposed upon it from without, whereas with Adler and Jung social and metaphysical ideas are assumed from without and cannot be challenged within the material itself.

[23]. quoted in Thirion, *Révolutionaries Without Revolution*, p 136.

[24] *Confound the Wise*, p 5.

[25] *ibid.* p 107.

corresponds to no recognisable reality and is no more than a methodological tool for coming to terms with the multiplicity of being. For instance, he notes, general classification tells us that bats are not birds, but flying mammals. However, such classification requires the separation of the component parts of different creatures, giving a greater importance to certain features, here the metabolism. If, however, the wings were to be taken as the loci from which the classification was taken (as is *de facto* the case if one studies the mechanics of flight), then one would have to classify bats with birds.[26] He goes on: "Nature is one; its laws are everywhere the same or correspond to each other and are united and coherent in the different kingdoms and to different degrees. Each science explores a part of the whole, bringing together a collection of phenomena and given characteristics, of individuals or of reactions which bring out similar or parallel properties. But the limits that determine these collections, without being arbitrary, are often deceptive and in any case have been determined with the aid of criteria which, while they might be the best available, necessarily exclude others."[27]

In its beginnings surrealism based itself on a concept of automatism that could be seen as a methodological technique. Automatism aims to explore the play of disinterested thought. Confronting thought in its 'pure state', it proposes to express 'the actual functioning of thought'. Probably nothing in surrealism has been so misunderstood as automatism, which was conceived neither as a technique for the production of texts, nor as a means to explore some kind of essential reality. Rather it was a means to put oneself in touch with the inner resources of one's own being. As such it has something in common with eastern meditation techniques. To my mind Roger Caillois has best expressed the 'automatist attitude' in writing of his relation to stones, which he regards "at times [as] objects of contemplation, almost as support of spiritual exercise. [...] Like the ancient Chinese, I am drawn to consider each stone as a world. Like Pascal, I presume that, from the atom to the nebulae, the models of two infinities coincide and, like Paracelsus, I readily accept that things establish their own sorts of signatures which are at once diverse and constant."[28] As such automatism can be seen as offering a means to establish a direct relation with the object contemplated. This was what Breton saw as fundamental, in distinguishing automatism from the spiritualist concept of automatism: "contrary to what spiritualism proposes - that is the dissociation of the subject's psychological personality - surrealism proposes nothing less than the *unification* of that personality".[29]

Automatism also connects up with another key surrealist idea - that of objective chance, which

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[26]. This argument clearly has something in common with the one advanced by Foucault in *Les Mots et les choses*, although Caillois, unlike Foucault, does not suggest that classification is thus arbitrary.

[27]. Caillois, *Cases d'un échiquier*, p 54.

[28]. Caillois, *Pierres Réfléchies,* p 9.

[29] Breton, 'The Automatic Message', (translated by Guy Ducornet) in F. Rosemont (ed) *What is Surrealism?* p 105.

is based on the belief that there is a continuity and a coincidence between the natural world and our own experience of it. Through the workings of objective chance is revealed the unexpected correspondence between material and mental facts. The idea itself was taken from Hegel, as the dual process whereby necessity manifests itself as chance, and vice versa. Subjectivity and objectify thus meet as a sign of recognition of the basic harmony between man's desires and the natural flow of the world. Objective chance is thus the most affirmative of all surrealist ideas, which is posited on the belief that the world offers everything to someone who has confidence in it.

Objective chance is most obviously manifested in the surrealist object, which represents in itself the concretization of human desire in material form. It is noticeable that the object has been one of the most persistent art forms within surrealism, which has generated theoretical discussion that relates, obviously enough, to our debate on objectivity.

The Crisis of the Object in Surrealism

The idea of a crisis of the object was one of the central themes within surrealism during the thirties. In 1936 the surrealists organised an exhibition of objects in Paris and in a text in the accompanying catalogue, Breton addressed the question in a text 'Crise de l'objet'. Breton saw that this crisis had been precipitated by the falling apart of rationalist and realist models for the representation of reality. "We are witnessing", he wrote, "the same vigorous stirrings of the thought process rebelling against the thinking habits of the past millennium heralding a way of thought which is no longer a reducing agent but has become infinitely inductive and extensible: one in which the object ceases to be fixed permanently on the nearer side of thought itself and re-creates itself on the further side as far as the eye can reach."[30]

The concern with the status of the object arises above all from the surrealist interest in Hegel. In Hegelian philosophy subject and object are seen as being problematic. They are not independent categories. They respond to each other, act upon each other and are inseparable from one another: the subject could only be viewed through the object while in the same way, the object could only be viewed through the subject. As the surrealists were well aware, to posit a 'crisis of the object' was to imply at the same time a 'crisis of the subject'. To bring the object into question was to challenge mankind's relation with the eternal world. "Nothing that surrounds us is object: all is subject",[31] as Breton had written. At the same time, objectification was necessary for the self-realization of the object as subject. This accords with Hegel's insistence on differentiation in subject and object relations and, in the anthropological context, points to the fact that the subject cannot be invested with a value in itself, but has to be mediated through its relation with the object. In this respect surrealism

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[30] Breton, 'Crisis of the Object', in *Surrealism and Painting* p 271.

[31] Breton, *Surrealism and Painting* p 35.

looks towards liberty as breaking the chains that tie the object and subject in an iniquitous relation. As Annie Le Brun explained: the object "allows the subject to rise above the folly of separation and invent itself by means of the union of two separate realities as a continued symbolic conjuration of rupture. Simply perceived the object serves to mask emptiness by its neutral presence, or tends to be confounded to it, while the privileged object imposes its own presence on us as a touchstone of emptiness, serving to reveal, between internal psychic reality and external reality, a horizon in which the menace of separation is vanquished without being repressed, and thereby becomes a guarantee of the freedom to take risks."[32] The transformation from perception of the object in itself to its status as privileged object is effected by means of the image which holds subject and object in balance between separate realities. In such a way, surrealism challenges the inequality of the subject and object relation through the image that "confronts this inner representation with that of the concrete forms of the real world, seeks in turn [...] to seize the object in its generality, and as soon as it has succeeded in so doing, tries to take that supreme step which is the poetic step, par excellence: excluding (relatively) the external object as such and considering nature only in its relationship with the inner world of consciousness".[33]

The first principle in surrealism, then, must always be objectification, since it is only through objectification that the nature of the object can be defined. But at the same time we need to remain conscious of the fact that the object we perceive does not correspond with anything more than, at best, a small part of the object's own integral being: "The object is the rock and the beach and as we think we have reached the heart of the rock, we find that the horizon of the beach still continues to unfold into the infinite. The object is never identical with itself and invites us to discover, one by one, the pieces of the symbolic functioning of the puzzle of our identity".[34]

These Hegelian reflexions, which are at the heart of the surrealist approach towards the object, show how the aim is to both fix and disintegrate identity at the same time: that is to hold fixation and disintegration in a tension that never allows the fixity of the object to become an issue. As such the object ceases to be a thing in itself but becomes, as Jean-François Chabrun expressed it, "the conception of an economy of exchange between the I and the Universe".[35] The great value of the surrealist object is to establish a non-ulitilitarian relationship with matter. It destroys our privileged relation with objects which are thereby returned to their proper integrity. While from a rationalist point of view this means that they become out of control and a threat, for the surrealist this lack of control is not percveived as a problem. In such terms, knowledge has been defined in surrealist terms by René Crevel as "the eternal and infinite rapprochement of thought with its object".

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[32]. Annie Le Brun, 'Objets d'identité', in *A Distance* p 42.

[33] Breton, 'Surrealist Situation of the Object', in *Manifestos of Surrealism* p 260.

[34] Annie Le Brun, *op,cit.* p 42

[35] Jean-François Chabrun, in Michel Fouré (ed) *Histoire du Surréalisme sous l'occupation* p 400.

Bearing these points in mind, let us next try to apply this to some thoughts about 'ethnographic' approaches within surrealism.

Elements of a Surrealist Ethnography

In surveying the topics on which the surrealists have written, one is often astonished by their range. One subject which is noticeably absent, and which seems all the more surprising in that it has proved to be one of the most important genres of twentieth century literature, is travel. It is noticeable, for instance, that though three of Breton's books, *L'Amour fou* (1938), *Martinique, Charmeuse de Serpents* (1942) and *Arcane 17* (1947) are centred around journeys made respectively to the Canary Islands, Martinique and Canada, one would find in them only the barest of impressions of the lands though which he travelled. His concern with any documentary evidence is almost nil, and what little there is seems devoted to the fauna and flora of the land. Even the various autobiographies hardly ever seem to dwell on journeys made and in a book by Raymond Queneau with the promising title *Le Voyage de Grèce*, which collects together articles from a time when he did indeed make a journey to Greece, the only reference we actually find to Greece is in the form of a questionnaire: "Qu'attendiez-vous de la Grèce? Je n'en attendais rien. J'en suis revenu autre".

In fact the surrealists as a whole seem to have had something of a marked distrust of travel. This was certainly true of Breton. Elisa Breton told me that she had a great love of travel, but that for Breton himself it was little more than a great inconvenience: he did his travelling, she felt, through his collection of art objects. Likewise René Magritte's rather contemptuously ironic attitude towards travel is well documented in his correspondence: "I'm completely devoid of the kind of imagination one needs to 'set off' on a trip" he wrote to André Bosmans.[36] And again: "Wherever I go, I say to myself 'It's just like I imagined it would be. I thought so.'"[37] In a similar sort of vein, Marcel Mariën says that when he came to London, he used a map of Paris to find his way around.

I mentioned to Vincent Bounoure that there seemed to be this dislike of travel in surrealist circles and although he said he had not really perceived that himself, for his own part he had never had any interest in travelling even though he is one of the leading French experts on Polynesian art and culture. His attitude was that such artifacts were the evidence of the society he loved but which did not exist any longer 'on the ground' and thus there was no point in going there.

One can cite other cases: Paul Eluard made a legendary trip to the South Seas in 1925, having left without a moment's notice and remained in the Orient for 9 months, but never said anything about the voyage, which appears to have left no mark on his writing, while it remains

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[36] letter of 26 May 1958.

[37] letter to Guy Mertens April 1965.

something of a mystery what he actually did there. Luis Buñuel has stated: "I've never travelled for pleasure. This taste for tourism, so prevalent these days, is incomprehensible to me. I don't have the least curiosity about countries where I've never been and never will go."[38] This dislike of tourism is also apparent in several of their collective declarations, most strongly expressed in 'Murderous Humanitarianism' published in Nancy Cunard's *Negro Anthology* in 1934, in which, having castigated those "drawn to some 'mystic' Orient or other" and the "votaries of corpses and theosophies,[who] go to ground in the past, vanish down the warrens of Himalayan monasteries" goes on to pour scorn on "our romantic exoticism and modern travel lust".

There are nonetheless some accounts of journeys in surrealist writings and to cast an eye over some of these works hopefully will be to gain a perspective on the way surrealists have approached the question of travel and the encounter with other cultures in a context of relevance to anthropology. Whether these can be classed as 'ethnography' or not they certainly go beyond what we usually consider to be mere travel literature. None are concerned with the individual's own subjective impressions of the country that are characteristic of modern travel writing. All seek a form of 'participation' within the culture, although it is on terms that are very different from those associated with the concepts of anthropological fieldwork.

The most significant of these works is certainly Michel Leiris's monumental *L'Afrique fantôme*, which has become very important in recent years as a precursor of the fashionable genre of 'reflexive anthropology'. For James Clifford, Leiris has led the way to an ethnography based on a "writing process that will endlessly pose and recompose an identity".[39] He says of *L'Afrique fantôme*, that by "interrupting the smooth ethnographic story of an access to Africa, it undermines the assumption that self and other can be gathered to a stable narrative coherence".[40] Clifford then goes on to argue, in line with his assumptions about surrealism, that this represents a 'surrealist ethnography', based upon techniques of collage and juxtaposition and arbitrarily establishing 'meaning' by shuffling reality as one would a deck of cards. From our exploration of methodological questions above, there seems little doubt that such an aim would be thoroughly out of accord with surrealist intentions. Since we would agree with Clifford that Leiris's achievement in *L'Afrique fantôme* is certainly in accord with surrealism, then we need to consider the nature of the work and its relation to surrealism in the context in which it was written.

L'Afrique fantôme is an account of the Dakar-Djibouti expedition, which was one of the most important events in the history of French ethnography. Leiris had gone on the expedition purely by chance. He had become interested in anthropology and had begun attending Marcel Mauss's lectures along with Georges Bataille, but apparently he had no intention of making anthropology a career. Nor

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[38]. Buñuel, *Mon Dernier souffle*, p 167.

[39] Clifford, *The Predicament of Culture*, p 173.

[40]. *ibid.* p 173.

did he seem to have any particular interest in Africa as such. It is not entirely clear what the circumstances were that led to Leiris being invited to join the expedition. He says that Griaule had asked him if he was interested (Luis Buñuel has recounted that he was asked to accompany the expedition as a film-maker. It didn't interest him so he suggested Leiris go instead). It is also doubtless of significance that Leiris had been the secretary of *Documents*, then being published by the Musée de l'ethnographie au Trocadéro, and it is perhaps for this reason that he was appointed as the 'secretary-archivist' of the mission. Clifford calls this designation 'superb', but presumably as a junior member of the mission with no specialist knowledge, he was simply given the most menial task.

Leiris was certainly diligent in his task. He made an entry virtually every day and the record of the twenty-two month journey is documented in impressive detail. On his return to Paris, Leiris showed the untouched journal to André Malraux who, deeming it worthy of publication as it was, arranged for it to come out with Nouvelle Revue Française in 1934. Griaule was furious, considering that Leiris had betrayed the expedition and, by his excessive 'subjectivism', had endangered further research. The question arises as to what exactly is the status of the information we are given in *L'Afrique fantôme*.

From the perspective of what the Dakar-Djibouti expedition represented in the development of French anthropology, it is difficult not to have some sympathy with Griaule, for Leiris breaks even the most elementary rules for the collection of ethnographic evidence. Since he was charged with documenting the ethnographic findings of the whole mission, one can understand Griaule's exasperation that Leiris should record only his own impressions and make not the slightest attempt to get this record to accord with the experiences of the other members of the expedition. In fact, considered purely as ethnography, *L'Afrique fantôme* must be regarded as a complete failure. Although it does set down some tantalising ethnographic details, these are completely uncontextualised as such and one can gain no real sense of the various societies through which the mission passed. There is no consistency to the data to which we are given access, which we see only through the eyes of Leiris. Of some events we are given minute details, of other hardly anything. We are entirely dependent, not simply on what Leiris personally saw and did, but on whatever his mood happened to be at the particular time and on the particular day on which he made the entry. The best that can be said for such an approach, considered as the ethnography of another society, is that it is outrageously irresponsible. But can *L'Afrique fantôme* be considered ethnography in the usually accepted sense of the word?

Prior to going on the mission, Leiris had done little study of ethnography and had apparently not given any thought to the idea of becoming an anthropologist. Any interest he had in Africa itself appears to have been as a result of Raymond Roussel's *Impressions of Africa*, an outrageously extravagant account of life in Africa that quite consciously draws a completely 'imaginary' Africa that has no verisimilitude at all with the actual continent. As his notes reveal, Leiris was uncomfortable, not to say hostile, to being placed in the role of an anthropologist. It was not until after he had

returned, and indeed after *L'Afrique fantôme* had been published, that he decided to train as an anthropologist. As he embarked on this career, his own anthropological writings are relatively conventional and certainly take none of the liberties, in terms of subjective positioning, that *L'Afrique fantôme* does. As regards his own position within the anthropological discipline, Leiris does not seem to have ever considered himself as an innovatory anthropologist. Indeed most of his work gives the impression of being a little distracted, the work of someone doing a job that interests him but that his own personal interests are elsewhere. This is borne out by his comments in recent interviews[41], in which he rather dismisses anthropology. In this respect, I think Frances Slaney is correct in viewing Leiris primarily as a poet who became involved with anthropology and that his most immediate interests lay elsewhere.

In this respect, *L'Afrique fantôme* can be seen as something of a prolegomena, not to his anthropological career, but to his vast autobiographical project which, although it has often been seen as representing - much to Leiris's own annoyance - an 'ethnography of the self' - in fact has little to do with any conventional anthropological approach.

Leiris himself seems somewhat ambivalent about the place to assign the work within his oeuvre. Making a clear distinction between his 'anthropology' and his 'literature', he does place *L'Afrique fantôme* in the anthropology section (although this could in fact have been for professional reasons - to make it seem he had written more anthropology than he had) but still has doubts about whether it is ethnography.[42] Perhaps it could be more accurately described as 'testimony' than as 'ethnography', since what it effectively does is to bear witness, with exemplary candour, to what happened to a group of Europeans who travelled for twenty one months through the centre of Africa. As such it certainly has an exemplary value, but it does not bring into question the traditional ethnographic approach, nor does it establish a role model for an innovatory form of ethnography. Indeed, implicit in *L'Afrique fantôme* is a critique of any role model. Leiris has stated that he had a "repugnance for everything that is a transposition or arrangement, in other words a fallacious compromise between real facts and the pure products of the imagination."[43] *L'Afrique fantôme* bears witness to this repugnance and to the continuity of the book with his surrealist concerns. There can be little doubt that *L'Afrique fantôme* is a surrealist work, but not for the reasons Clifford gives, since surrealism is a moral attitude and not a technique. It is therefore not the collage technique, the use of metonymic juxtaposition, the mockery of scientific discourse, the taste for incongruity, that make the work surrealist, even if these things are apparent within the book. In surrealism it is simply false to say, as Clifford does, that procedures of cutting out and assemblage are the message and that surrealists would find anything to praise in such an anthropology. But

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[41] see interview with Jean Jamin and Sally Price in *Gradhiva* (1980), no 4

[42]. interview in *Gradhiva*, p42.

[43] Leiris, *L'Age d'homme*, p 15.

having said all this and denied the status of *L'Afrique fantôme* as ethnography, whether in the traditional mode or in that of the currently fashionable reflexive, we will now seek to turn our argument back on itself and argue that *L'Afrique fantôme* is indeed ethnography, even innovatory ethnography, not because of either its form or its reflexive matter, however, but because of its content.

In *L'Afrique fantôme* what we see is the displacement of the object of ethnographic study; Leiris is not studying the peoples encountered by the Dakar-Djibouti expedition, nor is he studying his fellow ethnographers, as Michel Izard has suggested, since his observations on them are no more systematic than those on the natives. What is treated systematically as an object is the internal dynamic of Leiris's own imaginative processes. It does not seem to me that this can be described as an 'ethnography of the self', since Leiris himself is not really the focus of the 'study' (if this is an appropriate word). Rather it is the dialectic interplay between Leiris's self and his perception of the external world. Internal and external, in this context, become inseparable. Can we speak of such a process as representing an 'ethnography of the imagination'?

Three clear literary influences play upon Leiris's intentions with regard to the writing of *L'Afrique fantôme*. Most immediate is Breton's *Nadja* (1927), in which real and imaginary events are presented with the same veracity and given an identical ontological value. The other two works are Proust's *A la Récherche du temps perdu* and Joyce's *Ulysses*. The influence of these two works is perhaps less pervasive and immediate (and Leiris's intentions may have been rather different from these two authors), but if we consider the book in relation to these two works we gain some insight into the background against which Leiris was working. The importance of Proust is in the meticulous way in which he sought to address the question of memory while Joyce was important again for the way the events of a single day are presented so meticulously as to suggest numerous levels of possible interpretation. In some ways it might be possible to argue that both Proust and Joyce were engaged in an ethnographic quest, a quest in which the 'object' is not other people but the mechanism of one's own imagination. In this respect both works, in the way in which they effectively 'mythologise' contemporary life, have something in common with surrealist intentions, even though the surrealists were generally fond of neither author because of what was perceived as the overly literary intent. Even so the tantalizing glimpses of a potential 'ethnographic' approach to the imagination, something that is rather characteristic of surrealist narrative strategies in general, is in many ways prefigured in Proust and Joyce, and takes particular form in Leiris's autobiographical project.

If Leiris's account of the Dakar-Djibouti expedition raises difficulties as to the status of its ethnographic import within anthropology, Antonin Artaud's writings on Mexico and most notably his journey to the Tarahumara Indians - even though Artaud was not an anthropologist and had no interest in anthropological theory - are more clearly ethnographic in their overall aims in that Artaud was concerned to describe his experience in Mexico, and had no interest in problematizing his relation to the collection of ethnographic data. Artaud's work does nevertheless raise equally difficult questions in other respects.

There are some parallels between Artaud's journey to Mexico and the Dakar-Djibouti expedition in that Artaud had also hoped to be able to establish a similar sort of expedition among the Indian populations. The parallel, however, ends there. While the Griaule mission was primarily given the task of documenting the cultures encountered in the course of the journey, and also of bringing back as many cultural exhibits as possible, Artaud's intention was "to do with discovering and reviving the vestiges of the ancient Solar culture."[44]   Where the Dakar-Djibouti expedition was supported by the French government, Artaud had been invited to Mexico by some Mexicans interested in surrealism and had to raise his own funds, which were mostly obtained from friends, supplemented by the giving of lectures when he was actually in Mexico. He was given a grant by the Mexican government to visit the land of the Tarahumaras.

Artaud visited Mexico in 1936, staying there from January until October. His attitude towards his visit was nothing if not grandiose. Believing that the rest of the world had collapsed into barbarism, and considering that Mexico alone held the flame of world regeneration, Artaud believed he could work with the Mexicans towards the recovery of essential reality by rejecting pernicious European influences and reconciling Mexican revolutionary consciousness with the ancient secrets still retained by Indian civilisation.

It should be recalled that at the time Mexico was governed by the progressive Cardenas administration, which was determined to build upon the achievements of the Mexican Revolution and was far from being unsympathetic to ideas like those of Artaud. It was indeed a government grant that allowed Artaud to visit the Tarahumaras, even though in the end he was unable to establish the expedition he wished and had to travel alone.

Artaud's ethnographic attitude is the polar opposite to that of anthropology. Where anthropology seeks to discover and comprehend an 'Other', Artaud refuses to accept the notion of alienness. He refuses to accept the validity of treating other societies in terms other than his own. One could say that his image of the Tarahumaras was pre-determined, although this would be something of an over-simplification. It would be truer to say that he knew what he wanted to find in Mexico. It would be up to the Mexicans to conform to this idea. If they did not, then Artaud would reject them. Now, in considering the issue in these terms, what is apparent is that to some extent such an attitude is implicit in any ethnographic approach. Artaud's attitude problematises any conception of 'ethnocentrism', or rather brings into relief the fact that the ethnographer must bring some preconceptions into the field. The fact that Artaud's practice does not admit of the validity of denying such preconceptions does not necessarily invalidate his approach as ethnography, especially since the limit within which he is working is much narrower than that of most ethnographers. At the same time he makes no attempt to hide his own preconceptions and therefore one might argue that his ethnographic approach has some exemplary qualities in relation to the approach of traditional ethnography, since such an approach always leaves us to try to draw out what the anthropologist's

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[44]. letter to Jean-Louis Barrault

own prejudices are, whereas there can be no doubt about Artaud's.

Artaud's attitude is very much a surrealist one, the assumption being that 'thought is ONE and indivisible'. This stance does not admit of the possibility of relativism. It is fundamentally monist and against any form of pluralism. And, thought being common to all, the distance and detachment formally demanded by anthropology, is denied. Since everything comes from the same source, since everything is connected with everything else, then there is no possibility of alienness: everything becomes a matter of positioning. There is no question of 'objectivity' as such, but of establishing the objective relation between different subjectivities. From an anthropological point of view, Artaud's image of the Tarahumaras can be dismissed as being inaccurate, but it is so only because anthropology does not accept the starting point with which Artaud began. What Artaud saw of Tarhumaras culture is as objective as any anthropological account; if it is invalid from the point of view of the anthropologist it is so because the anthropologist is looking for something else. This argument brings to mind the Freeman/Mead debate, where it can be seen that neither Freeman nor Mead present an objective view of Samoan reality, but one which reflects their own perspective on it.

Artaud's approach towards foreign culture contrasts interestingly with that of Leiris. At root both had a similar attitude and Leiris had gone on the Dakar-Djibouti expedition to "get rid of old European attitudes". He expected to find in Africa something analogous to what Artaud wanted in Mexico, but was constantly frustrated. Was Artaud more tenacious? Was it because the Tarahumaras, unlike the peoples Leiris encountered, were to a large degree unacculturated? Was it because Leiris was a more reflective individual who was responsive to the nuances of the other's society and perceived the disparity between what he hoped to find and what he actually did find? There is probably an element of truth in all three , but the fact that the Tarahumaras were an isolated tribe with little contact with the outside world, meant that Artaud was able to establish a more immediate relation with the indigenous peoples than Leiris, who was part of a group of Europeans travelling among peoples who were in large degree colonial subjects and used to dealing with Europeans.[45]

A different perspective can be gained from a consideration of Octavio Paz's The Monkey Grammarian (1971). Paz gives us no details about the circumstances of his journey to the Indian holy city of Galta. He wrote the text of the book in the summer of 1970 in Cambridge, where he held the chair of Latin American studies for a year. He had visited Galta when he was in India as the Mexican ambassador to that country, a post he resigned in July 1968 in protest at the massacre of students in Mexico City. There was therefore at least a two-year gap between his visit and the writing up of the account. Paz never allows us to forget this triple conjunction: a Mexican, writing about a visit to an Indian town in the quiet seclusion of Cambridge University.

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[45]. Lourdes Andrade told me that the particular Tarahumaras tribe with which Artaud stayed have remained completely isolated to this day and that Artaud has been the only European they have allowed to live among them. Two anthropologists who tried to study them were murdered. I have not been able to verify this.

Galta is a town in Gujarat which was abandoned around 1920 because of encroachment by the desert. Falling into ruin it soon became a refuge for pariahs, holy men and, last but not least, monkeys. It also became a place of pilgrimage. Paz takes these images: a ruined city, untouchables, pilgrims, holy men and monkeys, as a point of departure for multiple reflexions on the nature of reality and the signification of perceptions of fixity and movement, turbulence and equilibrium, language and representation, fullness and emptiness. Thematic unity is established by the figure of Hanuman, the ambivalent Hindu monkey god who presides over culture and language.

At first glance, *The Monkey Grammarian* is even more disordered than either Leiris's or Artaud's books. Paz's narrative flies off in all directions at once, one perception being a touchstone for a whole series of reflexions. Such apparent confusion is illusory and as soon as one starts to engage with the book one comes to terms with its internal unity.[46]

Paz challenges the whole concept of writing about travel. For him, to write an account of a journey is to erase the journey. It is thus only vanity to seek to 'represent' what one has seen. And unhealthy to try (this is also the theme of another surrealist travel narrative, Alberto Savinio's *Speaking to Clio*, which is founded on the idea of writing as a process of clearing away past thought - a process of exorcism, even. Savinio goes so far as to recommend keeping a diary for the purpose of wiping the slate clean of the previous day - life is to be re-made anew each day). The purpose of writing is even precisely this: to wipe memories away and establish a new meaning in the new journey. Paz refuses to privilege any type of journey, whether it be a physical journey, or one conducted through reading or writing. The journey he undertakes from his study in Cambridge has as much significance as the one to Galta. Both represented the desire to continue the journey towards the self and towards the world. As such it represents the objective form of knowledge that surrealism sought, in which the subjective perspective would be incorporated within it and desire would become concretised. Breton had written that the universe is "an indivisible cryptogram which man is called upon to decipher" and this, we might say, provides the cornerstone for the surrealist 'anthropological' approach. Nothing is ever 'represented'; it is only re-made in a different form responding to different contingencies. The world, being one, cannot be experienced as separable from this whole. It is for this reason that Paz gives such significance to the figure of Hanuman, the grammarian who preceded man. As such he symbolises the unity of man with nature.

We can see here the point at which the approaches of Leiris, Artaud and Paz converge: in the wish to decipher the universe. Within these terms the fundamental framework of the ethnographic encounter - of trying to understand the other - is renounced. All three decline, or more often ignore, the idea of trying to establish a distance between oneself and the object of study. They all refuse to detach themselves from the people they are visiting and insist on considering both as parts of the same reality while still respecting the problematic this establishes: they remain conscious - often

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[46] *The Monkey Grammarian* is clearly influenced by *Tristes Tropiques*, with which it has much in common. Paz has written a book on Lévi-Strauss and has clearly learned a great deal about anthropology from him, although his philosophical position is somewhat different.

acutely so - of themselves as different from those they travel amongst (at least this is true of Leiris and Paz, but is less so of Artaud). The anthropologist is supposed to dissolve his own prejudices, but Leiris, Artaud and Paz all accept their own tendentiousness. But it can, I think, be seen that their approaches can not be considered to be subjective. On the contrary, within the terms of the framework established, they all seek to establish an objectivity in relation to their own work. They also point to areas of subjective intent, of imaginative construction, of factors of desire, that traditionally in anthropology have been excluded from the calculations upon which the ethnographic attitude is founded.

In each case, however, it is not the people visited who are the objects of study. In Paz's account, in particular, we gain no insight into the people who live at Galta. As an ethnography of Galta and its people, it would be worthless. As Paz states, nothing actually happened there. Although he describes a trip to an exotic place, Paz in fact refuses this exoticism and inscribes the very ordinariness that it involved, but only to emphasise the way in which any journey, any encounter, is at root mysterious. To a lesser extent, one could say the same about all the other accounts we have considered. Neither Leiris nor Artaud really make more than perfunctory attempts to understand the societies they visited. Such understanding as they had came from the extent to which they felt integrated into the society. They did not travel to try to find something new, something exotic and foreign, although to some extent they were looking for something that had been lost within themselves and their own society. In this respect they have something in common with other travellers in search of the 'Noble Savage'. I don't, however, see that this is the primary importance of these works in the anthropological perspective. Rather it is the extent to which they confront, in different ways, the encounter with otherness through their own individual imaginations.

The key surrealist image for the idea of travel is the phrase, *As he crossed the bridge the phantoms came to meet him*, something that comes from a film in which the lead character crosses a bridge into a dark forest. In the film the scene that follows the crossing of the bridge is printed in negative, suggesting the dialectical encounter with otherness in terms of a turning upside down of values.[47] It is perhaps in the surrealist attitude towards the cinema that we can gain another perspective onto ethnography through surrealism. The surrealists saw the visit to the cinema as always involving the crossing of a threshold into something unknown. Breton expressed this as follows: "it is a question of *going beyond* the bounds of what is 'allowed', which in the cinema as nowhere else, prepares me to enter into the 'forbidden'."[48] The effect is such that "a *super-disorientation* is to be expected here, not from the transference of a normal act from everyday life to a place consecrated to *another* life, which is profane, but between the 'lesson' the film teaches and

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[47]. The film is F.W. Murnau's *Nosferatu* (1923), the first film version of *Dracula*. The image is an inter-title which does not in fact appear in the original version of the film, being a mis-translation that occurred when the inter-title was rendered into French. The scene itself is when Hutter leaves the common road to take the path to Dracula's castle.

[48] Breton, 'As in a Wood', in Paul Hammond (ed), *The Shadow and its Shadow*, p 44.

the manner in which the person receiving it disposes of it".[49]

To consider this approach in ethnographic terms is not to suggest that it provides any 'alternative' ways of doing ethnography, but rather to bring into relief the way that any ethnographic approach must pass through the ethnographer's own sensibility. In giving us such a transparent view of the way in which they have approached the question of alienness, the surrealists allow us some insight into the imaginative process. We could, perhaps, describe this as giving the beginning of a potential 'ethnography of the imagination', the idea of which we will try to develop in subsequent chapters in dealing with the way the imagination functions in representation.

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[49] *ibid.* p 44.

CHAPTER FOUR:

REALITY, IMAGINATION AND THE OBJECT

> *The imagination is the queen of truth, and the possible is one of the provinces of the truth.*
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> Baudelaire

Travel, the Imagination and the exotic

In considering surrealist travel narratives, we have sought to problematise the notion of travel itself. What does the idea of 'travel' actually mean? Does it simply involve a change of geographical location? In the West, the idea of the seasoned traveller tends to be applied only to physical journeys undertaken from one place to another. If they involve difficulties of access, if one has problems with customs, is required to have numerous inoculations, falls ill with a tropical disease, is held up at gunpoint by bandits, has problems understanding local conventions, then so much the better: it is precisely such exotic adventures that legitimate the travel experience. This is equally true of anthropology and gives a romantic veneer to the fieldwork experience. All well and good, but as we discussed in the first chapter, such experiences, given a value in themselves, do scant justice to all

the congeries involved in the establishment of a 'science of man'.

Such an image of travel is not one shared by all cultures. In many societies, the most significant image of travel is towards an inner reality represented in particular by the shamanic journey. In such societies, the notion of travelling 'abroad' is often given no credence at all. Yet in Western societies it is often the freedom with which one is enabled to travel to other countries that provides one of the main barometers of the social well-being of a society.

This lust for the exotic is a reflexion of alienated social relations, for it is rarely a case of travel being perceived as a confrontation with otherness. To the contrary, everything is often done to restrict the extent to which the 'other' should enter the exotic framework. Whether it be a package tour or an anthropological expedition, the primary concern appears to be to frame the experience of travel within familiar terms of reference. What is sought is an encounter with something 'different', something outside oneself that is separable from oneself. No matter what the physical difficulties, or even dangers involved, everything is done to restrict the risk of psychic contamination. As Sidney Mintz has said: "...we rush about the globe, encouraging our children to do likewise, in search of something 'totally different', even while we relentlessly turn it into something that is 'the same'; that is, more like our own."[1]

This conception of travel, then, is diametrically at the opposite end of the spectrum from the idea of the shamanic journey, where it is precisely the notion of the confrontation of otherness that is centrally at stake. The idea of the physical journey as exclusively representing the process of travel is thus equally a turning away from the idea of the internal journey. Frequently such a conception of travel implies that there is something exemplary in any change of scene, that, simply by the process of going somewhere else, one's own vision of the world will be renewed. The curious phrase, 'travel broadens the mind', emphasises this assumption: the mind is broadened not by anything the mind itself actually does, but purely though the process of a physical change of locale. Such a belief relies upon the separation of mind and body and especially the separation of oneself from the external world, all of which is brought into question by our discussion of surrealist narratives that have dealt with the process of travel. This became particularly apparent to Leiris as he travelled across Africa to 'lose his white habits' and found that, contrariwise, he simply became more aware of them. It is still the case that the urge to travel frequently represents little more than the will to be elsewhere than one is. As such it remains a primarily negative experience, responding to a lack in one's perception of one's own social surroundings rather than a will towards something new.

Yet the image of the journey is an elemental human image. In being born we are set on an inescapable journey through life, in which we are continually forced to confront the alienness of what is external to us. The process of learning is one of gradual absorption of alienness into oneself. For the newly-born child, it might be said, everything is perceived in terms of itself. As it grows it learns that it must adapt to what surrounds it and it is only by passing through such an experience that the

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[1] Sidney Mintz, preface to the second edition of *Voodoo in Haiti* by Alfred Métraux.

child grows as an individual. There is no reality inside oneself that is independent of one's experience of the world. Equally, one's experience of the external world only takes form through one's own inner experience. Being born is thus to be thrown on the path towards the other. Marx expressed this well: "Since he comes into the world neither with a looking glass in his hand nor as a Fichtian philosopher to whom 'I am I' is sufficient, man first sees and recognises himself as other men. Peter only acknowledges his identity as a man by comparing himself with Paul as being of like kind. And thereby Paul, just as he stands in his Pauline personality becomes to Peter the true type of the genus homo..."[2] To this extent, then, we are all born as anthropologists.

Since the image of the journey is so integral to the experience of human life, being perhaps the most archetypal of all human images and at the heart of most mythologies, it is hardly surprising that the idea of the journey is one of the first specifically human images that has come down to us from the origins of culture. The oldest written text known to us, *The Epic of Gilgamesh*, represents a journey of some complexity dating from 3000BC. A similar account of a journey, the *Odyssey* of Homer, takes its place as a cornerstone of the Western cultural tradition.

As it took form, anthropology established its lineage in direct relation to the travel narrative. It has not traced its origins back to Gilgamesh or Homer, though, but to Herodotus, for reasons that are pertinent to our discussion.

Herodotus was attractive as the founding father of anthropology less because of the verisimilitude of the representations that constitute the anthropological content of his work (it is arguable that there are as many outlandish things in Herodotus as in Homer) as in its form; Herodotus disengages us from the mythical *form* of the journey to confront us directly with an image of otherness, which he claims to present with as much verity as possible. It is this claim, rather than anything directly in the content of his work, that establishes the credentials of Herodotus as anthropologist (and also as historian). The approach of Herodotus is descriptive of 'other people'. He separates himself from them and comments on them. Unlike the 'epic' or 'romance' form, he does not conflate his own perspective with that of the people he is writing about. Rather he seeks to establish the other's integrity, positing the other as being different rather than, as in the epic form, an enemy or an obstacle to be overcome. In Herodotus alienness becomes objectified instead of emerging pell-mell from the necessities of the narrative structure. We might exemplify this point by the episode of the Cyclops in the *Odyssey*. For Homer he is simply a dangerous obstacle to Odysseus in his journey and must be defeated to allow the hero to pass on his way - as such he has no integral reality except in relation to the hero of the narrative; Herodotus, on the other hand, had he encountered such a creature, would have sought to understand him quite independently of his relation to the story being told. This would seem to represent, at least at first glance, an admirably anthropological attitude and to draw a sharp distinction between the concerns of science and those of romance. It perhaps does do so, in fact, but not entirely in the way generally thought. For, as we

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[2] Marx, *Capital*, p 35.

have sought to show, questions of objectivity are by no means as simple and straightforward as positivist anthropology might like to believe.

In her history of early anthropology, Margaret Hodgen has considered Herodotus as being an exemplary figure who established an anthropology *avant la lettre* which was to be distorted over the centuries to come: "It was his hand," she writes, "which first set down in an organized and vivid form a description of a series of human cultures, later to be deformed and disfigured to suit the twisted imaginations of his successors. It was his mind, brooding restlessly over strange cultural contrasts in Mediterranean lands, which first formulated some of the persisting problems of anthropological inquiry."[3] Hodgen writes with great enthusiasm for the approach of Herodotus and seems to be incredulous at what she sees as the wilful distortions of the medieval mind.

In fact, Herodotus has often been considered to be too fanciful; and as a 'liar'. Was the reason for this some sort of incomprehensible perversity of medieval thinking, or does it rather involve a different perspective on the nature of the objective portrayal of the alien?

Of course, whether Herodotus' intentions were 'anthropological', in the contemporary sense, is open to question. It is a hazardous matter to impute intent (especially within such a specific frame of reference) to a person of such a different culture and sensibility as ours. It is misleading to try to establish a category (or discipline) of something like anthropology in so specific a framework as to make of it an absolute value applicable to all historical periods. Especially when anthropology, as consciously elaborated, properly belongs only to recent European history. The question of the status of Herodotus' work in the context of Greek society is something for Greek historians, not anthropologists, to determine. No doubt in considering Herodotus to be the originator of anthropology, we are imposing our own gloss. But what concerns us here is the nature of the evidence offered by Herodotus and how it helps to illuminate questions about travel and the nature of anthropological evidence.

At a superficial level it is not difficult to see that one of the central strands that unites Herodotus to modern anthropology is the needs of colonialism. Greek political authority was expansionist and imperialist in nature and such authority must have 'accurate' information about the peoples it has conquered to be able to maintain an efficient administration and impose its authority in the colonised territories. Even so, such 'accurate' information still needs to be ideologically sifted and defined: it is never neutral.

For in truth the medieval mind was not 'imperialist' in this sense at all and consequently its interest in other peoples was far more disinterested. Disinterested, but hardly more accurate. Yet accuracy in such a context begins to lose its sense. It is defined relative to the requirements of the society from which one is working. Medieval accounts of travel may seem to us to be fanciful and almost devoid of reality and we tend to ascribe this to some form of descriptive deficiency. The fact

[3] Margaret T. Hodgen, *Early Anthropology in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries.* p 20/21.

is otherwise: medieval travel accounts responded with perfect accuracy to what medieval society required from travel accounts.[4] To understand particular travel accounts it is not enough simply to establish a framework of supposed 'objective' portrayal. What is necessary is to consider the whole question of the to-and-fro nature of the encounter with the alien in terms of what is perceived as familiar and 'home'. Anthropological evidence always establishes its objectivity by means of balancing subjectivities. Here our argument about surrealist writers making an object of their own imaginative process gains additional force. For it is only through an understanding of the imagination, I would argue, that we can hope to come to terms with the range of difficulties involved here.

In the journey, the perception of the alien is always set off against a conceptualization of the familiar. One state begins where the other ends, although the boundaries between them are never clear cut and are always in process of new mediation. We are always, at every moment, involved in mapping out a new terrain by which our concepts of the familiar and the alien, the domestic and the wild, home and abroad can be established. How we perceive other people and how we undertake specific journeys is always dependent upon the relative sense of mediation we have established between concepts of what is familiar and what is alien, concepts which are largely produced by the imagination. This is something that was particularly important to the late nineteenth century writer, doctor, archaeologist and traveller, Victor Segalen.

Segalen denied the usual definition of exoticism as being a fixed form of strangeness that is assigned to particular races, cultures, fauna etc. Rather the exotic is a sense of surprise in which a disjunction is apparent between oneself and the world in which one lives. It is a feeling - the opposite of a *dèja-vu* - in which perception is torn apart from the familiar. It tends to occur in one of three ways - through a confrontation with the physically distinct, with the past or with the future. The exotic is a jolt into the unknown. But as it is established, so it tends to fade with assimilation and coming to terms with the new experience. The exotic is a means for the renewal of vision - it enriches the sensibility as it holds the real and imaginary in tension. Segalen's quest - which has to be considered as being very much an anthropological one - was to try to hold this tension so that internal and external reality would not be perceived as contradictory to each other. He wrote: "Let's not flatter ourselves that we can assimilate morals, races, nations, others, but rather let's rejoice in never being able to do so, thereby reserving to ourselves the durability of the pleasure of feeling the diverse."[5] What needs to be considered is the nature of the imagination as such. How does it function in relation to the real and produce the images encountered in representation?

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[4] On this question we might note the revealing example recounted by Jamake Highwater concerning an encounter between the Swiss artist Rudolph Friedrich Kurz and a Sioux Indian in 1852. The Indian expressed dissatisfaction with Kurz's drawing and said that he could do better. The Indian drew a man on horseback in a way that both the man's legs could be seen. Kurz's objected that this was wrong because one of the man's legs could not be seen from the angle from which it was painted. "'Ah,' the Sioux said softly, 'but, you see, an man has *two* legs.'" (Highwater, *The Primal Mind*, p 57.)

[5] Segalen, *Notes sur l'Exotisme*.

In Segalen's book *Equipée* (1928) he explores the nature of travel in its double sense as both a journey out there and as a journey within. The subtitle of the work is 'a journey to the land of the real' and it is written around a voyage that Segalen himself made in 1914 across China. The journey was undertaken primarily as an archaeological expedition to uncover examples of ancient Chinese statuary. Segalen was accompanied by Gilbert de Voisins and the photographer Jean Lartigue, and an account of the expedition was published in 1924 by the Librarie Orientaliste Paul Geuthner. But this very concrete reason for travelling was not sufficient for Segalen. He wanted to use it to try to understand the mechanism of the imagination through the process of travelling, to try to determine the extent to which one's preconceptions determined how one perceived the actual process of travel. Or did the physical act of travelling eliminate the preconceptions built up whilst thinking about the journey beforehand? The question that Segalen attempted to answer in *Equipée* was this: "is the imaginary dissipated or replenished when confronted with the real?"[6] As Yvonne Hieuh says: "The ultimate goal is to settle the following question: do the world of the Real and the Imaginary unite and reinforce each other, or does one inevitably destroy the other, so that returning from this 'Equipée dans le Réel,' the author will have to give up the 'double jeu plein de promesse sans quoi l'homme vivant n'est plus corps, ou n'est plus esprit'?"[7]

Segalen had a background in symbolism, in which the idea of travel was often scorned in a cult of the artificial. The classic example of this is the chapter in Huysmans' *A Rebours* in which the central character, Des Esseintes, having decided to visit London, wanders around Paris for anything imbued with English atmosphere - he buys a map, visits tea-shops and English bars, mixes with English people, etc. On his way to the railway station to catch the train, however, he decides he has had enough of London: "After all, I have felt and seen what I wanted to feel and see. I have been steeped in English life ever since I left home; it would be a fool's trick to go and lose these imperishable impressions by a clumsy change of locality. Why, surely I must have been out of my senses to have tried thus to repudiate my old settled convictions, to have condemned the obedient figment of my imagination, to have believed like the veriest ninny in the necessity, the interest, the advantage of a trip abroad?"[8]

Although coming from the same background, Segalen had none of this aristocratic contempt for the physical reality of the journey itself. On the contrary, he travelled as much as he could. But

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[6] Victor Segalen, *Equipée*, p 11.

[7] Yvonne Y. Hsieh, *Victor Segalen's Literary Encounter With China: Chinese Moulds, Western Thoughts*, p124.

[8] J.K. Huysmans, *Against the Grain, p 130.* The symbolists should perhaps be distinguished from the surrealists in this respect, for although the surrealists appear to have been largely indifferent or had a rather ironical attitude toward the idea of travelling, they never had any of the active contempt for travel displayed by the symbolists. This is an important distinguishing feature, for ultimately symbolism retreats before the exigencies of the real world into an inner sanctum of the imagination, whereas surrealism always sought to hold imagination and reality in tension.

his symbolist background gave him an acute sensitivity to the inner component involved when one travels in (outer) reality, and the extent to which the two are dependent on each other. He could not accept the fact that a journey simply involved the physical transportation of a person from one environment to another. He begins *Equipée* with these words: "I have always held to be suspect or illusory everything within the genre of adventure tales, travelogues, and tattletales - decked out with sincere words - based on activity presented as occurring in specific places at the end of catalogued days."[9] In this his attitude prefigures that of surrealism.

Real and Imaginary in surrealism

The question that arises here is the status of the imaginary in relation to the real. We are accustomed to considering reality as being commensurate with our perceptual frame of reference: we do not admit as reality anything that is beyond, or simply not reducible, to that perceptual framework.

This conception of 'reality' is legitimated philosophically by the delineation of ontology preponderant in Western culture and first expressed by Plato. This separates essence and appearance from each other in absolute terms and makes a dualistic division between them, in which essence is valorised against 'mere' appearance.

In surrealism this ontological principle is challenged. The issue has been considered in some detail by the philosopher Ferdinand Alquié, in his book *The Philosophy of Surrealism*. It is therefore useful here to recapitulate Alquié's argument to bring the question of the imagination in this context into relief.

Alquié identifies two essential postulates upon which the surrealist conception of the imagination is based. The first assumes a relation and a unity between the real and the imaginary, a unity that alone makes identity possible. The second rejects the Bergsonian concept of an arbitrary imagination to replace it with one which is fundamentally synthetic. The imaginary takes form as a realising force which holds images in an unstable relation formed by the play of the imagination, which is fluid, with the real, which is solid. It thereby throws a conducting line between the internal and the external, ceaselessly breaking the framework of the given in order to re-constitute it. The motive force here is desire, which tends towards the realization of what it imagines.

Up to this point surrealism remains within the framework of Cartesian ontology based upon three essential postulates - identity of sensation and image, the proper existence of images and the power of actualization - but reverses the values invoked, removing the rationalist frame and welcoming the free expression of images against reason, utility and moral censure. As surrealism developed, however, it began to question this framework and to anticipate the findings of gestalt psychology which undermined the belief that images accurately represented sensations. The

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[9] Segalen, *ibid., p 11*

surrealists had, Alquié suggests, anticipated such findings by what they had learned from Freud, positing the liberty of consciousness to create images rather than imitate given forms: "The surrealist imagination refuses the given and derealizes it; desire chooses whatever in ordinary life pleases it, and, the logical boundaries of perception being broken, all approaches become permissible and all are sources of light."[10] In this Freud had led the surrealists to question what they had at first simply taken to be a product of nature and to consider the imagination in relation to the nexus of subjective relations. In practice this leads surrealism to replace representational images with comparative ones and divests the imagination of all mystical forms. In this way, surrealism always invokes a dialectical relation whereby the seen is always seeking to suggest an unseen and vice versa; it is, in other words, always seeking to go beyond itself. As such it does not involve a return to immediacy but rather establishes contact with the immediate. Therefore it always remains opposed to what exists mechanically and presents itself as an eternal promise. This much is in harmony with surrealism's own self-image.

Alquié describes himself as a Kantian philosopher who sees himself as lying within a direct tradition that connects up with Plato through Cartesianism. He would like to claim surrealism for the same tradition, and argues that it does not - as superficially appears to be the case, and as the surrealists themselves would claim - break with the Enlightenment tradition that claims descent from Plato, but rather as developing in a new direction. Alquié does not specifically try to connect up the surrealist understanding of the imagination with that tradition, but prefers to view surrealism as a particular development, in terms of lineal process, of the Western intellectual tradition that links Plato with Descartes and Kant (who are Alquié's own favourite philosophers). He argues this because in surrealism the individual liberation that establishes the self's integrity is in opposition to all forms of oppression that would seek to limit it. This is in accord with Enlightenment ideas about the perfectibility of man and the requirement to foster self-consciousness as the means towards the realization of freedom. We will examine this question in some detail in the final chapter of the thesis. For now we will confine ourselves to looking at the implications of such an argument for the way in which we conceptualize the imagination.

In seeking to claim surrealism for the Enlightenment in this way, Alquié admits that he is interpreting surrealism in a way that is contrary to what the surrealists have said and thought about themselves. But he justifies his argument by the fact that the surrealists are not professional philosophers and cannot be expected to appreciate the full philosophical implications of their own practice. In this respect he is particularly keen to extricate surrealism from what he considers to be a *faux pas* by claiming descent from Hegel and German Romanticism, in which he sees a rejection of the Platonic tradition of self-realization and the establishment of mystificatory ideas that are the foundation of tyranny.

We cannot deal with this argument here, but it is important to establish the precise

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[10]. Alquié, *The Philosophy of Surrealism*, p 134.

relationship of surrealism to romanticism, and especially to the philosophy of Hegel (which Alquié sees as being particularly pernicious), since it will be clear from what has been said so far that I do not think the surrealists were mistaken in charting their own lineage through romanticism. It seems to me that the surrealists were far more philosophically literate than Alquié is prepared to give them credit for and that, for better or worse, surrealism has to be seen in terms of the heritage of romanticism and Hegel.

The a key element to be considered in treating notions of what constitutes reality is the ontological status of the imagination. Is it simply a deceiving realm of uncertainty to be distrusted, but which acts upon the 'real' by default. Or does it - as the surrealists would certainly argue - itself an ontological category as tangible as that of the 'real'? From the perspective of our argument about the way in which images and representation are established and take particular form must therefore turn on ontological questions about the status of reality.

Alquié recognises the difficulty involved here when he says that surrealism represents a 'rupture with ontology'. This is the crux of Alquié's argument, for he sees an inherent contradiction between surrealism's aims in this respect that reveals both the limits of surrealism in its central task of the transformation of man while at the same time it also shows the profound impact it has had on ideas of human freedom. He asserts that surrealism is "the sign of our autonomy. It chooses, it comprehends, it invents. It is not the road leading from the image to the real, the blind natural force by which forms are incarnated. It is much rather the liberating faculty that permits us to pass from the real to the image itself."[11] This backhanded compliment, praising the surrealists not for what they thought they were doing but for what Alquié thinks they are actually doing, robs surrealism of its founding principle and inserts the human will at the heart of its liberating aspirations. But even so, it is still not accurate to describe this as a break with ontology, since the surrealists plainly do not break with the notion of essence. It is, rather, a reformulation of ontological principles.

Alquié goes on: "In introducing into its conception of the imagination an element of critical consciousness, will not surrealism be constrained to renounce its fundamental project and to justify scientific and technological activity as the only way - at the level of scientific knowledge - that the imaginary can become real? If the image is born of our rupture with spontaneous and vital adaptation [...] we can no longer in effect find the real through the image except by acknowledging still more our first separation from nature and submitting our desire to the laws of representation. On the level of pure spontaneity and instinct, we can conceive of an action directly extending the affections. But precisely on this level there are no images properly so called. Dolorific, tactile, olfactory, and gustatory sensations, which express the animal nature in us, cannot be recalled in the form of images..."[12] This is the crux of Alquié's argument - it implies that the task the surrealists set themselves is untenable and contradicted by their own practice, but that surrealism is of great interest

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[11] Ferdinand Alquié, *The Philosophy of Surrealism*, p 134/5

[12] Alquié, *ibid*, p 135.

if we consider it as part of the Western tradition they themselves consciously rejected. This is rather condescending and brings to mind the worst anthropological approaches that purport to explain in 'primitive' society what is above the heads of the 'primitives'. But how firm is Alquié's own philosophical framework?.

As Alquié explicitly states his philosophy is grounded in Platonic concepts that make an absolute distinction between essence and appearance. Plato's own concepts here are complex, but in the way they have entered into the Western discourse on the functioning of the imagination, and how Alquié appears to view them, is in terms of a pure dualism in which essence is commensurable with 'reality', which thereby determines ontological value - the imagination and its immediate materiality (the imaginary) are thereby necessarily consigned to the realm of appearance. They are - by definition - illusory. But this is not the framework that surrealism accepts: the idea that 'the imaginary is that which tends to become real' can perhaps be seen as the first principle of surrealism. Alquié denies this principle, but he is certainly incorrect in stating that it represents a 'rupture with ontology'. What he really means is that it breaks *his* ontology.

External to the Platonic framework, Heraclitus had earlier suggested a different ontological principle in which the distinction between essence and appearance is established on a quite different basis. At the heart of Heraclitus' philosophy is the idea of the all-encompassing fire of creation from which all things are formed and pass through. He wrote: "This universe, which is the same for all, has not been made by any god or man, but it always has been, is and will be an ever-living fire, kindling itself by regular measures and going out by regular measures." All creation, of which both man and the gods are part, passes through the fire which is both substance and non-substance. Creation and the imaginative faculty are thus of the very essence of things. As Paul Eluard insisted: "the mind has no taste for imitation." In such terms the image is given its own autonomy and its own integrity. It is not subservient to whatever it might represent.

These questions were made philosophically manifest in Hegel. Taking issue with the Platonic conception of essence and appearance, Hegel argued that there could be no fundamental difference between the two things - they were in themselves one and the same. But the distinction remains at the perceptual level - a thing can be essence or appearance under different angles. Appearance is thereby an aspect of essence and cannot be separated from it. There is no such thing as essence existing in and of itself. Hegel expressed this as follows: "Nothing is more real than appearance, in so far as it is recognised as appearance."[13] Roger Caillois has illustrated this point by the example of a mirage, which is not an illusion if it is recognised as the essence of what it is (i.e. as a mirage), but becomes so only to the extent that it is perceived as something other than it is. Maurice Henry made the point directly in a cartoon in which a man stranded in the desert sees in the distance a sign announcing a 'Restaurant-Bar'; he races towards it to be finally greeted with another sign that reads 'Sucker!' This 'revenge of the object', which is embodied most forcefully in the mirage, is one of the

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[13] quoted by Roger Caillois, *Approches de l'imaginaire*.

central themes in surrealism and shows, I think, the extent to which they had - even if often intuitively - incorporated Hegelian philosophical concepts into their work.

In this respect, what surrealism learned from Hegel was combined with their understanding of Freud and the discovery of the unconscious. The value that Freud perceived in the unconscious (even if it was, for him, a negative value) acted as a concretisation of imaginative processes: it connected up with Hegel's concept of essence and gave to internal processes a material foundation that served also to undermine the old ontology that posited essence as existing in things themselves. As such the imaginary was brought out of the shadowy realm of appearance and could be seen as having its own place within the phenomenology of the real. It could thus be seen as a material and above all active quality that was inherent in all things. Imaginary and real thereby become aspects of the same things: "What is admirable about the fantastic," as Breton had said in the *Manifesto of Surrealism*, "is that there is no longer anything fantastic: there is only the real."

In the surrealist view reality is not a static category to which the imaginary must be related. The two categories are interrelated, to the extent that the one without the other becomes inconceivable. Having its own material integrity, the imagination is neither a product of the mind, nor is it a divine gift or manifestation. Although the generative principle *par excellence*, this is not seen as implying a pre-existing realm into which man can dip at will. Breton always insisted that creation must be empirical at root and must never presuppose "an imaginary universe tending to be manifested".[14] Indeed although the imaginary exists in material form, it remains ontologically unformed and disordered. It can take form only through a transformation that causes it to become real. To repeat: "The imaginary is that which tends to become real." It is a tendency only, however - everything that is imaginary does not *necessarily* become real.

This concept of the imagination appears to function in a quite different way in practice to that which Alquié would like to assign to it. It does not therefore follow that the art/science divide is as problematic at the heart of surrealism as he thinks. He writes: "Technological society does not make things as nature makes them; born of the constitution of the object by the rupture with ontology, it can no longer find the real except by the paths of reason. Everything here is language, and language will never be able altogether to turn against language to let appear what is only expressed symbolically."[15]

This relates to the centrality of the argument. Alquié is arguing that Cartesian reason is the only path of lucidity and the only valid means to explore scientific issues. Despite his sympathy and genuine love of surrealist writings and art, Alquié is convinced that this is all they are and can be, i.e. works of art. They are not the result of immediacy - as Hegel would have argued - and they are incapable of taking form as objects of knowledge. His argument here turns on the question of the status of imagery. Following Alquié the image is able only to embody abstract ideas in symbolic form.

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[14] André Breton, *La Clé des Champs*, p 113.

[15] Alquié, *op. cit.*, p 113.

It cannot break the ontological framework to exist in spontaneous form. This point is the basis of classicist aesthetics and implies that art can only express a subjective vision. It cannot objectify itself.

In *Oh What A Blow That Phantom Gave Me!* Edmund Carpenter has spoken of the difficulty he had in recognising the non-visual qualities of art and the object. He sees this as a peculiarly Western deficiency which has become pervasive with the growth of literacy to encourage an attitude in which visual perception becomes so predominant as to be the only legitimate means of evaluation of phenomena: "the eye of the reader [learned to scan] life as well as print".[16]

This is not a necessary consequence of literacy, however, as Carpenter has to recognise: in art a painter like Renoir does not paint a woman's body as it is seen, but as the hand touches it; others like Klee or Miró structure their paintings more by sound than by visual harmony. In this it connects up with primitive and children's art in which a hard-edged quality is predominant: the effect it provokes tends more towards the tactile than the visual.

The questioning of the nature of visual representation has become a central concern in post-modernist criticism (a question to be considered in the next chapter) which has perceived an anti-visual trend generally within Western art. This strain is strong within surrealism, but it is not a question of anti-visualism. To the contrary, surrealism has sought to emphasise the power of the eye to conceptualise images: "the eye exists in a savage state," as Breton once wrote. In surrealism it was a question of opposition to what Marcel Duchamp called the 'retinal' qualities of the image: the eye should not be allowed to hover over the surface of a painting, taking in its visual spectacle, but be drawn in to the frame and become one with it. "What interests me in a painting," as Breton said, "is not what it contains, but what it looks out upon."

This connects up with Carpenter's argument: "Literate people experience sound as if it were visible; they listen *to* music. Non-literates merge *with* music. Far from becoming detached, they become involved participants, immersing themselves totally within it."[17] This detachment from the object was in many ways the central issue that surrealism (and indeed the whole romantic tradition) had sought to confront. As Aimé Césaire warned: "Beware my body and my soul, beware above all of the pose of the spectator, because life is not a spectacle, a sea of sorrows is not a proscenium, a man who cries out is not a dancing bear."

We can thus see that, contrary to Alquié's argument, the image is not purely visual. It therefore follows that it is not necessarily 'born of our rupture with vital and spontaneous adaptation'. It may be true, speaking literally, that 'dolorific, tactile, olfactory and gustatory sensations cannot be recalled in the forms of images, but one can equally say it is no more possible to recall a visual sensation as an image, since the image partakes of all the senses and its visual elements, even if preponderant, cannot be separated out from the other elements. We can thus see that the imagination is not separable from nature by an ontological break but rather participates within nature

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[16] Carpenter, *Oh, What A Blow That Phantom Gave Me!*, p 42.

[17] Carpenter, *ibid.*, p 41.

itself. There would appear, therefore, to be no reason why spontaneous and vital images can not be formed.

Language, sign and symbol

This issue can be brought into focus by a brief consideration of language. Alquié sees the autonomy of human language from the natural forms of the universe as a prerequisite for the becoming of human freedom. As such he assumes that language is a purely human phenomenon that is artificially elaborated and can only construct meaning symbolically. Yet language is a form of communication; it may be the most complex form of communication that we know, but it is not qualitatively different from any other systematised form of communication, such as, for instance, courtship rituals in any number of animal species. Furthermore all living beings communicate: communication can even be seen as a *sine qua non* of existence. I can see no reason to assume that human language is necessarily any more divorced from a spontaneous relation to the world than any other form of communication.

Surrealism had been the inheritor of the symbolist tradition which, emerging out of romanticism, denied the primacy of written language as a symbolic code of meanings. Paradoxically, in this context, symbolism sought to invest language with a direct value in itself rather than to utilise it as a system of symbolically functioning signs. Rimbaud called for a poetry that would be created by all the senses, and Lautréamont, demanding that poetry should be made by all, invoked at the same time the necessity that language should respond to all the sensual rhythms of the body. In Mallarmé language was taken to an extreme in which it almost ceased to function as a language in the sense of being a systematic and intelligible code of meanings - meaning now comes to reside within the text itself and is no longer a means of communicating through an external system of signs. Signifier and signified thus became one.

Symbolism was undoubtedly the greatest influence on surrealist understandings of the function of language, which is no longer defined by its symbolic meaning, but has a concrete reality of its own. "Words make love," as Breton observed. But language, even at its limits, remains communication. In surrealist practice, automatism seeks to break down the codes of language to reveal communication in its pure state. A cleansing operation that does not deny language but seeks to open it up: "All that can be expressed," said Gérard Legrand, "expresses itself and can be intelligible; when it is not intelligible to reason, it is intelligible to poetic intuition, and it has not at all been proved that these two things are not the two faces of the same coin."[18] It had been stated by Breton in the First Manifesto that the problem that surrealism was most centrally concerned with was that of 'human expression in all its forms'. A little surprisingly, though, in French surrealism this

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[18]. Gérald Legrand, in Alquié, *Entretiens sur le surréalisme*, p 17.

concern has revealed itself almost wholly at the level of practice and there has been almost no interest shown in considering questions of linguistic theory.[19] To consider the question, then, it is necessary to return to romanticism, which foregrounds in theoretical terms the questions surrealism has raised in practice.

One of the key elements in romantic linguistic theory was the distinction drawn between allegory and symbol. This distinction is extremely important but is also complex and difficult to grasp. As will become apparent, it is a qualitative distinction, but not one that is in any sense dichotomous or dualistic: the symbol contains allegory within it. It might even be said that the symbol cleanses allegory of its mechanical and artificial elements. In the symbol, sign and signifier become one and perception and representation are established as parts of a unity.

It was Goethe who first made the distinction explicit, based on four main postulates: 1. symbol is indirect - it separates itself from representation to reveal representation; allegory is direct and seeks to dissimulate representation; 2. symbol is intransitive and endowed with signification - it is a thing in itself without being so, i.e. is simultaneously identical and separate from itself; allegory is transitive, functional, utilitarian, rhetorical and with no value in itself; 3. symbol is part of an image and derives from the natural; allegory is arbitrary and unmotivated; 4. symbol is intuitive; allegory rational. The fourth of these distinctions is crude and establishes a false dichotomy, but the others are richly suggestive. Schelling was later to give a more subtle shading to some of these distinctions by adding another category, the schematic, to the allegorical: "That representation in which the general signifies the particular, or in which the particular is apprehended through the general is the *schematic*. That representation, however, in which the particular signifies the general, or in which the general is apprehended through the particular is *allegorical*. The synthesis of the two, in which the general does not signify the particular nor does the particular signify the general but in which the two are absolutely one, is the *symbolic*".[20] Further qualities were also added to the distinction: symbol is open, allegory closed (Schelling); symbol is simultaneous, allegory discontinuous (Creuzer); symbol is related to

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[19]. The same cannot be said about Czech surrealism, which indeed grew out of the Prague linguistic circle and Jakobson and Muzarowsky remained close to the Czech Surrealist Group. It would obviously be of value to consider Czech surrealism in the present context, but I have decided not to do so for three reasons. First, because the fragmented nature of the material available at present does not give a complete picture of Czech surrealism and leaves one subject to the likelihood of treating materials out of context. Second, because the subject is worthy of a full study in its own right and, since no such study has been done as yet, it would be impossible in the current framework to deal adequately with all the issues involved. Third, because the focus here is on the practice of French surrealism, which was not influenced in its practice by theories coming from Prague - in this respect the Czech Surrealist Group charted its own autonomous course and it would be methodologically confusing to treat the two as if they emanated from the same source. For this reason I have also not included a discussion of the important work contained in *La Civilisation Surréaliste* (ed Vincent Bounoure, 1978), which was a collaboration between Czech and French surrealists with a particular focus on language. It seems to me that to bring this work into the current context would require the Czech contribution to the debate to be contextualised and evaluated.

[20] quoted in Tzvetan Todorov, *Theories of the Symbol,* p 208.

humour, allegory to wit (Solgar).

What is important to this discussion is that these distinctions do not pertain solely at the level of form and content, but also at the level of observation and interpretation. Brentano gave a felicitous example of this in a discussion of a man who was incapable of playing chess because he dramatized the figures in the game and imposed his allegorical interpretation on it. He was thus unable to take the game seriously. The game of chess itself is an example of a symbolic interpretation of the world, which was here being undermined through the imposition of an allegorical meaning: the particular was being perceived through the general. Such fragmentation of reality establishes an illusion which encourages virtuosity and trickery and the cultivation of wit rather than humour.

The valorization of the symbol in this way was complementary to romantic concepts of the imagination and paralleled the distinction drawn between 'imitative' and 'productive' imagination. Allegory was rejected on the same grounds as the imitative in art. This also connects up with the romantic anthropological principle of empathy.

Although expunged from anthropology as the positivist reaction to romanticism set in - and perhaps rightly so, for it had degenerated into a crude and rather mystical form by the middle of the nineteenth century as exemplified by the work of Bastian - the idea behind empathy remains pertinent to our discussion. It had emerged from romantic philosophical concerns and had its roots in Herder. But it was first given concrete form by Friedrich Schlegal during the years of the Jena Circle, in what he called 'symphilosophy' (sympathy + philosophy).

What is significant of note here is that it was the collective context of romanticism that gave form to the idea. As Todorov pointed out: "During a five year period, these men frequented the same houses, the same women, the same museums; they had countless conversations and exchanged numerous letters... There is one doctrine and one author, even if their names are several: not that each repeats the others (that would be no more than sympathy), but each one formulates, better than any other, some part of the same single doctrine."[21] This context is important to recall, for it gives the lie to the idea of romanticism as an individualist project. Far from being so, the collective input was considerable and quite consciously encouraged, indeed the Jena Circle during those few years enjoyed an intellectual cohesiveness not surpassed even during the heroic era of the Surrealist Group. Empathy was not conceived, then, as a means for one person to project himself into the 'soul' of another; it was conceived rather, in its beginnings, as the establishment of a common environment to enable ideas to be collectively pooled and take form. Otherness and the exotic relation become dissolved.

As an anthropological tool, empathy was brought into disrepute by Bastian, who sought to use it for unashamedly hegemonic and imperialist purposes. But it appears never to have been discussed in anthropological context in the way that the romantics themselves conceived it. It may be the case that the romantics here, as with their ideas on the imagination, may be seen to overreach themselves,

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[21] Todorov, *op. cit,*. p 165.

for it will be apparent that for empathy to function properly, the relations involved must be symmetrical. Since human relations are almost never so, this is highly problematic, but even so the notion of empathy ought not to be summarily dismissed from anthropological considerations, something which brings us back to a consideration of travel.

In today's world, in which travel has become a comparative formality, we need to question in what exactly the idea of travel consists. As Sidney Mintz has said: "In its savage and repeated thrusts into the world outside, the West has gone very far in replacing difference with sameness, in supplanting other, contrasting modes of thought and act, in changing what had been exotic for Westerners into pale and tawdry reflexions of itself."[22] As we argued at the beginning of this chapter, travel has become a sort of empty status symbol in which the idea of otherness loses its meaning. For, as Mintz continues: "It may be that the day when the total history of European hegemony is finally written, the indictment that we made many societies resemble ours will count as heavily as that we destroyed many others altogether."[23] From this perspective, we need to question ourselves and to enquire into the way in which our conceptualisation of others has been formulated according to our own needs. It is not enough, to quote Mintz again, to be "alternately amused and enraged by the consequences". What ought to be challenged is the ground upon which we thought to impose our presence on other people, something which arises from the assumption that perceptual realism is the only ground for the basis of ontology. The surrealist Jean-Louis Bédouin, writing about Segalen in 1963, decried what he called the 'sad esperanto' of contemporary language and communication, and went on: "true communication, fruitful exchanges, a profound understanding of Nature and of living beings are directly a function of the differences and distances existing between things in the intelligible, tangible universe and of the faculty granted to us to perceive and experience them. For it is these differences and distances that lay the foundation for the innumerable forms of *relationships* and make possible, for that very reason, the life of the spirit."[24] And we should also remind ourselves, in the process, of the part that our own imaginative process plays in the way in which communication takes place. As Segalen wrote: "I have called real only what is Palpable... I hasten towards an other Real."[25]

To this end, our discussion of romantic and surrealist uses of the imagination provides some sort of a starting point.

In the Western tradition, positivism has not been the only ideology that reacted against romanticism. In the next chapter we shall consider some of the consequences of the structuralist tradition that gave rise to the crisis of representation revealed in post-modernist criticism.

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[22] Sidney W. Mintz, *op cit.*, p 7.

[23] *ibid.*

[24] Jean-Louis Bédouin, *Seglaen*, p 11.

[25] Victor Segalen, *Equipée,* p 145.

CHAPTER FIVE:

REPRESENTATION AND RECIPROCITY IN THE CONTEXT OF POST-MODERNISM

> *If the solution appears to you difficult, perhaps even*
> *impracticable, don't blindly cry out that it is false. Don't*
> *use the real to justify your own shortcomings. Rather*
> *realize your dreams to merit your reality.*
>
> Edouard Glissant

Post-modernism and Representation

In our discussion of language we noted that the distinction between symbol and allegory had important implications for Western thought during the past two centuries. In the schools of thinking that have followed (either directly from or in reaction against romanticism) - and this includes both positivism and surrealism - the symbol has tended to be valorised against the allegorical, while in other schools, particularly those derived from structuralist modes of thinking issuing from Saussure, it has been the other way round. The latter tradition reaches its culmination in post-modernist criticism.

By valorising the symbol, the romantics broke with the notion of representation as pure contemplation: they were breaking the separation of the observer from thing observed. Although the

unity of observer and observed was perceived very differently by such movements as positivism and realism that reacted against romanticism, both still accepted that the two were related to each other, even if the pure objectivism that positivism sought to achieve necessitated the denial of the subjective relation of the observer vis-à-vis the observed. Although this relation was not denied as such, it was asserted that the observed could be represented objectively without taking into account the position of the observer. That is, the observer was not seen as being inevitably present within in the observed and the route to true representation was to divest the representation of any traces of the observer's own subjectivity. The problem of positivism was to assert that such absolute separation was possible and to make of this assertion an ideological position disguised as a methodological necessity.

For, while symbolic thinking (and, in this context realism should be seen as a form of symbolism, even if not a very rich one) assumes continuity with the world and looks for a synthesis of experience in which all the senses are involved, allegorical thought emphasises discontinuity and necessitates a separation of sensual experience. Allegory functions by presenting different images (representing different levels of experience) to different senses.

Recent post-modernist theory has sought to re-evaluate the notion of allegory and this has gained an anthropological perspective in the work of James Clifford.[1] Thus, at the level of sensual experience, Clifford can argue for allegoric ethnographic texts that present difference at one level and similarity at another: "Strange behaviour is portrayed as meaningful within a common network of symbols - a common ground of understandable activity valid for both observer and observed, and by implication for all human groups. Thus ethnography's narrative of specific differences presupposes, and always refers to, an abstract plane of similarity."[2]

This may be true of most ethnography, but Clifford is looking to a new ethnographic approach that would address the question more directly: "Allegory prompts us to say of any cultural description not 'this represents or symbolizes that' but rather 'this is a (morally charged) *story* about that'".[3] Here he accepts the artifice of rhetoric, seen by romanticism and positivism alike as a prime enemy, which allows, Clifford argues, for the multiple levels involved in the ethnographic encounter to be expressed. He writes: "once all meaningful levels in a text, including theories and interpretations, are recognised as allegorical, it becomes difficult to view one of them as privileged...".[4] Now this may be true *within the text*, but it assumes that such privilege is necessarily a bad thing and that symbolic and realist forms likewise attempt (unsuccessfully) to avoid such privileging. It further assumes that an avoidance of privilege within the text automatically means that privilege outside the text is avoided as well.

Although he would reject the label as such, there can be no question that Clifford's work is

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[1] in particular see, 'On Ethnographic Allegory', in Clifford and Marcus, *Writing Culture*, pp 98/122.

[2] *ibid*, p 101.

[3] *ibid*, p 100.

[4] *ibid*, p 103.

established against the background of the post-modernist swell in contemporary criticism and responds to the textural fetishism that has been apparent from the early days of post-structuralism.[5] In valorising allegory against the symbol, the imagination is brought into question and denied all the powers given to it since romanticism.

Richard Kearney has defined the post-modernist conception of the imagination as being 'parodic'. That is, it can only parody itself and have no connexion with reality. As such it is essentially an allegorical form and a fairly pure example of the type of allegorical thinking the romantics condemned, one that makes of the text an object independent of its referents. This idea is already contained within post-modernist criticism itself, but in mystified form, since the frame of post-modernist criticism needs to assume that it is not part of the process it comments on (some post-modernists would doubtless try to assert otherwise, but it is difficult to see how they can do so in good faith, since it must close off the possibility that it is simply parodying a parody, something that would make its own critique meaningless). In respect of the imagination, Kearney argues further that the existentialist distrust of the imagination has been taken to its logical conclusion in being denied a motive force at all. "Curiously," he says, "the collective term 'the imaginary' survives to some extent the philosophical decline of the subjective term 'the imagination'. This former term increasingly carries the connotation of an impersonal entity. The 'imaginary' is seen as a mere 'effect' of a technologically transmitted sign system over which the individual creative subject has no control".[6] Imagination is thus condemned to do nothing but parody itself, and it has no established point of reference, no point of origin, no contextual framework. Subjectivism has been given its head, only to revolve endlessly on itself. It negates the existentialist displacement of romanticism, but in so doing it can only spin a web of its own emptiness and can never function to come to terms with the implications involved in a consideration of imaginative constructions. The hope that romanticism and surrealism had placed in the imagination is seen as a ridiculous illusion.

The most coherent exposition of the post-modernist conception of the imagination is Baudrillard's idea of simulation. Baudrillard conceives of simulation as being indistinguishable from the real, but yet not to be real: "Since it is no longer enveloped by an imaginary, it is no longer real at all. It is hyperreal, the product of an irradiating synthesis of combinatory models in a hyperspace without atmosphere".[7] An image follows four phases: it begins as a reflexion of a basic reality; it then masks and perverts that basic reality; it marks the *absence* of a basic reality; it finally bears no relation to any reality whatsoever, but becomes its own simulacrum. If this scenario seems to recall

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[5]   In an early assault (the broadside 'Beau comme BEAU COMME' from 1967) on the presumptions of post-structuralism, the Surrealist Group had already noted how the impetus of post-structuralism was towards textual authority and the rehabilitation of 'literature', which the surrealists thought had been dead and buried for fifty years. This document is to be found reproduced in José Pierre (ed) *Tracts Surréalists et Déclarations Collectives*, p 276/273.

[6] Kearney, *The Wake of the Imagination*, p 251.

[7] Baudrillard, *Simulations*, p 3.

that of the invasion of the body snatchers, this is doubtless one of the reasons for its attraction: it responds very knowingly to the paranoia of contemporary society in which people feel increasingly powerless and alienated from their own inner beings. But in focusing on one of the central phenomological problems of modern society, Baudrillard merely legitimates such paranoia whilst offering no way out of its entangling structures. One does not require too much insight to recognise that Baudrillard's categories represent little more than a modern form of Platonism, in which the imagination is equally cursed, although the content is reversed since the evil imaginary has already succeeded in triumphing over the real. Quite what the original 'real' actually was that has been destroyed remains something of a mystery.

Baudrillard opens *Simulations* by referring to a fable by Borges in which a group of cartographers draw a map so detailed it becomes indistinguishable from the territory it 'represents'. He does this to undermine the foundations of representation. But a map is not a representation. Its purpose is not to create an image of a territory, but to provide a guide to a territory for the aid of people visiting it. The frame of its reference is not the territory itself, but other maps. If it serves the purpose of providing a guide to the territory it is beside the point whether or not it is 'accurate' to the territory itself. Indeed, such accuracy cannot even be measured, since the signs by which a map is constructed are wholly incommensurate with anything in the landscape itself. Borges's fable is, of course, telling: it points to the impossibility of the human endeavour for perfection. Even if it is true that a perfect map would have to become indistinguishable from the territory it represents, such a map would not, even so, become a simulation of the territory: it would become the actual territory itself. This would remain unsatisfactory. How can one put limits on a territory, since its existence would be dependent upon surrounding territories? The map would therefore have to extend further. It would have to encompass the whole world. Even that would not be enough. One would have to recreate the whole universe. And even then, it would be necessary, for completeness, for the 'simulated' universe to have a copy of this 'map' and therefore one would have to begin the whole process again... This presents us with a rather nice example of the old paradox of the play of mirrors. Good enough. But as far as representation is concerned, since cartographers in general don't seem to have such grandiose aims when they draw maps, one wonders just what Baudrillard's point is. We might also point out here that the use of Borges's fable merely emphasises the extent to which Baudrillard has moved away, in his later work, from even the pretence of a social critique towards making a philosophical statement on human endeavour. This tends to further distance his work from any concrete applicability: if all is simulation, then we could reverse the terms of his argument and say that the simulation has become real. Any point of differentiation must be impossible to determine and one could, just as easily say that there is no such thing as simulation: everything is real.

This example lies at the centre of Baudrillard's ontology. He makes the same point directly about anthropology, claiming that ethnology died in 1971 on the day that the Philippines government decided to keep isolated the Tasaday tribe - a confirmation, if such were needed, that anthropology can live only by killing what it is supposed to protect (it is doubtless a little unfair to tax Baudrillard

with the fact that he seems to take the story of the Tasaday at face value, since he was writing at a time that all the complex absurdities of the tale had not been revealed). Even so, the myth of the Tasaday (even when taken at face value) is little more than a fable as acute as that of Borges, and one to which exactly the same objection to Baudrillard's interpretation could be made. It might bring anthropology into question if we consider anthropology to be the study of people completely unacculturated by Western society and to be otherwise illegitimate. But who would be so naive as to believe this was the aim of anthropology? Even in its beginnings, anthropology was acutely aware of the fact that the object of its study was being transformed by its contact with the West.

Bearing in mind what we have said about the way in which the romantics' distinction between allegory and symbol has become inverted in twentieth century social science, one could see Baudrillard as the logical consequence of such inversion, incapable of seeing anything but the allegory. He would seem perfectly to encapsulate the false consciousness of Brentano's allegorical chess-player unable to actually see the game itself. But one would have thought that if everything is simulation, then logically this must apply to Baudrillard's critique as well. One therefore wonders why he writes at all, since he can only add another level of mystification to the morass of simulations.[8]

Although Baudrillard argues that this shows that everything has become object, and that it represents the triumph of the object over the subject,[9] one could equally take the argument the other way round and note that the object has been completely lost from view. Indeed, if everything is object then the idea of the object becomes purely a matter of arbitrary semantics: one could just as easily say that nothing any longer is object. For all of that Baudrillard would like to present as a radical critique of subjectivism, his own critique is nothing but subjectivism taken to its limits.

Much as it might like to do so, post-modernism cannot escape the consequences of its own discourse. If the imagination does not exist and reality is no more than a parody of something that was once alive, then post-modernism itself is nothing but a parody. Like all nihilism it remains trapped within the terms of the hermeneutic circle it has itself created: if it doubts everything then it must doubt its own doubt, but if it does so then it undermines its *raison d'être* and denies its own starting point.

Most post-modernist critiques do not take quite such an extreme position as Baudrillard and within the frame of post-modernism important issues connected with representation in anthropological

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[8] Yet, in keeping with the most hypocritical of idealisms, Baudrillard assumes that his own critique is transcendent of what it criticises. In his book on Baudrillard, Douglas Kellner puts this assumption rather nicely: "Baudrillard takes a broad philosophical view of ultimate reality (which has disappeared to the masses lost in simulations, but reappears to Baudrillard sitting high above the silent majorities on his philosopher's throne), and pontificates as if he were the scribe of Hegel's Absolute..." (Kellner *Jean Baudrillard: From Marxism to Postmodernism and Beyond*, p156).

[9] Baudrillard here owes a great, unacknowledged, debt both to the surrealists and the situationists, for their ideas about the revenge of the object. But where both the surrealists and the situationists situated the object dialectically in relation to the subject, Baudrillard establishes a dualism and imposes value onto the object, even though the object has no value independently of the subject. We will examine this point more closely in a moment in discussing Hegel's master/slave dialectic.

context have been raised.

The Orientalist Debate

Perhaps the most far-reaching of post-modernist critiques to have taken up anthropological themes has been Edward Said's controversial *Orientalism*, in which a consideration of the way in manner the West has conceptualised the Near East is used for a more general analysis of the way in which representation has been used by European consciousness in relation to its 'Other'. Although Said does not directly deal with anthropological images as such, his critique takes form around questions that must, if accepted, bring anthropological images into question.

Said's central concern appears to have been to examine the consequences that follow from what he gives early in his book as one of many definitions of Orientalism: "a Western style for dominating, restructuring and having authority over the Orient".[10] As a Palestinian working within the Western intellectual tradition he feels a personal stake in these issues and he writes with some passion and urgency.

Central to Said's argument is an undermining of the basis of the self/other relation, something that must have wide-ranging consequences for anthropology. We have already raised the question of how far the anthropological discipline needs to establish a self/other distinction. It might even be argued that such a distinction in some form is so fundamental to the discipline that it would deny its own legitimacy if it were to accept the consequences of Said's argument, even though some anthropologists, most notably, perhaps, Ronald Inden,[11] have tried to revise their own work to take account of the implications that Said's study raises for anthropology. The success of such endeavours is open to question, particularly given the radical nature of Said's epistemological critique.

What seems to be more urgent, though, is to question Said's own methodological assumptions and to try to consider the extent to which his critique advances our understanding of the way in which we establish images and representations of other people and in the process enables us to conceive the relation between ourselves and the 'Other' in different terms. As against this we must ask to what extent it simply adds one more level of mystification to what is already a difficult terrain to survey. Does his critique do any more, in other words, than address itself to European masochism and guilt?

Said's approach is manifestly idealist. Situating his critique in the realm of ideas divorced from concrete relations of living, he is able to present us with a very convincing argument of the

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[10] Said, *Orientalism* p 3. Said gives numerous other definitions of Orientalism through the course of the book, but this one seems to be most central to his overall theme.

[11] Ronald Inden, 'Orientalist Constructions of India', *Modern Asian Studies* (1986) 20(3) pp 401/446

deleterious effects of a particular way of perceiving the Orient. Said insists that such a perception is false; it was created in the European mind almost without reference to what the Orient was really like. One of Said's disciples, Christopher Miller, places the issue squarely in these terms: "...perception is determined by Orientalism rather than Orientalism being determined by perception".[12] This statement, something of an idealist statement *par excellence*, accurately sums up, I believe, the impulse underlying not only Said's own approach, but also those who have followed him. It emphasises the extent to which the 'real' Orient was irrelevant to the thrust of the movement to create a composite fictional character for the Orient. The images constituting this character were the products of who knows what perversity of mind (and Said shows curiously little interest in understanding *why* such images were created beyond making a banal equation with imperialism) and are completely devoid of reality: "The exteriority of the representation is always governed by some version of the truism that if the Orient could represent itself, it would; since it cannot, the representation does the job, for the West, and faute de mieux, for the poor Orient. 'Sie können sich nicht vertreten, sie müssen vertreten werden,' as Marx wrote..."[13] This passage is highly significant in relation to the work as a whole and we will return to consider it in more detail. For now we will look at some of the implications that arise from the apparent 'fictionality' of the Oriental construct, a construct that would appear to be a clear example of the sort of 'simulation' that so obsesses Baudrillard (even though these representations are all from the nineteenth century and before), although Said, unlike Baudrillard, is certainly not complicitous with such images and wishes to provide a critique that would reveal the mechanisms of such simulation. Nevertheless, he remains tied to the same frame of reference and his critique, in anthropological terms, is pitched at the same level.

The problem remains that if such representations are false then there has to be the possibility of a representation that is 'true'. Towards the end of the book, Said recognises this problem. He writes: "I would not have written a book of this sort if I did not believe that there is a scholarship that is not as corrupt, or at least as blind to human reality, as the kind I have been mainly depicting."[14] He is even able to give us an example: "the anthropology of Clifford Geertz, whose interest in Islam is discreet and concrete enough to be animated by the specific societies and problems studied and not by the rituals, preconceptions, and doctrines of Orientalism". Yet we find that, five years on, the work of Geertz has been miraculously transformed into being simply "standard disciplinary rationalizations and self-congratulatory clichés..."[15] We are given no indication of what might have caused this extraordinary transformation.

That Said feels under no compunction to justify his change of opinion here is indicative of his

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[12] Christopher Miller, *Blank Darkness: Africanist Discourse in French*, p 15.

[13] Said, *op cit*, p 21.

[14]. Said, *ibid*, p 326.

[15] Said 'Orientalism Revisited', in *Europe and its Others,* (1985).

methodological approach. As he felt no necessity to explain what it was specifically that made the work of Geertz admirable in the first place so, it appears, he is not called upon to explain a radical change of opinion. For of course nothing about the work of Geertz has changed. It is Said's perspective that is now different. In 1978 he had been seeking to place himself within 'Western' discourse, almost in the role of a radical reformer. By 1983, he is clearly seeking to orient his critique differently, seeking to find a place within anti-imperialist studies in which the work of Geertz does not fit. This much is apparent in his article 'Orientalism revisited' in which he plays down the originality of his own study, to place it in a line of anti-colonialist writers who seem to have nothing in common but their anti-colonialism and the fact that Said approves them.[16] It is thus not difficult to see that Said's value judgements made against the 'Orientalists' are based on a fundamental bad faith. What he is keen to establish is a catch-all critique that is able to provide him with the means to dispose of what he finds objectionable and to praise whatever he approves. This is exactly the same power relation he accuses the Orientalists of constructing in relation to the Orient. Unlike the Orient itself, however, contemporary Orientalists have the power to answer back, something they have not surprisingly hardly been hesitant about invoking. Said's pathetic response to some of these counterblasts indicates the weakness of his position, which he seems incapable of defending, except by means of a particularly offensive form of invective and by constantly shifting his ground.[17]

The more substantial questions raised (or, one could equally argue, hidden) by Said's critique are those relating to questions of reciprocity between subject and object. In this respect the extent that Said has adequately represented what the Orientalists themselves have said about the Orient becomes largely irrelevant. His argument rather stands or falls on his denial of such reciprocity. Orientalism was imposed upon the Orient: it was a European project, more or less consciously elaborated, in which Orientals were nothing but passive pawns. To this extent it is not the question of the accuracy of the images as such that is at issue as the way they were utilised in the relationship between Europe and the Orient and the extent to which representation itself, as an epistemological category within Western thought, is compromised by such use.

The problem is that if reciprocity between subject and object is impossible then, by the same token, the object cannot challenge the subject by developing alternative models. In fact, since the object has no real existence, being only a conceptualization of the subject's mind, it can never be a question of the former acting upon the latter. However, this just will not do, as Said has to recognise in the conclusion to his book, since to leave the matter there would be to freeze the relation in empty space. There could be no way of ever changing it. The only way out of the impasse is for the subject to develop representations of the object that would represent the object more faithfully. Given the extent of Said's critique, however, it is difficult to see how this can ever occur and, even if it could,

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[16] see, *ibid*, p 214/5.

[17] for a particularly good example of this see Said's response to Bernard Lewis in the *New York Review of Books*, 12 August 1982.

it would emphasise even more the power of the subject over the object. The best that can be achieved is that the representation should accord with Said's own understanding. But by what right can Said stand as a representative of the Orient? By entering Western discourse and contesting these issues he is, by definition, becoming part of the subject which is supposedly imposing its will on the object. He is consequently forced into a position that relies on precisely the same discourse he is criticising. There is certainly no easy way of avoiding such an ironical position, but we might expect a little recognition of its existence. Instead, Said presents his critique with all the self-certainty of the most dogmatic of positivists. Whether or not the 'Orientalists' are guilty of the central charge he lays against them, of believing that the Orient 'cannot represent itself, it must be represented' (and it cannot be said he proves his case on this point), it would certainly appear that Said himself believes it; indeed such a belief is inscribed at the heart of his project. Furthermore, his own critique relies on just as much mis-representation of Orientalists as he accuses them of making in their representations of the Orient. In Said's terms, in fact, his own conceptualization of 'Orientalists' is as pure an example of 'Orientalism' as one could wish for! Can there be such a thing as Orientalism except as a product of Said's mind?

This raises various questions relating to representation that Said makes no attempt to confront: What is a representation? For whom is it made? In what circumstances? What are the factors that determine the use that will be made of it? How does it function at various meta-levels? Said sidesteps such questions by assuming a simplistic cause and effect relation: representations of the Orient were a means of political control over the Orient and nothing more. Furthermore, they acted to create an entirely homogenous frame in which British, French and German writers all seem, at some mysterious unconscious level, to have conspired with each other to produce this composite view. And it also seems that no distinction is to be drawn between different types of knowledge: travellers' tales meet the statistical tables of administrators in a contiguous way, all with the aim of denying a voice to the 'Oriental'.

At this point, we can perhaps bring such questions into relief by looking at the elements of reciprocity in representation, elements that Said himself is determined to avoid. We have already noted the use made by Said of Marx's phrase 'they cannot represent themselves; they must be represented'. This phrase is also used as an epigraph to the book and is clearly one if its central themes. Yet if we refer to the context in which Marx himself made this comment, we find that the implications for Marx are radically different from those that Said seeks to establish. Given the importance this phrase has for Said it is perhaps useful here to give the context of Marx's own argument.

Marx was considering not the Orient but the peasantry. He was concerned with understanding a concrete historical context: the failure of the revolution of 1848, and in this specific quotation he was looking at the relation of the peasantry to the Bonapartist Party. He wrote: "Insofar as these small peasant proprietors are merely connected on a local basis, and the identity of their interests fails to produce a feeling of community, national links, or a political organisation, they do not

form a class. They are therefore incapable of asserting their class interests in their own name, whether through a parliament or through a convention. They cannot represent themselves, they must be represented. Their representative must appear simultaneously as their master, as an authority over them, an unrestricted government power that protects them from the other classes and sends them rain and sunshine from above."[18] If there are implications in this for the Orientalist debate, they are certainly not the ones that Said himself picks up. Indeed it is noticeable that Marx emphasises the fact that representation is not imposed *on* the peasantry. What will be immediately apparent is that for Marx this relation is *dynamic*: the peasantry are not acted upon but rather actively seek such representation and use it for their own purposes. The relation between the Bonapartist party and the conservative peasantry is thus reciprocal: they need each other. It goes without saying that the idealist conclusion drawn by Said: 'if the Orient could represent itself, it would; since it cannot, the representation does the job...' would be wholly foreign to Marx. Indeed it reveals a curiously distorted idea about how people actually conceive images. Does Said really believe that anyone actually thinks that images of the Orient are commensurate with what the Orient is really like?

In any representation something of the original is always lost. But one could equally say that something is gained. Perfect verisimilitude in imagery is almost impossible, but it is pertinent to ask: does it matter? Why do we construct images? What actually occurs during the process of creating images that determines the form it will take? General responses to such questions are impossible, since the process is too complex and contains too many variables. But if we wish to understand all the congeries involved in representation then it is necessary to consider all the factors involved in the relation. And what should be clear is that while representation does not stand on its own independently of the social and cultural situation in which it is produced, it equally cannot be tied in a causal relation with what it represents. Representation and what is represented are not commensurate and ought not to be treated as though they are. It is at least arguable that it is only academic literary critics who could become so embroiled in the representation as to mistake it for the thing represented. Can one not see a certain self-loathing of the literary critic in relation to his own profession in the virulence with which the concept of representation is treated, both here and more generally in post-modernism?

Said would wish to extend such a critique even further to dissolve the subject/object relation altogether, something that is not unique to him but is something of a post-modernist stance. It certainly cuts to the heart of the anthropological project, since, as we have seen, a relation of self to other is fundamental to anthropology and it is difficult to see how anthropology can possibly take form unless it engages with the complex dialectical relation between distantiation and familiarity that the subject/object relation implies. If at its root such a relation is unable to entertain the notion of reciprocity, then anthropology must resign itself to producing images that bear no relation to the object of study. Worse, such images could only function ideologically and involve falsification in a power

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[18] Marx, *Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte,* in *Selected Works,* p 122.

context.

In this context Said fails to justify, or even to argue, the presupposition that enables him to establish the monolithic nature of the object of his study: the European subject that has created Orientalism. What is the nature of this subject? Where did it originate? And why and how? Such 'willed, human work', as he calls it, can hardly be born from empty space. Given the nature of his critique, it would seem incumbent upon him at least to take this issue on board. The fact that he does not do so emphasises even more the 'Orientalist' nature of his own project: Orientalism is a given to be analyzed; as such it becomes Said's own 'Other'. In this way, within his own work, the self/other relation remains intact. And the object of Said's analysis is treated, furthermore, in a purely 'ethnocentric' way. No question of any reflexivity here: Orientalists are fair game.

Yet even if we allow for the possibility of the dissolving of the self/other relation, it must still be asked whether this can be done except by means of a tautological sleight of hand. Said has certainly not taken on board the philosophical underpinning of this relation, which is contained in Hegel's anthropology and most notably in his treatment of the relation of master and slave.[19] For in Hegel's terms what is fundamental is reciprocity. In fact it is more than reciprocal - it is symbiotic: the reality of slave is the master; the reality of the master is the slave. Neither are free agents, and each needs the other to complete his relation to the World. This is not, at root, an exploitative relation (although it may become so in certain circumstances). The separation it implies is also necessary for any sort of lucidity; without it undifferentiation and entropy take over. But in Hegel's terms, the differentiation between master and slave remains, at root, illusory: it is the interplay of the relation, not its fixity, that is of importance. In Hegel's terms, then, Orientalism could only be changed by the Orient itself acting upon the relation. The Orient would have to recognise itself, something that Said refuses to accept and the consequences of which he is determined to avoid. The problem is that if the relation remains static then Orientalism will not, indeed cannot, change its ideological character. In this respect a critique such as Said's, acting solely on the form by which the subject master asserts its ascendency, can change only the form and not the substance of such domination. Indeed it must become subsumed within the dominant subject; it must of necessity become part of the dominating ideology. In this respect Simon Leys was not merely being malicious when he wrote acidly: "*Orientalism* could obviously have been written by no one but a Palestinian scholar with a huge chip on his shoulder and a very dim understanding of the European academic tradition."[20] As we have already noted, Said himself must become an 'Orientalist'.

The deleterious consequences that Said's critique can have for anthropology can be shown by a consideration of Johannes Fabian's *Time and the Other*.[21] Fabian adopts Said's approach

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[19] Hegel, *Phenomenology of the Spirit*, (1977) Oxford University Press (translated by A.V. Miller) p 111/119.

[20] Simon Leys, *The Burning Forest*, (1988) Paladin p 96.

[21] Johannes Fabian, *Time and the Other*, (1983) Columbia UP.

almost wholesale and applies it directly to the anthropological discipline as a whole. Virtually all the reservations we have made concerning Said could equally well be applied to *Time and the Other*, but Fabian has made his critique even more vague by focusing not upon an identifiable group of people who can at least be methodologically defined as 'Orientalists', but has taken up the whole question of how a perceptual category (time) and a particular sense (sight) have been utilised by the West, particularly in anthropology, against its other.

As with Said, there would be much value in such a critique if it focused on the ideological aspects involved in the relation. Unfortunately, again like Said, Fabian displaces the ideological aspects to locate the critique in the methodological categories themselves. This once more conflates representation with the essence of what it represents and refuses to countenance the possibility that people are capable of making such a distinction. In discussing the question of time, for example, Fabian writes as though historians believe that time and history are the same thing, even though historical methodology is acutely aware of the fact that history is a construction made *through* time and can never be commensurate with it.

Fabian displays a tenacious determination to establish a duality between an accursed Western idea of linear time and the 'Other's' cyclical concept. In philosophical terms this distinction is not new, going back to Vico and before. What is new is the virulent quality that is now attached to linear time itself rather than the perception of it. What should be pointed out is perhaps an elementary point: that though people may perceive time in different ways, the defining characteristic of time is that it passes. Such passing must be capable of being presented in a linear fashion. But it is evident that time itself is not linear, since time has no reality in and of itself independent of the human perception of it. In the West it may be true that a particular concept of linear time has been established to provide a basis for Western hegemony. Again, however, this needs to be considered in its concrete historical circumstances, not detached and presented as though it was the concept of linear time itself that is responsible for such distortion. Even in the West, Yi-Fu Tuan has identified three different conceptions of time appropriate for different circumstances: the cosmogonic (dealing with history and ideas about origin); human time (which follows the course of a human life and involves birth, life and death); and astronomic time (the sun's daily round).[22] What is undeniable is that time can be conceptualised in numerous ways which respond to the exigencies of particular situations. If anthropological discourse has adopted a specific conception of time that has consequences for the way in which anthropology constructs its object, this is something that calls for comment. But it does not mean that it follows that to establish a different mode of conceptualising time in anthropological discourse can provide a solution to the problem, if there is indeed a problem.

Fabian sees the problem involved as one of distantiation. This is the point at which his critique of conceptualizations of time in Western discourse connects up with the idea of the visual.

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[22] Yi-Fu Tuan, 'Space, Time, Place: A Humanistic Frame', in T. Carlstein, D. Parkes and N. Thrift (eds) *Time, Space and Spacing Time Vol 1*, (1978).

(He even emphasises the dangerous effects of visualism so much that the eye almost gains a Luciferian quality. Here Fabian's tone assumes apocalyptic proportions that perhaps calls for an appropriately puritan response: "If thine eye offend thee, pluck it out".) Fabian seems to see vision as an authoritarian sense that organises reality in such a way as to exclude messages received from the other senses. Arguing against the Aristotelian idea of a hierarchy of the senses with vision at the top, he still seems unable to think outside this framework in asserting that if there is to be a hierarchy of the senses then it ought to be the audile that ought to be valorised.

What does not seem to occur to Fabian is that the separation of the senses in this way is characteristic of the Cartesian thinking he is criticising. It is not that sight is in some way a hegemonic sense; if it has assumed such a quality in Western discourse it is precisely because it has been so isolated. In this respect Fabian confounds his own argument and shows how far it is rooted within the discourse he is criticising. What should be obvious is that the senses never function independently of each other. They are furthermore all dependent upon the mediation of the brain. It is obvious that vision is the sense responsible for distantiation. One would have thought that this was precisely its strength. Distantiation allows precision and differentiation and prevents ideas in discursive discourse falling into virtuoso performance in which content is collapsed into form. The visual is always critical. Hearing is far more subject to persuasion. In totalitarian regimes it is the visual that is feared above all and it should be recalled that the primary means of persuasion of the Nazis was the immediacy of the mass-parade and the radio, both formed around an auditory experience, within which the visual is carefully integrated to provide framing. Hitler, we might recall, established his authority through the charismatic quality of his oral presentation, not through writing *Mein Kampf*, and in totalitarian regimes it is word-of-mouth, gossip and innuendo that predominate and the visual is seen as a threat. It is the little boy who refuses to disbelieve the evidence of his eyes that brings attention to the Emperor's nakedness. We may say that 'seeing is believing', but we also speak of the 'voice of authority'.

To point this out is not to assert that the visual really is superior to the oral, but to show the absurdity of the framework being constructed. The human senses are complementary to each other: they do not function by competing against each other for hierarchical positions.[23]

The difficulty arises here from faulty methodological premises: instead of working from

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[23] Fabian's critique is almost identical to that put forward, with far more cogency, by Edmund Carpenter in *Oh, What a Blow That Phantom Gave Me!* But a critical difference lies in the form by which the argument is established. Carpenter refuses to rationalize his argument and eschews the discursive frame. This leaves the tendentiousness of his argument wide open: his intent is not to persuade but to provoke. In this he remains consistent with the postulates of his own argument in seeking to engage the reader sensually rather than purely by appealing to the visual. Fabian's mode of argument, on the other hand, remains firmly within the visual form he regards as being so insidious. Carpenter's overall argument doesn't convince me any more than Fabian's does, but I can recognise and applaud the vitality and urgency of the questions addressed and the cogency of many of Carpenter's insights. In Fabian's work, on the other hand, I can see only tendentiousness and a straining for intellectual effect.

particular social situations and identifying the way ideological formations are constructed within them, Fabian, like Said, establishes the ideology in a void and then applies it to arbitrarily selected social situations. Addressing a different, but contiguous question to that of Fabian, Eric Wolf has defined culture as "a series of processes that construct, reconstruct, and dismantle cultural materials, in response to identifiable determinants".[24] The way in which anthropology functions is part of such a process and what cannot be separated out from it is the particular modus operandi adopted in each case. Wolf goes on: "...instead of assuming transgenerational continuity, institutional stability, and normative consensus, we must treat these as problems. We need to understand such characteristics historically, to note the conditions for their emergence, maintenance, and abrogation. Rather than thinking of social alignments as self-determining, moreover, we need - from the start of our enquiries - to visualise them in their multiple external conditions".[25] These seem to me to be general first principles, yet Fabian's critique sidesteps such implications to focus on spurious oppositions (coevalness vs allochronism; orality vs visualism) that accept the self-determining quality of methodological categories.

Post-modernism and the Object

The critiques of Said and Fabian are both issued, through post-modernism, from a dubious Nietzschean subjectivism. Said dutifully quotes Nietzsche (p 203) in defining truth as a 'mobile army of metaphors', but he refuses to recognise the problematic that Nietzsche himself recognised in such a definition. Nietzsche recognised that truth and falsehood existed in dialogic relation to each other and that if one accepted that truth was simply a 'mobile army of metaphors' then one needs to establish a centering position to enable the relative value of the particular 'lie' to be evaluated. Both Said and Fabian fall into the trap of all subjectivism and conflate general and specific critiques in a way that de-legitimates both. The direction of the 'deconstructive' impulse in contemporary criticism is not negation, but rather its subversion, to the extent that genuine negation becomes impossible. It recovers idealism to insert a subjectivist vision at the heart of intellectual discourse. But where does such subjectivism lead? Where is it intended to lead? Here it is often difficult, in considering post-modernist works, to discern the direction of a particular critique. The impulse for deconstruction can lead one on so far that what is supposedly being deconstructed becomes unclear. But having rejected the claims of objectivity, the only place to go is towards the subject. It is necessary to give to the subject value in itself. Some way must be found to establish a dialogic relation between two subjects. But in viewing the subject subjectively, are we not faced with a double negative? As Adorno wrote: "The denial of objective truth by recourse to the subject implies the negation of the

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[24] Eric Wolf, *Europe and the People Without History*, p 387.

[25] *ibid*, p 387.

latter: no measure remains for the measure of all things; lapsing into contingency, he becomes untruth."[26] It is time, perhaps, to look more closely at the post-modernist subjectivist impulse, in which its claim to have developed an original perspective must lie.

An urge to establish a subject as subject in itself does not at all mean the same thing as 'subject for itself'. Indeed the latter aim is quite independent and perhaps necessarily hostile to the former. No one can claim to transcend their social position and no one from the West has the right to imbue subject status upon the object of study. To do so is simply a form of condescension. If the object is to establish itself as subject then the impetus must come from the object confronting such status. In this respect the establishment of the object as subject in itself can serve to mystify such a process by imposing a spurious dialogic relation that effectively silences the other by imposing the terms of the argument on him. The frame of reference in any dialogue is always established by means of a stronger authority, and, no matter what one's intentions, there is no way that any westerner can relinquish his authority, especially in the framework of intellectual study.

To consider the question involved here (to which we will return in the next chapter), we need to look further at the nature and status of evidence. We have considered the relation of positivism to romanticism and looked at how different objective criteria have operated in romantic and surrealist methodologies on the one hand and those of positivist/realist methodologies on the other. The essence of the dispute between romanticism and positivism in this context seems to come down to a disagreement over the appropriate methodological response to the phenomenal world. Positivism charges romanticism with over-ambition and fears the consequences of such over-reaching. Romanticism accuses positivism of reducing human reality to the level of over-simplification. But both positivism and romanticism are agreed on seeking out objective criteria for a consideration of the world. They are united in believing that there ought to be a continuum between reality and representation and that knowledge should have an immediacy that connects it with experience.

It is in structuralist thinking that such immediacy is denied. We noted in passing at the beginning of the chapter how, in Saussure's linguistics, the sign is valued at the expense of the signifier. As Bourdieu has pointed out: "Language as conceived by Saussure, an intellectual instrument and an object of analysis, indeed the dead, written, foreign language referred to by Mikhail Bakhtin, a self-sufficient system, detached from real usage [...] opened the way to all the subsequent research that proceeds as if mastery of the code were sufficient to confer mastery of the appropriate usages, or as if one could infer the usage and meaning of linguistic expressions from analysis of their formal structures..."[27] This assumption appears to be the central methodological presumption of post-modernism, and from the point of view of representation it appears certainly to be Saussure rather than Nietzsche who ought to be considered as the father figure of post-modernism.

The opposition between sign and signifier is what confers legitimation on allegorical

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[26] Adorno, *Minima Moralia, p 63.*

[27] Pierre Bourdieu, *The Logic of Practice*, p 32.

configurations that establish meaning independently of social conditions. The text is given its own integrity and comes to define the nature of those social relations of which it was, at the beginning, only the representation. In anthropology this implies a re-valorisation of the subjectivist concerns that James Clifford has been predominant in advocating. Clifford wishes to deny the legitimacy of a particular viewpoint predominating within discourse and to promote the values of multiplicity and dialogue. This concern is manifested on all levels: between anthropologist and informants, between academic disciplines, between academic and artist, between different texts etc etc. No viewpoint must be given privileged status and all positions should be open to criticism. Such an aim can be seen as a process of de-centring: it necessarily denies monist and holistic approaches and any attempt at establishing universal criteria of judgment. But such a position cannot escape the consequences that follow from the way it has been established in the first place, in which it can only legitimate itself through imposing its own ideological hegemony over such universalist approaches. Admirable though such an aim may appear to be it cannot escape the logical consequences of its own postulates. This is equally so at the level of methodology: Clifford can establish a subjectivist and allegorical framework only by bringing into disrepute symbolic and realist methodological criteria seeking to establish an objective frame of reference. In his reply to an article by Steven Sangren pointing out some of the more hegemonical aspects of Clifford's own practice, Clifford can only reply with apparently unassumed ingenuousness: "The book [*Writing Culture*] encourages debate about its own crucial assumptions", he writes. And again: "the possibility that the book might represent not a position to be marked off but rather a series of debates and evolving ideas entirely escapes Sangren."[28] However, this is exactly Sangren's point: that it is precisely the 'debates and evolving ideas' encouraged by *Writing Culture* that have established the agenda and imposed authority over the course the debate can follow. It seems to be more because the nature of Sangren's critique cannot be encompassed within the terms established by the debate around *Writing Culture* that Clifford is so offended by it, rather than by Sangren's 'misrepresentations'.

What should also be noted in this context is that the prefix 'post-' in itself has significant hegemonic properties. It is a rhetorical conceit that deflects analysis from what is happening on the ground towards a transcendent realm where the criterion of value appears to be entirely evolutionary: we can be post- modern, anthropology, history, Orientalist - you name it - and by the simple evocation of this word we sweep away all the prejudices of the past. From this perspective, the prefix functions - almost exclusively, as far as I can see - as an uncritical nodal point by which to de-legitimate a particular discourse without having to analyse its particularities or even to raise the context of the appropriate frame of reference

But, although I substantially agree with the thrust of Sangren's critique of the form of post-modernist authority that *Writing Culture* establishes, I think he overplays his hand in doubting the

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[28] Clifford replying to Sangren's article, 'Rhetoric and the Authority of Ethnography', in *Current Anthropology* Vol 29, no 3, June 1988 p 425.

good faith of the authors involved. Indeed, I must say that in Clifford's case at least good faith seems to be manifest. What seems to be more useful is rather to question the consequences that follow from establishing the sort of framework that Clifford in particular would like to see. Does it really encourage a more open approach to the writing of ethnography? Does it provide a potentially more equable approach (i.e. one that is capable of giving equal voice to the 'Other') than the sorts of approaches he is criticising?

One of Clifford's definitions of allegory is as "a representation that interprets itself".[29] But a representation that interprets itself is one that can make no judgement outside of itself. Clifford commends Majorie Shostak's *Nisa* with the comment that in it "Ethnography gains subjective 'depth' through the sorts of roles, reflections, and reversals here".[30] Yet this subjective 'depth', which presumably makes of this account 'one story among many' denies the story of totality that would give such subjectivity meaning. This means that the particular gains ascendency over the general which, in the process, tends to become lost from view. It was on such grounds that the romantics rejected allegory and it is an objection that Clifford does not meet. All the world, as they say, is a stage, but the purpose of ethnography is surely not to write stories engaging in verbal wordplay along the lines of the experiments of the Ouilipo but to seek to establish an integrated science of mankind. Otherwise ethnography might just as well be seen as preparation for the creation of literature.

What is still more serious in this context is the relation to the 'Other'. Clifford's preferred approach assumes that the relation between anthropologist and informant is symmetrical within the terms of any human relationship and that ethnographic representation should convey the sense of this relationship. Such an approach implies its own kind of universalism: a universalism based upon the assumption of and even imposition of cultural diversity (which in the process denies the very diversity it advocates by placing everything in the same melting-pot). This range of 'diversity' can be explored by ethnographic means to provide the 'partial truths' that represent what must be the limit of anthropological knowledge. The argument here seems to be that in so far as anthropological knowledge can never attain the 'truth' to which it aspires, then it should abandon such an aim: "In cultural studies at least, we can no longer know the whole truth, or even claim to approach it."[31] In his invocation of subjectivist concepts like a polyphony of voices and decentredness, Clifford does not specify what the nodal point of analysis is. He speaks of a general trend toward a specification of discourses in terms of "who speaks? who writes? when and where? with or to whom? under what institutional and historical constraints?"[32] This is all very well, but it does not address the question

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[29] Clifford in 'On Ethnographic Allegory', *op. cit.*, p 99.

[30] *ibid*, p 108.

[31] *ibid*, p 25. It is interesting that Samir Amin, in his study of eurocentrism, identifies the idea of 'partial truths' as one of the central ideological falsifications that Europe-centred thinking asserts.

[32] *ibid*, p 13. .

of the nature of anthropological evidence and the status that data should have. Such questions are subsidiary ones that should be asked only when there is a clarity about the aim of the object within an intellectual discipline. When there is such a crisis of objectivity as we have tried to focus upon in the preceding chapters (and which Clifford himself has played his part in bringing to light), then it is obfuscatory to locate the problem within such hermeneutic categories. The crisis of objectivity within anthropology is not essentially a crisis of methodological means (although it necessarily entails that such means must be brought into question); it represents a more generalised crisis within contemporary consciousness. This concerns above all the status of reality and the understanding of imagination in relation to it.

In establishing the distinction between symbol and allegory, the romantics were taking issue primarily with the classical conception of beauty as pure contemplation. They were arguing for an approach toward reality that would involve the observer in what was observed whilst, at the same time, giving full rights to the imagination to interpose into the frame as both an interlocutor and generative principle of reality itself. In so doing they were rejecting the rhetorical and the arbitrary and charting out the ground for a unity between reality and experience in extremely complex terms. The post-modernist valorization of the allegorical refuses this complexity and seeks to separate out reality from experience in such a way as to enable both to be quantified. Yet reality, by its very nature, can never be quantified, since it is always in process of negotiating the sensible area of its domain in the dialectical relation between the real and the imaginary. We can see, then, why post-modernism needs to deny the powers of the imagination if it is to establish a coherent argument about the structure of allegorical simulation that it would wish to pass off as contemporary reality.

The main impetus for the current fashion for post-modernist analysis in anthropology has come from anthropologists in the United States. What seems extraordinary is that with all the plethora of critiques of textural authority and concern with the status of the object, no analysis appears to be directed in concrete terms towards the contemporary relations between the USA and its 'Third World'. Nor does the reflexive component seem generally to extend as far as the analysis of the anthropologist as *American* (as opposed to being an individual who just happens to be an American) in relation to the object of study. Where is the analysis, for instance, of American popular attitudes towards Latin America, of the sociology of the media in the Vietnam War, of middle American religious fundamentalism, of the reasons for US support for the Contra assassins in Nicaragua? Where are the anthropologists, to repeat a complaint made by the Haitian writer René Depestre as long ago as 1971, "who had the idea of taking as their field of study the boards of management of neo-colonial banks and exchanges? Where is the anthropology of the military caste, of the so-called Inter-American economic and political institutions, of pseudo-legal mechanisms of 'Papadocracies' and military dictatorships. To summarize: how long should we continue to rule into squares the elementary structures of imperialist power, which, together with the indigenous oligarchies, continues

to underdevelop our societies?"[33] In the intervening twenty years, how far has anthropology gone to satisfying such demands?

Perhaps we should not be surprised that, living in a society as imbued with imperialist assumptions as the contemporary United States (in which the idea of 'manifest destiny' is almost as strong as the nineteenth century idea of the 'white man's burden), intellectuals in that society (any more than intellectuals in Victorian Britain) are not always able to stand outside such a framework and analyse its workings. We should, however, not allow them the alibi of presenting thoroughly conservative approaches as though they were subversive of social norms. This is the fundamental error of the whole 'deconstructivist' impulse, which raises, in a generally banal way, examples of Western hegemony without in any way challenging the context or the even seeking to understand it in terms of the nexus of objective relations in which it is founded. Simon Leys rightly pointed out that Edward Said shows a 'dim understanding of the Western intellectual tradition', but this could be applied to post-modernism as a whole, if one did not suspect that such poor understanding was often a wilful refusal to try to understand, for the reason that one is too busy jockeying for one's own place in the sun in that very same intellectual tradition.

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[33] René Depestre, *Bonjour et adieu à la négritude*

anthropology could not afford to set itself up against colonialism. The surrealists, on the other hand, were deeply at odds with their own society. They had no illusions about the 'civilising mission' of the West and had no interest in maintaining the colonial order. This gave them a perspective, lacking in anthropology, from which to declare themselves in opposition to the colonialist attitude.

In line with thinking about questions of reciprocity and objectification, surrealism is of especial interest in that surrealism was taken up by intellectuals in the Third World who sought in it 'miraculous weapons', in the words of Aimé Césaire, in their own struggle against colonialism. There have been surrealist groups in several non-European countries: Japan, Egypt, Chile, Argentina, Brazil, Colombia and it has generally had an considerable impact throughout Latin America. We will look at the specific relations established in particular countries in a moment.

As we noted earlier, the French Surrealist Group had been politicised by the Moroccan War of 1925. They then assumed an anti-colonialist position, unequivocally took the side of the Riff rebels, called on French troops to fraternise and declared that 'for us France no longer exists'. The famous 'surrealist map of the world' was drawn up soon afterwards and emphasises this displacement: France, indeed, does no longer exist and Paris has become the capital of Germany; the United States has also vanished and Britain has become an inconsequential dot dwarfed by a massive Ireland. The map remains a remarkable statement about surrealist affective considerations of the time: Mexico, Alaska, and Polynesia have become the centre of the world culturally; Russia and China maintain their positions in the world primarily due to the political upheavals. The comparatively small size of

CHAPTER SIX:

RECIPROCITY AND THE VOICE OF THE OTHER

People do not follow the same course like water.

Zulu saying

Introduction: a background to Latin America

If, as we have argued in the previous chapter, the impulse of much recent theory around conceptualizations of the other has been to mystify the nature of this other, then we need here to look at the relation of (anthropological/Western) self towards the other.

The question of what it is that actually constitutes the 'Other', in so far as one is seeking to provide a definition sufficient to be considered as representative of the 'Other's' voice, is an impossible one to answer. It would be absurd to try to give to 'otherness' some homogeneous quality which expresses itself in certain ways. What we are concerned with here is the extent to which another voice has sought to establish itself consciously as such; to establish its own identity against that of the dominant European model. Of course, there is no such other voice in absolute terms,

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since the extent of Western hegemony over communications in the contemporary world is so extensive that to contest its ideology one must engage with it, to an extent on its own terms. To refuse to do so is to be excluded from such discourse. Even if it were possible to establish an alternative discourse, then we, who remain within the confines of European hegemonic discourse, would necessarily remain ignorant of it.[1] In this context the 'other' can be provisionally defined as being all those who contest the legitimacy of European hegemony, but this is a category comprising such vast numbers of people as to be impossible to quantify. The claims of all of those who seek to define themselves as 'other' in this sense must always be questioned therefore, both on a collective and individual level, to see the extent to which their otherness involves a meaningful opposition to the dominant ideology.

The Latin American Background

In this chapter we will endeavour to raise the question of the self and other in connexion with the relationship between Europe and Latin America. It is impossible to do more than touch on such a complex theme; what follows therefore only related to certain aspects of Latin American reality that provide some illumination on this question.

There are several reasons why it is particularly useful to take Latin America as exemplar in this connexion. In the first place its colonial relation with Europe has been the longest and most complex of any part of the world: most of the region was colonised and settled by the end of the seventeenth century; in many areas the indigenous population was decimated; colonial wealth was assured by slavery and iniquitous forms of indentured labour which involved the forceable immigration of a whole population of African peoples. Despite the fact that the majority of countries in Latin America had obtained their political independence from the European colonial power by the early part of the nineteenth century, none of the Latin American countries has succeeded in establishing a genuine autonomy from Europe in the economic, social or cultural domain, and the whole of Latin America today remains tied in a neo-colonial relationship with the United States that is, in its way, as invidious as the old colonial forms imposed by Europe. Furthermore, the internal dynamic of Latin American cultures dramatises issues of reciprocity and dialogue since it represents a society in which American, European and African values are intermingled to such an extent that it is impossible to disentangle them one from another. The social differentiation along racial lines dividing white from mulatto and mestizo on the one hand and from black and Indian on the other provides another level of internal reciprocity within Latin American societies as a whole.

Does it, however, make any sense to differentiate Latin America as an entity? Can such a

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[1] It was a realisation of just this point that was partly responsible for the surrealist demand for 'occultation'.

heterogenous range of cultural experiences be given methodological unity, and if so, upon what basis? Obviously the range of contingencies that Latin Americans share is wide and also complex, as are those that divide them: three colonial powers were involved directly in Latin America (Spain, Portugal and France) as against the five involved in America as a whole (the Dutch and the British being the colonial powers in the other American countries). Each colonial power adopted a different colonial policy which gave a different cultural coloration to the areas colonised. Nor was this homogeneous. English influence was pervasive in predominantly Spanish Argentina; Spanish influence remained strong in British Guyana etc. Obviously the boundaries involved are very fluid, but two elements that unite 'Latin America' as a concept are the economic relationship with the United States (which also, it is true, unites Latin America with anglophone West Indies and Canada) and also the racial component, a carry- over from colonialism that still conditions Latin American society. René Depestre has defined this ambivalently as an attitude of *passionate racial antagonism*. This is the opposite to what occurred in anglophone America, where racial antagonism has a more straightforward relation based upon a mutual suspicion that is uncomplicated by a large mulatto/mestizo population. The racial question thus seems to be a crucial factor in looking at Latin American reality, which it has affected to a profound extent and brings into relief issues of identity and cultural belonging that are of considerable importance in looking at questions of otherness. Due to the nature of the racial question in Latin America, and the way in which the struggle for independence from European hegemony has unfolded, we can see numerous aspects involved in the question of a specific Latin American identity. The question of the relation of the European elements in Latin American society to both American Indian and African cultures brings this especially into focus, but also the relation towards the particular colonial power, towards the United States and Britain, is also deeply ambivalent and problematic. The situation is quite distinct from that of anglophone American societies in which racial heterogeneity is essentially European and the fundamental racial problem is not one of identity but of integrating different racial groups into a Europeanised society. In Latin America, on the other hand, societies are much more clearly 'hybrid': there is revealed an interplay between European, American Indian and African realities. Simplistically, we could say that whereas anglophone American societies are European societies transposed to the Americas, those of Latin America are of a more specifically American origin in which the relation between Europe and its others is more clearly brought into focus.

In this respect it is revealing to take the cases of Martinique and Haiti. At first sight they may seem to be rather atypical examples of Latin American societies, not least because they are two of only four francophone societies in Latin America and, as such somewhat marginal to Latin America as a whole. Nevertheless, they still represent extremes that help to define the dilemmas of the continent. Haiti was the first Latin American society to obtain independence from the European colonial power, and has the most traumatic history of any Latin American nation. Martinique, on the other hand, remained a French colony until 1946, when it became, by national plebiscite, not an independent nation, but legally part of the French mainland. Such are the extremes that face all Latin

American societies, caught between the Scylla of being cast adrift from the European controlled world market, and the Charybdis of colonial dependence. Before we look specifically at Martinique and Haiti we will take a brief look at the way original anthropological themes have been raised in Latin America not so much by means of an institutional academic discipline as within the novel. This will have a dual purpose: to add to the insights developed through looking at surrealism as a non-institutional form of anthropology and to locate anthropological themes outside the European context.

Anthropological themes in the Latin American novel

One of the things that characterises Latin America as a whole in the contemporary situation is under-development. This is something recognised by virtually everyone who has considered the problems of Latin American reality, no matter how different their solutions to the 'problem'. In 1968, Fidel Castro insisted on the fact: "We do not feel in the least offended if we are included among the underdeveloped countries. Because development of awareness, our social as well as our general cultural development, is steadily becoming a prerequisite to our economic and industrial development. In this country [...] the development of a political as well as a social awareness among the people becomes a *sine qua non* requisite for winning the battle against underdevelopment".[2] In the obsession with economic development, the consequences of cultural under-development tend to be underestimated; it might be said that one of the central problems is that in so far as economic, social and cultural development are treated in isolation from each other rather than being perceived as part of the same thing, then under-development is bound to persist. As James Cockcroft has reminded us: "Real *development* involves a structural transformation of the economy, society, polity and culture [...] that permits the self-generating and self-perpetuating use and development of people's potential."[3]

It is in Latin America's cultural history that we can see most clearly the historical attempt to grapple with the question of identity, in which the central issue has always been to integrate the native American, African and European aspects of Latin American reality into something that would represent a separate American identity. Latin America has always been aware of this necessity in the cultural sphere, although in the economic and social spheres it has tended to look to Europe for models of what its development ought to be. This has led to what might be called, in fact, some degree of cultural 'over-development', although such 'over-development' must be seen in the overall context of generalised under-development. In the cultural sphere there has been a tenacious attempt over two centuries to come to terms with Latin America's reciprocal yet unequal relation with Europe. To use Hegel's concept of becoming, we can see Latin American culture as involving a constant effort in which "the aim of the conscious mind is to make its appearance identical with its essence, to rouse

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[2] Fidel Castro, Speech at the Cultural Congress of Havana 12 January 1968.

[3] James D. Cockcraft, *Dependence and Underdevelopment. Latin America's Political Economy*, p xvi.

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its self-certainty to truth".[4] This effort has seen its most tangible results in the sphere of literature, in which Latin Americans can certainly compete with Europe on equal terms and in which Latin American self-certainty has unquestionably been turned into truth.[5]

In the context with which we are concerned here, however, we are not dealing with literature in its quality as literature. An area in which Latin America still remains 'under-developed' is anthropology (in the sciences generally as opposed to the arts, Latin America remains still tied to European models). To be sure, there are excellent anthropologists in Latin America such as Gerardo Reichel-Dolmatoff, Victor Daniel Bonilla, Carlos Furtado or Darcy Ribeiro, but they all work within a framework, whose boundaries have been determined by Europe. Even though they doubtless have a keener insight into Latin American reality by virtue of their status as Latin Americans, their fundamental framework is always European and there is nothing in their work that could not by presented by a European anthropologist with only a slight change of emphasis. It is also worth noting that the focus of almost all Latin American anthropology is either developmental themes, or is concerned with Indian cultures. This is hardly surprising in the circumstances, but it does show the extent to which anthropology there is subservient to vital everyday concerns which prevent Latin American anthropology from being able to develop a comparative approach of its own. It is hardly a rhetorical question to ask how many Latin Americans do - or are even interested in doing - research in Britain or France or ... China? This is not, of course, through a lack of interest in such countries, but is a recognition of the fact that Latin American concerns are too vital and immediate to expect Latin American anthropologists to be interested in casting their net wider. It does, nonetheless, mean that they remain dependent upon European anthropology to provide such a wider comparative framework.

It is also the case that financial, political and social pressures on Latin American anthropologists are far greater than they are on their European counterparts and this also obliges them to conduct their research in more restricted ways. Nevertheless there is still a strong perception throughout Latin America that anthropology is of vital concern and this can be brought into relief by looking at the way in which anthropological themes emerge in a very original way in the context of Latin American literature. Indeed, so striking is the way that anthropological themes are inserted within the frame of literature, that one could see such literature as representing a sort of surrogate anthropology in which themes that cannot be dealt with in the restricted realm of institutional anthropology find their way into the mainstream of Latin American thought. This is emphasised by the fact that many Latin American novelists have studied anthropology and anthropologists like José Maria Arguerdes and Darcy Ribeiro have turned to literature as a more immediate way of exploring anthropological themes in their widest sense.

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[4] Hegel, *Philosophy of Mind*, p 137.

[5] although one could equally perhaps consider dance or football as being comparable in terms of influence on Europe.

It would be impossible within the confines of our subject to treat this question with the depth that is due to it. What I want to do is to use Latin American literature in a general way to illustrate the the nature of reciprocity and the status of objective knowledge. For what I hope this consideration will show is that it is impossible to make a divide in Latin America between the concerns of science and those of art. This is not to suggest that the realms of science and art should collapse into each other but that they should, on the contrary, become sharply delineated in the way they develop in relation to each other. That is, that unlike what we have witnessed in European culture, especially over the past century, where science and art have been set against each other, in Latin America we can see the beginnings of a process, the deepest aim of which, as we have seen of romantics and surrealists, is for the two realms to inform each other and interact.

Julio Cortazar has spoken of Latin American literature as constituting a "kind of grand inventory of Latin American reality, covering everything from geopolitical conflicts to sociological processes, the evolution of customs and feelings, and the search for valid responses to the great conscious or unconscious questions of our peoples: What are we, who are we, where are we going?"[6] He sees this process as always being orientated towards something external to oneself (the *other*, indeed) at the same time as involving a confrontation with one's own essential being. This sort of attitude, which plainly implies a sort of anthropological beginning, is central to much Latin American literature, and especially to those writers we shall examine here.

Anthropological themes in Latin American literature

The question of reciprocity and the nature of Latin American reality has been tackled with great subtlety by Darcy Ribeiro in a trilogy of novels, of which only the first, *Maíra* (1978) has been translated into English. Ribeiro himself has something of a legendary quality. As Brazil's leading anthropologist he spent fifteen years among Indians of the Amazonian basin. He has also had a tempestuous political career and, as personal advisor to President Goulart, who was overthrown by the US sponsored coup in 1964, has spent much of his time in exile, mostly in Argentina and Uruguay.

Given his background as an anthropologist it is hardly surprising that the Amazonian world conjured up in Maíra gives the impression of complete authenticity. The story tells the tale of Avá, the chief-to-be of the Maírun Indians and Isíais, the Christian missionary unable to come to terms with his place in the world. These are, in fact, one man: Ava left his tribe as a child and has studied since at the Vatican, learning the ways of the white man. He has taken the Christian name of Isiais but has become unsure about his identity. Although ordained as a priest he is convinced he must return to his tribe: "We the Maíruns are an aspect of God, our Creator, worthy of being an aspect of Him, so

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[6] Cortazar, 'Reality and Literature in Latin America' *Index On Censorship* (1981) Vol 10 no 6.

we have a mandate to preserve ourselves in all the singularity of how He had made us. What is the consequence of this mandate for me? I who am Isíais of the Missionary Order and, at the same time, Avá of the Jaguar clan of the Maírun people?" But as he ponders he becomes clear about his identity: "In truth I was only acting, am still acting a script that I have learned. I am not, I never was, never will be Isíais."[7]

The novel concerns his return to the tribe. On the journey he is accompanied by a young European woman, Alva, a former nun, a promiscuous 'lost girl' from civilisation, hoping to find herself in the wilderness. Multiple senses of journey are thus suggested: Ava's return is counterpoised against Alva's escape, their respective journeys leading in the opposite direction, but both involving a quest towards a sense of identity: ideas about 'otherness' are presented with a great deal of anthropological acuity, in which it is not simply, or even primarily, about us and them, but takes account of multiple levels of reciprocal relation, all of which Ribeiro seeks to elucidate.

The knowledge that Avá is to return creates a mood of expectancy among the Maírun. The guide of the souls relates the news to the people: "He was taken away from here by the alien sorcerer many years ago, do you remember? Well, yes! He is about to return. He will come, bringing us everything, in a white boat as big as the Great House. Do you believe it? How strange. Perhaps it is for the good. Perhaps it is for the worse Who knows?"[8]

His return is opportune since the chief, Anaca, has just died. Preparing for their burial rituals, the tribe need to re-establish their society in its harmony with the world and heal the breach which the death of Anaca had brought about, something that reveals a completely different conception of death than the one we are familiar with in the West: "Anaca is buried. Soon he will be dead. Life must now be re-born."[9] As the rituals are enacted, Avá reveals himself as being incapable of assuming the chieftainship. No one can account for this disappointment. They had expected that he would return with the new skills learned at the hands of the foreigners and be able to add Western knowledge to traditional Indian knowledge. Instead he appears to have learned nothing and to have lost all the skills taken for granted by the Indians. At first they explain Ava's failure in the hunt, and inability to assume the chief's authority, as being due to the necessity for him to work through some 'secret destiny' that he would in time reveal to them. Time, however, merely serves to emphasise the extent of his displacement. He seems to have lost his old identity without having gained a new one. He becomes a social outcast, impotent (both figuratively and literally). Eventually, in desperation, the Maírun have to re-create their society without Avá, and another warrior has to take over the chieftainship. Henceforth Avá's only purpose in the tribe is to be sort of village idiot to the Indians, who assume that the white man must have stolen his soul. For himself, Avá realises that white

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[7] Ribeiro, *Maíra,* p 17.

[8] Ribeiro, *Maíra,* p 26.

[9] Ribeiro, *Maíra,* p 12.

civilisation has nothing to offer the Indians, who can only follow their own path. They cannot become integrated with, or learn anything from white civilisation, since the latter's relation towards them is only an exploitative one, that refuses to recognise the Indians own reality on its own terms. Avá is able to do no more than take refuge in a personal tranquillity in which he recognises that "truth is not to be found in one place. And it is not a single thing. It is everywhere; it is multiple, dispersed and contradictory."[10] We are left numbed by a sense that these people are doomed to be destroyed by the encroaching civilisation. It is impossible for them to adapt to changing circumstances without denying their own essential being. Avá's pious hope at the beginning of the book that "This is the only command of God that completely moves me: that each people retain its identity", is shown to be a woefully inadequate response to the conditions that pertain in the Amazon today, in which the Indians can only be to be absorbed by the process of civilisation, as if being taken into some infernal machine (bringing suggestions of Jarry's 'debraining machine').

But if the Indians have nothing to learn from civilisation, there is plenty that civilisation has to learn from them. Alva discovers this as she does not, as she had hoped, 'find herself' in the process of discover a reason for living among 'primitives'. Rather she finds her place within Maírun society not by attempting to understand them, but by shedding her European identity. Her ego seems to dissolve as she becomes impregnated with the life of the village: she comes to accept life in all its immediacy, accepting her own identity as being contingent and in a constant state of flux. She learns that she has no 'self' to find: she is only what she is. And in accepting this, in losing her fear of the loss of identity, she loses the sense of alienation she had felt from living in the West.

It would be misleading, and somewhat presumptuous, to try to read *Maíra* as an allegorical fable about relations between Europe and Latin America, since the issues Ribeiro focuses upon are wholly concrete and he seems specifically concerned to deny the reduction of relations to an allegorical level. In sketching out the effects of human development in the terms he is using, Ribeiro denies the nature of reciprocity that pertains at present between Europe and its 'Other'. It is not dialogue that is being encouraged, however, since dialogue always privileges the stronger and leads to a denial of the reality of otherness. The tragedy of Amazonia is one of imposition. In its determination to exploit the region for profit, the West denies space to the other and makes it meaningless for the exploited even to seek to come to terms with what is happening to them. But civilisation itself cannot escape the consequences of what it is doing. By destroying the Indians (and indeed the jungle itself) it is also destroying something of itself: it is part of a slow process of suicide to which civilisation is subjecting itself. This process can only be arrested by that civilisation recognising itself in itself and in the process recognising the other, not as a separable, and disposable, object, but as a part of itself. One must, as Alva does, learn to respond to the ebb and flow of life as it unfolds around one, rather than imposing one's will over it. It is only in such recognition that genuine reciprocity becomes possible. In such a scenario, Latin America as a

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[10] Ribeiro, *ibid,* p 320.

collective entity lies betwixt and between, forced to forge ahead with Western ideas of development (characterised by Octavio Paz as a "race to see who can reach the gates of Hell first") and yet seeking to establish an identity that would be unique unto itself.

This is a dilemma that was central to the work of another Latin American anthropologist-turned-novelist, the Peruvian José Maria Arguerdes. Arguerdes had an absolute commitment to the lives of the Quechua Indians with whom he had been brought up and with whom he had lived for much of his life. He was obsessed, not to say tormented, by the problem of expression: the double imperative of how to find the means to express the reality of the Quechua people and how to expose the way in which European language served to locate and establish power over the people. Arguerdas saw that if the continent was to advance then its culture had to collectively express the aspirations of whole communities in all of their varied and dynamic aspects. Although he has been accused of seeking to maintain an old archaic social structure, in fact it is apparent that Arguerdes's intention was exactly the opposite. As he wrote: "Who will change this social 'equilibrium' that has already prevailed for centuries - an equilibrium that is profoundly horrible - and destroy it, to enable the country to roll more freely and catch up with other nations - of the same age but with less human potential - that have already left such a shameful period behind?"[11] Change,then, but not change that involved the imposition of alien modes of living and thinking, but a change that was integral to the community itself.

What particularly concerned Arguerdes was that such 'destruction' should not come from without, but rather from within the community itself, as part of a process of change that would in its wake create a newly integrated community rather than one divided against itself. He saw that economic development could offer no solution to such problems, but could only exacerbate them, and he bitterly opposed most of the development programmes organised either by the government or by aid organisations on the grounds that they ignored the realities of life in the communities to which they were supposed to apply. Both in his anthropological writings and in his literary works, Arguerdes sought to alert us to those realities. But how can one present such realities without betraying them? How to even talk of Quechua reality in the Spanish language, a language that can only, even with the best will in the world, serve to mask an oppressive relation. At times he won himself over to the idea of writing in Spanish, thinking he had found a tentative solution to what he called his 'Way of the Cross'. He explains what occurred: "I solved the problem by creating for them a special Spanish language, which has since been used with horrible exaggeration in the work of others. But the Indians do not speak that Spanish, not with Spanish speakers, much less amongst themselves. It is a fiction. The Indians speak in Quechua. [...] So it is false and horrendous to present the Indians speaking the Spanish of Quechua servants who have become accustomed to living in the capital."[12] His anguish over this dilemma was to lead him to write only poetry in Quechua during his last few

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[11] Arguerdas, 'The Novel and the Problem of Literary Expression in Peru', in *Yawar Fiesta*, p 4.

[12] Arguerdas, preliminary note to *Yawar Fiesta*, p xi.

years and was one of the reasons for his suicide in 1970.

Both of these novels problematise the question of what exactly internal reality is and how to integrate the Indian populations into the polity of Latin American society. This problem cannot be divorced from the wider one of the position of Latin America in the world and directly implicates, in the way both authors organise their themes, the wider relationship between European and Latin American reality. The fact that both authors have seen anthropology as being inadequate to express the reality they wish to document is also significant, for it is apparent that neither author has seen their novels as an escape from anthropological research but as an intensification of it, able to convey a more complex sense of the burning actuality they perceive in their own societies which calls for a sense of recognition by the other of a sense of their own involvement in the relation between Europe and otherness. In this relation it becomes essential that we as Europeans should listen to the other voice, and not dissemble it in terms of a relativist universalism.

It was precisely such a demand that was made by Latin American anthropologists as long ago as 1971 at a symposium organised in Bridgetown, Barbados on the situation of the forest Indians of South America. They issued the complaint against the anthropology of Latin America that it "took form within and became an instrument of colonial domination, openly or surreptitiously [...and] has continued to supply information and methods of action useful for maintaining, reaffirming and disguising social relations of a colonial nature. [...] with growing frequency we note nefarious Indian action programmes and the dissemination of stereotypes and myths distorting and making the Indian situation - all pretending to have their basis in alleged scientific research. [...] The anthropology now required in Latin America is not that which relates to Indians as objects of study, but rather that which perceives the colonial situation and commits itself to struggle for liberation. In this connexion we see anthropology providing the colonised peoples with data and interpretations both about themselves and their colonisers useful for their own fight for freedom, and re-defining the distorted image of Indian communities current in the national society, thereby unmasking its colonial nature with its underlying ideology..."[13] Whether or not this complaint against Western anthropology is still valid in the same terms today, there can be little doubt that the colonialist relation as a whole has remained unchanged and the way in which Indians within Latin American countries are treated simply replicates the way in which Latin America as a whole is treated by European consciousness. Just as the Indians need such weapons to enable them to come to terms with their own context, so too do Latin Americans generally need to become aware of their own specificity that would not simply represent the apeing of European standards.

The themes we have touched upon in looking at the novels of Ribeiro and Arguerdes do no more than touch the surface of the anthropological themes that could be drawn from looking closely

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[13] 'The Declaration of Barbados for the liberation of the Indians' made 30 January 1971 and signed by Miguel Alberto Bartolome, Guillermo Bonfil Batalla, Victor Daniel Bonilla, Gonzalo Castillo Cardenas, Miguel Chase Sardi, Georg Grunberg, Nelly Arvelo de Jimenez, Esteban Emilio Mosonyi, Darcy Ribeiro, Scott S. Robinson, Stefano Varese.

at Latin American literature as a whole. Indeed it could be argued that novels in Latin America often represent anthropology 'continued by other means'. They are certainly seen throughout Latin America as a means of knowledge, as a way of understanding the world and of defining themselves. They could certainly, as such, be seen as contributions towards a 'science of man'. But the value they have for us is that they question the monolithic relation we tend to establish between the other and ourselves. These are others who do talk back. It is this that appears to be the great value of treating anthropological themes in literature. Even if Latin American anthropologist had the same means of research at their disposal as those of Europe, there would remain the difficulty of making their voice heard in the rough and tumble of the international world market of ideas, in which there are barriers of translation and distribution to be broken down before the 'Other' voice can possibly be heard. In literature, on the other hand, these barriers have to some extent been broken down. There can be little question that, in literature at least, we can hear the unmediated voice of the Other. Whether we choose to listen or whether we deflect such voice into our own universalist perspective is, of course, another matter. In an interview given shortly before he died in 1985, the Mexican Juan Rulfo doubted the sincerity of Europeans who assume knowledge of Latin America. "They published us because we were exotic, strange," he said. They did not listen but rather established a voyeuristic relation that simply appropriates and extends European and North American concerns. It was only with the Cuban Revolution, he asserted, that any sort of genuine interest in Latin America had been awakened: "Before 1959 they didn't even know where our continent was located."[14] And it is perhaps for this reason above all that anthropology in Latin America is treated not as a luxury but as a necessity: a necessity that will enable a sense of identity and common purpose that would emerge from their own appropriate reality.

As long ago as 1950, Michel Leiris called for an end to a localised anthropology that refuses to treat societies in terms of the real relations of power, but seeks to dissemble the colonial or neo-colonial context.[15] Repeating such demands, indigenous Latin American anthropologists like Darcy Ribeiro have called for an anthropology that does not base itself on dubious concepts like scientific objectivity, but which would seek to participate directly in the life of the communities involved, a participation at some remove from the detached idea of the participant observer.

In the previous chapter we looked at the way in which an obsession with Western images of the other tends to lead to an over-estimation of their power and serves to deflect debate away from the nature of the self/other relation in so far as it concerns the other as an entity in its own right. We noted that Edward Said, for all the deficiencies of his study, had brought into focus a specific part of colonial ideology that could be identified as 'Orientalism'. The functioning of this ideology cannot be simply located in the Orient, but takes form in different ways throughout the colonial Empires. The terms by which such ideological conceptualization are framed is a form of exoticism, made concrete

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[14] Juan Rulfo, interviewed by Victoria Azurduy, *Granma,* 23 February 1986.

[15] see Leiris, 'L'Ethnographie devant le colonialisme' in *Brisées*, pp125/145.

by the colonial relation.

In considering exoticism in the colonial context, René Ménil has defined it as "an initial moment in relations from country to country, people to people. But this moment must be transcended and denied to allow the truth of man to emerge from what has until then only been perceived in terms of the exotic relation."[16]   Ménil considers that the effect of colonialism was to stunt this relation in its initial exotic form. No real contact was made between cultures and the relationship was reified in a way that   prevented real development. The effect upon the oppressed was to deny on the conscious level the reciprocity involved in the self/other relation. Thereby for the colonised the self becomes exoticised, the 'I' becomes alienated, becomes, in fact, 'other' to oneself, and one is able to see oneself only through the veil of exoticism so constructed. He becomes, in Ménil's words "exotic-for-himself".[17]

But for Ménil this relation is extremely complex. These are real relations. They are not, as they are for Said, simply conceptualizations of the European's mind. Far from it - in their very material reality they directly implicate the 'other'. It is not so much a matter of imposition and of mutually defined relations. It is not the European who has made the other 'exotic-for-himself'; it arises rather from his own complicity in the way in which this alienating identity is established. It is a relation that can be refused, but only at the cost of an even more acute identity crisis. One can see this problem with Edward Said himself in that, as a Palestinian, he rejects the 'exotic-for-self' identity and seeks, through his analysis of Orientalism, to undermine the ideological apparatus that is placing the dilemma on him. The irony is that he can only escape the dilemma by himself becoming part of the same ideological apparatus he is seeking to undermine. For René Ménil, the relation involved cannot be denied: the 'exotic-for-self' identity must be taken as given since one cannot outwit history. The only way to deal with the relation is to confront it and to conquer autonomy in order to "destroy the duality in virtue of which we appear, to ourselves, strangers and strange... in order that we can at last be ourselves, to be invented, it's true".[18]

Ménil's comments were made against the background of the development of the concept of negritude, of which he has been one of the most consistent critics. In considering the question of representation in the context of current post-modernist debates, we doubted the various paths that have been followed in anthropological theory. We considered the way that current ideas of dialogue could set up a spurious reciprocity in which the voice of the other was as effectively suppressed as in the traditional forms of anthropological knowledge against which the reflexive model of anthropological discourse is reacting. This process of incorporating the other's voice into one's own in order to claim a genuine dialogue can be brought into focus by considering the history of the

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[16] Ménil, *Tracées*, p 19.

[17] Ménil, *ibid.*, p 23.

[18] Ménil, *ibid.*, p 24/25.

negritude movement.

Negritude as 'counter' Orientalism

The negritude movement developed in francophone African and West Indians societies during the late forties and the fifties. It began as essentially a cultural movement, but became, as the independence movements in the French colonials gathered force, a political doctrine. In 1960, the leading negritude poet Leopold Sedar Senghor was elected the first President of the newly independent Senegalese Republic, a position he was to hold for more than thirty years. Negritude consequently became the banner around which much of the independence movement in the French colonies rallied. Considering negritude here, we will concentrate on issues arising from the effects of negritude in the Caribbean.

In the West Indies, negritude emerged from two different points: the first coming as a response in Haiti to the US occupation (1915/1934) which prompted Haitian blacks to undertake a re-examination of their culture and to re-appraise the African contribution; the second took form in the late forties in the then French colonies of Martinique, Guadeloupe and French Guiana as part of the movement towards more political autonomy for the colonies and resulted in all three colonies becoming a legal part of metropolitan France. The impetus thus covered a range of exigencies, but both were attempts to recover a specifically black consciousness perceived as being either lost or under threat in the particular context of the four societies. We will examine some of the national effects of negritude later, but here we will concentrate on the ideological implications of its development through the Americas in general.

In the nineteenth century the French colonial myth had developed along quite different lines from that of the British. Having lost the 'pearl' of the empire in the trauma of the Haitian Revolution, France was more responsive than Britain to the aspirations of the colonised for integration into the body-politic of the 'mother country'. French colonial policy was thus based on cultural rather than biological racism. The colonial lie was not that black was inherently inferior to white, but that it was his culture that prevented his personal becoming. To the extent that he renounced his own culture and accepted that of the French, he would become civilised, 'French with a black skin'. The name of this game was assimilation.

Such a policy was, if anything, more insidious than the British myth based upon inherent biological inferiority, since it involved a double alienation. Not only were blacks told they were from an inferior race, they were also led to believe they could, in Fanon's words, be "elevated above jungle status in proportion to [their] adoption of the mother country's cultural standards".[19] Thereby denied their own culture, they were also placed in a hierarchical relation defined by cultural terminology

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[19] Fanon, *Black Skins, White Masks,* p 136.

always controlled by the coloniser. Before being able to act politically against colonialism, then, the colonised of the French Empire would need to re-establish a sense of their own cultural identity.

The roots of the negritude movement in the French colonies (we will deal separately with Haiti later in the chapter) were laid down by a group of West Indian and African poets who were studying at the Sorbonne during the thirties. It was in 1938 that one of their number, Aimé Césaire, composed what was later to be seen as the rallying cry of the movement in writing the monumental poem Cahier d'un rétour au pays natal, a lyrical document of passion and fire that would be published in its entirety only in 1947. The poem announced a changed relation between black and white in the French colonies, in which assimilation could no longer be taken for granted as the destiny of the colonised:

"Listen to the white world

appallingly weary from its immense effort

the creak of its joints rebelling under the hardness of the star

listen to the proclaimed victories which trumpet their defeats

listen to their grandiose alibis (stumbling so lamely)

"Pity for our conquerors, all-knowing and wise".[20]

Defiance would henceforth be the watchword:

"Accommodate yourself to me. I won't
Accommodate myself to you."[21]

The title was significant in another way, signalling Césaire's own return to Martinique, a decision that Franz Fanon later regarded as being of crucial symbolic importance (it was also to be symbolic that the ship on which he travelled was to be bombed by the Nazis on its return journey: there would be no way back to Europe). As Fanon has testified, Césaire's very presence in Martinique was a provocation and his great poem suggested a 'bridge' to Africa: contrary to the assertions of the assimilationists, there was now an important figure on the island who celebrated the very African values that the people of Martinique had always been taught to despise. C.L.R. James saw the importance of the Cahier as being threefold:

"1. He has made a union of the African sphere of existence with existence in the Western world.

2. The past of mankind and the future of mankind are historically and logically linked.

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[20] Césaire Return to my Native Land [translation by Anna Bostock and John Berger] p 76.

[21] Césaire, ibid.,p 60.

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3. No longer from external stimulus but from their own self-generated and independent being and motion will Africa and Africans move towards an integrated humanity."[22]

Back in Martinique, Césaire established, together with his wife Susanne and with René Ménil, the journal Tropiques, which would provide a starting point for the development of negritude, although immediately after the Second World War, René Ménil would move away from Césaire and later become one of the most trenchant and unsentimental critics of negritude.

To consider negritude critically is to be faced with a problematic established when an amorphous movement of ideas becomes crystallised in an ideological form that causes its ideas to move away from their initial direction. René Despestre expressed this shift: "as it developed into an ideology, and even an ontology, the concept of negritude began to adopt one of various meanings, all of them ambiguous, until it presented the following paradox: formulated to awaken and to encourage self-esteem and confidence in the strength of the social groups that slavery had reduced to the status of beasts of burden, negritude now makes them evaporate into a semantic metaphysics."[23]

Although the reductive essentialism that became prevalent in negritude had been defined in Césaire's poem ("Those who invented neither gunpowder nor compass/Those who never knew how to conquer steam or electricity/But who abandoned themselves to the essence of all things..."), it was Senghor who placed an ideological gloss on to the process. Or more specifically, if we accept the argument of René Ménil, it was Jean-Paul Sartre, through Senghor (in his introduction of Senghor's Orpheus Noir), who established negritude in ideological form. It was Sartre's formulations, transformed by his point of view, that defined the direction that negritude would take. In this process, as Ménil sees it, negritude's apparently progressive credentials were assumed as a mask by the native petty-bourgeoisie who, in complicity with imperialism, wished to ensure that a neo-colonialist mentality would follow independence. Sartre's unwitting role in this process emerged from his own relation to negritude, which he was unable to see on its own terms, but which he wished to use as part of his own existentialist philosophy. As Ménil says, the negro in question resembles Sartre, but it is a Sartre "who had darkened and sometimes reversed his colour. It was a very anguished, very existentialist and picturesque negro".[24] He becomes a character without concrete reality that has emerged from nowhere, exists outside all social relations and outside the real world and the national context. In making such a reification, the doctrine of negritude is led to the error of believing that blacks were colonised because they were black. Rather, Ménil asserts, it was the other way round: that through being colonised, disparate blacks became negroes and gained thereby something in

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[22] C.L.R. James, *The Black Jacobins*, p 402.

[23] René Depestre, *Bonjour et adieu à la négritude*, p 176.

[24] Ménil, *op cit*, p 65.

common. This is not a racial trait, but is born of a common experience: the experience of colonialism.

In discussing negritude in these terms, Ménil is raising complex issues about the self/other relation, for it is a question not simply of the development of black consciousness, but of the whole nature of self/other relations, whether they be black/white, coloniser/colonised, Occident/Orient etc. For negritude was defined precisely in relation to the West, but instead of questioning the relation, it capitulated to the 'exotic-for-self' identity (something which, in Hegelian terms is defined as 'appetitive self-consciousness', the first stage of becoming). If we apply Hegelian concepts here, the second part of the process of recognition, and the basis of Ménil's critique is that negritude is unable to take this step and remains trapped in its own-self-consciousness. On the one hand it reflects the inverted image of the European, allowing itself to be defined by external consciousness (in this case by Sartre) and on the other hand it capitulates to its own petty-bourgeois class interests to serve in the neo-colonial relationship established post-independence. There is a double movement involved that is equally confining and requires re-formulation in different terms by both consciousnesses (i.e. both by the coloniser and by the colonised). As Ménil puts it: "...in not wanting to consider a black philosophy as simply a human philosophy, is this not a repression of racism? In the same way, negritude is not just a matter among Blacks since its object is the relation Blacks/Whites and the Whites are there qualified and defined correlatively and antithetically in relation to Blacks. In the last analysis negritude, being situated at the point of departure in the framework of progressive and anti-colonial ideologies, the most liberal white critics have the problem of surmounting the following difficulty: how to make without complacency a progressive critique of a progressive ideology that has made mistakes?"[25] Recognition, that is to say, must become mutual. If this recognition is refused, by either side, then the relation remains trapped and neither can act upon it. It is necessary for both to see negritude as a mentality that developed in a particular historical time, responding to exigencies both within the indigenous culture and in that of Europe.

The trap that Sartre fell into was to refuse this recognition. It was not a question of ethnocentricity, but the reverse. What Sartre was doing was not making a judgement of the other in terms of the West, but was rather assuming the position of the other as a means to make a value judgement against the West and as a legitimation of his own political and philosophical position. In so doing he effectively stole the identity of the other as a means of escaping the self. Whether he wanted to be or not he was a European serving his own culture.

It was left to Wole Soyinka to pinpoint the moment that a liberatory idea falls into an ideological strait jacket. In clarifying a notorious statement he was alleged to have made to the effect that 'a tiger doesn't proclaim its tigritude', he said, "The point is that, to quote what I said fully. I said: 'A tiger does not proclaim its tigritude, he pounces.' In other words: a tiger does not stand in the forest and say 'I am a tiger'. When you pass where the tiger has walked before, you see the skeleton of the duiker, you know that some tigritude has emanated there. In other words: the distinction I was

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[25] Ménil *ibid.*, p 86.

making [...] was a purely literary one: I was trying to distinguish between propaganda and true poetic creativity."[26] Soyinka's image is a potent one and points to the fact that ideas, when they stand still, become congealed. It is necessary, like the tiger, to keep moving on.

This necessarily rather cursory look at some of the ideological factors that have affected the history of negritude, gives us the background to look more specifically at the way in which the relationship of Europe and the Other has unfolded in specific contexts. We will consider here relations between France and Haiti and Martinique which can be seen to represent, as we have noted above, the extremes of the different Latin American societies in their relation with Europe.

Reciprocity and dependence in Martinique

We will first look at the example of Martinique, where the idea of reciprocity has been much touted, and yet the overwhelming sense is of a particularly insidious form of colonial dependence.

To orient ourselves, a little general information about Martiniquan history is necessary.

The island, in the eastern part of the Caribbean, was colonised by the French in 1635. As a colonial possession it was subjected to the slave-based plantation system centred around the production of sugar that was typical of French possessions in the Caribbean, although the island was of minor importance compared with the enormous wealth generated by Saint-Domingue (now Haiti). As a response to the slave revolt in Saint Domingue, and as part of the general libertarian policies of the French Revolution, slavery was abolished by the Convention in 1792, something that led to much resistance from the planters who openly collaborated when the English invaded the island, which was brought under English control in 1793, unlike its sister island of Guadeloupe, which successfully resisted the English assault. The English restored slavery and the plantation system continued when the island was restored to French control in 1812. It was finally and definitively abolished in 1848 but the actual system of production remained more or less the same through the nineteenth and early part of the twentieth centuries. Nationalist feeling arose during the Second World War, when the French administration collaborated with Vichy, and in 1946 a plebiscite was held to vote on whether the island should be incorporated into France itself. A considerable majority, voted affirmatively and since then Martinique has been a legal part of France, with the status of being an overseas department with all the same rights and duties as any other French department. There is a nationalist movement on the island which continues to make the demand for independence, but its influence is not great. In Martinique, it seems, there is a relative contentment with this relation and the island appears pleased to be seen as an 'exotic' part of France, completely assimilated to its culture. Unlike the other francophone islands of Guadeloupe and Guiana, which likewise voted to

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[26] quoted in Jahn, *A History of Neo-African Literature,* p 265/66.

become part of France, there seems, on the surface, to be little ambivalence in this attitude.

Nevertheless, Martiniquan intellectuals like Aimé Césaire, René Ménil, Franz Fanon, Edouard Glissant, and Georges Gratiant have been at the forefront of attempts to recover a specifically American identity with full acknowledgement of the African influence on the island's culture. Their work has provided a considerable body of analysis of the colonial mentality that still persists in the island and these analyses have been drawn upon considerably by the French anthropologist, Francis Affergan, in what is a remarkable study of the island called *Anthropologie à la Matinique.*

Affergan's work is a deliberate challenge to traditional anthropological research methods. He does not appear to have done fieldwork, or if he has, then the nature of his book eschews the sort of evidence that generally is gained from an ethnographic encounter. Affergan refuses the personal nature of ethnographic evidence to undertake "an anthropological experience through Martinique and not *of* Martinique".[27] Martinique is an ideal subject for such analysis, argues Affergan, because the relation between France and Martinique gives to the nature of otherness a clarity that emphasises the reciprocal nature of the relation. In Martinique 'otherness' is rendered ambivalently. The French person who visits the island is beguiled by complete familiarity on the one hand and by strangeness and exoticism on the other. It thus renders possible a relation in which "complicity with others consists in mingling there, mingling in life itself, whilst ceaselessly detaching oneself".[28] But internally, too, the population is divided within itself in ambivalent fashion, torn between its African and French traditions, which pull against each other in different directions so that everyone becomes in some way envious of the other: "to feel oneself to be white is better socially than culturally; to feel oneself black is better culturally than socially".[29]

Affergan sees Martiniquan society as being defined by race, which divides the society in four ways: blacks, mulattos, Martiniquan whites (békés), and metropolitan whites. But relations between them can be described as being pathological: a state of perpetual disequilibrium is established in which black and white relate to each other through a continual play of mirrors. This pathology is marked by two main symptoms: first, a sensibility that over-reacts based upon a negative transference in relation to France; culture thus tends to be marked by a mimetic quality in which there is an attempt to flee the self and which is consequently dominated by a sense of morbidity; and second, a sense of failure in relation to the metropolis which leads to auto-repression in an attempt to master body and consciousness. The Martiniquan is denied a sense of the other since the other is identical to the self. By voting for incorporation into France, Martinique was turning its back on the essential Hegelian pre-condition for self-recognition - the determination to be prepared to fight to the death. It is thus condemned to a form of simulation in morbidity, as Fanon had earlier pointed out. This is most clearly

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[27] Francis Affergan, *Anthropologie à la Martinique,* p 9.

[28] Affergan, *ibid,* p 7.

[29] *ibid,* p 27.

seen in the petty-bourgeoisie, which clings to French culture and yet also wants its own Martinquan identity. In effect it wants France but not the French, thus establishing an amorous relationship based on need rather than desire.

In this way Martinique can have no consciousness of the self nor knowledge of the other, but only a sort of pseudo-recognition in which the other exists only as a negative aspect of the self. This is the consequence of assimilation which results in the extinction of the self rather than the creation of an autonomous source of existence - the object of desire thereby remains unrecognised by the subject. As such class consciousness can never take form, since it is diverted into a mimetic quality by those who are perceived as the 'haves' against the 'have-nots'. In the process even race itself is emptied of content and is condemned to being 'an eternally empty subject',[30] and racial consciousness leads not so much to racial antagonism as to objectivisation and fetishism: "To be neither French nor Antillean consequently comes back to saying that man is nothing."[31]

The key to this problem is the relation of France and the ideological consequences of assimilation. Assimilation denies otherness and reduces the other to a coeval entity. This makes an assumption of the equality of the relation even though it is patently clear that the relation is not equal. France thus refuses to accept any form of reciprocity except money (which it both gives and receives), since it refuses to accept that Martinique is different from itself. This is so even though it is patently clear that culturally Martinique is quite distinct from any other part of France (although one should not see this as a process unique to relations between Europe and its other, since, within France itself, the relation of Bretons and Basques, to take just the most obvious examples, are treated in exactly the same way by the hegemony of French social and cultural politics). France is thus literally the mother country, to which Martinique maintains an unnatural attachment. Time is thereby denied and any dialectical movement becomes impossible.

This brief synopsis of Affergan's complex argument does not do it justice, but what I have sought to bring out has been the themes it touches upon that relate to the themes of the current study. Affergan brings out very forcibly the pitfalls that are involved in making too close an assumption about affinity with the other and the consequent denial of otherness. It will be noted that the situation Affergan describes is curiously like the sort of approach on which Fabian, as we saw in the previous chapter, would like to found current anthropological research. It is precisely the denial of the autonomy of the other's voice that has created the insidious situation that we find in Martinique. It is the assumption of coevalness and the refusal to recognise difference as difference that has resulted in the other being unable to establish a clear sense of identity, or rather, has served to muddy questions of identity so that the other's identity is absorbed into that of the self.

The question of otherness is one that is acutely felt throughout Latin America, particularly in the way that cultural imperialism can take form in ways that are, on the surface, 'sympathetic'

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[30] *ibid*, p 130.

[31] *ibid*, p 131.

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European attempts to understand or 'empathise' with the other. For Latin American intellectuals this presents a particular problem, in that they are often simultaneously incorporated into and excluded from the voice that speaks with European authority. Carlos Fuentes, speaking some years ago at the ICA, related how the Latin American has this dual personality formed by his relation to European culture on the one hand and his reality as a Latin American on the other. To establish oneself as an intellectual it is necessarily the relation with European culture that is fundamental in one's formation. Communication, both within and between Latin American countries, is difficult, and institutions of education are isolated from each other. Their self-knowledge tends, therefore, not to be constructed through a direct confrontation of their own direct reality, but mediated by their relation to Europe. He illustrated this with a revealing example: for the North American, crossing the border into Mexico is an adventure, the crossing of a frontier into another land, a land of strangeness and disorientation, the land of the other. For the Mexican crossing the border in the opposite direction no such disorientation is apparent. In fact, he suggested, if one were to ask most Mexicans about their feeling on crossing the frontier, their most likely response would be "What frontier?" This anecdote illustrates an important distinction between European identity and identity in the Third World in general, for whereas European and North American culture defines itself, that of the Third World tends, at the present time, to define itself necessarily in relation to Europe.

In his study of Martinique, Francis Affergan has allowed some of these problems to be openly confronted within the terms of a specific relation. He has also opened the way for an anthropology that looks at other societies in a rather more sophisticated way than is possible if the fetish of fieldwork remains in place. There still remain methodological problems with his own approach. First, he seems over-eager to engage in theoretical discussion at the expense of ethnographic detail. His ethnographic detail is rarely properly contextualised and though this does not affect his overall analysis, it does create substantial methodological difficulties. It seems to me that any anthropological study must be properly grounded in ethnography, even if one has not collected the ethnographic facts oneself and it must be unacceptable to seek to impose a theoretical argument using ethnography as back-up for a theoretical argument established beforehand, which is effectively what Affergan does. In his case it works, I think, because his theoretical insight is so acute, but as an approach it has the danger of encouraging the very complacency he is directing himself against. This relates to a second difficulty: we are given no standard against which Martiniquan sensibility can be classified as being pathological. This is hardly unproblematic. What is the norm against which this pathology is being compared? How is Martinique's relation with France qualitatively different from that of any other department? What is the nature of the entity defined as 'France'? How has the incorporation of Martinique into French society effected (in social, political and cultural terms) the 'mother' country itself? These are not questions that ought to be ignored given the aims of Affergan's study. Martinique is not only a problem for Martinique, but also for France. As René Ménil has insisted, in terms of otherness, it is also the self that must be brought into question.

Bearing in mind what we have said about Martinique, we will briefly look at Haiti, the

Caribbean island that has followed exactly the opposite course from that of Martinique, in refusing the direct relation with Europe and making a tenacious attempt through two centuries to define its own separate identity.

An indigenous anthropology: the case of Haiti

The French colony of Saint Domingue was established in 1697 when France seized the Western part of the Spanish island of Hispaniola, till then mainly a haunt of pirates and bandits. For almost a century it was to be the most magnificent colony in history, providing untold wealth for the mother country. One of the most fertile pieces of land in the world, the territory was mercilessly exploited to become the jewel in the French colonial crown.

The upheaval brought by the French Revolution was to lead to the only successful slave rebellion in history and to the French colony of Saint Domingue being transformed into the Republic of Haiti. Inspired both by the ideals of the French Revolution and by African traditions that had taken form in the religion of voodoo, the Haitian Revolution was one of the more extraordinary happenings in history, in which the Haitians had to successively defeat the French royalists, the Spanish, the English (the only time the British navy has ever surrendered) and finally Bonaparte's France to finally proclaim independence in 1804, when Dessalines declared the establishment of the Republic by tearing the white out of the French flag.

Independence was to bring fresh sorrow to Haiti. Internal divisions between mulatto and black were difficult enough, but the refusal of the population to engage in anything other than subsistence farming, perceiving any attempt to rationalize the economy as being a prelude to the re-introduction of slavery, made it very difficult for any Haitian government to come to terms with the political and economic needs of the new nation or to enable even a small proportion of the wealth produced under colonial rule to be generated. What was determining for the course of Haiti's history, though, was the attitude of foreign powers.

Soon after the declaration of independence, France imposed an economic blockade to prevent trade. This had a paralysing effect, particularly since Haiti soon established a position in European demonology as 'the Black Republic'. Even other Latin American republics, newly independent themselves (and to whose own independence struggles Haiti had given all possible aid), refused to give any solidarity. Britain, and then later in the century the United States and Germany, watched the Republic through vulture's eyes, looking for an opportunity to re-establish colonial power. It was not until 1825 that the French government lifted the blockade after forcing the Haitian government to agree to pay absurd amounts of reparations for the loss of the colony. Since the interest on the debt soon became more than the Haitian gross national product this did not do anything to help Haiti establish economic autonomy. Of course, it was hardly designed to.

European pressure intensified throughout the century, and was typified by an incident in 1898

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when a Haitian court had the temerity to find a German citizen guilty of beating up a Haitian policeman and sentenced him to one month in prison. In response the German government created a diplomatic incident: two battleships entered Part-au-Prince harbour and trained their guns on the National Palace. The immediate release of the German was demanded, together with $20000 compensation and a letter of apology. A salute was also to be given to the German flag. Whether or not the German was actually guilty of the alleged crime seems to have been a matter of no consideration.

This sort of war of attrition against Haiti was to continue until 1915 when the United States invaded the country and was to remain in occupation for nineteen years.

The reasons for the US invasion were complex, responding to internal confusion in Haiti itself as well as to US imperialist interests, and the invasion may indeed have been viewed in Washington as a genuine implementation of the Monroe Doctrine to forestall an invasion by Germany.

Whatever, the occupation was to be an unmitigated disaster from the point of view of Haiti. The only positive effect was to impress on Haitians the need to become conscious of the specificity of their society and to explore what being a Haitian meant.

Despite being seen by Europe as the uncontrollable 'Black Republic', a place of cannibalism and unspeakable savage happenings, the Haitian elite (which was primarily mulatto) regarded themselves as a uniquely civilised society in the Americas. They saw themselves as being part of French culture and indeed looked down on the 'uncivilised' Yankees to the north (their sense of superiority over the US made the occupation, if anything, more unacceptable to the elite than to the general population). As Jean Price-Mars was to argue in his celebrated 1928 work, *Ainsi Parla l'Oncle*, in this continued identification with French culture, Haitians had fallen into a form of 'collective bovaryism' in which they were only able to see themselves as other than they are. They had, in effect, 'exoticised' themselves. This is obviously very similar to the contemporary situation we have examined in Martinique. Two factors were, however, very different. In Haiti political independence had been fought for and won. Also, it was only the elite who were tied to French culture. The peasants, who comprised the vast mass of the people, had their own tradition based upon the voodoo religion that the elite had conspired to deny.

Jean Price-Mars had been considering Haitian folklore well before the US invasion, but this event gave his research greater urgency. By the mid-twenties, there was coming to be recognised a need to delve deeper into the particularities of Haitian culture: "The Haitian soul must be uncovered and analyzed in its bareness", as Philippe Thoby-Marcelin was to write in 1925. In 1927, a group of young writers began to publish a journal, La *Révue Indigène*, whose title emphasises the new concern with dealing with native values. Then, in 1928, as we have already noted, Price-Mars's *Ainsi Parla l'Oncle* exploded on the Haitian scene and made the literate population aware of the richness of the voodoo tradition.

During the 1930's the quest for an authentic identity became a central concern and led to the formation of *Les Griots*, a movement established by Carl Brouard, Lorimer Denis and François

Duvalier to recover African values and promote the doctrine of Africanism, which was to have much the same characteristics of the later negritude movement. It was indeed Brouard who had coined the word 'nigritie' as early as 1929.

A concern with anthropology was, hardly surprisingly, central to such considerations, and in 1941 the Haitian Bureau d'Ethnologie was created by Price-Mars and Jacques Roumain.

Although such interests may have had important consequences in the cultural domain, they made little impression in the political sphere. The US occupation had left the mulattos firmly in political control and in fact successive presidents were little more than US puppets. This became particularly apparent with the accession to power of Elie Lescot in 1940. Michael Dash explains that typical of his administration was "his agreement with the American controlled S.H.A.D.A. (Haitian/American Society for the Development of Agriculture) [that] gave the company the right to expropriate peasant land for planting rubber trees. In order to subdue peasant opposition to the project Lescot sanctioned a campaign by the Catholic Church against the voodoo religion - *La campagne anti-superstitieuse* - realizing that voodoo temples could become obvious centres of peasant revolt. The tactlessness of the Catholic Church provoked widespread criticism and the S.H.A.D.A.project was a failure - thousands of acres of peasant land destroyed in the process".[32]

To attack the voodoo religion in such a blatant fashion was to do more than display complicity in an imperialist operation. It was also the assertion by the mulatto elite of their intellectual superiority over blacks, an assertion based upon the assimilationist lie that European values are the ones to be emulated. This assertion was, of course, a denial of their own selves and also a denial of Haitian identity.[33]

No matter what the internal effect of the creation of an Ethnological Bureau in Haiti has been, it does seem undeniable that its very existence has been to provide the means for a certain reciprocity between European and Haitian anthropological concerns. The French anthropologist Louis Maximilian and the surrealist Pierre Mabille were among those involved in the founding of the bureau, and one can see that the quality of the anthropology that has since been done in Haiti is of an extremely high standard, notwithstanding the fact that sensationalist accounts have continued to proliferate in more general representations of Haiti. Nevertheless, it is clear that the creation of an indigenous anthropological tradition has the consequence of giving to creative writers a focus on their

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[32] Michael Dash, *Literature and Ideology in Haiti.*

[33] Although it may seem incredible to people who associate Haiti exclusively with voodoo, the voodoo religion has always been (even under Duvalier) legally prohibited, even though no government has ever been able to suppress it. One of the most noticeable consequences of this auto-repression within Haitian society has been to force voodoo adherents to form a network of secret societies to defend themselves, something of immense value to the repressive apparatus that a government such as that of the Duvalier dynasty established. That, since the fall of Duvalier, the Catholic Church has persisted in its hounding of voodoo (quite beyond the bounds of 'revenge' for the complicity that some voodoo priests certainly did have in the crimes of the regime) does not bode well for the future of Haiti.

own culture and has also served to orient Western anthropologists in their work on Haiti. The work of Louis Maximilian, Alfred Métraux, Sidney Mintz, Harold Coulander, Roger Bastide and Maya Deren has provided us with a rich tapestry of Haitian life, revealing evidence of a genuine sense of participation in issues of concern to the indigenous population itself.

In Haitian folklore, the key myth is that of the zombi. This is a specifically, one might even say archetypal, New World myth which, though having its roots in Africa, addressed American realities in its particularity. Most specifically it has obviously been created out of the experience of slavery. Métraux brings out this aspect of the myth well: "He moves, eats, even speaks, but has no memory, and is not aware of his condition. The zombi is a beast of burden exploited mercilessly by his master who forces him to toil in the fields, crushes him with work, and whips him at the slightest pretext, whilst feeding him on the blandest of diets. [...] Zombis can be recognised by their vague look, their dull, almost glazed, eyes, and above all by the nasality of their voice, a trait also characteristic of the 'Guedé' spirits of the dead. Their docility is absolute as long as they are given no salt. If they inadvertently eat any food containing even a single grain of salt, the fog envelopping their minds is immediately dispelled and they become suddenly aware of their enslavement. This discovery arouses in them an immense anger and an uncontrollable desire for revenge. They hurl themselves on their master, kill him, and ravage his goods, then go off in search of their graves."[34] What is this but the collective memory of slavery and the knowledge that it will, one day, be revenged? For this is not simply a reflexion of the slave's helplessness: it is more especially a myth of regeneration. For voodoo belief does not recognise death in the sense in which it is accepted in the West. There is no death, there is only transformation. The zombi is a being denied this transformation and is trapped in a world he ought to have left. Thus the zombi cannot be seen as a soul in purgatory in the Christian sense of the term since 1. by definition it has no soul; 2. because it is not dead. It is rather a being trapped without identity that has been denied the right to certain means of life that are rightfully its own.

But it is also as the image of death ensnaring life - which it is unable to leave - that the zombi haunts the world of the living and acts on it like an unspoken condemnation. Zombification thereby implicates the world of the living - unable to die (that is to be transformed, in the sense also of the 'Death' card of the Tarot pack), we are also condemned not to be able to live. The Haitian surrealist writer Magloire-Saint-Aude brings this out well in a passage from his story *Veillée*:

"As I examined her face (I only had to stretch out my arm to be able to touch her body) one particular made me shudder: the eyes were not completely closed and, from beneath the eyelids, the young girl seemed to look at me... and she did so with such fixity that it threw me into a state of panic. I tried to move, but my movements were paralysed with cramp. I

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[34] Métraux, *Le vaudou haitien,* p 250/1.

wanted to speak, but I was voiceless.

"And all the time Thérèse continued to stare at me.

"At me alone.

"And my own eyes were as if magnetised and could not detach themselves from those eyes of the other world."[35]

The implication is that the gaze of the slave transfixes the master. By enslaving another we become enslaved to the slave and have perverted the real relations of life. Real life passes elsewhere and we become alienated from ourselves. The continuity of existence asserts itself through death, but a death that is not death, a 'death' that straddles the borders of life and death, denying the existence of either and preventing their natural flow.

What the zombi lacks is salt, which would restore its creative and imaginative gifts. As René Depestre wrote: "The history of colonialism is that of a process of generalised 'zombification' of mankind. It is also the story of the quest for a revitalising salt that is capable of restoring to man the use of his imagination and culture."[36] I'm not certain that 'quest' is the right word here, since the zombi, being incapable of desire, is unable by definition actively to seek revitalisation. What is rather implied is the necessity for the restoration of reciprocity: the master who restores the salt to the slave liberates himself as he frees the latter. Such recognition is rarely, of course, in the nature of things. The restoration of salt almost always comes about, to use a surrealist term, by means of an 'objective chance' that forces the recognition of such reciprocity.

This truth is borne out by a consideration of the abolition of slavery in Haiti. This did not take place through an act given from without, nor was it established by events within Haiti itself. It was rather an act of generosity born of the recognition of two peoples in struggle of their mutual dependence. It is perhaps the finest achievement of C.L.R. James's *The Black Jacobins* to elucidate the mechanics of this symbiosis. The slaves of Saint-Domingue had demanded their emancipation and the people of France were in the mood to make such a demand their own. As James says: "the generous spontaneity of the Convention was only a reflexion of the overwhelming desire which filled all France to end oppression and tyranny everywhere."[37] This desire was not one way, however: it had to be completed by an equal desire on the part of the oppressed themselves. In Hegel's terms, the slave had to be prepared to put his own life into question. In the other French colonies slavery was abolished from without and was easily re-applied when the revolutionary tide had passed. In Haiti there was to be no turning back. The Haitian people would fight to the death to defend their newly-won freedom and the consequences engendered by the struggle were such that Napoleon's

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[35] quoted in Maximilian Laroche, *L'image comme echo*, p 185.

[36] quoted in *ibid.*, p 196.

[37] C.L.R. James, *The Black Jacobins,* p 141.

wish to re-establish slavery was doomed from the beginning. The Haitian Revolution thus belongs wholly to the Haitians themselves, to their sense of being and history. Today this must involve a sense of creative dialogue. On the one hand, as Fanon insisted, there is the need to reach the point at which "...consciousness is immanent in its own eyes. I am not a potentiality of something. I am wholly what I am. I do not have to look for the universal".[38] On the other hand, we also need to be aware of turning the other into an ill-defined universal, or of denying the fact that the reality of the other is always separable from our own true reality. Such a gap is impossible to surmount and is almost certainly necessary for any sort of lucidity to be established.

This need for mutual recognition is strikingly revealed in Haiti, where the political history has been so profoundly terrible and remains so to the present day. Duvalier's election triumph in 1957 may be seen as heralding a new era of barbarity in Haitian history, but the complicity of the US in the maintenance of power by the Duvalier family was always such to make it impossible to blame Duvalierism simply upon anything specifically internal to Haiti itself. Of course US ignorance about Haiti, a measure of its general ignorance about Latin America (which should be called its 'sphere of influence' only in an ironical sense), is quite astounding, but is no more than a continuation, taken perhaps *in extremis*, of the general Europe attitude towards its other. Except that the US attitude towards Haiti is not in reality an imperialist one in any of the traditional senses of the term. It responds rather to the need to establish otherness as a measure for one's own sense of identity. For as Sidney Mintz has said: "Haiti's enigmas, if any, will be solved by those who patiently acquire enough knowledge of its past and present to make sense of what has been happening there, not by those who substitute neologisms and bad imagery for research."[39] He goes on to note that what Haiti lacks is "the unified institutional forms through which class and other conflicts could be mediated, settled, or fought out; and this lack is related both to the nation's isolation during the first century of its existence and to the effects of North American colonial rule not long thereafter."[40]

It is the denial of any sort of reciprocal relation that has created this situation and keeps it in place. Although it is difficult to see how anything - short of major structural change in the nature of US society - can change the situation in the foreseeable future, nevertheless through anthropological exchange a beginning of reciprocity and dialogue can be made, both here and elsewhere. The Haitian writer Jacques Stephen Alexis was well aware of the double nature of the alienation of Haitian society when he wrote: "If I have chosen without hesitation the human families which appear to be the closest to me, the negro family and the Latin American family, I am equally determined not to deny any part of my heritage. I am close to the thought and sensibility of the French and France has

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[38] Fanon, *Black Skins White Masks,* p 135.

[39] Sidney Mintz, *Caribbean Transformations,* p 296.

[40] Mintz, *ibid.,* p 301.

given me so much that I am obliged to reciprocate with the little I have to offer".[41] It is through the same sense of generosity, in the same sense of recognition, that European understandings of the other ought to begin.

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[41] quoted in Michael Dash, *Haiti and the US*, p 201.

CHAPTER SEVEN

SURREALISM AND THE OTHER

In declaring their differences, men wish to be alike. From this one wish all human relations derive their value.

André Breton and Paul Eluard

Surrealism and the Western Tradition

In the last chapter we looked at otherness from the perspective of the other and raised some of the difficulties that emerge from trying to consider issues of reciprocity in the context of the relationship between the West and non-western societies. In this chapter we will return to surrealism and try to raise the same issues directly in the frame of the concrete reciprocal relation established in the general context of surrealism and notions of what constitutes otherness.

In taking form and distinguishing itself from Dadaism, surrealism looked to create a sense of its own tradition that would be opposed to that of the dominant European tradition that emphasized rationalism and realism. Taking as its starting point, Marx's watchword, 'merciless criticism of everything in existence', surrealism saw itself as a night avenger within bourgeois culture. As such,

although it was not content with assuming a passive outside role, it did not seek to reform the dominant tradition. Rather it began consciously to assert itself as an 'other' within European culture, and sought to recover aspects of European culture that had been excluded from the dominant tradition.[1]

Ever since the romantic rebellion against the Enlightenment, Western intellectuals had sought a counter-value that would go beyond ideologically legitimated Enlightenment modes of thinking. The romantics themselves were tied within the frame of their own intellectual ancestry and unable to see a way out of the Enlightenment cul-de-sac other than by vague appeals to the powers of imagination and intuition. Romanticism never engaged with the *ideology* of the Enlightenment; it believed it was sufficient to challenge Enlightenment rationality at the level of pure thought. The aim was to counter Enlightenment ideology, but on the Enlightenment's own terms. The effect could only be to make of romanticism a sort of counter-Enlightenment: not its negation, but its complement, in the same way that the coming of reason brought with it the complementary category of unreason.

Although some romantics did perceive the necessity of developing an alternative tradition directed against Enlightenment values, this never got beyond a vague medievalism and an invocation of the claims of a mystical Christianity. Likewise, during the nineteenth century, artists in the romantic tradition tended to build a whole mythology about their outsider status, a process that reached its culmination in *fin-de-siècle* decadence. It would await the coming of surrealism for the establishment of the basis of a counter-tradition by means of a systematic search for elements excluded from the Western tradition itself. Breton was to make this very explicit: "We have had to attack everything in Western man which conspired to shamefully repress his past, for this has been the lasting effect of the tenet 'might is right' imposed by the Roman legions nineteen hundred years ago. Historically, there is no doubt that this assault was facilitated by the increasing general awareness that the thinking of a past era was blatantly ill-equipped to define the conditions of life in the nuclear age. From that point we were led by an atavistic leap in the mind to inquire about the possible aspirations of the men who lived in our land before the Greco-Latin yoke descended so heavily upon them".[2] For Breton, according to Julien Gracq, this went as far as refusing ever to visit Greece because "I don't visit occupying powers. For two thousand years, now, we have been occupied by the Greeks".[3]

The idea of sweeping the past away had been dominant in Dada, and surrealism took this as a starting point on which it was necessary to build something new. Alfred Jarry had written: "We will not have destroyed anything if we don't destroy the ruins as well", but surrealism also recognised

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[1] for an account of the extent of this re-evaluation see the article by Elizabeth Cowling, 'An Other Culture' in *Dada and Surrealism Reviewed* by Dawn Ades. Appended to this thesis are the various documents in which the surrealists have affirmed their ancestors.

[2] quoted by Jean Markale in his *Celtic Civilisation* p 20

[3] quoted by Julien Gracq, *Sur les sept collines*, p 7.

that something more than pure negation was required: a tradition of revolt had to be established - a tradition, in a sense, rubbed against the grain. "In matters of revolt," as Breton was to write in the *Second Manifesto*, "we have no need of ancestors." At the same time there was a very real sense in which surrealist revolt could only be legitimated by what their predecessors had achieved: surrealism could not exist in a vacuum, either in space or in time, and, as it needed to expand its contemporary political horizon out from its core towards marxism, so it needed to extend itself into the past.

The most significant aspect of this process in early surrealism was their 'Orientalism'. In the light of our earlier discussion of Edward Said's examination of Orientalism, the way in which the surrealists utilised the idea of the Orient is of some interest. Marguerite Bonnet has dealt directly with this point in her article about the role of the Orient in surrealism. She notes that this was a theme that became for a very short time a key element of surrealism and then was suddenly dropped. She notes that the Orient was barely mentioned in surrealist writings before 1925, yet from January of that year the surrealists seem to have taken up Nerval's invocation of 'to the Orient'. They spoke of the 'purifying fire from the Orient', and the symbolism it invoked of the dawn, light, presentiment and the promise of new beginnings was obvious. In 1925, the surrealists also announced, on the cover of *La Révolution Surréaliste*, 'the end of the Christian era'. Yet as suddenly as the theme was taken up it was just as suddenly dropped. After October 1925 the 'Orient' is hardly ever mentioned again in surrealist writings.[4] This surrealist 'Orientalism' is very revealing in terms of the way the surrealists subsequently conceived otherness and we will therefore spend some time looking at what was involved.

Bonnet notes that during 1925 when Drieu de Rochelle poured scorn on this 'absurd neo-orientalism', Aragon responded with a vigorous defence of its symbolic value. Bonnet argues that the surrealists never confounded their image of the Orient with a real place: "The Orient has no true reality; it is only a word which allows a resolutely Manichean opposition to take form: the Occident represents an absolute evil, the Orient an absolute good."[5]

Surrealist interest in the Orient was filtered through the writings of René Guénon, who had published his major work, *Orient et Occident* in 1924. This work had so impressed the surrealists that they invited Guénon to join the group, an invitation that was refused, according to Pierre Naville, because Guénon had no belief in the future or in anything to do with Western civilisation.

Pierre Naville explains that the appeal of Guénon to the surrealists was precisely because of the fact that he used the Orient as a weapon against the West. His was hardly an appeal to Oriental wisdom or inscrutableness, but came from a deep sense of disenchantment with the West

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[4] Although one can mention the serious work of René Daumal on Oriental philosophy or Artaud on the Balinese theatre as examples of some surrealist interest in the Orient, this was very specific and involves no conceptualization of the 'Orient' as such.

[5] Marguerite Bonnet, 'L'Orient dans le surréalisme: mythe et réel', in *Revue de litérature comparée* no 4 (1980) p 416

on every level of being. Guénon, to quote René Daumal, definitively rejected all the modern idols of "discursive science, moral progress, human happiness, the autonomy of the individual..."[6]   The attraction of this for the surrealists was the refusal of the whole Promethean urge of Western society. It was the necessary counter-weight to the Hegelian sense of becoming, placing man in his proper perspective as nothing but a symbol of descent from a superior reality. As such, any progress is just an illusion within appearance, for "the inferior can never give birth to the superior, for it is fragmentation and illusory dust; it is the primordial that is alone capable of giving sense to the world, because it embraces the whole within the self and the self within the whole."[7] This fitted in perfectly with the most pessimistic aspects of the surrealist programme. Guénon had set himself "against the horizons of bourgeois progress, Christian humanism, egalitarian democracy of minds, speculative individualism, in sum anything that could hold back the powers of the imagination that surrealism placed above, and even beyond, everything we are reduced to perceiving under the name of reality."[8] For Guénon - and this above all was the message the surrealists took from his work - the Orient had nothing to teach the West but one thing: to learn to accept the inevitability of its own destruction.

But if the surrealists were drawn to the 'Orient' for these reasons, there were other contingencies that imposed themselves in the context of the time, in which to accept the Orient meant at the same time to reject the 'civilising mission' that sustained French colonialist ideology.   To appreciate the significance of this step we need to take a brief look at the historical background.

The 'crisis of consciousness' of Western sensibility that took form in France after the first world war involved a considerable sense of national paranoia. As Bonnet argues, the 'East' did not simply comprise the Orient itself, but also meant Germany and Russia - the former the defeated, but still dangerous, enemy, the latter the land of Bolshevism. In this respect the influence of Spengler was pervasive. In his analysis of the 'decline of the West' the French perceived an assault on their own self-perception as the crystallization of the ideals of Greco-Roman civilisation. German thought as a whole was seen as representing a threat to the whole tradition of French rationalism. Germany, the defeated, became confounded with the colonised of the empire in which the danger of a 'return of the repressed' was not to be under-estimated.

For the surrealists such an argument was very attractive, but they perceived the situation in exactly the opposite sense - if they represented such a threat to the 'French spirit', then German and Oriental thinking was only to be welcomed. Thus the surrealists made a myth of the idea of the

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[6] René Daumal, quoted in Pierre Naville, *Le Temps du surréel* p 291

[7] Pierre Naville, *ibid.* p 286

[8] *ibid.* p 288

Orient precisely to counter the patriotic neo-fascism of Massis and Maurras.[9] There was never any wish to look seriously to the Orient itself. That the surrealists were aware of the way in which they were using the concept of the Orient in order to establish a myth is apparent from a collective declaration: "The Orient is everywhere. It represents the conflict of metaphysic and its enemies, who are the enemies of freedom and contemplation. In Europe itself who can say where the Orient isn't? In the very street, the person you pass may carry it within himself: the Orient is in his consciousness."[10]

During 1925, too, political realities began to impinge. The rise of the Chinese Communist Party and the momentous strikes in Shanghai, Gandhi's struggle in India and finally the outbreak of the Moroccan War gave a concreteness to the surrealists' 'Orientalism'. With their declaration on the Moroccan War, made in July of 1925, the 'Orientalist myth' in surrealism had almost run its course. The imaginary had, indeed, become real, and the myth no longer meant anything in respect of the changed circumstances.

This myth of the Orient (which, we might note in passing, gives a rather different picture of Western perceptions of the Orient than that analysed by Said) served to give to surrealism a perspective on the nature of otherness and gave a grounding to an uncompromising anti-colonialist attitude that never flagged until the fall of the colonial empire, something that can be seen from a consideration of their collective declarations that are appended to the thesis.

As it developed the influence of surrealism spread widely. Although this influence was felt most deeply in Europe, especially in Belgium and Czechoslovakia, it also spread in significant ways to non-European countries. We will look at each of the examples in terms of the question of reciprocity and consider how, in each case, the relationship between French surrealism and the indigenous surrealist movement was played out.

The interest in surrealism was generated in part by the attitude it took towards indigenous cultures and especially by its uncompromising and consistently anti-colonialist standpoint. It was this very point that made surrealism incompatible with the French anthropology of the period, since the latter never questioned its framework as a project issuing out of the enlightenment and dedicated to positivist research methods. It was thus unable to question the Western hegemony that had resulted from colonialism and made the anthropological project viable. Although individually anthropologists were often unhappy with the social framework of colonialism and with the ideology of western civilisation in general, to be able to exist as anthropologists they were forced to work within the framework of colonialism, with which they had to make an accommodation: as a discipline,

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[9] In an enquiry in 1925 on the question of the Occident and the Orient, Breton explicitly denied that the Orient could give 'us' anything, and stated that the myth of the Orient was necessary precisely to combat the 'odious fanaticism' of Massis. See Breton *Oeuvrès Complètes* p 859.

[10] 'La Révolution d'abord et toujours' dated June 1925, in José Pierre (ed), *Tracts et déclarations collectives du surréalisme* p 55

anthropology could not afford to set itself up against colonialism. The surrealists, on the other hand, were deeply at odds with their own society. They had no illusions about the 'civilising mission' of the West and had no interest in maintaining the colonial order. This gave them a perspective, lacking in anthropology, from which to declare themselves in opposition to the colonialist attitude.

In line with thinking about questions of reciprocity and objectification, surrealism is of especial interest in that surrealism was taken up by intellectuals in the Third World who sought in it 'miraculous weapons', in the words of Aimé Césaire, in their own struggle against colonialism. There have been surrealist groups in several non-European countries: Japan, Egypt, Chile, Argentina, Brazil, Colombia and it has generally had an considerable impact throughout Latin America. We will look at the specific relations established in particular countries in a moment.

As we noted earlier, the French Surrealist Group had been politicised by the Moroccan War of 1925. They then assumed an anti-colonialist position, unequivocally took the side of the Riff rebels, called on French troops to fraternise and declared that 'for us France no longer exists'. The famous 'surrealist map of the world' was drawn up soon afterwards and emphasises this displacement: France, indeed, does no longer exist and Paris has become the capital of Germany; the United States has also vanished and Britain has become an inconsequential dot dwarfed by a massive Ireland. The map remains a remarkable statement about surrealist affective considerations of the time: Mexico, Alaska, and Polynesia have become the centre of the world culturally; Russia and China maintain their positions in the world primarily due to the political upheavals. The comparatively small size of

The surrealist map of
the world, first
published in *Variétés*,
1929

Africa shows that the surrealists were not particularly drawn to African art, but this is something that has been over-emphasised, I think, since Africa is still quite large - as large, in fact, as South America.

This anti-colonialist impetus was maintained at the time of the 1931 Colonial Exhibition, which brought a surrealist response in the form of two broadsides attacking 'colonial piracy' and urging people to boycott the exhibition. They also organised a counter-exhibition, with the support of the PCF, under the title 'The Truth About the Colonies'. This exhibition was organised under the principle of reciprocity and took as its underlying theme a quotation from Marx: "A people which oppresses others cannot be free". Among the exhibits of 'European fetishes' was a black child with a begging bowl.

A further vitriolic declaration was published in English in Nancy Cunard's important *Negro: an anthology* (1934). This attacked all forms of imperialism in such uncompromising terms that its violent tone surprises even today. But it was not simply an emotional attack on the most obvious abuses of colonialism. Rather is was particularly directed against those who, under the veneer of liberalism, were drawn to 'some mystic Orient or other'. The title emphasises this aspect: "Murderous Humanitarianism". Even so, it is one thing for surrealism to have taken such an unequivocally anti-colonial stance for their own cultural purposes. It is quite another to see in this evidence of genuine reciprocity with other cultures.

Surrealism in non-Western countries

Having set up this context, then, let us now look at the way in which surrealism was taken up by intellectuals in non-Western societies to see what the relations established can tell us about the more general question of reciprocity across cultures.

1. Japan

We will begin our survey with a consideration of Japan. Even through Japan has never been tied in a direct colonial relation with Europe, it still embodies ideas of otherness in the eyes of many Europeans.

The idea of surrealism in Japan may seem a somewhat unlikely conjunction given the general Japanese indifference to Western currents of thought, and particularly in the context of the inter-war period, with the growth of Japanese nationalism and militarism that was to culminate in the Second World War. Yet Japan was perhaps the first place outside France to feel the direct influence of surrealism, for Japanese surrealism pre-dates even Belgian surrealism. The origins of the movement go back to 1925, when the first Japanese group was formed, although it does not appear to have led

to any very tangible activity for a few years after that. Nevertheless, the first Japanese translations of French surrealist works soon followed, with Takiguchi Shûzô's translation of Breton's *Surrealism and Painting* being published in 1930 (and thus pre-dating the first English translation by some forty two years!). Interest in surrealism in Japan was such that the third International Surrealist exhibition was held there, a show that travelled from Tokyo to Osaka and Kyoto. It was organized by Takiguchi Shûzô and Yamanaka Chirû in Japan with European co-ordination by Paul Eluard, Georges Hugnet and Roland Penrose. However, Takiguchi and Yamanaka decided not to include any Japanese artists in the exhibition, which they saw primarily as being a means to introduce surrealism into Japan, placing their emphasis to Freudian psychoanalysis and the surrealist object.

The period from 1937 to 1941 appears to have been the richest in the history of Japanese surrealism and led to the formation by Fukuzawa Ichirô of the group 'Bijutsu-bunka' (Art-Culture), which made the greatest impact of any of the surrealist groups that have surfaced in Japan. By 1941, though, the political situation had, not surprisingly, become very difficult and both Fukuzawa and Takiguchi were arrested and charged with propagating 'surrealist and marxist ideas'. They were released after a few months on an undertaking not to publish and not to engage in political activity. The group was re-established in 1945, but seems to have been unable to adapt to the post-war situation in Japan. Further groups were formed by younger surrealists in 1951 ('Jikken kobô') and in 1956 ('Chôgenjitsushugi Kenkyûkai'), but neither seems to have made a great impact.

We are indebted for what little information we have about Japanese surrealism to the efforts of the Czech surrealist, Vera Línhartová, who has collected together their texts and published an anthology together with an illuminating, if primarily descriptive, introduction. She makes little attempt, however, to analyse Japanese surrealism in its social, political and cultural context and therefore gives us little real sense of how surrealism was perceived in the Japanese context.

What does seem clear, though, is that surrealism in Japan testified to a desire to engage with Western modes of thought. Although, at least on the evidence provided by Línhartová, this does not seem to have gone beyond establishing a sense of their own individual identity and attempts to situate their surrealism in Japanese cultural reality seem not to have gone very far at all. Not that they seem to have been at all francophile or especially Euro-centred in their approach (Takiguchi in fact only travelled to Paris in 1957), but they seem rather to have been drawn to surrealism for its use-value in their revolt against Japanese society. There would thus seem to be little real reciprocity in their relation to French surrealism. For the most part European surrealists seem to have been almost indifferent to Japanese culture (Línhartová's comment that the fact that Eluard and Gilbert-Lecomte both wrote some *haiku* seems rather a desperate attempt to force a mutual relation) and no one in the surrealist movement (until Línhartová) has ever learned Japanese, so communication could only really be one way. Nevertheless, the fact that surrealism emerged at all in Japan is testimony to the universal aspects in its appeal.

2. Egypt

Surrealism flourished in Egypt between 1936 and 1952. It was in 1936 that the Anglo-Egyptian Treaty was signed which established Egypt as a sovereign state, albeit still with an occupying British army and also with a strong French influence. During the next few years, Egypt would become a focal point for the anti-fascist struggle, which would culminate in the defeat of the Nazi army in 1942.

During the period of Egyptian surrealism, then, Egypt was at the forefront of a struggle that properly belonged to Europe. As we shall see, the activities of the Egyptian surrealists reflected this fact.

The Egyptian Surrealist Group itself was formed in 1939 under the name 'Art et liberté' and in the same year they published a bulletin, in French, with the same title. This was followed by the appearance, also in French, of a weekly journal, *Don Quichotte*, which began publishing in December 1939. At the same time they published an Arabic journal, *Al Tatawor*, which appeared monthly. The group was animated primarily by Georges Henein and Ramsès Younan and also included Anwar Kamel, Kamel El-Telmisany and Fouad Kamel.

In his study of the Egyptian group, Abdul Kader El Janaby has argued that though both Henein and Younan were original thinkers who made important contributions to surrealist theory, they were both essentially European in their thinking and outlook. In particular, they looked to Europe to provide the key to Arabic modernization. As such their surrealism, in the Egyptian context, simply represented a strong but ephemeral 'flapping of Breton's wing'. But still, Henein and Younan were aware of the problems connected with the relation between Europe and otherness, and after Henein left Paris in the 1950's he tried to set up a review with Mounir Hafez that would function as a critique of surrealism and, by extension, of European attitudes from the point of view of 'Orientals'. This did not come to pass, but Henein was very conscious, according to Serane Alexandrian, of his role as a 'stroller of two worlds'. He made an important distinction between Europe as a geographical place and the Occident as a mental place that regulated the whole world. According to this schema, the Occident is an amorphous mental construction that seeks to regulate the world and dictate organised life. It assumes the status of active thought, imposing a sort of *architecture of action* on the whole world: "Occidental thought is founded, in the first place, on doubt in relation to the absolute. This doubt transcends it in creating and erecting work which will become in its turn another object of doubt and contestation, which is to say a pretext for new creations. This is the cycle of all spirit which refuses to allow itself to be present in things. [...] To say that the world needs the Occident is to say that it needs works which are no longer temples but indefinitely correctible human edifices."[11] Henein's insight is important, but is simply thrown out as a random thought and he never developed this critique fully.

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[11] Georges Henein, *L'Esprit frappeur* p 101

During the actual period of Egyptian surrealism their concern was primarily with the introduction of modernity into Egyptian culture and society and with countering the dual threats of fascism and stalinism. As El Janaby argues, however, such concerns were tangential to the real needs of the Egyptian people. He argues that "the main task in Egypt was to bring to the Arabic language innovation that had the power to liberate it from the tyranny of traditional Koranic structure. [...] Such a task, certainly, would entail the sweeping away of the ultra conservative Islamic train of thought..."[12] Yet this was something that neither Henein nor Younan were in a position to even contemplate since, both coming from Christian families, such a concern could only be alien to them, even if they perceived its urgency. Failure to do so still meant a failure to confront Egyptian reality and in this respect Egyptian surrealism was no more than an adjunct (albeit a highly original and critical one) of French surrealism and no more managed to find an 'indigenous' form of surrealism than did the Japanese surrealists. Equally, European surrealists has no more interest in contemporary Egypt than they had in Japan and we can not see the basis for any sort of reciprocity there (admittedly some interest may be perceived in ancient Egypt, but this hardly implies any form of reciprocity within the modern world).

3. Mexico

In Mexico the position is certainly rather different. Unlike Japan and Egypt, the French surrealists undoubtedly had an interest in contemporary Mexico. Pre-Colombian art had a great appeal, but there were also the myths of the Mexican Revolution, which were still fresh in human memory, and the fact that, during the thirties, Mexico had an extremely progressive left-wing government that saw its task as being to build upon what was achieved by the Revolution.

As we have already seen, Antonin Artaud had visited Mexico in 1936. André Breton was to follow in 1937, partly to visit Leon Trotsky, but also drawn to Mexico in one of the few journeys he seems to have made willingly. On his return Breton was to write that he considered Mexico to be one of the places where the destiny of the world was being played out. The other countries were Russia, Germany, China and Spain, but it was probably only in Mexico that Breton felt a positive hope for the future was being generated.

It was with the surrealist diaspora to the Americas during the Second World War that surrealism really came to Mexico. The fifth International Surrealist exhibition had already been announced for Mexico and it took place in Mexico City in 1940, organized by Wolfgang Paalen, who was to remain in Mexico for most of the remainder of his life. At the same time Paalen was in the process of establishing his own surrealist journal *Dyn*, although in doing so he was to split with Breton and most of the surrealists over what he saw as the authoritarian tendencies of Hegelian philosophy.

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[12] A.K.El Janaby, *The Nile of Surrealism* p 21

Paalen was to be joined in Mexico by a cosmopolitan group of surrealists: French (Alice Rahon and Benjamin Péret); English (Leonora Carrington and Gordon Onslow Ford); Spanish (Remedios Varo and Luis Buñuel); Peruvian (Cesar Moro); as well as the Austrian Paalen. After the war, Rahon, Carrington, Remedios and Buñuel would continue to live in Mexico and become almost adopted children whose work was seen not as being French, Spanish, or English, but as specifically Mexican.

Their presence did not, however, lead to the creation of a specifically Mexican Surrealist Group, and the most prominent of Mexican surrealists, Octavio Paz, came into contact with surrealism in Paris and needs to be regarded as much a cosmopolitan artist as a specifically Mexican one. Surrealism has been a pervasive influence on Mexican culture, but a detailed study of this relation would take us too far from our central theme.

What needs to be noted is that in Mexico, contrary to what we saw in Japan and Egypt, it was European surrealists who were seduced by Mexican reality to the point of seeking an identification with it, an identification that was not rejected by the Mexicans themselves. Even so, only a handful of Mexican artists identified themselves fully with the surrealist attitude and the nature of the reciprocity revealed remains evanescent. It exists somewhat in the margins of actual relations, somehow ungraspable. A reciprocity without dialogue, perhaps, in which each party rather took the other for granted. To find traces of a genuine reciprocity we need to return to the West Indies and look at the way in which surrealism unfolded in Haiti and Martinique.

4. Martinique

The surrealist anti-colonialist declaration, 'Murderous Humanitarianism', which we mentioned above, was notable for the fact that it was signed by two young Martiniquan surrealists, Jules-Marcel Monnerot and Pierre Yoyotte (indeed it would seem quite likely, from the tone, that Monnerot may have had a hand in drafting the statement). In 1932, Monnerot and Yoyotte had tried to establish an Antillean Surrealist Group. This never came to pass as such, but they did publish, together with fellow Martiniquan students at the Sorbonne, a single issue of a journal called *Légitime Défense*. The title, taken from a short book published earlier by Breton, announced its surrealist affiliation, which was made explicit in their declaration of intent which, invoking both surrealism and marxism, stated that "as traitors to [our] class [we intend] to take treason as far as it will go. We spit on everything they love and venerate".[13]

Légitime Défense was the first publication in which colonised blacks in the French Empire had sought to speak with their own voices. The tone, so clearly influenced by the French surrealists, was unaccustomed and the French authorities, without going so far as actually to ban publication, put so

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[13] published in *Légitime Défense*, issue no 1 (1932). A translation of the declaration is included in the appendix of the thesis.

much pressure on the students that they were unable to publish any further issues.

In breaking with the ethics of the European culture that blacks had been taught to emulate at all costs, surrealism had in a sense provided them with a sort of Trojan Horse within which they could enter the previously impregnable white citadel. They were hearing a new voice. Previously the only thing they had heard had been the homogeneous white voice of authority that extolled the values of white civilisation. Now they heard white people themselves actually accusing that 'civilisation' of unspeakable barbarities that outdid anything the so-called 'primitive' peoples were ever supposed to have done. As Jacqueline Leiner put it: "Reinvested by the Other, the Black could no longer deny himself".[14] In this respect marxism complemented surrealism in the socio/political judgement it made on Western institutions.

If *Légitime Défense* sowed the seeds that were to flower in the next decade as negritude, it was not to be the only link between surrealism and black consciousness in Martinique.

We have noted the importance of the work of Aimé Césaire in looking at the development of negritude in Martinique. Césaire had been a student at the Ecole Normale Superieur soon after *Légitime Défense* was published. He and his friends, Léon Damas and Léopold Sedar Senghor, were very impressed with it but had doubts about its relation to marxism and surrealism. They considered that it simply appropriated the position of French communists and surrealists and did not leave room for a specifically Antillean position.[15] Even so, the composition of Césaire's *Cahier d'un retour au pays natal*, owed much to surrealist practices, both at the level of language and in terms of its content.

We noted in the previous chapter that when he returned to Martinique, Césaire had founded, with Ménil and with his wife Susanne, the journal *Tropiques*. What we did not mention was that this journal, aside from establishing the roots of negritude, was also important as a specifically surrealist journal. Césaire had met Breton in 1941, during the course of the latter's enforced stay in Martinique whilst fleeing to the United States. It was a meeting that Césaire was to consider decisive in his life and caused him to make a more direct commitment to surrealism. *Tropiques*, indeed, was to assume an importance on three fronts: as developing a specific black conscious, as an organ of international surrealism and as a focus of the anti-Vichy struggle in the colonies. Susanne Césaire expressed what surrealism meant to them as follows: "surrealist activity [is] a total activity that is alone capable of freeing man by revealing his subconscious and is among those that will liberate people by casting light on the myths that have led humanity to its current blind predicament... not for a moment during those terrible years of domination by Vichy was the image of liberty tarnished here and this we owe

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[14] Jacqueline Leiner, 'Les Chevaliers du Graal au service de Marx', preface to re-edition of *Le Surréalisme au Service de la Révolution* p xix. (re-printed in her *Imaginaire-Langage-Identité culturelle-Négritude* [1980])

[15] René Ménil, who participated in *Légitime Défense*, has always asserted, on the other hand, that *Légitime Défense* had established a platform closer to the one that Fanon would later develop and that it was far more radical than the negritude that Césaire would later help to establish.

to surrealism. [...] Our surrealism will provide the bread of the depths that will finally transcend the crass antimonies of white/black, European/African, civilised/savage. [...] Surrealism, taut cord of our hope."[16]

After the war, as we have seen, Césaire and Ménil went their separate ways, the one to become a leading proponent of negritude, the other to be a trenchant critic of it. What *Tropiques* did establish, though, was a forum for dialogue which emphasised the nature of the reciprocity.

5. Haiti

In the previous chapter we stressed the extremes of Caribbean reality represented by Martinique and Haiti. This is especially so in the cultural domain and was even more marked during the thirties and forties, the period we are discussing here. Haiti had been an independent nation for more than a century; it had a rich literature which, if it was often derivative of French models, did have its own dynamic. It was dependent on France neither in the cultural nor the political sphere. Yet surrealism had as strong an impact in Haiti as it had in Martinique.

When he was in Haiti in 1946, André Breton told his listeners that "...the beautiful name of Haiti immediately evokes, if not the most important chapters of your history at least a will to freedom that has never been quixotic. The beautiful name of Haiti has assumed such poignant overtones that it is etched forever in the minds of all who are *worthy of thinking*. It is a dynamic words, among the small number *moving forward*."[17] This panegyric is typical of the mutual love affair between surrealism and Haitian culture.

As we have seen, the Haitian Revolution was born of the ideals of the French Revolution and the Haitian people have never renounced a belief in the ideals of 'liberty, equality, fraternity'. Such a collective belief has meant that Haiti would never accept a neo-colonial relation with Europe without a struggle. But it also meant it would never be able to compete in a capitalist world market in which the rules were made by and for Europe. The result has been a history that has been a continual tale of political instability and poverty, to the extent that one imagines it must have been with one eye on Haiti that Sekou Touré made his famous comment that for the colonies the choice was between 'independence in poverty or riches in slavery'.

Nevertheless, this refusal to compromise has given to Haitian popular culture a singular vitality. "In Haiti," according to René Depestre, "even the political history is marked by surrealism." He goes on: "the whole of Haitian culture is imbued with a popular surrealism, manifested in the voodoo religion, in the plastic arts and in the different forms of being among the people of Haiti."[18]

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[16] Susanne Césaire, 'Le Surréalisme et nous' in *Tropiques* no 8 (October 1943).

[17] Breton, 'Speech to the young Haitian Poets', published in F.Rosemont (ed), *What is Surrealism?* p 260

[18] René Depestre personal letter dated 19 July 1987.

Contrary to Martinique, Haiti did not need to use surrealism to help to establish a sense of cultural identity. That identity was already formed when it came into contact with surrealism: what it found there was a recognition and an affinity. One can discern a trace or an echo, at least, of surrealism in the majority of Haitian writers of the past half-century: Jacques Roumain, René Depestre, René Bélance, Paul Laraque, Hamilton Garoute, Jacques Stephen Alexis, Franketienne, Jean Métellus... quite apart from Clément Magloire-Saint-Aude, the one Haitian poet committed to surrealism.

As we have already seen, the study of the roots of Haitian folklore had become of great importance during the 1930's. In this context, surrealism had already begun to make waves in Haiti. For the writers of the Africanist movement surrealism was one of the modernist ideas coming from Europe that gave some legitimation - in its reclamation of the 'primitive', in its assault on rationalism - to Haitian hopes of developing a specifically black consciousness. To be sure, this was a superficial influence that gave no particular precedence to surrealism over other manifestations of European modernism. On the other side, the surrealists had also evinced a similar interest - equally superficial it must be said - in the mythology of voodoo, in which they had seen something of a confirmation of their own thoughts about dream, trance and automatic writing, stimulated by the publication of Seabrook's sensationalist *The Magic Isle* (1931).

In the 1940's this influence was to be deepened on both sides. In 1944 Aimé Césaire had visited the island to give a series of lectures. The following year an exhibition of paintings by the Cuban surrealist Wifredo Lam was organised - some on voodoo themes, something that Lam was to substantially develop in subsequent years. In the same year, too, Pierre Mabille was appointed Cultural Attaché at the French Institute at Port-au-Prince.

Mabille had previously worked in Haiti in 1940, when he had been head doctor and surgeon at the French hospital, before being transferred to Mexico. Whilst in Haiti he had become particularly interested in voodoo, making contact with voodoo priests and studying the religion, with a particular interest in voodoo medicine. Mabille had also become friendly with Price-Mars and had assisted in the foundation of the Bureau d'Ethnologie.

On his return to the island, Mabille embarked on a systematic study of Haitian culture and established the journal *Conjonction* to provide, under the auspices of the French Institute, a focal point for the indigenous study of Haitian culture.[19] Towards the end of 1945, Mabille arranged for André Breton to visit Haiti, something that was to have far-reaching consequences.

Breton was to have given a whole series of lectures presenting surrealism within the general context of French culture. His first talk was given to a group of young poets on 14 December 1945 and in it he drew lines of convergence between surrealism and Haitian culture. On 20 December he gave a longer and more formal lecture directly on the history of surrealism at a cinema in Port-au-Prince to a large audience that included some of those who had been at the previous talks, but also

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[19] Mabille himself only edited the first issue, after which he was recalled, for reasons directly connected to the visit of Breton to the island, which will be discussed below. The journal itself is still being published.

some of the most important people on the island, including President Lescot himself. They were expecting an inoffensive man of letters. Instead, as René Depestre, who was among the audience on that day, was to recall: "...his words exploded over their stupid official heads. Presidents, senators, ministers, colonels, big businessmen in the import-export trade, all these inflated gentlemen of bad taste with their little women squirmed in embarrassment at the words of the poet, while the flower of youth, who were also present in the room, cheered and expressed its joy, dancing and entering into Breton's lyricism as though into a magic tree. In that cinema was re-created the whole climate of subversion and scandal that had marked the heroic age of surrealism..."[20]

The consequences were dramatic. The students immediately brought out their journal *La Ruche*, dedicated to Breton and taking an insurrectionary tone. It was seized and its editors were imprisoned. In protest a student strike was called. This led to street fighting. Unrest spread to the general population and resulted in the calling of a general strike. Within days the government had fallen. According to Michael Dash, Lescot was convinced that Breton had come to Haiti expressly to foment the revolt.

The fact that Breton was the catalyst for a popular revolt does not, of course, mean that the revolt itself was expressly surrealist in nature. No calls were made for Breton, or even any of the poets who had started the revolt, to be made President. Indeed, the practical effect of the 1946 Revolution was to pave the way for the rise of a black middle-class that would gain political ascendency during the fifties and result in Duvalier's election victory in 1957.[21] For René Depestre the failure of the Revolution equally indicated "the limits of surrealism and its main ambition of seeking to 'change life'. Since that time it has been vital for us to understand that it is impossible to change life without a prior revolution which has transformed society and brought about fundamental changes in the conditions of social existence."[22] This is rather unfair, since surrealism has never claimed anything otherwise, always having been at pains to emphasise the fact that its aim of changing life must be allied to a social struggle for the transformation of the world. Also, the 1946 Haitian Revolution was clearly not a Revolution for surrealism. If Breton had provided the spark, this was no more than coincidental. The fact is that there was little to distinguish the 1946 Revolution from several others in Haitian history, when a popular uprising had been used by factions within the elite to jockey for power. The question of whether or not surrealism has helped in any qualitative change in the nature of Haitian society is not the issue here, however. What is more important for the

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[20] René Depestre, *Bonjour et adieu à la négritude* p 228

[21] It is curious to note that if surrealism can be implicated in Duvalier's rise to power, then so too can anthropology. At the time of Duvalier's election victory the Bulletin of the Bureau d'Ethnologie applauded the event, noting that it was the first time ever that an anthropologist had been made a world leader. The editor believed that Duvalier was thus the ideal person to bring about a 'regeneration' of Haitian society (see the *Bulletin of the Bureau d'Ethnologie* Serie III no 4 (January 1958).

[22] Depestre, *ibid.* p 230.

purpose of the present discussion is the nature of the reciprocity involved in the relation.

As we have seen, surrealism had a clear influence on the emergence of ideas of negritude both in Martinique and in Haiti. As Paul Laraque was later to say, surrealism made such a dramatic impact in Haiti because it served to demystify Haitian society in their minds and enable them to see their society from a different perspective. This gives further emphasis to Jacqueline Leiner's assertion of surrealism acting as a sort of 'Trojan Horse' and also provides clear evidence of the diffusion of ideas. But is this an influence only, or is something deeper involved on which we need to focus in trying to consider the relation of self and other?

Surrealism and Otherness

For the apostles of cultural diversity and subjectivism in anthropology such an influence is part of the diffusion of the 'modernist project'. The influence of surrealism was such because its apparent modernist framework acted as a magnet for Third World intellectuals striving towards the modernisation of their societies and it has served to make 'our' problems 'theirs', and vice versa. As James Clifford has revealingly written of Césaire: "We are all Caribbeans now in our urban archipelagos. 'Guinea' (old Africa, writes Césaire) 'from your cry from your hand from your patience/we still have some arbitrary lands'. Perhaps there's no return for anyone to a native land - only field notes for its reinvention."[23] Clifford's identification here is presented as one of sympathy. And so it is. But it also serves to mystify the relation in a somewhat insidious way. First of all, it elides together Clifford's own sense of alienation from his society with that of Césaire. But Césaire is speaking about a far deeper sense of alienation which has quite different roots. What is the nature of the native land that Clifford feels estranged from? What arbitrary lands, embodied for Césaire in the myth of Guinea, can be equivalent for Clifford?

Clifford's comment would appear in any event to be somewhat presumptuous. Césaire's anguished cry against cultural alienation from his roots is also directed against the European who has been responsible for such estrangement. It simply does not belong, as Clifford implies, to the same paradigm as the dilemma of European representation. Indeed, if we read this quotation in context we will see that it reveals something rather more than Clifford has drawn from it:-

"Guinea whose rains from the curdled height of volcanoes shatter a sacrifice of cows for a
thousand hungers and thirsts of denatured children
Guinea from your cry from your hand from your patience
we still have some arbitrary lands
and when they have me, killed in Ophir perhaps and silenced for good,

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[23] Jemes Clifford, *The Predicament of Culture* p 173.

out of my teeth out of my skin let them make

a fetish a ferocious guardian against the evil eye

as your solstice shakes me strikes me and devours me

at each one of your steps Guinea

silenced in myself with the ancestral depth of medusas"[24]

If these are re-invented field-notes then anthropology has been following an unaccustomed trajectory. One is entitled to ask: field-notes from what? This is a cry of the heart; poetry of the very highest calibre. For better or worse, it has nothing to do with anthropological field-notes of any sort. Clifford here performs an elision of subject and object on several levels at once (all of which represent a subtle form of cultural imperialism): not only does he appropriate the other's sensibility into the self, he also incorporates poetry into anthropology, something that has the effect of controlling and incorporating the other's voice into one's own.

In a like manner, Clifford calls Césaire's negritude 'tactical' and says that, reading the critique of Depestre that places in its specific American context: "To be American is to be hybrid, métis; and in Depestre's vision the true heirs of negritude are writers like Carpentier, Guillén, Amado, Vallejo, Cortázar, Márquez. Again negritude is transmuted; it is no longer about roots but about present process in a polyphonous reality."[25]

This is an extraordinary statement. Quite apart from the fact that Carpentier, Guillén and Vallejo were all intellectually formed before negritude took form (indeed, Vallejo had been dead for a decade), making it somewhat absurd to speak of them as its 'heirs', apart from Guillén, who was a mulatto), all of them are white Latin Americans. Clifford is here making assumptions that seek to legitimate the polyphonous reality he advocates in which American identity which would have the effect of effecting a solidarity between intellectuals. These assumptions, which are very different from what Depestre is saying about American identity, are revealing. Depestre is arguing for a consideration of America as a whole: to see the continent as part of the same reality in which the United States is not separated out and contrasted against Latin America in a way that privileges the United States as being the role model for what the rest of America ought to have, but has not, achieved. For Depestre this was essential to undermine the sense of the United States' imperialist 'manifest destiny', whose self-perception is that it has some sort of duty to help the rest of 'backward' America to 'develop'. For Depestre's argument is that one has to view America as a whole, to see how elements of 'development' and 'under-development' have interacted, to see that it is part of the same reality and that it is untrue to see the United States as a 'success' against which the rest of the continent's 'failure' ought to be judged. Clifford, however, is taking this from a contrary viewpoint,

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[24] Césaire, 'Ode to Guinea', translated by Clayton Eshleman and Annette Smith, in *The Collected Poetry* (1983) p 207.

[25] Clifford, *ibid.* p 179

subsuming US dominance by effectively taking away the other's voice by assuming it within the same reality. The specific reality of Latin America is thus lost: the supposed 'polyphony of voices' is reduced, bizarrely, to one - which is the one that is more authoritative. It makes no sense here to speak of American reality as 'hybrid'. Although Clifford is an 'American' his sense of his 'Americanness' is quite different from that of a Haitian. It is difficult to believe that Clifford thinks of himself as 'hybrid', still less as 'métis'! In defining negritude within the context of America as a whole and within the Latin American context in specific, Depestre is hardly suggesting that the perspective is the same everywhere. Yet Clifford's comments, read literally, would seem to imply that he himself is an 'heir' of negritude. In some senses one might say this was true, but it is hardly so unproblematically, and for Clifford to make such a claim is to exercise his greater authority over the black reality of which negritude is one expression. This is exactly comparable with the way in which Sartre appropriated the ideology of negritude for existentialism in the fifties. Now it is not existentialism, but 'polyphonous reality' that negritude legitimates. Western arrogance, one might believe, knows no bounds.

In looking at the relationship between surrealism and anthropology we have tried to chart out a terrain in which it might be possible for separate voices to be heard and to respond to each other without denying the other. The question that therefore needs to be addressed here is whether surrealism has acted in a way to effect the same sort of cultural imperialism over the other?

On the whole, European surrealists have shown an awareness of their own position within their culture and have been suspicious of rapprochement with other cultures suspecting, even if such a sentiment is rarely consciously articulated, that such rapprochement can easily lead to a form of appropriation of the dominated culture. Breton had expressed just such a fear in speaking to the Haitian poets in 1945: "How could I have avoided a certain apprehension at the idea of importing a plant like surrealism which, though it aspires to psychical satisfaction of man's needs in their generality, nonetheless emerged in an entirely different climate."[26] We have spoken of the mutual influence of surrealism and Haiti on each other. It was an influence that involved respect for the other's autonomy. The surrealists never claimed Haiti for their own as Sartre did in respect of negritude. A comparison here between Breton's article on Césaire and Sartre's on negritude poetry is instructive. Where Breton respected difference, Sartre, like Clifford, only respects difference in respected of others. That is, he posits negritude as a challenge to European thought, but he also exempts himself from the aspects of European thought to which the challenge is made. What is admirable in surrealism in this regard, it seems to me, is that it has fairly consistently recognised its own position as part of its own culture. It has never sought to incorporate elements from other cultures into itself and has, indeed, always shown great suspicion about doing so. The lessons learned from their 'Orientalist' episode seem never to have been forgotten and very much conditioned subsequent surrealist thinking about otherness and made them conscious of the danger of assuming

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[26] Breton, *op cit* p 259

the position of the other. Furthermore, Hegelian anthropology had penetrated too deeply into surrealism for the problematic at the heart of human communication not to be recognised. The surrealists equally never sought the *experience* of otherness as has come to be popularised in Western fads ranging from the notorious grand hippy trip to Katmandu to the sophisticated universalism of the US 'ethno-poetic' movement which assumes a universal language of poetry, and that the divisions between societies can be bridged by locating this privileged realm. Surrealism always seems to have recognised that poetry is not transcendent of the cultural circumstances in which it is produced. Again, its Hegelian basis is what appears to have caused surrealism to be suspicious of attempts at identification with the 'other' since, according to Hegel, we might recall at this point, that other can only be a projection of oneself.

Whilst he was in Haiti, Breton was specifically asked by the Haitian poet, René Bélance, what he felt the peoples of colour could gain from an allegiance to surrealism. His reply was very clear:-

"...in considering class and other barriers that must before all else be corrected by other means, I think that surrealism aims and *is alone at aiming systematically* at the abolition of these barriers [of the differences between people]. You know that in surrealism the accent has always been on displacing the ego, always more or less despotic, by the id, held in common by all... Surrealism is allied with peoples of colour, first because it has always taken their side against all forms of imperialism and white banditry [...] and secondly because of the profound affinities that exist between surrealism and so-called 'primitive' thought, both of which seek the abolition of the conscious and the everyday, leading to the conquest of revelatory emotion..."[27]

We might suspect that in suggesting that 'peoples of colour' are more responsive to the supposed aims of this 'primitive' thought, Breton is making the same sort of reification we have criticised in Sartre. But it will be clear that he is careful not to assume the position of the other, nor is he suggesting, whatever 'primitive' thought might be, that it is an exclusive or even a particular preserve of some category of 'primitives'.[28] It is equally clear that whenever he uses the word 'primitive', he is tied to a vocabulary with which he is ill-at-ease. His cautious use of the term corresponds to the dislike he had for Lévy-Bruhl. In referring to 'primitive thought' it seems clear that what he is looking for is not the reification of a particular categorization of thought patterns, but rather to establish a quality of value in a similar way to that of the contemporary American Indian writer Jamake Highwater with his concept of 'primal thought', which he sees as characterizing American Indian culture, a poetic and affective way of thought rather than a utilitarian one based on cause and

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[27] *op. cit.*, p 256.

[28] for an anthropological account of the use and etymology of the word 'primitive' that appears close to the surrealist understanding see Stanley Diamond's *In Search of the Primitive*, pp 123/125.

effect. This distinction had already been advanced by Jules Monnerot who, writing in *Le Surréalisme au Service de la Révolution* in 1932 had, in a sense, turned Lévy-Bruhl the right way up, insisting that the idea of a 'primitive' mentality was a mystification, but a revealing one since, in being formulated it defined its opposite: 'civilised mentality'. This 'civilised mentality' is a bounded category that limits or excludes everything that does not comply with a certain ideological formulation, comprised by the bounds of rationality. Non-civilised thought, on the other hand, excludes nothing but embraces the totality of all we are and can be. It is not 'primitive' but rather is thought itself. Civilised mentality on the other hand is reducible to its own pre-established limits of acceptability. It is thus an impoverishment of thought.[29]

It is in this sense that we must understand Breton's assertions. The affinity that surrealism feels with peoples of colour is due, as he explained in a speech given in Haiti, to the fact that "they had remained closest to the sources, and that in the essential development of surrealism, which has consisted in *making heard* the interior voice within each human being, we have found ourselves linked from the beginning with 'primitive' thought, which remains less alien to you than to us and otherwise demonstrates a remarkable strength in Haitian voodoo. In periods of great social and moral crisis, I believe that it is indispensable that we enquire into primitive thought, to rediscover the fundamental aspirations, the incontestably authentic aspirations, of mankind."[30] A key phrase is *remains less alien to you than to us*, making it clear that Breton did not regard the 'black soul' as being any closer to nature (in the way that negritude was to reify itself).

I specifically asked the surrealist writer Vincent Bounoure, who is himself a leading expert on American Indian and Polynesian art, if he could illuminate the nature of the surrealists' attraction for the so-called primitive. He gave a clear reply: "The people of white civilisation consider themselves to be exterior to nature which, in their eyes, has existence only to be utilised to the best purpose. To obviously variable degrees, the peoples of the civilisations called primitive see themselves as natural forces in the midst of other forces of natures, as one actor among many in a universal psychodrama."[31] Surrealism seeks, then, to re-orient humanity into a harmonious relation with the world which it sees as having been sacrificed in the process of the development of technological society. While surrealism has always perceived itself as being the 'other' within European culture and as a European sensibility, it would certainly not wish to deny to humanity the undoubted material gains that Western civilisation has brought to the world. Nora Mitrani puts the issue in these terms: "Man of mass civilisation has made a miserable bargain. He has exchanged his independence and his freedom of spirit for a higher standard of living. We do not despise this material conquest: even here there is much to be done and to gain. But I think that for surrealism this type of bargain does

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[29] see Monnerot, 'A partir de quelques traits particuliers à la mentalité civilisée', *LSASDLR* vol V. p 35/7

[30] Breton, *op cit.* p 256

[31] Vincent Bounoure in a personal letter dated 13 July 1987

not suit us. Anyway, there is no bargain in the world which could satisfy us: like children we want the whole of reality."[32]

There is in surrealism no thought of a 'return to nature', no romantic attachment to the past, even to the 'primitive' past. Their commitment always appears to be to the *now*. The majority of surrealists are city dwellers and make no protest against the fact. On the contrary, they love the city. Most surrealists not only do not object to the material comforts of a bourgeois existence - they seem to demand them as an inalienable right. What they are in revolt against is a world out of harmony with itself; a world in which such comforts are seen as having a value in themselves, quite separate from all other aspects of life.

In this respect one must take issue with Robin Horton, who has considered surrealism as being representative of a modern sort of romantic nostalgia that is drawn to the primitive as a desire to return to a 'lost world' of pre-industrial society. He speaks of our perception of other cultures as being born of a "compensatory fantasy in which every frustrated yearning of the West is banished".[33] He speaks of modern man as being alienated from society and trapped in loneliness; as yearning to commune with nature; as living in a world in which reason is killing emotion and feeling and science killing art; as being frustrated by the lack of symbolism in the structure of Western institutions. For each of these aspects of the contemporary 'malaise' we seek to provide a remedy in our conception of a traditional society.

Personally I can find no evidence that the surrealists themselves view the 'contemporary malaise' in these terms at all. They certainly do not see traditional societies as providing any remedy for the ills of contemporary life. What Monnerot is arguing in the article cited above is not a variant of the Lévy-Bruhl distinctions, but rather - and this appears to be a fundamental surrealist tenet - that what we call 'primitive mentality' is a basic condition of existence common to all people, but which the West has often lost consciousness of. That is, that 'primitives' are perfectly capable of thinking scientifically if they need to do so, but the reverse is not always the case. What this reveals is a surrealist given - rejecting the evolutionary argument, they see a continuum of thought (made explicit by the surrealist slogan 'thought is common to all') in which it is *we* who have lost something. Thought does not advance; it adapts to fit the exigencies of particular societies. Benjamin Péret made the point thus: the fact that we have invented wine does not mean that we stop using water. By virtue of the fact that we need to establish a specific category of thought that we label as 'primitive' without fully understanding it, bears witness to the fact that we have lost from our consciousness a whole way of viewing the world. It is this that the surrealists seek to recapture. As the Seneglese surrealist Cheikh Tidiane Sylla has put it: "In the Western World [...] surrealism is the result of a long

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[32] Nora Mitrani, in the course of BBC radio programme, 'In Defence of Surrealism' broadcast in 1961.

[33] Horton, 'Lévy-Bruhl, Durkheim and then Scientific Revolution', in Horton & Finnegan (eds.) *Modes of Thought* (1973)

philosophical, political, scientific and poetic struggle to recover what the traditional African has never lost."[34]

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[34] Cheikh Tidiane Sylla, 'Surrealism and Black Africa', (1989) in *Arsenal:Surrealist Subversion* p 129

CHAPTER EIGHT:

SELFHOOD, OBJECTIFICATION AND EUROPEAN CONSCIOUSNESS

The colour of coal is a mystery. Some say it is black - or white.
Joao Guimaraes Rosa

The Background to European selfhood

In considering the relation of Europe to its 'other' in previous chapters, we have tended to take European identity for granted. As we have seen, surrealism sought to set itself against the models of European tradition. As such, there seems to be little doubt that it responded to a generalised sense of disillusionment with such models within European society itself. But what exactly is the European tradition? What is constituted within it? How can the vast number of cultural strains apparent within such a wide construct as 'Europe' or 'European consciousness' - comprising as it does a wide array of cultures from Finland to Greece, Yugoslavia to Portugal - be given form to make it methodologically possible to deal with in a coherent way?

To come to grips with such questions, we need to engage with how notions of selfhood and identity have been constructed and sustained, especially in the Western context.

In the history of ideas, the linkage between the discovery of the 'New World' of the Americas and the coming of the Enlightenment has long been recognised. In his book on the conquest of the America, Tzvetan Todorov has perceived the difference in European mentality as being apparent in the different personalities of Columbus and Cortès. As Todorov argues, Columbus, still tied to a medieval world view in which man and nature were interrelated, would have been unable to defeat the Aztecs. It required Cortès, who conceived man as being superior to nature, to outflank the mentality of the Aztecs. The conflict between Aztec and Spaniard was a confrontation between two extremes: the Aztecs conceived communication only with the world, in which man had no 'rights', but only the responsibility to integrate himself into the world's harmony.

Cortès intuitively perceived that to defeat the Aztecs it was necessary to engage them on other terms than their own. Nor could they be defeated by military means alone. Todorov convincingly argues that the conquest of Mexico occurred only because Cortès embodied a different sensibility that would allow nothing to stand in the path of its own becoming. Cortès needed to instil a sense of superiority over nature, the feeling that man could accomplish anything and triumph against any odds. To do so it was necessary to suppress his own inclination to believe in omens and signs and relentlessly to pursue the path chosen. Todorov thus saw in the personality of Cortès the point at which man definitively separated himself from nature, something that would make possible a conception of self that would become more pronounced through the development of Enlightenment consciousness. L.L. White has defined this sensibility as the Western ideal of "the self-aware individual confronting destiny with his indomitable will and sceptical reason as the only factors on which he can rely..."[1] Self-awareness was created by, and became the ideal of, all Enlightenment thinking. In many ways it became the European myth *par excellence*, the one upon which all the achievements of Western civilisation are based.

In their *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, Adorno and Horkenheimer have traced back the beginnings of this attitude to Homer, especially in the confrontation of Odysseus and the Cyclops, an image that is particularly felicitous in terms of our discussion of the relation of self to other, and which also connects directly with what Todorov has to say about Cortès. In the confrontation of Odysseus and the Cyclops, Odysseus asserts his superiority by means of language, confusing the Cyclops by displacing his self from his being. He calls himself 'Nobody' as a deception. The result is that any call the Cyclops makes for retribution remains "magically bound to the name of the one on whom he would be avenged, and this name condemns the call to impotence."[3] In so doing, they argue, he had transformed language into a sign without reference to what it represented and provided thereby a tool of domination that became a particular modus vivendi of the Enlightenment sensibility.

This deception, which Adorno and Horkenheimer characterise as a 'means of exchange' becomes the foundation of the capitalist and bourgeois attitude. By such means direct human

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[1] L.L. Whyte, *The Unconscious Before Freud*, p 8.

[3] Adorno and Horkenheimer, *The Dialectic of Enlightenment*, p 60.

interaction is denied: separated from the self, the other has no rights unless he can assert them as such. This principle -- seen at its most rapacious in colonial relations - underlies subject and object relations in Western discourse, which relies on a peculiarly Western conceptualisation of how dualities are to be perceived. The trajectory by which such separation came to take form is complex and goes back to far before the Enlightenment. No doubt one could trace it roots back to Zoroastrianism and beyond. For our purposes, however, we will take the Aristotelian 'law of contradiction', which has taken form as one of the earliest philosophical formulations that has helped to legitimate the idea.

Aristotle established the 'law of contradiction' on the principle that a thing could only be what it is and not something else (p cannot be non-p). This was done to counter the arguments of the sophists who asserted contradictory statements as a matter of principle in order to establish the relativity of any concept. Aristotle's argument has been taken out of this specific context[4] to become the cornerstone of much of Western thinking to the present day, even though such a proposition has enormous phenomenological difficulties (can one extract hydrogen and oxygen from water and still have water?)

The very terminology that asserts a *law* of contradiction implies its own ideological roots. For a law is imposed, or at least constructed. A law cannot exist outside the discursive framework that establishes it as a law. If we wish to look at the roots of any law, we need to take into account the questions of on whom and by whom the law has been imposed and for what reason.

Is the law of contradiction a natural law? Hardly, since we can perceive contradictory factors at work throughout nature. As Gregory Schrempp has argued, the law of contradiction is an ideological construction, formulated as a scientific principle with little hard evidence to back it up. It is a belief, quasi-religious in nature, that has served to sustain and legitimate a certain self-image that has been developed by Western consciousness. It is not, in other words, something that has emerged from a natural process in the evolution of thought, but has developed out of a range of its own contingencies that have served hegemonic purposes in Western discourse. In particular, it has served to help legitimate a conception of the self as an autonomous entity, able to separate itself from others to achieve an ideal of self-knowledge through its relation to the other. Perhaps the clearest formulation of such a position has been the distinction drawn by Sartre between the *en-soi* and the *pour-soi,* in which the *en-soi* personality remains unable to rise about the constraints imposed by the natural world to assert its integral personality as an independent being that exists in and of itself; it is therefore necessary to rise about the constraints of nature by an effort of will, through which one

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[4] We should perhaps remind ourselves here that our understanding of Greek cultural concepts are almost always inflected through Enlightenment ideas, something problematic in so far as there was, as we shall argue, a disjunction between the Enlightenment and Greek culture. The Enlightenment appropriated Greek culture for its own interests and imposed its own necessities on it. Whether the Greeks themselves conceived their concepts in the same terms is something else altogether. In this respect André Breton's contention that Greece had colonised Europe perhaps requires some adjustment - it would be more accurate to say that the Enlightenment colonised (or, more accurately, appropriated) ancient Greece for itself.

learns to live in terms of the *pour-soi*. This imposes at the same time a separation between oneself and others: the other becomes distinct from, if still similar to, the self. But this similarity provides, not a measure of one's own being, but an object for the self's contemplation. Self and other thus become distinguishable in an absolute way, something that has enormous ramifications for the way in which human relationships are perceived. In such a way the objective world comes to exist independently of our subjective perception of it.

In establishing the idea of a bounded self, however, one is at the same time alienating oneself from one's own inner being - the self becomes only what it is consciously conceived as being. As Adorno wrote: "The self, its guiding idea and *a priori* object, has always, under its scrutiny, been rendered at the same time non-existent. In appealing to the fact that in an exchange society the subject was not one, but in fact a social object, psychology provided society with weapons for ensuring this was and remained the case. The dissection of man into his faculties is a projection of the division of labour into its pretended subjects, inseparable from the interest in deploying and manipulating them to greater advantage."[5]

The consequence here is that, having become an entity in itself and freed of all contingencies, the self has ceased to be the measure of all things. It stands outside not simply nature, but also other human beings. It cannot understand anything *from within* but must externalise everything and make of other beings an object of contemplation that has only a random association with its own being. This has tended towards the separation of subject from object in an absolute manner, which becomes a principle of 'objective science' and legitimates discursive logic. "The argument is essentially," as Schrempp asserts "that one can more objectively contemplate one's own nature when it is experienced in another person of similar character than when it is experienced in one's own self."[6] Here we see the sharp contrast with the romantic idea of empathy, founded as it is on the refusal of such distantiation and in the assumption that we can know others through ourselves.

As an epistemological principle this can have some methodological justification, but in the way that it has been imposed ideologically on Western discourse it involves an intolerable resignation. Especially in anthropological discourse it serves to separate knowledge of the other out away from knowledge of the self, as though it is possible to make such a separation. Through such a process we displace a part of ourselves. By such means a mechanism of repression is established in which there is a tendency to dissolve the self into the other and yet assert in so doing that any construction taking form from such an encounter is an 'objective' representation of the 'other'.

In the wider context, this way of thinking about the construction of the self and of self/other relations, leads to a collective sense of identity being established upon the same sort of basis. But the concretisation of such collective consciousness as a given 'European identity' is by no means as straightforward as might at first sight seem.

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[5] T.W. Adorno, *Minima Moralia*, p 64

[6] Gregory Schrempp, 'Aristotle's Second Self', in Stocking *Romantic Motives* p 40.

In the previous chapter we mentioned in passing a distinction drawn by Georges Henein between Europe as a geographical place and the Occident as an ideological construct. This encapsulates the fundamental issue at stake and we will here try to follow through the implications of this distinction in relation to the problems of identity and selfhood raised above.

In considering the Occident in such terms, its actual constitution becomes somewhat elusive - as elusive, indeed, as ideas of the 'Orient', something that is important to note, since the idea of the 'Occident' is a construction that is complementary to the idea of the 'Orient'. The 'Occident' as a concept could not have any meaning if it did not establish an other, given form as an object of contemplation in terms referred to above, against which to set off its own special characteristics.

If we look at the concept itself and what it comprises we will find that it is as inherently contradictory as the idea of the 'Orient'. What exactly does such a concept comprise? If one tries to grasp it one finds oneself rather like Alice before the bottle marked 'Drink me': at times it can be so vast as to comprise anything one likes. We can inscribe its presence globally, seeing it everywhere, permeating the smallest manifestation in the world. On the other hand, it can be reduced down to almost nothing. Today, it generally seems to comprise most of Western Europe, but also the United States and Japan, although historically such countries are seen as peripheral extensions of it, the latter directly, the former, more problematically, by means of the Meiji Restoration that separated its society from the supposedly 'static' quality characteristic of the Orient. But even within this schema, things can fall apart. As we discussed in the previous chapter, in some circumstances Germany can even be identified with the Orient; so, too, from a different perspective, can Spain and Italy; even, at an extreme, 'Latins'. For the most part, though it always includes English and French culture (though, even then, not unproblematically so, since it does not necessarily include minority cultures within - Celtic, Basque, Provençal). It can perhaps best be seen as a sort of centrifugal force with English and French culture lying at its core.

Samir Amin has identified such an ideology as 'Eurocentrism', and has sought to provide keys towards its definition in a way that seems to correspond very much with Henein's concept of the 'Occident'.

As Amin sees, the roots of such an ideology are certainly not to be found either in English or French culture as such. They go back far further, and include what are often contradictory elements, especially in terms of culture and religion. As he says: "The Holy Family and the Egyptian and Syrian Church Fathers had to be made European. Non-Christian Ancient Greece had to be assimilated into this lineage, by accentuating an alleged contrast between Greece and the ancient Orient and inventing commonalities between these civilized Greeks and the still barbaric Europeans. The core of genetic racism therefore remains. But above all, the uniqueness of Christianity had to be magnified and adorned with particular and exclusive values that, by simple teleology, account for the superiority of the West and its conquest of other people."[7] By such a process a rational and

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[7] Samir Amin, *Eurocentrism*, p 98.

secular ideology claiming worldwide scope is established: an 'eternal West'.

As Amin argues, the presuppositions of this ideology are untenable and in particular rest upon two pivotal points that are inconsistent with each other: on the one hand the heritage of Judeo/Christian and Hellenic culture; on the other the evidence, drawn above all from linguistics, of the superiority of the Indo-European language and its derivatives. Both suppositions cannot be true: the first involves the incorporation of Oriental ideas into the cultural history of Europe to an extent that is wholly inconsistent with the proposition of European supremacy. If the cultural heritage which was imported from the Mediterranean and points east was necessary for the development of European society, then this would make such a society little more than an appropriation of Oriental concepts and without an originality of its own. If the Indo-European language, on the other hand, was inherently superior, then it would have its own dynamic and would have had no need of concepts derived from Greek and Jewish culture, especially since it had also perceived that same Greek and Christian culture as having been formed in opposition to and as a result of its victory over the very Persian culture that was the ancient embodiment of what was to become the Indo-European diaspora.

As an ideological construction, Eurocentrism achieved its most comprehensive form in the nineteenth century, at the height of English and French colonialism and the expansion of the European market system. In the process was created at the same time the ideological construction of Orientalism that Edward Said has identified.

Amin's critique obviously owes a lot to Said, but unlike him he refuses to see Orientalism as being commensurate with European writings on the East. It is, rather, a mythical construction that emerged out of Europe conceiving of itself as the 'Occident' and thereby establishing for itself a collective identity to be set off against something external to it. As Amin says, it "refers to the ideological construction of a mythical 'Orient', whose characteristics are treated as immutable traits defined in simple opposition to the characteristics of the 'Occidental' world."[8] Such supposedly 'immutable' traits were, however, always subject to change in accordance with the contingencies of particular situations, always serving to provide explanations not so much for the 'superiority' of the West over the East, for that went without saying, but for the fact of such superiority being immutable. Thus, for instance, in the nineteenth century Eastern 'backwardness' was explained as being the result of sexual license and an inability to control libidinous instincts; in the twentieth century this idea has been reversed: now it is Eastern puritanism amd repression that explain exactly the same symptoms.

It is not so much the actual ideas that are insidious here as the form by which they gain a hegemonic status through the assumption of immutable qualities. It is the way in which assumptions about immutability and inability to change have served to determine how ideological forms of domination retain a seamless quality even in respect of events that seemingly undermine the ideology at root, as in the incorporation of contemporary Japan into the rubric of the 'West'.

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[8] *ibid.*,p 100/101.

But Eurocentrist ideology was not born from nothing. In taking the form it did in the nineteenth century it was maintaining and refining a cultural heritage that had been in place for centuries. What was especially introduced was the racist gloss, which in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries added a new and virulent form to an ideological formation that emerged primarily from ideas that had their roots in the Renaissance and took manifest form during the Enlightenment.

The phenomenon that Amin describes as 'Eurocentrism', then, was constructed. As such it responded to a set of idea that had been developed with some consistency as the consciousness of the 'West' took form as an entity.

The idea of Europe is based upon two central traditions that have been meshed with one another to provide a seemingly homogenous set of ideas laying claim to cultural (the Greco/Roman tradition) and religious (the Judeo/Christian tradition) authority.

The Greco/Roman tradition was established in Europe only with the coming of the Renaissance. During the medieval period, the intellectual achievements of Greece and Rome were largely forgotten in Europe. The preservation of Greek and Roman books was largely left to Arabic scholars without whom the extent of Hellenic culture might have been lost to us. It was only with the Renaissance that an interest in classical civilisation came to be manifested in European consciousness.

The Renaissance perceived itself, and has been seen since by history, as the recovery of something that had been lost, but this is not entirely accurate, since the classical heritage never really belonged to Europe. The idea that a dark age had descended over Europe through which it somehow managed to mislay its Greco-Roman cultural roots was nothing but a Renaissance myth established as part of its own ideological legitimation. The medieval era was no more of a 'dark age' than any other. If classical ideas had little importance during the medieval period it is not because they were lost, but because they had not been part of Europe in the first place. Furthermore, the thrust of medieval society was away from the imperialism that had been imposed from Rome. One should hardly be surprised that a society that has been delivered from an imperialist enemy should take few pains to preserve that enemy's cultural tradition. The structure of medieval society belonged, for the most part, to an older European order that had nothing to learn from that of Greece or Rome. For we should keep in mind that Europe had its own rich culture(s) that had been colonised by Rome, and it would be more accurate to say that, in the aftermath of the fall of Rome, European society had liberated itself from foreign imposition. It would take many centuries before that society would be able to appraise its enemy's culture dispassionately.

What the Renaissance did, then, was not to recover a 'lost' tradition, but to invent its own tradition by means of the transformation of elements of Hellenic culture to respond to its own cultural needs. The Renaissance needed to show the superiority of Hellenic forms to enable it to make a conceptual break with medieval thought to which in other respects it was the immediate heir. Its judgement on medieval society was thus ideological in nature: it was affirming its own legitimacy by its 'recovery' of the glories of Greece and Rome from the morass of medieval 'vulgarity'. In such a

way it created the 'dark' ages as a myth against which to set its own light. In this way it was establishing an imperialism in time that would reflect the way in which European imperialism would later function in space with respect to the rest of the world.

But the Renaissance did not explicitly deny medieval European culture. Rather it claimed to have incorporated it into its own superior vision. This represents what Samir Amin perceived as the beginning of the Eurocentrist perception of the world. This was characterised by two essential prerequisites: first, the need to break with a tributary past; second, the reconstruction of itself on mythical foundations which blur the break with the past and affirm a historical continuity that is, in fact, non-existent.

The other central element of this tradition was Christianity, which was incorporated into the ideology in a similar way.

Christianity was no more part of indigenous European society than were classical ideas, but it had been able to integrate itself into medieval culture as a revolutionary movement against Roman hegemony. The great attraction of Christianity was its apparent lack of hegemonic political aspirations. In its internationalism and in its call to notions of human equality it had an appeal for all oppressed societies. But Christianity had hegemonic aspirations of its own: in its very claims to universalism there was inscribed a cultural imperialism certainly as virulent as any political imperialism.

What distinguishes Christianity as an ideology is its invention of 'God' as a symbol of absolute power, representative of the individual ego with its will-to-power and totalitarian aspirations.

The surrealist writer Joseph Jablonski has taken up this issue in an interesting review article on Norman Cohn's important study, *Europe's Inner Demons*.

In his book, Cohn had viewed the great European witchhunts in terms of complex psychological and ideological relations between Christianity and the European psyche. As Cohn states, his title was chosen to suggest "that the groups which were demonized did not consist of inhabitants of distant countries but lived - or, in the case of the witches, were imagined as living - in the heart of Europe itself. But it is also meant to convey that for many Europeans these groups came to embody part of their innermost selves - their obsessive fears, and also their unacknowledged, terrifying desires. The nature of these endopsychic demons is indicated by the specific accusations brought against the demonized groups."[9] In this respect it represented "*unconscious* resentment against Christianity as too strict a religion, against Christ as too strict a taskmaster".[10]

Cohn establishes his argument against scholars like Michelet and Margaret Murray, who have argued that witchcraft represented an underground movement against Christianity based on the old religion that Christianity sought to suppress. Cohn seeks to demolish such arguments.

In his review, Joblonski argues that while Cohn does very effectively destroy the empirical

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[9] Norman Cohn, *Europe's Inner Demons*, p 259.

[10] *ibid.*, p 262.

framework of Murray's evidence, he does so in a way which effectively reformulates and strengthens her underlying arguments. While it seems abundantly clear that there was never any organised resistance to Christianity and that the existence of witchcraft as the focus of such resistance is thus untenable, the virulence of the witchcraft trials shows that something very fundamental to European thinking was taking place. This involves a far more damning and far-reaching indictment of Christian hegemony, for where Murray had seen an underground movement, which may only have responded to the needs of a small minority of the population that resisted Christianity, Cohn sees evidence that Christianity was rejected by the European psyche as a whole.

Jablonski extends this argument with his own gloss. He argues that Christianity represented a 'universal superego' that sought to undermine ideologically the heterogeneous strands of European culture and thereby appropriate them for its own monolithic and imperialist purposes. Christianity acts to reject the duality at the heart of all things and to replace it with a monolithic dualism with totalitarian aspirations. Instead of doubt being inscribed at the heart of existence, whereby contrary sentiments were seen as complementary, as 'two sides of the same coin', conviction would be established as the principle of life. Doubt would be reserved for anything external to the sensible world. The ambivalence of being would be destroyed to be replaced by a 'way of God' that would admit of no uncertainty and would draw an unequivocal distinction between 'true' and 'false', 'good' and 'evil', 'self' and 'other'. To this end, it established a triad of enemies which were to be expelled from consciousness but which still took form as scapegoat symbols. These were the *Devil*, which represented above all the primordial forces of nature and the principles of disorder, revolt and evil; the *Jew*, representing patriarchal order and the male principle; and the *Witch*, representing matriarchal values and the female principle. Against this expelled triad, Christianity sought to institute itself in universal form in a way that would reject nature, the animal, and sexuality and would exalt the human in a severely emasculated 'totality': "being neither male nor female, totally divorced from nature, paralyzed by fear of its own instincts, a slave to its own guilt. The church longs to lord it over such creatures as a Universal Superego promising a poisonous 'love' in exchange for submission."[11]

Such was the momentum gathered by this process that it became less an instrument by which men dominated others than the very form of domination itself. It divided people against each other and, simultaneously, against themselves. As such it was not opposed by a minority, or even a majority, of the population of Europe. Rather it was subconsciously rejected by European consciousness as a whole, to the extent that those most zealous in the propagation of its spirit were the very people who were subconsciously the most hostile to it. This can be seen by a consideration of the nature of the demonic hierarchy, which is plainly nothing but the church itself in inverted form. That the extent of the internal repression involved was so great, argues Jablonski, can be seen from the behaviour of the witch accusers themselves, who seem in general to have been overcome with a sense of remorse in which they came to accept the innocence of the very people they had so

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[11] Joseph Jablonski, 'The Devil's Own', p 11.

zealously persecuted. Jablonski likens such a psychological state to post-orgasmic lassitude.

We might add here, too, that the pre-Christian religions of Europe had hardly any hegemonic aspirations and certainly no urge towards universality that would have made possible the sort of underground resistance suggested by Margaret Murray. But what Christianity needed, in accord with its dualistic formulae, was an enemy precisely with such a universalist aim. It needed something to embody the 'evil' that would bring its own embodiment of the 'good' into relief. It therefore needed to invent witchcraft in the same way that the Renaissance needed to create the myth of the 'dark ages': to legitimate itself.

Where Christianity differs from all previous religions (even from the Judaism - which remains the religion of 'the chosen people' - from which it emerged) is in this urge towards universality and equality. But, as Tzvetan Todorov has argued, such concepts are inherently contradictory: Christianity can assert its universality only by denying the legitimacy of non-Christian modes of thought, its assertion of equality only by accepting its own superiority. As he says: "the Christian incarnation is not one which can be added to the rest, it is *one* in an exclusive and intolerant fashion, and leaves no room for other gods. [...] Christianity's egalitarianism is part of its universality: since God belongs to all, all belong to God."[12]

The two strands upon which the European tradition are based (this 'Hellenic/Christian alliance') can be seen to meet in the Greek myth of Prometheus which, as Samir Amin argues, is the Renaissance myth *par excellence.*

The constituents of the myth of Prometheus in terms of Enlightenment ideology is double-edged: Prometheus restores the power of the control of fire to man (a power of which he had been deprived only because of the duplicity of Prometheus himself), but with it also comes the will to power that inserts hegemonic desires into human relations. It was the latter rather than the former consequence that was to bring down the wrath of the gods on the head of Prometheus, for the rebellion of Prometheus is a false revolt - a revolt of the spirit against itself. Since the gods are only a projection of human needs, it represents not so much a revolt against authority, but against man himself. It represents the beginning of mastery over nature in the rejection of sacrifice as the point of mediation between humanity and the natural world: man keeps the fruits of the earth for himself rather than for the general good.

The conceit displayed by Prometheus is that which we have encountered in seeking to elucidate the characteristics of the European 'self' that perceives itself solely in terms of its own self-awareness and determination to triumph against no matter what odds. In self-awareness and self-consciousness arise the respect for similar qualities in others, but they also lead to separation: it becomes necessary, by the very process of self-awareness, to deny one's own relation to others. We learn to respect other's 'rights' rather than to respect other people for what they are in themselves. A belief in equal rights as an abstraction standing above the concrete relations of living can in this

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[12] Todorov, *op. cit.*, p 106

way also lead to intolerance and even to the legitimation of the violation of those very same supposed 'rights' of other people when they stand in the way of one's own self-realisation. This leads in its turn to feelings of guilt and repentance. And in this respect the 'light' which Prometheus brought was the same as that to which the Enlightenment laid claim.

As we have seen, the Enlightenment legitimated itself as a triumph over darkness and in so doing it created the myth of the medieval 'night'. As such it brought everything into the light, and especially the human personality. We were given a 'self' as something that belonged to us, rather than as our essential being. This reinforces the argument made earlier about the separation by Odysseus of his identity into 'self' and 'non-self'. As Adorno recognised, the connexions between the notion of selfhood and the development of private property are hardly coincidental. We come to 'own' a self in the same way that we might 'own' a house. The self becomes an object of possession like any other and in the process gives rise to the possibility of 'owning' others: we thus have the right not only to control nature, but also to control other people's labour. Such an idea has served to transform what had been in medieval times the cardinal sin of usury into the thoroughly respectable notion of 'profit'.

It was Max Weber who first made the connexion of the capitalist attitude with Christian ideology in asserting the link between the 'protestant ethic and the spirit of capitalism'. Although often regarded as one of Weber's more superficial contentions, we can see that Protestantism, as Christianity taken to its logical, secular conclusion, leads into the mentality of capitalist expansion. It would be facile to see the one as the cause of the other as the two ideologies are so inseparably interlinked that they must be treated as two aspects of the same phenomonon. As such, the movement away from religious forms becomes acute within Christianity, something that has led Georges Bataille to argue that in essence Christianity is not a religion but a political movement. Todorov perceived the same thing and spoke of this thrust within Christianity as being a process in which "egalitarianising religion leads to transcendence of religion".[13]

Adorno and Horkheimer said that "Animism had spiritualized objects; industrialism objectified spirits",[14] and what we see occurring with the development of Western society is the progressive estrangement of man from his natural surroundings and even from the sensibility of his own self. This established the basis of the Western subject and object relation in specific terms. As Roger Bastide, for example, has argued the difference between African and Western forms of thinking is that whereas the former conceived of human relations in terms of the interrelationship between subject and object, in the West they were conceived in terms of the mastery of the subject over the object.[15]

This leads us to a reappraisal of the distinction between supposedly 'civilised' and 'primitive'

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[13] Todorov, *op. cit.*, p 107.

[14] Adorno and Horkheimer, *The Dialectic of Enlightenment*, p 41.

[15] Roger Bastide, 'Religions africains et structures de civilisation', (1968) *Présence Africaine*, 66.

patterns of thought, the subject of so much controversy since the time of Lévy-Bruhl.

The idea of the 'Primitive' as a myth

In Lévy-Bruhl a distinction is made between civilised and primitive on the basis of cognitive ability. It is a qualitative distinction drawn by means of an implicit acceptance of the superiority of the logical thought patterns of Western, supposedly 'civilised' thinkers. Such a crude dichotomy is hardly acceptable today, but nevertheless the broad outlines of Lévy-Bruhl's distinctions remain in place, even though the debate has taken on multifarious aspects that go far beyond the manifest content of his own work.

Symptomatic in this respect may be an article by Robin Horton, in which he tries to bring Lévy-Bruhl's distinction into question by contrasting it with that of Durkheim, arguing that Lévy-Bruhl established what he calls an 'inversion' model in which primitive thought is simply a contrary established to set off the characteristics of our own thought. Durkheim on the other hand saw a continuity between the two: primitive thought was essentially no different from modern logical thinking - it just wasn't as efficient. It was the introduction of a critical spirit of enquiry that enabled modern thought to go beyond the limited thought pattern of what he calls 'traditional' societies. This is a no-nonsense empiricist's argument - science replaces religion because science does what religion tries to do with a greater competence.

I am by no means convinced, however, even taking Horton's contentions as read, that Durkheim's position is substantially different from that of Lévy-Bruhl: it still assumes a qualitative distinction between 'primitive' and 'civilised' thought and, like most other critiques of Lévy-Bruhl, simply takes issue with the process by which the transformation of the one into the other was accomplished.

But Horton's article is significant in other ways. He accepts the distinction as a process of evolution, and he identifies a single factor - the birth of a critical spirit - as being responsible for the transformation. In so doing he assumes the process to be unilineal and irreversible. But also he refuses to countenance the possibility of any evolution other than the one specified. Yet if evolution has any meaning, it must be a continual and universal process. If, at some point in the past, 'our' culture was identical to 'theirs' (i.e. primitive), and has since diverged, still 'their' culture must have also evolved in a different way, of which we know nothing. Unless we accept a purely uni-directional thrust to evolution in which there is only one direction in which it can go, which is the way we have already gone - others must therefore 'catch up'. We become thereby the yardstick by which all others are judged, the assumption of which is the beginning of racist and imperialist myths. It is this point that Samir Amin particularly emphasised in his discussion of Eurocentrism - insisting that the universalism to which Europe lays claim is not in fact universal, but the opposite, since it subsumes everything under the mantle of its own point of view. In so doing its 'universalism' is nothing more than the imposition of European norms onto the rest of the world.

What we need to accept is that the concept of the 'primitive' is, as Jules Monnerot long ago

insisted, a myth of the civilised. As Stanley Diamond has said: "The search for the primitive is [...] as old as civilization. It is the search for the utopia of the past, projected into the future, with civilization being the middle term."[16] In focusing on ideas around the primitive, then, we should be aware that it is generally less the idea of the primitive itself that is at issue than Western understandings of it. What it provides us with above all is a conceptual tool that enables us to focus more clearly on ideas about the differences between societies and ways of thinking. In so doing it establishes an identifiable object against which to set off our own self-image as 'civilised' people. What we are not doing is talking about a definable group of people who can be called 'primitives'.

The myth of the primitive arises from a conception of ourselves as a collective entity. It testifies to a need to give ourselves a collective identity commensurate with our general ideas about the self as a bounded individual, something which requires an 'other' against which to reflect and judge itself.

Central to Lévi-Bruhl's conceptualization of primitive thought is the notion that it was comparable to the Western mystical tradition which was thus viewed as a survival of such thinking. However, as the idea of the bounded self gained ground in Western thought it gave a new meaning to mystical consciousness in which the self dissolves in union with God. For Lévy-Bruhl, tied to the notion of the bounded self as distinctive of 'civilised' man, 'participation' was an early form of mysticism. But in contemporary Europe the mystical tradition functioned as a reaction of the spirit against the newly rationalised self. It was in mysticism that the idea of the subconscious first took form as an explanation and sanction for the ecstatic.[17] Functionally, therefore, mysticism was not a precursor of rationalism but followed on from it.

The Re-evaluation of the Self in Surrealism

If mystical consciousness sought to escape the consequences of the idea of a bounded self, we see a different perspective on notions of the self emerging towards the end of the nineteenth century, exemplified by Rimbaud's statement that "*I* is another". This key moment in the modernist questioning of the concept of selfhood has been interpreted in several ways, but today the predominant interpretation is the one that, following Foucault's announcement of the 'death of man', is seen to imply an identity crisis in which the ideological construction of the Enlightenment 'self' is being deconstructed, but with no idea of what is being put in its place. The '*I*' becomes problematic as a term of definition: how do we delineate its boundary so that it takes into account all the multifarious elements contained within it?

There is, however, little trace of an identity crisis in Rimbaud's own words: "*I* is another. If the brass wakes up the trumpet, it is not at all its fault. This much is evident to me: I am present as

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[16] Stanley Diamond, *In Search of the Primitive*, p 208.

[17] see, for a discussion of this question, William James, *The Varieties of Religious Experience*, p 486/490.

my thought is being born: I watch it, listen to it; I pluck at the bow strings and the symphony stirs in the depths or bounds onto the stage with a leap."

In surrealism far from implying an identity crisis, Rimbaud's perception was taken as a liberation. Rimbaud also said, " It is false to say: I think. One should say: I am thought." This idea, as we discussed earlier, is at the heart of surrealist ideas of automatic writing and served as a prelude to ideas leading to the discovery of the unconscious: whatever constituted the self was more than the sum total of its consciously elaborated manifest actions. Here Freud's 'discovery' of the unconscious served as verification. But such notions do not subjectify being. On the contrary, they serve to objectify its hidden aspects.

In his exploration of identity at the beginning of *Nadja*, Breton defines the self as being commensurate not with its own essence, but with what it 'haunts'. Both in *Nadja* and in Breton's other narratives (and this is also a common theme in surrealism narrative generally) the subject is displaced *vis-à-vis* the objective world he describes. Instead of a given subject (i.e. Breton) responding to the objective world separable from him, what we are shown is an objectively experienced world in which subject and object interpenetrate and are perceived as part of the same process: the world infects Breton's personality as he himself acts upon that world. Recalling our discussion of the imagination in surrealism, we see here how the imagination takes form as an ontological category: the imagination, again, becomes real.

In a like manner Paul Nougé has stated that he thinks of himself "not as a person but as an action which takes place through me and for which I am partially responsible." Bona de Mandiargues, too, likening herself to Lichtenberg's 'bladeless knife without a handle', says: "When I speak of myself, it is not a question of me. I would like constantly to throw myself outside of the self into others... I would like to go towards the whiteness, to become like a pinch of salt, a polyhedron in which all things converge and vanish; to be both reflexion and assimilation of images. I would like to be a diamond and to become myself a play of reflexions."[18] One could multiply such quotations throughout surrealist writings for the question of identity can be seen, I think, as the central theme generally in surrealist narrative. But such slippage of the self is not seen by surrealists as being problematic. They appear to have no difficulty in conceptualising themselves in terms of manifold forms of being: this does not involve an identity crisis. Pierre Mabille has said: "Our being is the sum of all the activity of the environment, which is transformed into us and retained in our bodies. We are the reservoir of all the energy that has not been immediately spent."[19] Elsewhere he has noted, "Man is for himself a conscious frontier placed between two worlds: that of the interior, the indivisible self that is the real and directly experienced life, and that of the exterior, which is the unlimited universe, infinitely

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[18] Bona de Mandiargues, *Bonaventure*, p 59/60.

[19] Pierre Mabille, *Egrégores ou la vie des civilisations*, p 221.

multiplied and created."[20] Identity, then, is never fixed: it emerges from the interplay between different domains in specific contexts. For surrealism essence and experience are one. The self is not a separated being, but rather a concentrated form of energy that takes particular forms in particular circumstances. Those circumstances are determined by the life that is directly experienced. They are neither imposed on the subject from outside, nor are they established as a result of the subject's own will.

According to the American Indian writer Jamake Highwater the Western idea of the personal self is a 'fearsome dogma' in that it both absolute and permanently on display. "Indians," he asserts, "find it incredible that a person must retain one identity, one name, one persona for his or her entire existence, no matter what immense changes may take place in that person's life."[21]

We know from the linguistic analyses of Whorf that the structure of language can often reveal a very different perception of man's relation to the world than that found in European languages. In the Hopi language, for instance, reality is examined not in terms of objects, but in terms of events. Unlike English, which tends to exclude from the notion of the self the element of change, in Hopi the subject is defined in terms of a constant process of becoming.   This "implies that existents do not 'become later and later' all in the same way; but some do so by growing like plants, some by diffusing and vanishing, some by a procession of metamorphoses, some by enduring in one shape till affected by violent forces."[22] This more flexible approach to the question of identity and its evolution arises most specifically in relation to North American Indian conceptions of selfhood and the personality.

According to Jamake Highwater, the fact that the American Indian does not conceive of the 'self' as having a bounded personality does not at all mean that there is no individual awareness. But the conception of the person is not interiorised: it is projected outwards into the community and it is the tribe that has a sense of 'selfhood' distinguished from all other tribes. The idea is that "people enrich or enervate the power that gives them life, and then they pass out of existence... What remains is the tribe; the community; the *orenda*."[23]

In discussing notions of the self, Dorothy Lee has written of the Wintu that they "...conceive of the self not as strictly delimited or defined, but as a concentration, at most which gradually fades and gives place to the other. Most of what is other for us, is for the Wintu completely, or partially, or

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[20] Mabille, *Le Merveilleux*, p 10.

[21] Jamake Highwater, *The Primal Mind*, p 168.

[22] B.J. Whorf, *Language, Thought, and Reality*, p 147.

[23] Highwater, *ibid*, p 170.

upon occasion, identified with the self."[24] She goes on to compare this conception of the self with what she assumes to be 'ours' : "The Wintu conception of the self differs from our own in that it contains the total person and the activity of all its aspects, and in that it fades out gradually and without distinct demarcation. It is not clearly opposed to the other, neither is it clearly identical with or incorporated with the other, and is of equal status to the other; where we see a one way relationship from self to other, an assertion of the self upon the other, the Wintu see a coordinate togetherness, with, at most, a stressed point of view."[25] It is completely otherwise in our society in which experience is valid only when "the self is logically and cognitively in control".[26]

Lee's comparisons here are valuable, but they raise the question of who precisely this 'we' is? She is drawing the reader into a sort of complicity in which his own categories will be questioned. But to whom is she addressing her remarks? To a small, specialised, academic audience? To the American public at large? To Europeanised intellectuals? For it would seem plain that anyone of a surrealist persuasion would certainly object to being considered within such a collective designation. Indeed, if we consider surrealism in this context, then we will see that there is a remarkable congruence between their view of the world and that of the Wintu. We could quite easily replace the word 'Wintu' in the above quotations with 'surrealist' without doing any great violence to the surrealist point of view.

The fact that the surrealist viewpoint is so close to that of an American Indian tribe brings into focus how problematic a notion the European 'civilised' mind is. In the previous chapter we touched upon the question of surrealism as the other 'within' European culture and this is something that could be developed to discuss surrealism in relation to elements of European culture with which they themselves have perceived an affinity, which would include the whole Manichean and gnostic tradition, the hermetic tradition, Celtic society and myths, and elements of popular culture, millenarianism and conceptions of revelation and madness, subjects that the surrealists have often treated with a systematisation and sophistication. But what seems significant in this respect is that a group of intellectuals with a highly privileged position in Western society and with access to the whole scope of Western education and deductive knowledge should feel the necessity to explore and recover 'primitive' concepts of being, or elements within Western culture which deductive logic would like to believe it had made anachronistic. For a rationalist, like Robin Horton, this is simply a 'romantic nostalgia' for what we have surpassed, rather, one supposes, like a nostalgia for childhood: one has to accept that one is now grown up. But is this all that is involved?

In his work on what he calls the 'Primal Mind' - seen particularly from the American Indian perspective - Jamake Highwater seeks to legitimate primitive concepts by reference to Western artists

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[24] Dorothy Lee, *Freedom and Culture*, p 134.

[25] *ibid*, p 136.

[26] *ibid*,, p 138.

and argues that elements of the 'primitive'[27] remain pervasive throughout Western culture, although generally marginalised as the preserve of artists and outsiders.

Highwater's analysis is essentially a re-evaluation of Lévy-Bruhl's dichotomies, but from a perspective that seeks to valorise what Lévy-Bruhl had dismissed from the purview of the 'modern' sensibility. This is in many ways an admirable enterprise, but it leaves open the ideological bias of the 'West', which would be quite happy to leave the 'poetic' values associated with the 'primitive' or 'primal' to the excluded category of artists, madmen and visionaries as surrogates from the reality principle by which 'civilised' people have to live. In this respect, those artists who have fostered their outsider status and made a direct connexion between it and 'primitive' values have served to strengthen rather than undermine Enlightenment ideology by giving legitimacy to the duality between 'civilised' and 'primitive' modes of thought.

In Robin Horton's article considering Lévy-Bruhl and Durkheim, we saw that the assumption being made was for the unilinear relentless march of progress on the Western model. Although Horton was arguing for the idea that all people think alike, he was still asserting the superiority of Western knowledge as a system of thought.

As we have already argued, following Monnerot, that the 'primitive' is a myth of the 'civilised', we can see that Horton's argument does no more than utilise the myth of the 'primitive' in another Western way. To question his argument is to question the construction of this myth as it applies to the object in anthropological discourse.

We might mention here that for, say, Amazonian Indian peoples (to take an example at random), a microscopic knowledge of the rhythms of the forest is essential. They 'read' the forest in exactly the same way that we read a book, being able to draw out subtle meanings from the shape of a branch, the rustling of the wind at certain times, etc, etc. This is a very real, a very concrete form of knowledge the import and subtlety of which are inconceivable for most Westerners. Yet it is so not because we have transcended such knowledge and replaced it with something more efficient, but rather because it is of no use to us in the sort of life we live in contemporary society. In just the same way, our deductive logic may be of little use to Amazonian Indians. It is not that one thought leads on to another more efficient one, but, to repeat what we said earlier, that thought adapts itself to particular circumstances. We might recall here Benjamin Péret's point about the fact that wine does not replace water.

In discussing the Hopi language, Whorf notes that in comparison with European languages, it is inadequate to express a formal systematisation of language. But at the same time it is far richer and more precise in expressing the relation of consciousness to sensation. Where we would tend in English to say of an object that: 'it is red', the Hopi says what something that would be equivalent in English to 'I hear that it is red'. "Does the Hopi language," he asks, "show here a higher plane of

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[27] Highwater argues for the use of the word 'primal' against the derogative associations implied by the word 'primitive'. However, in so far as we have sought to show that the 'primitive' can be nothing but a myth of the 'civilised', then such a euphemism would serve as a mystification.

thinking, a more rational analysis of situations, than our vaunted English? Of course it does. In this field and in various others, English compared to Hopi is like a bludgeon compared to a rapier."[28] As Whorf insists, we will get nowhere by reducing all cultures to a common denominator defined by our own perspective.

As we have tried to show throughout this thesis, reality is not determined by directly observed logical categories. Reality is absolute. As Dorothy Lee has said: "If reality were not absolute then true communication would of course be impossible."[29] But we can only perceive it under contradictory and ambivalent forms. Inevitably, reality shifts in relation to our gaze. There can, therefore, be no one way by which to categorise or discuss it in its absolute sense. Yet equally reality cannot be relative - there must be an absolute point at which the disjunctions we see around us no longer appear in contradictory forms. The desire to attain such lucidity, which was implicit in romanticism and became explicit in surrealism, cannot be dismissed out of hand as being anti-scientific.

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[28] B.J. Whorf, *Language, Thought, and Reality*, p 85.

[29] Dorothy Lee, *Freedom and Culture*, p 89.

CONCLUSION:

This thesis has utilised a wide canvas to consider the question of objectivity in anthropological perspective. In contrast to fieldwork-based anthropology, this has involved a concentration on general questions at the expense of the particular. We have not chosen this course. We have assembled the material and it has spoken to us. We have listened to it and tried to do justice to what it has told us without forcing an argument from the material. This endeavour is in accord with the romantic and surrealist demand that the subject should not impose itself on the nature of the object.

The thesis began as an examination of the relationship between literature and anthropology with a particualr focus on surrealism in the light of James Clifford's work. As it crystalised, it came to survey a wide array of themes current in anthropological theory. It became clear that there were a range of issues connected with the romantic traditon that had not been satisfactorily treated in

anthropological history. These issues have entailed a re-consideration of the ideological foundations of Western culture and the way in which romanticism has been eclipsed not only in anthropology but in the sciences generally. Pierre Bourdieu has referred to his intellectual apprenticeship as being a 'fieldwork in philosophy'. In a similar spirit we might say that this thesis has emerged from a sort of 'fieldwork in anthropology'.

Anthropology took form in the nineteenth century against the background of unquestioned positivist assumptions of the nature of scientific enquiry that issued from Enlightenment ideology. According to Adorno and Horkenheimer, Enlightenment ideology can be characterised by its insertion of 'deception as a means of exchange' into the frame of human discourse. By such means was colonialism made possible: "the contract was fulfilled and yet the other party is deceived".[1]

The Enlightenment should be given its due: "the condition of self-conscious man is efficient in promoting thought and action, particularly in new explorations of all kinds and it produced among other things a rigorous development of the rational intellect."[2] But the Enlightenment served to decentre man in the world as it decentred the world in the cosmos. It treated self-awareness as primary rather than secondary and denied the integrity of the other while at the same time it separated the mind from the body and divided the self from itself. By such means it caused the divided self to deny self-knowledge as a valid means of knowledge of the other as it reduced the other to an object of pure contemplation.

Anthropology, as the study of humankind, embodies within itself the contradictions of the Enlightenment view, but inherent in anthropology is an auto-critique of Enlightenment ideology - to study 'man' is to lay bare the problematic of the self in relation both to itself and to others. Although anthropology has sought to deny such problematic by the adoption of positivist methodology it has done so only by reducing its field of study and turning away from its own rationale - to found a 'science of humanity'.

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[1] Adorno and Horkenheimer, *The Dialectic of Enlightenment,* p 61. A striking example of this in concrete terms is the means by which American Indians were induced to sign away their 'rights' to their land; the contract was binding even though they did not know what they signed.

[2] L.L. Whyte, *The Unconscious Before Freud,* p 35.

The allegory by which knowledge is separated out from its object into parcels is the means by which the Enlightenment deception is achieved: we speak of one thing but mean something else. This position did not go unchallenged.

Romanticism sought to confront this allegory and reassert immediacy by means of the symbol which would re-establish thought in its unity.

Surrealism, through an exploration of the unconscious factor of the human personality, sought to extend the romantic critique and give form to a sensibility that would not be tied to Enlightenment concepts.

Positivism met the romantic and surrealist challenge by ignoring its philosophical position and distorting its methodological concepts. In anthropological terms it denied the immediacy of knowledge and made the other into an object separable from the subject. The romantic principle that knowledge must begin with oneself was dismissed from consideration as being subjectivism and irrationalism. Empathy as a methodological tool faded from view.

The aim of this thesis has been to re-appraise romanticist and surrealist concerns within the contemporary anthropological context, not in order to argue that they provide a 'better' means of anthropological enquiry but to reveal the way in which positivist hegemony in the sciences has served to distort and suppress the issues raised by such considerations.

Positivism no longer holds sway in the social sciences. Its ascendency has passed to hermeneutic and structuralist approaches that inscribe a subjectivism at the heart of human discourse that essentially is the inverse of positivist objectivism. This has led, in anthropology, to the development of a 'reflexive' approach to the collection of data in which self-knowledge through the other and conversely knowledge of the other by means of the self (the basis of the romantic position) is denied as emphatically as it is in positivism. We have tried to argue that by such means the integrity of the other is still denied: the deception remains.

We have analysed post-modernist attempts to engage with the question of representation. Post-modernist representations are unsatisfactory on a number of counts, but primarily in the way that, consciously or not, they serve to valorise subjectivism. We have sought to show that value cannot be ascribed to the object isolated from its relation with the subject. To seek to do so by transforming the object into a 'subject' in its own right with whom we engage in dialogue is as spurious as to found a science based purely on supposedly 'objective' considerations.

The central difficulty lies in the nature of the 'other'. We live in a world in which people who would once have been treated as 'others', and exoticised as such, have access to our own communication system and can answer 'us' back on our own terms. The other's own voice can therefore no longer be ignored, as it almost always was in colonial times. This is undoubtedly something that raises questions in anthropology which are very difficult to answer in terms of the rationalist/positivist subject and object dichotomy. But at the same time it is not possible, we have sought to show, to dissolve the object from methodological consideration. A great danger lies in the way in which the object is denied by being incorporated into the subject in such a way that its voice thereby becomes neutralised. Diversity of views and differing world views are undermined in the very process of giving value to them: the effect is to impose universal values at the level of the lowest common-denominator., something that can only serve to maintain the status quo and ultimately retain an us and them divide.

In the romantic tradition, the subject and object relation is accepted, but on terms that are very different from those encountered in the central Enlightenment tradition. Little attention has been paid to this phenomenon, especially to the surrealist contribution to such a debate, which has mostly been ignored altogether. We would therefore contend that a re-appraisal of romantic and surrealist concerns is of value to recall to anthropology its forgotten heritage.

There can be no exclusive means of seeking knowledge. As the surrealists would be the first to acknowledge, empiricist and rationalist based research remains as valid as ever: disinterested research into the nature of phenomena can uncover factors in human culture that must remain hidden if all knowledge is inflected through the self. The aim, then, is not to discredit rationalism, but to confront its claim to a monopoly of knowledge.

In accordance with the precepts of rationalism, anthropology has established a methodology based on fieldwork that gives undue emphasis to the particular at the expense of the general. This thesis, both in scope and method, assumes that this approach does not exhaust the possibilities of anthropological knowledge.

It should be recognised that the romantic approach has a place in anthropological research, and that its criteria for judgement are as objective, even if on different grounds, as those for rational and empirical modes of scientific investigation. Romantic approaches are in no sense irrational or subjective.

It is not sufficient to know the other as an object of contemplation. We should also acknowledge that it is possible to know otherness through oneself. As the Guyanese writer Wilson Harris wrote: "I felt the face before me begin to fade and part company from me and from themselves

as if our need for one another was now fulfilled, and our distance from each other was the distance of a sacrament, the sacrament and embrace we knew in one muse and one undying soul. Each of us now held in his arms what he had been for ever seeking and what he had always possessed."[3] Within such a quest, as we have sought to show, there lies a long suppressed possibility of another anthropological knowledge.

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[3] Wilson Harris, *The Palace of the Peacock,* p 152.

APPENDIX

SURREALIST DECLARATIONS ON COLONIALISM

TO THE SOLDIERS AND SAILORS

Comrades,
In spite of the promises given to us in 1919, war has again broken out, this time in Morocco, as horrible as the one that ravaged the world for more than four years.

This war has no other aim than to save national honour. You are being sent to Morocco to allow the bankers to get their hands on the riches of the Republic of the Riff so they can grease the palms of the capitalists.

YOU ARE FIGHTING THE WAR OF THE BANKERS

Comrades, soldiers and sailors, we have confidence in you: we know you will do your duty toward the Riffians who are struggling for their independence. You will not be the flunkeys of the banks. Remember that the Russian Bolsheviks, the glorious sailors of the Black Sea, the soldiers of Odessa, the Spanish soldiers of the Riff, have been able to stop the war by fraternisation ...
Understand your duty:

FRATERNISE WITH THE RIFFIANS
STOP THE MOROCCAN WAR

Down with the War in Morocco!
Immediate peace with the Riff!
Long live the military evacuation of Morocco!
Long live fraternisation with the Riffians!

> Maxime Alexandre, Louis Aragon, Antonin Artaud, Georges Bessière, Joë Bousquet, Pierre Brasseur, André Breton, Robert Desnos, Paul Eluard, Max Ernst, Theodore Fraenkel, Michel Leiris, Georges Limbour, Georges Malkine, André Masson, Douchan Matisch, Max Morise, Georges Neveux, Marcel Noll, Benjamin Péret, Raymond Queneau, Philippe Soupault, Dédé Sunbeam, Roland Tual, Jacques Viot, Pierre de Massot, Georges Ribemont-Dessaignes
> 18 October 1925

(This was a PCF declaration which the surrealists signed along with the Clarté and Philosophes groups. Only the surrealist signatories are given here.)

DON'T VISIT THE COLONIAL EXHIBITION

On the evening of 1 May 1931,which is to say the day before the Colonial Exhibition was inaugurated, the Indo-Chinese student Tao was picked up by the police. To justify this action Chiappe* used lies and an anonymous letter. We now learn that, sufficient time having passed to avoid protest, this arrest, which was taken as a preventive measure, was merely a prelude to his deportation to Indo-China(1). Tao's crime? To be a member of the Communist Party (which is after all not illegal in France) and to have been among the protesters outside the Elysée against the execution of forty Annamites.

In vain has world opinion been mobilised against the fate of Sacco and Vanzetti. And Tao, delivered up to military justice and the justice of mandarins, has no guarantee that his life will be spared. This fine curtain-raiser was an appropriate prelude to the Vincennes exhibition in 1931.

The idea of colonial piracy (the word is illuminating but hardly strong enough) dates from the nineteenth century, and is one we have made our own. With our surplus money we send ships, shovels and pickaxes to Africa and Asia, which we are pleased to present as gifts to the natives, even though they are provided precisely to allow the natives to work for a living and help to create such wealth. We pretend that it is perfectly reasonable that the reserves of gold that lie in the vaults of the Banque de France should be *created* by the work of millions of new slaves. But the fact is that it is forced - or free - labour that is at the heart of this monstrous exchange. The fact is that men whose customs, insofar as it is possible to learn what they are from rarely disinterested accounts, appear (not that this is saying much) to be less perverted than ours , are being drawn away from the true goals of the human species, away from knowledge, love and human happiness. Not content with this, our own self-perception is enough to give us the credentials to organise a Colonial Exhibition, something which, if we are not very much mistaken, responds to a very *French* idea, or more accurately a *French* calculation, around which all the enthusiasts gather like vultures. Yet we are distinguished from these native peoples only by the fact that we are white (as colourless people we call them coloured) and purely due to the power of European metallurgy, and distinguished most especially from them for having worked our skins off in 1914 for a miserable collective funerary monument. All the Lyauteys*, the Daumesnils* and the Doumiers* who today lord it in this France of the Moulin-Rouge would fit in better in the nearby carnival of skeletons. A few days ago it was even possible to see an undefaced poster in Paris in which Jacques Doriot was presented as being responsible for the massacres in Indo-China. An *undefaced* poster.

The dogma of the integrity of national territory, invoked to give moral justification to these massacres, is not based on sufficient play of words to enable us to forget that hardly a day goes by without people being killed in the colonies. The presence on the inaugural platform at the Colonial Exhibition of the President of the Republic, the Emperor of Annam, the Cardinal Archbishop of Paris with several governors with their thugs, opposite both the pavilion of the missionaries and those of Citroën and Renault, clearly reveals the complicity of the whole of the bourgeoisie in the birth of the new and particularly repugnant idea of "Greater France". It is to try to indoctrinate the idea of this fraudulent concept that the pavilions at Vincennes have been built. It is a question of giving to the citizens of the metropolis the consciousness of being proprietors and to this end it is necessary not to waver at the echo of faraway gunfire. It is all about annexing a perspective of minarets and pagodas (as had been suggested before the war in a song about the bamboo-huts) to the pleasant French landscape.

In this context we have not forgotten the charming recruitment poster for the colonial army, which gives us the image of a life of ease, with big-breasted negresses a-plenty, as the petty officer in his elegant khaki is carried around in his rickshaw by the natives. A life, to be sure, of adventure and advancement.

In other respects, the advertising spares us nothing as we see a native king coming in person to beat the drum at the door of these papier-maché palaces.The fair is international and in this way colonial fact (a European fact, as the opening address made clear) becomes acquired fact.

With due regard to the scandalous Socialist Party and the jesuitical League of the Rights of Man, one would be hard-pressed to make a distinction between good and bad types of coloniser. The pioneers of national defence in a capitalist regime, with the unspeakable Bancour at their head, can justly be proud of the Vincennes Luna-Park. But for all those who refuse once and for all to be among the defenders of the bourgeois parties it is necessary to oppose such rejoicing and exploitation in the appropriate way in accord with the attitude of Lenin, who was the first person this century to recognise colonial peoples as allies of the world proletariat.

In response to this discourse and to the death sentences, we must respond by demanding the immediate evacuation of the colonies and the bringing to trial of the generals and officials responsible for the massacres in Annam, Lebanon, Morocco and Central Africa.

> André Breton, Paul Eluard, Benjamin Péret, Georges Sadoul, Pierre Unik, André Thirion, René Crevel, Aragon, René Char, Maxime Alexandre, Yves Tanguy, Georges Malkine.

May 1931

1. We have felt it necessary to refuse to accept the signatures of foreign comrades for this manifesto.

* Chiappe was Parisian Chief of Police, a hated figure later to be caricatured in Buñuel's *Diary of a Chambermaid* (1963); Marshall Lyauty was a colonial general; Daumesnil a radical deputy and Minister of the Colonies; Doumier was President of the Republic; Paul-Bancour was a member of the French delegation at the League of Nations.

FIRST CONSIDERATION OF THE COLONIAL EXHIBITION

It is we, the poets, who nail the guilty to the eternal scaffold. Future generations will insult and scorn those we condemn.
Emile Zola

On the night of 27 and 28 June the pavilion of the Netherland Antilles was completely destroyed by fire. "So what?" might be the response of any spectator who understands the nature of the imperialist demonstration at Vincennes. People will perhaps be surprised that, since we are hardly noted as enthusiasts for the conservation of art objects, we have not abandoned ourselves to this initial response. Yet just as the opponents of nationalism have the duty to defend the nationalism of oppressed peoples, so the opponents of that art which is the fruit of the capitalist economy also have the duty dialectically to place the arts of the oppressed peoples in opposition to it. The pavilion which the journalists call, without the least embarrassment, the 'Dutch' pavilion unquestionably contained the most valuable manifestations of the intellectual life of Malaysia and Melanesia. As we know well, it was a question of the rarest and oldest artistic artifacts known in those areas, objects which had been violently torn from those who made them and which a European government can, as paradoxical as it may seem, not be afraid to present as an advert for its own method of colonisation(1). Even the scandalous inversion of meaning by which such an act of piracy seems to be completed was insufficient, for these objects could still serve the appetite of the anthropologist, the sociologist and the artist. Only by adopting a completely superficial point of view could one see the

fire on 28 June as a simple accident. What has been lost, in spite of the use that capitalism would like to make of it, was destined to haunt the latter, thanks to the quality of the evidence it constituted. From such evidence only materialist science could benefit, as Marx and Engels have shown in the use they made of the research done by Morgan on the Iroquois and the Hawaiians to help them in their own study of the origin of the family. The revelation of the arts of the so-called 'primitive'peoples has been such that the recent discoveries both in the realm of art and sociology would be incomprehensible if that did not take this determining factor into consideration. Equally, in its struggle against religion, materialism alone is in a position effectively to utilise the connexions that must be made between the images of the whole world. This is something the missionaries, whose pavilions did not burn down, understand very well, since they are in the habit of mutilating fetishes while they drag the natives into their schools to be taught to reproduce the features of their Christ according to the formulas of the lowest forms of European art (2) (this comparison would be all the better established in the anti-religious museums in Russia). All these are excellent reasons for us to consider the destruction of the treasures of Java, Bali, Borneo, Sumatra, New Guinea etc as a sort of act of negligence on the part of capitalism, which it had so elegantly gathered together under a imitation straw roof. In this way colonial work, which begins with massacres, and is continued by conversions, forced labour and disease, reaches completion (in which connexion, while the French newspapers have given the lie to the fact that the natives who came to the Colonial Exhibition brought sleeping-sickness and leprosy to Paris, we are not aware that any precautions have been taken to protect the workers at the Colonial Exhibition from the dangers of European plagues, from alcoholism to prostitution by way of tuberculosis).

If anyone thinks it excessive to indict capitalism for the fire of 28 June, we would point out that contrary to what happens when a train is derailed and the driver, whether he lives or dies, is the first person on whom blame is placed, the night-watchman of the destroyed pavilion has been absolved from any responsibility. They were, presumably, unable to find any communists among his relatives! Even so, *Figaro*, among other newspapers, has drawn a direct relation between communist agitation in Malaysia and the spark that started the fire(3). For ourselves we restrict ourselves to noting that capitalism must take full responsibility for what happens at Vincennes, since it is capitalism that has coined it there, rather than blaming more specifically, for example, the missionaries. However such a charge would not be without justification if one thinks about the vile habits of the priests and their iconoclastic falsification of texts.

As for those who believe they perceive a contradiction between our applause for the proletariat's acts of purification in burning down convents in Spain and this terrible loss which philosophically lights up the smile in the corner of Marshall Lyautey's face, we shall not content ourselves with repeating what was said at the beginning of this text. We would point out that if the fetishes of the Sunda Islands have an undeniable scientific value for us and have, for this reason, lost their sacred qualities, the same cannot be said for the fetishes of Catholic inspiration (paintings by Valdes Leal, sculptures by Berruguete and collecting-boxes of the house of Bouasse-Lebel) which have not the slightest interest, either from a scientific or artistic point of view. Equally Catholicism has laws, courts, prisons, schools and money with which to protect itself and its representations of Christ, which have only a minimal interest compared to tikis and totems.

Without taking into account the nostalgia that it imparts to the bourgeoisie's kids - did you know how big France is? - the exhibition has now established its first consideration. This consideration displays a deficit that will not put up the price of the Angkor temple which has been sold to a film company for the purpose (as it happens!) of being burned down.

Here a simple question is raised: despite opinions to the contrary, the Dutch Indies pavilion was not built to be burned down. Nevertheless it burst into flames like a match. The Angkor temple was actually built to be burned down. Can this not lead us to suspect that it might have been constructed from especially inflammable materials which might cause it to go the same way before its appointed date? In such circumstances, and despite the assurances given by the Prefect of Police to the municipal council that the exhibition is the best guarded place in the world against fire, does not this French colonial work run the risk of being staged not only at the expense of science but also

at the expense of the lives of the crowds who come to it together with a good part of the Parisian population?

3 July 1931

Yves Tanguy, Georges Sadoul, Aragon, André Breton, André Thirion, Maxime Alexandre, Paul Eluard, Pierre Unik, René Char, Benjamin Péret, René Crevel, Georges Malkine(*)

(*)and twelve signatures of foreign comrades.

1. "I have to address my regret and sympathy to Your Excellency about the fire at the principal pavilion of the Dutch East Indies, which we had inaugurated together and which was a magnificent testimony to the colonial work of your country." (telegram from M. Paul Reynaud to the minister for the colonies of the Netherlands)
2. See L'Année Missionaire (1931)
3. Article by Eugène Marsan

LEGITIMATE DEFENCE

This is only a preliminary warning. We consider ourselves to be totally committed. We are sure that there are other young people like us who could add their signatures to ours and who - to the extent that it is compatible with remaining alive - refuse to adjust to all those who attempt, consciously or not, by their smiles, work, exactitude, propriety, speeches, writings, actions and their very persons, to pretend that everything can continue as it is. We rise up against all those who are not suffocated by this capitalist, Christian, bourgeois world, to which, involuntarily, our protesting bodies belong.

In every country the Communist Party (Third International) is in the process of playing the decisive card of the Spirit - in the Hegelian sense of the word. Its defeat, impossible as we think it to be, would be for us the definitive 'Je ne peux plus'. We believe unreservedly in its triumph because we accept the dialectical materialism of Marx, freed of all misleading interpretation and victoriously put to the test by Lenin. We are ready, on this plane, to submit to the discipline that such convictions demand.

On the concrete plane of modes of human expression, we equally and unreservedly accept surrealism to which, in 1932, we relate our becoming. We refer our readers to the two manifestos of André Breton, René Crevel, Salvador Dali, Paul Eluard, Benjamin Péret and Tristan Tzara. It must be said that it is one of the disgraces of our time that these works are not better known everywhere that French is read. And in the works of Sade, Hegel, Lautréamont, Rimbaud - to mention only a few - we seek everything surrealism has taught us to find. As for Freud, we are ready to utilize the immense machine that he has set in motion to dissolve the bourgeois family. We are moving with sincerity at a furious pace. We want to see clearly into our dreams and we listen to their voices. And our dreams permit us to see clearly into the life that has been imposed on us for so long.

Among the filthy bourgeois conventions, we despise above all the humanitarian hypocrisy, this stinking emanation of Christian decay. We loathe pity. We don't give a damn about sentiment. We intend to shed light on human psychic concretions - a light related to that which illuminates Salvador Dali's splendid convulsive plastic works, where it seems sometimes, suddenly that love-birds could be ink-bottles or shoes or little bits of bread, taking wing from assassinated conventions.

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If this little journal, a temporary instrument, breaks down, we shall find other instruments. We accept with indifference the conditions of time and space which, by defining us in 1932 as people of the French West Indies, have thus settled our boundaries without at all limiting our field of action. This first collection of texts is particularly devoted to the West Indian question as it appears to us. (The following issues, without abandoning this matter, will take up many others.) And if, by its content, this collection is addressed primarily to *young* French West Indians, it is because we think it is a good idea that our first effort finds its way to people whose capacity for revolt we are far from underestimating. And if it is aimed especially at young *blacks*, this is because we believe that they especially have had to suffer from capitalism (outside Africa, witness Scottsboro) and that they seem to offer, in that they have a materially determined ethnic personality, a generally higher potential for revolt and joy. For want of a black proletariat, to whom international capitalism has not given the means to understand us, we speak to the children of the black bourgeoisie; we speak to those who are not already killed established fucked-up academic successful decorated decayed endowed decorative prudish decided opportunist; we speak to those who can still accept life with some appearance of truthfulness.

Having decided to be as objective as possible, we know nothing of each other's personal lives. We want to go a long way, and if we expect much from psychoanalytical investigation, we do not underestimate (from those acquainted with psychoanalytic theory) pure and simple psychological confessions which, provided that the obstacles of social conventions are removed, can tell us a great deal. We do not admit that one can be ashamed of what he suffers. The Useful - social convention - constitutes the backbone of the bourgeois 'reality' that we want to break. In the realm of intellectual investigation, we pit against this 'reality' the sincerity that allows man to disclose in his love, for example, the ambivalence which permits the elimination of the contradiction decreed by logic. According to logic, once an object with an affective value appears, we must respond to it either with the feeling called love or with the feeling called hate. Contradiction is a function of the Useful. It does not exist in love. It does not exist in the dream. And it is only by horribly gritting our teeth that we are able to endure the abominable system of constraints and restrictions, the extermination of love and the limitation of the dream, generally known by the name of Western civilisation.

Emerging from the French black bourgeoisie, which is one of the saddest things on earth, we declare - and we shall not go back on this declaration - that we are opposed to all the corpses: administrative, governmental, parliamentary, industrial, commercial and all the others. We intend, as traitors to this class, to take the path of treason as far as it will go. We spit on everything they love and venerate, especially those things that give them sustenance and joy.

And all those who adopt the same attitude, no matter where they come from, will be welcome among us.*

> Etienne Lero, Thélus Lero, René Ménil, Jules-Marcel Monnerot, Michel Pilotin, Maurice-Sabas Quitman, Auguste Tesée, Pierre Yoyotte.

> (1932)

*If our critique is purely negative here, if we do not propose any positive efforts in place of that which we mercilessly condemn, we excuse ourselves on the grounds that it was necessary to begin - a necessity which did not enable us to await the full development of our ideas. In our next issue, we hope to develop our ideology of revolt.

(translated by Paula Wissing)

MURDEROUS HUMANITARIANISM

For centuries, the soldiers, priests and civil agents of imperialism, in a welter of looting, outrage and wholesale murder, have with impunity grown fat off the coloured races. Now it is the turn of the demagogues, with their counterfeit liberalism.

But the proletariat of today, whether metropolitan or colonial, is not longer fooled by fine words as to the real end in view, which is still, as it always has been, exploitation by the greatest number for the benefit of a few slavers. Now these slavers, knowing their days are numbered and reading the doom of their system in the world crisis, fall back on the gospel of mercy, whereas in reality they rely more than ever on their traditional methods of slaughter to enforce their tyranny.

No great penetration is required to read between the lines of the news, whether in print or on the screen: punitive expeditions, blacks lynched in America, the white scourge devastating town and country in our parliamentary kingdoms and bourgeois republics.

War, that reliable colonial epidemic, receives fresh impulse in the name of 'pacification'. France may well be proud of having launched this Godsent euphemism at the precise moment when, in the throes of pacifism, she sent forth her tried and trusty thugs with instructions to plunder all those distant and defenceless peoples from whom the intercapitalist butchery had not distracted her attentions for a space.

The most scandalous of these wars, that against the Riffians in 1925, stimulated a number of intellectuals, investors in militarism, to assert their complicity with the hangmen of jingo and capital.

Responding to the appeal of the Communist Party, we protested against the war in Morocco and made our declaration in 'Revolution First and Always'.

In a France hideously inflated with having dismembered Europe, made mincemeat of Africa, polluted Oceania and ravaged whole tracts of Asia, we surrealists pronounced ourselves in favour of changing the imperialist war, in its chronic and colonialist form, into a civil war. Thus we placed our energies in the service of the revolution - of the proletariat and its struggles - and defined our attitude towards the colonial problem, and hence toward the colour question.

Gone were the days when the representatives of this snivelling capitalism might screen themselves in those abstractions which, in both secular and religious mode, were invariably inspired by the Christian ignominy and which strove on the most grossly interested grounds to masochise whatever people had not yet been contaminated by the sordid moral and religious codes in which men feign to find authority for the exploitation of their fellows.

When whole peoples have been decimated by fire and sword it became necessary to round up the survivors and domesticate them in such a cult of labour as could only proceed for the notions of original sin and atonement. The clergy and professional philanthropists have always collaborated with the army in this bloody exploitation. The colonial machinery that extracts the last penny from natural advantages hammers away with the joyful regularity of a poleaxe. The white man preaches, doses, vaccinates, assassinates and (from himself) receives absolution. With his psalms, his speeches, his guarantees of liberty, equality and fraternity, he seeks to drown out the sound of his machine guns.

It is no good objecting that these periods of rapine are only a necessary phase and pave the way, in the words of the time-honoured formula, 'for an era of prosperity founded on a close and intelligent collaboration between the natives and the metropolis'. It is no good trying to palliate collective outrage and butchery by jury in the new colonies by inviting us to consider the old, and the peace and prosperity they have so long enjoyed. It is no good blustering about the Antilles and the 'happy evolution' that has enabled them to be assimilated, or very nearly, by France.

In the Antilles, as in the Americas, the fun began with the total extermination of the natives, in spite of their having extended a most cordial reception to the Christopher Columbian invaders. Were they now - in the hour of triumph and having come so far - to set out empty-handed for home? Never! So they sailed on to Africa and stole men. These were in due course promoted by our humanists to the ranks of slavery, but were more or less exempted from the sadism of their masters by virtue of the fact that they represented a capital which had to be safeguarded like any other capital. Their descendants, long since reduced to destitution (in the French Antilles they live on vegetables and salt cod and are dependent in the matter of clothing on whatever old guano sacks they are lucky enough to steal), constitute a black proletariat whose conditions of life are even more wretched than those of its European equivalent and which is exploited by a coloured bourgeoisie quite as ferocious as any other. This bourgeoisie, covered by the machine-guns of culture, 'elects' such perfectly adequate representatives as 'Hard Labour' Diagne and 'Twister' Delmont.

The intellectuals of this new bourgeoisie, though they may not all be specialists in parliamentary abuse, are no better than the experts when they proclaim their devotion to the Spirit. The value of this idealism is precisely given the manoeuvres of its doctrinaires who, in their paradise of comfortable iniquity, have organised a system of poltroonery proof against all the necessities of life and the urgent consequences of dream. These gentlemen, votaries of corpses and theosophies, go to ground in the past, vanish down the warrens of Himalayan monasteries. Even for those whom a last few shreds of shame and intelligence dissuade from invoking those current religions whose God is frankly a God of cash, there is the call of some 'mystic Orient' or another. Our gallant sailors, policemen and agents of imperialist thought, in league with opium and literature, have swamped us with their irretentions of nostalgia; the function of all these idyllic alarums among the dead and gone being to distract our thoughts from the present, the abominations of the present.

A holy-saint-faced *international* of hypocrites deprecates the material progress foisted on blacks; protests, courteously, against the importation not only of alcohol, syphillis and field artillery but also of railways and printing. This comes well after the former rejoicings of its evangelical spirit at the idea of the 'spiritual values' current in capitalist societies, and notably respect for human life and property, which devolve naturally from enforced familiarity with fermented drinks, firearms and disease. It is scarcely necessary to add that the colonist demands this respect for property without reciprocity.

Those blacks who have been merely compelled to distort in terms of fashionable jazz the natural expression of their joy at finding themselves partakers of a universe from which Western peoples have wilfully withdrawn may consider themselves lucky to have suffered nothing worse than degradation. The eighteenth century derived nothing from China except a repertoire of frivolities to pave the alcove. In the same way the whole object of our romantic exoticism and travel lust is of use only in entertaining that class of blasé client sly enough to see an interest in deflecting to his own advantage the torrent of those energies which soon - much sooner than he thinks - will close over his head.

> André Breton, Roger Caillois, René Char, René Crevel, Paul Eluard, J.-M. Monnerot, Benjamin Péret, Yves Tanguy, André Thirion, Pierre Unik, Pierre Yoyotte.

[probably drafted in 1932, the declaration was published in 1934 in Nancy Cunard's *Negro:an anthology*. The translation is by Samuel Beckett.]

FREEDOM IS A VIETNAMESE WORD

Is there a war in Vietnam? One can hardly doubt it. The press in 'free' France, more than ever subject to censorship, remains silent. They tamely note down military victories and to comfort the families speak of those soldiers who have only been 'lost' (the bankers show their hand in this type of reporting). Not a word is heard about the fierce repression perpetrated there in the name of

democracy. Everything is done to hide from the French people a scandal that alarms the world.

There is a war in Indochina, an imperialist war undertaken in the name of a people who have themselves only just been liberated from five years of oppression against another people unanimous in their desire for freedom.

This aggression has a grave significance:

It shows first of all that nothing has changed: as it did in 1919 capitalism, having abused the most noble slogans of freedom in the name of patriotism, seeks to establish total control to continue its traditional imperialist policies and to re-establish the power of its financiers, army and clergy.

It has equally shown that the officials of the working-class, contemptuous of the anti-imperialist tradition that has long been one of the clearest dynamics of the workers' movement and in flagrant disregard of the oft-proclaimed right of national self-determination, have been accomplices - not without a certain ambivalence of behaviour - of this oppression. Whether due to corruption or by blind submission to a strategy imposed from on high, they have capitulated to demands whose effect is to conceal or to invert the true nature of the struggle.

Thus we appeal to all those who retain some lucidity and some sense of honesty and remind them that it is not possible to defend freedom *here* whilst imposing servitude *elsewhere*. It is not possible to wage such an odious war in the name of the French people without bringing in its wake a dire set of consequences.

The carnage has been deftly organised by an admiral-monk to maintain the cruel capitalist tyranny of bureaucrats and priests. And let us have no illusions about what is involved: there can be no question of preventing Vietnam from falling into the hands of a rival imperialism. For since when has French imperialism shown any independence? Since when has it done anything, in the past quarter of a century, than give up and sell out? What protection does it flatter itself it is giving to any of its slaves?

We surrealists, who have always seen as our objective the liberation of mankind, cannot remain silent in the face of such a stupid and revolting crime. Surrealism can only be against a regime which can view this bloody spectacle with pleasure; a regime which, as soon as it is born, can collapse into the mire of compromise and extortion which can be nothing but the calculated prelude to the establishment of a new totalitarianism.

On the occasion of this new crime, surrealism declares that it has renounced none of its demands and least of all the desire for a radical transformation of society. But it knows how illusory are appeals to conscience, intelligence and even the interests of people; how easy are the lies and the errors and inevitable divisions. It is for this reason that surrealism has chosen a wider and deeper domain; one which is in proportion to true human fraternity.

It is for this reason that it makes a vehement protest against imperialist aggression and extends its fraternal welcome to all those who embody, in the present moment, the becoming of freedom.

Adolphe Acker, Yves Bonnefoy, Joë Bousquet, Francis Bouvet, André Breton, Jean Brun, J.-B. Brunius, Eliane Catoni, Jean Ferry, Guy Gullequin, Jacques Halpern, Arthur Harfaux, Maurice Henry, Marcel Jean, Pierre Mabille, Jehan Mayoux, Francis Meunier, Maurice Nadeau, Henri Parisot, Henri Pastoureau, Benjamin Péret, N. et H. Seigle, Iaroslav Serpan, Yves Tanguy.

April 1947

DECLARATION ON THE RIGHT TO INSUBORDINATION
IN THE ALGERIAN WAR

A very important Movement is developing in France and it necessary that French and international opinion be better informed about it. At the moment that the Algerian War has taken a new turning point we must remain clear about what is involved and not forget the depth of the crisis that has opened up during the past six years.

Today more and more French people are pursued, condemned and imprisoned for having refused to participate in this war or for having helped the Algerian combatants. Misrepresented by their adversaries, but also defended under false pretences by those whose duty it is to defend them, their reasons remain generally misunderstood. It is not enough to state that such resistance to public power is respectable. A protest of honour, justice and truth such as this has a significance that is important to grasp irrespective of whatever happens in the course of events.

For the Algerians the struggle, whether followed by military or diplomatic means, involves no equivocation. It is plainly a war of national independence. But what is it for the French? It is not a foreign war. French territory has never been threatened. More than this: it is a war directed against a people that the State is determined to call French, even though they are struggling precisely for the means by which no longer to be so considered. It is not even sufficient to define it as a war of conquest, an imperialist war, accompanied by an accentuation of racism, although it is both. The equivocation remains.

In fact, by a decision that constitutes a fundamental abuse, the State has today mobilised entire classes of citizens for the sole end of carrying out what it admits is a police operation against an oppressed population, a population in revolt only by want of elementary dignity, since it wishes only to be recognised at last as an independent community.

Neither a war of conquest, nor a war of 'national defence', the Algerian War has little by little become an action that serves only the interests of the army itself and the caste it has thrown up, which refuses to give an inch faced with an upheaval of which even the civil power, if we take account of the general collapse of colonial empires, seems to recognise the validity.

Today it is primarily the will of the army that sustains this criminal and absurd combat, and this army, through the political role that several of its highest representatives have required it to play, sometimes acts openly and violently beyond all legality. As such it betrays the role that the whole country has entrusted to it and runs the risk of perverting the nation itself, by forcing its citizens, under orders, to be accomplices of a factious and degrading action. Do we have to recall that, fifteen years after the destruction of the Hitlerian order, French militarism, by following the demands of such a war, is party to the restoration of torture and to reinstating it as an institution in Europe?

It is in such conditions that so many French people have come to bring into question traditional values and obligations. What can good citizenship mean when, in such circumstances, it becomes shameful submission? Does not the refusal to serve become a sacred duty, when 'treason' means a courageous respect for the truth? And when, by the will of those who use it as a means of racist or ideological domination, does not the army place itself in rebellion against democratic institutions and so give to the revolt against the army a new meaning?

The question of conscience has been there from the beginning of the war. As the war has continued, it is natural that such conscience should become concretized through more and more common acts of insubordination and desertion, as well as providing help and refuge for the Algerian combatants. A free movement that has developed at the margins of the official parties, without their help and, in the last analysis, in spite of their disavowal. Once more, with no need of militants and pre-established slogans, a resistance has been born through a spontaneous taking of conscience, seeking and inventing forms of action and means of struggle in accord with a new situation of which

the political groups and the press have knowingly, whether by inertia or by doctrinal timidity, whether by moral or nationalist prejudices, refused to recognise in its true meaning and its true demands.

The undersigned, believing that each person must make a stand and that it is henceforth impossible to consider such diverse facts as part of an individual adventure, and believing that they themselves, according to their position and means, are under a duty to intervene, not to give advice to those people who have personally made their decision in the face of such grave problems, but to demand that those who judge them must not be allowed the equivocation of words and values, accordingly declare:-

- We respect the refusal to take arms against the Algerian people and consider it wholly justifiable.
- We respect those French people who regard it as their duty to give aid and refuge to the Algerians who have been oppressed in the name of the French people and consider their actions justified.
- The cause of the Algerian people, which contributes in a decisive fashion to the destruction of the colonial system, is the cause of all free people.

> Jean-Louis Bédouin, Robert Benayoun, Raymond Borde, Vincent Bounoure, André Breton, Guy Cabanal, Simone Collinet, Adrien Dax, Yves Ellëouet, Jean Ferry, Dr. Theodore Fraenkel, Georges Goldfayn, Edouard Jaguer, Alain Joubert, Robert Legarde, Jacqueline Lamba, Gérard Legrand, Michel Leiris, Georges Limbour, André Masson, Pierre de Massot, Jehan Mayoux, José Pierre, André Pieyre de Mandiargues, Jean Schuster, Jean-Claude Silbermann, Claude Tarnaud, Tristan Tzara.
> 1 September 1960

[This notorious declaration, more commonly known as the 'Declaration of the 121' after the initial number of signatories, was drawn up by the Surrealist Group and was eventually signed by 247 French intellectuals. Only the names of those who have participated in surrealist activities are given here.]

APPENDIX B

DEFINITIONS OF SURREALISM

SURREALISM; n. Psychic automatism in its pure state, by which it is proposed to express -verbally, in writing or by any other means - the actual functioning of thought. The dictation of thought, in the absence of all control exercised by reason, and outside all aesthetic or moral considerations.*
ENCYCLOPEDIA: philos. Surrealism is based on the belief in the superior reality of certain forms of previously neglected associations, in the omnipotence of dream, in all the disinterested play of thought. It tends toward the ruin once and for all of all psychic mechanisms and to substitute itself for them in solving the principal problems of life.
<div align="center">ANDRE BRETON   1924</div>

* Breton was later to qualify this definition, regretting that it takes account only of "surrealism's idealist disposition" and adding, "I deceived myself (....) in advocating use of automatic thought not only removed from all control exercised by reason but also disengaged from 'all aesthetic or moral considerations'. It should at least have said *conscious* aesthetic or moral considerations.
<div align="center">ANDRE BRETON 1924/34</div>

For us surrealism IS life and there is no diversification to be introduced between what in surrealism is pure speculation of the mind and what is given as a reinstallation of life into the surrealist perspective. We need, as a first principle, to accustom ourselves to this confusion and to aim all of our strength at the establishment of such confusion.
<div align="center">ANTONIN ARTAUD 1925</div>

Surrealism is not a new means of expression (...) it means total liberation of the mind *and all that resembles it.* Surrealism is not a poetic form. It is a cry of the mind turning back on itself, and it is determined to break apart from its fetters, even if it must be by material means!
<div align="center">FRENCH SURREALIST GROUP 1925</div>

Surrealism is for me nothing but the insidious extension of the invisible, the unconscious within reach.

<div align="center">ANTONIN ARTAUD   1926</div>

The vice called *surrealism* is the disordered and impassioned use of the image as a drug, or rather the uncontrolled provocation of the image for itself and for what it brings in the domain of representation by way of imperturbable metamorphosis: for each image, every time, forces you to reconsider the whole Universe.
<div align="center">LOUIS ARAGON 1927</div>

Everything I love, everything I think and feel, leads me to a particular philosophy of immanence in accord with which surreality is comprised in reality itself and is neither superior not external to it. Thereby the contained is also the content.
<div align="center">ANDRE BRETON 1928</div>

Surrealism is at best a notion that slips away like the horizon before the walker, for like the walker it is a relation between the spirit and that which it will never attain.
<div align="center">LOUIS ARAGON   1928</div>

Everything tends to make us believe that there exists a certain point of the mind at which life and death, real and imaginary, past and future, communicable and incommunicable, high and low, cease to be perceived contradictorily. It would thus be vain to seek in surrealist activity any other aim than the hope of determining this point.
<div align="center">ANDRE BRETON 1929</div>

The idea of surrealism tends simply towards the total recuperation of our psychic strength by a means that is simply the vertiginous descent into ourselves, the systematic illumination of hidden places and the progressive darkening of other places, perpetual promenading in the middle of forbidden zones.
ANDRE BRETON 1929

A certain ambiguity contained in the word *surrealism* is capable [...] of leading one to suppose that it designates I know not what transcendental attitude, when on the contrary it expresses [...] a desire to deepen the foundations of the real, to bring about an ever clearer and at the same time more passionate consciousness of the world perceived by the senses.
ANDRE BRETON 1934

Surrealism, which is the constructive evolution of Dadaism, seeks to integrate human poetry into true life, which is to say that it it hereby implicitly submits itself to the dialectical movement of becoming human. Its limits can only be those of mankind in relation to the earth and vice versa.

MARCEL LECOMTE/E.L.T. MESENS 1934

Surrealism is the collective experience of individualism.

ANDRE MASSON 1938

Surrealism is the internal terror of man, his forests, his temples, his dawns, his splendours. Surrealism consists of a representation of the formless, of that which has not yet taken form. It is the expression of the unconscious, of that which has not yet been discerned and is at the base of all mental civilisation.
ALBERTO SAVINIO 1942

Surrealism involves seeking the means to effectively explore the personal and collective unconscious; the determination to reject the enormously antiquated vision of beauty presented by the Cartesian bourgeoisie based on a Greco-Latin-Louis XIV pseudo-classicism. The determination to draw closer to the arts of the so-called primitives, naives and savages. The will to introduce into such exploration a dialectical critical approach with all the tools forged by materialism, biological science, psychoanalysis etc. [...] The most important thing is to introduce knowledge into a domain denied by academic science and exploited by charlatans, which is to say the relation of man and the cosmos.

PIERRE MABILLE 1943

Surrealism can exist only in continual opposition towards the entire world and towards itself, it is a negation of the negation directed towards the most inexpressible delirium without, it hardly needs saying, losing one or another aspect of its revolutionary power.

GHERASIM LUCA 1944

Surrealism - which is catching fire - in the sense of being an autonomous doctrine or a specific method, does not exist. But it is a historic fact that this fire still illuminates the intellectual landscape as far as the horizon.
PAUL NOUGE 1947

Surrealism is not a school, but a state of mind. Nobody belong to this movement, but everybody is part of it. Is surrealism disappearing? No, because it is neither here nor there: it is elsewhere It is a phantom, a brilliant obsession.
MAURICE BLANCHOT 1947

SURREALISM IS THAT WHICH WILL BE.
FRENCH SURREALIST GROUP 1947

To be nothing. To be everything. To open the individual.
To navigate. To awaken. To conceal.

FRENCH SURREALIST GROUP (Slanislas Rodanski) 1948

Neither a school nor a sect, so much more than an attitude, surrealism is, in the most aggressive and total sense of the term, an adventure. An adventure of mankind and of the real thrown together in the same movement.

FRENCH SURREALIST GROUP 1951

Surrealism is a tornado on the edge of an atmospheric depression where the norms of humanist individualism founder.

JACQUES LACAN 1958

Surrealism is the desperate attempt of poetry to incarnate itself in history.

OCTAVIO PAZ 1959

Surrealism is the direct knowledge of reality; reality is absolute and unrelated to the various ways of interpreting it; [...] Surrealism is the knowledge of absolute thought.

RENE MAGRITTE 1965

Surrealism represents a desperate effort and passionate quest for continuity, a continuity of the subject with its own internal spirit and [...] also a will towards continuity between the subject and the external world.

PHILIPPE AUDOIN 1966

Surrealism is not poetry but a poetics and even more, and more decisively, a vision of the world. External revelation, inspiration breaks the subjectivist labyrinth: it is something that assaults us as soon as consciousness dozes, something that irrupts through a door that only opens when the doors of wakefulness close. Internal revelation, it causes our belief in the unity and identity of that same consciousness to waver: there is no self and within each of us diverse voices are in conflict. (...) the true originality of surrealism consists not only in having made of inspiration an idea but, more radically, an *idea of the world*.

OCTAVIO PAZ 1966

Surrealism is always what will be. it will be the contrary of what it has been if its maintains its living heritage.

VINCENT BOUNOURE 1967

Surrealism is a preface to a future sensibility.

ALAIN JOUFFROY 1971

Surrealism is in search of an authentic language, the language of negation, as the great refusal to accept the rules of a game in which the dice are loaded.

NICOLAS CALAS 1981

DEFINITIONS OF ANTHROPOLOGY

Genealogy or issue which they had, Artes which they studied, Actes which they did. This part of History is named Anthropology.

R. HARVEY 1593

Anthropologie, or the history of human nature, is, in the vulgar (yet just) impression, distinguished in two volumes: the first entitled Psychologie, the nature of the rational soule discoursed; the other anatomie, or the fabrick or structure of the body of man revealed in dissection...

ANON 1655

Anthropology includes the consideration both of the human body and soul, with the laws of their union, and the effects thereof, as sensation, motion,etc.

ANON (18th Century)

A discourse upon human nature. Among Divines, that manner of expression by which the inspired writers attribute human parts and passions to God.

BRITISH ENCYCLOPEDIA 1822

Anthropology is the branch of natural history which treats man and the races of man.

TOPINARD 1876

Social Anthropology [...] is limited to the crude beginings, the rudimentary development of human society. [...] Its province may be divided into two departments, one of which embraces the customs and beliefs of savages, while the other includes such relics of these customs and beliefs as have survived in the thought and institutions of more cultured people.

J.G. FRAZER 1908

It may be [...] described as the 'science of man', which compasses two main divisions - the one which deals with natural man [...]; the other which is concerned with man in relation to his fellows.

A.C. HADDON 1910

In its power to make us understand the roots from which our civilisation has sprung [anthropology] impresses us with the relative value of all forms of culture, and thus serves as a check to an exaggerated valuation of the standpoint of our period, which we are only too liable to consider the ultimate goal of human evolution, thus depriving ourselves of the benefits to be gained from the teachings of other cultures and hindering an objective criticism of our own work.

FRANZ BOAS 1911

Anthropology is the whole history of man as fired and pervaded by the idea of evolution. Man in evolution - that is the subject in its full reach. Anthropology studies man as he occurs at all times. It studies him as he occurs in all known parts of the world. It studies his body and soul together - as a bodily organism, subject to conditions operating in time and space, which bodily organism is in intimate relation with a soul-life also subject to those same conditions.

R.R. MARRETT 1912

Social anthropology is the study that seeks to formulate the general laws that underlie the phenomena of culture. Ethnology is the history of peoples, including the history.

A.R.RADCLIFFE-BROWN 1923

Anthropology is the science of man and of his culture at various levels of development. it includes the study of the human frame, of racial distinctions, of civilisation, of social structure, and of man's mental reaction to his environment. We confine our attention to the study of culture, and, since the study of living peoples uses methods and controls sources of information entirely different from those at the disposal of archaeology and pre-history, we restrict our scope to the study of modern living representatives of primitive mankind.

BRONISLAW MALINOWSKI 1926

Anthropology deals with man as a social being. The races, languages and cultures found in different localities and following one another in the course of time are the material and contain the problems of methodological study [...] Its subject matter includes all the phenomena of the social life of man without limitation of time and space.

FRANZ BOAS 1930

Anthropology is the study of human beings as creatures of society. It fastens its attention upon those physical characteristics and industrial techniques, those conventions and values, which distinguish one community from all others belonging to a different tradition.

RUTH BENEDICT 1934

Ethnology is the science of peoples and their cultures and life histories as groups, irrespective of their degree of advancement.

A.R. KROEBER 1948

The Social Anthropologist studies society directly, living among them for months or years, whereas sociological research is usually from documents and largely statistical. The social anthropologist studies societies as wholes - he studies their ecologies, their economies,their legal and political institutions,their family and kinship organisations, their religion, their technologies, their arts etc as parts of general social systems.

E.E. EVANS-PRITCHARD 1951

In social anthropology [...] we attempt to extend our knowledge of man and society to 'primitive' communities, 'simpler peoples' or 'preliterate societies'.

S.F.NADEL 1953

Social anthropology may be defined as the investigation of the nature of human society by the systematic comparison of societies of diverse types, with particular attention to the simpler forms of society of primitive, savage or non-literate people.

A.R. BRADCLIFFE-BROWN 1958

Anthropology means 'talking about man' as psychology means' talking about mind'.

LUCY MAIR 1965

Social anthropologists study people's customs, social institutions and values, and the ways in which these are interrelated. They carry out their investigations mainly in the context of living communities [...] and their central not their only interest is in systems of social relations.

JOHN BEATTIE 1964

Cultural anthropology is a circumscribed enterprise in exploring the extremities and possibilities of our own thought and culture.

BOB SCHOLTE 1970

Anthropology is a view of the human condition and a means towards gaining some removal from and perspective on our own lives [...] it attempts to explain the ways in which various societies are organised and to analyze their civilisations.

ROBERT F. MURPHY 1979

If there is an overall aim today that is both intellectually and morally commendable in the mission that is anthropology - the 'study of man' - it is not only that the study of other societies reveals the way in which they are influenced by ours but also that such investigations provide us with some critical leverage with which to assess and understand the sacrosanct and unconscious assumptions that are built into and emerge from our social forms.

MICHAEL TAUSSIG 1979

The question What is Anthropology deserves at least three different answers. The first has to do with curiosity about foreign people. This is a characteristic anthropologists share with others, both past and present. The second response concerns the development of anthropology as a profession with distinct standards for membership and practice. And the third response concerns anthropology as an academic discipline that offers a general perspective on the human condition.

JEANNE GUILLERMAN 1981

Today the label 'anthropology' covers two quite different disciplines which were in no way predestined for a monogamous union: interpretive ethnography, a lively and somewhat troubled discipline, and anthropology properly speaking, which consists of little more than a vague scientific project nursed in a compost of philosophical reminiscence.

DAN SPERBER 1981

However else anthropology could be defined, to do anthropology meant to study a specific community through long-term participant observation.

LADISLAV HOLY 1984

ANCESTORS OF SURREALISM - SURREALIST MYTHS

ERUTARETTIL

Hermès trismégiste   Apulée   Lulle   Flamel   Corneille Agrippa   Bœte

Leibnitz

Racine   La religieuse portugaise   Pascal

YOUNG   Fichte

Radcliffe   Keats   Byron   HEGEL
de Saint Martin

LEWIS   MATHURIN

Lermontov

Mickiéwicz

Borel   Nerval

HUGO   RABBE   BERTRAND

BAUDELAIRE   LAUTRÉAMONT
RIMBAUD

Maeterlinck   Gail   Saint-Pol-Roux
Loeye

APOLLINAIRE   FANTÔMAS
Reverdy

— 24 —

Erasme   S   Mille et une nuits

Arétin

Perrault   SWIFT

Leprince de Beaumont   BAFFO

Diderot   Rousseau   Laclos   SADE.
Nerciat   Restif   Marat

Chateaubriand

Constant   Sénancour

Desbordes-Valmore   Grandville   Lacenaire
Aymard   Sue

Cherret

Poittevin

NOUVEAU   Zola
Péladan

JARRY   Huysmans

Ramrun

VACHÉ   Roussel   Cravan

— 25 —

LISEZ :	NE LISEZ PAS :	LISEZ :	NE LISEZ PAS :
Heraclite.	Platon.	Lautréamont.	Kraft-Ebbing.
	Virgile.		Taine.
Lulle.	St Thom. d'Aquin.	Rimbaud.	Verlaine.
Flamel.		Nouveau.	Laforgue.
Agrippa.	Rabelais.	Huysmans.	Daudet.
Scève.	Ronsard	Caze.	
	Montaigne.	Jarry.	Gourmont.
Swift.	Molière.	Becque.	Verne.
Berkeley.		Allais.	Courteline.
	La Fontaine.	Th. Flournoy.	Mme de Noailles.
La Mettrie.		Hamsun.	Philippe.
Young.		Freud.	Bergson.
Rousseau.	Voltaire.	Lafargue.	Jaurès.
Diderot.			Durckheim.
Holbach.			Lévy-Brühl.
Kant.	Schiller.	Lénine.	Sorel.
Sade.	Mirabeau.	Synge.	Claudel.
Laclos.		Apollinaire.	Mistral.
Marat.	Bern. de St Pierre.	Roussel.	Péguy.
Babeuf.	Chénier.	Léautaud.	Proust
Fichte.	Mme de Staël.	Cravan.	d'Annunzio.
Hegel.		Picabia.	Rostand.
Lewis.		Reverdy.	Jacob.
Arnim.	Hoffmann.	Vaché.	Valéry.
Maturin.		Maïakovsky.	Barbusse.
Rabbe.	Schopenhauer.	Chirico.	Mauriac.
A. Bertrand.	Vigny.	Savinio.	Toulet.
Nerval.	Lamartine.	Neuberg.	Malraux.
Borel.	Balzac.		Kipling.
Feuerbach.	Renan.		Gandhi.
Marx.			Maurras.
Engels.	Comte.		Duhamel.
	Mérimée.		Benda.
	Fromentin.		Valois.
Baudelaire.	Leconte de Lisle.		Vautel.
Cros.	Banville.		Etc., etc., etc...

Back cover of a
catalogue of books
issued by José Corti,
Paris, 1931.

The Nights of Young are surrealist from beginning to end. Unfortunately it is a priest who is speaking, a bad priest no doubt, but a priest all the same.
Swift is surrealist in malice.
Sade is surrealist in sadism.
Chateaubriand is surrealist in politics.
Hugo is surrealist when he isn't stupid.
Desbordes-Valmore is surrealist in love.
Bertrand is surrealist in the past.
Rabbe is surrealist in death.
Poe is surrealist in adventure.
Baudelaire is surrealist in morality.
Rimbaud is surrealist in the practice of life and elsewhere.
Mallarmé is surrealist in confidences.
Jarry is surrealist in absinthe.
Nouveau is surrealist in the kiss.
Saint-Pol-Roux is surrealist in the symbol.
Fargue is surrealist in atmosphere.
Vaché is surrealist in me.
Reverdy is surrealist at home.
Saint-John- Perse is surrealist at a distance.
Roussel is surrealist as a storyteller.
        André Breton: *Manifesto of Surrealism* 1924)
Heraclitus is surrealist in dialectic.
Albertus Magnus is surrealist in the automaton.
Lulle is surrealist in definition.
Flamel is surrealist in the night of gold.
Uccello is surrealist in the free for all fight.
Radcliffe is surrealist in the landscape.
Carrier is surrealist in drowning.
Monk Lewis is surrealist in the beauty of evil.
Maturin in surrealist in despair.
Arnim is an out and out surrealist and chiefly in time and space.
Nerval is surealist in allegory.
Borel is surealist in liberty.
Forneret is surrealist in the maxim.
Hervey Saint-Denis is surrealist in the directed dream.
Cross is surrealist in the mirror of the ear.
Carroll is surrealist in nonsense.
Gustave Moreau is surrealist in fascination.
Huysmans is surrealist in pessimism.
Allais is surrealist in mystification.
Helen Smith is surrealist in the tongue.
Picasso is surrealsit in cubism.
Cravan is surrealist in the challenge.
Chirico is surrealist in the effigy.
Duchamp is surrealist in the game.
Mac Sennet is surrealist in movement.
The Postman Cheval is surrealist in architecture.
        (André Breton 'Surrealism yesterday, today, tomorrow' in *This Quarter*, Sept 1932)
Seurat is surrealist in the motif.
        (André Breton: *Qu'est-ce que c'est le surréalisme?* (1934)

WILL YOU OPEN THE DOOR

If the following people were to call at your door would you open it? The Surrealist Group in Paris responded as follows in 1954:

	Yes	No		Yes	No
Balzac	9	7	Lenin	15	2
Barbey d'Aurevilly	10	6	Mallarmé	10	7
Baudelaire	17	0	Marx	11	6
Bettina	6	7	Moreau	15	0
Brisset	12	2	Nerval	16	1
Cesanne	2	15	Nietzsche	9	6
Chatêaubriand	7	10	Nouveau	15	1
Juliette Drouet	13	2	Novalis	16	0
Fourier	15	2	Poe	7	9
Freud	16	1	De Quincey	16	0
Fulcanelli	12	1	Robespierre	13	4
Gauguin	14	2	H. Rousseau	15	2
Goethe	8	8	J. J. Rousseau	15	2
Goya	15	2	Seurat	11	5
Caroline de Guederode	11	0	Stendhal	8	5
Hegel	14	3	Van Gogh	13	4
Hugo	10	7	Verlaine	2	14
Huysmans	14	3			

SURREALISM: MYTHOLOGICAL ANALOGIES

1. *Playing-cards*

	MAGUS	SIREN	GENII
REVOLUTION	*Pancho Villa*	*Lamiel*	*Sade*
DREAM	*Freud*	*Alice*	*Lautréamont*
LOVE	*Novalis*	*Portuguese Nun*	*Baudelaire*
KNOWLEDGE	*Paracelsus*	*Helène Smith*	*Hegel*

2. *The Zodiac*

1. ARIES   *The Fashionable Tiger* (story by Jean Ferry)
2. TAURUS-   *Falmer's Head of Hair* (from Lautréamont)
3. GEMINI-   *The Gile Monster* (from Arizona)
4. CANCER-   *Jeanne Sabrenas* (from Jarry)
5. LEO -   *Léonie d'Ashby* (from Rimbaud)
6. VIRGO -   *The Secreatry Bird* (a lizard eater)
7. LIBRA -   *The Gravity Manager* (from Duchamp)
8. SCORPIO -   *The Candylura* (Star-faced mole spoken of by medieval authors
9. SAGITARIUS - *The Wolf Table* (painting by Brauner)
10. CAPRICORN - *Raymond Roussel*
11. AQUARIUS - *The Great Invisibles*
12. PISCES-   *The Window of Magna sed Apta* (from *Peter Ibbetson*)

3. The Tarot

1. THE JUGGLER - *Melmoth the Wanderer*
2. THE PAPESS - *Life and death of the Postman Cheval*
3. THE EMPRESS - *Reveries of the Solitary Walker* (Rousseau)
4. THE EMPERER - *The Golden Bough*
5. THE POPE - *Les Fleurs du mal*
6. THE LOVER - Hölderlin: *Poems of Madness*
7. THE CHARIOT - *Justine* (Sade)
8. JUSTICE- *Sermons* (Eckhart)
9. THE HERMIT - *Christian Rozencrantz's Nuptials*
10. THE WHEEL OF FURTUNE - *The Trial* (Kafka)
11. STRENGTH - *The Harness and the Saddle Horse Through the Ages* (Lefebvre de Noettes
12 THE HANGED MAN - *The Science of God* (Brisset)
13. DEATH - *The Rotting Enchanteur* (Apollinaire)
14. TEMPERANCE - *Memorabilia* (Swedenberg)
15. THE DEVIL - *Ubu Roi*
16. TOWER OF DESTRUCTION - *Faust Part 2*
17. THE STAR- *Theory of the Four Movements* (Fourier)
18. THE MOON- *And the Moon Shone and the Dew Fell* (Forneret)
19. THE SUN - *Dreams and How to Control Them* (Hervey de Saint-Denis)
20. JUDGEMENT - John: *Apocalypse*
21. THE WORLD - Lautréamont: *Complete Works*

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