

**ARCHAEOLOGY OF TROBRIAN KNOWLEDGE. FOUCAULT IN
THE TROBRIAND ISLANDS**

David Patrick Slattery

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**ARCHAEOLOGY OF TROBRIAND KNOWLEDGE.
Foucault in the Trobriand Islands**

by

DAVID PATRICK SLATTERY

For the Degree of Ph.D.

April 1992.

University of St. Andrews



Declarations.

I, David Slattery, hereby certify that this thesis, which is approximately ...80,000..... words in length, has been written by me, that it is the record of work carried out by me and that it has not been submitted in any previous application for a higher degree.

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I was admitted as a research student under Ordinance No. 12 in July 1988 and as a candidate for the degree of Ph.D. in February 1990; the higher study for which this is a record was carried out in the University of St. Andrews between 1988 and 1992.

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Date 24/4/92. Signature of supervisor ..Adrian W.J.

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Dedicated to the memory of Mary Herbert
- a dear friend and classmate.

ABSTRACT.

This thesis holds that the application of the archaeological method, developed by the French philosopher Michel Foucault, to the field of anthropology reveals a hitherto hidden primitive episteme. Such a project represents a rejection of a search for a fundamental Truth, available through the traditional figures of rationality, either vertically in history or horizontally across cultures. The form of reason posited by this project does not have a constant and universal occurrence but is given in the discontinuous figures of the episteme. The quest for a single manifestation of the conditions of validity in reason is replaced by a study of the conditions of possibility of the truths, discourses and institutions of a primitive peoples.

The conditions of possibility for the emergence of the elements of primitive knowledge and practices are available through the application of the explanatory unities of the archaeological method. These unities replace the traditional explanatory role of the subject, with all of its psychological baggage, which has a central role in modern theories of rationality. The subject-knowledge link that dominates traditional anthropological analyses is replaced by a power-knowledge link that postulates the two axes of discursive and non-discursive concerns. The discursive axis is concerned with the objects, concepts, statements and discursive formations of primitive knowledge while the non-discursive axis is concerned with the systems of power that propagate and sustain those discourses. These two axes constitute the nature of the archaeology employed in this study.

This thesis is sustained by both negative and positive evidence. The negative evidence takes the form of an anti-subjectivist thrust where the subject-dependent explanatory unities of the tradition are replaced by the positivistic elements of archaeology. The positive evidence primarily takes the form of a detailed analysis of the presence of the guiding codes of the episteme amongst the Trobriand Islanders that give rise to their primitive knowledge and practices. In this area, I make extensive use of Malinowski's ethnographic observations for their breath of detail and application without employing his subject-dependent psychological conclusions. Further, I am proposing a transformative position such that orality becomes a feature of the episteme rather than its condition of possibility.

The guiding codes of the Trobriand episteme take the form of enclosed oppositional figures that are everywhere related to space. The Trobriand episteme provides the conditions for the emergence of primitive discourses and orders the experiences of the Trobrianders. The guiding figures of the episteme are based in a form of complementary opposition, causation as vitality and a dogma of topological space that give rise to primitive knowledge which is a form of divination. A significant part of this dissertation is taken up with an examination of the detail and limitation of these figures where ideas from Levy-Bruhl, Hallpike, and others are employed to produce the most appropriate configuration for my project. A particular form of language as the manipulation of real signs, rather than ideational signs, has its possibility in this configuration which has consequences for the type of knowledge produced. The form of knowledge appropriate to the presence of such a model of language is magic. Writing has no possibility for emerging in this episteme and, therefore, there are significant consequences for the type of knowledge that can be maintained and propagated in a context which must utilise static tradition to the detriment of reflection.

An archaeological analysis of the Trobriand Islanders, focusing on discourses on sex and marriage, the nature of tabooed sexual acts, economic relations arising out of marriage and the role of the polygamous chief, the nature of love-magic and magic in general, reveals a shared possibility for all of these discursive realms in the figures of the episteme. These discourses are regulated by the presence of a fundamental opposition between a brother and his sister. This opposition forms the motif for primitive problematizations and constitutes a vulnerable boundary which is the appropriate focus of taboos relating to sex and food, amongst others.

This primitive episteme characterises the unity of the experiences of the Trobrianders. This experience is discontinuous with our own and does not involve a role for the individual ego. This project represents a worthwhile contribution to an understanding of human experience and knowledge in general which does not seek to reduce the natural diversity of man to just the monotonous experience of modern man. In conclusion, I tentatively speculate about the appropriateness of the Trobriand figures for primitive experience in general.

**ARCHAEOLOGY OF TROBRIAND KNOWLEDGE.
Foucault in the Trobriand Islands**

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CHAPTER 1.

Archaeology and Discourse.

' - my aim is most decidedly not to use the categories of cultural totalities (whether world views, ideal types, the particular spirit of an age) in order to impose on history, despite itself, the forms of structural analysis. The series described, the limits fixed, the comparisons and correlations made are based not on the old philosophies of history, but are intended to question teleologies and totalizations;' [Foucault 1972, pp.15-16].

1.1 Introduction.

Anthropologists who analyse some primitive society in terms of the individual goals and strategies of its members may not be doing anything other than trying to understand that society in terms of our own experience rather than describing its episteme and understanding it within those terms. The same might be said of those who ascribe the primitive the same rationality as ourselves, such as Malinowski or Evans Pritchard, or of those who argue for the psychic unity of mankind, etc. In this study, I try to avoid such subject-centred approaches in favour of the positivistic elements of Michel Foucault's archaeological analysis. My thesis is that the application of archaeology to anthropology, in the field of Trobriand knowledge, reveals a hitherto hidden primitive episteme. That episteme, when elaborated, will make it possible to understand the natives of the Trobriand Islands within their own epistemological frame of reference.

I am applying the archaeological method to the Trobri-

and culture in order to reveal the source of the validity and objectivity of their knowledge in an epistemological guiding code that takes the form of enclosed circular areas of bounded oppositions that rival one another.

The uncovering of the episteme governing Trobriand knowledge has its condition of possibility only in archaeology. The primitive episteme of the Trobrianders is characterised by figures of asymmetric opposition and it is these guiding codes that make the knowledge of that culture possible. An understanding of the nature, efficacy and limitation of all primitive knowledge must surely be related to the project of the elaboration of these Trobriand epistemic figures. I will tentatively suggest that the metaphorical figures outlined may have a more general application.

I offer two types of evidence in support of my thesis. Firstly, there is the negative evidence of the anti-subjectivist thrust. In order to reveal the guiding figures of this episteme, I am setting out to offer an alternative to the entire terms of traditional anthropological discourses. The subjective-type explanations of culture and subject-dependent explanatory unities such as 'man', 'science', 'reason', etc. are set aside in order to appreciate the epistemic significance of the elements of the primitive Trobriand knowledge. These epistemic elements have a positivistic nature that avoids problems of interpretation and meaning in the new anthropology. An analysis of the relation

between power and knowledge replaces the concern with the relation between the subject and his knowledge in the traditional approach. The particular archaeology that is to be employed in this study, while not the genealogy of Foucault's later work, is nevertheless concerned with the power-knowledge relation that links discursive and nondiscursive practices within the episteme. In this chapter, I examine the elements that focus on the nature of the discursive aspects of archaeology, specifically those explanatory and descriptive terms pertaining to knowledge, while in the next chapter, I examine that which pertains to the power aspect so that the two can be combined to reveal the exact nature of the archaeology that is to be utilised throughout this study.

Secondly, the positive evidence that is offered is of two kinds. On the one hand, I propose a transformative position such that I make orality a feature of the episteme rather than its condition of possibility which is a view held by more traditional approaches. On the other hand, there is a detailed analysis of the guiding codes that give rise to the primitive bodies of knowledge and practices amongst the Trobrianders. These codes take the form of the enclosed bounded figures of opposition and provide the conditions for the possibility of primitive discourses and institutions within that culture. I offer a detailed account of how these codes function with respect to the Trobriand

discourses and practices focusing on kinship, wealth and magic.

Archaeology is a form of analysis that was developed exclusively by Foucault. The method offers an alternative to the explanatory assumptions of the kind of approach that makes rationality, consciousness, agency, universal truth, etc. the core of the intellectual enterprise. In the place of a single central theme, such as truth, archaeology reformulates the problematic in terms of the discussion of the co-extension of knowledge. The anthropologist can relate cultural elements to the same epistemological era, the episteme, in the same way that the archaeologist can assign artifacts excavated at the same level to the same historical period. The cultural elements appropriate to this project are not the subject-related components of traditional rationalist approaches, but the elements of discourse. Discourse is the basis of cultural praxis for the archaeological method.

Archaeology avoids a transcultural treatment of primitive cultures where native themes are held to be historically constant figures. Archaeology also avoids universalist themes in favour of more local motifs and, as a consequence, eschews the type of transcultural analysis where a feature like orality is taken to be that which characterises all primitive experience. During the course of this study we will see that the figures of the episteme, through which

Trobriand knowledge is deployed, provide the possibility for an entirely oral culture and not vice versa.

1.2 The episteme.

Archaeology is a means for the analysis of discourse. It employs several important explanatory elements that replace the traditional unities of the subject-related approaches. The most significant one of these explanatory elements is the notion of the episteme. The episteme has an essential role in archaeology and an understanding of the meaning and function of this notion is a prerequisite for an understanding of that method. The episteme¹ represents the context within which the specific discourses emerge. Any discourse can only emerge within a specifiable historical context. For example, I will be examining the codes of knowledge governing the emergence of particular discourses that have their possibility in the context of the Trobriand culture.

The episteme is not a form of knowledge or type of

1. Both Foucault, in his own writings, and Merquior, in Foucault (see bib.), have compared the notion of episteme to the notion of the paradigm developed by Kuhn in The Structure of Scientific Revolutions (see bib.). However, the episteme does not refer to conscious principles like those of the paradigm but its principles are located at a level beneath the conscious choice of theory or method. The episteme is strictly rule bound whereas the paradigm offers merely procedural directives. I think that it is more profitable to recognise that there are significant differences between the two models. If any emphasis is to be placed on one difference it must surely be the historical stress (historical apriori) that the epistemic context carries which is absent in the paradigmatic analysis.

rationality which manifests the unity of a subject, a spirit or a period [Foucault 1972, p.191]. It is the historical condition for the possibility of discourse which manifests itself as different sets of epistemological guiding figures or philosophical theories. Since the elements of discourse are knowledge this implies that any particular piece of knowledge may be referred back to its guiding epistemic figure. The set of constraints and limitations that, at a given time, are imposed on a particular discourse can be apprehended by understanding the discursive inter-relations at the level of the particular epistemic figure. These limitations are not areas of ignorance but are what make the existence of epistemological figures and discursive functions in discourse possible.

Foucault outlines three examples of different epistemic configurations which have provided guiding codes for the knowledge claims of their related epistemes. There is the Renaissance characterised by the epistemological figure of resemblance; the Classical Age of the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries which is characterised by the philosophical theory of representation; and the Modern Age from the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries characterised by agency or consciousness. These three configurations provide, for Foucault, the three principal historical contexts for the emergence of knowledge in Western civilisation. They represent the three main ruptures, or disconti-

nunities, in our Western historical experience. They can provide us with concrete examples of how the episteme functions to relate all of its bodies of knowledge together in terms of its constituent figures, and how a limit is placed on the expansion of that knowledge.

1.2.1 The Renaissance episteme.

The fundamental code of knowledge operating during the Renaissance was that of resemblance. This epistemological figure characterised the knowledge and the discursive formations (with their objects, strategies and theoretical themes) of this era. It determined the limitations of that knowledge, what features were included or excluded from it (the regularities) and the way in which the knowledge and discourses were formed. Resemblance had a formative role in the knowledge of Western culture up to the end of the sixteenth century. It made knowledge of things possible because it formed the fundamental structure of knowledge.

Resemblance had four essential figures that determined the kinds of knowledge available in the Renaissance episteme. They were convenience, emulation, analogy and sympathy/antipathy¹. These figures were the means by which the

1. Resemblance is a form of divination where convenience forms a linear chain of inter-locking circles of similarities; emulation forms a series of circles which reflect and rival one another; analogy forms a series of concentric circles; sympathy/antipathy is the force that holds these patterns together but at the same time prevents them from collapsing upon each other.

things of the Renaissance world were brought together and held apart. The bringing together of things that were near to each other in space and time, that looked similar or had analogous components, formed sixteenth century truth.

Resemblance characterised the regularity of the discursive formations arising within the Renaissance episteme. Only concepts characterised by resemblance could function within that context. The regularity that was formed constitutes a tight network of necessities that linked together all the elements of Renaissance knowledge. This regularity authorised theoretical choices and practical speculation while providing a link between desires and knowledge. In the Renaissance episteme, to possess knowledge meant to be able to show the system of resemblances that made things dependent on each other. Resemblance provided a chain of causal relations in the world.

Resemblance encompassed empirical sciences, languages, philosophical pre-suppositions, superstitions and the natural sciences. This epistemological figure provided the rational basis for all these forms of knowledge in this era. The archaeological analysis of the Renaissance shows us the inter-relations between these discourses (their shared regularity in figures of resemblance). They are not characterised in terms of the truth of the rigorous sciences such as physics, chemistry or mathematics and the folly of the looser disciplines. Resemblance does not function by

recognising a duality in knowledge between truth and error, rational and irrational, etc. The archaeological rationality uncovered within this episteme recognises only one form of reason, resemblance, and this reason encompassed all of the true and false knowledge claims of that era. Certain types of mistakes were made possible in this way. The 'rational' figure of archaeology makes error possible in the same way that it constitutes the truth. The Order of Things deals in detail with the particular functioning of this epistemological figure. Another type of divination is available, in the primitive Trobriand episteme, where enclosed circular spaces rival one another in a complex way. The relations of the Trobriand episteme is the form of reason available to the natives and does not divide knowledge simply between truth and error.

Foucault claims that, at the beginning of the seventeenth century, Western knowledge ceased to be associated with the epistemological figure of resemblance [Foucault 1970, p.51]. Resemblance became exclusively a source of error, where resemblances were regarded as mere chimera, and no longer a source of truth. The same can be said of the primitive knowledge when it was first encountered by Western European man.

1.2.2 The Classical episteme.

Classical thought excluded resemblance as the fundamental experience and primary form of knowledge. The Classical

episteme is characterised by the philosophical theory of representation. This theory constitutes the particular mode of rationality of the knowledge claims of the Classical Age. The theory of representation provided the conditions for the possibility of Classical knowledge, from reflections on economics to analyses of language. The archaeological analyses of the knowledge of the Classical Age are made possible by an examination of the theories of grammar of that era: these theories can be found in the discipline of General Grammar. A study of Classical grammatical theoretical choices makes an archaeology of the economics and medical/botanical discourses possible and reveals the common regularity of these disciplines in a taxionomic strategy.

Representation formed tables of knowledge in the Classical age as opposed to the circular figures of resemblance. The study of General Grammar provides the strategies, techniques and theoretical choices, indeed, the whole group of discursive statements that define the elements of the epistemic figure of representation. Again, this is outlined in detail in The Order of Things.

The analysis of representation determined all of the domains of knowledge of the Classical Age. Knowledge had its possibility in representation when representation represented itself. In this way, language was regarded as simply the representation of words; nature was simply the representation of beings; wealth was simply the representation of

needs [Foucault 1970, p.209].

1.2.3 The Modern episteme.

Foucault maintains that, in the later years of the eighteenth century, the Classical episteme was replaced by the Modern episteme in much the same way as the Classical had, in its turn, come to replace that of the Renaissance. Because of these epistemic replacements we can identify discontinuities in the history of Western knowledge. Such transformations cannot be explained in the archaeology of knowledge. However, their effects can be outlined [Foucault 1970, p.217]. The transformation from the Classical to the Modern episteme was not brought about by an increase in the objectivity of knowledge, or in a more precise technique in scientific research and information, or a few fortunate discoveries, or a little good luck or genius. On the contrary, this change came about because of the break down of representation. Indeed, representation had its own possibility for collapse built into it as a condition of its own existence. This collapse did not come from somewhere external to it.

The guiding code of knowledge in the Modern Age is a configuration centred on human agency. In this figure, knowledge claims are produced by a knowing subject. The concepts of 'man' and 'self' have their possibility here, and individuals are constituted as subjects within this figure. Further, the activities of traditional historians

and anthropologists belong to this episteme.

Human experience in general, where it diverges from the Western, allows us to identify further epistemological discontinuities. A primitive epistemic system may be added to those three outlined above. The Trobriand Islanders manifest the operation of an episteme that is characterised by the epistemological figure of asymmetry as a form of emulation, convenience and enclosed circular spaces. This is a divinational model and later I will examine in detail how these particular figures work and how this epistemic configuration, in the context of the Trobrianders, which gives rise to their particular forms of knowledge, differs from the conventional Western epistemological figure of agency.

1.3 The terms of archaeology.

The notion of the episteme is the principal explanatory unit to be employed in archaeology. Other important concepts in the method include the notions of positivity, statement, discursive formation and regularity. The notion of positivity refers to the way in which we can identify the rules that are employed in a discursive practice to form objects, strategies, concepts or theoretical choices. These rules constitute the preconditions of what functions as an item of knowledge or error within a particular episteme. In Western societies this knowledge often acquires the status of a science. However, we will see how it is that the Trobriand episteme contains no techniques for constituting its endemic

forms of knowledge in terms of an opposition between science and superstition since these divisions have no possibility there. Within contemporary knowledge the subject is formed in different ways according to the various objects, strategies and theoretical themes in operation in a particular knowledge configuration. Again, in the primitive experience we will learn how it is that this type of formation of the subject is absent. There cannot be knowledge outside of a particular discursive practice and, indeed, discursive practices can only be defined in terms of the knowledge that they produce [Foucault 1972, p.193].

The positivity of a discourse characterises its unity within an episteme and allows us to say, once this unity is identified, that two people are using the same concept in the same way. The unity of a discourse, the limitations, functions, objects and theoretical choices that characterise that particular discourse, are encompassed by the notion of positivity. This conception of discursive unity replaces more traditional unities. Examples of the more traditional unities are that two people come from the same place, that they both speak English, French, etc., that they are both speaking at the same historical time, etc. These forms of continuity, concerning the speaking subject, are suspended in archaeology. The unity of positivity reveals to what extent subjects are talking about the same thing by placing themselves at the same level within the same conceptual

field. The employment of the notion of positivity indicates that the search for continuity between discourses shifts from the author, or subject of the discourse, to discursive objects. This marks a move from an intentionalist analysis to a positivistic analysis. This move is made more markedly when nondiscursive material elements are taken on board in the power analysis. The discursive field is sought, and not the author of discourses.

Positivity provides limits, or ways of identifying this discursive field. The grasping of the notion of the unity of positivity leads directly to a grasping of the notion of a shared representation. In this way, we can say that positivity provides the condition for the possibility of meaningful communication amongst the subjects of an episteme in terms of its discursive elements which are shared representations.

The analysis of statements operates without reference to a cogito since it does not pose the question of a speaking subject. This does not mean that statements are communal representations imposed on every individual. On the contrary, statements refer to the totality of things that are said, the relations between them, the regularities, and the transformations that can be observed in them [Foucault 1972, p. 122]. All statements are made by individual speakers, but, in making a statement, a speaker takes up a position that has already been defined by the rules of the relevant discursive formation [Gutting 1990, p.241]. A discourse is

possessed by a particular group of individuals in the sense of the right to speak, ability to understand, the capacity to use this discourse in decisions, institutions and practices. For example, magical discourses are possessed by primitive peoples since these discourses are understood by them and effectively used by them.

A statement is a functional unit of discourse that defines the possibility of the appearance of meaningful concepts. A concept only has meaning within the context of a statement. Statements show the function of sentences and propositions within particular discourses that are embedded in epistemic figures. Statements may have similar form but have different meanings; the meaning is determined by the rules for the construction of an expression. The rules governing magical formulae in the production of spells are good examples of primitive statements. These rules provide a contextual set of relations that include some sets of meanings and exclude others. In this way, the statement forms the contextual precondition for discursive meaning.

A statement allows signs, whether marks, figures, traces or artifacts to be more than just signs. During magical incantations the manipulation of the sign is not a mere mental activity but the manipulation of things in the world. This is the source of the efficacy of magic. A statement is the specific character that these signs have in a discursive formation. The statement puts a series of signs

into the specific forms required by the discursive formation [Foucault 1972, pp.88-105].

A discursive formation is a large group of statements which is not simply a science, a discipline or a theoretical field but, rather, the term indicates more complex problems of continuity and location and more problematic unities than the notions of science or discipline¹. These new unities of discourse are necessary for an understanding of the primitive discourses of witchcraft and economics that are not reducible to a scientific rational for their unity. The statement provides the functional basis for the unity (positivity) of a discursive formation. For example, it is necessary to identify statements of witchcraft that form the functional basis of that discourse.

A discursive formation can be questioned as to whether its forms have become established once and for all and have gone on developing in the same way through time; do they conceal other formations?; what sort of links can be recognised across the group of statements [Foucault 1972, p.31]? We can ask of a large group of statements like primitive economics, what is the nature of its unity and on what that unity is based? What counts as an answer to this type of

1. In The Order of Things Foucault appeals to his reader to suspend these more traditional unities in our understanding of history in order to facilitate entry to the archaeological method.

question is a series of gaps, differences and transformations from our own economic experience.

The rules governing a discursive formation do not have a transcendental status. These rules are simply the description of the existing relations that pertain between statements. Archaeology deals neither with prediscursive experience of things nor with the verbal forms produced by discourse. Instead of a concern with ontological or linguistic questions, archaeology focuses on a group of rules that define the ordering of discursive objects. There is more to discourse than the designation of things by signs and archaeology reveals and describes this [Foucault 1972, p.49].

The regularity of a discourse is identified in terms of the conditions, or rules of formation, of the regularities themselves. The regularity of discursive formations, the rules governing the appearance of statements, cannot be explained in terms of traditional concepts since the tradition conceives of regularity in terms of an opposition between the regular and the deviant. Archaeological regularity does not refer to frequency of occurrence or probability. It is not a universalist a priori specification but an historical a priori. Regularity refers to the effective field of the appearance of statements. An example of this can be seen later in the conditions governing the emergence of the concept of incest, and the statements related to it in the Trobriand Islands. I will argue that the conditions govern-

ing the emergence of this concept demand a field of economic statements related to it. From these we can determine the conditions for the possibility of the emergence of the concept within that particular episteme. Only archaeological analysis can reveal these rules governing the emergence of particular statements that have the function of expressing sexual taboos. We will encounter these rules in detail in the later discussions.

Discourse gives rise to certain organisations of concepts and groupings of objects. These organisations and groupings form themes or theories that are to be identified and interpreted strategically [Foucault 1972, p.64]. Archaeology questions how these strategies are distributed in history and whether they are necessary or chance encounters between different ideas or if there is a regularity between them that defines the common system of their formation.

All of these discursive elements in archaeology, outlined above, are dynamic and function at different levels and according to different rules of formation. Discursive elements are functional. Functions include such notions or concepts as contradiction, comparison and change¹. The

1. Details of the role of comparison, contradiction and change are given in 'Archaeological Description' which is Part IV of The Archaeology of Knowledge. It suffices here to acknowledge that contradictions should not be sought in a discourse simply to point to a weakness in that discourse but must be analysed to explicate the productive function of contradictions: the ways in which contradictions operate at

discursive functions characterise the specific nature of any discourse. Therefore, a discourse may be defined in terms of its discursive functions. In turn, the discursive functions may be defined in terms of the strategic choices and theoretical themes that are available within a particular episteme.

The explanatory performance of the episteme might be better understood by describing as circular the relation between the discursive elements of archaeology and the central explanatory metaphor of the episteme; a relationship that Foucault likens to that between the branches and trunk of a tree. The study of the particular discursive formations, positivities, institutions, techniques for the circulation and limitation of discourses etc. reveals the nature of the central organising metaphor and generating themes for that episteme. These themes provide, in turn, the unity of these discourses and define the limits of what counts as a shared representation. This circular explanation will have to be employed as a means of providing an account of the Trobriand episteme. The central primitive epistemological figure for the production of knowledge, truth and power systems needs to be outlined together with its limitations. The resulting forms of knowledge highlight the presence of these figures

...Continued...

different levels and give rise to new strategies and concepts within that discourse and, indeed, give rise to new disciplines.

as guiding codes in that knowledge.

1.4 Archaeology.

Archaeology is a method specifically designed for describing experience within its own historical context. In order to achieve this, it divides discourse into non-traditional unities (positivities), and investigates them by means of the unique notions of statement, discursive function, regularity, etc. Archaeology encompasses discontinuities, gaps and new forms of positivity [Foucault 1972, p.169]. Further, it distinguishes several levels within discourse; the statements themselves in their unique emergence; the appearance of objects, concepts, strategic choices within discursive formations; the derivation of rules of formation, and the substitution of one formation for another. Later, I will show that the primitive episteme of the Trobrianders is particularly static since there are no forms of discursive substitution that I could find. However, there is an abundance of examples of the other archaeological features.

The guiding codes of knowledge of a particular episteme encompass the natural, social and human sciences, superstitions, witchcraft, philosophical pre-suppositions, etc. of that particular era. The specific codes of knowledge that have their possibility in a particular context can be characterised by the identification of the epistemic figure governing the emergence of that body of knowledge in that

area. These figures enable us to identify the presence of non-sense, error or truth and knowledge in terms of the demands of a particular discursive formation, for example, effective witchcraft and ineffective witchcraft, and not just simply in terms of a singular and constant form of rationality associated with the development of Western philosophy.

The archaeological method avoids the identification of universal and necessary conditions for the possibility of knowledge but instead seeks the contextual possibility for the meaning of the concepts that occur within the intellectual lives of subjects. This method endeavours to provide the conditions for the possibility of, for example, a primitive sexual ethics and the problematisation of questions of sexual experience within that primitive space.

The archaeological analysis functions to identify discontinuities in the use of a particular concept such as 'man' or 'experience'. Therefore, it is important at the outset to suspend a linear historical conception where the concepts of our knowledge are held, either to be absent due to the particular ignorance of a people at a particular time, or to be present at that time but to have remained to a large extent hidden from the participants in that episteme. The elucidation of the discursive context for the meaning of any notion involves a dismantling of the discursive functions, strategies, technologies, sciences, judi-

cial treaties, medical themes, etc of the episteme in question.

In the Western experience, both the abstract and empirical sciences, religious beliefs and disciplines of all sorts are influenced by the codes of resemblance, representation and agency within their particular time spans. In the same way, the beliefs and practices of the Trobrianders are determined by the particular codes of opposition in operation amongst them. In brief then, the archaeological hypothesis is that all of the intellectual activity of the Trobrianders obeys the same laws of a certain configuration of knowledge. Once these laws have been elucidated it is possible to identify epistemic contexts and themes and these allow meaning to be given to the concepts that emerge from this autonomous epistemological community. This represents a project for the reconstruction of the Trobriand culture in terms of discursive and strategic elements.

1.5 Archaeology and anthropology.

Since the employment of archaeology in anthropology involves a form of reconstruction, it is appropriate to examine briefly Levi-Strauss's views on the problems that might be associated with such a project. In Structural Anthropology, he elucidates the different problems that have confounded evolutionist and diffusionist reconstructions [Levi-Strauss 1963, p.3].

The evolutionist interpretation in anthropology derives

from evolutionism in biology. According to this view, Western civilisation is regarded as the most advanced expression of the evolution of societies while primitive groups are regarded as 'survivals' of earlier stages, whose logical classification reflects their order of appearance in time [Levi-Strauss 1963, p.3]. This is unsatisfactory since given an unlimited choice of social criteria an unlimited number of evolutionary sequences may be constructed [Levi-Strauss 1963, pp.3-5].

The diffusionist interpretations, like the 'stages' of the evolutionist, are the product of an abstraction that always lacks the corroboration of empirical evidence and the history produced is conjectural and ideological [Levi-Strauss 1963, pp.6-7].

In his own structuralist solution, Levi-Strauss avoids the traditional opposition between evolutionist and diffusionist approaches since he holds that the two schools converge in a problem of reconstruction [Levi-Strauss 1963, p.3]. He refers to Boas's claim that all of the history of primitive peoples has got to be a form of reconstruction. Boas is noted for imposing rigorous criteria of validity on reconstruction. Levi-Strauss finds Boas successful where his reconstructions amount to a microhistory which cannot be related to the past [Levi-Strauss 1963, pp.6-9]. However, Malinowski reasoned that since Boas demonstrated the extent to which it was futile to seek knowledge about 'how things

have come to be' in the past, he himself could renounce an understanding of history in favour of a synchronic analysis of the relationships between the constituent elements of cultures in the present¹. However, Levi-Strauss fails to see how the functionalism of Malinowski, which resulted from this move, transcends Boas's theoretical position as it is sometimes claimed to do [Levi-Strauss 1963, p. 11].

Levi-Strauss criticises Malinowski for ignoring history and claims that it caused him to ignore an essential distinction between primary function, which corresponds to a present need of the social body, and secondary function, which survives only because the group do not give up a habit. While it is a truism to say that a society functions, it is absurd to claim that everything in a society functions [Levi-Strauss 1963, pp.12-13]. According to Levi-Strauss, where a function has a universal claim, which is far from established even with a rigorous study of all the customs of a particular type and a study of their historical development, it is merely some triviality. Levi-Strauss praised Malinowski's field work for the wealth and vividness of his data [Firth 1988, p.18]. However, he thought Malinowski's

1. In Britain, Malinowski's functionalist approach was regarded as a competitor to the older evolutionary and diffusionist historical schools [Firth 1988, p.15]. Firth tells us that Malinowski was so dismissive of Boas and his followers that he punningly described that anthropology as 'Boasinine' [Firth 1988, p.14].

theoretical approach to be incorrect in two major ways. It was essentially empiricist, focussing almost exclusively on observed behaviour, and rather than seeking underlying principles, he interpreted this behaviour in terms of overt factors. Levi-Strauss deplored this indifference to structural problems [Firth 1988, p.18].

Despite the fact that the archaeological method is involved in reconstructions this approach avoids the problems outlined by Levi-Strauss since it breaks with an analysis of man in time and is, therefore, not involved with the human science of history at the level of the problem of evolution or diffusion. This break with man in favour of an analysis of that which is behind consciousness, but is not itself a form of consciousness, marks a break with the figure of agency, which is the foundation of history, where it manifests itself as either evolutionism or diffusionism. Archaeology can concede an involvement with microhistories which are not related to the past so much as to each other.

Further, Levi-Strauss has himself addressed this question of a cultural unconscious in this context and developed his structuralist solution in that direction. He attributes the principle that anthropology draws its originality from the unconscious nature of collective phenomena to Tylor [Levi-Strauss 1963, p.18]. Tylor defines culture as a complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom and any other capabilities and habits acquired

by man as a member of society [Levi-Strauss 1963, p.18]. Levi-Strauss also credits Boas with defining the unconscious nature of cultural phenomena in terms of a comparison of cultural phenomena with language. In the same way that Boas claimed that linguistic classifications never rise to consciousness, I claim that the epistemic classifications, or guiding codes, never rise to primitive consciousness in terms of moral justifications or rational explanations. However, the Boasian analysis remained at the level of individual conscious thought. This level of intention is exactly where agency forms the positivity of the modern analysis and is not a level found in my archaeological analysis of the primitive Trobriand episteme.

The way in which this unconscious structure is apprehended marks a significant difference between structuralism and archaeology. While in agreement with Levi-Strauss's conclusion that anthropology is involved primarily with an analysis of the unconscious elements of social life, the archaeological method does not agree at the level of results. Foucault is often described as a structuralist but he took some pains to dispel this idea. While sharing the structuralists' desire to displace the human subject from theoretical concern, he has little else in common with them. The archaeological analysis reveals a structuralist framework within the Classical episteme while the modern episteme does not. This characterises the difference between archae-

ology and structuralism in that structural elements belong to the object of archaeological analysis and not to its method. We can say the same of representational and agency models as Foucault claimed of the structuralist method. Structuralism was found to be the way in which a particular episteme was organised. It remains outside of the archaeological method and belongs at the level of results. Because archaeology eliminates the fundamental role of the subject, in an approach to the history of thought, it can operate as the historical counterpart of the structuralist counter-sciences of psychoanalysis and linguistics in the move away from a conception of man as the object that constitutes the world of objects. This explains the close link between Foucault's work and structuralism and his insistence that he is not a structuralist [Gutting 1990, p.228].

1.6 Conclusions.

My focus thus far has been on the discursive elements of the archaeological method, that is, on knowledge that is the outcome of linguistic practices. However, there are relations between knowledge and nondiscursive domains [Foucault 1972, p.162]. A discourse may have a pedagogical role, a function in the political and economic decisions of governments, in the social and political struggles that characterise a particular period, in systems for organising and regulating marriage, religious ceremonies and practices. This domain involves a concern with the causal questions

relating to power. Foucault's archaeology as he presented it to us in his earlier writings was concerned with a description of the discursive formations as a condition of the possibility of symbolic connections. At that stage he was not prepared to extend archaeology to causal questions. However, according to Gutting, he began, in The Archaeology of Knowledge, to create a space for a discussion of the relation between knowledge and society that would connect the two at a fundamental level but would not require the reductionist's presuppositions of social determinism [Gutting 1990, p.257]. Foucault eventually found this space in the realm of questions of power.

Archaeology supports an understanding of power as a complex set of force relations that are distributed everywhere in discourse and are exercised through major discursive strategies. We must not conceive of power as immanent in a state body or sovereign individual but as being manifested everywhere in discourse.

The objective of this anthropological project is to analyse discourses and practices regarding sex, marriage, exchange and magic as they occur amongst the Trobrianders for their shared positivity in the figures of the episteme governing the emergence of these discourses within that group. In order to achieve this objective, the space vacated by the subject in knowledge is to be occupied by power and its effective relations so that it can be shown how these

discourses are maintained and propagated by nondiscursive practices.

CHAPTER 2.

Archaeology and Power.

'The lie of the ideal has hitherto been the curse on reality, through it mankind has become mendacious and false ..' [Nietzsche 1985, p.34].

2.1 Introduction.

The field of nondiscursive practices can be brought into the analysis by linking a notion of power to the archaeological concerns. This connection provides a causal dimension for what is principally a descriptive method. Firstly, in this chapter, I am concerned with outlining the nature of the model of power involved. The appropriate figure of power is not involved with ideology nor is it a repressive figure, that functions especially effectively with respect to the area of sex, but, on the contrary, it can have positive effects. One such positive effect is that of producing and circulating knowledge. Secondly, I raise the subject of the consequences of such a figure of power for anthropology in the context of a debate on replacing the subject-knowledge link of the tradition with the power-knowledge link of the method that I am promoting. This move can be supported by Wittgenstein and, once it is complete, it is then possible to outline the epistemological figures of the archaeology that animates the episteme of the Trobrianders.

According to Dreyfus and Rabinow, under the structuralist influence of Levi-Strauss, Lacan and Chomsky, Foucault

sought to further a formal analysis by determining the conditions and limitations of a justified formalisation [Dreyfus & Rabinow 1982, p.17]. The aim of this formal project was to rediscover on what basis knowledge became possible. Foucault employed the transitory notion of the episteme towards this end [Dreyfus & Babinow 1982, p.18]. However, Foucault eventually expressed a disappointment with The Order of Things because it lacked the problem of a discursive regime, and sought too much systematicity which he described as something like a paradigm [Foucault 1979, p.32]. In the context of this disappointment, he employed the later genealogical method to uncover the operation of power in discourse. The genealogical approach represents the application of archaeology to both discursive and nondiscursive practices and this scope of application exhibits an essential link between knowledge and power. By exploiting this connection a causal explanation of changes in discursive formations and epistemes can be achieved. Genealogy combines a causal analysis with a descriptive archaeology. According to Gutting, genealogy does not replace archaeology since it is still needed to uncover the discursive rules that constitute bodies of knowledge. However, genealogy explains changes in the history of discourse that are merely described by archaeology [Gutting 1990, p.7].

In this study, I am only concerned with a description, in the above sense, of the discursive formations of the

Trobrianders and not with an explanation of changes in those formations. The earlier archaeology is crucial for an understanding of Foucault's later development since archaeology is a key element in the later genealogical method. Therefore, I maintain the use of the term 'archaeology' but I am also concerned with nondiscursive practices and this involves a link with power.

Foucault's later analysis is concerned with the positive nature of power in producing knowledge and truth as part of its own effects. The archaeological analysis itself, as a form of discourse, belongs to a regime of power. The Modern episteme is characterised by the central role of agency. Foucault claims that the archaeological analysis has no origin in agency but falls outside of such an analysis that relies on the agent as the productive force of knowledge. Archaeology loosens its emphasis on the strictly theoretical, in favour of an exploration of the regimes of power themselves.

2.2 Power in discourse.

The archaeological analysis of power is distinct from four traditional sorts of analyses of that concept [Foucault 1979, p.49]. Firstly, it is independent from the idea of power as something definite that some people possess while other people do not. In the orthodox notion of power, there is a group of people or a class that possesses power and, in Western society, this syndicate is the bourgeoisie, intelli-

gentsia or the military, etc.

Secondly, the notion of power appropriate to archaeology is distinct from the idea that political power is always localised in a definite number of elements which are essentially the state apparatuses. The archaeological analysis is freed from this correspondence between the forms of power and political structures.

Thirdly, the archaeological conception of power is unconnected with the idea that power is always subordinate to a mode of production and, fourthly, is also unconnected with the idea that power only produces ideological effects and not knowledge [Foucault 1979, p.59]. Instead of these conceptions of power we have one where power is won or lost like a battle, and the heart of the power relation is in a war-like representation of language and not one of mere appropriation [Foucault 1979, p.60].

For Foucault, bodies of knowledge are never autonomous intellectual achievements applied as instruments of power. Rather, their constitution as knowledge depends on mechanisms of power. While power is always dangerous it is also a creative source of positive values including those of truth and knowledge [Gutting 1990, p.6]. This creative, if dangerous, conception of power is employed in this study. When the time comes to analyse the Trobriand episteme in detail, the archaeology employed will describe both the native discourses, such as magical spells, and the nondiscursive

practices, such as witchcraft, that sustain these.

Foucault believes that recourse should not be made to ideals of signs and language¹ in the analyses of historical discourses but instead the notions of war and battles should be employed as models. He suspects that the history, which determines us, is war-like and not language-like [Foucault 1979, p.33]. In this way, allusion must be made to power relations and not to the sense-relations of the philosopher since history has no sense. This does not mean that history is incalculable; it simply means that analyses exclusively in terms of linguistic meanings are incapable of making history intelligible. History is both understandable and analysable down to the slightest detail. However, such an analysis is only possible according to the rationale of disputes, strategies and tactics and not according to the intelligibility of the logic of contradiction or semiotics. Foucault says of the dialectical method that it is a way of avoiding the dangerous and open reality of our history, understood in terms of a battle, by depreciating it to the Hegelian skeleton [Foucault 1979, p.33]. In a comparable way, semiology is an expedient for avoiding the violent quality of our history by reducing it to a peaceful Platonic form of language and dialogue. The model of violent confron-

1. Examples of ideals in language are the notion of 'la langue' in structuralism and the 'proposition' in logic.

tation is relevant for an understanding of the stratagems and devices of discourses embedded in our history.

By acknowledging the presence of power in the history of our discourses, we are at once addressing the question of whom the discourse serves. In traditional political analyses the proposition of power is placed on either the 'right' or the 'left' of our political dichotomy. On the right, power is questioned exclusively in terms of constitutions, government, sovereignty, etc. and thus only in juridical terms. On the left, power is posed uniquely in terms of the state apparatus. These analyses avoid a scrutiny of the actual mechanisms of power [Foucault 1979, p.34].

2.3.1 Power and ideology.

Foucault offers two main reasons why an analysis of power must avoid the notion of 'ideology' [Foucault 1979, p.36]. Firstly, archaeology is always antagonistic towards something like a rationally derived truth. The method is not committed to the problem of how to make a division in a discourse between that which is scientific, and thereby rational and true, and that which is incoherent, for example magic, poetry, etc. Archaeology is involved with understanding how truth effects are historically produced within discourses which are not in themselves either true or false. In this way, the analysis is not concerned with a study of primitive discourses in order to defend them in terms of scientific rationality or to denounce them as mere supersti-

tion; it is determined to reveal the techniques and strategies with which these discourses constitute their own truth producing effects. We will see examples of this later with regard to Trobriand sexual, economic and magical discourses.

Secondly, ideology necessarily refers to something like a subject and, as I have already mentioned, archaeology shares the structuralist avoidance of an inquisition of discourse in terms of a subject. An appreciation of the archaeological analysis of power necessitates the avoidance of any procedure that implicates the constituent subject as an explanatory element either on the right or the left. This move is very important to the present study since anthropology traditionally deals with subjects. Here, an analysis in terms of the subject is replaced by a study that can account for the portrayal of the subject within historical contexts. Archaeology is a form of history which accounts for the distinctiveness of knowledge, discourses, domains of objects and theoretical choices without having to allude to a subject as a transcendental in relation to a field of knowledge [Foucault 1979, p.34]. The evasion of mere subjectivity in the analysis is achieved by the comprehensive rejection of the subject as an efficacious explanatory unit in the history of knowledge. The traditional ideological analyses constantly refer back to subjects and are, therefore, inappropriate for archaeology.

2.3.2 Power and repression.

The concept of repression is likely to be associated with an investigation of power and, in Foucault's opinion, this affiliation is detrimental to an understanding of the figure of power appropriate for archaeology. He contends that the conception of repression is completely inadequate for an account of the productivity of power in discourse. If the effects of power are specified solely in terms of repression we are at once committed to a naive juridical conception of that power, and are immediately secured within the traditional dichotomous analysis between the left and right. Such an inquiry implicates us in an identification of power in terms of a prohibitive law. On the contrary, what gives power its acceptability for so many is the fact that it produces things and does not just weigh down on us as a negative force; it causes pleasure, it forms knowledge, it produces discourses. It is a productive complex running through the entire social body and is not just a negative instance which has the particular function of repression [Foucault 1979, p.36]. The archaeological analysis discloses the creative function of power and shows how it exercises itself in, for example, matrimonial, economic and magical discourses. Furthermore, if power were everywhere prohibitive and repressive it seems inconceivable that so many people have avoided anarchism as a solution. Anarchy is not rejected simply because repression is thought

to be better than chaos. It is because power has its own attractive and constructive aspects. Power has received wholly negative connotations in the ideological analysis. This is not the case in the archaeological analysis where power has positive possibilities.

Repression is generally thought to have a ubiquitous manifestation in relation to sex. This prevailing association of sexuality with repression endorses an identification of a liberal society with a permissive one in terms of the absence of juridical interference; the identification of a liberal society as one that takes every available opportunity in word and deed to exercise its sexuality. However, 'repressive' discourses on sexuality facilitate positive systems of medical and social procedures of intervention and control, systems of circulation (medical and pedagogical texts) of the discourses, etc. which seem to be bound up with techniques which have the appearance of repression, or at least are capable of being interpreted as such [Foucault 1979, p.37]. Freud is held to have inaugurated the thesis that children have a sexuality. This was supposedly achieved in the context of a bourgeois repression¹. However, all the

1. The refusal to acknowledge infantile sexuality occurs even amongst anthropologists as we can see in Malinowski's The Sexual Lives of Savages page 48 where he writes that the Trobriander's claims that four year old girls are fully sexually active can be dismissed as typical native exaggeration and an example of their Rabelaisian humour. He puts the age of sexual activity at between six and eight years and

pedagogical and medical guides for parents in the eighteenth century address children's sex in every possible context. One might argue that the purpose of these discourses was explicitly to prevent children having a sexuality. But the effect of these discourses was to focus on the problem for parents which the children's sex constituted in terms of their educational responsibilities; to persuade the children that their relationship with their own bodies and their own sex was a fundamental problem as far as they themselves were concerned. This had the consequence, not of repressing child sexuality but, on the contrary, of actually exciting sexual desires in both the parents and children. This repressive focus on the perils of child sexuality had the effect of sexualising the child and of sexualising the relationship between parent and child. In brief, it had the effect of sexualising the family domain [Foucault 1979, p.37]. In this way, the medical and pedagogical repression of sexuality in the eighteenth century gave rise to new forms of desires, and ultimately, by making the family the focus of a sexual discourse, created the conditions for the possibility of the emergence of incest. The repressive nature of the eighteenth century had the productive function of creating these

...Continued...

assigns it little importance in the child's life. The selection of this topic as an example of native exaggeration is itself a good example of a bourgeois repression of child sexuality while at the same time speaking of it.

new sexual desires and explaining these very desires to families by means of pedagogical and medical treatises. Thus, repression is just one strategy in discourse for the production of effects¹.

In outlining the nature of the Trobriand episteme, it will be seen that the problem of incest does not arise so much from a sexual focus on the native family as from myths focusing on the origin of man. However, it will also be seen that the problematisation of kinship in terms of an incest taboo has the effect of creating particular sexual ethical and ritual practices that prevail between brothers and their sisters. This is an example of the productive effects of a supposed repressive practice. In chapter four, the incest taboo will be examined for this type of productive effect rather than any repressive form that must be supported or resisted. The incest taboo between brother and sister is a discursive strategy and an example of the operation of power in sexual discourse. This taboo is due neither to a suppression of sexual desire nor a particular moral restraint nor sexual prudence within the indigenous family, since

1. Indeed, Malinowski acknowledges an effect of his own scientific study. In the special Foreword to the Third edition of The Sexual Life of savages, he writes of his disappointment that the effect of a serious and objective study was that only the sensational details were picked out to be made the objects of wonder, laughter and titillation and that the whole functionalist mechanism was missed. This effect of Malinowski's work demonstrates Foucault's point well.

these themes are absent in the native discursive context. On the contrary, the taboo is due to the particular discursive power relations of the natives where productive techniques differ radically from those of the Modern episteme and, as a result, give rise to a different set of objects of desire.

Sexuality is, therefore, a far more constructive product of power than is commonly imagined. These positive mechanisms of power are investigated in the archaeological analysis of knowledge and not the naive examination of the mechanisms of openness or repression. This marks a break with the hasty characterisation of power in terms of a juridical schema or figures of repression. Power is technical and constructive rather than juridical and injurious [Foucault 1979, p.38].

2.3.3 Power and truth.

Procuring the truth by discourses is not outside of power nor is the project deprived of power. We should not conceive of an impotent voice speaking the truth against the repressive forces of power. On such a model, the truth is conceived as virtuous and struggling for justice against an inequitable power regime. A conception of power that is capable of both producing and circulating the truth is appropriate. Indeed, this conception of power simultaneously produces that which counts as deception and repression and the very systems for achieving 'openness' and 'liberty'. The

truth is produced by the regulative effects of power [Foucault 1979, p.46].

Each society has its particular regime of truth; its general politics of truth which are the types of discourses that it harbours and causes to function as true. These are the mechanisms that enable the individual to distinguish true from false statements. These techniques are valued for their ability to attain the truth and to establish in their particular status those who have the responsibility of identifying what counts as true [Foucault 1979, p.46].

In Modern societies, the general politics of truth is, according to Foucault, characterised by five historically important traits. Firstly, 'truth' is focused on the convention of scientific discourse and the institutions that produce it. Secondly, the truth is subject to an enduring economic and political demand which is concerned with both economic production and political power. Thirdly, the truth circulates in both the machinery of education and information which have a relatively wide extent within society while at the same time have their own strict limitations. Fourthly, it is produced and transmitted under the control of a few political or economic apparatuses such as the university, army, writing, media, etc. Fifthly, it is the centre of an entire political debate and social confrontation that takes the form of ideological struggles [Foucault 1979, p.46].

Truth is focused on mythical discourse and traditional practices in the primitive society of the Trobrianders. The mythical truth produced in this way is subject to both a constant magical demand and the basic demands of survival. These primitive truths cannot circulate through the written word since the episteme is entirely oral so it avails itself of the less sophisticated and limited devices of repetition and the precarious handing on of formulae from the old to the young¹. We will see that there are very specific apparatuses of control on the transmission of truth available in the native notions of kinship. These particular techniques and strategies must be dissected in order to arrive at an efficacious understanding of the knowledge of primitive societies and an understanding of the adequacy and limitations of that knowledge.

The primitive truth of the Trobrianders is focussed on the conventions of magical and mythical discourses and the practices that produce them. This truth is subject to the basic demands of survival in a hostile environment and circulates by tradition and the static knowledge thus produced has strict limitations. The truth that is maintained in this way is controlled by magicians and those elders in possession of the myths. Confrontations between truths take place on the battle field.

1. I address the question of the nature of oral discourse in more detail in the closing chapter.

2.4 Summary.

In summary, we can say that 'truth' is a set of ordered procedures for the production, regulation, distribution, circulation and function of discursive statements. It is linked in a circular relation to systems of power that produce and sustain it, and to effects of power which it induces and which redirect it. This is what is meant by a regime of truth. A regime of truth different from that in the modern experience operates in the Trobriand society. The archaeological analysis in anthropology does not have the function of identifying what system for the production of truth, for example, scientific or magical discourse, is most valuable. Such an inquiry would relinquish an analysis of truth and become an apparatus solely for the production of truth. Archaeological anthropology attempts to analyse the techniques and procedures for the production, regulation and circulation of the primitive statements that have the purpose of producing truth. Such an analysis involves this present distinctive conception and understanding of power. The project is to detach the power of truth from the forms of hegemony with which it operates at a particular time and not to extract the truth from either a system of native power or a native discourse and modify or rectify that truth in terms of scientific discourse. The anthropological project is not one of identifying error, illusions and instances of 'native rationality', that is some belief that

can be made to conform to our own, but an analysis of primitive truth and power itself.

2.5 The power-knowledge relation.

Foucault claims that it was Nietzsche who first specified the power relation as the general focus of philosophical discourse whereas Marx specified the production relation. He describes Nietzsche as the philosopher of power claiming that he managed to think power without confining himself within a political theory to do so. Foucault's analysis of the role of power in discourse remains influenced by a Nietzschean perspective. In the same way that archaeology thinks power without confining itself within a political theory, so also must it think of the subject without confining itself within subjectivity.

The conditions for the possibility of power are not sought in the primary existence of a central point, that is, a unique source of sovereignty from which secondary forms are derived. The conditions for the possibility of power are sought in the particular force relations which perpetually give rise to states of power which are always local and unstable [Foucault 1978, p.93]. Foucault alleges that power is omnipresent because it is produced from one moment to the next at every point, that is, in every relation from one point to another, and not because it has the privilege of consolidating everything under its unity. Power is attributed to a complex strategical situation in a par-

ticular society and not to an institution, structure or a certain strength that an individual might possess [Foucault 1978, p.93]. Foucault advances four propositions concerning the notion of power and its relation to knowledge.

Firstly, power is exercised from innumerable points and is not something that is acquired and distributed. Nor is it something that we keep possession of or forfeit [Foucault 1978, p.94].

Secondly, relations of power are not external to other categories of relationships, such as economic and sexual relations, but are immanent in these relations. Power relations are the immediate effects of the divisions and inequalities which occur in discursive relations. Conversely, power relations are the internal conditions for these very discursive discriminations. In chapter five, I demonstrate this very feature in operation with respect to the role of the chief in a system of exchange for the production of wealth. The power of the chief is the immediate effect of an inequality arising out of discourses on the status of men and women. In turn, the role of the chief provides the conditions for this discrimination. Power relations are not in a super-structural position with regard to other relations but merely accompany them and have a productive function.

Thirdly, all power is exercised with a series of aims and objectives but these do not emanate from the choices or

decisions of an individual subject. The rationality of power is often characterised by tactics that are quite explicit and in this way cynical. However, it is often the case that no one could have invented these particular strategies and very few could be said to have formulated them. In other words, the agency of a subject is not necessary to this analysis of power since the agent cannot conspire at this level of power. The strategies of power relations are anonymous and are 'invented' without hypocrisy [Foucault 1978, p.95]. This point is extremely important since it necessitates the rejection of the subject as a causal unit in this analysis.

Fourthly, wherever there is power there is resistance and this resistance is never outside of the power relations. Power relations depend on a multiplicity of points of resistance and take the form of adversary, target, support, etc., and these points of resistance are always present in the power network. Hence, there is no inviolable law of resistance posited outside of power.

The analysis of power appropriate to archaeology eschews the system of law and sovereignty which has maintained a political analysis for such a long time. This genre of analysis questions power relations for their most immediate and most local incidences at work in discourses appearing historically and in specific places. It questions power relations as to how they make these kinds of discourses

possible and, conversely, how these discourses support power relations. It also examines how these power relations are linked to one another according to the logic of a great strategy. These are the types of questions this type of analysis asks of all discourses. To answer them, Foucault advances several rules that he does not intend to be methodological imperatives but merely regards as cautionary prescriptions [Foucault 1978, p.98].

Firstly, since techniques of knowledge and regimes of power are not separable from each other, the power-knowledge relation must be the object of the archaeological study [Foucault 1978, p.98]. This means that if a discourse is the object of mechanisms of prohibition brought to bear by the economic or ideological requirements of power, it becomes the concern of disinterested scientific enquiry. In order to gain access to such an analysis, local centres of power-knowledge must be selected. The local centres that are chosen eventually enter into a total strategy and conversely strategies achieve comprehensive effects only by gaining support from precise relations [Foucault 1978, p.100].

Secondly, the inquisition of power does not seek the possessors of that power (men, parents, doctors, chiefs, etc.) nor those who are deprived of it (women, children, slaves, etc.). Thirdly, power and knowledge are linked together in discourse and for this reason, discourse must be conceived of as a series of discontinuous segments with

neither a uniform nor stable tactical function. There is a multiplicity of discursive elements that can come into operation in various strategies and it is this distribution in particular societies that must be reconstructed.

Finally, discourses are not subservient to power in a permanent way but may be hostile to it. Discourse can be both an instrument and an effect of power but it can also be a hindrance and a point of resistance and, indeed, a starting point for an opposing strategy. Discourse transmits, produces and reinforces forms of power while at the same time undermining them and exposing them to weakness and making it possible for those forms to be overthrown.

In summary, the shift towards the archaeological conception of power offers an alternative to the privileged place of legislation, in the traditional analysis, with the notion of the objective of a regime. The privilege of prohibition is replaced by the notion of tactical efficacy, and the privilege of sovereignty is supplanted by the complex field of moving force relations. This means that the original force relations which have found their expression in war have gradually become immersed in the order of political power during peace time and in this way peace may be regarded as a form of war [Foucault 1978, p.102]. This strategical archaeological model applied to anthropology can replace an ideal model based on the traditional explanatory categories.

2.6 Power or agency?

Fardon affirms that Foucault's writings dismantle the classical problematisation of knowledge and power in terms of ideology in favour of a composite power-knowledge which is productive of truth [Fardon 1986, p.5]. He takes issue with this approach in what he alleges to be its failure to address major questions in the sociology of knowledge: the extent to which dominant ideologies are in fact generally adhered to, the conditions under which they deviate, the degree to which they can be demonstrated to incorporate different classes within a society. In short, he questions the entire mechanics by which the dissolution of the agent is achieved and suggests that the logic of this position is difficult to maintain, and moreover creates problems in an explanation of transformations.

In Fardon's assessment, Foucault endeavours to disregard the problems inherent in theories of ideology by compounding power with truth where truth is a product of power relations and not by situating power on the side opposed to truth or on the side of oppression. An understanding of these ideas would involve anthropologists in a fresh appraisal of the theories of ideology and commit them to various approaches in that analysis [Fardon 1986, p.16]. This conclusion is as much as he concedes to Foucault's proposals in the problem of power.

Fardon embraces quite specific criticisms of Fou-

cault's work. He rightly claims that, by virtue of its scope and the brilliance of its application, we may describe the concept of power available in Foucault's texts as a 'broad notion of power' [Fardon 1986, p.128]. A 'broad notion of power' accommodates questions of great generality which are not available if power is equated with force or possession that is wielded to serve the interests of a dominant individual, class or group. He correctly characterises theoreticians of 'broad notions of power' as practising an activity in which knowledge becomes an instance of the relations of the deployment of power. These different formulations share the characteristic of collapsing received distinctions into a single instrumentality with non-intentional destinies. This can be achieved because Foucault, amongst others, subscribes to some version of a replacement of individual subjects by super-individual forces which effectively subsumes individual agency. This observation is pertinent to my work here since it also subscribes to this 'broad notion of power' with its replacement of the agent as an explanatory element. It is necessary then to address and refute Fardon's particular criticisms.

Firstly, Fardon claims that Foucault's result is paradoxical since this manoeuvre imposes some form of inevitability upon historical outcomes while encountering difficulties in accounting for historical processes of transition [Fardon 1986, p.128]. Against this tendency of introducing

super-individual forces, Fardon argues that meaningful or goal directed behaviour should be re-introduced to the model to solve some of the problems encountered by broad theories of power. In other words, he demands the re-introduction of intentional states¹.

Secondly, subjectivity becomes problematic by its very nature where personal experiences are considered illusory and when notions of personhood vary both horizontally across cultures and vertically through history [Fardon 1986, p.129]. From an anthropological point of view, in order for activity to be meaningful and purposeful, Fardon claims that we have to know the sense in which such qualities can attach themselves to agency in the societies which are studied, and further, we have to be sure that this knowledge is unavailable as an object of reflection to those who are studied. This gives rise to the problem of the situation of subjectivity. This dilemma offers two possible solutions: the first solution is to argue that there is a standardised human cognitive development with minimal correspondences in universal human agency; the second is to work with the hypothesis that agents are differently constructed in dif-

1. In this criticism Fardon ignores the role of positivities in the context of the overall archaeological technique. The positivity of discourses is in place precisely to replace the role of intentional states.

ferent cultures¹. In Fardon's opinion both of these strategies are preferable to the Foucauldian consequences since a non-subject analysis would be against the spirit of humanitarianism.

Fardon alleges that Foucault's collapsing of the unconscious categories of the episteme into the broad concept of power-knowledge results in an anti-humanitarian posture more radical than that of the structuralists from whom Foucault disassociates himself². The subject is dissolved both as an agent of meaning creation and as an agent of power. Power relations are at one and the same time intentional and anonymous, non-subjective, yet strategic. For Fardon, the analyst, whose analysis makes these categories visible, is the only subject who seems to remain undissolved. In anthropological terms, this represents a convergence of, in Fardon's thinking, causation and translation and the possibility of a simultaneous solution in terms of each other [Fardon 1986, p.142]. The problem of translation occurs for the anthropologist in the analysis of alien cultures.

1. The first of these is adhered to by Bloch in the essay 'From Cognition to Ideology' in Power and Knowledge. Anthropological and Sociological Approaches while the second is adhered to by Strathern in the essay 'Knowing Power and Being Equivocal: Three Melanesian Contexts' also in Power and Knowledge.

2. These unconscious categories of the episteme are not the psychic categories of the unconscious. It must also be remembered that Foucault does not disassociate himself from the structuralists simply for humanitarian reasons.

Further, Fardon claims that Foucault's epistemes resemble the anthropologist's more mundane notion of 'cultural patterns'. He argues that the epistemes in The Order of Things, where Foucault locates the episteme in the Classical theories of wealth, living beings and language, are constructed in accordance with the interests of the analyst. Different interests, he claims, would have located a different episteme according to a procedure which Foucault likens to a game. Assuming a continuity between the earlier notion of episteme and the later one of knowledge, the power-knowledge concept must, according to Fardon, harbour the same arbitrariness. However, the difference is that this later concept is supposed to rescind individual agency.

Fardon fails to see how a certain imposition of arbitrary form can achieve this result. He is not claiming that these impositions are incorrect but that they cannot negate agency. This constitutes the fourth point of his criticism.

Fardon uses his own study of sociability among the Chamba as an attempt to reproduce the intentionality of the Chamba actions. He argues that these actions are based on intentions which, in principle, are not directly accessible to him just as the intention of a writer is inaccessible to his translator. Translations attempt to represent intentions within a system of language which itself is in the process of change and as such have to be periodically overhauled. For Fardon, the task of translation is by its

very nature incapable of completion. Therefore, he argues that his account of Chamba political development does not negate Chamba agency but, rather, it offers a generalised translation of the intentions implied in Chamba agency by positing the existence of an implicit knowledge. The study avoids causal generalisations which are the only claims which could usurp the assumption of agency. Such a task is an effort to situate subjectivity rather than supplant it [Fardon 1986, p.143].

In conclusion, the analyses of the theories of 'broad notions of power' involve circularities which Fardon claims can be avoided by the enterprise of translating the intention of the agent. While acknowledging that sociability, agency, personhood, etc, are not concepts that are available to the Chamba, Fardon believes that it is still possible to argue that there are terms of translation which are concerned with the representation of intention. This does not exclude a role for the notion of power; on the contrary an account of intentions is not the same as an account of power.

Fardon argues that broad analyses of power tend to tautology because they collapse procedures of causation and translation. He calls for a distinction to be made between the techniques which constitute an object of analysis and the means by which we analyse or explain that object thus constituted. Translation procedures must attempt to encom-

pass the agency of the situated subjectivities that are studied in anthropology. The techniques of explanation tend necessarily to displace the agency of those studied with their own interests but caution in this area is necessary in the model where the anthropologist is the custodian of both sets of intentions, our own and those studied, and we remain in the constant danger of disregarding the latter through failure to think through the implications of the former. Anthropology must define its responsibility in the handling of this 'middle ground'.

2.7 Replying to Fardon's criticisms.

Firstly, with respect to Fardon's claim about the paradoxical results available in the displacement of the analytic role of the subject, I argue that inevitability is imposed in archaeology only within the confines of a definable era, that is, within the episteme. The inter-epistemic breaks remain unspecified in their causation even in a causal analysis involving power regimes. Foucault regards the interrogation of this area as a form of questioning inappropriate to his method. The archaeological analysis has no claims on a teleology. By breaking history into such specifiable eras this type of paradox is avoided in 'broad notions of power'.

Secondly, I argue that it is not obviously the case that all anthropological analyses necessitate a knowledge of the sense in which personal experience attaches itself to

agency in studied societies. Both types of solution supported by Fardon can be circumvented by removing the myth of the necessity of agency. It is typical of the archaeological analysis to avoid the explanatory terms of rationalism rather than attempt to dissolve them in a re-working. The archaeological analysis sets out the wholly new analytic parameters outlined in the previous chapter and this must always be kept in mind.

Fardon claims that the difference between the power-knowledge concept of Foucault's later work and the epistemes is that the power-knowledge concept rescinds individual agency. However, Foucault has already abandoned the utilisation of human agency in the earlier archaeological analysis. In essence then, Fardon is arguing that the genealogical analysis arbitrarily abandons subjectivity and intentionality. However, this move has already taken place in the earlier analysis. The absence of an explicit analysis of the function of power distinguishes the earlier and later work. The later work marks the addition of an analytic tool rather than the subtraction of a subject.

Fardon's error lies in his demand for a subject within an archaeological-type analysis. This demand ignores the positivistic nature of the analysis which is one of the main reasons it can be used in anthropology since, in its non-subjective nature, there is no reduction to states of personal or experiential meanings and the problem of transla-

tion is avoided.

The fundamental misunderstanding of The Order of Things revolves around a single problem: the status and role of the human subject, the concept of 'man' in history and in the human sciences. In The Order of Things Foucault had precisely the ambition of displacing human agency, consciousness, from the centre of theoretical concern. Human subjects had enjoyed this position in many forms of philosophy during the time from Descartes to Sartre. This is the project that he shares with structuralism and not a desire to extend the application and methods of structural linguistics. This does constitute a basic anti-humanist position in Foucault's thought but he remains profoundly anti-structuralist. The archaeological history does not seek to crystallise the movement of history in structures but to elucidate the nature of historical change.

Indeed, it emerged from Foucault's study of general grammar, natural history and the analysis of wealth that, in a sense, the whole Classical period was structuralist because its knowledge was based on the representation of the sign and on the analysis of fixed relations between specific elements that exclude the concept of 'man' and 'history' as these were understood in the nineteenth century. Foucault's analysis of Classical thought reveals a 'structuralist' framework while his analysis of Modern thought since eighteenth hundred reveals the role of agency in the construction

of knowledge. The structural elements belong to the objects of Foucault's research, that is the Classical period, but do not belong to his method. The Modern episteme is characterised by the role of agency, consciousness, in the construction of discourses. In this sense we can say that agency has a necessary role in all modern discourses, including anthropology. However, if we use a method like that recommended by Fardon, which has a role for agency, then we would be committed to retaining traditional anthropological unities and traditional attempts at universalising cultural phenomena. In other words, we would elevate agency from the status of the object of a study to a transcendental role in a study. This would result in an undermining of the archaeological project by ignoring it. Agency is to the Modern episteme what structuralism is to the Classical: the object of the analysis and not the method. Foucault invokes the notion of positivity precisely to underscore the non-subjective elements that are revealed in discourse by the archaeological method. The avoidance of the use of agency in the analysis is precisely the aim of archaeology. Because of this, the role of the subject can be outlined and delimited since the presence or absence of the concept of 'man' can be made opaque in the analysis. The use of a positive point of departure is the only means whereby the role of such a concept can be revealed horizontally across cultures in anthropology or vertically in the history of our knowledge.

Otherwise, the danger remains of imposing this concept on cultures where it may not occur. This imposition can be easily achieved by the translation of the signs of selfhood, e.g. 'I', 'man', etc as denoting a selfhood constructed in our terms. This lesson can be learned from the archaeology of the Classical Age which reveals that the term 'man' did not signify self but represented a category of types.

In The Archaeology of Knowledge Foucault was concerned with clarifying certain misunderstandings in the nature of the archaeological enterprise. These misunderstandings generally appeared around the notion of 'self'. A second set of problems arose surrounding the question of historical periodisation. Fardon alludes to these in terms of the arbitrary form of the episteme which seems to serve the interests of the analyst. Foucault refers to this problem by discussing the status of certain concepts in the historical disciplines generally. He rejects the notion of rationality, the teleology of the sciences and the continuous labour of the thought of subjects as historically transcendental themes. The apparent unity on which such large groups of statements as medicine, economics and general grammar were based was illusory. The archaeological analysis revealed that in place of these unities were series of gaps intertwined with one another, interplays of differences and transformations. Because of this, his analysis can be said to demonstrate a system of dispersion. As we have seen,

when such a system is at work in a group of statements it is termed a discursive formation. This term replaces the older deceptive terms of 'science', 'discipline', 'theory', etc. which are all attached to agents and do not appear at all arbitrary to Fardon.

The selection of the episteme is not simply capricious. Foucault mentions how the method is 'fictitious' [Foucault 1979, p.74]. This refers to the poetic dimension of the method. Gilles Deleuze describes this work as 'not so much a discourse on his method as a poem of his previous work'. Foucault had reached a point at which he regarded philosophy to be necessarily poetry [Sheridan 1980, p.90]. His histories are truth producing fictions. Here he is assigning a new effect of power to fiction. Fiction acquires the effect of producing the truth with which, hitherto, it has not been associated. Such is the nature of a method that seeks to avoid the scientific 'rational' dichotomy in the history of our intellectual disciplines¹. The intellectual status of the method is not at stake here. Foucault is provocatively pointing to the fact that, since his analysis focuses on the techniques for establishing statements as true, it is not an appropriate form of questioning to interrogate the method for its own truth. Foucault is underlining the fact that it

1. This type of project with its new unities is outlined in the Preface to The Order of Things. There Foucault offers several examples of explanatory unities that he wishes to abandon, for example, the subject, the oeuvre, science, etc.

is power regimes that establish a body of knowledge as containing the truth and not simply logical coherence. Poetry, on this model, might have this status if it could be made to serve the interests of truth. Foucault is demonstrating the fact that power regimes have the possibility of assigning truth to any form of discourse that has not hitherto been associated with it.

The introduction of power into the analysis does not rescind individual agency in the subject-knowledge relation as Fardon suggests. He is correct to believe that a move like that would have such a result. The analysis of power is not brought in to remove agency but to occupy one side of the epistemological concern only after the place of the subject has already been vacated. This vacancy has already been achieved in the positivistic analysis of the discursive elements. Power now occupies one half of a relationship with knowledge, as that which produces, grounds, modifies and maintains it; a role hitherto assigned to the subject. This only means that knowledge manifests a contingent form across our cultures and histories. The subject is only one such form that has fallen into disuse.

2.8 Wittgenstein and power-knowledge.

Wittgenstein's social theory with its explanatory role for forms of life can be used to criticise the transcendental role of agency and its apparently non-arbitrary and universal unities which Fardon wants to maintain. His

writings can be used to support some of the conclusions of archaeology that attempt to show the historical contingency of the primary metaphorical figures in the construction of our knowledge. He lays down the conditions for the possibility of knowledge in that when something is claimed to be known it must be the case that that something is true or false. Something that is neither true nor false has the status of a fundamental proposition which has a foundational function in a system of knowledge without itself being a piece of knowledge. The guiding metaphors of the episteme are like this. Metaphors do not hold across all possible cultures since they depend on the way in which they are employed by a culture. This formulation represents the death of the unique role of the subject in knowledge. An affective language would not have the status of knowledge claims since it would not have any rules, good or bad, for establishing the truth or falsity of those claims and as such is impossible [Kenny 1973, p.180]. The central contention here is that the term knowledge is misused in relation to a language based on the subject. Therefore, we do not have to use such a strategy, or figure, as the foundation for an anthropology.

In anthropological discourses, where knowledge is alleged, we must look to the way knowledge claims are actually used in their original homes and return concepts from their metaphysical to their everyday use [Wittgenstein 1984,

para. 116]. Bloor refers to Wittgenstein's comments about the language games in which there is an extensive vocabulary of words for framing accounts of actions that includes intention [Bloor 1983, p.72]. Wittgenstein suggests that the giving of reasons why one acts in a particular way does not involve finding the causes of one's actions by frequent observation of the conditions under which they arise [Wittgenstein 1987, p.110]. It consists in making actions intelligible by relating them to an acceptable pattern of conduct and expectation. These patterns are known to all competent social participators and so they are readily available for the purposes of explanation and justification. Therefore, an intention is something that is embedded in human institutions and customs [Wittgenstein 1984, para. 337]. It is obvious that the rejection of the subject as the explanatory unit of epistemology involves the rejection of intentionality as an account of human action. Earlier, we saw that Fardon claimed that intentionality was essential to all types of analyses. Wittgenstein lends credible weight to what may be termed the 'broad theories of history' that accommodate 'broad notions of power' against the position adopted by Fardon.

For the anthropologist, Wittgenstein's arguments allow for the claim that all of the members of a primitive community, such as the Trobrianders, know what they mean by certain terms and know what the rest of the members of that

community mean by those terms. It is to the extent that the rules governing the formation of discourses are shared that we can identify a collection of individuals as a community. A community is a group of individuals immersed in a shared form of life (episteme) and not a group who share views by majority consensus, or for pragmatic reasons, or because of a desire to be rational, etc. By producing evidence of discursive discontinuity in terms of material meanings, which both Foucault and Wittgenstein have done, the claim for a radical diversity in thinking processes can be upheld. There is no one correct rational procedure but many forms of rationality. These many forms of rationality Wittgenstein calls 'forms of life' and Foucault calls 'epistemes'. The ends served by discourses lie outside of the intentions of the individual agents and their discourses serve the discursive ends of that community in terms of truth and power effects. It is not necessary for the anthropologist to attempt to gain access to the primitive individual experience but to understand the discursive regularities that are in operation in that community.

In his early work, Foucault's iconoclastic style found its object in psychiatric and penal institutions from whence it moved to the discourses of Life, Wealth and Grammar¹. The

1. See Foucault's work The Birth of the Clinic, Discipline and Punish and The Order of Things.

study of Grammar in the Classical Age is complimented by Wittgenstein's critique of the philosophical maintenance of such a model of representation in many contemporary intellectual pursuits. Wittgenstein suggests that representation is inadequate for the task of producing contemporary knowledge by showing how it conflates experience and knowledge in a (representational) model where memory is made infallible¹. Foucault's analysis shows the detail and limitations of any knowledge which finds its conditions of possibility in any such figure.

2.9 Malinowski and collective knowledge.

Malinowski, whose ethnography I extensively employ in this study, was repelled by ideas of collective knowledge. He was an individualist, interested in the experiences, perplexities and desires of individuals and he deeply distrusted anything claiming to be more than individual. It is worth mentioning in passing that Malinowski was influenced by that theoretical approach which is perhaps the most individualistically orientated, that is, psychoanalysis. From psychoanalysis he got the clues for some of his most cherished theoretical ideas on the nature of family relations [Fortes

1. See Wittgenstein's 'private language argument' in The Philosophical Investigations for a detailed elaboration of this position.

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1970, p.171] . His most persistent criticisms are directed against positions like the one I am propounding that might be held to imply that the individual does not possess the capacity for free choice based in reason. Thus he would not be happy with the direction of my analysis here. Morgan is rebuked for postulating group marriage [Malinowski 1982a, pp.xxxii]; Durkheim is criticised for emphasising religious euphoria with its implications for a group mind [Malinowski 1982b, p.55]; Freud is criticised for postulating a collective unconscious [Malinowski 1927b, p.156f]; Hartland is criticised for suggesting that primitive man is a legal automaton [Malinowski 1932, pp.10, 55f]. It is fairly safe to suggest that, if he were alive today, I would likewise be abused for positing knowledge as an historical rather than individual achievement. It was dogma for Malinowski that all human beings are reasonable individuals [Leach 1970, p.127]. Leach reminds us that at the beginning of Malinowski's career the 'savage' was commonly regarded as sub-rational and Levy-Bruhl's contemporary notion of 'pre-logical mentality' was repugnant to Malinowski's thinking. It is against this background that he tried to impose 'rationality' upon his savages. He contended that primitive man maintains a

1. Fortes claims that Malinowski had to reinterpret Freud to accommodate his ethnography. The main problem was the empirical status of the unconscious emotional formations and conflicts, overtly visible in symbolic forms. For a detailed study of Malinowski's adoption of Freud see Fortes's essay 'Malinowski and the study of kinship'(see bib.).

fundamental category distinction between fact and fiction, using criteria that might have been acceptable to John Stuart Mill [Leach 1970, p.128]. This argument is latent in all of his writings concerning the relation between science and magic. Since he found the conceptual difference between the objective-rational and the subjective-metaphysical self-evident, he insisted that it must also be self-evident to the Trobrianders [Leach 1970, p.128]. In the late nineteenth-century, non-rationality was regarded as one of the characteristic marks of the savage. Likewise it was regarded as characteristic of civilised man that he could distinguish between the logical and the non-logical. Frazer's description of magic as 'bastard science' is typical of this view [Leach 1970, p.129]. In seeking to break down this dichotomy between civilised and savage man, Malinowski argued that primitives and Europeans were equally capable of making this distinction [Leach 1970, p.129].

Archaeology addresses this dichotomy between the modern European and the superstitious savage. It is misleading to describe the gap between these epistemes as incommensurable. The Order of Things is concerned with outlining the discontinuous nature of epistemes while avoiding a conclusion in either incommensurability or its opposite, cumulative rationality. The archaeological analysis occupies the space vacated by such unities and examines what follows from their rejection. To embrace these simple notions of discontinuity

would be to ignore the spirit of the archaeological enterprise and its potential in anthropology.

Foucault claims that anthropology¹ could achieve enormous prestige and importance if it were to seek its objects in the area of the unconscious processes that characterise the system of a given culture. In this way it would define as a system of cultural unconsciousness the totality of formal structures which render mythical discourse significant, give coherence and necessity to the rules that regulate needs and provide the norms of life with a foundation other than that to be found in nature or in pure biological function [Foucault 1970, p.380]. It is exactly my ambition here to attempt to provide anthropology with this important status by initiating an epistemic approach to cultures that uncovers the formal codes that constitute kinship relations,

1. In a footnote to an interview with Foucault in Power, Truth, Strategy, Fontano and Pasquino point out that traditionally in French 'anthropology' was defined in opposition to ethnography and ethnology where ethnography is the descriptive study of the life of human groups and ethnology is the comparative theoretical use of the data provided in ethnography and corresponds to the English discipline of Social Anthropology [Fontano and Pasquino 1979, p.48]. However, Levi-Strauss initiated a move towards using 'anthropology' in the same relation to ethnology as ethnography. The three terms then correspond to a three stage research project which seeks a global knowledge for the whole of the evolution of man that embraces the subject in its complete historical and geographical extent. Foucault's interviewers suggest that it is in this sense that he makes use of the term 'anthropology'. In The Order of Things he uses the term 'ethnology' which I am loosely replacing with the term 'anthropology'.

that regulate needs and empower magical discourses with curative or dangerous effects. Ethnologies such as those of Malinowski will be rejected in place of an analysis of the cultural unconscious which forms an historical apriori. While Malinowski bases his interpretations in pure biological function, archaeology tries to completely avoid such an approach.

2.10 Discursive and nondiscursive elements.

The ambition of this project is to construct an epistemological framework in the form of a primitive episteme that will account for the discursive objects and rules of formation of the Trobriand discourses. However, we have seen that the discursive concerns of the last chapter cannot be separated from the nondiscursive practices and institutions which are the concerns of power. As well as discursive strategies and techniques, we will have to take into account how the primitive discourses are maintained, adhered to and propagated; the way in which these discourses are made true and false; the way in which they are made objective through the function of myths. Despite Fardon's objections the construction of such an episteme, with its power-knowledge relations, is an anthropological project and does not involve intentional states manifested in the explanatory role of 'agency', 'consciousness', etc. in the same way that the construction of the Renaissance episteme did not involve these terms. The construction of the Trobriand episteme

involves the positivistic concepts and objects appropriate to the primitive rules of its discursive formations.

A characterisation of power exclusively in terms of primitive hegemonies and systems of sovereignty is to be avoided in an analysis of the power relations of primitive societies. Such a representation would mark a return to the traditional conception in terms of juridical forms. While the Trobrianders lack a formulation of the state in terms of sovereignty, or in terms of a policing apparatus as a punitive system, they do not lack discursive power relations that have productive functions in the same way that modern sexual discourse has these. Precisely these productive functions, techniques and strategies will be examined in this study. The discourses of this primitive society are examined in order to identify the particularity of these power functions and the means whereby the native discourses propagate, circulate, and sustain themselves. Tribal chiefs cannot occupy the whole field of the actual power relations. On the contrary they maintain their status only on the basis of already existing power relations which are promoted through economical, magical, and ontological discourses.

Anthropologists tend to confine the analysis of power relations of primitive societies to a hegemonic system in the same way that modern thought has confined the operation of power to the forms of law and the forms of sovereignty.

The particular discourses that are created and the positive products of those discourses in terms of the function they have for furnishing customs, maintaining a certain order, and producing native truths are the power relations available in the application of archaeology to anthropology. In the ethnographic detail available in Malinowski's work, it can be observed how power draws on the native perception of suitable marriage and appropriate sexual behaviour that is determined according to precise norms. This analysis will draw our attention to the discourses concerning tribal discipline in the areas of economic exchange, marriage, sexual behaviour, magical ritual and kinship. Where the notion of the state operates in modern culture as a stratagem for maintaining the productivity of power relations, the notions of kinship, manhood and tribal hierarchies have a similar function in primitive societies. Power performs through signs of loyalty to the tribal chief, rituals, ceremonies, marital levies in the forms of gifts of crops, hunting, war, etc. in this primitive context.

The traditional analysis of power in terms of ideologies has as a central concern the reconciliation of the conflict of individual and collective interests. Political institutions set up as juridical systems are viewed as having the function of providing a balance in this conflict. The conflict is resolved on the right by democratic means with individual freedom having priority, and on the left

with a priority on the collective. The archaeological analysis emphasises the role of discourses and institutions in resolving this conflict.

The significance of the problem of sex in a primitive society is that sex is located exactly at the point of intersection between the control of the individual and the control of the society in general. The problem of sex serves to maintain a balance between the conflict of the individual and the collective interests. The resolution of this conflict for the Trobrianders does not take the form of a solution on either the right or the left. An articulation of the power effects employed in their type of solution is at stake in the archaeological analysis.

2.11 Power and anthropology.

The anthropological task of researching the force relations in primitive societies is to investigate the shift in those societies from the force relations of warfare to the strategies and tactics that are used during peace time.

Foucault claims that in any society the production of discourse is at once controlled, selected, organised and redistributed according to a number of procedures whose roles are to avert the power and dangers of discourse and make it a predictable event. These procedures are obviously at work in the powerful discourses on magic. The most obvious procedure for excluding discourse is prohibition. In The

Order of Discourse he outlines the contemporary forms of prohibition and exclusion that act on our discourses. The three main types of prohibition are the taboo of the object, the ritual of the circumstance, and the privileged or exclusive right of the speaking subject. These types intersect and reinforce one another in a complex ever changing network. Foucault notes that the two areas where this network operates at its strictest in the modern world are in the areas of politics and sexuality. The types of prohibitions, taboos and rituals operating in the primitive world are different since tradition has privilege over the speaking subject and the ritual of custom prevails everywhere.

In the construction of the episteme governing Trobriand knowledge forms and practices, both the particular surfaces of emergence and the social and cultural areas of that society will have to be examined for the way in which they allow a particular discursive formation to make its appearance. Further, either the authorities of delimitation, or the institutions deemed by the members of that society to possess a certain knowledge, or the system of government, must be described. Likewise, the way in which the members conceive of themselves in terms of the notion of the 'body' and its place within the environment, the 'spirit' and its place in the spirit world, the absence of the status of 'personal experience', etc. are all themes that must be investigated to provide the rules of formation for the

particular discourses.

An entry to this project is made at the level of native discourse on acceptable sexual activity. These discourses have a shared positivity with the discourses governing economic, social (marriage and kinship) and magical realms. These provide the kinds of knowledge available to, and acceptable to, the natives. Further, they are made true or false in terms of primitive power regimes for the production of true native discourses. The native dominions of power have the positive function of producing true and false discourses which are involved with the primitive sexual discourses. The rules of formation for other primitive discourses with a shared positivity are disclosed by establishing the specificity of primitive sexual mores. Further, the way in which these discourses are made true or false by the particular regimes of power will provide a means for the specification of the Trobriand episteme in terms of dominant codes for the formation of knowledge. An elucidation of the primitive epistemic codes, in turn, provides both an understanding and an explanation of the way in which the power regime works within that epistemic context and the way in which possibilities for the emergence of discourses are themselves determined by the strategies for establishing discourses as true or false. Also, the way in which these discourses share their conditions of possibility with sexual discourses is explained. Here there is a circular dependence

between the parts and the whole of the episteme. The episteme is, however, more than the sum of its parts and an elucidation of those parts will illuminate the role of that episteme in the formation of the elements of knowledge which in turn explains those very elements that constitute that actual episteme. I am not making transcendental claims for the results of this study but am confining myself, where possible, to local centres by my selection of the Trobriand Islanders. In this I am following Foucault's directive. The presence of discontinuities are kept in mind even where they are not affirmed. However, in the closing chapter, I will suggest a more generalised theory on the nature of primitive experience and knowledge that goes beyond the borders of the Trobriand Islands.

2.12 Conclusions.

The place vacated by the subject in archaeology has become occupied by the figure of power. We have seen that the configuration of power appropriate to the power-knowledge relation in question has nothing to do with ideology, nor is it necessarily a repressive form. It has an effective and positive relation to knowledge. An archaeology that is involved with the causal concerns of the nondiscursive practices of power will be employed in the analysis of the Trobrianders. Before this project, however, I turn my attention to developing what is to count as the guiding epistemological figures of that primitive episteme.

CHAPTER 3.

The Figures of the Trobriand Episteme.

'What resemblance more perfect than that between our two hands! And yet what a striking inequality there is!' [Hertz 1960, p.89].

3.1 Introduction.

As a recourse to an anthropology, the archaeological method provides us with a real alternative to approaches involving subjective explanatory unities. Having previewed the main features of this method, we can now turn to an examination of the elements that constitute the positivistic epistemic approach to the primitive knowledge forms of the Trobrianders. In this chapter, I will introduce the components that are to function in the divinational figures of the episteme which characterise that knowledge.

Archaeology posits formal differences (discontinuities) in the history of man's knowledge and experience. This means that primitive thought is distinguishable from our own both in terms of its content and the forms of reasoning involved. This means that archaeology promotes a transformative thesis that has its anthropological precedent in the earlier work of Levy-Bruhl. Levy-Bruhl became interested in primitive mentality because by comparing it with modern mentality, which was the furthest removed from it, he could prove his relativistic and pluralistic philosophy [Tambiah 1990, p.84]. Like Durkheim, Levy-Bruhl believed that primitive peoples were involved with collective representations. These

representations, which guide and limit experience, we might call 'epistemes' or 'forms of life'. This is supported by the fact that Levy-Bruhl described primitive forms of 'rationality' as the 'law of participation' [Tambiah 1990, p.86]. Tambiah believes that this concept of participation has been magnificently documented by Foucault as the 'doctrine of signatures' in which the notion of resemblance played a key role [Tambiah 1990, p.87]. This relates Levy-Bruhl's work to the notion of the 'episteme'. Tambiah also refers us to Wittgenstein's provocative notion of 'form-of-life' as an example of a Levy-Bruhlian-type relativistic project.

Levy-Bruhl was at pains to point out that primitive peoples do not reason in the way attributed to modern man by philosophers. However they do have guiding norms for the construction of their own knowledge. Further, in his earlier writings he had no thesis of continuous development from primitive to modern thought. Morris reminds us that when Levy-Bruhl writes of 'primitive mentality' he is not referring to individual mental faculties but to the cultural content of thought. The mental attitude of the individual is derived from the collective representations of the society, which are obligatory [Morris 1987, p.183]. This type of position reinforces Levy-Bruhl's work as a precursor to the archaeological approach. In this context, his primary importance lies in positing a discontinuity between modern and

primitive thought, and the kinds of questions that that discontinuity gives rise to, rather than the particular solutions that he offered. I am avoiding the conflicts between mystical and scientific, logic and prelogic, etc., in which Levy-Bruhl was immersed, because archaeology does not employ those unities and the traditional debates that they engage.

Levy-Bruhl's earliest claims rested on the view that the thought of some primitive peoples never employed the ideas of verification and testing¹. However, he later repudiated parts of this thesis that the more logical habits of Western thought had entirely displaced 'prelogical' thought processes. Le Pan agrees with Levy-Bruhl's later thesis and holds that it would be quite wrong to claim that primitive cognitive processes are entirely foreign to modern Westerners [Le Pan 1989, p.20]. This represents a developmental theory. He came to believe that the characteristic modes of thought of modern societies are distinguished from the modes of thought of primitive societies, not by the absence of primitive processes, but by the presence of additional modes of causal, temporal and logical thought.

The epistemic analysis of archaeology does not view the

1. The epistemic characterisation of a cognitive system is not defined in terms of logical forms, which in archaeology have the status of the producers of true statements, but the characterisation is in terms of the principal organising metaphors.

difference between the modern episteme and the primitive episteme of the Trobrianders as a question of the cumulation of cognitive features but rather a question of discontinuities and this constitutes a significant difference between my analysis and that of the later Levy-Bruhl. Archaeology does not promote a developmental model because of its involvement with a cumulative theory of a single form of rationality¹

Archaeology persistently attacks the definition of knowledge, in terms of 'rationality', as logical discourse. This was seen earlier in the rejection of the 'proposition' which is the logical unit of language in favour of the 'statement'. Traditionally, disciplines such as mathematics and physics are taken to be the best examples of rational activity and as such are defined as 'scientific'. The problem then becomes the task of elevating the 'less rational' human sciences such as economics, history, psychology and anthropology to this hallowed status of 'scientific', or condemning them if they fall short. Archaeology replaces the role of science as the model for rationality with 'dis-

1. Some primitive modes of thought, such as the establishment of sides of the body that are antagonistic towards each other with respect to strenghts, values, etc. are familiar in modern thought. However, just as resemblance ceased to be the ground of knowledge in the Classical Age so also has this type of opposition ceased to be the foundation of knowledge outside of primitive experience. These motifs do indeed persist but now have the status of mere superstitions.

course' and shows exactly what it means for any discipline to be discursive and what it means for any discourse to be 'scientific discourse'.

The archaeological analysis can make distinctions between 'resemblance man' of the Renaissance era, 'representational man' of the Classical era and the creative 'agent' of the Modern era. These are the forms-of-life that operate within these epistemes. The epistemological unity of modern man is dissolved in archaeology and replaced by these discontinuous forms. The analysis can be extended to make distinctions between these and 'primitive man', such as the Trobrianders. The characterisation of man strictly in terms of features of modern experience is surely inadequate for an account of knowledge both historically and anthropologically.

Modern man is a scientist and occupies a rational world. The primitive man of the Trobriand Islands is a magician and occupies a world everywhere ordered by the necessities of the episteme. It is non-sensical to question the rationality of these figures since they constitute what is to count as reason in the primitive experience and give rise to primitive truths. The universal manifestation of modern experience is replaced by the appearance of different peoples who occupy different worlds and may be defined in terms of shared conditions of experience and knowledge.

3.2 Three components.

The Trobriand episteme is a form of divination and has three essential attributes that determine the kind of knowledge available to it. These are the operation of figures of bounded complementary opposition, the immediate connection of this model with a notion of qualitatively differentiated space and a primary theory of occult causation in bounded essences or vitalities. The Trobriand model involves the imposition of asymmetrical boundaries on the world and these impositions give rise to a series of contextually specific realms not totally unlike those resemblances that Foucault identifies as operating in the Renaissance. The configuration of these boundaries provide the only form of reason recognised in the Trobriand episteme.

The antagonistic bounded oppositions are inextricably involved with the essential figures of convenience, continuity, asymmetry and enclosure because of its connection with topological space. These figures are the means for the allocation of boundaries and the establishment of various realms of things. Once the realms are available, essences can be attributed to each. The power of the essences will be dependent on the clarity of definition of the boundary. The world is divided by boundaries into opposing and rivalling spaces. Relations are established between the things that occupy these spaces on the basis of continuity, asymmetry, enclosure and resemblance by convenience. In this way, we

will see that men are convenient to wealth, light, strength and virtue while women are convenient to evil, darkness and weakness.

One of the most important figures in this model is that of asymmetric opposition. Joseph Needham suggests that the idea of complementary division was of such simplicity that it might have arisen independently in several civilisations [Needham 1956, p.277]. Goody suggests that such an idea seems intrinsic to human thought and to the use of language itself [Goody 1977, p.40].

In the collection Right and Left, Rodney Needham describes Hertz's work as a contribution to the analysis of our representation of space with an explicit emphasis on asymmetrical opposition [Needham 1973, p.xii]. The central theme of Hertz's study is that of 'polarity' or opposition¹ manifested in symbolic classification. Two further notable

1. The Trobriand episteme does not employ simply binary forms of oppositions between right and left. However, it is useful to look briefly at Hertz' treatment of this area. Hertz contends that the preponderance of the right hand is imposed by coercion and guaranteed by sanctions. The difference in value and function between the two sides of the body possesses, therefore, the characteristics of a social institution. He maintains that a fundamental opposition dominates the spiritual world of primitive men; that between the sacred and the profane [Hertz 1960, p.94]. Positive and constructive powers lie at one pole. Contrarily, oppressing influences reside at the opposite pole [Hertz 1960, p.96].

Hertz sought an account of this asymmetry outside of the human organism. I argue that such an account is found in the primitive necessity of epistemic figures that form the cultural apriori. Foucault uses the term 'historical apriori' to describe the conditions for the possibility of state-

works in this area are Evans-Pritchard's paper on 'Neur Spear Symbolism' and Hallpike's work The Foundations of Primitive Thought.

Needham goes further than Hertz's belief that asymmetry is the essence of primitive thought and claims that the symbolic opposition of right and left, and the dualistic categorisation of phenomena of which this opposition is paradigmatic, are so common as to seem natural proclivities of the human mind [Needham 1973, p.123]. Needham asserts that it is informative to elicit the symbolic classification and mode of conceptual relations from an ethnographic description since the particulars of a classification are not obvious. The detailing of a classification provides the explanatory merit of this sort of analysis. The construction of this sort of scheme does not depend simply on ingenuity in relating concepts and values which one has some reason to expect in any case. The form of the classification by which

...Continued...

ments and not the conditions for the validity of judgments. It is not an apriori of truths but the apriori of a history that is actually given [Foucault 1972, p.127]. The systems of statements produced by the different positivities, in accordance with historical aprioris, are the archive. The archive is, then, the system that makes the emergence of statements possible. Here, the cultural apriori has the same role in a cultural analysis that the historical apriori has in the historical analysis. The cultural apriori produces an archive that includes asymmetrical division. It does not, and need not, establish the validity of this opposition. This notion of the archive is something like the notion of 'collective representation' put forward by Durkheim which is discussed by Evans-Pritchard in Social Anthropology page 53.

a people order things imposes itself on the analytic construction [Needham 1973, p.124]. Needham suggests that it remains to determine the range of symbolic significance in social systems of different types and explain the correlations of social and symbolic structure [Needham 1973, p.124]. This is the task of the present archaeology.

I will examine, in this chapter, the fairly complex and unwieldy system of knowledge that is involved with the apparently simple idea of asymmetrical or complementary opposition. The figure of opposition involved in this study is more complex than those of asymmetrical opposition outlined by Hertz or Dumont when it is combined with the figures of convenience, continuity, asymmetry and enclosure which are all forms of resemblance. They form the collective representations of the Trobrianders.

3.2.1 Primitive causation.

The object of Levy-Bruhl's Primitive Mentality is to show what the notion of causation means to primitives and the inferences derived from their idea of it [Levy-Bruhl 1923, p.11]¹. When a phenomenon is presented to a primitive, he does not enquire into causal connections which are not self-evident, but refers to a mystic power. Causal connections are considered to be of slight importance as it is the natural consequence of the well established fact that

1. See also The Notebooks on Primitive Mentality for a more detailed and revised study.

primitive collective representations immediately evoke the instrumentality of mystic powers. Within this system cause is merely the opportunity that might have been afforded by something else since all that is necessary is the occult power to come into play without the intervention of a superior force of the same nature [Levy-Bruhl 1923, p.37].

The role of occult powers in primitive societies is a kind of apriori upon which experience has no hold [Levy-Bruhl 1923, p.38]. This applies in the primitive understanding of death where, generally speaking, when a man dies it is because he has been 'doomed' by a sorcerer [Levy-Bruhl 1923, p.39]. Primitives, as a rule, do not perceive any difference between a death which is the result of old age or of disease, and a violent death. The difference between the lingering of sickness and the suddenness of death met in a hunt or a battle is of no interest to them, since from their point of view neither the illness on the one hand, nor the wild beast or spear on the other, is the actual cause of death. These are merely the agents of the occult power which willed the death, and which equally might have chosen any other instrument to bring it about. Therefore, no death is accidental [Levy-Bruhl 1923, p.43]. There is no such thing as chance but primitives have a conception of the unusual. The unusual may occur with comparative frequency, and the primitive's disregard of secondary causes is compensated for by an alert attention to the mystic meaning of everything

that strikes it. Therefore, the primitive is astonished at nothing but very emotional about everything. The absence of intellectual curiosity about causation is accompanied by an extreme sensibility to the appearance of anything which takes him by surprise [Levy-Bruhl 1923, p.57].

At the very moment when the primitive perceives what is presented to his senses he represents to himself the mystic force which is manifesting itself in this way. He does not 'infer' from one to the other [Levy-Bruhl 1923, p.60]. The primitive in the presence of anything new knows already all that he needs to know. In any unusual event he perceives the manifestation of an invisible force.

The connection between cause and effect necessarily unites phenomena in time and they are conditioned in such a way so that they cannot be reversed. However, the primitive mind has a different view of the matter. All that happens is referred to the influence of mystic or occult powers. Instead of both cause and effect being perceptible in time, and nearly always in space, the primitive acknowledges only one of the two conditions to be perceptible at one time while the other belongs to those entities which are imperceptible to sense [Levy-Bruhl 1923, p.90].

For primitive man, cause and effect present themselves in two forms, not necessarily different from one another. Sometimes the collective representations impose a definite preconnection, as in the case where certain taboos are in-

fringed, certain misfortunes will result, or inversely, if such-and-such misfortunes occur it is because some taboo has been violated. Other times the event may be related to a cause in a general way, for example, an epidemic may be related to the wrath of ancestors or the evil work of a wizard. In each case, there is a direct link between cause and effect [Levy-Bruhl 1923, p.91].

This direct link accounts for the primitive's indifference towards the search for secondary causes. The primitive mind is accustomed to a type of causality that observes the network of such causes. The mystic causes to which the primitive man nearly always turns, being extra-spatial, and even at times extra-temporal, exclude the idea of intermediate links and chains. The influence of causes can only be direct. Even if an effect is produced at a distance, as is very often the case in witchcraft, and not perceived until after a lapse in time, it is nevertheless perceived with no intermediary [Levy-Bruhl 1923, p.92].

This configuration of cause which relates events in the world to an occult force, and lacks the notion of secondary events, allows for a world in which a force or vitality animates all things since the occult power is active everywhere. We will see this notion of occult cause, that lacks a theory of secondary causation, in operation in Trobriand magic. Levy-Bruhl's conclusions about primitive cause in general may be regarded as appropriate to the specific case

of the Trobrianders.

Primitive man classifies objects by the contextual associations available in his spatial representations and not by, for example, the resemblances of the Renaissance, nor the taxonomic tables of the Classical Age, nor the psychologistic categories of agency in the Modern Age. Thus the primitive world is composed of natural realms, or areas, of things. Because of this context-dependency, the same entity assumes different natures when it occurs in different places. In this way, rain water may be distinguished from river and sea water even though the word for 'water' may be used for all of them [Hallpike 1980, p.443]¹. This system of contextual realms allows the world to be known.

Primitive classification based on contextual association makes realms of experience possible such as 'the bush', 'the village', 'the body', etc. which come to be regarded as possessing a vitality of their own [Hallpike 1980, p.445]. In this way, the figures of the primitive Trobriand episteme attribute an external reality to the subjective experience of the Modern episteme. In this primitive scheme of things, there are two modes of exist-

1. Hallpike notes that this context-dependent type of classification will prevent the emergence of a generalised system of representations which focuses taxionomically on the physical attributes of things to the exclusion of context. This anticipates the arguments for the impossibility of the emergence of a written language.

ence: things apparent to the senses; and essences composed of a vital principle. Hallpike offers the example of semangat, the vital principle, from the Malays [Hallpike 1980, p.447]. In its most general form, semangat is that which is present in all organised things maintaining their existence and guiding and controlling their actions where appropriate. For example, houses and boats have semangat (vitality) which corresponds to the experience of their organised inter-related parts and which preserves those parts from dissolution since what is organised has the possibility of becoming disorganised.

The presence of vitality in things depends on their distinctiveness, both in type and number, and is a variable property. The clarity of definition of things, and the boundaries between them and their environment [Hallpike 1980, p.448]. In other words, the clarity of the operation of the figures of the episteme, is of importance in the power of the essences of things.

The most powerful essences are only vaguely defined while the less powerful ones are clearly defined by material boundaries. A change in the degree of definition of a thing in its environment effects the power of the vitality of the thing. The recitation of information about the essence of a thing formulated in a magical spell makes that thing less obscure and therefore, more susceptible to constraint by boundaries, less powerful and subject to predictions [Hall-

pike 1980, p.449]. This is the way in which witchcraft has its possibility in this episteme .

The basic realms of the Malay world, water, earth, jungle and the habitations of men, are further divided, where they concern men, into bounded classes of things, such as fishing grounds and fields. More specific classes of things are distinguished within the various realms. Vague free vitalities (spirits) identified with the division of the world roam widely. Some spirits are associated with more specific classes of matter. Essences are partially defined by the categories of matter they inhabit and in turn help to define these categories. In this way, well-defined bodies constrain well-defined essences much more than vaguely defined categories constrain their poorly defined inhabitants. Thus spirits are more powerful in relation to boundaries than semangat, and clearly defined bodies are more powerful in relation to essences than bodies with vaguely defined boundaries. Spirits, being only slightly differentiated from the mass of the vital principle, retain much of the power they derive from its infinite flexibility. This low definition allows spirits to break through the boundaries of more highly defined categories [Hallpike 1980, pp.449-450]. This is what happens in magical spells where well defined entities act as signs in the rite. A specific notion of space must prevail to accommodate this occult notion of cause.

3.2.2 Primitive space.

According to Levy-Bruhl, primitive man is much more conscious of time according to its qualities than according to its objective characteristics. Periods and salient points of time are characterised by the manifestations of the mystic powers which occur in them. Time does not have the divisions of past, present and future in primitive experience. Equally, it has neither value nor object and is therefore treated with indifference [Levy-Bruhl 1923, p.94]. The conception of time does not play a central role in the primitive Trobriand episteme in the way in which the primitive conception of space does.

Space also appears to the primitive as being laden with qualities. Its regions will have virtues peculiar to themselves. They share in the mystic powers which are revealed therein. The various directions and positions of space are qualitatively differentiated from one another [Levy-Bruhl 1923, p.95]. I employ this notion of differentiated space extensively in the construction of the Trobriand episteme.

Levy-Bruhl concludes that when we describe primitive experience as differing from the modern experience it is a question of the particular world formed for primitives by their collective representations. Of course every primitive can move in space and use instruments. However, every individual member has a representation of the reality in which he is living and acting which is constituted in accordance

with the group representation. This claim supports a collective conception of knowledge. Levy-Bruhl's results support the first presumption of the application of archaeology to anthropology, that is, that the primitive experience of the Trobrianders fails to coincide with our own in the limits of its collective manifestation and provides us with an analysis of primitive space and causation.

In this context, Hallpike claims that the dominant spatial concepts of primitive society are those of inner/outer; centre/periphery; left/right; high/low; closed/open; symmetrical/asymmetrical; and boundary [Hallpike 1980, p.285]. These orderings, he claims, are associated with concrete physical features of the natural environment such as the sky, earth, village, bush, etc. and with the images of the human body and dwelling and are closely integrated with moral values and social relations. These orderings are topologically projectional and act as the focus of a number of social categories. Their inversion is a common symbol of disorder where reversals are regarded as symbols of abnormal status. The body forms the necessary reference point for the most elementary spatial constructs and has significance in the primitive representation of space [Hallpike 1980, p.286].

Complex systems of spatial ordering are built up by the repetition of these basic classificatory notions. These are often based on dualistic opposition. The human body, the

dwelling and the village are the focal points of spatial representation in many primitive societies. Primitive representation of space is largely qualitative and complex systems can be built up on the basis of the general concepts of left/right, inner/outer, high/low, etc [Hallpike 1980, p.290].

Villages are clearly bounded entities and only the interior of a boundary has ceremonial value. The layout of primitive villages is consistent with the view point of someone looking down from a high place. In the case of the Kedang village of Meuwajang, the centre of the village, the navel, is of great symbolic importance and is marked by a flat offering stone. Further, the village is supposed to have two snakes, male and female, which represent the spirits of the village and which are closely associated with the centre [Hallpike 1980, p.291]. The importance of the centre is emphasised by the proximity of the temple and by the fact that various prohibitions, such as the growing of maize or palms and cloth-working apply at the centre [Hallpike 1980, p.292].

The maintenance of the proper relations between upper and lower is of great importance to the Kedang. Indeed, confusion of up and down or high and low is regarded as the archetypal case of incest. This principle of order is of particular importance in house and boat building where the posts that maintain the four corners of the roof preserve

the same relation to the trees from which they were cut as they had when planted in the ground; the root ends of the trees must form the base ends of the posts [Hallpike 1980, p.292].

Hallpike notes that in many primitive societies the geometric notion of the straight line as the products of the intersections of planes, or a segment which is the shortest distance between two points, is not developed in the absence of problems that do not demand, for example, siting between two points. Primitive systems do not use Euclidian concepts in the construction of co-ordinated system or in the organisation of experience [Hallpike 1980, p.339]. Hallpike attributes the absence of measurement and quantification to the lack of Euclidian and projective spatial representation together with the lack of representative drawing and mapping.

Hallpike concludes that the primitive representations of space are dependent on the phenomenal appearance and the contextual associations of the physical world which are experienced in everyday life such that representations tend to be static and heavily loaded with symbolism. Boundaries, centre and periphery, above and below, left and right and other topological relations abound. While many cultures recognise the cardinal points these are often conceived of in a static manner based on the rising and setting of the sun and the axes of the human body and they are not used as

co-ordinate systems for orientation [Hallpike 1980, p.338].

Southwold provides a supposedly devastating attack on the type of position argued by Hallpike¹. He acknowledges that Hallpike is trying to revive Levy-Bruhl's thesis that there are major formal differences between the modes of thought common to primitive societies and those that prevail in modern societies [Southwold 1981, p.491]. He characterises Hallpike's findings as being based on a scientific theory of mind which is explicitly rooted in the developmental psychology, and genetic epistemology, of Piaget [Southwold 1981, p.491]. While acknowledging Hallpike's significant achievement in demonstrating the fact that the collective representations are necessarily shaped by the kinds of cognitive processes that prevail among individuals in that society, he is nevertheless dismissive overall. Southwold classifies Hallpike's treatment of causality and space as belonging to Piaget's 'preoperatory' stage of human development.

I join with Southwold where he criticises Hallpike for rejecting the Durkheimian assumption that collective representations are to be understood in isolation from individual psychology. Given the non-subjectivist claims of the opening chapters of this study, it readily follows that the archaeo-

1. He makes this challenge in a review of Hallpike's The Foundations of Primitive Thought that appeared in Man (see bib.).

logical approach to collective representations does not reduce to categories pertaining to individual consciousness. However, Southwold's main criticism of Hallpike focuses on the tone of his arguments rather than their substance. He claims that it is derogatory both to apply the term 'primitive' to societies and to correlate the cognitive processes of 'primitives' with those which are normally superseded in our childhood. Further, Hallpike describes modern thought as 'higher', more 'effective' and more 'powerful' than primitive thought [Southwold 1981, p.493]. It is not part of my thesis, or the archaeological project in general, to make value judgments between the merits pertaining to different epistemes. Indeed, how could such a task be accomplished in a method that energetically eschews any such 'objective' point of judgment. All values, merits and efficiencies belong within the particular episteme: there is no trans-epistemic overview. We have already seen that while archaeology is concerned with an analysis of truth it is not an apparatus for its production. If it made such judgments it would be producing truths and would, therefore, cease to fulfil its original function. I have tried hard to reject the models that could provide these types of judgment, that is, models that posit a cumulative rational theory with only one form of rationality. The developmental psychology of Hallpike is an example of such a rational theory. These theories hold that primitives are only imperfect participa-

tors in reason. I make no such claims.

However, I maintain the use of the term 'primitive' as an historical classification to signify difference and hope, perhaps naively, that it will be read without any of its usual ethnocentric derogatory connotations.

Using Hallpike's general findings I conclude that the figures of the Trobriand episteme are based on a strictly topological conception of space. The notion of space to which the figures of the episteme are linked cause it, unlike that of the Renaissance model, to be everywhere tied to those figures.

3.2.3 Bounded complementary oppositions.

Dumont, in Homo Hierarchicus, problematizes the notion of opposition by distinguishing between complementary and hierarchical opposites. He provides us with an example of asymmetrical opposition in the form of the caste system which he treats as a central ideology of inequality.

Barnes and de Coppet claim that central to Dumont's understanding of caste is the principle of hierarchical polarity attached to every criterion of distinction and the opposition of status and power [Barnes and de Coppet 1985, p.1]. Dumont's conception of hierarchy can be seen as providing a method of anthropological analysis relying on the conception of hierarchical opposition as extending throughout the totality of the ideology of all societies. The key terms in his approach are difference, ideology, value,

totality, opposition and hierarchy. Dumont distinguishes hierarchy from social stratification and inequality [Barnes and de Coppet 1985, p.1]. In his analysis, the notion of equal opposites in structural taxonomies and classifications is of less use than hierarchical opposition.

It is useful to examine Dumont's notion of hierarchical opposition rather than his analysis of caste systems. When discussing the nature of power in archaeology, we have seen that any system that is involved with an ideological dimension is inappropriate for grasping the elements to be revealed at the archaeological level. If an analysis of the caste system were to be carried out in archaeology it would not be in terms of its ideological import but in terms of caste as a condition for organising the world in terms of its discursive potential. Since the notion of caste as political and economic hierarchy is so imbued with ideological content, and is given in terms of a repressive power, it is not an appropriate unity for the construction of the Trobriand episteme. We have seen that archaeology analyses power for its positive effects and not as a negative conception of prohibition. Dumont concedes that the caste system has positive attributes as a power regime but these are still construed within a left/right ideological opposition.

Barnes holds that Dumont defines asymmetry as the principle by which the elements of a whole are ranked in relation to that whole. This asymmetry is a relation between

the encompassing and the contrary where the idea of encompassment brings in the issue of distinctions within the whole and the oppositions of the resulting parts. Dumont's principle of encompassment holds that the superior includes the inferior which in turn excludes the first. This means that Dumont regards hierarchical opposition, which makes reference to the whole, as the appropriate asymmetrical figure. He concedes that at first sight some oppositions do not exhibit this relationship, for example, the left is not normally included in the right. All that seems essential to this model is the division of the whole into unequal pairs (complementary opposites). If this is the case, according to Barnes, the nature of opposition is a matter of empirical demonstration in each culture [Barnes 1985, p.11]. However, the debate is more complex than Barnes' recommendations would suggest since there are rivalling forms of hierarchical models.

For Dumont, complementary opposition provides a division of the universe of discourse into two complementary or contradictory classes. Despite both classes being subsumed within the greater whole, Dumont does not describe this relationship as hierarchical. However, hierarchical asymmetry is represented where there is unity at the superior level, distinction at the inferior level and the two classes are related by complementarity and contradiction. The superior class stands both in opposition to the other and for

the higher order unity. Therefore, opposites exemplify hierarchical opposition only where one stands for the whole as well as for part of the internal division [Barnes 1985, p.11].

According to Allen, hierarchical opposition may appear at first sight as a binary relation like contradiction. But there is a third relevant entity, namely the whole universe of discourse. It is possible to describe the classes as differentiated while the whole world of discourse transcends such classification. This means that hierarchical opposition takes a tertiary rather than a binary form. Leaving the question of transcendence aside, Allen asks whether structuralism needs to put as much emphasis as it has on binary formulations [Allen 1985, p.27].

Mauss goes beyond Allen's recommendations for a tertiary formulation to one involving many more dimensions. He emphasises the need to go beyond the simplistic sacred/profane opposition of Hertz's pioneering work [Mauss 1968-69, pp.143-148]. The lateral opposition of right and left, according to Mauss, is to be treated with reference to spatial dimensions. The right/left relation needs to be analysed together with the up/down relation and front/back relation. One should take account of a centre associated with the cosmic navel or the inhabited space of the village, etc. Mauss envisaged the whole set of relations as a sort of sphere with six poles radiating from the centre with its

special quality [Mauss 1968-69,p.145]. But he was not thinking solely of conceptions of space but had in mind a complex combining positions, powers, and purities and in extreme cases embracing all the beings and events in relation to other things. The objective should be the ensemble of things and relations. Mauss does not conceive of the centre as transcendent nor of the whole as constituting a level distinct from that of its components but it is clear for him that the route to such an holistic approach was not solely through binary opposition.

I am guided by Mauss's recommendations and go beyond the simple binary oppositional forms of Hertz's asymmetrical conception to take the whole world of things into account. However, what is sought in a guiding metaphorical code is not an infinitude of relations but a few relations that can be imposed on the infinite world of discourse.

The important element in Dumont's model of hierarchical opposition is not so much the presence of unequal division but the relation of the unequal classes to the whole. This means that there must be a clear and distinct formulation of a closed world of things available to the hierarchical model. I will look at how orality has its possibility because of the absence of this type of closure in the primitive model. Closure is a condition for the possibility of the emergence of writing and is not available in the Trobri-

and episteme. A distinction can be made between enclosure¹ or encompassment, which is indeed present in the primitive episteme, and closure represented by the notion of a closed whole. Dumont does not make such a distinction. Because of this absence of closure, the fundamental figure of asymmetry appropriate to the Trobriand episteme is that of complementary opposition².

But there are also other oppositional relations that pertain to this spatial model. Proximity is the most elementary spatial relation together with its complement separation [Hallpike 1980, p.283]. This proximity and separation I call the recognition of convenience. Separation of objects

1. Closure is discussed in more detail in the context of orality in the final chapter.

2. Needham refers to Bernardi's study of the Mugwe of the Meru society, where the left hand possesses and symbolises ritual power, as an example which might invert complementary relations. In the light of this, Bernardi should have looked for an explanation of this case but he did not [Needham 1973, p.110]. Needham's only assumption is that the Meru classification is consistent, and on the strength of this, he suggests that the sacred hand must enter the series with what is superior and the profane hand must enter the series in the company of the complex of opposite and complementary terms [Needham 1973, pp.120-121]. The selection of one hand or the other as sacred is not necessarily determined by matters of physical fact and the categorisation of a term is not in principle deducible from any one of its properties. The point is very pertinent to the present study. What is being examined here is not necessarily the determination of value in terms of the right but the consistency and coherence of the operation of systems of complementary opposition as an element in the complex of the episteme. There are many examples of this type of consistency available in Needham's essay 'Right and Left in Nyoro Symbolic Classification' in the collection Right and Left (see bib.).

results in their ordering or succession of which a particularly important case is asymmetry. We have seen that the asymmetry in question is complementary opposition. Ordered sequences also possess the property of enclosure or surrounding. The centre of a circle is enclosed by the periphery. Lines and surfaces also possess the property of continuity in which only the end-points are distinguished: the mid-points are not. Continuity is, therefore, a synthesis of the relations of proximity and separation and is the last of the topological relations to be fully grasped at the conceptual level of spatial representation [Hallpike 1980, p.284]. The figures of the episteme are everywhere involved with topological space and are those of asymmetry, convenience, enclosure and continuity. These figures characterise the epistemological configuration that orders the Trobrianders' world and allow for the contextual associations of their representations.

Convenience, as a means of identifying a boundary, forms adjacencies and is connected with space by a graduated scale of proximity. Convenience pertains to the world as a whole. Things are convenient when they are sufficiently close to be adjacent. The contact gives rise to a resemblance of areas by exchange on the basis of their adjacency. Convenience sets up a linear chain of resemblances. In this way a child is connected to its mother in that while in the mother's womb, it occupied the same place as the mother.

Convenience co-exists with separation. Separation results from the convenient ordering of objects in succession which are asymmetrically opposed. Asymmetry provides for the division of the world into rivalling parts. It is a form of emulation, and thus a form of resemblance that establishes spaces that reflect and rival each other. By the division of the body in space into two parts essences are assigned asymmetrically to the two parts because they occupy different realms. One side is similar to strength, light and honour. Space is also divided in such a way that the top reflects and rivals the bottom, where again the top is positive, being the home of the gods.

Ordered sequences possess the property of enclosure. There are enclosed circles of conveniences and separations in the Trobriand episteme. Lines and surfaces possess the property of continuity in which only the end points are distinguished. In this way continuity is a synthesis of the relations of convenience and separation. Enclosure differs from Dumont's notion of the whole since it posits a surrounded space rather than completeness. The elements of this primitive episteme multiply to infinity so that any notion of the whole is missing. However, there is a restraint on the analysis in the function of the microcosm and macrocosm. Primitive thought can find all of its necessary terms in the body of man which is the centre of reflection. This body acts as a limiting function in the analysis.

The figures set up relations between things in the same way as the figures of the Renaissance episteme set up resemblances between things. This is how boundaries are established and, as a result, how the essences of things are knowable in this primitive episteme. However, the Trobriand episteme has four figurative moves that are different from the four of the Renaissance and different types of boundaries and relations are established. The four figures of the Trobriand episteme are strictly related to space. This allows different constraints on each model and, further, it allows for more complex relations in the Resemblance model. The linking of forms of representation with space has its most important consequence for the Trobriand model in the nature of language available to it and its absence of the conditions for the possibility of writing because of the primitive conception of the sign.

In the Renaissance episteme the figures of emulation and sympathy/antipathy are not connected with space. Sympathy, antipathy and analogy operate in a free state; they can cross the largest space instantaneously. Sympathy has the power of making things identical with each other and causes individuality to disappear. It is counter-balanced by antipathy which maintains things in isolation and prevents assimilation to a single point. These two give rise to all the figures of the Renaissance. Sympathy/antipathy have no counterpart in the Trobriand episteme except continuity

which gives rise to the other figures. However, this does not have the power of sympathy or antipathy. Continuity is a synthesis of convenience and separation. Convenient objects form ordered successions which may be asymmetrical and form enclosures. We can see all of these figures in operation in an archaeological analysis of the Trobrianders.

The signs in the world rival the things of the world which are related together in space by convenience and asymmetric emulation. This primitive model lacks the three dimensionality of the Renaissance model and only allows for simpler forms of similitude. Therefore, the positivity of the primitive discourses can be defined in terms of this circular enclosed place with its conveniences, asymmetries, and continuities.

The Trobriand figures have several consequences for the character of their knowledge. The resulting knowledge takes the form of divination and, because of its universal application in space, it is limitless since the whole world must be investigated in order to obtain correct knowledge. Each pole of the asymmetry refers back to another and proceeds by an infinite accumulation of confirmations which are dependent on each other. In this way, Trobriand knowledge accumulates by simple addition.

Knowledge of the world is gained by divination where the place of the sign is sought. The world is changed in witchcraft where the signs are operated upon and altered by

an operation on the vital boundaries. The infinite possibility of this knowledge and the possibility of witchcraft accumulates by addition and is maintained by tradition and restrained by the microcosm.

3.3 Microcosm and macrocosm.

The limitless universe of things in the primitive world is constrained by the use of a fundamental resemblance in the body of man¹. The divinational model is applied to the human organism which forms the microcosm for the otherwise infinite investigation. The human organism as a microcosm guarantees that every investigation will have a microcosmic justification on the larger scale. The organism provides the conditions for the validity of primitive knowledge and order of the universe while the realms of the model in general² provide the conditions for the possibility of that order². Inversely, it confirms that the visible order of the world will be reflected in the microcosm. The figures of the

1. Littlejohn argues that the ground of the fundamental distinction between right and left must be sought in the human body. The distinction must make possible the separation between left and right in the body and it must confer a primary meaning on the two halves. The ground of the distinction must be a directed straight line and represent a sort of vector otherwise right and left could change sides at any time depending on which end of the line was taken as a starting point. Evidently the vector is a movement from high to low [Littlejohn 1973, p.289]. Some primitives may have a representation of a vector in the form of a tree, spear, house-pole, etc.

2. See the role of the microcosm in The Order of Things, page 30.

Trobriand episteme occur between the limits of this analogy, between the world and the human organism which provides the conditions for the limitation of the accumulation of primitive analyses, and the primitive justification of knowledge. The beings and things residing between microcosm and macrocosm are finite and potentially countable. The macrocosm provides the guarantee of knowledge and the limit to its expansion. Thus, the body of man forms a limiting analogy for this otherwise infinite world and provides the possibility of primitive truths.

The human organism forms the microcosm for the Trobriand configuration and the figures occur within this space between the body and its reflection onto the world. However, the individual bodies are subjected to the operation of this model. There is an organic asymmetry between the body of a man and the body of a woman. The male body is assigned a place at the pole of strength, light, courage and skill. But if the woman is powerless and passive she has her revenge within the realm of magic where she is particularly suited for the workings of sorcery. The model is not one of power present on one side but wholly absent on the other. On the contrary, power is spread across both sides functioning in a state of tension. The relation of knowledge to power is possible by the very deployment of this axis in the space of the primitive world. Evils, misery and death can come from the female element [Hertz 1960, p.97]. In this way, the

opposition between the two sexes correspond to oppositions between the sacred and the profane, to life and to death, to light and darkness. Women possess the powers of one side of the power deployment.

Hertz notes that the human body, the microcosm, could not escape the law of polarity which governs everything [Hertz 1960, p.98]. Society and the whole universe have a side that is sacred, light and precious and another which is profane, dark and common; a male side strong and active and a female side that is weak and passive. This means that it is impossible for the human organism to remain symmetrical. Such an exception would ruin the entire economy of the primitive world. In this way, Hertz argues that if organic asymmetry had not existed it would have been invented. There is no need to invent this asymmetry since it is a necessity imposed by the order of things in the primitive world available through the figures of the antagonistic bounded realms.

In the primitive thought of the Trobrianders, the world forms a closed circle at the centre of which is the body of man. An axis divides this circular space of the universe cutting the world into two opposing and rivalling halves with the organic body of man at the centre divided by this axis. This figure is reflected in the physical structure of the Trobriander village where the inside represents strength, security, goodness and life, and is the place of the chief, while the outside is near to the hostility and

menace of evil in the form of hunger, disease and war from the world outside of the village.

The organic body is divided between the two sexual natures of male and female. On the one side is the male, represented by the brother, while on the other side is the female, represented by the sister. Each body itself finds its appropriate place in the world. The male body is on the side of strength and power while the female is on the side of weakness and evil. However, the female is not completely cast out into the world of darkness and evil. If such were the case, relations between the two sides would be impossible. The female body itself has its right side, or is convenient to the male body at the macroscopic level. However, at the microscopic level it represents darkness. The female body acts both as the sign for negative attributes and as a thing that can occupy various spaces in the world itself. This is the way in which the female body functions in Trobriander thought. The primitive sexual act has its possibility in this convenience.

In the primitive experience of the Trobrianders, the epistemological figures are imposed on the world so that specifiable realms are available that are convenient, asymmetrical, enclosed and continuous. All of these realms are spatial. Essences or vitalities are assigned to each in relation to a corresponding division of the mass of the vital principle which is everywhere operating in the world.

Thus, the primitive world is divided by the application of specifiable figures so that animated spaces can emerge which are at one and the same time the natural order of the world and the signs of that order. Because knowledge is always concerned with formulating truths about the order of things, its nature will depend on the episteme's construal of the nature of the signs used to formulate truths.

3.4 Primitive signs.

Wagner holds that it is reasonably self-evident that the meaningful elements of a culture all bear some sort of relationship to one another [Wagner 1972, p.168]¹. This implies that meaning is constituted through a determinate relation between signifier and signified. Wagner describes a signifier, that bears such a determinate relation to the signified, as a metaphor. A metaphor presupposes a contrast as well as at least one point of similarity with the thing it represents. A metaphor signifies a relation [Wagner 1972, p.169].

The relations outlined above indicate the presence of such a metaphorical system of signification at work in the episteme. Metaphorical signification has an innovative interaction with the elements it metaphorizes such that, eventually, the relation between signifier and signified

1. This has already been asserted in archaeology but the meaningful element there is the 'statement' and not the 'proposition' as in Wagner's conception.

becomes one of ordinary lexical signification, which can be incorporated into a new metaphor. The interchange between signification and metaphorisation implies that meaning is a function of change that takes the form of metaphoric innovation [Wagner 1972, p.169].

In this model of meaning production, one relation is used to produce another which results in a dialectic relationship in which the relation signified by one metaphor becomes the context of another and, therefore, the meaning evoked by each is achieved at the expense of the other. These metaphors may either exist in a complementary or a dialectically innovative relationship to one another, with the respective meanings being either consistent or contradictory [Wagner 1972, p.169].

Elsewhere, Wagner argues that since metaphoric usage sets one symbol into a relation to another such symbol, it is obvious that a notion of simple, or literal, reference cannot apply [Wagner 1978, p.25]. This relation introduces a new symbolisation simultaneously with a 'new' referent such that the symbolisation and its referent are identical. The metaphor assimilates both symbol and referent into one expression. In other words, a symbol stands for itself [Wagner 1978, p.25]. Thus, the symbolic effect of metaphoric usage collapses a distinction between symbol and symbolised and differentiates that expression from others [Wagner 1978, p.25].

Wagner's work is relevant for articulating the nature of signs in the Trobriand episteme. In this episteme, signs are themselves things in the world and act as references for the assignation of new signs. There is an inter-connecting circle of things in the world that occupy a certain place. Each possible place is opposed through the operation of the metaphorical figures of the episteme. These places allow something to be assigned a sign to determine its essence. Once an essence is assigned to a sign, which itself is a thing in the world, a different essence may be assigned to the sign in a different place.

This means that the inter-connecting circular world of things has super-imposed on it an equally complex inter-connecting circular world of signs. In order that these signs are not transparent to the world of things their imposition is referred to a different application of the metaphorical figures.

Because each thing is the sign of itself, this means that signs are indistinguishable from the things they represent and their function as signs cannot be detected. However, by referring things to their place on a model of fundamental opposition, imposed on the human organism, an opaque sign can be determined. We have seen that the imposition of an asymmetrical axis on the world is available at the microscopic level in the asymmetry of the human organism. The signs that arise from this are the left and right hand

sides. Further, the application of this opposition onto the world as a whole allows each thing in the world to occupy a place relative to it , and allows new oppositions to emerge. These are oppositions such as up and down.

Amongst the Trobrianders, the signs of things have to be located in their appropriate spaces. Hertz offers us examples of these from Maori thought [Hertz 1960, p.101]. If a convulsive tremor is felt while sleeping it is a sign that a spirit has entered the sleeper, and according as to whether the sign was on the right or the left, good or ill fortune can be expected. The same rule holds in general for omens which consist in animals thought to be bearers of fate. These messages are susceptible to two contradictory interpretations according to whether the situation is seen from the point of view of the observer or the observed. If it appears on the left it presents its right side and, therefore, it can be considered favourable.

Holy, in his essay 'Symbolic and Non Symbolic aspects of Berti Space', raises the point that criticisms of analyses of symbolic collective representations of the form outlined above typically have been concerned with the psychological validity and with the difficulty of establishing the criteria in terms of which they might be falsified [Holy 1983, p.269]. This puts pressure on Barnes's claim that the nature of opposition is merely a matter of straightforward

empirical demonstration. In response to this criticism Hallpike suggests that the collective representations may have a dualistic structure which is beyond the capacity of the individual members of the culture to employ explicitly in their reasoning. Therefore, the collective representations exist at the level of the unconscious and this effectively dismisses the question about their existence at the level of individual consciousness.

The employment of models of opposition in the episteme does not amount to the claim that archaeology is adopting a structuralist method at this level. Foucault claims that the collective representations, or guiding codes, exist at the level of the unconscious which is not a psychic unconscious (since archaeology does not employ psychologistic models). These representations exist at the level of a collective unconscious; they form the cultural archive. In this way, archaeology avoids the first criticism. This answer, however, does not address the second criticism [Holy 1983, p.270].

The second criticism remains and appears to be as pertinent to archaeology as it is to structuralism. How are the archaeological collective representations supposed to be falsified? The answer to this problem is straightforward but might strike some as unsatisfactory. Popper's definition of scientific knowledge in terms of theories that are open to falsification suffices as the definition of science for

those who raise this criticism. We have already seen that a concern of archaeology is to question scientific discourses for what it means for those discourses to be scientific. The archaeological definition of science is not given simply in terms of the possibility of falsification of a body of knowledge. Despite problems with the definition of science in terms of falsification¹, the demand for falsification belongs to a rationalistic conception of science that I have taken some space in this study to circumvent.

Further, in The Order of Things Foucault treats contradiction (falsification) not as some part of knowledge that is wholly to be avoided but as having the positive effect of producing further discourses. Falsification may be regarded as a technique for the classification of theories in discourses as true or false. This is a technique employed in a power regime for the establishment of a body of knowledge as true and as such, since the truth is valued, facilitates the propagation of that knowledge. Archaeology is not as directly involved with this technique as some might desire but, nevertheless, I will employ empirical examples of its application to the Trobrianders to show the operation of the symbolic representations at work.

1. See Kuhn's History of Scientific Revolutions, Feyerabend's Against Method and Chalmer's What is This Thing Called Science? for a criticism of Popper.

3.5 Malinowski's ethnography.

In the next chapter I will turn to an archaeological mediation of the empirical data amassed by Malinowski in his prolonged study of the Trobrianders' culture to demonstrate the operation of the epistemological figures. Paluch tells us that Malinowski's work has only recently been rediscovered in his native Poland, where it had been viewed as serving the ends of British imperialism [Paluch 1981, p.276]. Malinowski's influence on the development of Polish social science was not especially important [Paluch 1981, p.277]. However, Paluch claims that Malinowski's earliest works in Polish are crucial for an explanation of the origins of his functionalism as well as for the interpretation of some of his ideas. Malinowski's doctoral thesis in 1908 was in positivistic philosophy. There he argued that the function and genesis of science must be explained within a relationship defined by human biological needs [Paluch 1981, p.279]. Both his emphasis on functional explanations and his notion of culture as an instrumental whole can be traced to this period [Paluch 1981, p.279].

However, Malinowski diverged from his positivistic programme when he was influenced by the neo-Kantianism of the Marburg school. This school of thought promoted the employment of apriori forms of cognition in the study of reality. The apriori concept that was to determine his anthropological results was one of biological imperatives

[Paluch 1981, pp.280-282]. Culture, then, is an apparatus that makes the satisfaction of human needs possible [Paluch 1981, p.283]. Paluch concludes that Malinowski's positivistic bias produced not specially deep and sensitive common-sense knowledge [Paluch 1981, p.283].

With respect to the theory of biological needs, Goddard claims that Malinowski owed much to Durkheim as he was not an empiricist in the traditional British sense and, as such, his more radical formulation of functionalism was rejected by British anthropology [Goddard 1979, p.67]. The assimilation of Durkheim in Britain was highly selective and incomplete. Durkheim's mode of analysis was interpreted uneasily as a form of 'sociological positivism' and made to conform to the methodological conditions of traditional empiricism [Goddard 1979, p.74]. Durkheim's disdain for empirical facts was berated. His view that one experimental situation could serve to establish the validity of a sociological law was received with incredulity. In this way, the real strength of the Durkheimian method was never accepted in British anthropology [Goddard 1979, p.75].

Leach supports this view since he claims that any attempt to elucidate the epistemological context of Malinowski's functionalism runs into the difficulty that Malinowski borrowed the notion of social function from Durkheim but transmuted it in the process. He understands Durkheim to have been concerned simply with investigating the relation-

ship between social facts and their social consequences. But for Malinowski, social phenomena exist to satisfy biological needs¹. Functions are thus purposeful and positive and to detect them requires intuitive judgment. In light of this, Leach concludes that Malinowski's functionalism is presented as practical rather than plausible [Leach 1970, p.124].

While Radcliffe-Brown was initially willing to accept a 'functionalist' label with Malinowski, he later preferred to elaborate his conception of anthropology in terms of a comparative study of structural systems. Formal structural concepts were employed to provide a framework and differentiating element in the idea of a functional social system put forward by Malinowski [Firth 1988, p.17].

Jarvie criticises Malinowski's functionalism with

1. In A Scientific Theory of Culture, Malinowski constructed a table of basic needs with their corresponding cultural manifestations.

A	B
<u>Basic Needs</u>	<u>Cultural Responses</u>
1 Metabolism	1 Commissariat
2 Reproduction	2 Kinship
3 Bodily Comforts	3 Shelter
4 Safety	4 Protection
5 Movement	5 Activities
6 Growth	6 Training
7 Health	7 Hygiene

[Malinowski 1944, p.91]. When I come to treating the economy of a Primitive culture I do not seek the possibility of an economics in organic need but in the figures of the episteme and in this way my analysis is significantly different from Malinowski's. For a detailed analysis and assessment of Malinowski's theory of needs see Piddington's 1970 essay in Firth's collection Man and Culture. (see bibliography).

respect to its ability to explain change. He claims that social change cannot be handled by functionalism and this amounts to a significant weakness in the theory [Jarvie 1964, p.19].

Malinowski's general interpretations may be briefly summarised in the following way: first, he initiates his theorising by making all modes of behaviour intelligible in terms of the motivations of individuals; second, he includes within this theory both rational 'scientific' behaviour and irrational 'magical' behaviour; and third, he recognises the interconnectedness of the different items which constitute the Trobriand culture as a system [Parsons 1970, p.55].

With respect to the first aspect of his theory, Malinowski was repelled by the historicist implications of his teacher Wundt's notion of 'group-mind' and sought a theory which could combine the 'materialist' basis of nineteenth-century Evolutionism with the attribution of free will to the individual. According to Leach's belief, Malinowski found this body of theory in the Pragmatism of William James [Leach 1970, p.121-123]¹. He claims that Malinowski rebelled against the mechanistic implications of the late nineteenth-

1. Leach claims that Malinowski's Pragmatism is that of James rather than Pierce. He cites Gallie's commentary where a summary of James' thesis is that the main function of thought is to satisfy certain interests of the organism, and that truth consists in whatever thinking satisfies these interests. Leach suggests that if we substitute behaviour for thought we have the essence of Malinowski's functionalism.

century and his 'functionalism', like James's 'pragmatism', is an aspect of this revolt. However, Malinowski never fully succeeded in escaping the influence of these traditions [Leach 1970, p.127].

Parsons identifies the main characteristic in Malinowski's thought as an effort to remain close to an interpretation of the motives of the individual which is a psychological emphasis [Parsons 1970, p.54]. Foucault rejects this analysis of motives in this type of analysis and with it the role of individuated experience. This marks what is probably the most significant difference between the two analyses. Malinowski's psychologism was tempered by an awareness of the cultural context in which the individuals lived [Parsons 1970, p.54]. My analysis views individuals as immersed in the context of the episteme. The subject is necessarily situated and dependent in archaeological analysis and cannot function as a transcendental figure or as empirical consciousness [Foucault 1972, p.183]. Instead of exploring Malinowski's consciousness\knowledge\science axis which cannot escape subjectivity, there is the objective exploration of the practice\knowledge\discourse axis.

With respect to the second aspect of Malinowski's theory which relates to rational behaviour, Malinowski rejected both the rationalism of Tylor and the irrationalism of Levy-Bruhl in interpreting the mind of primitive man. Malinowski's savage combined empirical knowledge, that was

rationally directed, with a belief in ritual and magical rites within certain contexts. He tried to make both aspects intelligible through a theory of function [Parsons 1970, p.54]. Archaeology does not interpret the mind of man but the knowledge of primitive man, which does not have its origin in the mind, but in the creative figures, or codes, of the episteme. Further, archaeology does not divide the debate in the emergence of knowledge between the rational and the irrational where rationalism is defined in terms of its empirical content and 'sensible' application. Archaeology examines that which counts as sensible for any context. The limits of reason are given within archaeology and not outside of it in a way which supposedly governs its application.

The third aspect of Malinowski's theory refers to culture. Malinowski's definition of culture states that 'culture' comprises inherited artifacts, goods, technical processes, ideas, habits, values and social organisation since these cannot be understood except as part of culture. In this way, it only differs slightly from Tylor's nineteenth century definition of culture as including knowledge, belief, art, law, morals, customs, and all the other capabilities and habits acquired by man [Richards 1970, p.16]

Subsumed under Malinowski's use of the term 'culture' is, first of all, the notion of the tribal microcosm, the functioning whole. Secondly, there is a stress on the need

to study the 'use' or 'function' of the custom's institutions and beliefs which form part of a culture. Thirdly, because Malinowski was interested in the difference between man's biological and sociological heritage, he identified the latter with the term culture [Richards 1970, p.16].

In Argonauts of the Western Pacific, Malinowski attempted to analyse culture into a number of well balanced distinct parts. Leach contends that Malinowski's discourses on culture and his theoretical position in general are merely platitudinous [Leach 1970, p.119]. Further, he regards functionalism in the Malinowskian form to have become repugnant and his abstract writings to be dead [Leach 1970, p.120]. However, he believes that the only distinguishing special characteristic of his theoretical assumption is that the total field of data must fit together and make sense [Leach 1970, p.120].

Archaeology shares Malinowski's belief that all the elements of a culture have an interconnectedness. However, Malinowski defines 'culture' in terms of three disparate categories: firstly, material culture consisting of physical objects which are the products of human activities; secondly, concrete categories of human activity under the term 'custom'; thirdly, constitutional charters for the various social groupings and beliefs [Parsons 1970, p.58]. In terms of the archaeological analysis 'culture' may be understood in terms of power regimes, discursive formations, positiv-

ties, institutions, objects and statements which are interconnected in terms of the possibility of cultural effects. We have seen that these effects, in the primitive Trobriand episteme, are unweildly and multiply to infinity and, as such, are static in nature and do not involve any techniques for bringing about significant internal dynamism.

Goddard claims that Malinowski's type of functionalism arises in the context of his inability or reluctance to subject the whole of society to questioning with notions of totality and the use of structures. Malinowski follows British philosophers in their inability to provide a criticism of the totality of the social order [Goddard 1979, p.62]. Goddard concedes that there has been a notion of structure in British social anthropology but that this notion is simple since it merely relates, without mediation, to the empirical reality of native social life [Goddard 1979, p.63].

Further, Goddard claims that Malinowski sought a solution to the problem of how social life presents a stable order in the institutional arrangements regulating relationships between individuals and not in culture as a given totality [Goddard 1979, p.64]. Therefore, within Malinowski's anthropology there is nothing more than the idea of an aggregate of social relations (the social structure) maintained by the ongoing processes of social life. In effect, he claims, the normative series remains unreduced; it is

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simply described and its order noted .

Archaeology provides a means of placing the whole of society in question in a totalising fashion that does not reduce social phenomena to mere empirical observations. In fact, we have seen that archaeology provides a significant criticism of empiricism in general. Archaeology furnishes a form of reductionism where the notion of the 'archive' is equivalent to the idea of 'culture' as the given totality invoked by Goddard. Archaeology is not a form of analysis of the possibility of the regulation of individuals where individual desires are repressed. It is an investigation of the order of things where power is creative rather than solely repressive. In Crime and Custom in Savage Society, Malinowski is concerned with this question of the origin of the conformity of the individual to the collective order. By positing the individual against the collective will we are involved in an ideological analysis of power which I have argued is inappropriate for archaeology. It is essential to realise that archaeology does not utilise a conflict between the individual and the collective but seeks a solution which is an aggregate of social relations.

Archaeology embodies a Durkheimian disdain for empiri-

1. See Firth's essay 'Malinowski in the History of Social anthropology' in Ellen's edition of Malinowski, Between Two Worlds (see bib.) for a comprehensive review of the way in which Malinowski's work has been received in anthropology.

cal facts but here I attempt to mediate them rather than dispense with them altogether. It must be noted that archaeology is not at all involved with an inductivist method. Empiricism regards induction as a condition for the possibility of validity. Archaeology puts those very conditions into question. What is offered as a 'proof' is similar to a Durkheimian type conclusion from a single experimental situation. However, the totality is constrained by the notion of 'episteme' and the omnipresence of difference in the analysis. Further, archaeology offers a positivistic analysis where the shared positivity of discourses is sought.

Malinowski's phenomenological view, that no data outside of the subjective-objective present need be considered, is disastrous for abstract generalisations. Because of this Malinowski's merit lies in the quality of his observations rather than in his interpretations. His interpretations are merely the private intuition that humans must satisfy biological needs [Leach 1970, p.120].

3.6 Conclusions.

It is my view, then, that once the task of applying archaeology to the field of anthropology is completed I will have succeeded in placing the whole of our approach to our

own culture and that of others into question¹ so that there is a viable alternative to the traditional interpretative unities that have sustained anthropology and have also sustained debates about the status of primitive knowledge in terms of a Western rational.

We have seen that, in the Trobriand episteme, there are three attributes that characterise primitive knowledge. These are the operation of forms of complementary opposition (asymmetry), convenience and enclosure. These figures are inextricably linked with space and the involvement of these bounded spaces with an occult causation gives rise to a world of vitalities. These are the main features of the epistemological figures which guide the knowledge of the Trobrianders.

The antagonistic realms of the episteme provide the conditions for the possibility of Trobriand knowledge and institutions in the same way that agency makes modern knowledge possible. It shapes the sexual, magical and economic discourses of the Trobrianders. I have selected the natives of the Trobriand Islands for the central examination because of the wealth of ethnography available on them in the work of Malinowski. They are not deliberately selected to suit my thesis since there is no precedent for a study of the world

1. Goddard criticises British anthropology for its inability to place the whole of culture into question. For details of this criticism see his essay 'Anthropology: the Limits of Functionalism' in Ideology in Social Science, page 62.

of these natives in terms of the oppositions outlined above.

The main objective in looking at the configurations in this primitive episteme is to show what kinds of knowledge can be included or excluded. This epistemological figure outlines the regularity of the discourses and shows their positivities in that we can see how sexual discourse, magical discourses and discourses on marriage and economics occur at the same level.

CHAPTER 4.

The Realm of Sex.

'The manifold sexualities - those which appear with the different ages (sexualities of the infant or the child), ... those which haunt spaces (the sexuality of the home...) - all form the correlate to exact procedures of power.' [Foucault 1978, p.47].

4.1 Introduction.

The figures of the primitive episteme, outlined in the previous chapter, will be used here to provide an account of the nature of the discourses of the Trobrianders. Far from being the free and unfettered creature of Rousseau's imagination, the savage is hemmed in on every side by the custom of his people, he is bound in the chains of tradition in his religion, medicine, industry, art and social relations [Hartland 1924, p.138].

Over the next three chapters, I will look at the objects of discourses available in the discursive formations governing primitive sexual relations, industry in the gardens and magic. I have selected the primitive discourses on sexual experience as a means of gaining access to a group of discourses since sexual experience is involved with many other primitive discourses and is part of a technique for reconciling the individual desires with the collective and, therefore, is an effect of power. I will examine the discourses on sex, kinship and marriage in the context of economics and magic and demonstrate the shared positivity of all these discourses in the primitive epistemic figures.

The experience of the Trobrianders is itself subject to the operation of the episteme in the way in which they come to regard themselves as a selves. The notion of self which is appropriate to the experiences of the Trobriand episteme is not the undifferentiated modern individual. Morris refers to Taylor's conception of the primitive self as one where the self spills out into the world beyond the confines of the experiencing body [Morris 1987, p.185]. The nature of the individual is derived from the place of his origin in the world and the nature of that boundary. In this way, it will be demonstrated how it is that a brother shares his nature with his sister, whom we might regard as a differentiated extension of his self.

Dumont separates the notion of the individual into the two concepts of the empirical subject of speech, thought and will and the essentially nonsocial moral being who carries our value and is found in the modern ideology of man and society. He defines the approach where the individual is of paramount value as 'individualism' and where society is the paramount value he uses the label of 'holism' [Dumont 1986, p.25]. Dumont reminds us that Hellenistic thought believed the path to wisdom lay in the renunciation of the world in favour of individual concerns. He identifies this thought as the genesis of individualism in Western intellectual life [Dumont 1986, pp.27-28]. Universal reason is regarded to be at work through the particular person that exercises it. The

Hellenists established this ideal of the wise man detached from social life [Dumont 1986, p.29]. Individualism developed from its Greek beginnings through Christianity where Augustine inaugurated an existential struggle between reason and experience which modifies the relation between the ideal and the actual, and of which, Dumont claims, we are in some sense the products in the modern episteme [Dumont 1986, p.41].

Dumont identifies Leibniz's system of monads as the only serious attempt to reconcile individualism and holism. However, Leibniz's successors seem to have forgotten the incompatibility between these two [Dumont 1986, p.211]. Durkheim initiates his analysis from the social whole by stressing collective representations while Weber starts with the individual. Dumont seeks his own solution in a complex hierarchical combination of both principles [Dumont 1986, pp.213-214]. Here, Dumont's solution is involved with an ideological conception of power which is inappropriate for archaeology. The archaeological solution does not reject the value of individuals over society as a whole, which is an ideological concern, but does reject the role of the individual in reason, which is an epistemological concern. Nevertheless, in this way, the method might be described as holistic.

The archaeological method constantly refers to the conditions for the emergence of discourses in the context

of an epistemological pattern. The study of the Trobriand episteme provides a context for the analysis of primitive knowledge different from current anthropological approaches. This project encompasses an introduction to a range of fundamental concepts and issues which I have already explored. It also involves an examination of the primitive archive; the shared positivity of diverse discourses and practices.

4.2 Discourses on sex.

In the Modern episteme, sex is located in the family where it is transformed into a function of reproduction. Sex is not located in the family in the Trobriand episteme. One of the most interesting things about the Trobriand experience of sex is that it has no association with reproduction. The dominant place of reproductive sex in the bedroom of modern man can be contrasted with the many locations of sex in the villages of the Trobrianders; there is the central dwelling of the polygamous chief; the house of the married couple; the bukumatula (bachelor's hut) of the unmarried young men; and the shaded groves of the children. These locations are not related to the utility of reproduction.

In the Victorian Age a general silence was maintained with respect to sexual activity amongst children and all evidence to support such practice was assiduously ignored. The Trobrianders tolerate sexual activity amongst children and it is not at all regarded as an illegitimate activity.

However, the most conspicuous form of taboo operates at the level of a strict prohibition on sexual relations between brother and sister which is not a repressive figure. Further, this taboo is not related to a Capitalist economics based in reproduction and production as we find with sexual activity in the Modern Age but is related to a primitive economics of exchange. A necessary space was provided, in the Modern Age, for illegitimate sexualities in the area of an economics. Perversions were denied a place in production and reproduction and the brothel became the place of sexual tolerance where money could be exchanged. Perversions could be tolerated where they could be made to contribute to an economy. In the Trobriand episteme, the taboo on incest between brother and sister arises from the fundamental order and its tolerance would invert that order along with the economic system that it gives rise to. This threat is posed in such a way that this incest has no chance of becoming involved in the primitive economy of exchange. The maintenance of the taboo is necessitated by the primitive economic order.

In the primitive society of the Trobrianders, we find no locations for the tolerance of perversion at a price. This is because the nature of primitive sexuality is not to be understood in terms of repression, reproduction or an economics based in production. Repression has come to be regarded as the fundamental link between power, knowledge

and sexuality since the Classical Age [Foucault 1978, p.5]. The placement of the age of repression in the seventeenth century causes it to coincide with the development of Capitalism, and as such repression becomes an integral part of the bourgeois order of things. Sexuality becomes associated with the modes of production and is linked to a particular economics. However, the primitive taboo on sexual activity between brother and sister has its origin in the figures of the episteme and not in a repression. The incest taboo is examined for its productive nature and not as a possible repression.

The experience of sex in the Trobriand society is characterised by the inter-relations of the two axes that constitute it: the formation of discourses that refer to it; and the systems of power that regulate its practice. The analysis of the discourses that refer to sex avoids the dilemma of science versus ideology. The analysis of primitive power relations and their technologies makes it possible to view them as open strategies while escaping the conception of power as domination.

In the first of these constitutive axes, there are the discourses which are governed by the figures of the episteme. In the second are the power regimes that propagate and maintain that formation. My analysis explores these two axes which constitute the power-knowledge relation in this primitive episteme.

There is a topological example on the knowledge of sex from the natives of Lambok which shows us that when they marry, the couple sleep with their heads to the north or the east, or between north and east. The man lies on the side that is closer to north and east, directions which are superior to south and west [Duff-Cooper 1985, p.413]. In the Lambok, male and female have different roles with different values attached to them. This is especially true of their sexual relations. A male retains his superior position in sexual intercourse; penetration always takes place with the male above the female [Duff-Cooper 1985, p.415]. This example shows us that even the concerns of desire are not outside of the imposition of qualities and values on the bodies of men and the parts of the body concerned with those desires.

The native Trobriand physiological conception of the male sex organs is that they are strictly for sexual pleasure and excretion and not for reproduction. The eyes are regarded as the seat of desire and lust. They are the cause of sexual passion. Desire is carried from the eyes to the brain by means of the wotuna (fibre) and hence spreads all over the body to the belly, arms and legs until it finally concentrates in the kidneys. The eyes are regarded as the u'ula (basis) of sexual passion. The kidneys are considered the main part or tapwana (trunk) of the system. Other wotuna lead from them to the penis. This is the highest

point of the whole system, the matala (eye). This division between basis, trunk and tip is repeated later in the structure of the magical spell. This indication of the three cardinal points is characteristic of the native canons of classification in general and represents vital boundaries in the body. Thus when the eyes see an object of desire they communicate the impulse to the kidneys which transmits it to the sex organs. The eyes are the primary motive for all sexual excitement; they are that which makes the native desire to copulate. Consistent with this conception, the natives hold that a man with his eyes closed will have no desire [Malinowski 1982a, p.142].

The process of sexual excitement in the female is analogous [Malinowski 1926, p.20]. The eyes, the kidneys and the sex organs are united by the same system of wotuna. Both the male and female discharge have the same name: mamona. The natives ascribe both discharges an origin in the kidneys and a similar function which has nothing to do with generation but is strictly concerned with lubricating the membrane and, thereby, increasing pleasure [Malinowski 1982a, p.142].

Men and women are not distinguished on biological grounds and this means that there is a strict symmetry between male and female sexuality. There are three bounded areas functioning in this account; the eyes, the kidneys and the sexual organs. There is a distinction between elements: the u'ula, the tapwana and the matala. The image is derived

from a tree, a pillar or a spear. The u'ula is the foot of the tree and has come to mean the source of strength. This represents the eyes. The tapwana is the middle part of the trunk and represents the kidneys. The matala which is the eye, or point as in a spear, stands for the highest part and represents the penis [Malinowski 1982a, p.143].

Love, as opposed to passionate desire, has its seat in the intestines, in the skin of the belly, in the arms, and, only to a lesser extent, in the eyes. Hence, when the natives look at their friends, those they are fond of and their children they desire to hug them with their arms [Malinowski 1982a, p.144]. The native conception of the body reveals a series of bounded realms separated by their relative place within the body rather than by biological function. Each participating organ has a role determined by its place in the asymmetric order. As well as sex having its distinctive places in the body it also occupies a place in the world outside of the body in the village.

The village takes the form of two rows of houses built in concentric rings around a large open space. Between the outer ring and the inner there is a circular street running around the whole of the village. The outer ring consists of dwelling houses and the inner ring consists of store houses in which yams, which are the staple food, are kept. The yam houses, being the place of food have an important central location and are distinguished from the dwellings by their

better and more elaborate finishes. Both the dwellings and the store houses always face the centre. The inner circle is the scene of public and festive life. A part of it consists of a burial ground and another part of it consists of a dancing ground which is the locus of all festive and ceremonial activities [Malinowski 1982a, p.8]. All the houses of the inner row, which are mainly store houses, are subject to certain taboos, especially to the taboo of cooking. The outer ring consisting of dwellings, is where cooking is allowed [Malinowski 1982a, p.60]. All the houses of married people have to be in the outer ring, whereas a bachelor's house may be allowed among the storehouses in the middle. Thus, the inner row consists of yam-houses, personal huts of a chief and his kinsmen, and the bachelor houses. The outer ring is made up of closed yam-houses, matrimonial homes and widow's and widower's houses. The main division between the two rings is the taboo on cooking [Malinowski 1982a, p.61]. However, before exploring the discourses on sex, marriage and food we can say that the outer part of the village, the street, may be regarded as the female portion of the village. The street is occupied by women busy with their household tasks. The central place may be regarded as the male part of the village where men predominate, discussing in communal gatherings the prospects of the garden, a fishing trip or ceremony [Malinowski 1982a, p.9]. In this way, we can say that the physical design of the village itself

reflects the primitive ordering of the world. The most important people of the village occupy the most central positions. The male children eventually move towards the centre where they take up residence in the bachelor huts, while the females, in the form of witches, move in the shape of spirits towards the most extreme darkness of the jungle outside [Malinowski 1982a, p.39]. The architectural layout of the village finds its possibilities and limitations in the circular positivities of the episteme. There is an enclosing boundary outside of which is the place of darkness and disorder. This is the realm of witches. The central place of the village represents the most stable place and holds the food stores which represent survival. The central place is enclosed by a continuous circle of dwellings. The boundary between these and the central place interact since food is taken from the central stores and cooked in the outer ring. Cooking represents a manipulation of this boundary, which guarantees future survival, and, therefore, takes the form of an implicit threat. This is seen in the prohibition on cooking in the central place. The spatial layout of the village reflects the operation of the primitive boundaries of the episteme with its enclosures, continuities and asymmetries. For the young and the chief the place of sex is in the inner enclosed circle while sex in marriage belongs to the outer enclosure. For the very young the place of sex is anywhere privacy is possible which is usually some quiet

grove outside of the village.

Native children become acquainted with sex at a very early age. They enjoy considerable freedom and independence from the adults. This freedom extends to sexual matters. Since there is little or no privacy within the household, children have ample opportunity for acquiring practical information concerning the sexual act, and no precautions are taken to prevent them doing so. Children initiate each other into the practicalities of sexual life. A premature amorous existence begins among children before they are really able to carry out the sex act. Games and pastimes satisfy sexual curiosity about the appearance and function of the sexual organs, where genital manipulation and oral stimulation are typical forms of these amusements [Malinowski 1982a, pp.44-47]. Adults regard such infantile indulgence with indifference or complacency. They find it natural and do not interfere, and at times, even indulge it. This is because there are no discourses available that would problematize children as valid sexual objects.

The age at which a girl joins in kayta (sexual intercourse) coincides with her putting on the small fibre skirt; between the ages of four and five¹. When a boy reaches the

1. It is interesting to note here that Malinowski rejects all claims that these girls engage in real intercourse as an example of the Trobriands grotesque Rabelaisian humour and, based on no apparent evidence, comes up with his own estimate of the ages for a girl's start to full sexual life at

age of from twelve to fourteen years he ceases to be regarded as a gwadi (child) and receives a different status involving some duties and many privileges, a stricter observance of taboos, and more participation in tribal affairs¹. A girl emerges from childhood into sexual maturity with the development of breasts and the start of menstruation [Malinowski 1982a, p.53].

A partial breakup of the family takes place at this stage. Brothers and sisters are separated since the demands of the taboo on brother and sister sexual relations forces

...Continued...

between six and eight and a boy's at between ten and twelve. Here Malinowski is, himself, involved in a debate about whether or not children are sexual beings and comes up with his own peculiar compromise [Malinowski 1982a, p.48].

1. Malinowski provides a table of age designations in The Sexual Life of Savages that roughly indicate the stages of the lives of the Trobrianders.

Waywaya (fetus; infant till the age of crawling, both male and female).

Pwapwawa (infant till the stage of walking, male and female).

Gwadi (child till mature sexual development, male and female). This is also the generic designation for all these stages meaning child, male or female, at any time between birth and maturity.

To'ulatile (youth from sexual maturity till marriage).

Nakapugula or Nakubukwabuya (girl from sexual maturity till marriage).

Tobubowa'u (mature male).

Nabubowa'u (mature woman).

Tovavaygile (married man).

Navavaygile (married woman).

Generic designations - Ta'u (man), Vivila (woman).

Tomwaya (old man). Toboma (old honoured man).

Numwaya (old woman).

[Malinowski 1982a, p.51].

the brother out of the parents hut. The boy moves to a house occupied by bachelors or by elderly widowed male relatives or friends. This house is called the bakumatula. Sometimes the girl goes to the house of an elderly widowed maternal aunt or other relative [Malinowski 1982a, p.53].

Coinciding with this move to the central bukumatula is the development of a more serious attitude towards sexual activity with definite attachments and personal preferences coming into play. There are no serious duties to be performed and young people enjoy more independence and a wider scope of action than they had as children. Many of the taboos are not yet quite binding on them and they know little of the operation of magic [Malinowski 1982a, p.55].

Young people of this age, as well as conducting their love affairs more seriously and intensely within the village community to which they belong, also form sexual connections outside of the village. These new associations are formed on the occasion of a ceremony where custom permits. During this intermediate period, between the playful sex of the infant and the serious commitments of the married man, sexual relations are involved with sentiment since these pre-marital intrigues are based upon and maintained by personal elements only. There is no obligation on either party and both may enter into them and dissolve them at will [Malinowski 1982a, pp.56-59]. These relationships do not have an important role in marital choice.

The most important institution in the village for the maintenance of the separation of the brother and sister is the bukumatula. This form of accommodation for the young unmarried men meets the demands of seclusion, comfort and of the approval of custom by preventing incestuous liaisons. This bachelor's hut can accommodate several couples who live there for various lengths of time in this temporary community. It also offers occasional privacy for younger couples for a few hours of passion [Malinowski 1982a, p.60]. This place, set aside for the sexual enjoyment of the young, was established because of the demands of the incest taboo. Apart from the taboo on incest there are specific limits on the choice of a sexual partner for the native which have their origin in the primitive conception of kinship and not in a dominating figure of repression. I will now examine the discourses limiting these choices.

4.3 Sex and the clan divisions.

In the native organisation, humanity is divided into four clans (kumila) [Malinowski 1982a, p.416]. Each of the four clans comprises smaller sub-clans called dala [Malinowski 1982a, p.417]. The sub-clans are, if anything, more important than the clans since the members of the same sub-clan regard themselves as kinsmen, have the same rank, and form the local unit in Trobriand society. All the members of the same sub-clan belong to the same place. It is in this way, as we have seen, that the same name can be applied to

them. It is through a shared location that they get their identity. Each local community is composed of people belonging to one sub-clan only. Larger villages are compounded of several minor units but each unit has its own compact site within the village. In this identification of clan, the ability to delimit the locus of the group allows for a stricter identification. People of the same sub-clan are real kinsmen and call one another veyogu [Malinowski 1982a, p.417]. This identification is made in terms of location and not genealogy and provides the basis for a weak taboo on sex between the members of the same clan.

The taboo on sex at the level of the clan means that two people of the opposite sex and members of the same clan must neither marry nor co-habit nor even show any sexual interest in each other. The term tabu in its most extensive application stands for 'woman with whom intercourse is possible' and she must be someone from another clan for this term to apply [Young 1979, p.81]. Malinowski tells us that the native word for clan incest, or breach of exogamy, is suvasova [Malinowski 1982a, p.423]. Breach of exogamy is reinforced at the level of classificatory kinship but only by weak forms of censure. Clan incest is an example of a native vague boundary in the Trobriand experience. These weak prohibitions demonstrate the native belief that operations on vague boundaries are less effective than manipulations on specific ones and, therefore, less in need of

maintenance by strict prohibition.

There is a magical discourse designed to maintain clan exogamy. An undiscovered incestuous relationship between members of the same clan entails an unpleasant disease. This disease involves the swelling of the belly, a whitening of the skin with sores and a small insect is generated in the body and maggots can be found in the corpse if death results [Malinowski 1982a, p.424]. This is an example of the association of diseases with certain types of sexual activity. Certain sexual activities are made dangerous in magical discourse. However, we might imagine that, from the possibility of catching this dread disease, few cases of breaches of clan incest would occur. On the contrary, clan incest provides the possibility of a tolerable sexual digression amongst the natives. There is a difference of stringency according to the clans in which it happens and in general amounts to a desirable and interesting form of erotic experience. Magic to counter the associated disease is available so the threat is virtually eliminated in practice. Therefore, clan incest provides the possibility of an erotic perverse diversion which is frowned upon and not openly practised as is the nature of perversions.

Each of the four clans has its own name: Malasi, Luku-
ba, Lukwasisiga, and Lukulabuta [Malinowski 1982a, p.417]. Each of these names can be used to give a definition of the natives place within the fourfold division of mankind. There

is an hierarchical differentiation within this division. Each clan, because of its relative place, has its own characteristics associated with it: magical knowledge, moral and intellectual propensity, relations with certain animals and plants and an indication of rank. There are myths to support the hierarchical division of the whole of humanity into four clans. Each sub-clan in the Trobriands can indicate its original locality, where their group initially emerged. Coral outcrops, water-holes, small caves and grottoes are pointed to as the original 'holes' [Malinowski 1966, p.63]. Near the village of Laba'i is a place called Obukula which is a 'hole' and is the place from which the first ancestors emerged [Malinowski 1982a, p.418].

There is a significant myth which accounts for the original clan divisions and maintains those separations. This myth represents a powerful technique that propagates the social order and its prohibited sexual combinations. According to the myth of origin, before they appeared on the earth people led a subterranean existence similar in all respects to life on the surface. They were divided into clans and sub-clans and were grouped into districts [Malinowski 1982a, p.418]. A sister as the head of the family and the brother as her guardian emerged and gave the totemic, economic and magical character to the communities begun in this way [Malinowski 1926, p.47]. In the emergence myth the Iguana, the animal of the Lukulabuta clan, scratched its way through

the earth and climbed a tree and remained there as a mere onlooker on the subsequent events. Then the Dog, totem of the Lukuba clan, who originally had the highest rank, came up. The Dog was followed by the Pig, representative of the Malasi clan. Last came the sign of the Lukwasisiga clan, represented variably as a crocodile, snake, possum or sometimes completely ignored. The Dog ate the fruit of the noku plant. The Pig regarded the Dog to be of low rank since it accused it of eating dirt in the form of noku (there is a convenience here between eaten fruit and excrement) and assumed the highest rank [Malinowski 1926, pp.47-48]. Food is the main indication of man's nature and there are taboos imposed according to rank and clan and in this way the Lukuba clan lost its highest ranking. In the Trobriands, the higher the rank of the totemic sub-clan, the greater its power of expansion [Malinowski 1926, pp.59-60].

It can be said at this stage that the clan distinctions came about because of the groupings into distinct areas and not vice-versa. The identification of spatial difference in the episteme made these differentiations possible. The autochthonous clan emergence strengthens the fact of the local unity and the kinship unity and this unity is provided in the figures of the episteme.

The rule in Trobriand emergence mythology is that one pair of brother and sister emerged, formed one sub-clan, occupied one village, worked one portion of garden land, had

one system of gardening and fishing magic. The exception to this rule is the hole at Obukula from which the four main clans emerged. This emergence established the relative positions of the four clans in the scale of rank [Malinowski 1982a, p.419].

The subdivision of people into four main clans provides a justification of differentiation by location at a macroscopic level. This can be seen in the weakness of the taboo on sexual relationships between members of the same clan. However, it is at the level of the sub-clan distinction, which impinges concretely on the natives lives since the sub-clan has its locus in the village, the most tangible unit, that the exogamic rules come into full effect. While the clan is a function at the macroscopic level for the limitation of the primitive notion of the human species in general, the sub-clan is a function for the organisation of the sexual lives of the natives at a practical level. It has its own mythological rules for emergence in the one-hole-one-line-one-sub-clan regime [Malinowski 1982a, p.419]. It is a rule which gives rise to specific discourses and practices relating to choice of sexual partners. A stronger taboo on sub-clan sexual relations pertains than the taboo at the level of clan relations. However, this taboo is not nearly as significant as the taboo on sexual relations between the brother and sister.

The categories of clan, sub-clan and the brother/sister

relation as the identification of limits on sexual partners are each defined to various degrees. The notion of clan is vague in its operation and has, therefore, a more powerful vitality than the others. But, by possessing this power, it remains beyond practicable manipulation by the natives. In this way, inversions in the sexual order at this boundary have no practical effect on the clan order. The designation of the sub-clan by the same name, more so than the clan, designates a more localised place in the world, and, therefore, a more specifiable shared nature. The sub-clan is modelled on the brother and sister emerging together from the ground but has a vaguer boundary. The notion of the brother/sister relation is the most well defined and as such is the most easily manipulated by magic and social intervention. Manipulations are available in the form of love magic and the separation of brothers from their sisters at an early age. This well defined boundary becomes the focus of the strictest discourses on sexual taboos and an area with the possibility of the greatest danger of an inversion of order through the bringing together of bodies in sex by magic. The notion of the sub-clan lies between these two extremes and is the category for the focus of discourses on sex where sexual inversions have a less dangerous potential.

Both dala and kumila identity is transmitted to individuals at conception. The rule of exogamy between kumila is broken without any drastic repercussions; however, dala

exogamy is strictly maintained [Weiner 1976, p.51]. Malinowski translated kumila as 'clan' assuming that a dala was a smaller replica of a kumila. Weiner claims that the Trobrianders only take an interest in personal genealogy where it serves land disputes and holds that the kumila are not descent lines [Weiner 1976, p.52]. I have abandoned genealogical conceptions in the analysis so Weiner's insights are of no significance to me here. Further, kumila boundaries are not manipulated. Further, Weiner seems to believe that definite versions of the emergence stories would be available in an oral culture. However, this is not likely to be the case. Neither dala nor kumila are crystallised in a culture where writing has no possibility. The same applies to unities of descent.

4.4 The incest taboo.

The archaeological analysis does not question primitive sexual experience for its repressive nature. Instead, it questions this experience for its origins in the figures of the episteme and its positive possibilities. After looking at the sexual experience of Trobriand children it would seem that there are no sexual censures in place. There are no native discourses condemning such practices as bestiality, fetishism, exhibitionism and masturbation nor are there believed to be any dangers associated with these practices. A native would never use the term bomala (taboo) with regard to them [Malinowski 1982a, p.395]. Bomala has its possibili-

ty only in incest and all of these other practices form no part of native concern. They have no possibility for emerging as real problems amongst the Trobrianders. All forms of sexual decorum are problematised in terms of a taboo on incest.

Sexual activity at the level of the brother/sister relationship is strongly prohibited in native activities and discourses. The removal of a child from his family and his placement in a bachelor hut is due to the supreme taboo: the prohibition of any erotic dealings between brother and sister. This taboo is the first rule seriously impressed in the child's life [Malinowski 1982a, p.437]. The relation between brother and sister is denoted by the term luguta which designates a person of the opposite sex and of the forbidden class. As a metaphor, the word luguta for 'sister' is used in magical formulae when blights and diseases are to be exorcised [Malinowski 1982a, p.437]. This term, luguta, is used only with regard to the tabooed relationship since children of the same parents and of the same sex use different kinship designations to describe each other [Malinowski 1982a, p.438].

Brother and sister are forbidden to take part together in any childish sexual games, and this convention is rigorously observed by the children themselves. No festive company is allowed to include a brother and sister. When a boy grows up he goes to the bukumatula to sleep and to carry on

his love affairs. In this way, brother and sister grow up without any personal or intimate communication between them. The sister is the centre of all that is sexually forbidden and unnatural for her brother. This application of a strict taboo arises out of the native desire to maintain this vulnerable boundary in the face of magical manipulation. This boundary forms the microcosm for the political and economic ordering of the society where the brother is the powerful possessor of wealth, the head of the family and the provider for his sister's children. An inversion at this level would threaten the entire social order.

The incest taboo is involved with the formation of clans and the origin myths accounting for the clans maintain that order. The most central location for the identity of a shared nature lies in the mother. A child comes from the same place as the mother and as such has a shared nature with the mother. There is no knowledge of physiological paternity amongst the Trobrianders. Therefore, the father occupies a different place to the child and does not share in its nature in the way in which the mother does. The father stands in a different relationship to the child. Sexual relations between father and daughter or between mother and son are not involved with mythological proscription nor are they the locus of the involvement of sex with real dangers as are brother/sister relations. This is the epistemological significance of the matrilineal system which

makes the brother/sister boundary central rather than a father/son boundary. In this way, the matrilineal system makes the particular discourses on incest possible.

Brother/sister incestuous relations is the subject of one of the natives' sacred stories and the basis of love magic. The myth outlines the origin of the association of death with incestuous activity and maintains and promotes this taboo. The myth represents a powerful strategy for the maintenance of the separation between brother and sister and is an example of the relation of power to knowledge.

The myth on the origin of love magic runs briefly as follows. In the village of Kumilabwaga there was a woman of the Malasi clan living with her son and daughter. One day the son made some magic over herbs to gain the love of a certain woman and placed the finished oil concoction in a container in the thatch of the roof. He then went to the sea to bathe. As the sister passed under the container on the way to a water hole, some of the oil mixture dropped onto her hair. She brushed it off with her fingers and sniffed at it. She was overpowered by the potion and immediately began to inquire after her brother, which she should not have done, and this caused her mother to realise what had happened.

The sister ran after her brother whom she found bathing naked on the beach. She threw off her fibre skirt and tried to approach him. The brother was horrified by this act and

ran away along the beach three times until he fell down exhausted and was seduced by his sister. Then, ashamed and remorseful, but still effected by the love magic, they retreated to the grotto of Bokaraywata where they stayed without food, drink and sleep until they died and the sulumwoya plant grew out of their entwined bodies.

Meanwhile, a man on the island of Iwa dreamt the magical dream of this event. When he woke he told the people of his village how the two were dead and how the sulumwoya plant was growing out of their bodies. He journeyed to the grotto where he picked some of the plant and then travelled to the mother's house. She gave him the magical formula which he learned by heart. He took part of the spell to Iwa and left part of it in Kumilabwaga. The root of the plant (magic) remained in Kumilabwaga while the tip was taken to Iwa¹. This man from Iwa then imposed the taboos of the magic, he prescribed the ritual and stipulated that a substantial payment should be made to the people of Iwa and Kumilabwaga when they allowed others to use their magic [Malinowski 1927b, pp.127-129].

The power of love magic reaches its climax in this incest case. Love magic focuses on the fundamental opposition between brother and sister and the threat to the order

1. We have already seen the division of sexual parts of the body into the yu'ula (root), tapuala (flank) and dogina (tip).

of things, through the possibility of incest, provides it with its power. Because magic can act accidentally on brothers and sisters it is important for them to avoid each other since all sexual attraction has its origin in magic and not in the will. For this reason the brother must leave the house where his sister lives so that he avoids becoming the victim of a magical spell. Here we have a concrete case of the absence of individual will amongst the Trobrianders. Sexual desire, which is at the heart of Modern analyses of the individual in Freud, has no place here.

This myth is an example of the system of power that regulates the primitive discourse on incest and forms the second axis of the present analysis. This is a mythical discourse in the native experience that makes a particular sexual activity dangerous by relating it to death. The myth associated with brother/sister incest and the origin of love magic addresses the fundamental paradox concerning sexual activity available in the figures of the episteme. On the one hand, the male is attracted to the female because of a shared nature. Here the brother is doubly attracted to his sister in that they share the same nature by emerging from the same place; the mother¹. This makes them extremely vulnerable to the operation of magic. On the other hand, the

1. The mother in the story has a passive role but is none the less inadvertently responsible in bringing her children together in a sexual relation by not assisting her daughter.

opposition is most acute in the organic asymmetry presented by two persons of the same sex with the same natures. One is assigned virtues while the other, the luguta, is blighted. However, magical desire threatens to bring these two together since desire belongs to love magic which cannot be resisted by the will. Magic has the power to break down this opposition with a resulting inversion of the primitive order of things. Love magic focused on the boundary of the asymmetry of the sexes threatens to destroy the order of the world and a great amount of native energy and attention must be given to this ever present threat so that it might be overcome. That energy takes the form of a prohibition which is not so much a repression of freedom as a device to maintain and propagate the order of things.

We have seen the exogamic and incestuous restrictions operating to limit the choice of sexual partners. There are also endogamous restrictions which are again relatable to spatial concerns. Endogamy functions to prevent the native sexual world becoming intolerably large and dispersed. Endogamy for the Trobrianders allows for sexual partners within some ten to twelve villages of the same district. Endogamy and exogamy emerge at the same level and relations occur within the space established by the operation of the two. Their function for the production of relations is similar to the function of sympathy and antipathy for the production of a space for the figures of the Renaissance

episteme. Endogamy represents the operation of a form of enclosure while exogamy represents a form of separation within the conveniences of clan and sub-clan.

The brother/sister emerge asymmetrically from the mother to form the continuous sub-clans which are convenient but separated by exogamy. These sub-clans are enclosed by more specific boundaries than those of clan. Exogamy functions nearer to the original place of emergence and is more suited to operation on native boundaries and, thus, the focus of more native discourses than endogamy which encloses a viable world of people. These boundaries form the epistemic configuration of the divisions of society.

The four main clans are convenient to each other and are all enclosed by endogamy. The brother and sister are related asymmetrically and form a microcosm of the sub-clan. Exogamy provides the separation that makes convenience possible. The positivity of clan relations is given in these relations and they are wholly absent in Malinowski's treatment.

The incestuous restrictions have a microcosmic function in that they move towards an idealised unit of society available in the mother/brother/sister conception of the family. This microcosm of the native society provides a fundamental model of sexual opposition and relations from which spring the discourses on incest, disease, death and exogamy. Further, it provides the possibility of erotic

experiences available in sexual relations amongst people prohibited from marriage by the one-hole-one-line-one-sub-clan exogamic rule.

Brother and sister are assigned the same nature, at the level of this rule, because they are said to have emerged from the same place in the ground. This is acted out at birth where the brother and sister come from the same womb. This shared nature allows for the possibility that all sexual relations focus on this initial convenience and a man need look no further than his sister for sexual satisfaction. This identification of brother and sister makes incest such a real possibility and problematizes it in its particularity for the natives. This problem is worked out through mythical and magical discourses. Incest operates at the level of the central metaphorical model of primitive society in the sub-clan composed of brother and sister. Exogamy functions at this point to prevent the world closing upon the single place of the mother's womb. Exogamy, in its strongest instance keeps brother and sister apart. The need for this separation arises out of the epistemic demand for a world divided into unequal parts rather than one indivisible space. A brother shares his nature with his sister as a differentiated extension of himself. If these two were to join together in desire it would be something like masturbation since it would be wholly unproductive. However, the productivity of sexual relations does not lie in the chil-

dren it produces, since primitive intercourse has not reproductive function, but in the economic system that marriage maintains.

4.5 Non-reproductive sex.

One of the most important elements in the Trobrianders' experience of sex is the absence of a link between copulation and the birth of new life. In their understanding, new life begins with death. The baloma (spirit) moves to Tuma, the island of the dead, after the body dies where it leads a pleasant existence analogous to life on earth [Malinowski 1926, p.26]. Whenever the baloma grows wrinkled and its hair turns grey it simply sheds its outer skin [Malinowski 1982a, p.146]. This power of regaining youth was once enjoyed by the whole of humanity when it lived underground [Malinowski 1926, p.27]. The native conception of this stage in human existence reflects the static nature of the world in primitive experience. This inertia was disrupted by the introduction of death as a dynamic of spiritual exchange. When the baloma becomes tired of constant rejuvenation on the island of Tuma it may return to earth again by leaping back in age and becoming a small pre-born infant. Black magic may reach a spirit on Tuma and make it tired of life there. Then it will change into a spirit child [Malinowski 1926, p.28].

These rejuvenated spirits are the only source from which humanity draws its new supplies of life. A pre-born

infant finds its way back to the womb of some woman who always belongs to the same clan or sub-clan as the spirit child itself. Clan identity is maintained since it is carried over into the next life and brought back again in reincarnation [Malinowski 1982a, p.416]. Therefore, the only real cause of every birth is the activity of spirits and not sexual intercourse [Malinowski 1982a, p.146].

The rejuvenation process is associated in a general way with sea water. The spirits go to the beach and wash their skin in salt water and become young again. This is the process of rejuvenation on Tuma. Likewise, in the final rejuvenation which makes them return to the infant stage, the spirits have to bath in salt water and when they become babies again they go into the sea and drift. These spirits floating in the sea around Tuma are invisible to ordinary people.

The spirit infants never float far away from the island. They are transported to the Trobriands with the help of another spirit. This baloma (carrier spirit) puts the infant spirit in the hair of the woman who is to become pregnant who then suffers head aches, stomach aches and vomiting. Then the child comes down from the head and into the belly and at that point the expectant mother says that the spirits have brought her the child¹ [Malinowski 1982a, -----]

1. The mother might describe this event as the child having found her [Malinowski 1982a, p.148].

p.148].

When the natives say that the children are given by a baloma, it is the baloma that is the real cause of child-birth. This is an example of the operation of occult cause in the primitive experience. The natives always refer to the controlling spirit and not to the infant spirit itself as the direct cause of pregnancy. This controlling spirit usually appears in a dream to the woman about to become pregnant. The woman dreams of a face and it is the person dreamed of who is thought to have given the child to the mother. The tradition maintains the notions of a spiritual godmother and godfather in this way. Usually it is some maternal relative of the mother who bestows the gift but sometimes it may be her father's relatives [Malinowski 1982a, p.148-149].

The spirit child is laid by the baloma on the woman's head. Blood from the body rushes there and on this tide of blood the baby gradually descends until it settles in the womb. The blood helps to build the body of the child and that is the reason why, when a woman becomes pregnant, her menstruous flow stops. Consistent with the topologically differentiated world a physical means, or pathway, must be provided for moving an element from one part of the order to another. Here the water of the sea and the blood of the mother provide a flexible connection between Tuma and the mother's womb. The movement between these two is aided of

course by occult intervention.

An alternative version of the story of reincarnation ascribes more initiative to the reincarnated infant. In this version, it is supposed to be able to float of its own will towards the Trobriands where it remains drifting about the shores waiting to enter the body of a woman while she bathes. The spirit infants are thought to be attached to driftwood, or else to small stones at the bottom of the sea. Whenever much debris accumulates on the shore due to winds and tides the girls will not enter the water for fear that they might conceive. Again, in the villages on the northern coast, a wooden baler is filled with sea water which is left overnight in the hut of a woman who wishes to conceive on the chance that the spirit might have been caught in it and will transfer itself to the woman during the night. But even in this case the woman is said to be visited in her dreams by the spirit of some deceased relative so that a controlling spirit is still essential to conception. The water must always be fetched by her brother or by her mother's brother; that is, by a maternal kinsman [Malinowski 1982a, p.150]. Therefore, in every version, the real cause of childbirth is the spirit initiative from Tuma.

The native discourses on childbirth take the form of a topological account where the different bounded areas employ vitalities in the form of spirits to transact the movements from one area to another; to bring about the proximity of

convenience. This is achieved by the intervention of baloma or by the mechanical aid of magic in the case of the transportation of sea water into the house. The sea is a large and, therefore, vague boundary and as such has powerful vitalities operating in it. These vitalities are the cause of birth. Here the account of procreation is not given in the form of an explanation involving the functions of the organs in generation. The problematisation is strictly spatial and is a good example of the operation of the epistemic figures.

A virgin cannot conceive because of the physiological obstacle of kalapatu¹ [Malinowski 1982a, p.154]. Once this has been removed by sexual intercourse, or by the mechanical insertion of an appropriate object into the vagina, there is no further need for male and female to come together in order to produce a child. It is thought that a bulabola (large orifice) facilitates conception and that a nakapatu (closed entrance) does not [Malinowski 1982a, p.154]. Therefore, a virgin cannot give birth. However, there are no virgins in the villages since, as we have seen, every female child begins her sexual life very early. Even extremely ugly women and albinos, who would not be objects of native de-

1. Malinowski translates kalapatu as 'tightness' but I think it is more useful to render this term as 'closedness' which we will shortly see allows us to understand what is involved here.

sire, give birth without sexual relations by mechanical dilation. The native idea on virginity relies on the notion of mechanical dilation and not physiological fertilisation.

As we have already seen, according to native discourse mankind originated from underground with a brother and sister emerging at specified places. According to certain legends only women appeared at first. The primeval woman is always thought to have borne children without the intervention of a husband or any male partner but not without the vagina being opened by some means. In some of the mythological discourses this is mentioned explicitly. Thus on the island of Wakuta there is a myth which describes how an ancestress of one of the sub-clans exposed her body to falling rain and in this way mechanically lost her virginity. In the most important Trobriand myth a woman lives quite alone in a grotto on the sea shore. One day she falls asleep in a rocky cavern reclining under a dripping stalactite. The drops of water pierce her vagina and take away her virginity. In other myths of origin, the means of piercing the hymen are not mentioned but it is explicitly stated that the ancestress was without a man [Malinowski 1982a, p.156]. We must understand the native notion of virginity as meaning the presence of a hymen. This means that native discourses rule out the possibility of virgin birth even with the visitation of spirits. The native belief demands the need for an open passage from the womb to the vagina.

The role of the vagina is analogous to the role of the original hole in the ground from whence the clans emerged. Each clan has its own hole and in this native account it can be seen that each clan or sub-clan has its own vagina. The identity of sub-clan is preserved throughout the rejuvenation cycle. However, consciousness of personal identity is not preserved. The only rule guiding these metamorphoses is the one-hole-one-line-one-sub-clan rule that guided the initial emergence of humanity where the unalterable essence of the clan is maintained throughout.

The vagina must be made to be open by mechanical means so that it can function in the way a hole in the ground functions to allow humanity to emerge. This mechanical opening is an example of the operation of enclosure and convenience. The mother is connected with the earth from which the human race comes. Women belong on the earth as opposed to the sky. However, women may escape from this boundary through the operation of magic when they have the power to fly through the night sky and even appear as a falling star [Malinowski 1982a, p. 39]. Outside of the operation of magic, women belong on the earth. A hole in the ground is an example of an enclosed area which rivals the enclosed spaces of the village and dwellings. The mechanical removal of the hymen provides the vagina with this enclosed nature: the penetration of the vagina is an operation on a bounded space for the establishment of another.

This conception of the nature of childbirth gives rise to its own particular social formations. Children born in wedlock during a long absence of the husband will be recognised by him as his own since women cannot give birth to illegitimate children. This is because the father has no legitimate, or otherwise, role in procreation. A parallel to this is provided by the case of children born out of wedlock but during a long exclusive liaison. In such a case the male sex partner would not recognise the child as his. The husband is always the father of children born to a married woman. Children born to unmarried women have no fathers at all. The father is defined socially and in order that there be fatherhood there must be marriage. Thus, the notion of the father has its possibility only within a social convention and not within a physiological theory [Malinowski 1926, p.71-73].

It is not the custom of an unmarried girl to become pregnant although it is the custom for her to have as much sexual intercourse as she pleases within the permissible relations. This possibility is not brought about by the availability of contraceptive techniques since these only have a possibility within a biological theory of procreation. There are no primitive statements focusing on the area of biology nor any possibility for their emergence. No preventative means are used since seminal fluid is considered a beneficent ingredient in love making and there is no

reason to interfere with its lubricating properties [Malinowski 1926, p.73]. Unmarried girls are not exhorted to abstain from sexual activity to avoid becoming pregnant. There are no native discourses focusing on this area.

Amongst the Trobrianders, fatherless children are rare since spirits are not inclined to visit unmarried girls. When a girl becomes married she usually conceives and often breeds prolifically. Those rare children that are born outside of marriage are often adopted by a relative. A man may regard his wife's sister's child born outside of marriage as his own child [Malinowski 1982a, p.167]. Some magic exists to bring about abortions and abortion by mechanical means is the only technique available to counter the unwelcome visitation of a spirit. Fertility in married women is considered to be a good thing since it effects their maternal kinsmen. The kinsmen rejoice when their sisters and nieces have many children since they believe that this makes their own bodies stronger. This relates to the conception of the clan as a single realm where the bounded members form a single body. However, public opinion holds that a woman must not become a mother before she marries though she may enjoy sexual freedom within the legitimate bounds. This means that she should practice precautions when bathing in the sea, etc. Physiological theories have no chance of emerging in this context and this means that discourses on the prevention of pregnancy focus on strategies for avoiding the

appropriate spirits.

A mother needs a defender and provider of economic necessities. She has one natural protector in her brother but he is not in a position to look after her when she is pregnant. This is because the natives believe that during pregnancy she must abstain from sexual intercourse for a period. At this time she needs someone who will take over the role of sexual protector. The brother cannot fulfil this role because of the strict brother/sister taboo in all matters sexual [Malinowski 1926, p.81]. He must avoid the thought of anything concerning his sisters sex. A man fulfils this function in the role of the husband. In this way, the father has his possibility in his strength to protect the children and as a provider. This is why the theme of food constantly emerges in the discourses on married life. The sexual taboo governing the brother/sister boundary makes a space for the emergence of the husband and father. A woman with a child and no husband is an incomplete grouping. The disapproval of a fatherless child is an instance of a general disapproval of anything which does not conform to the general order of things in tribal organisation; this order is given in the figures of the Primitive episteme.

4.6 The matrilineal system.

The non-reproductive role of sex and the function of spirits in an explanation of pregnancy provides an account of the possibility of matriliney. The process of

introducing new life into a community involves only the spirit world and the female organs. There is no possibility in such an account for a role for the male except as a mechanical means for the opening of the vagina from which the child must emerge. This theory of non-sexual reproduction closes a circle of relations since it also provides an account of the origin of the incest taboo. These three discursive formations with their own particular statements support and reinforce each other.

The incest taboo does not have its origin in repression but in the native belief that the mother contributes everything to her child because of the absence of a link between sex and reproduction in a theory of physiological paternity. The mother makes the child out of her own flesh [Malinowski 1926, p.10]. Brothers and sisters are of the same flesh since they come from the same mother and, therefore, from the same place. These beliefs describe the native attitude towards their fundamental principle of kinship [Malinowski 1926, p.10]. A mother is able to give her child her own attributes since the child is convenient to the mother at birth. Social position is handed on in the mother line from a man to his sister's children, since brother and sister have the same nature, the same vital principle, and this matrilineal conception of kinship is of paramount importance in the restrictions and regulations on sexual activity. The mother functions to distribute wealth and office, because

she is the one who bears children, while being unable to hold either in her person herself. She is a mechanism for the deployment of wealth and influence in the primitive world and this involvement in a regime of power will be examined in detail in the next chapter.

The native ideas of kinship dramatically come to light at the death of an individual since burial, lamentation, mourning and the ceremonies of food distribution are based on the belief that people united by the bond of maternal kinship form a unity of interest, feeling and flesh [Malinowski 1926, p.11]. Here the notion of maternal kinship operates in the place of the modern unit of the individual. The Trobriander term tama (father) signifies the man married to the mother, who lives in the same house with her. He is described as Tomakava (outsider) [Malinowski 1926, p.11]. Marriage is patrilocal since the woman is displaced to her husband's village community and lives in his house. A child quickly learns that he is not of the same clan as his tama and that his totemic appellation is identical with that of his mother. He learns that the place where his kada (mother's brother) lives is also his own village, and not the place where he presently lives with his father. In his kada's village is his property and other rights of citizenship, his natural allies and associates. While his father's authority over him diminishes as he grows up, the influence of the kada increases over the child and gradually replaces

that of the father [Malinowski 1982a, p.3].

Even Malinowski recognised the presence of asymmetrical pressures when he described the life of a Trobriander as running under the influence of a duality that produces complications in the continuity of tribal life: this is the dual influence of the maternal and the paternal which is at the bottom of all native experience [Malinowski 1926, p.16].

Children inherit the attributes of their mother's family through her as they come from the same place in the world as her. In this way, the father cannot impose his place in the world on his children. They inherit their citizenship, companionship and real identity through their mother who is herself displaced. Full citizenship is not gained through achieving a certain age but by returning to one's rightful place in the world. That place is the place from whence the mother came. This displacement is fundamental to the Trobriander's experience and characterises the nature of childhood. Thus, the life of the Trobriander child is dominated by a fundamental displacement. Children are initially displaced at birth and it is in the space of this displacement that they are defined as children, dependent on an alien place in the world without their real attributes available in their kada's village¹. They achieve their real

1. It is with Freud that the contemporary debate about the sexual nature of children begins. Freud claimed that children were sexual in nature and related that nature to par-

place in the world by regaining their rightful place which comes to them through their mother.

The displacement of women in marriage should not be regarded simply as a form of suppression, or sexual domination, to be overcome but as a means of deploying the discursive statements that are involved with the discourses on clan identity, incest taboos, marriage and economic practices. Further, the matrilineal practice should not be regarded as signifying a particular tolerance towards women. Such a conception does not belong to the Trobriand episteme. The epistemic significance of the matrilineal practice is available at the level of the economic, magical and sexual realities that it makes possible for the Trobrianders. The existence of a matrilineal system should not be reduced simply to an analysis in terms of the ideological role of men and women. It has its significance as a technique for the re-deployment of men and women in space and, therefore, makes a dynamic primitive knowledge of human affairs possible.

Malinowski translated the word dala as 'sub-clan'.

...Continued...

particular ages. Here, however, children are not defined in terms of age related to sexual development (puberty). Children are small adults dependent on their parents. The displacement brought about by the mother's move at marriage provides the conditions for the limitations and nature of child sex in terms of clan relations, sub-clan relations and the relation of the child to these. There are no discourses concerning child sex except in relation to the specific taboo on incest between brother and sister.

Weiner holds that this is because he is trying to equate birth, descent, women, the place of emergence and village community with matrilineality as a total gestalt [Weiner 1976, p.38]. Weiner demands that this gestalt be broken up. The waiwaia (spirit child) required for conception is not conceptually identical to an ancestral founder of hamlet land. The former spirit is reincarnated from an ancestral being called baloma while the latter is tabu. Only baloma transmits dala substance in the form of a new child through its mother. In this sense, a person's dala remains the same [Weiner 1976, p.39]. However, Weiner argues that when magic spells, body decorations, taboos and land become associated with the name of a dala, then dala identity is transformed into external holdings. Dala property does not remain as pure as dala blood since property circulates and increases. To understand the significance of dala as it relates to property it is necessary to introduce a male frame of reference [Weiner 1976, p.39]. In the next chapter, we will see that this male frame of reference outside of matriliney is involved with the discourses and practices governing exchange.

While women have the right of inheritance they do not have the power of possession; only their sons can possess this inheritance during their lives. This means that women are the means to power as wealth, but have no end in this figure of power themselves. The female body represents the

boundary through which possessions pass so that they become inheritable. The power and functions which belong to a family are vested in the men of each generation, though they have to be transmitted through the women. However, women play an influential role in the community because of the woman's exclusive role in procreation. The role and nature of women is characterised everywhere by the demands of the episteme, at one and the same time, to exclude them from power while acknowledging their necessary inclusion in the order of things as the exclusive place of regeneration. This allows for the claim that women are at the nexus of tensions in the primitive power deployments. Soon we will see how women have an integral role in the deployment of a power regime based in the creation and exchange of the signs of wealth.

In comparing the parts played by the sexes, the brother and sister have to be set side by side as the representatives of male and female. Within the matrilineal order, the brother and sister are the naturally linked representatives of the male and female principle in all customary matters and are a more appropriate focus of sexual discourses than the husband and wife relation. In the myths covering the origin of the clans, the brother and sister emerge together from underground through the original hole in the earth. They come from the same place. In family matters, the brother is the guardian and head of his sister's household. But

in their personal relations the strictest taboo divides them and prevents any intimacy between them [Malinowski 1982a, p.30]. This recurring theme of the shared origin of the brother and sister gives rise to the particular problematization of sexual and domestic relations among the Trobrianders where a boundary must be established between them.

It would seem that the most natural and spontaneous sexual relationship that the primitive episteme would allow for is that between brother and sister and, indeed, this relationship constantly occupies the discourses of the Trobrianders. The brother and sister come from the same place and the brother is the head of his sister's family. However, if this relationship were allowed, conflicts in the model would be overcome at the cost of resolving all human relations into one single static point. To avoid this the episteme allows for the production of mythical discourses focussing on this very theme of brother and sister relations and resolves it by prohibitions threatening death and disease. These relations also have a more complex economic nature and are linked to systems of food exchange which are necessary for the survival of the Trobrianders.

4.7 The function of kinship systems.

The Trobriander kinship system is defined by the operation of matriliney. However, there are different systems of kinship in the primitive world which are based on patriliney. Rabelais explains that the Ennase (noseless people) con-

ceived of kinship and affinity on the model of such functional relationships as those of oyster and shell, hole and plug, axe and handle. Levi-Strauss raises the question as to why such different patterns of kinship perform the same function with respect to the members of social groups. He examines three possible solutions. The first solution is that the taxonomic principles adopted by a given kinship system are the indirect result of psychological and sociological factors operating on an independent level. However, he holds that the psychological affects cannot account for the rigid properties of a conceptual system [Levi-Strauss 1965, p.14]. This is the type of solution adopted by Malinowski in the body of his work and is rejected here as an account of kinship.

The second solution is best exemplified by Radcliffe-Brown who claims that there is a close correspondence between the structure of a kinship system and the network of rights and obligations, so that each society recognises as many types of kinsmen and women as there are distinct and prescribed modes of behaviour between them. Levi-Strauss rejects this solution because both terminological and behavioural differences are the outcome of more basic structural features which alone can account for their similarities and differences [Levi-Strauss 1965, p.14]. I agree with Levi-Strauss that what is sought is an explanation at a more basic level. This, however, need not involve us in a struc-

turalist analysis since this more basic level is available in archaeology.

The third solution is that favoured by Levi-Strauss himself, namely, that the function of a kinship system is to generate marriage possibilities or impossibilities. According to Levi-Strauss, a kinship system acts as an operating agent to a system of matrimonial exchange within the community. He believes that a people who make use of a kinship system need not be aware of the type of solidarity it generates between them [Levi-Strauss 1965, p.14].

Marriage must be envisaged as a kind of exchange between social units [Levi-Strauss 1965, p.15]. This implies that there should be two distinct kinds of relatives involved. One kind is found in the form of the wife's brother or the husband's sister who are 'cross' in-laws. Their presence is required for exagamous marriage. The other kind is that of the wife's sister or a husband's brother who only feature as possible seducers of their sibling's spouse and are 'parallel' in-laws [Levi-Strauss 1965, p.16]. This distinction in relatives is not present in the asymmetrical system of the Trobrianders. Nevertheless, the kinship system operating there functions to generate marriage possibilities which have a productive role in the patterns of economic exchange. This constitutes a form of exchange between distinct social units.

Levi-Strauss contends that in order to understand an

asymmetrical system, whether patrilateral or matrilateral, the philosophical relevance of the difference between advocating 'prescriptive' and 'preferential' systems must be investigated at the level of the model. A preferential system is prescriptive at the level of the model, while even a prescriptive system cannot be preferential at the level of reality [Levi-Strauss 1965, p.17]. The choice in systems is between formulating strict rules that cannot be closely adhered to in practice, or framing observances so broadly as to be empty of content. The difference between 'preferential' and 'prescriptive' does not pertain to the systems themselves, but to the way in which these systems are conceptualised [Levi-Strauss 1965, p.18].

The conception of the kinship system offered in archaeological analysis may be described in these terms as 'prescriptive' where detailed observations are sacrificed to content. We have a simple model in the figures of the brother-sister asymmetry. However, as Levi-Strauss reminds us, the notions of a 'complex structure' and a 'simple structure' are merely heuristic devices and cannot be used alone to define a system. All systems of kinship and marriage contain an 'elementary' core which manifests itself in the incest prohibition. Similarly, all systems have a 'complex' aspect deriving from the fact that more than one individual can usually meet the requirements of even the most prescriptive systems, thereby allowing for a certain amount of

freedom of choice. Levi-Strauss sees the future of anthropology in the progression from elementary to complex structures [Levi-Strauss 1965, p.18].

One means of making the simple taboo centred systems of marriage more complex is to show how the system has a shared positivity in an economic system. Indeed, it is not possible to grasp fully the significance of the pattern of the kinship system without taking this realm into account. This is not the vertical trans-epistemic movement towards more complex societies envisaged by Levi-Strauss as a possible solution. It is a horizontal movement within the same episteme that includes more forms of discourse such as the discourses on wealth and magic whose regularities share the patterns and possibilities of the discourses on kinship and marriage. This horizontal move avoids the universal conception of rationality that is available in structuralism.

4.8 Conclusions.

The primitive experience of sex focuses on its own discursive objects: a taboo on sexual intercourse between brother and sister; non-reproductive sexual intercourse; and virginity which has no necessary connection with sex. These objects belong to a discursive formation on kinship which is designed to allow for particular sexual relations which are compatible with marriages that have an economic productivity. The primitive discourses on sex are maintained and regulated by the presence of discourses focusing on origin

myths and love magic. In the case of the Trobrianders the origin myths posit an enclosed world of convenient clans that have their own characteristics or essences. Because of the topological conception of the world the mother has the function of being the place from whence the child emerges. A child shares this place with the mother because of a link with the original birth of the clan since clan identity is maintained through the process of reincarnation. This identity is redoubled since the child gains its clan identity through coming from the mother's womb. A child does not inherit its nature through biological concerns but from the qualities assigned to the location of its birth, that is, the mother. This central role of the mother as the provider of location provides the principal for the matrilineal system.

The opposition between gender influences among the Trobrianders, represented by the mother's brother and the father respectively, creates two natural spheres of influence to be exercised over a woman by a man. The one domain is that of sex, from which the brother is absolutely debarred and where the husband's influence is paramount. The other is that of kinship where the interests of the blood relationship can only be safeguarded by someone of the same blood. This is the realm of the brother. However, in the area of marriage these two spheres are brought together in a different way where the brother is materially obliged to his

sister and her husband's sexual interest is subsumed by economic factors. Systems of kinship provide the pattern of possible marriages and thus contribute to the particular economic profile of the community. I will now turn to a consideration of marriage and its involvement in wealth. This represents a concern primarily with the axis that propagates and maintains the particular discursive formations outlined above.

CHAPTER 5.

The Realm of Wealth.

'In the ethics of married life, the 'fidelity' that is recommended to the husband ... has to do with maintaining the wife's status ... it does imply a certain reciprocity of behaviour between the man and the woman ... A reciprocity, then, but a fundamental dissymmetry since the two interdependent behaviours ... do not obey the same principles.' [Foucault 1985b, p.165].

5.1 Introduction.

The incest taboo is the strongest and most persistent motif in the field of the sexual discourses of the Trobrianders. This taboo, which opposes the brother to the sister in a fundamental asymmetry, arises out of the particularity of the Trobriand conception of the origin of human nature in the mother and is at the centre of the kinship system. The discursive themes on the origin of individual nature and the species in general have their possibility in the widespread division of the world according to the circular figures of the primitive episteme. The threat of an inversion at the level of the epistemic order by an act of incestuous sex is greatly lessened in the marriage of both brother and sister to different acceptable spouses. When a woman marries, her relationship with her brother becomes problematised in terms of a significant economic obligation rather than in terms of a sexual danger.

Malinowski described the obligation between a brother and his married sister as a form of 'gift' exchange since there is reciprocation from the husband's family. He regard-

ed the goods exchanged to be gifts because his psycho-biological theory was unable to reveal the obligation on the concerned parties that is exercised at the level of the native collective experience. While he noted the absence of divergence from this practice, he sought an explanation for it in free will. This account in individual agency fails to identify the function of the kinship system in bringing about the particular patterns of marriage. Permissible marriages allow for a specific movement of goods within the system and, as I demonstrate in this chapter, that movement constitutes a primitive economics. While I retain the use of the term 'gift' it is not used as a concept free of obligation. Clans, age groups and sexes, in view of the many relationships ensuing from contracts between them, are in a state of perpetual economic activity which is not really materialistic [Mauss 1954, p.70]. For example, the mapula form a sequence of payments by a husband to his wife as a kind of salary for sexual services. Likewise, the payments to chiefs are tribute and the distributions of sagali (food) are payments for labour or ritual accomplished, such as work done on the eve of a funeral. Therefore, these gifts are neither spontaneous nor disinterested. They are basically counter-prestations made both to pay for goods or services and to maintain profitable alliances [Mauss 1954, p.71]. The notion of a primitive gift emerges as a discursive object which is involved in a system of strict obligation at the

level of primitive discursive formations governing wealth. Here my archaeological analysis seeks to show how the natives came to regard themselves as gift-givers.

Furthermore, I will demonstrate the operation of the power of the polygamous chief in the exchange of goods in marriage. The practice of exchange in marriage is asymmetrical since the majority of goods pass from the brother, through the sister, to the husband. The gifts pass through the sister because, as we have seen, women form a particular boundary for the deployment of plutocratic power. When a chief has several wives he has an economic command over many brothers-in-law. The obligation of gift exchange, and not an initiation of sexual acts, constitutes marriage and this is an example of a primitive institution for the maintenance of the economic and social order. This institution has its origin in the particular form of the opposition between brother and sister which emerges from the epistemic order of things. Furthermore, I will demonstrate how the chief functions as a mechanism for the conversion of food into signs of wealth because of his peculiar location in that order.

In summary, archaeology reveals that the exchange of goods constitutes the act of marriage and gives meaning to it as an institution. Marriage is the primary locus of economics and makes a closed system for the circulation of wealth possible in the episteme. In the realm of wealth, I will try to show that the circular figures of the Trobriand

episteme, with the opposition between brother and sister at the domestic level, characterise the nature of a primitive economics as exchange. This will allow us to say that the discourses concerning sex and those concerning wealth have a shared positivity and this unity governs the nature of both the experience and knowledge of self and the world of things in that episteme.

5.2 Marriage.

Leach makes a distinction between two types of marriage. The first results from the whims of two persons acting as private individuals; the second is a systematically organised affair which forms part of a series of contractual obligations between two social groups [Leach 1951, p.24]. This is a distinction that Malinowski does not clearly make and there is an ambiguity in his work as to which type of marriage is the object of his analysis. It is the second type of marriage referred to by Leach that I am alluding to in this study and I will go so far as to claim that the first type has no possibility amongst the Trobrianders.

We have already seen that the Trobrianders enjoy sexual freedom as they grow up in the villages and, in such a society, marriage adds nothing to this freedom but, indeed, takes a great deal away from it. Marriage does not mark a form of sexual licence where, for example, virginity is valued and removed. Virginity is of no particular value to

the Trobrianders. The basis of marriage does not lie in sex since it can be noted that a married couple maintain a strict decorum regarding any sexual relations between them which is in striking contrast to their pre-nuptial lifestyle. The primary basis of marriage is for status and economy. Marriage is constituted by economic obligation. In my view, Malinowski does not stress this dimension enough in his account of the motives for marrying since he seems to have a notion of marriage based for the most part in sentimental companionship. This type would fall into Leach's first category. Not surprisingly, Malinowski's banal account of marriage fails to account for why the brother continues year after year to fulfil his not insignificant obligations to the husband of his sister.

Further, we must resist the sentimental type of explanation of the role of marriage provided by Malinowski in his claim that women marry simply for personal affection and a desire to have children [Malinowski 1982a, p.70]. For Malinowski, these two motives seem somehow equivalent. Affection can be separated from procreation. It is possible to have children in marriage once the means for providing for them has been secured. The organising figures of the episteme allow for the appearance of children at this level since a visitation from the baloma lies outside of the realm of free choice. However, the spirits usually only visit married couples so marriage does help to clear the way for reproduc-

tion. Therefore, Malinowski seems justified in claiming that primitive marriage is also involved in the production of children. However, we have seen that birth is itself a form of exchange, where the spirit substitutes one body for another. This theme of exchange constitutes the regularity of the primitive discursive formations centred on marriage. The motives for marriage lie outside of the individual's conscious choice and at the archaeological levels of the episteme. The system simply allows affection as a contingency in marriage but not as the moving force behind it.

Marriage represents the placement of the man in the economic and social order of the society. A bachelor would have no household of his own and would be debarred from many privileges. However, a proof of the significance of the economic aspect of marriage lies in the fact that there are no unmarried men of mature age except idiots, invalids, old widowers and albinos. Widowers and deserted men remarry as soon as possible [Malinowski 1982a, p.68]. If the whims of private individuals had a place here, it would seem likely that some men would remain unmarried out of choice. However, this is not the case as marriage is involved with daily survival by securing adequate sustenance, since marriage brings with it a considerable yearly supply of staple food, and is not necessarily involved with securing genial companionship.

The economic obligation on the brother, and other mem-

bers of a married woman's family, is a mechanism which is central to the Trobriander society. The authority of the chief lies in the practice of exchange of goods in marriage and his privilege of polygamy provides his ability to finance ceremonies and festivities. The chief has this privilege in his role as a creator of the signs of wealth. Therefore, any man, and especially the chief, must marry to gain economic security and social status by entering the group of tovavaygile (married men) [Malinowski 1982a, p.51].

When a man becomes part of this group of tovavaygile he receives a dowry with his wife [Malinowski 1982a, p.66]. This fact characterises marriage amongst the Trobrianders as a means for the distribution of goods. Power and economics come into contact with the field of sex in marriage. The economic objects, statements and discursive formations associated with marriage, as well as the techniques for the deployment of these formations, give marriage its most important features at the archaeological level. The Trobriand marriage is associated with a custom of infant betrothal which also has important implications and is a further proof that this form of marriage is not necessarily linked to individual will but to a series of contractual obligations.

Leach describes the Trobriand-type marriage as asymmetrical cross cousin marriage (patrilateral) which precludes the reciprocal marriage of a man with the sister of his own sister's husband, but amounts to a systematic exchange of

women between two local descent groups [Leach 1951, p.26]. Amongst the Trobrianders, the local descent group has its possibility in matrilineal descent and avunculocal residence where succession of male authority is from mother's brother to sister's son [Leach 1951, p.24]. The exchange of women is completed only after a time interval of one generation. In the ideal type, a man marries the father's sister's daughter; he is forbidden to marry the mother's brother's daughter. This kind of marriage regulation also occurs in patrilineal societies [Leach 1951, p.26].

The person who has the most influence in the marriage of a girl is her father. The strict taboo that rules that the brother must have nothing to do with the love affairs of his sister debars him from any control over his sister's matrimonial plans. Because of the operation of this taboo the responsibility falls to her father who is not her kinsman [Malinowski 1982a, p.72]. The father acts as the spokesman of the mother who is the appropriate person to deliberate on her daughter's sexual intrigues and marriage. Further, the father is closely concerned in the work of his sons from an economic stand-point and, after the marriage of the daughter, these sons will have to divide the fruits of their labour between her and their mother [Malinowski 1982a, p.73].

If a family is well disposed towards a prospective husband they will take the initiative by asking him for

small gifts which is an unambiguous indication that he is acceptable. When a family are opposed to the match, and give no sign of good will, the prospective husband may take the initiative and plead on his own behalf. He may be refused because he is notoriously lazy and would be a burden on the future relatives or else because the girl is intended for someone else. If there is a refusal, the couple may try to bring about their marriage regardless. If they decide to do this, the bride stays in the house of her lover's parents as if she were really married. Sometimes the couple elope to another village in the hope of impressing the opponents to their marriage. While the couple have eloped they stay indoors and do not eat anything. This abstention from the common meal constitutes a definite declaration of intent and shows that they are waiting for the family's consent. In the meantime, the boy's father or maternal uncle may go to the girl's family as an ambassador and offer them a valuable gift. Under such pressure the latter may give in and send the customary present to the couple. If, however, they do not agree, they go to the house of the couple and bring the girl back with them¹. The boy's relatives may oppose this and a scuffle will ensue. But the girl's relations cannot be forced to supply the pair with food and without these provi-

1. The customary and technical expression for this event is 'pulling the girl back' which indicates what actually happens [Malinowski 1982a, p.74].

sions, the household will soon dissolve since food is the most important symbolic and economic sign in the area of marriage. This action by a couple might, on the surface, be taken as an example of the exercise of individual preference in marriage. I am not claiming that there are no individual actions. This would be as absurd as claiming that action and movement were impossible without a Euclidian understanding of space. I am merely claiming that the economic dimension is what gives marriage its discursive significance.

When the parents of the girl are in favour of the marriage, the couple must wait for a short interval in order to allow time for the necessary preparations. One day the girl will remain with her husband, take her meal with his parents and accompany him throughout the day instead of returning in the morning to her parents house. The word goes around that the couple are married. These proceedings constitute the act of marriage. There is no other rite, no other ceremony to mark the beginnings of wedlock. From the morning on which the girl has remained with the man, she is considered to be married to him provided of course that the consent of the parents has been given. Without this consent, the act constitutes only an attempt at marriage. The act of marriage is recognised by the open sharing of a meal with the husband and by staying under his roof. This conventional public declaration of marriage has serious consequences in that it imposes considerable obligations on the girl's

family; obligations associated with counter-obligations on the part of the bridegroom [Malinowski 1982a, p.75].

This simple act of marriage is followed by the complex exchange of gifts between's the boy's family and that of the girl. Each gift has a definite nature and quantity, each has its own place in a definite sequence, and each is reciprocated by a corresponding contribution¹. This system of gifts and counter-gifts brings together the realms of sex and primitive economics in marriage.

The family of the girl make the first offering to signify their consent to the marriage. This small gift must be given on the day on which the two remain together, or on the morning of the next day. A series of gifts and recipro-

1. Malinowski provides a list of this gift and counter-gift sequence [Malinowski 1982a, p.76].

Gifts from the girl's family.

1. katuvila - cooked yams, brought in baskets by the girl's parents to the boy's family.

2. Pepe'i - several baskets of uncooked yams, one given by each of the girl's relatives to the boy's parents.

3. Kaykaboma - cooked vegetables, each member of the girl's family brings one plateful to the boy's house.

4. Mapula Kaykaboma - repayment of gift (3), given in exactly the same form and material by the boy's relatives to the girl's family.

5. Takwalela Pepe'i - valuables given by the boy's father in repayment of gift (2) to the girl's father.

Gifts from the girl's family.

6. Vilakuria - a large quantity of yam-food offered at the first harvest after the marriage to the boy by the girl's family.

Counter-gifts.

7. Saykwala - gift of fish brought by the boy to his wife's father in repayment of (6).

8. Takwalela Vilakuria - gift of valuables handed by the boy's father to the girl's father in payment of (6).

cations follow, culminating in the girl's family giving a present of considerable size at the next harvest, and from then on at every harvest they will have to help the new household with a substantial contribution of fresh yams. This gift must also be repaid. Fish is considered to be an appropriate counter-offering. The husband in a coastal village will embark on a fishing expedition while those living inland will buy the fish with yams. Sometimes a gift of valuables will also be given at this point and this closes the series of initial marriage gifts [Malinowski 1982a, p.78]. This complicated series of gifts represents a continuous principle in the economic relation which will obtain for the entire duration of the marriage. Marriage confers substantial material benefits on the man. He repays these at intervals with a gift of valuables such as polished axe-blades of green stone, necklaces and shell armllets.

5.3 Infant betrothal.

However, there is a second way of arranging marriages that is in sharp contrast to the process outlined above. In vaypokala (marriage by infant betrothal), a binding agreement is made by the parents in the children's infancy. The boy and girl grow up into the relationship and find themselves bound to each other before they have an opportunity to choose for themselves. Vaypokala is always associated with cross cousin marriage. The practice of infant betrothal lends weight to the argument that marriages are arranged to

serve the ends of power and not affection. In this case, arranged marriage is particularly important in relation to the chief who has a specific role in the creation of wealth.

In the ceremony of vaypokala, the initiative is always taken by the brother who, on behalf of his son, asks his sister for the hand of her daughter in marriage. If the sister of a new-born boy has a daughter, or perhaps a granddaughter who will not be too old to become the infant's wife later on, a request for betrothal may be made immediately on this infant's birth. The disparity of age should not exceed two or three years [Malinowski 1982a, p.89]. Soon after the preliminary agreement, the man has to give a vaygu'a (a polished axe-blade or shell ornament) to the father of the infant bride. She must sleep in her mother's house only. Shortly after this three gifts of food are offered by the girl's family to the boy's father which are similar to the three initial gifts in ordinary marriage. Because of the presence of exchange, vaypokala is thought to be an actual marriage. The betrothed are regarded as husband and wife. As in an adult wedding, the three gifts are considered to conclude the marriage and the infant bridegroom's family have to repay the last present by a return gift of food [Malinowski 1982a, p.89]. At the next harvest, the girl's father brings yam food to the boy's parents. This is a reversal of what happens in normal marriage. In vaypokala

the boy's father receives a gift from his sister's husband on behalf of his son. The sister's husband acts as the representative of his own sons, the brothers of the future bride. As yet, the yearly harvest gifts do not follow the first offering of crops. An interval lasts until the new household is actually established [Malinowski 1982a, p.90]. When the two grow up, they have to marry again. The bride has to go officially to the bridegroom's house, share his bed there, take her meals with him and be publicly announced to have married him. The initial gifts are omitted and only the large harvest gift and its repayment are exchanged [Malinowski 1982a, p.90].

During the interval between betrothal and adult marriage, the appearance of chastity has to be maintained. Both parties must be discreet in their affairs. Also, it is not customary to return the initial presents in the event of the dissolution of the marriage arrangement.

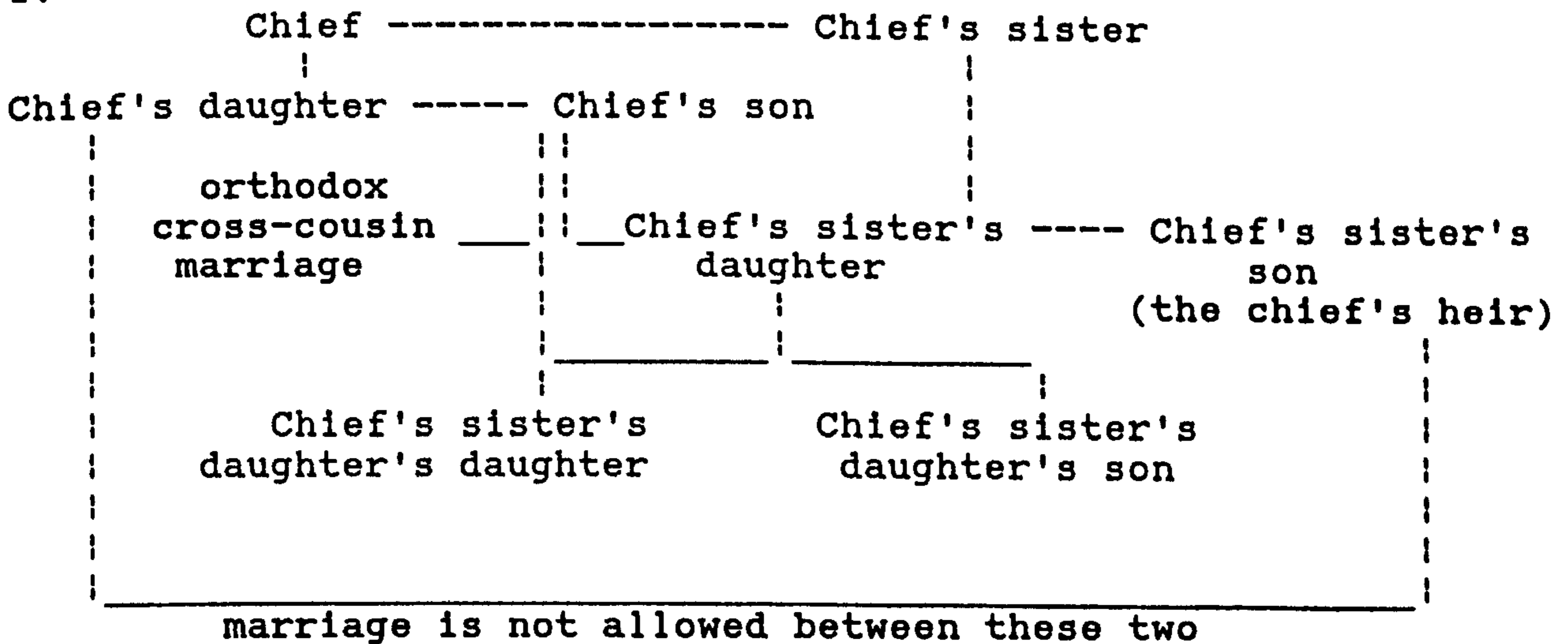
According to native ideas, the two people most suited for marriage with each other are a man's son and the daughter of his sister. If the sister's daughter is too old to be betrothed to her male infant cousin, her daughter may replace her since the two are regarded as equivalent for the purposes of this marriage. Vaypokala is an important device for a chief in establishing his son permanently in the village with rights of full citizenship for himself and his progeny. This device is necessary to the chief in the matri-

lineal society of the Trobrianders .

The chief's son can enjoy practically the same position that he enjoyed during his father's life time by marrying his cousin. He is ousted from his position of influence by his male cousin, the rightful heir, at his father's death. The husband of the chief's niece will have a definite claim on his wife's brother (the new chief) and other male relatives. He also has the right to live in the village if he chooses. He holds this right through his grandmother who is also the grandmother (or great-grandmother) of his wife. The mother has the function of establishing the place to which he has claim of belonging despite the fact that marriage is patrilocal. Malinowski does not trace this right of the chief's son to his grandmother but merely attributes it to his influence and vested interests [Malinowski 1982a, p.83].

Through cross-cousin marriage, the chief and his son

1.



get what they want; the chief's niece marries the most influential man in the village; an alliance is established between the son of the chief and the chief's lawful heirs eliminating the rivalry between them.

It should become clearer why there is an exogamic restriction operating to prohibit the chief's heir, his nephew, from marrying the chief's daughter. Such a marriage would result in a closed system of exchange where the chief's son would lose all benefit from his betrothal by being obliged to furnish gifts to the new chief (his sister's husband). The exogamic restrictions operate to prevent such a closed movement of goods and to provide an open primitive system of exchange based on the figures governing the ordering of the clans and sub-clans.

Whenever the possibility arises a cross-cousin marriage will always be arranged for the son of a chief, a village headman or any man of rank, wealth and power. This demonstrates that marriage is involved in the primitive deployment of power: marriage is part of a regime of power. Marriage as an institution primarily serves the interests of power rather than sentiment in the primitive society. It is an institution for the deployment and maintenance of the figures of a primitive economics. One of the main effects of the institution of marriage is the manipulation of a fairly complex system of exchange. Sexual tolerance exists only where it does not interfere with the economic ambitions of

those involved. Therefore, it is becoming clearer that the primitives order their world and their relationships along the lines of the formative figures of the episteme rather than along sentimental lines. The figures governing the operation of the primitive system of economics share the same positivity as those governing the notions of clan and sub-clan identity which provides the primitive technique for the construction of the individuals as selves.

Malinowski regards the existence of cross-cousin marriage as a compromise between the two principles of mother-right and father love [Malinowski 1982a, p.86]. The cross-cousin marriage between the son and the niece (or grand-niece) of a man is the only exception to the exogamic prohibition since other combinations are prohibited. I hold that it is more intelligible to regard the presence of cross-cousin marriage of this nature as an attempt to resolve the conflicts arising out of a system which allows women to be the means through which power is deployed but not held and allows men to be the objects of that power. For the man, the problem then lies in passing that power, through an appropriate pattern of women, to his own sons without it being deflected to someone else. The possibility of the loss of power comes about because of the primitive conception of the family based in the brother/sister model available in the myths on the origins of the tribe rather than a father/son model.

5.4 The economics of exchange.

Mauss claimed that an archaic form of exchange, involving gifts and return gifts, could be seen in operation in primitive societies such as the Trobrianders [Mauss 1954, p.45]. In these societies he noted the circulation of objects along side the circulation of persons and rights. He speculated from this that gift exchange was characteristic of societies that were not involved with pure individual contracts, the money market, fixed price and weighed and¹ coined money .

Mauss translated kula which describes the whole system of inter-tribal and intra-tribal commerce as 'ring' [Mauss 1954, p.20]. Mauss introduced the concept of exchange as a 'total social phenomenon' containing elements at once social, legal, moral, aesthetic, etc. He analysed exchange by separating the acts of giving, receiving and repaying so that the structure of exchange as a total concept could become fragmented. Mauss's reciprocity was a step towards a general theory of exchange. However, Weiner claims, in agreement with Levi-Strauss in The Savage Mind, that the separation of the acts of giving, receiving and repaying was a major conceptual error. Weiner holds that an analysis of

1. However, Mauss is only concerned here with societies that have passed the phase of 'total prestation' between clan and clan, and family and family. He obviously has a form of economic evolution in mind.

Trobriand exchange in terms of a single dimension tends to make the processes of social interaction appear to be determined by principles of cause and effect. This mistake, Weiner claims, arises out of the error of looking at exchange as an act within the limitations of the present rather than the analysis comprising a system of regeneration in which the temporal context of generational continuity carries as much weight as economic and political factors. In conformity with Weiner's advice, the archaeological analysis of the economics of exchange, which I attempt here, is not broken down into these elements of giving, receiving and repaying.

Furthermore, Weiner holds that Malinowski's dilemma of 'giving for the sake of giving' has tended to obscure the nature of power underlying exchange events. I am in agreement with Weiner that this view of exchange as primarily social rather than economic, because of the generalised character of reciprocity and kinship, is unsatisfactory. Anthropologists have tended to ignore exchange as part of a power system. Exchange must be seen as the means of gaining power over people and control over resources. Levi-Strauss was a proponent of a social rather than an economic view of exchange and this marks a significant difference between structuralism and archaeology. Structuralism is not concerned with the relationship between regimes of power and knowledge.

Weiner is correct to analyse exchange as part of a power system. However, there is a difference between Weiner's analysis of exchange as a deployment of power and that of archaeology. In archaeology the analysis of exchange does not emerge from the space of a competition between a social and an economic theory. It is difficult to see exactly what is meant by 'economic' in Weiner's view. She accepts that the meaning of this concept has a relationship with power as wealth but her analysis remains vague as to what is meant by power here and I can only assume that she is employing the traditional conception that was rejected in chapter two. Archaeology does not oppose the social to the economic but places both discursive fields within the framework of an analysis in terms of the productive figures of power. During the course of the investigation, the particularity of this approach will become apparent.

Marriage is constituted by exchange since it places the brothers of the woman under a permanent tributary obligation to the husband. They have to pay yearly contributions to the households for as long as it exists. This contribution takes the form of yams produced by their kinswoman's family. These yams make up about half the annual consumption of the average household.

When a couple get married they have to set up a yam-store as well as a dwelling house. The yam-store stands in the inner circle facing the dwelling. It contains a ceremo-

nial compartment which stores the contribution of the wife's family at harvest. At the same time the new husband delivers a large quantity of yams to his own sister or female relatives. He keeps only the inferior tubers in the sokwaypa (the inferior yam-house). He also produces seed yams and other vegetables [Malinowski 1982a, p.104].

Weiner informs us that the production of yams is firmly grounded in the male domain. The taytu forms the principal object of exchange and opens the way to all other areas of resource control [Weiner 1976, p.137]. Two types of gardens are worked: subsistence and exchange gardens. Two types of exchange occur: cooked and raw yams are exchanged and this difference has contextual implications. Raw yams can be stored for up to six months and thus can enter further exchanges unlike cooked yams which cannot be stored nor can they be replanted for another harvest. Therefore, uncooked yams are the basic commodity in exchanges [Weiner 1976, p.138].

Weiner believes that the cooked yams must be taken out of an exchange system so that an estimation of yams for subsistence can be made. This, she claims, is the main reason why boys in the bukumatula are not allowed to cook so that this estimate might be made more accurately. I disagree with this interpretation and argue that the taboo on cooking has more specifically to do with the dual function of the yam as the sign of wealth and the means of subsistence. The

taboo focuses on a vulnerable boundary in the yam in the same way that the sexual taboo focussed on the vulnerable boundary between the brother and sister.

The family dig up the taytu (small yams) from their own garden plot within the communal garden and carry them to a kalimomyo (shade) where they are carefully cleaned and selected. The best yams are placed in a conical pile in the middle and this is the urigubu (the yield for the husband's women folk). The rest are irregularly stored in the corners. This marriage gift is the main and most ostentatious product of the garden work [Malinowski 1982a, p.105].

Because quantities of yams can be amassed and stored, a single harvest can be subdivided and redistributed. Thus, a man can establish relationships with several people. This is why, according to Weiner, the yam is culturally elaborated into the system of display and exchange [Weiner 1976, p.139].

After about a week, the taytu are brought into the villages and the urigubu are carried to the husband's sister's husband. This is a time of gaiety and rejoicing. Sometimes several village communities organise a kayasa (competitive harvest) and everyone tries to produce the best crop. Often wars, or at least fights, are associated with the intense rivalry of the kayasa. The gift yams are placed in a conical heap outside of the recipient's house and after about a week there is a ceremony for placing them inside the

yam-house [Malinowski 1982a, p.107].

Malinowski notes the profound effects of this annual endowment on the institution of marriage and on the economy and constitution of the tribe as a whole. He believes that it would be wise for a man to guide his choice of a bride according to the number of her sisters and brothers. An only daughter with several brothers would prove to be a profitable choice. Here Malinowski is clearly contradicting his earlier observations that love and sentiment were the only guiding factors in a man's choice of a wife, outside of the incest taboo bars. He is, at this stage, allowing an economic dimension in the choice as an important factor. It will become clearer that this element has a very important function in the institution of marriage; it governs the choice of partners. The sexual element that dominates the relationship between a couple before marriage is gradually replaced after marriage by an economic concern with survival.

Once a couple become married, there is a distinct increase in sexual propriety between them. In public, they never demonstrate any affection towards each other in the manner of lovers from the bukumatula. All allusions to sex between them is rigorously excluded [Malinowski 1982a, p.96]. In this way, we can see the emergence of institutions and discourses which replace the role of sex focussing on the boundary between the sexes. The yam-houses occupy the central place of the village and married life tends to focus

on this place. There is a shift from a concern with sexual activity as that which characterises a relationship to a concern with food as the primary theme of experience.

A man acquires new relatives-in-law in the form of his wife's sons since, in a matrilineal society, children are regarded as the kinsmen of the woman. A man's relatives-in-law are obliged to assist him when he builds a house or canoe, arranges a fishing expedition, or takes part in a public festival. They must keep watch over him against sorcerers when he is ill or carry him to some location which might bring about a cure. Finally, after his death the bulk of the mortuary duties fall upon them. Only occasionally does he have to repay these services with youlo (valuables) [Malinowski 1982a, p.108].

Malinowski claims that it is merely custom and personal pride that impel a man to give yams freely and liberally each year since there are no definite punishments to enforce this duty. Neglect is rewarded with public contempt [Malinowski 1982a, p.108]. The force must therefore be pride and ambition. However, archaeology questions practices for their possibility in epistemic figures and we must investigate the practice of annual contributions from a brother to his sister's household for its possibility in the figures already outlined. The forces behind this practice have the same conditions as those governing the deployment of magic and clan relations. Pride does not provide an account of

primitive economics just as genealogy could not provide the solution to the deployment of the clan. Genealogy and vanity are examples of two traditional explanatory unities that are rejected in archaeology.

This native system of the giving of urigubu involves the extra work of the building of the kalimomye, the cleaning, stacking and carrying of the taytu. However, this extra burden, according to Malinowski, enhances industrial efficiency. If he worked just for himself, the native would have no means of capitalising his surplus and would have no incentive to produce it [Malinowski 1982a, p.109]. However, the native system of annual contributions to the household of the sister has produced a system that allows for the capitalisation of surplus and provides a means of producing that surplus. In this system we see the workings of matriliney.

The wife's brother, who is the guardian of the wife and her children, bears the largest part of the economic burden of the household. A brother retains an authority over his sister after she is married regardless of the rank of her new husband. At the same time, there exists an important and elaborate ceremonial of respect towards persons of rank which highlights the function of the boundaries of the model among the Trobrianders. This manifests itself in the idea that a man of noble lineage must always remain on a physically higher level than his inferiors. People of lower rank,

in the presence of a noble, have to bow the head or bend the body or squat on the ground according to the degree of their inferiority. Tall platforms are always built on the chief's house and he will sit on one of these at tribal gatherings so that the people may freely move below without any head reaching higher than his [Malinowski 1982a, p.28]. If the chief stands up, the commoners must bend towards the ground [Young 1979, p.44].

The sanctity of the chief's person is particularly localised in his head, which is associated with strict taboos. Most especially sacred are the forehead and the occiput with the neck and only equals in rank, wives and a few privileged persons are allowed to touch these parts, or in other words, to be convenient with them. This sanctity of the head extends to the female members of the noble sub-clans, and if a noble woman marries a commoner, her brow, her occiput, neck and shoulders should not be touched by the husband even during sexual intercourse [Malinowski 1982a, p.29]. In the area of nobility we have an example of a weak boundary between the sexes.

Women enjoy the same privileges of rank as men in the observances of taboos. However, no woman is ever the head of any sub-clan and, therefore, no woman can be a chieftainess. Furthermore, the privilege of polygamy, which is the basis of the chief's power, is denied to women since they have no similar privilege of polyandry [Malinowski 1982a, p.29]. The

chief derives his authority from the fact that he is the headman of the village and from the division of the community into different rankings of clans [Malinowski 1978, p.62]. In every community, there is one man who wields the greatest authority, though in reality, this may not amount to much. All decisions are taken on the basis of traditional and conventional lines and the authority has no capacity for innovation. These lesser authorities are in effect the masters of ceremonies. However, in the case of a headman of high rank, such as the head of the Tabalu sub-clan of the Malasi clan who holds the highest rank of all, the authority is more than ceremonial. The authority of a chief lies in his ability to produce value and wealth from food which is not just involved with basic survival.

Weiner cites three features which support the conception of the Trobriand guya'u¹ as chief. Firstly, the Trobriand 'chiefs' adhere to hereditary claims. Secondly, the paraphernalia of decorations and social and physical taboos serve as a means of rank separation. Thirdly, only the few guya'u are polygamous. The right to be polygamous comes from the founders (tabu) [Weiner 1976, p.45-46]. However, an account of the privilege of the polygamy of the chief is given here in terms of the function of the chief as the

1. Malinowski glosses this term as 'aristocratic' on page 26, chief (premier) on page 122 and 'as people of high rank' on page 385 of The Sexual Lives of Savages.

creator of the signs of wealth because of his central location in an enclosed system of exchange. Power deploys itself through the symbols of wealth by operating in the polygamous chief. The chief is the locus for a connection between power and knowledge where that knowledge takes the form of a primitive economic discourse based in exchange.

All chiefs are obliged to have a great number of wives. In order to wield power and fulfil the obligations of his office, the chief of an extended district must possess wealth and he can do this by marrying several native women. The chief is obliged to pay for everything, even for the services that are due to him and that could not be withheld. The brothers of each of his wives must contribute in the same way as any other brother-in-law. Therefore, a chief can multiply his wealth in direct proportion to the number of his wives. The opposite state of affairs would prevail if a woman were to take several husbands since this would not increase the number of her in-laws obliged to her but merely increase the household without increasing its wealth. This further demonstrates that the matrilineal system is such that women provide the means of enhancing the power and wealth of men. The husband becomes powerful through his wife and weaker through his sisters who are always placed to threaten his status and his very existence.

When a chief comes to power, he inherits the late chief's widows who automatically become his own wives, while

their children become part of his household. The majority of the widows have passed through the hands of several husbands and are fairly old [Malinowski 1982a, p.114]. In general, the wives of the chief can be divided into three groups. Firstly, there are those wives acquired from the chief's predecessor. These may be regarded as dowager tribute-bringers who cannot be repudiated. The second class of wives are those whom the chief married in his youth. These are women acquired and not inherited. The third class consists of younger women adopted in exchange for older ones who have died. The chief indicates his choice, and irrespective of her previous attachments, the woman is given to him [Malinowski 1982a, p.117].

The chief is able to carry out many of his functions and to claim certain of his privileges only because he is the wealthiest man in the community. He can ensure the support of his subjects in expeditions, wars, festivals, etc. because he can pay for all these things. Power is plutocratic amongst the Trobrianders [Malinowski 1982a, p.111]. The chief is the most powerful person in the district because he is the wealthiest. He is the wealthiest because he is entitled to take many wives. For his real income a chief has to rely entirely on his annual marriage contribution. Each of his wives is more dowered than if she had married a commoner.

Each chief has a district, comprising several villages,

which is tributary through marriage. Each village is ruled by the headman of the sub-clan which constitutes that village. The chief takes a wife from each sub-clan, and in the event of her death, she is replaced immediately by a woman from the same sub-clan. All the male members of this sub-clan contribute their share to the dowry. The sub-clan is represented collectively by the headman. Thus every man in a village works from a distance for his chief [Malinowski 1982a, p.112]. The wealth of the chief is then redistributed in payment for wars, expeditions and craft. This system invests the taytu with an economic value which it could never have if each native provided just for himself from his own garden.

The relation between the polygamous chief and his wives, which is based in matriliney forms the economic macrocosm for the Trobriand society. The relationship between the sister and her husband finds its economic possibility in the special ties that bind a brother to his sister. The brother/sister(husband) opposition forms the microcosm for the primitive economic system in the same way that the matrilineal conception of the brother/sister relationship formed the microcosm for the division of the clans. Primitive economics functions between the limits of these two. Monogamous marriage is grounded on the economic basis of the microcosmic function of the brother/sister(husband) relation. Polygamous marriage is based in the economics of the macrocosmic func-

tion of the clan as a collection of sub-clans which itself has its basis in the brother/sister relation which in turn is an asymmetric relation that has its origin in the mother.

Between the limits of the clan and the brother/sister relation we find the realm of sex. Between the limits of the chief and the brother/sister(husband) relation we find the realm of wealth. This space contains the possibility of a primitive economics. The taytu become more than mere sustenance once they are put into circulation. They circulate by their movement from the brother to the sub-clans and on to the chief, via the chief's wives, and back to the members of the clan as payment. The movement from the sub-clan to the chief is made possible and determined by the guiding codes that are available in the figures of the primitive episteme. The notion of the clan provides a limit to the economic responsibility of the chief. This limit has its origin in the topological aspect of convenience. The clan provides enclosure for the economy. The sub-clans are convenient to each other. Again, this economic model is strictly two-dimensional and the taytu, displaced through the chief, becomes the sign of value.

In the establishment of value, the asymmetrical relation between a chief and his wives occupies the central place. This place is reflected in the village layout by the fact that the chief's dwelling is the only one in the centre of the village. The chief/wives are enclosed by the conven-

ient asymmetrical relations of the chief's-wife/wife's-clansmen which is the brother/sister asymmetry. Taytu represents the movement of yams from the enclosing circle of brother/sister(husband) conveniences that emulate the central one, to the central chief/wife asymmetry. The taytu are returned to the sub-clans as payments. The taytu have been displaced through the chiefs so that they are now the signs of value. The chief occupies the central place in the village and is therefore valued by that placement. In the same way that something becomes the sign of a positive essence by occupying the valued areas of the differentiated primitive space, the chief empowers yams with his own positive attributes so that they can function as the signs of wealth. In chapter three, it was suggested that a primitive sign is a thing in the world and is established by being related to the thing for which it is a sign in the field of the bounded relations of the epistemic figures. Yams become primitive 'currency' in their relationship to the chief. The chief is the boundary through which yams must pass so that they can function as the sign for currency. The necessity of polygamy lies in this role that the chief has. His place in the economic order must be enclosed by the continuous circles of sub-clans and this is achieved through marriage with as many women of those clans as possible. Yams are 'exchanged' through the chief, or anyone of higher rank, where they cease to be agricultural products and become the signs of

wealth and power. They are then returned to the natives in the form of obligatory payments where they are transformed back to agricultural products in cooking. Each village represents its wealth through the elaborate display of its own yams which are the signs of its prosperity.

This circulation of wealth and the creation of value have their possibility in the figures of asymmetry, convenience and emulation in the enclosed figures of the episteme. The shared regularity between the economics and sexual patterns is evident in the central place occupied by the chief/wife being equivalent to that occupied by the mother as the central place of emergence in the origin myths and equivalent to the central place of the brother/sister in the incest taboos. There is an equivalence between the roles of the conveniences of the sub-clans in the creation of value and the role of the clans in the kinship myths and the convenience of the domestic dwellings in the layout of the village. The village is structured to reflect these figures with the yam stores occupying the same place as the chief's house. Again we see the topological aspect of the organisation of primitive knowledge.

Power deploys itself in the Trobriand system through women who are conceived to be related to their brothers, through their mothers, in this very particular way with its sexual and economic aspects. In the area of the constitution of the brother/sister relation, we found the source of

sexual relations through the operation of the incest taboo. Here again, in this same space, we find the source of economic distribution through the operation of the special relation between brother and sister. This special relation has its origin in matriliney which provides the shared positivity for sexual and economic activity. Thus we can conclude that matriliney is a particular means for the deployment of plutocratic power in the Trobriand society which does not exclude women but allows them to function as the means to that power without an end in it themselves.

The source of power, in the Trobriand society, lies in the conception of the brother/sister relation where the sister transfers a power from her brother, who shares her nature, to her husband. The end manifestation of power here lies in economic wealth. Through economic wealth a man can display his status. This is most evident in the practice of the polygamy of chiefs.

Power takes the form of the material control of resources. Wealth deployed through his wives invests a chief with power. However, this power is maintained by the taboos associated with the sacred person of the chief and his association with magical powers appropriate to his status.

5.5 The archaeology of wealth.

In The Order of Things, Foucault describes how objects became invested with value so that they could become part of an economics. He reminds us that there was no political

economy in the order of knowledge of the Classical Age because, at that time, the notion of production did not exist. However, in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries there is a domain of wealth. This domain contains the notions of value, price, trade, circulation, income and interest. It is the ground and object of 'economy' and is not applicable to questions deriving from a different type of economics: an economics organised around production or work. The analysis of wealth is useless without taking into account the system from which it draws its positivity [Foucault 1970, p.166]. This is a very important point and one entirely missed by both Malinowski and Weiner.

Malinowski situated the domains of 'money' and the 'division of labour' in the same place in his analysis. Concerns with the division of labour did not emerge until the Modern era. Nevertheless, he provides ethnographic detail on a 'primitive economics' that he maintains is found amongst the Trobrianders that includes both these themes [Malinowski 1921]. While he acknowledges the need for comprehensive economic analysis of primitive cultures, he does not acknowledge any possible discontinuities in such a discourse and promotes the type of retrospective analysis rejected above by Foucault.

A boy receives seeds for his first yam exchange garden from the male to whom the harvest will go. Because of this, Weiner claims that the yams represent the labour invested in

them [Weiner 1976, p.147]. However, the complex notion of 'labour' requires the epistemological setting of the Modern episteme which is not present. Weiner does not demonstrate the reality of the yam as labour. Further, throughout her analysis, she ignores the fact that the Trobrianders had been greatly influenced by Modern Western culture by the time she got to them. She does not take seriously any affect this influence might have on traditional symbolic notions and her imposition of the notion of 'labour' on the yam can only be regarded as arising from this epistemological confusion.

A retrospective reading of a 'primitive economics' that would merely endow this area with the unity of a Political economy must be avoided. We can look at an example from the Renaissance where economic thought is restricted to the problem of prices and that of the best monetary substance. The question of prices concerns the absolute or relative character of the increasing dearness of commodities and the effect that devaluations or the influx of American metals had upon prices. The problem of monetary substance is that of the nature of the standard, of the price relation between the metals employed, and of the distortion between the weights of coins and their nominal values. These two types of problems were linked in that the metal functions only as a sign for measuring wealth because it was itself wealth. Just as words had the same reality as what they said, simi-

larly, the signs that indicated wealth and measured it were bound to carry the real mark in themselves. In order to represent prices, they themselves had to be precious [Foucault 1970, p.169].

The two functions of money as a common measure between commodities and as a substitute in the mechanism of exchange are based on its material reality. As a measure it is stable, recognised as valid by everyone everywhere and can be compared to the diversity of things that one wishes to measure. Money can only measure in the Renaissance if it has a reality that really exists. Money was a measure of wealth because it signified only its power to standardise wealth on the basis of its own material reality as wealth. This is the epistemological foundation that determined the domain of wealth in the sixteenth century [Foucault 1970, p.170].

Amongst the Trobrianders, there are three manifestations of 'money' as an object of a primitive economics but none of these instances function as a common measure between commodities. Money functions as the sign of wealth and the economy is based on (unequal) exchange through the higher ranks and not exact procedures of comparison. The range of commodities to be exchanged is extremely limited in any case.

Trade follows customary rules which strictly determine what and how much shall be exchanged for any given article. All trade is carried on exactly the same way: given any

article and the communities between which it is traded, the natives know its equivalent prescribed by custom. A narrow range of exchangeable articles and the inertia of custom leave no room for a notion of free exchange. There is, therefore, no need for a medium of exchange in the form of money as a comparative measure of value [Malinowski 1921, p.14]. Malinowski does not employ a notion of money in his analysis since he defines money solely in terms of its function as a common equivalent. However, we need not abandon the term in this way but employ it where it functions as a mechanism in an exchange. This is least obvious where yams, which are themselves food, function as money in food exchanges. The yam has the dual characteristic of being simultaneously food and the sign of wealth. It has this dual nature because it is itself valuable being food. Something can act as money in the Trobriand episteme because it is itself valuable.

Firstly, money appears in the form of the valuable items of ornaments. In the Trobriand society this type of money takes the form of ceremonial axe-blades, necklaces of red shell discs, and armshells of the conus millepuctatus shell which are collectively known as vaygua. These objects have hardly any practical utility. However, they transmit their virtues when handled [Mauss 1954, p.22]. The materials of which they are made are rare and difficult to obtain. They are durable and almost indestructible. At least the

most valuable and coveted of the vaygu'a have a name, a personality, a past, and a legend attached to them [Mauss 1954, p.22]. They are owned as signs of wealth because they have a material reality and represent wealth on the basis of their own material reality as wealth. They are not measures but are themselves wealth. As a substitute in the mechanism of exchange, primitive money has the forms of these vaygu'a. A distinction can be made among vaygu'a between mwali, which are finely cut and polished armshells and soulava which are necklaces [Mauss 1954, p.21]. The mwali go in a regular circular movement from west to east while soulava have a circular movement from east to west [Mauss 1954, p.21].

Mauss believed that these vaygu'a, like the North-West American coppers and Iroquois wampum, are at once wealth, tokens of wealth, means of exchange and payment, and things to be given away or destroyed [Mauss 1954, p.71]. In addition, he regarded them as pledges, linked to the persons who use them and who, in turn, are bound by them. However, at other times they serve as tokens of money [Mauss 1954, p.71].

The vaygua are only money in the sense that they have a material reality and function in the mechanism of exchange. It is not, however, a common measure between commodities. Since each thing is invested with its own value or 'vitality' there is no need for a common measure. The value of each thing is manifest in that thing and crystallised in custom.

Because of this, the vaygua have only one function as money in a primitive episteme.

Secondly, native women cease to be just objects of sexual desire and themselves enter into circulation as wealth in marriage. The practice of marriage is a form of the distribution of wealth. A woman represents wealth by being a sign for wealth that is in itself valuable and has a central role in the mechanism of exchange.

Weiner claims that, in the marriage contract, the movement of women and yams to the husband's house represents a symbolic association between women and yams. Yams reproduce themselves in the gardens just as women are thought to do in childbirth. The movement of yams from the father and brother of a woman to her husband symbolises the transformation of her sexuality into a sexual union that produces a child provisioned with paternal identity. Since the sexual relations between husband and wife can never be publicly discussed, and since a father (or brother) can never acknowledge a woman's (his sister's) sexual behaviour, the yams exchanged through a woman 'speak the elemental words that constitute all men's immortality' [Weiner 1976, p.210]. Now what could all of this mean? Firstly, we have seen that there is an absence of paternal identity and, further, sexuality can not be symbolised in the primitive episteme since the notion cannot emerge until the nineteenth century. By this very obscure phrase Weiner can only mean that women

(and not the fathers) control the continuity of dala identity in ahistorical time. This contradicts her criticisms of Malinowski where she claims that continuity is available through the father.

The third and most important manifestation of money is as raw yams. Yams raise a problem of monetary substance since they can be transformed by cooking into a perishable form of sustenance which is no longer a practical sign of wealth. The threat to wealth because of this nature of the sign has led to a series of taboos on cooking that especially focus on unmarried couples eating together. Cooking is banned from the central place of wealth in the village since it represents a threat to the economic order. However, yams as the signs of wealth do not disappear altogether as a result of successive exchanges, continual circulation and consumption as food since they are agricultural products and are restored annually by the labour of the gardens. In this way, the energy invested in agriculture is a direct means of restoring the signs of wealth and, in light of this, it is not surprising that gardening is the focus of significant magic. It is at this level that the notion of 'labour' enters a primitive economics. However, the concept of labour is not problematised in the primitive discourses on wealth. Successful gardening has its ultimate possibility in the correct application of the appropriate magic and not in the labour of man.

5.6 Gardening.

Because of the function of yams in exchange, the Trobriander's economy is involved in agriculture which produces that which is to count as the sign of wealth. Yams can be exchanged for fish and imports. The natives have to rely on the importation from other tribes of stone implements and pottery because of a lack of raw materials.

Agricultural production involves the central role of the chief and especially the function of magic. The absence of a constitutive notion of labour in production is similar to the absence of the notion of reproduction in sexual activity which is also assigned to the role of magic.

A man who plants and tends an exchange garden (which is a garden specifically planted so that its produce enters an exchange) does not own any of the yams which belong, from the time of planting, to the person to whom the harvest will be presented. There is no formal harvest for subsistence gardens and no public display of the harvest of the food yams.

The guya'u (chief) has an influence over all the garden land within the district. This consists in the exercise of ceremonial privileges and arbitration in garden disputes. The towosi (garden magician) exercises complex magical functions over the gardens and has the ultimate responsibility for a successful harvest.

It is possible to make a distinction between the re-

sponsibilities of the guya'u and the towosi. The guya'u supplies the authority in the complex conditions of land tenure, in the frequent quarrels about gardening, and in the summoning and maintaining of communal labour. In the realm of wealth, the chief has his principal function in its creation and circulation. However, magic is the means whereby the substances that are to function as the signs of wealth are created and, in this area, the magician is the central figure. The towosi of each village community has a direct causal influence in the production of the yam crop. Each stage of gardening is inaugurated by a magical rite that is performed by him. He orders the work that is to be done; supervises the way in which it is to be carried out and punctuates the work with the imposition of periods of taboo [Malinowski 1921, p.4].

The chief summons a conference outside the house of the garden magician to open the gardening proceedings. The village community brings a gift of selected food to the magician who performs the appropriate rites. The magician goes to the garden plots the following morning with the men of the village carrying axes wrapped in charmed leaves. The towosi strikes the ground of each plot with a ceremonial staff and utters a formula. After this the scrub is cut in the garden by the men only, and communal labour is often resorted to. The magician then has to decide when the next stage, the burning of the scrub and the clearing of soil,

has to begin. When he thinks that the cut scrub is sufficiently dry, he imposes a taboo on the garden work. Then, in a series of rites lasting about three days, he initiates the work of clearing the garden plot. The work of clearing is carried out by both men and women, working in families, each on its own plot. A very elaborate ceremony inaugurates the planting of the yams and each further stage is initiated by its own ceremony; the weeding carried out by female communal labour; the cleaning of the yam roots and tubers; the preliminary harvest of early yams; and finally the main harvest of late yams [Malinowski 1921, p.5].

These magical rites give impulse to the growth of the plot; there is magic to make the seed tuber sprout; another rite to drive up the sprouting shoot; another to lift it from the ground; another to make it twine round the support; magic to make the leaves bud, open and expand¹. The owner of

1. Tambiah outlines the structure of a Trobriand garden spell (with reference to the tapwana) in the following way.

The belly of my garden _____	leavens rises reclines grows to the size of a bush hen's nest grows like an anthill rises and is bowed down rises like an ironwood palm lies down swells swells as with a child
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Note the presence of resemblance between a garden and a

the leywota (plot selected for the magical ceremony) has to work conscientiously to keep pace with the progress of magic and this plot provides a standard for the others. Thus, the towosi exercises an authority in the initiation of work by imposing taboos and sets standards by means of the leywota plot. The natives believe that he controls the forces of nature, and they also believe that he controls the work of man [Malinowski 1921, p.6].

The authority and efficacy of the magical spells regulate the work and production of the yam crops. The same can be said about fishing, building of houses or canoes and big trading expeditions. All these activities are dependent on the influence of the respective magicians. Malinowski assigns an equal function to both the chief and the magician in agricultural pursuits. This is because he underplays the authority of the causal role of magic in primitive knowledge in favour of the hegemonic role of the chief. In the next chapter, I examine the origin of the magical authority in greater detail.

5.7 Functions of a primitive economy.

There are two functions that govern the economic lives of the natives and move gardening work from the concerns of each individual family to a collective problematisation.

...Continued...

pregnant woman [Tambiah 1968, p.191]. The Trobrianders also employ a resemblance between the human belly and the yam house [Tambiah 1968, p.201

These two functions in the Trobriand culture are: the obligations imposed at marriage by rules of kinship and relationship-in-law, and the dues and tributes paid to the chief [Malinowski 1921, p.8].

We have already seen the complex system of gift exchange involved in marriage. This involves the redistribution of garden produce resulting in a condition where everybody is working for someone else. The whole community is enmeshed in a network of reciprocal obligations and dues. This system indicates the importance of the economic character of the natural produce of magic to the natives.

In general, the transactions that follow from the produce of any male garden (a garden worked by one male for another) involve two men who are in an asymmetrical relationship to each other, that is, son to father, sister's son to mother's brother, younger brother to older brother [Weiner 1976, p.152]. Here we have another example of the role of the epistemic figures. Older men afford younger men the opportunity for security and access to valuables and magical knowledge that only older men possess. The amount and kind of magic spells that men teach their sons are relative to the strength of the yam exchange relationship that a son enters into with his father. Magic is passed in this way from father to son. Men also purchase magic spells from anyone except their fathers since every Trobriander has an individual store of spells [Weiner 1976, p.153].

Through the effect of polygamy and through dues and tributes, about one third of the whole production of a district finds its way into the yam houses of the chief [Malinowski 1921, p.8]. The value of these yams is portrayed in elaborate displays. The natives take great pride in their possession of yams and Malinowski claims that the custom of eating in public serves to prevent the suspicion of a scarcity of food being attached to the eater. However, this explanation is based in a view of native psychology which is rejected in an archaeological analysis. Instead, I argue that food is eaten in public since the consumption of the yams represents a threat to the order of wealth and, as such, is an appropriate locus for specific taboos. Taboos operate where there is a threat of a possible inversion of the order of things in the primitive world. In order for these taboos to be applicable, they must be subject to public scrutiny. There is a place appropriate to the display of yams as wealth and a place appropriate to their consumption. In the realm of sex, a taboo focuses on the body of man, with its dual sexual nature represented by the boundary between brother and sister. These two could not be left together unobserved. Likewise, in the realm of wealth, a taboo focuses on the body of the yam, with its dual economic nature represented by the boundary between the sign of wealth and food. Also, the yam must always be observable.

The chief's yam house is of an open design so that all

may be able to see the produce. The primitive system of exchange enables the chief to be the only person who can own and display large quantities since everyone else is under an obligation both to their sisters and the chief. This allows him to be the most powerful person in the district by having the most elaborate and public display of wealth.

The chief has a significant power located in his person in that he is able to transform food into objects of permanent value. He is the only person allowed this function. He is the stabilising force at the centre of the economics of the village and this stability is symbolised in his central location in the structure of the village. The vaygua (objects of value) have no utility but are extremely highly valued by the natives. These form the basis of certain types of native trade and the chief retains the majority of them as symbols of his own wealth. These signs of wealth are not subject to the threat of destruction since they are of durable substance.

The essential of a chief's power lies in his ability to enforce order and punish wrongdoers. He appoints special persons to carry out his judgments by inflicting punishment. The executioners must be paid by vaygua. More often punishment takes the form of evil magic performed on the guilty [Malinowski 1921, p.10]. Further, because of his role as initiator of enterprises and ceremonies, the chief must be able to pay the leading actors and feed the participants.

He can fulfil both these conditions of the enforcer of civil order and master of ceremonies solely because of his large stock of yams and vaygua [Malinowski 1921, p.11].

In summary, the chief functions economically as the locus for the yams produced in the district. He is the place of wealth in the primitive economies. In this place, perishable goods are transformed into indestructible objects of value; goods are accumulated for tribal use which makes collective enterprises such as war, fishing and agriculture possible.

The chief occupies the central place of the village and thus we can say that the centre of the village is the place of power and wealth. Far more native energy is given to the considerations of this place than that of the place of sex but, yet, they share the same positivity in the figures of the episteme in general. The economic organisation draws on the same figures as the primitive notions of kinship and clan-relations with the brother/sister(husband) relationship as a microcosm. The chief finds his wealth through marriage to other men's sisters and the basis of his power rests in this source of wealth. As his predecessor's nephew through his mother he shares an essence with him. This is how he comes to inherit the title. He occupies both the central stabilising place in the village and the central role in an economics in his ability to transform yams into the signs of imperishable value.

The function of money in a primitive society is as a substitute in exchange. This is a substitute that does not act as a common equivalent. Something can act as money because it is itself valuable rather than the sign of value. For this reason women may be described as 'money' in that they have a role in the mechanism of exchange. Primitive exchange of gifts is not based on a varying value (or free value) assigned to things related to supply and demand but on the value each thing has because of the place it occupies on the Trobriand model. The yams in the yam-houses form a circle of conveniences around the place of the chief and provide a stable enclosed boundary for an economics. Women have a definite value and enclose the larger area of the clans. The marriage ceremony represents their role in the initiation of a complex system of exchange. This is seen in the fact that marriage propriety focuses on the relationship of the couple to food and not on sexual protocol.

Unlike my analysis, both those of Weiner and Malinowski are concerned with cultural meanings in terms of subjective desire. However, Weiner claims that, unlike Malinowski, she attempts to read objects of exchange as the Trobriander's symbolic representations of their own thoughts. Objects become highly significant because in their manner of presentation, quality, quantity and the like, they can be read as an objectification of desire and intent [Weiner 1976, p.212].

In order for the Trobrianders to read specific exchanges as reflections of the thoughts and feelings of the participants, they must possess a system of interpretation and their signs must be able to represent thoughts. As their system of signs does not have this power, we have to conclude that gifts do not reflect the feelings of the giver as they do in our own experience.

Furthermore, in Weiner's understanding magical discourses provide the native with a realm that addresses itself to feelings in the form of desires to influence the states of others. The natives cannot effect their will over another person but they believe that it is possible to influence the disposition of others. Giving things to others and the use of magic spells are the two most effective persuasive devices available to every individual. The dynamics of exchange embody attempts to gain control over objects and persons. Exchange mediates the opposition between the self and others, while simultaneously it reinforces the very same opposition. Weiner holds that where Levi-Strauss saw exchange as the mediator of fixed opposed categories of relationships, she is suggesting that Trobriand exchange creates and reinforces oppositions of self-interest that coincide with the momentary overcoming of those oppositions. Exchange allows social space to be negotiable at the same time that personal space is inviolable. In contrast, magic is a mechanism that allows one person to intrude upon the

personal space of another. The possibilities for gaining power over other people are limited [Weiner 1976, p.213].

Here Weiner accepts that the notion of 'personal space' is given to the natives. Her analysis is based on autonomy and has a very subjective element. This is a role that is not available in archaeology. It is extremely difficult to know what is meant when she says that exchange gives scope to an ongoing process wherein the donor and the recipient may be continually re-evaluating the other's and their own condition [Weiner 1976, p.213]. It is not clear what this could mean. This claim arises in the context of a system where custom dictates what that condition will be in terms of assigning a value to everything. Again we find Weiner importing notions from an inappropriate episteme into her analysis. In the next chapter, I examine how magic, especially love magic, replaces the role of the will, and indeed individual properties, in desire.

5.8 Conclusions.

The concern of this chapter was to show that the primitive discourses on sex and those focusing on wealth had a shared positivity in the figures of the primitive episteme and that these realms were regulated by the same types of problematisations. We have seen that the economics of the Trobrianders finds its primary expression in marriage and this institution is organised around the distribution of food in a society under constant threat of war, hunger and

disease. In the previous chapter, it was shown that, in the myths on the origins of the tribe, the mother is in the central place of emergence. The significance of the mother is in her role as a common place for defining the nature of the brother and sister. The conception of the mother as a locus provides the possibility of the identification of the operation of an asymmetrical axis between the brother and sister. In this way, the figures governing the laws of kinship, which govern permissible sexual relations, give rise to a convenient series of asymmetric brother\sister relations enclosing the stable central place of the emergence of the original mother (brother\sister).

Likewise, in the realm of primitive economics there is an axis of asymmetry functioning between the chief and his wives. The chief, who occupies the place of wealth is enclosed by a convenient series of yam-houses representing the wealth of the district. In both these areas of discourse, we see asymmetry, convenience and enclosure.

Many of the events of public life that take place in the central place of the village refer to garden produce [Young 1979, p.35]. Since this produce is the principal manifestation of wealth, we can say that wealth occupies the same place as sex because sexual activity has its most spirited manifestation in the centralised bukumatula.

There is an antagonism between cooking and the accumulation of wealth which is regulated by the same concerns as

the fundamental antagonism between the brother and sister. The first arises from the threat to the primitive order because of the dual nature of the yam as both sustenance and the sign of wealth. This is an example of the imposition of the bounded spaces of the episteme on the yam. The second antagonism arises because of the dual natures that arise from the primitive conception of the origin in the mother. Both areas are the focus of publicly observable taboos. Cooking is always done in or around the dwelling. There is a taboo on cooking within the inner ring [Young 1979, p.42]. Eating as the act of the destruction of wealth never takes place in the same place as the accumulation of wealth. Thus there is a topological differentiation between the spaces for the increase and decrease of wealth. There is a taboo on the brother and sister coming together and both are assigned different locations in the world.

In the examination of the discourses on sex which formed one axis of the enquiry, we saw that the regularity that emerged took the form of an opposition between the brother and sister who inherited a dangerously similar essence from their mother. The dangers of inversion to the order based on this unity are overcome by the imposition of a central sexual taboo. This regularity had implications for the deployment of power through an economics of exchange. Questions focusing on the way in which power deployed itself for the propagation and maintenance of such discourses

formed the second axis of the enquiry. We have now seen that the principal power technique for the distribution of wealth as the sign of power is marriage.

In marriage the husband contributes nothing to the nature of his children. A brother sustains his own flesh and nature by providing sustenance for his sister and her children. In maintaining oneself, the native maintains many individual bodies since the notion of self is not confined to the individual person alone. Psychological interpretations based in individual agency are supported by a concept of selfhood based in an individual body. This notion is not available in the primitive episteme and, therefore, Malinowski's psycho-biological theory is inadequate for an account of the formation of primitive discourses. The archaeological method can reveal this complex notion of selfhood that has many individual persona involved which is appropriate to the experience of sex, marriage and economics in the primitive world.

This primitive notion of self, which is not the undifferentiated psychological self of the Modern episteme, is to be found in the set of rules and norms which find support in economic, magical and clan institutions. The experience of sex was characterised, in the previous chapter, in terms of the discourses on the clan, sub-clan and brother/sister where they refer to tabooed sex and where personal identity is retained in birth and death and is linked to one's sib-

lings. These forms provide the possibility for the Trobrianders to recognise themselves as the subjects of those discourses. In this chapter, I have tried to demonstrate how it is that the technique of gift exchange regulates the practice of marriage and constitutes the subject as a gift-giver. In the next chapter, I examine magical discourses and practices that both refer to sex and regulate its practice. There is a constant threat to the primitive world from the operation of love magic. The focus of the problematisation of systems of kinship and exchange in terms of a topological asymmetry provides magic with its most significant possibility and darkest manifestation and thus furnishes this form of knowledge with the respect of the natives. I will now turn to a consideration of this primitive knowledge where all three realms of sex, economics and magic have a shared positivity in the primitive episteme and thus a shared condition of possibility.

CHAPTER 6.

The Realm of Magic.

'But no one who reads the histories can doubt that there have always been witches, and that by their evil works much harm has been done to men, animals, and the fruits of the earth,..' [Kramer and Sprenger 1986, p.248].

6.1 Introduction.

Magic is found in the gap between man and nature where it has come to refer principally to human activities and states such as hunting, gardening, fishing, trading, sexual activity, disease and death. It is not derived from any observation of the laws of nature and as such has absolutely no claim on science. It is a primeval possession known through tradition.

Malinowski provides a sociological account of magic in terms of a 'universal psycho-physiological mechanism' [Malinowski 1982b, pp.79-84]. We have already seen that the archaeological analysis rejects psychological categories. The archaeological analysis of magic reveals the shared positivity between magical knowledge and the positivities that give rise to the discourses on kinship, sex and wealth. The archaeological examination of magic provides examples from the Trobriand episteme that refer to, reinforce and propagate these discourses. The powerful magical practices are surrounded by fear and form the principal location for both a knowledge of the primitive world and a threat to the order that that knowledge gives rise to. As in the cases of the other areas of menace in the primitive experience, the

possessor of magical knowledge has to keep many taboos.

Amongst the sorcerers of the Trobrianders the spells reside in the magician's belly which is the seat of memory. When required the spells are summoned to the larynx which is the seat of intelligence and from there they are given voice. Magic is expressed in words and words have their specific location in the larynx. In this way, magic is enshrined in the body of man and can only be handed from one to another by strict rules of initiation and instruction. Magic never resides in nature acting independently of man but dwells in him and works only for him [Malinowski 1982b, p.76]. The Trobriander is an appropriate instrument for the operation of magic with his spatially differentiated body.

In this chapter, I will demonstrate how it is that magical discourses have their possibility in the figures of the episteme. Magic shares this possibility with the other discursive realms that have been explored so far. Furthermore, magical practices are outlined in terms of the power axis where there are magical rites focusing on sex, gardening, birth, etc. which help to deploy and maintain those formations. Magic in the primitive world is the most immediate and ubiquitous example of the operation of a link between power and knowledge. Magic is powerful because it is a means for directly operating on the world. This causal nature gives it its prominent role and it possesses this character because of the properties of primitive knowledge

in general.

6.2 Magical discourse.

Tambiah believes that language is not just used with a communicative function in magical ritual. For instance, in Buddhist magical rituals words are chanted aloud that are not understood by much of the congregation [Tambiah 1968, p.197]. These chants are not nonsensical and Tambiah attempts to formulate a general statement about the belief in the magical power of sacred words. There are three postulates about the value of magical words that are represented in Trobriand thought. Firstly, magic appeared with the first ancestors and was not invented or tampered with by man. It was handed over to man whose descendants inherited it in unbroken succession [Tambiah 1968, p.183]. The Trobrianders believe in the primeval natural existence of magic. However, they also believe that magic can only retain its efficiency by an absolutely unmodified transmission. Any alteration from the original pattern would be fatal [Malinowski 1982b, p.75]. This is because primitive knowledge relies on tradition rather than a form of reflection for its transmission and maintenance. Secondly, the Trobrianders conceive of magic as an essentially human possession. The human belly is the seat of magic which can only escape by being voiced [Tambiah 1968, p.184]. Thirdly, the Trobrianders believe that magical formulae, once voiced, influence the course of events. This means that the first ancestors, or their equiv-

alents, instituted speech and the classifying activity. This aspect of magic corresponds to the domain of myth which relates stories about ancestors and magic. Man is the user of this propensity and this belief about magic broadly corresponds to the ritual or magical system itself, that is, the linguistic structure of the sacred words. Language has an independent existence and has the power to influence reality. This corresponds to the level of the behaviour of magicians, their sacred status, their links with ancestors and their special behaviour and preparations which make their rites effective [Tambiah 1968, p.184].

Tambiah defines magical ritual as a complex of words and actions that include the manipulation of objects, and tries to show precisely the interconnection between words and actions. In doing this, he criticises Malinowski's views on language which can be roughly divided into two related theories, one pertaining to 'an ethnographic theory of language' in general and the other pertaining to the language of magic in particular [Tambiah 1968, p.185]. The main feature of Malinowski's general theory was the pragmatic character of language where language was regarded as a hard-worked tool for practical living. Because he made no distinction between language and speech, Malinowski viewed words as a part of action and equivalents to actions. He believed that the effective force of general verbal acts lay in their ability to reproduce their consequences [Tambiah

1968, p.185]. Malinowski was criticised for confusing the context of the situation with other levels of analysis pertaining to language. He had argued that words had no existence and that texts divorced from context were meaningless. Yet he provided word for word translations in Coral Gardens and Their Magic [Tambiah 1968, p.185]. For Malinowski, the basis of verbal magic was 'the creative metaphor of magic' which he interpreted to mean that the repetitive statement of certain words were believed by the natives to produce the reality stated [Tambiah 1968, p.186]. Malinowski concluded from this approach that magical language was objectively a delusion and sought a kind of rational justification for the false use of magical language in individual psychology [Tambiah 1968, p.186]. However, he also believed that language gave man a sense of power over his environment. He believed that both ordinary and magical language engendered the belief in the creative force and pragmatic power of words which he traced to childhood experience [Tambiah 1968, p.186]. Tambiah holds that this biographical theory is question-begging because the notion of language is prior to a child's comprehension of language. Adults reply to sounds as meaningful and direct a child's efforts at communication and this results in the child learning the concept and use of language [Tambiah 1968, p.186].

Tambiah claims that Trobriand magical language is intelligible language and is not qualitatively different

from ordinary language, but is a heightened version of it. The same laws of association that apply to ordinary language apply to magical language [Tambiah 1968, p.188]. Further, he believes that Trobriand magic is a clear case of a system that combines word and deed. Therefore, an analysis should find a way of linking words and actions.

The form of knowledge that corresponds to the primitive episteme is that of divination. Divination demands that the location of the sign be identified so that it can function as a sign and it can be transformed in meaning by being operated on with relation to the guiding codes of the episteme. We have seen an example of this when possessions are deflected through the mother so that they become the sign for the inheritor's wealth. Another example is available in the displacement of the yam through the chief so that it can function as the sign for primitive wealth. Here the sign finds its place within a particular boundary that can be manipulated. In the transformation of signs, the world of things can be changed since signs are themselves things in the world rather than ideational representations. This is how primitives effect change in a divinational context.

The understanding of signs in the primitive world is not a question of interpreting the intentions of the speaker. The meaning of the sign does not lie in an idiosyncratic idea in the mind of a speaker. The meaning of signs is contained in the larynx. The understanding of signs is in-

volved with their manipulation and the mode of their transportation into the world on the breath and from one place to another. Thus, topology is crucial to meaning. The manipulation from larynx to object takes the form of primitive magic where there is a desire to change the order of signs in the world and it is here that magic is efficacious. The sign of sickness can be placed where it had hitherto been absent; desire can be placed in the heart of the disinterested; a child can be placed in the womb of a woman.

Tambiah differentiates between the semantics of ritual which is concerned with the manner in which spells are constructed and the pragmatics where the ritual is analysed in terms of how it relates to other activities, the context of the practice and its consequences for various segments of society [Tambiah 1968, p.189]. In order to analyse the semantics of Trobriand magic, Tambiah employs Jakobson's notion of metaphor and metonymy. Metaphor is more than a conventional sign because it highlights a resemblance. I suggest that the metaphoric differentiations within resemblance, outlined in chapter three, be added to this definition, that is, asymmetry, enclosure, and continuity. The metaphoric function of language exploits the procedures of selection and substitution by which words replace one another.

er in terms of semantic similarity [Tambiah 1968, p.189]¹. This means that the spell can exploit the metaphorical function of language, which makes the transfer from an attribute to a recipient. This is a normal use of language [Tambiah 1968, p.189].

While metaphor is a form of substitution, metonymy is a case of a part standing for the whole on the contiguity (convenience) principle and complements metaphor [Tambiah 1968, p.189]. The constituent units of the recipient of magic are enumerated and the transfer is made to each of them. This metonymic technique transmits through the redundancy that is characteristic of oral discourse² and causes the spell to be quite lengthy [Tambiah 1968, p.190]. Both metaphoric and metonymic procedures are accompanied in magic by action. Objects are used as vehicles of transfer through contagious action. These vehicles express substitution (resemblance) and contiguity (convenience) principles [Tambiah 1968, p.190]. This is the divinational set.

Divinational knowledge is appropriate to a general episteme that is based on the topological imposition of asymmetrical opposition, enclosure and convenience. The operation of conveniences is acknowledged in magic with the

1. I have examined these substituting relations in chapter three.

2. I will be discussing this and other features of oral discourse in more detail in the next chapter.

use of mats to contain the flow of signs. We will come across examples of this in rites governing pregnancy and child birth. Enclosure is recognised by placing evil witches in the darkest recesses of the jungle outside the sanctity of the village. The central opposition between the brother and sister that defines the regularity of sexual taboos, kinship laws, permissible marriage, perversions, inheritance and economic practices is a boundary that is the focus of the central assault of dangerous love magic. Thus magic as divination, which is the primitive form of knowledge, threatens the very order of things while making the knowledge of that very order possible through the nature of the sign. The divinational figures of the episteme make the order of the primitive experience possible in its problematisation of sexual, economic and magical discourses in terms of the regularity of the brother/sister opposition while simultaneously providing the means for endangering that very order from within by the application of magic to eliminate the oppositions and collapse the primitive world into a single point. This tension provides primitive discourses with an essential dynamic space between the limits of prosperous marriage on the one hand and the evils of magic on the other.

For every magical rite there is a counter-rite. This corresponds to black and white magic. Amongst the Trobrianders every single magical act is believed to have a counter-

act which, when stronger, can eliminate the effects of the initial act. In certain types of magic, such as that concerning health and disease, when the sorcerer learns a performance for causing a disease, he will learn the formula to annul the evil effects at the same time [Malinowski 1982b, p.86]. The presence of counter-magic expresses the opposition manifested in magic between the twin forces of black and white, disease and healing, sorcerers and witches, love and hate.

Malinowski does not regard the presence of these oppositions in magical discourse to be consistent with Trobriand knowledge in general. On the contrary, the ability to account for the failures of magic in terms of a lapse of memory, inaccuracy in performance or the presence of counter-magic allows Malinowski to describe magic as a pseudo-science [Malinowski 1982b, p.87]. He believes that it is not hard to detect the spurious character of this pseudo-science since it is based on the specific experiences of emotional states which are not based on reason. Magic is based on the belief that hope cannot fail nor desire deceive [Malinowski 1982b, p.87].

It is not part of archaeological analysis to investigate discourses for a single manifestation of rationality or to demonstrate how they fall short of the rigorous nature of physics and mathematics which traditionally are taken as paradigmatic examples of the operation of reason. Archaeolo-

gy investigates discourses for the conditions of their emergence, propagation and maintenance. Magic has a shared possibility in the primitive episteme with the other discourses we have examined. Magic is not analysed for its logic so that it can be placed amongst native superstitions. It is examined to show its shared positivity in the episteme which characterises primitive reason. Malinowski's views concerning magic are based on the banal observation that magical knowledge is not scientific. Such an approach fails to account for the central role of magic in native discourses.

6.3 The magical rite.

It is possible to distinguish between magic which forms a system and that which consists of unconnected formulae. A system of magic is one in which a number of formulae form a consecutive whole. This whole is connected with activities which are part of a large organic total directed towards the same end. Garden magic forms a system since every formula is connected with some activity. No single formula of such a system is effective since they must all be recited successively and each must mark off some phase of the given activity [Malinowski 1982b, p.211]. The most effective magical rite takes the form of a connected number of formulae.

In Coral Gardens and Their Magic, Malinowski offers a detailed analysis of the language used in the magical spells of harvesting [Malinowski 1935 pp.170-181]. Also, in Argo-

nauts of The Western Pacific, he shows by means of a linguistic analysis what sort of words are believed to exercise magical power. We have already observed the topological divisions of the anatomy of sexual desire between the u'ula, the tapwana and the dogina in chapter four. We find these divisions again operating in the anatomy of the magical spell. Here Malinowski describes the u'ula as short, cutting, pithy expressions; the key words of the tapwana are verbal and adverbial expressions of locality. The dogina contains explicit allusion to specific locations and shows the usual crescendo characteristic of the ending of spells. In the dogina the most outstanding trait is the use of onomatopoeic sounds. The belief in this type of convenience in oral signs results in the peculiarities of the language used in magical spells.

The performance of magical rites in the primitive experience can be divided into two typical elements. Firstly, there is the delivery of the magical spell. The spell consists of phonetic effects which are taken to be imitations of natural sounds such as the whistling of the wind, animal voices, the roaring of the sea, etc. These sounds function as signs for the imitated phenomena. Further, words are used that invoke, state, or command the desired aim. This means that the sorcerer must mention all the symptoms of the disease which he wishes to inflict. Spells are built on the same pattern as the rites and the words are selected

for the substances of the magic.

According to Malinowski in Magic, Science and Religion, the main virtue of all magic resides in the spell. The rite functions only to transmit the spell. It is in the formulae that the ideas concerning magic are found [Malinowski 1982b, p.196]. The formulae contain frequent mention of ancestral names and many begin with long lists of such names as an invocation. The spells are passed from generation to generation, inherited from father to son in the paternal line or from kadala (maternal uncle) to nephew in the maternal line which is the real line of kinship descent.

Some magic is associated with a particular locality. These spells cannot be passed from any one person to another. All the systems of garden magic belong to this class as do magical spells connected with certain places endowed with magical properties. Examples of these spells are rain magic of the weika (grove) of Kasana'i and the official war magic of the Kiriwina that is performed by the men belonging to Kuiabuaga [Malinowski 1982b, p.197].

The class of magical spells that are not bound up with locations and can be passed from any one person to another is very small. To this class belong the spells of medicine; healing and inflicting illness. Love magic, magic for removing the bad effects of incest, and canoe making magic also belong to this class but they have a location myth always associated with them [Malinowski 1982b, p.197]. Consistent

with the knowledge of kinship, acceptable sexual activity, marriage and gardening, the knowledge of magical spells is involved in the same topological order: the more important magic is local both in character and transmission.

There is an element in every spell to which there is no counterpart in ritual. These are the mythological allusions and references to ancestors from whom this magic has been received [Malinowski 1982b, p.74]. In the case of any important magic, there is a myth accounting for its existence. These myths tell where and when a magical rite became the possession of man in general and how it became the property of a local clan. These are not strictly origin myths in the same way that the emergence myths of the clans are not strict accounts of origin, since the clans already existed underground. The primitive conception of the world with its perpetual enclosed spaces does not allow for a strict conception of genesis. This underlines the distinct priority that spatial concerns have over temporal order in the model. Magic was never invented. The spell, the rite, and the thing which they govern are coeval [Malinowski 1982b, p.75]. Amongst the Trobrianders, all magic comes from a time when humanity lived underground and magic was a natural knowledge. It is part of the original endowment of man. The mythical references provide the primitive condition of validity for the magical rites in the same way that mythical references provide the condition of validity for primitive

discourses in general.

In The Foundation of Faith and Morals, Malinowski addresses the problem of accounting for the tendency for dogma to develop into a story. The story is the means by which knowledge and beliefs are maintained and propagated in an oral culture. Malinowski claims that a knowledge of the mythological past supplies primitive man with both the incentive and justification for ritual action. It also furnishes both a body of indications and directions for the correct performance of sacred acts [Malinowski 1936, p.13]. Here Malinowski attributes myths with both the conditions of validity and the conditions for maintaining primitive knowledge and institutions. In Myth in Primitive Psychology, Malinowski directly addresses the role of myth in the lives of the natives where the primitive discourses are presented in a form that is involved with myth.

Malinowski tells us that the Society for the Comparative Study of Myth founded in Berlin in 1906, which included such scholars as Ehrenreich, Siecke and Winckler, regarded the moon as the producer of myths in man's imagination. Others, like Frobenius, regarded the sun as the subject around which myths were symbolically constructed and, then again, there were the meteorological interpreters who maintained that wind, weather and the colour of the skies were the essence of myth [Malinowski 1926, p.13]. In contrast to this extreme naturalistic account of myth, the Historical

School in Germany promoted the belief that a sacred tale was a true historical record of the past. This view, Malinowski correctly contends, endows primitive man with a scientific impulse for knowledge [Malinowski 1926, p.15-16]. Since the primitive episteme is static and without an area for the possibility for reflection, this view of myths is anachronistic. Finally, there is the psychoanalytic interpretation that regards the myth as a day-dream of the race which can only be explained by ignoring nature, history and culture [Malinowski 1926, p.18-19]. Such an approach is the counterpoint to the present analysis. Malinowski concluded that myths are not symbolic but a direct expression of their subject-matter; they are narratives of a primeval reality [Malinowski 1926, p.23]. A myth is not an intellectual explanation but a charter of faith [Malinowski 1926, p.23]. Indeed, we might concur by regarding myths as a proclamation of faith in the efficacy of the magical rite. They provide the ultimate ground of validity and objectivity appropriate to the forms of primitive knowledge. But this gives them an intellectual role despite Malinowski's claims. They have this function because oral discourses are grounded in tradition rather than reflection. The obligations of the epistemic codes on knowledge provide all intellectual activity with an ultimate ground in either resemblance, representation, agency, etc. However, this ground is only articulated retrospectively in archaeology and is not available to the par-

ticular actors. This foundation provides that which is to count as the appropriate form of reason for that episteme. We have seen this form of reason in the figures of the Trobriand episteme.

Apart from myth there is another class of primitive discourse in the form of folk-tales. In Sex and Repression in Savage Society,¹ Malinowski addresses folk-lore in relation to the typical sentiments of the matrilineal family [Malinowski 1927b, p.104]. He also takes interest in stereotyped modes of abuse in the form of incestuous swearing. The natives have three incestuous expressions: kwoy inam (cohabit with your mother); kwoy lumuta (cohabit with your sister); and kwoy um'kwava (cohabit with your wife). The first is a mild form of abuse, the second more serious and the third regarded as extremely abusive. Here, the cause of offence is proportional to the plausibility and the reality of the act [Malinowski 1927b, p.106]. Malinowski summarises the distinction between a folk-tale, a legend and a myth in the following way. The folk-tale is a seasonal performance and an act of sociability: the legend opens up past historical vistas: the myth comes into play when rite or ceremony

1. In this work Malinowski confesses to attempting to psycho-analyse the natives. He admits of his difficulties with orthodox techniques but is oblivious of the fact that the natives could not have constructed their selves in the same way as Freud's patients. I ignore Malinowski's analysis in terms of the repressed self and only make use of his writings here for their ethnographic detail.

demands justification, reality and sanctity [Malinowski 1926, p.39]. We can conclude from this that sacred stories are not merely fictitious narratives but are a statement of the primitive reality. Myths are not to the Trobrianders what stories are to us. They are involved with producing truths in that society. Myths provide the conditions for the maintenance and deployment of primitive knowledge and the conditions for the validity of that knowledge. Wagner analyses myth as a metaphoric sequence that has power through setting up its own world of contradistinction where myth 'remakes' the realm of morality and facts in its own terms. The power of a myth lies in its ability to elicit and compel the moral and factual without being of them [Wagner 1978, p.33].

In mythology and legend, three categories can be distinguished. First, there are myths on the origin of man and clan kinship; second, there are myths about heroic deeds, the establishment of customs and institutions; third, there are myths associated with definite forms of magic [Malinowski 1927b, p.108].

In the first category, the matrilineal character of the Trobriand culture can be observed in the myths about the emergence of man, the establishment of chieftainship and totemic divisions. We have already seen that the first ancestor is always a woman, sometimes accompanied by her brother. This woman begins the line of her descendants by

exposing her sexual organs to the rain, drips of water from stalactites in grottoes, or a fish bites her while bathing in the sea [Malinowski 1927b, p.109]. These myths reveal the spontaneous procreative powers of the woman. The father does not exist in any part of the mythological world [Malinowski 1927b, p.109].

In the second class of myths, the most important is that of Tudava, a hero born of a virgin who was impregnated by a drop of water from a stalactite. The introduction of agriculture is attributed to him but the main deed of the hero is the slaying of an ogre¹.

In the third class of myth, there exists an intimate connection with magic [Malinowski 1927b, p.117]. Most of the super-normal power displayed by the heroes in myths is due to their knowledge of magic. Magic is dependent upon myth and almost every type of spell has its mythological foundation. Myth lives in magic. Magic shapes and maintains many types of institutions and practices and, in this way, myth exercises its power upon these institutions and practices. An important myth in this category, which I have already sketched in chapter four, concerns the origin of love magic which is involved with the matrilineal complex.

Among the many forms of love magic, that of sulumwoya is the most important. It is very potent and the formula has

1. For an account of this heroic deed see pages 111-112 in Sex and Repression in Savage Society.

a high price when purchased by a native or used on his behalf. This magic is localised in two centres, one of which lies on the eastern shore of the main island and the second one on the western island of Iwa. A myth of magic and love connects these two places. We have already seen how this myth accounts for the origin of love magic in terms of an incestuous act between brother and sister.

6.4 Magic and sex.

Magic has a double relationship with sex: there is an association between magic and sex where sex is the object of its application; and there is a relationship between magic and the sex of the performer. Both of these connections demonstrate the shared positivity between the realm of magic and the realm of sex. Both types of discourses have a regularity determined by the guiding themes of the episteme. The first type of connection between sex and magic, where sex is the focus of the magical rites, provides us with examples of similarly regulated discursive formations determined by topological boundaries. The regularity is given in terms of a focus on the brother/sister boundary. In the second type of affiliation between sex and magic, where sex is related to magic in terms of the question of the sexual nature of the performer, we have examples of the operation of the axis of power. The problematisation of the sexual identity of the magical performer arises because of the presence of the divisions of the bounded figures of the

episteme. We have already seen that these two areas of discourses and power form the two axes which are the general focus of this particular archaeology.

The first type of connection between sex and magic occurs where sex is the target of magical spells and offers an example of a shared regularity in terms of the division between brother and sister which is a motif central to the primitive problematisation of sex. The most prominent focus of magic in the field of sex is in the area of sexual desire.

There are a number of different systems of magic operating amongst the Trobrianders. Each system is identifiable by being able to be related to a particular place. The most famous one is that of Kayro'iwa with the systems of Kwoygapani and Libomatu from the islands of Vakuta and Kayleula respectively being prominent [Malinowski 1982a, p.314]. The magic of love, connected with the erotic life of the Trobrianders and governing sexual desire, also belongs to a system [Malinowski 1982a, p.304]. Love magic is regarded as the only means of wooing. All success is attributed to the use of successful formulae while all failure is attributable to inadequate performance of the spells or the presence of counter-magic. Success in love is only attributed to precise and strong magic [Malinowski 1982a, p.316]. All marriages are brought about by the application of magic. This is further evidence against Malinowski's claims that marriage

had a significant basis in sentimental attachment [Malinowski 1982a, p.66-67]. The individual will is everywhere governable by magic and, therefore, has no significant role to play in the context of the operation of magic.

Love charms have to contend with a magic of estrangement which acts in the opposite direction [Malinowski 1982a, p.319]. This is a form of black magic, bulubwalata. This magic acts upon the feelings and destroys the affection of one person for another. An effected woman leaves her house, her village and wanders away. It is worth noting here that emotions are also spatially involved where emotional closeness is equivalent to physical proximity. A mild form of the magic causes a girl to leave her husband or lover and return to her own village. A strong form of this magic will cause the girl to run away to the bush and perhaps disappear forever [Malinowski 1982a, p.319]. The magic of the bulubwalata cannot be undone by love magic. However, within its own system there is a possible remedy. The magician can recite formula towards north, east, south and west so that the magical virtue might reach the girl wandering in the bush and cause her to return [Malinowski 1982a, p.322].

There is a class of dreams that are prescribed and defined by custom and these are expected of certain people by virtue of their position or as a consequence of magic that they have performed, or which has been performed upon them [Malinowski 1982a, p.326]. A significant role is

played by visions of departed spirits in these standardised dreams. The appearance in dreams is one of the main ways in which these spirits manifest their existence to the living. The appearance may be sasopa (an illusion) or a real baloma (spirit). Real spirits always come with a purpose and under conditions that can be expected [Malinowski 1982a, p.327]. All true dreams are in response to magic or to spiritual influence, and are not spontaneous. An important class of ancestral visitations are associated with the act of magic, in which we have seen spirits play a significant part. A magician is liable to dream about his enterprise under the control of spirits. Thus the master of the gardens will learn of an impending drought or storm [Malinowski 1982a, p.329]. Erotic dreams are the response to certain charms. In fact, dreams of a sexual or erotic nature are always attributed to magic. If a boy or girl dreams of sexual union with a person of the opposite sex it means that that person has performed love magic since it is characteristic that the dream takes place in the mind of the object of the spell and not in the mind of the performer [Malinowski 1982a, p.331].

Dreams of an incestuous nature form a very important class and especially those concerning the brother-sister taboo. The occurrence of incestuous dreams associates sex and the magic of love with incest. However, incestuous dreams are always explained as an accidental misuse of magic or magic wrongly performed with regard to the dreamer

[Malinowski 1982a, p.332].

In the second link between sex and magic, the sex of a magician is a relevant factor in the practice of magical rituals. The magician has immense influence over other tribesmen since magic is the most efficient and frequently used instrument for the deployment of power and persons with magical knowledge share in this power. Women are debarred from land ownership and many public privileges since they have no place in tribal gatherings and no voice in deliberations on gardening, hunting, fishing, war, overseas expeditions, trade, festivities and dances [Malinowski 1982a, p.31]. We might be tempted to conclude from this that women are entirely excluded from the exercise of power. In the realm of wealth, we saw that while men wield plutocratic power women determine its distribution and, in this way, retain a relationship to power. Furthermore, in chapter two, we saw that the figure of power appropriate to archaeology is not one that simply includes or excludes people. The power configuration appropriate to archaeology has a productive nature. The realm of magic provides a regime of power most suited to the archaeological analysis since it is here that we find both men and women participating. In the area of witchcraft, women are attributed a more potent capacity than men for evil which may be acquired through their sexual liaisons with evil beings. Their power functions under the cover of darkness and in the most hidden parts of the jun-

gle. Women have the capacity for a negative potency on this sinister side; a power that is always negative but must only be seen to be positive in the form of healing.

In the field of magic, women have a power restored to them that prevents them from being mere objects in the world to be moved around freely. They have a further association with power in being in the place from whence children come and in their special relationship to their brothers. These three spatial characteristics form the problematization of the role of women in primitive thought. We have already examined the peculiarity of the relationship between women and their brothers and the singular role of women in propagation. Women also have a particular capacity for witchcraft.

Women, in the field of megwa (magic), have a capacity for a special knowledge of the darker side of life and, therefore, the capacity for a special power. Fortune or failure, dearth or plenty, health or disease are caused by the appropriate magic correctly applied in the proper circumstances. Magic consists of spells and rites performed by a person who is entitled by the fulfilment of several conditions to perform them [Malinowski 1982a, p.35]. Magical power resides in the words of the formula and the function of the rite, which, as a rule, is simply to convey the magicians breath, charged with the power of the words, to the object or person to be affected. This is because, as we

have seen, words are things in the world like other things and have their own locations. The magical power of prediction lies in the ability to manipulate the boundaries of the things in the world. Here the words of the magician are located on the breath and are transported from inside the magician to a new location by breathing. This means that the place of the magician in the order of things is a key factor in the type of magic that will be practised. Women occupy their own place in the order of things and this place determines the nature of the spell¹.

The most distinct allocation of magical powers to the sexes is to be found in the dreaded forces of sorcery. The magic of illness, health and death can be made by men and women alike but its character depends on the sex of the

1. Since magic is so intimately bound up with the activities which it accompanies, the division of functions between the sexes involves a corresponding division in magical performance. The following table outlines these divisions.

Division of Magic between the Sexes.

Male: gardening, fishing, hunting, canoe building, exchange, weather, wind, war, safety at sea, wood carving, sorcery.

Female: rites of first pregnancy, skirt making, prevention of dangers at birth, toothache, elephantiasis, swellings, affections of the genitals, abortion, female witchcraft.

Mixed: Beauty magic, love magic, private garden magic [Malinowski 1982a, p.37].

We can see from this that the outcome of a task does not depend on the individual skills but on the magic involved. The role of the individual in knowledge does not function here.

practitioner. Men and women each have their own sorcery, carried on by means of different rites and formulae, acting in a different way on the victims body and associated with different beliefs [Malinowski 1982a, p.38].

The male sorcerer's magic is much more concrete than the female's. The sorcerer's devices are restricted to his power of vanishing at will, of emitting a shining glow from his body, and of having accomplices amongst the nocturnal birds [Malinowski 1982a, p.38]. However, a female sorcerer, or witch, who is always a real woman and not a spiritual or non-human being, has an invisible double who goes out on her nightly errands. She can fly through the air and appears as a falling star; she assumes the shape of a fire-fly, or a night bird or a flying fox; she can hear and smell at enormous distances; she feeds on corpses. This means that the female witch has the power to transgress specific boundaries in space and subverts the assignation of limitations and values available in the episteme. She gains her significant powers in this association with vague boundaries. This ability to overcome the constraints of space empowers the magic of the witch. A witch ceases to be confined to a particular place in the world, since her invisible double can traverse distances in flight and can hear and smell across distances. This subversion of the ordered world is not practised openly but is done under the cover of darkness.

The disease that witches cause is almost always incurable and extremely rapid in its action reflecting the witch's greater efficacy. The power of the wizard is much less effective and he can only hope to inflict a lingering disease. However, there is little chance of combating a witch even if the help of another witch is sought immediately. A witch may receive payment for healing but she must never undertake to kill for a fee. Here again she differs from her male counterpart who derives the greater part of his income from black magic [Malinowski 1982a, p.39]. Male black magic is less threatening because it is more distinctly linked with the boundaries associated with the male body.

Several systems of magic are hereditary, each in a special sub-clan, and such a system is possessed by that sub-clan since the time that the clan came from under the ground. This hereditary magical power is handed on in the female line, though it is exercised by men alone. In only a few cases can this hereditary magic be practised by women [Malinowski 1982a, p.35]. Again we have an example of the female body acting as a means for the distribution of powers.

Female witchcraft is inherited from mother to daughter and an early initiation has to take place. Some women, in later life, are said to have sexual relations with non-human evil beings, or spirits, called tauva'u who bring epidemics and other ills upon the people. These tauva'u

further instruct witches in the arts of evil, and these witches are particularly feared [Malinowski 1982a, p.40]. Such witches are known as yoyova [Malinowski 1982a, p.360]. This is an example of an operation on the boundary of the female essence through the sexual orifices by spirits when women and evil spirits come together in sexual intercourse. Here we find wholly negative potential in the bodies of women that are moved towards the darkest possibilities of the primitive order.

It can be seen from this brief outline that the sexual identity of the magician emerges from the particularity of the primitive order. Because each place in the world is assigned an essence and because each operation on signs is effected by a place in the world, the place of the performer of the magical rite is relevant. Sexual identity is related to the general topology and, in this way, the sex of the magician enters into the concerns of the primitive deployment of a regime of power through magic.

6.5 Magic and reproduction.

After magic has succeeded in bringing a couple together in marriage, since all things happen because of occult causes, the next call on magic is in getting the woman pregnant. We have already seen how the woman takes the appropriate steps to reproduce. Pregnancy is first indicated when a woman dreams that the spirit of one of her kinswomen brings her a child from the island of Tuma.

A pregnancy robe is made by the tabugu (the girl's father's matrilineal kinswomen) for the pregnant woman. Four garments have to be made: two long mantles and two skirts. One of the mantles is to be worn at the initial celebration of first pregnancy and the second when the mother first appears in public after giving birth. The two skirts are also for use after the birth [Malinowski 1982a, p.181]. When the garments are completed, the work passes to the magical stage. Magic is an essential part of the production when something is to be endowed with definite properties and powers [Malinowski 1982a, p.181].

In the magical rite, a mat is spread on the ground and the four pregnancy garments are placed upon it. The magician knells low over white lily-leaves sprinkled on the robes and speaks the magical words into both leaves and robes [Malinowski 1982a, p.181]. The spell is divided into the u'ula, tapwana and dogina partitions. In the u'ula, a white bird is invited to hover over the village. In the tapwana, this bird is invited to make the robe and all the parts of the child's body beautiful. In the dogina, the bird is invoked to empower the creek and the water hole to whiten the woman's face when she bathes there [Malinowski 1982a, p.182]. The four robes, together with the leaves, are then covered with another mat so that the magic might not be dispersed. The use of mats is significant. We have seen that magical formulae have a definite location in space. Since they originate

in the larynx and are transmitted on the breath, the magician has to place her mouth close to that which is to be charmed. The mat on the ground has the function of separating that which is to be charmed from the continuity of the world in general. The world is a vague and, therefore, powerful boundary which cannot easily be manipulated by the witches spell. The mat prevents the ineffectual dispersal of the spell into the ground. Likewise, the mat placed on top prevents the spell from being dispersed into the air. The use of the mat provides a well defined boundary which is easily altered during the magical ritual.

On the day following the charming of the robes, the pregnant woman is escorted to the seashore (or water hole for inland villages) by the tabula (paternal relatives) [Malinowski 1982a, p.184]. If a woman is of high rank, she will be carried all of the way to the shore [Malinowski 1982a, p.185]. The expectant mother walks on a bridge made from the arms of her tabula from which she jumps down into the water and is thoroughly cleaned by the tabula splashing her [Malinowski 1982a, p.185]. After this drenching, she is brought on to the shore and placed on a mat. From this moment on, she is completely isolated from the earth and must not touch the soil with her feet [Malinowski 1982a, p.186]. It is important that the mother should not be allowed to touch the ground. Contact with the ground would result in an effective operation on her body as a boundary.

An operation on this boundary would cause the magical charms that invest the pregnant woman's body to leave and would also cause the fetus to become associated with a location other than the mother. By isolating the mother from the continuity of the world in general, stable qualities can be maintained in the unborn child.

The bathing ceremony is followed by beauty magic which has no direct connection with pregnancy or the pregnancy robes [Malinowski 1982a, p.187]. Only after the beauty magic has been performed can the pregnancy rite proper, the investment with the long robe, be carried out. The tabula place one of the pregnancy robes on the shoulders of the pregnant woman and the formulae used in the making of it are repeated [Malinowski 1982a, p.188].

The pregnant girl is carried to her father's house and she is placed on a small raised platform. It is customary for a woman of the rank of chieftain to be carried to her maternal uncle's house where she is placed on a high platform [Malinowski 1982a, p.188]. While seated on the platform, she must remain motionless, she must not speak and any food that she eats must be placed in her mouth since she is not allowed to touch it. Water for washing her skin is brought to her in a wooden bowl or else she is carried back to the water's edge and placed on a mat. After sunset, she is allowed to rest in her father's house. The next day she must resume her position on the platform and observe all of

the previous day's taboos. This ceremonial vigil is repeated for between three and five days [Malinowski 1982a, p.188]. These taboos focus on the boundary between the body of the pregnant woman and the world in general. They function to maintain a separation between the body and the world when the woman is in this vulnerable condition. We have previously seen how the taboos of incest and those concerning food have likewise focused on vulnerable boundaries.

The pregnant girl may then return to her husband's house for a few more months; or she may remain in the house of her father or maternal uncle. She dresses in the saykeulo (pregnancy mantle) until it is worn out which is usually after about two months [Malinowski 1982a, p.189]. Malinowski attributes the purpose of the ceremony to whitening the skin of the pregnant woman since the saykeulo keeps the sun off the skin [Malinowski 1982a, p.191]. There is a minor ceremony where the father of the pregnant woman chooses some particularly good food and carries it to certain women who are known to possess evil magic that blackens the skin of the expectant girl. He gives these women the food in an attempt to forestall any evil intentions that they might be harbouring [Malinowski 1982a, p.190]. However, the whitening of the skin is not its entire function. I suggest that the function of this cumbersome mantle is to maintain a distinct boundary around the body of the woman which is the place which characterises the nature of the child. This

mantle is invested with magical properties which assist it in this function. We can see from this example that the focus and efficacy of primitive magic is aimed at the maintenance and alteration of the bounded regions of the episteme by operating on the signs for those places which themselves have a definite location in the world.

The work, the magic, and the ritual are performed by the female relatives of the father. The mother's brother, the brother, and the other maternal kinsmen of the pregnant woman distribute the food immediately after the ceremony. If she is a woman of high rank she is carried onto the central place of the village. After the ceremony each one of the tabula who has been working on the robe and taking part in the ceremony receives a heap of food. Sometimes there are additional payments (pemkwala) to the house of the paternal aunt [Malinowski 1982a, p.189].

The ritual bathing, the ceremonial investment with the pregnancy mantle, the magic of whiteness and of beauty are only performed during the first pregnancy. However, the use of the mantle belongs to every subsequent pregnancy but on these occasions the mantle is made by the woman herself [Malinowski 1982a, p.192].

About the time of the ritual bathing, the prospective mother begins to observe food taboos. She forgoes fruit kavaylu'a (delicacies) such as banana, mango, apple, almond, pawpaw and breadfruit. Fruit are banned since they would lie

like excrement in the belly of the child who would soon die. Certain species of fish are also restricted from the diet; those are species that are difficult to haul out of the sea since this would mean that the child would not easily be brought into the world [Malinowski 1982a, p.193]. Here we have two very good examples of the operation of resemblance in the form of convenience in native thought. In spells in general, the substances used in the magical rites, as the means of ritual transference of the spell, are associated with the aim of the magic. Light substances are used in magic to make light, white substances to whiten, etc. [Malinowski 1978, pp.452-453]. Lightness of skin (with the exception of albinism) is on the same side of the asymmetrical division of the world as strength, vigour and vitality [Malinowski 1982a, p.248]. The child inherits its nature directly from the mother and therefore, the whiter the mother the better the child. Thus the aim of pregnancy magic is to improve the nature of the unborn child by whitening the skin of the mother.

During the later stages of pregnancy, sexual intercourse must be abandoned since it is thought that the penis would kill the child. Otherwise the pregnant woman leads a normal life almost up to the time of her confinement. Only when the saykeulo is worn out must she keep out of the sun and, therefore, abandon the heavier work in the garden [Malinowski 1982a, p.193].

In every pregnancy, the woman takes up residence in her father's or maternal uncle's house after about eight months. This custom is associated with the fear of evil magic which surrounds a woman in childbed. This evil called vatula bam (the paralysing of the uterus) can only effectively be warded off by the woman's maternal kinswomen [Malinowski 1982a, p.194]. The pregnant woman's mother is the appropriate person to look after her at this time. The male relatives gather around the house and set up a yausa (watch) against any sorcerers attempting to cast the vatula bam magic. This sorcery is actually attempted and carried out by male sorcerers. The formula is recited and the house is approached by the sorcerers as near as the circumstances will allow [Malinowski 1982a, p.194].

At the time of birth all of the male relatives have to leave while some female kinswomen come in to help the mother. The pregnant girl is made to squat on a raised bedstead with a small fire burning underneath it. This is done to make her blood flow. At the critical moment the woman is placed on a mat on the ground. The newly born is received onto the mat. The baby is allowed to be born without intervention from anyone in attendance. They do not take hold of it and it is never pulled out or manipulated [Malinowski 1982a, p.195]. Here we have another example of the reluctance of the natives to alter the vulnerable boundary of the baby by touching its body during this crucial moment.

If the labour is very difficult, the natives ascribe the fact to the magic of the vatula bam and they summon someone who knows vivisa (counter-magic). If the vivisa fails the child is manipulated as a last resort.

There is a taboo on sexual intercourse between the new mother and her husband which, in its strictest occurrence, lasts for about two years while the child is still a wayway. A breach of this taboo brings about the death of the child [Malinowski 1982a, p.197]. This taboo does not represent some primitive technique for limiting the number of children born into a household since we have already seen that sexual intercourse is separated from reproduction in primitive thought. The taboo focuses on the still vulnerable boundary between mother and child and prevents the father coming between these two. The term wayway does not distinguish between the fetal condition before birth and the infantile condition after birth. The absence of a strict conditional distinction is paralleled in the emergence myths where people existed fully formed underground. There is an absence of a physiological theory of human development which corresponds to the absence of a biological theory of reproduction. I have already alluded to the fact that reproduction may be regarded as a form of exchange rather than production since the spirit is passed through the body of the woman so that it can participate in the world in the form of flesh and blood. No new life is created at birth since the spirit

already existed before emerging from the mother. This weak notion of origin in birth is similar to the weak notion of genesis in general that is available in the emergence myths where the ancestors already existed underground. The topological figures of the episteme do not allow for a precise notion of origin or, indeed, a notion of finitude. What we have is a system of interchanging places. Magic is involved in the exchanges of places operating on the spirit which is birth. Magic is also concerned with the exchange of yams which we have seen is the basis of wealth.

6.6 Magic and wealth.

In the Trobriand society, megwa is very intimately associated with economic life. All important economic activities are surrounded by magic especially where those activities are involved in chance or danger. We have seen how the production of yams is intimately involved with the primitive economics based in exchange and gardening provides an example of an economic activity completely involved in magic. One of the most obvious threats to the garden is posed by the weather and this is subject to a large number of spells.

During the performance of certain garden spells the mouth of the magician is held quite close to the elements of the charm so that his words can't go astray [Malinowski 1982b, p.192]. This is because, as we have seen, words are involved in a topological order with everything else in the world. They have an ontological reality. The spell is re-

peated over and over [Malinowski 1982b, p.192]. This is consistent with the redundant nature of an oral practice which will be examined in the next chapter.

Origin stories have an economic dimension and are amongst the most coveted and valuable kinds of knowledge since settlements of land disputes are made by the recitation of the genealogy of the land from the tabu (a discrete named kinsperson). The knowledge of the history of the land should only be known by those men who control the land [Weiner 1976, p.40]. The genealogies of the land are far more detailed than personal genealogies and must be traced to the original founders. The recitation of land history is a means of argumentation. Claims are rewarded on the basis of the accuracy of memory. This recitation also takes place in magical spells.

Garden magic is the most conspicuous of all magical activity amongst the Trobrianders. Malinowski has recorded two systems of this magic: that of the village of Omarakana called kailuebila which is considered to be the most powerful; and the momtilakaiva system associated with the four small villages, Kupuakopula, Tilakiva, Iourawotu', and Wakailuva [Malinowski 1982b, p.198].

In the Omarakana system of garden magic there are ten magical spells each associated with a particular stage in gardening activity: digging new ground, cutting scrub, burning dried scrub, etc. The typical form of spell consists

of three parts. First, the introduction called u'ula (lowest part of a stem); second, the body of the spell called tapuala (the flanks); third, the dogina (the tip). The listing of ancestors is always contained in the u'ula [Malinowski 1982b, p.199]. Briefly, then, this is the structure of a spell in garden magic. This division was already demonstrated in the bodily functions governing sexual intercourse and in the spells regulating pregnancy magic. This configuration regulates the structure of a spell in magic, the structure of a plant in economics and the structure of the body of man in sexual activity.

6.7 Conclusions.

In these last three chapters, I have tried show how the operation of the Trobriand episteme determines the ways in which native themes are problematized, the limitations of the patterns of knowledge that emerge and the shared positivity of that knowledge in central oppositional figures. This is not just a structuralist opposition between left and right. I have not been concerned with simple binary opposition but with the generalised pattern of the opposing spaces of the primitive world and the techniques for the maintenance of their separations, which take the form of myths and taboos. Examples of these took the form of the body of man being divided between the sexual nature of brother and sister which is maintained by a strict taboo. The sister, as a mother, is divided between her own nature and the nature

of her children.

The native village is divided between the place of wealth and the place of food in the form of cooked yams. The yam is itself divided between food and wealth and, again, there is a strict taboo maintaining this division. The form of knowledge appropriate to these convenient spaces is that of divination available in native magical rites. These examples revealed the three aspects of the Trobriand episteme which were the presence of asymmetrical forms of resemblance, the imposition of these divisions on space and an occult causation.

CHAPTER 7.

Primitive Man.

'In character, the Negro is best described as an overgrown child: vain, self-indulgent and fond of idleness, but with a good heart...'¹

7.1 Introduction.

I have been looking at the application of the archaeological method to the local centre of the Trobriand Islands. That study has revealed the inextricable interconnectedness of the realms of sex, wealth and magic in terms of their shared possibility in the figures of the episteme. I investigated this primitive episteme in terms of the two axes of knowledge and power which were appropriate to the method. We have seen that there is an absence of any unities relating primitive knowledge to individual agency and we have also seen many examples of the archaeological components, outlined in the opening chapters, present in the Trobriand discourses.

The fact that I have selected a specific centre reduces the strength of my claims for the occurrence of these motifs of the episteme in the more general primitive experience. Despite my not having any universalist claims on the truth, nevertheless, I will now examine the more general features of primitive knowledge and go some way towards

1. From a nineteenth century British school textbook on geography. Quoted in Le Pan's The Cognitive Revolution in Western Culture (see bib.).

positing the Trobrianders' experience as a microcosm for a broader theory of primitive knowledge.

7.2 Towards a more general theory.

Malinowski holds that in their general level of culture, the Trobrianders may be taken as representative of the majority of savage races [Malinowski 1921]. He believed that their distinct forms of economic organisation were representative of the forms of the primitive experience in general. He was justifiably criticised for making this kind of unsubstantiated generalisation. It is obvious that there are a great many differences between the many primitive societies. These discontinuities must be kept in mind while speculating how widespread the figures of the primitive episteme, outlined in this study, might be amongst primitive peoples. This means positing a more general primitive episteme. I am proposing a distinct discontinuity between primitive experience and the experiences of the Renaissance, Classical and Modern epistemes outlined in the opening chapter. This is a form of a relativistic thesis.

Bloch addresses such relativistic themes. He claims that Radcliffe-Brown inherited two key propositions from Durkheim; firstly, that society is an homogeneous, organised and self-reproducing entity; secondly, that the categories of understanding are social in origin [Bloch 1977, p.279]. This theory of the social origin of cognitive systems has largely gone unchallenged, according to Bloch, because it is

linked to the belief that different cultures or societies have fundamentally different systems of thought. Now, if we believe in the social determination of concepts, this leaves the actors with no language to talk about their society and, therefore, no means of changing it, since they can only talk within it [Bloch 1977, p.282]. Cultural relativists such as Durkheim, Boas and Levi-Strauss tell us that notions such as time, which we feel to be self-evident, can be experienced in other cultures in totally different ways, as perhaps static or cyclic. If a claim such as this were true it would justify the conclusion that all aspects of culture are relative [Bloch 1977, p.282]. However, rather than a whole range of different concepts of time for different cultures, Bloch claims that there are only two notions of time. On the one hand, there is the concept of linear durational time and, on the other hand, there is a concept of a static notion of time (cyclic) [Bloch 1977, p.282]. Although I have not really been concerned with the notion of time, this argument could easily be extended to include native notions of space which are of more concern to me. Bloch identifies Wittgenstein as someone who would claim that communication with creatures with a fundamentally different system of ideas and life is not possible and surely, Bloch argues, people with a different concept of time (or space) would pose problems equivalent to communicating with animals [Bloch 1977, p.283]. Since some form of communication with

other cultures is possible this must mean that relativists like Wittgenstein, Levy-Bruhl and Foucault are incorrect.

Bloch's argument is not persuasive for two reasons. Firstly, it is partly based on Wittgenstein's thought that if lions could speak we would not understand them. Wittgenstein was notorious for using thought experiments like this for his own arguments and there is a distinct danger of their misuse in the context of a different argument. Bloch exemplifies this danger well. If a lion could speak then it would cease to be a lion. Even Bloch himself eventually dismisses this type of zoological argument.

Communication between the anthropologist and the natives of an alien culture does take place but Bloch does not show that this represents nothing more than a translation of the native concepts into a form of our own rather than a significant inter-epistemic meeting of minds. It has not been shown that communication takes place at a shared level. This would involve the project of demonstrating a shared positivity. Therefore, Bloch's case remains unproven.

However, more reasonably, Bloch employs examples from syntactical and semantical studies of language which would seem to suggest that the logic of languages implies a notion of temporality and sequence which is the same for all speakers [Bloch 1977, p.283]. I accept that psychological and syntactical tests would fail to substantiate the claims of anyone who supports a discontinuity thesis. However, it is

surely question begging to problematize cultural relativity either within a logical framework, which posits a singular cumulative rationality, or within a psychological framework which assumes a unified self. Bloch's manner of arguing simply underlines the need to replace these explanatory unities, which cannot escape a cumulative rationality, so that a field of possible discontinuities can emerge. I have been at pains in the opening chapters to show what such a replacement involves.

I have not been arguing that the forms that constrain the knowledge and experiences of the members of a society are to be found either at the level of 'culture' or 'society'. I have been arguing that these forms are found at the level of the 'episteme'. I have tried to outline that level and its productive potential for the society of the Trobrianders. I have used the writings of cultural or social relativists, such as Levy-Bruhl, only where their interests co-incide with archaeology. While I believe that we can only talk within our epistemes, this does not mean that change is impossible. Potential for change is built into the epistemic figures¹. We have seen that there is no potential for critical reflection built into the primitive model which is fairly static. It is beyond the scope of the present work

1. Foucault provides an examination of the potential for change in the Renaissance and Classical epistemes in The Order of Things.

to examine this potential in any detail. I will confine myself to the mere speculation that the most likely source of change lies outside in the form of writing. I am merely arguing for difference rather than explaining it.

The fact that the divinational figures occur at the level of the episteme means that the notion of the 'episteme' replaces the notions of 'culture' or 'society' as valid unities for identifying the extent of a significant shared experience. This implies that the figures may be acceptable for experience that is broader than the local centre of the Trobrianders. It would be ridiculous to claim that there are no cultural differences in the modern episteme. These differences are manifested in their most obvious form in terms of national boundaries. However, archaeology does not recognise these differences as epistemologically significant. In the same way, there are cultural differences within the primitive experience but many of these may not be epistemologically significant. It is obvious that a wider investigation would show that the patterns of possession of different forms of knowledge vary; techniques for inheriting power and wealth vary; specific sexual taboos and mores differ; institutions supporting marriage have varied manifestations. However, we can postulate the general figures of the episteme as constants across all primitive experience even in the presence of these ideological differences.

Ideological differences constitute differences in

content while causal theories and understandings of space and time constitute formal differences. Le Pan holds that the anthropological tradition has denied the existence of formal difference and has assumed that human intelligence forms subconscious systems which follow principles of thought common to all humanity [Le Pan 1989, p.3]. We have seen that this assumption is denied in archaeology which posits formal differences (discontinuities) in the history of man's knowledge and experience while largely ignoring ideological content.

Le Pan believes that Goody is almost alone in his appreciation of the possibility that different processes may exist in different societies [Le Pan 1989, p.4]. This view is at variance with Bloch's claims about the prevalence of relativistic theses in anthropology. Indeed, we can go further than Goody by claiming that it is these very differences in forms of thought, postulated by the thesis of epistemic gaps, that can be used to characterise the differences between societies.

Hallpike, in The Foundations of Primitive Thought, argued that different peoples often employ predominantly different cognitive processes but the prevailing anthropological assumption remains that the cognitive processes employed by primitive peoples and those employed in the modern experience are the same. Le Pan feels that it is extremely unlikely that the thought processes of all the

peoples of the world have been identical for the past one million years. It seems reasonable to expect that men would have been perpetually altering their cognitive processes [Le Pan 1989, p.6]. However, it is broadly supposed by anthropologists that no alterations in cognitive practices have accompanied the cultural changes of the last forty thousand years. Le Pan cites Beattie's work as an example of this presupposition [Le Pan 1989, p.6]. In criticisms of Frazer's theory of magic, Beattie claimed that nobody in their senses could believe that all things share a common quality, and that all things that have once been in contact are continually affecting one another. In such a world, everything would all the time be affecting everything else and this would be chaos. Here, Beattie is assuming that to be in one's senses means to think with the logical processes habitual to modern society.

In the context of this debate, Le Pan contends that the best defence of the mainstream position, that the thought of primitive peoples does not differ in form from our own, is that put forward by Evans-Pritchard [Le Pan 1989, p.7]. Evans-Pritchard believed that the Azande were dominated by an overwhelming faith which prevented them from making experiments and from generalising contradictions between tests, verdicts of different oracles and between all of the oracles and experience. When objections were raised these could not be well expressed by the language of that culture.

Any objection, if translated into Zande modes of thought, would serve to support their entire structure of belief since their mystical notions were regarded as eminently coherent, being inter-related by a network of logical ties; they never too crudely contradict sensory experience but, indeed, experience seems to justify them.

Le Pan questions Evans-Pritchard as to what he means by the Azande being 'overwhelmed' by faith. He asserts that primitive peoples cannot in any sense be considered to be living in a sort of trance. The difference is not in the degree to which they believe, but rather in the way in which they believe; a matter of form rather than content [Le Pan 1989, p.8]. According to Le Pan, the reason the Zande never become fixed on the contradictions between belief and experience is because, apparently, they employ cognitive processes that are different from our own. While Evans-Pritchard is prepared to allow that other people may think in a more mystical fashion than ourselves, he is loath to admit that that thought is any less logical, if logical at all [Le Pan 1989, p.9].

Evans-Pritchard demonstrated that Zande modes of thought formed a closed system which is a project different from showing that they formed a logical system [Le Pan 1989, p.10]. It is easy to blur the distinction between the underlying logic that often characterises the relationship between a society's belief system and its social structure,

and the intentional logic of conscious thought [Le Pan 1989, p.11]. This kind of example helps to support the archaeological claim that there is a general discontinuity between modern and primitive experience. However, the question of the nature of significant differences within a primitive episteme remains to be examined.

Foucault's notion of the episteme involves temporal classification since, in The Order of Things, he outlines a linear configuration of epistemes stretching from the Renaissance through the Classical to the Modern. A primitive episteme does not belong to this linear model but to its own space. It is not simply pre-historic since it is not confined to a pre-cultural past. It pertains to my argument that the notion of the primitive is a feature of contemporary cultural life. This perception of the contemporary-primitive is primitive in terms of the concept of difference, which is central to the archaeological approach, and does not necessarily imply a reduced degree of sophistication. The primitive is not necessarily a preliminary condition to our history. The concept of the primitive in archaeology is extra-historical rather than pre-historical. It is to be recognised for itself while at the same time it is not isolated from the other archaeological eras since the history of primitive societies is related to our own history by a series of discontinuities.

It is well beyond the scope of this present work to

provide a detailed examination of every primitive society. However, Evans-Pritchard's comparative study, in The Morphology and Function of Magic, between Trobriand and Zande magic, on the surface, seems to undermine the thesis for a broader application of the primitive Trobriand episteme by pointing up what he regards to be significant differences. But on closer examination these differences do not occur at the archaeological level.

Evans-Pritchard agrees that both Trobriand and Zande 'white' magic came into the world with man and do not belong to nature [Evans-Pritchard 1962, p.622]. Both forms of magic are regarded as precious cultural possessions which derive their powers from man's knowledge of tradition and abstinence, in the form of sex and food taboos, precede all acts of magic. Trobriand and Zande magic have a shared structure but there is a different emphasis placed on the component parts by the two societies [Evans-Pritchard 1962, p.623]. Here Evans-Pritchard regards the efficacy of magic to lie in abstinence imposed by taboos. The significance of a taboo is to impose these forms of sanction. I fail to see how abstinence empowers magic in this way and instead have treated the notion of taboo as a primitive technique for the maintenance of a vulnerable fundamental boundary which has a regulative role in discourse.

We have seen that, for the Trobrianders, it is the spell that is the essential part of magic, known only to the

practitioner, and handed down unaltered. However, Evans-Pritchard claims that in Zande culture it is the material element in the magic that is the essential component and known only to the practitioner [Evans-Pritchard 1962, p.626]. He regards this difference as significant. At an epistemological level, however, this difference is not profound since we have seen that, in the primitive episteme, words and, in this case the formulae of the spell, are regarded as things in the world amongst others. They have a material reality. Words are not abstract signs that refer to objects but are themselves objects in the world that occupy a particular place. The ontological difference between words and pieces of wood and feathers that exists in the Classical and Modern epistemes has no significance in the primitive episteme.

Another supposed significant difference that Evans-Pritchard points to is that of the role of tradition. He distinguishes between everyday myth based on personal history and socially inherited myth. Evans-Pritchard admits that there are myths amongst the Azande accounting for the origin of a magic but generally there are no traditional stories accounting for the existence of magic [Evans-Pritchard 1962, p.630-631]. He regards the personal stories of experiences in magic as having the function of providing the validity of the magic for the Zande native. Here Evans-Pritchard is conflating the conditions of validity, which he construes in

terms of empirical demonstration to oneself which seems extraordinary, with the conditions for the emergence, maintenance and propagation of magic in traditional forms of knowledge, which are its conditions of possibility. In this study, I have been primarily interested in the separation of the conditions for the validity of magic in general, which we find in the divinational figures of the episteme, from the conditions of validity which we find in the function of the myth. Empirical demonstrations, such as those referred to by Evans-Pritchard, belong to the Modern Age and it seems unlikely that the Azande are practising them in the form of personal histories.

My aim here is not to reduce the plurality of all primitive societies to that of the Trobrianders but rather to point up general similarities in function and occurrence while allowing for differences. After all, it must be remembered that archaeological analysis emphasises difference. It is the discovery of differences at the level of the positivity of the episteme that would undermine my tentative thesis for the more general manifestation of the epistemological figures and these are not present in such comparative analyses as those of Evans-Pritchard.

While my emphasis in examining the Trobriand episteme was on the whole set of primitive figures, anthropologists have isolated the operation of complementary opposition in many primitive societies as having a particular importance.

Needham tells us that there are traces of opposition in Meru origin myths. Further, the dual division of the clans is concordant with a division of the Imenti into the two groupings of the Nkuene and the Igoki: the Nkuene being on the north and the Igoki on the south [Needham 1973, p.112]. Needham offers further examples of symbolic terms in which pairs of opposites are analogically related by the principle of complementary opposition¹.

There are further examples from Neurland where, during sacrifices, the spear is brandished in the right hand of the officiant [Evans-Pritchard 1973, p.92]. This type of spear symbolism figures prominently among the Nilotic peoples; among the Shilluk; among the royal emblems of the Anuak; among the Lango; and amongst the clans of the Luo of Kenya.

1.

Meru Symbolic Classification.

This classification is valid for the Imenti but the principle is exhibited in some of the other sub-tribes [Needham 1973, p.116].

right	left
north	south
Urio	Umotho
Igoki	Nkuene
white clans	black clans
day	night
first wife	co-wife
senior	junior
man	woman/child
superior	inferior
east	west
sunrise	sunset
light	darkness
elders	Mugwe
older	younger
white man	black man

The spear is an extension of the right hand, which stands for the strength, vitality and virtue of the person. It is a projection of the self, so that when a man hurls his spear he cries out 'my right hand'. This is an example of the extended, or differentiated, self that we saw was the subject of experience in the Trobriand Islands. The spear being an extension of the right hand stands for all that the right hand stands for [Evans-Pritchard 1973, pp.94-95]. For the Nuer the right arm stands for masculinity and hence for the paternal kin and the lineage. When the carcasses of oxen sacrificed at marriage ceremonies are divided among the kin, the right fore and hind legs are the portions of the father's brothers and sisters and the left fore and hind legs are the portions of the mother's brother and sisters [Evans-Pritchard 1973, p.95]. The left side symbolises weakness and consequently femininity and also evil [Evans-Pritchard 1973, p.95]. We saw this type of association between evil and women amongst the Trobrianders.

When Nuer deform the horns of their favourite oxen, with which they identify themselves, it is always the left horn which is trained downwards. If the right is trained at all it is trained upwards [Evans-Pritchard 1973, p.96].

For the Temne, east provides the primary orientation; it is where life started. West is associated with death e.g. cemeteries are on the west of a village [Littlejohn 1973, p.291]. Further, amongst the Themne there is a rule govern-

ing the uses of the hands. The right hand serves the upper half of the body, particularly the mouth, and the left hand serves the lower half, particularly the genitals and anus. The right hand only must be used while eating and when cleaning the anus only the left hand may be used. Also, during sex play only a man's left hand may touch the woman's genitals [Littlejohn 1973, p.292]. These examinations reveal a basic social opposition corresponding to the hands. This opposition is that of being-in-proper-relations-with-others and not-being-in-proper-relations-with-others [Littlejohn 1973, p.292].

Further, amongst the Temne witchcraft is explicitly connected with the left. Witches are known to grow a special organ low down on the left-hand side of the trunk, called ankunto. This is the region of the body where hate develops; hate makes the ankunto grow, and this is the source of the evil power of the witch [Littlejohn 1973, p.293].

Sleep and death are situations in which a total reversal occurs with respect to the attribute of power that the Temne confer on the hands. During sleep and death the left hand becomes strong having the capacity to exert a crushing weight. For the Temne, weight is a virtue of truth [Littlejohn 1973, p.297].

Wagner exploits Levi-Strauss's observation that New Guinea and its neighbouring regions present, to an extraordinary degree, a differentiation between brother and sister.

From this he argues that there is a more general scheme by which men and women are allocated to tangential but distinct and self-contained 'spaces' within a social unit. The existence of discrete male and female 'substance' lines, and the transmission of unit-affiliation through one sex or the other, can also be seen as coherent analogues of this system [Wagner 1972, p.39]. Wagner employs the Daribi as an example of a group who recognise a major subdivision of adult society into the wezibi (group of women) and the bidizibi (group of men). These categories are independent of the reckoning of genealogical ancestry or the partitioning of society into exogamous units; they may refer to the composition of a single unit or they may include the whole society since they reflect a set of complementary status distinctions that are characteristic of the social system as a whole [Wagner 1972, p.39]. The male/female distinction also represents separately transmitted essences so that we can identify the wezibi and bidizibi as distinct 'lines'. Male and female transmit separate but complementary substances to their offspring [Wagner 1972, pp. 39-40]. Examples of such substances of the body are maleness and femaleness. Amongst the Trobrianders, we saw the native concern with the transference of essence between a mother and the child in her womb.

The Daribi also distinguish between two general categories of food; meat, which is believed to have a nutritious value, is distinguished from vegetable food, which is con-

sidered to be a mere palliative against hunger. Men exchange vegetable foods with women, whereas they exchange meat, together with other valuables, for women. We have seen how women were are involved in Trobriand exchanges. Virtually all interaction between Daribi men and women occurs in the context of the production and preparation of food, or in the context of sexual relations [Wagner 1972, pp.41-42].

Topological concerns exist amongst the Daribi since almost all living spaces are marked off in more or less restricted male and female spaces. In the more substantial dwellings the separation is well marked. Men occupy the upper floor of the two story longhouse and women the lower, and in the single story version, a wall divides the house into a 'front' facing eastwards which is occupied by the men and a 'rear', occupied by the women [Wagner 1972, p.42]. Within each clan or sub-clan the men and the women form separate social bodies [Wagner 1972, p.43].

The subdivision of the social space amongst the Daribi is also reflected in the sexual division in labour and in ownership [Wagner 1972, p.43]. Further, men who occupy the upper floors are associated with tree-tops, activities involving trees and arboreal creatures; women who inhabit the lower floor are associated with ground crops, activities involving the preparation of ground and gardening and with aquatic creatures and insects [Wagner 1972, p.44].

Complementarity characterises the clan as the largest

distinct and permanent unit in the Daribi society. Members of a clan share a common obligation to contribute to the bride-prices of clan members and, in this way, share the inheritance rights of their wives [Wagner 1972, p.47]. Clan members inhabited a single house¹ and made a common garden, so that males and females of the whole clan could cooperate as complementary groups [Wagner 1972, p.47].

We have seen how the primitive Trobriand episteme posits the circular places of complementarity. By generalising the occurrence of this figure, it means that the episteme, without establishing a universal truth, provides a form of reason through which primitive man experiences his world and his particular form of differentiated selfhood. The self is subject to the same divisions as the rest of the world. His village embraces a centre of stability for the community rather than an ego which he cannot possess. Magical discourse is the form of knowledge appropriate to the circular figures for the organisation of primitive experience. It does not provide an interpretation of the world or a reflection of a primitive rational. It is simply the form of knowledge that has its necessity in the figures of the primitive episteme.

7.3 Magic.

The divinational figures that characterise the Trobri-

1. Before contact with Europeans.

and episteme have consequences for a knowledge of nature in the primitive world in general expressed as magic. They also have consequences for the nature of the spoken word. Writing has no possibility for emergence in an unclosed episteme such as the one outlined above. Orality dominates any primitive space where such an unclosed figure operates.

The circular configurations of asymmetry, continuity, convenience and enclosure have consequences for a primitive knowledge of nature. The primitive world is covered with signs in their own place and this place must be located. Therefore, to know the world is to locate these signs in the world. Hence, it is not possible to act upon a sign without, at the same time, acting upon the thing that is indicated by it. A knowledge of magic, which is the deciphering of the location of signs and the acting on them by the specification and manipulation of a boundary, is inherent in this way of knowing. The location of the signs of nature must be discovered and this makes magic possible in a primitive episteme. In other words, magic as an operation on the world by an operation on the signs of the world, has its condition of possibility in this model. In this way, speech is power in witchcraft if language is understood as a system of signs.

In the Renaissance episteme, the interweaving of language and things has the consequence that writing has a privilege over speech. It is the primary character of lan-

guage to be written in the Renaissance. However, amongst the Trobrianders language is located in the mouths of the speakers so speech has a possibility while writing has not. Examples of the location of the spoken word are available in chapter six in rituals associated with pregnancy. In the primitive experience, there is no difference in kind between marks and the spoken word in the sense that there is a difference between observation and accepted authority. The process is the same. Nature and the spoken word are intertwined with one another. Language inheres in the world amongst the plants, rocks and animals. It takes part in the convenience of the world and must be studied itself as a thing in nature. Language has its own continuities, asymmetries and enclosures and is not analysed in terms of meaning. This interweaving of language with the world also occurs in the Renaissance episteme.

I postulate, then, the presence of a model, similar to that of the Trobrianders, which is amenable to divinational manipulation in any society that successfully practices magic. Tambiah supports this kind of move when he identifies the presence of the three characteristic notions about Trobriand magical ritual in the Bible and in Buddhism. We saw that these were the appearance of magic with the first ancestors; magic is an essentially human possession; and magical formulae have a causal influence. This allows him to form a general statement about the widespread belief

in the magical power of sacred words. He claims that no book on religion or the origin of language fails to refer to the ancient belief in the creative power of the word [Tambiah 1968, p.182].

7.4 Writing.

In the Classical Age it was thought that writing properly began when an attempt was made, firstly, to represent one of the constitutive elements of something or secondly, to represent one of the circumstances that constantly attended that something or, thirdly, to represent some other thing that that something resembled [Foucault 1970, p111]. These three methods produced three techniques. The representation of a constitutive element gave rise to the curiological writing of the Egyptians (a bow for a battle, a ladder for a siege). The representation of circumstances gave rise to the more perfected hieroglyphics which employ some notable circumstance (God is represented as an eye since he is all powerful and sees everything). The representation of resemblances between things formed symbolic writing. This technique makes use of resemblance. For example, the sun rising in the morning is expressed by a crocodile whose eyes are just level with the surface of the water. These types of writing soon faded out since because their signs multiply by distant analogies they encouraged the imaginations of the people using them rather than their powers of reflection [Foucault 1970, p.111]. Innovations are impossible within

this model and the concern of the learned is to maintain a respect for tradition. These two characteristics also pertain to the primitive model of language in speech.

With alphabetic writing the history of man is changed since it does not matter that letters do not represent ideas because they can be combined together in the same way as ideas, and ideas can be linked together and disjoined just like the letters of the alphabet [Foucault 1970, p.112]. It is very easy to learn the alphabet because of its small number of elements. Everyone can devote the time to reflection which the hieroglyphic people wasted in learning how to write. Hence, it is within language that progress arises. Language was of all the signs the one having the property of being sequential. It drew out into sequential sounds the simultaneity of representation and thereby temporal successions were established. This makes science as the naming of each representation possible. Knowledge and language are interwoven in the Classical Age because of this sequential possibility.

In the Renaissance episteme, resemblance constitutes a sign and gives the sign a particular value as a sign. It signifies by resembling what it is indicating. It indicates another resemblance which is an adjacent type that allows the recognition of the first. Every resemblance receives a signature. The totality of signs slides over the circles of resemblances. The signs form a second set of circles which

is an exact duplication of the set of circles of the resemblances of things. However, this set of resemblances of signs is displaced by one figure. In this way, the sign of sympathy is in analogy; the sign of analogy is in emulation; emulation has its sign in convenience; and that of convenience is in sympathy and, thus, the circle is closed. The signatures have exactly the same nature as what they denote only that they are distributed differently. It is this displacement that makes possible the revelation of Renaissance knowledge in writing [Foucault 1970, p.29].

In the primitive episteme, the figures do not form a complex closed set like the figures of the Renaissance episteme. Asymmetry gives rise to emulation and the sign of emulation is in convenience. The sign of convenience is in further separations. The closure of the Renaissance episteme allows for the possibility of a displacement in an identical pattern of resemblances. However, closure is not guaranteed in the primitive episteme.

A sign is a thing in the world amongst others and can act as both a sign and a thing. The sign emulates its antipodal sign and the system is two dimensional and open as opposed to the three dimensional and essentially closed pattern of the Renaissance. The deployment of asymmetrical oppositions operate on a two dimensional table. Because of this a set of signs cannot be abstracted or isolated and identified as writing since, because of its lack of closure,

it would not have the autonomy of hieroglyphics, curiological or symbolic writing despite its infinite accumulation. The impossibility of the emergence of writing in the primitive episteme has significant consequences for the nature of the knowledge available; the nature of learning as an oral tradition; the lack of techniques for reflection; and the maintenance of tradition. All these consequences we find amongst oral cultures in general.

7.5 Orality and primitive discourse.

The problematization of aspects of primitive personal experience and the way in which that experience can be thought is effected by the absence of writing. Many of the features taken for granted in discourses among literates have no possibility in non-literate societies. Writing has no possibility in the figures of the Trobriand episteme and this has consequences for the nature of the particular discourses of that episteme and primitive discourses in general.

Once any piece of knowledge is acquired in a primitive culture without writing it must be repeated constantly or it will be quickly lost. Therefore, fixed formulaic thought patterns are essential for wisdom and effective administration of authority [Ong 1982, p.24]. The fixed figures of the episteme provide the necessary static possibility for knowledge. The knowledge made possible within this figure takes the form of more or less exactly repeated set phrases or set

expressions such as proverbs in verse, magical chants, cliches, etc. The Trobrianders exist in a wholly oral culture and they have no knowledge whatsoever of writing and no possibility for its emergence within their own experience. The same can be said of many other societies. Orality does not function as a form of positivity for what counts as primitive but, rather, it does indicate the presence of the operation of epistemic figures.

Further, primitive words have no visual presence, even when the objects they represent are visual. Words are not visual metaphors [Ong 1982, p.31]. Oral peoples commonly consider words to have great power. This is the source of the power of magic, that is, the nature of the word. Ong claims that the source of magical power in the spoken word lies in the fact that it is an event, and hence power-driven [Ong 1982, p.32]¹. However, archaeology shows us that the source of the power in magic is based in the fact that the manipulation of the sign is the operation on a vital boundary and as such an operation on the world. We saw examples of this in the operation of love magic. Since falling in love is an event in the primitive experience it is always regarded as coming about because of the operation of magic.

1. We can distinguish between oral signs for things in the world, that is, signs that allow the world to be known and the spoken word. Signs are things in the world while oral signs are events that have a place in the world. The oral sign is not a visual phenomenon but a thing in the world amongst other things.

Love cannot occur without magic: they are inextricably bound together.

The problem of retaining and retrieving spells about sex and love in a primitive context is overcome by the application of mnemonic patterns that are shaped for ready oral recurrence. The rites must come into being in rhythmic balanced patterns, in repetitions, in alliterations and assonances, in standard thematic settings (conflicts, gatherings, meals, etc.), in proverbs which are constantly heard by everyone so that they come to mind easily [Ong 1982, p.34]. For example, a chief articulates sets of relevant proverbs out of which he can produce equitable decisions [Ong 1982, p.35]. Non-formulaic, non-patterned, non-mnemonic ideas are lost since they cannot be recalled effectively. Therefore, primitive experience is intellectualised mnemonically [Ong 1982, p.36]. Thus we have a limit on the way in which language must be given to a primitive person so that it can be used and retained.

Because of the presence of orality in primitive societies, some general features of the discourses can be outlined. Firstly, in primitive discourses expressions are additive rather than subordinative. Oral structures serve the convenience of the speaker while chirographic structures serve the organisation of the discourse itself. Written discourse develops more elaborate and fixed grammar than the grammar of oral discourse since oral discourse has a fuller

existential context surrounding it [Ong 1982, p.38]. Oral expressions carry a burden of epithets and formulae and therefore have an aggregative weight in place of the analytic weight of written discourse [Ong 1982, p.38].

Secondly, since an utterance vanishes immediately it is uttered, redundancy is necessary and is more natural to thought and speech than linearity. Orality has evanescence, a relationship with time. In some forms of acoustic substitute for verbal communication such as African drum talk, redundancy causes eight times as many words to be used on the drums than in the spoken message [Ong 1982, p.40]. Therefore, oral discourses tend to be much more repetitious than written ones.

Thirdly, because primitive societies must invest a great deal of energy in repeating over and over again what has been learned over the ages, a conservative frame of mind is created. The time and effort invested in repetition inhibits intellectual experimentation. Thus, knowledge is hard won and as such precious, and the primitive society has a high regard for those who specialise in conserving it. These are the elders who can recall myths and the witches who know and can recall ancient spells. Writing frees the mind of the task of memorising and, thus, allows time for speculation and original reflection. This is a luxury not available to the primitive who refrains from reflection. In primitive cultures originality takes the form of a novel

interaction with the audience each time a story is told. Narrators introduce new elements into old stories and the variations on a myth can be increased indefinitely [Ong 1982, p.42].

Fourthly, primitive cultures conceptualise and verbalise all of their knowledge with close reference to the human lifeworld, assimilating the world of things to the more immediate interaction of human beings. This is because the analytic categories of the other epistemes that depend on writing to structure knowledge are absent. Primitive cultures are extremely agonistic in their verbal performances, and, indeed, in their lifestyles. Writing creates abstractions that disengage knowledge from the sphere of human struggles. Writing separates the knower from the known. However, orality situates knowledge in human interaction. Proverbs and riddles are used to engage others in verbal and intellectual combat [Ong 1982, p.44]. Oral cultures are agonistic in both the uses to which knowledge is put and in the celebration of physical behaviour. For example, there are many vivid descriptions of sexual encounters amongst the Trobrianders [Malinowski 1982a, p.286-287].

Fifth, primitive knowledge depends on achieving a close communal identification with the known. The separation of the knower from the known in writing sets up the conditions for objectivity. Primitive objectivity is enforced by formulaic expressions. The individual's reaction is not subjec-

tive but encased in the communal reaction [Ong 1982, p.46]. Therefore, the forms of objectivity of the later epistemes is not available in the primitive episteme and, thus, we have a different form of knowledge in oral discourses and a different type of knower.

Sixth, primitive societies are homeostatic in that the natives live almost entirely in the present. The forces governing homeostasis arise because orality has no dictionaries and few semantic discrepancies. Words acquire their meanings only from their actual habitat which ranges through facial expressions and gestures to the setting in which the word occurs. Meanings come out of the present [Ong 1982, p.47].

Therefore, the form of primitive knowledge is conditioned by orality. Orality grows out of natural powers that are not structured by the technology of writing. Oral cultures know an autonomous discourse in fixed ritual formulas and prophecies [Ong 1982, p.78]. Writing presents utterances and thought as uninvolved, self-contained and complete and thus encourages a sense of noetic closure. Primitive utterances are not autonomous in their contexts and do not partake in such closed figures. Ong suggests that writing and especially print provides this closure [Ong 1982, p.132]. However, this analysis holds that writing was possible only because of the closed figures of the Renaissance episteme which we find in early literate cultures. The primitive

episteme, because of the dependence of the sign on the context of the utterance, does not have this closure and therefore does not have writing.

7.6 Orality and the primitive episteme.

Goody examines oral cultures for the role of the individual in the creative process [Goody 1977, pp.19-35]. The archaeological analysis rejects the contribution of creativity to the nature of knowledge while not dismissing such creativity altogether. The question is not whether creativity is possible in an oral society but whether any possible creativity could effect the forms in which knowledge and experience are given to the primitive native. For Durkheim the highest intellectual activity was essentially social and knowledge was regarded as cumulative. As in archaeology, it was the collective manifestations of categories of creativity in which Durkheim was interested. A consequence of such an approach is to deflate the contributions of specific individuals. His theoretical foundations attribute as much as possible to collective factors. Goody rejects a Durkheimian-type thesis and assigns a large significance to the creative role of the individual in changing the shape of the frame-works of both literate and oral societies [Goody 1977, pp. 32-33].

Archaeology avoids the separation of the world into the oral and the literate, the magical and the scientific, the religious and the secular. These unities of anthropology

which form two worlds, one oral, magical and religious, the other literate, scientific and secular are based on the role of subjectivity and are replaced in an analysis by the archaeological unities of the episteme. These unities take the form of a common discursive structure in the primitive domain and are expressed in terms of the enclosed divinational figures of asymmetry, continuity and convenience. In this way, we can say that orality has its possibility in the figures of the primitive episteme and this orality regulates the shape of the knowledge presented in it. Orality is not that which gives rise to the possibility of primitive cultures. The epistemic figures have this function. Likewise, literacy is not that which gives rise to the Modern experiences of that same episteme. Agency has that function. Orality, literacy, scientificity, secularism, etc. have their possibility in the epistemic figures rather than creating those epistemes. Orality and its role in shaping knowledge is an effect of the open figures of the episteme and not the cause.

* * * * *

The concern of this thesis was not to address traditional problems of a cumulative rationality but to address archaeological-type projects that arise with respect to a primitive era: to show the guiding metaphorical codes of the episteme in the epistemological figures; to show the discursive

sive formations that allow the primitive guiding figures to give rise to bodies of knowledge and practices; and to show the limitations of primitive discursive and nondiscursive realms. This project allows a primitive society to be defined in terms of the degree to which its discursive formations conform to the epistemological figures of a primitive episteme.

I hope that I have shown that the replacement of a model of meaning based in the subject allows for the possibility of an anthropology based on the study of the way in which concepts function with respect to native discourses and the way in which those discourses are related to fundamental metaphorical figures. The movement from a concern with 'meaning', which relies on the role of the subject, towards a concern with 'discourse' signifies a move from an intentionalist analysis to a material analysis that finds its explanatory entities in socially and culturally determined epistemic phenomena.

Malinowski confused knowledge and experience in the same way Wittgenstein attributes this confusion to Descartes. Bachelard speaks of a move from Descartes' solitary cogito to the communal cogitamus and from individual existence to social surexistence. He also speaks of the community of truth based on a corationalism. This move from the personal to the interpersonal is a move from the merely psychological to the genuinely epistemological [Gutting 1990,

p.26]. This is a move which must be made in order to make archaeology function at a level beneath that of subjectivity. The history of knowledge written at this level opens up an important new dimension for knowledge of ourselves. This knowledge is only available by rejecting Malinowski's universalist notion of reason supported by traditional philosophy and by rejecting the privileged role assigned to the individual that we find in his work.

I have tried to apply some of the principal elements of Foucault's writings to the traditional objects of anthropological study. It is difficult to classify the nature of Foucault's work. He can be regarded as a philosopher, a social historian, a literary analyst or a social and political critic. It is equally difficult to pigeonhole the nature of my present work for those interested in such classifications. In my view, Morris is correct when he tells us that anthropological studies have suffered unduly from the effects of the unnecessary schisms and specialisms that have developed within academia [Morris 1987, p.2]. This criticism may be directed against all disciplines that have the human condition in general as their object of study. Morris bemoans the separation of sociological and anthropological concerns. This point may be extended to include historical and philosophical areas of interest. I have tried to strike a balance between philosophical and anthropological concerns. This represents reaching a harmony between theoretic-

cal insight and empirical detail. Anthropologists could criticise philosophers for offering no detail from examples taken from the real world while philosophers could be dissatisfied with anthropological studies that are only empirical observation. In light of this, it is not difficult to anticipate philosophical criticism of this work that focus on a supposed lack of abstract generalisations and anthropological criticisms claiming that there are too many present. It is easy to imagine philosophers agreeing that the results are not of sufficient philosophical interest. Despite such criticisms, and even in spite of them, I hope to have contributed to the broadening of the field of problematisation in philosophy. That is something that Foucault succeeded in achieving. It is equally easy to imagine the adherents of more traditional approaches in anthropology disagreeing both with the possibility of the removal of the subject from its traditional place and with the Durkheimian-type drawing of broad conclusions from a small empirical sample. What then of categorising it as comparative history? By sketching the limits, problematisations, regularities and power regimes of the primitive experience we can be led to appreciate more fully the limits of our own contemporary knowledge forms. Such a project is not a history of knowledge for its own sake but continues the Enlightenment ideal of freedom.

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