CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

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WHY ORATORY?

Political anthropology has always been one of the aspects of anthropology where influences from other social sciences have been strong. This has not always been beneficial since it has led anthropologists to focus on data comparable to that obtained in these other sciences and has often meant the loss of the special value of anthropological speculation, i.e., the raising of questions of a particularly fundamental nature which would not normally be considered within a culture, but arise as a result of the confrontation of totally foreign cultures.

Political anthropological studies are said to have changed recently. In the past, for those societies with a separated political structure,[1] attention was paid to law, to acts of leadership, to tribute, to rights and duties between chiefs and subjects, and especially to succession, while for less centralised systems anthropologists concerned themselves with the settlement of disputes and feuds. More recent anthropologists such as Schwartz, Turner and Tuden, Bailey and Barth, have looked at the same problems in terms of the choices open to individuals, especially in crisis situations and power conflicts.[2] There is, however, a similar problem inherent in both these approaches. In both cases they make

1. Contract societies for Maine; centralised societies for Fortes and Evans-Pritchard; state government for Lucy Mair.
2. For a clear statement of this theoretical standpoint and for a discussion of the change from the older to the newer type of political anthropology see *Introduction to Political Anthropology*, M. J. Schwartz, V. W. Turner and A. Tuden (eds), 1966.

what is called the political an extremely difficult thing to observe and as a result it is not quite clear how this *thing* is related to data. In the older type of political anthropology the fact that the focus had been on fighting, peace treaties, succession disputes and such like, meant that the political could only be studied on occasions which were at most rare events in most people's lives and which consequently only occurred exceptionally during a period of fieldwork.

More recent approaches lead to a similar problem but for a very different reason. These approaches often see politics as an aspect of any type of action (Smith, 1956) and therefore it should be accessible from the observation of everyday life normally made by the anthropologist. However, because the concepts which are used in isolating this "aspect" from the reality of human interaction are so abstract and so unspecific, no clear rules for relating given events to theoretical abstractions emerge. Having treated the political as an aspect of any activity because control and conflict are present in all activities, but not having been told what it is in an activity which tells us that we are dealing with conflict and control, we are left with a situation where little more than an intuitive feeling is a guide to the political. As a result the political anthropologist, when he is analysing and theorising about his data, rapidly abandons the reality of social intercourse, people saying things to each other, people coming into contact with each other, and instead he "imagines" the political which is taking place in a hazy, artificially constructed area of hidden conflicts and alliances. By contrast what is observed is dismissed simply as a front for this "real" political activity. The political anthropologist thus abrogates for himself the freedom to construct what he should be observing and explaining, with the obvious result that he can say anything about this "political" realm since there is no way of relating these abstractions to their starting point: the words and actions which have been recorded.

In criticising these approaches for making the political intangible, I am not saying that observation of events is a substitute for theoretical explanation, but I am saying that we must start with what we can observe and make deductions from it according to set rules and criteria. This book is an attempt to do precisely this: to start with clearly occurring events, that is, people speaking to each other, and to move from the analysis of their words to an abstract theoretical construct. This abstract theoretical construct however, must genuinely be developed step by step to deal with the words and actions of the actors. It is no good listening to what people say, but forgetting all about it, and then building up a political system.

When I was in the field, in Madagascar, the lack of a clear theory for

relating everyday words to "politics" made this side of my study particularly difficult. As the result of a long period of direct rule by both the French Colonial Government and, following them, the Malagasy Government, there was no local political hierarchy of office holders which could claim any independence from a national hierarchy (Bloch, 1971a). As a result, problems of succession and the formulation of laws did not arise since most disputes were settled according to legal criteria which were totally independent and even alien to the people studied. Secondly, because of the particular nature of the Malagasy culture, the kind of disputes and dispute settlement which has been the concern of much political anthropology occurred only relatively rarely (Gulliver, 1963). I could therefore neither do a traditional political anthropological analysis, looking for a local political structure made-up of office holders and institutions, nor could I observe power conflicts when these emerged into the open; since they did not. My conclusion was that I had nothing to say about politics. This, however, was contradicted by other facts which needed explanation and were clearly political. They concerned the oppressively hierarchical character of the society which manifested itself in elders continually telling younger men what to do, in fathers similarly telling their sons, older brothers telling their younger brothers, and men telling women. All this exercise of authority seemed intangible because of the shared presupposition in much of political anthropology that politics is the exercise, and therefore, the conscious exercise, of power. (See, I. Schapera, 1956 and F. Bailey, 1969, for this point of view.) Yet the notion of a conscious exercise of power was totally inapplicable in a society where as a result of socialisa-tion, power was permeated through social intercourse on a day-to-day basis in a totally unconscious and completely accepted way. This notion that in Madagascar, or indeed anywhere, power is just accepted and not normally challenged is difficult for people who live in a modern industrial society to understand, where a questioning of authority is seen as an inevitable aspect of its exercise. The difficulty exists not so much because traditional authority is less important in our society than among a society such as that of the Merina of Madagascar but precisely because it is accepted and especially unconsciously accepted authority. It is by definition something of which one is not aware in one's culture and it only seems to require explanation when looking at another culture whose basic assumptions have not become part of our un-conscious. In one's own culture only those few rare aspects of traditional authority which we challenge inevitably stand out, while the great hidden mass of what we all accept is not the focus of our attention.

In all societies some of the burden of social control, and in some

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societies nearly all, is permeated through the constant requirements of such things as respect to elders, and the appropriate polite behaviour required by others. Most of the time indeed, this appears to the actors as the only natural way to behave. "Control" is not seen as control since it is not consciously compared to situations where such control might not exist. But this is why there exists a problem for the political anthropologist. He cannot just look at what are defined by the actors as political events, because for them everyday control is invisible; nor can he use conflict situations as a guide since they do not arise. The only solution for escaping this type of social control is to do what seems to have been so often avoided in political anthropology, that is, to look closely at what is being said and what is being done and see in this material how control is exercised. The most obviously observable of these events and interactions is the language of politics and this is what the authors of this book are doing. They are starting from the observed speech acts of political leaders and trying to see what these speech acts imply both in terms of the intentions of the speakers and in terms of the implications of the type of speech which they employ. This latter aspect is to my mind the most important and the least studied. To study political language as a preliminary to studying politics would seem a fairly obvious thing to do, since if we think about what it is that anthropologists have had in mind when they have been discussing the political it is soon realised that it is almost exclusively speech acts. This fact, however, has been only rarely treated as relevant to the political process.[3] The significance of what kind of speech is involved in political interaction, what kind of conventions in speaking and communication exists, has been largely overlooked as though political language was a completely transparent media for something else, as though it was of no significance in itself and its nature was therefore irrelevant for understanding what is being said. This assumption has resulted more from acts of omission than acts of commission but it is not only an unproved assumption, it is also an extremely unlikely one for two very simple reasons.

If political language and procedure are of little importance politic-ally, it would be surprising to see how strongly they are valued and insisted upon by the participants in many societies. The one thing which stands out at first sight from all the studies in this book is the stress and the value put on language and political procedure by the various people studied themselves. If there was not something of importance there, this repeated and quite dramatic emphasis would be totally inexplic-

3. An exception is the recent work by such writers as Rosaldo, M. (1973) "I have nothing to hide: the language of Ilongot oratory", *Language in Society*, **2**, no. 2, pp. 193–223.

able. The second fact which suggests the importance of the kind of language employed for politics also emerges clearly from a comparison of the various contributions in this book, and this is the striking recurrence of very similar patterns of speech norms for politics in totally different cultures. This similarity, to which I return below, is striking at all levels. It exists in the correlation between the type of event and the type of speech thought appropriate. It occurs in the variety of types of speech recognised within a culture and it even occurs in the words used by different cultures to describe these different types of speech. This repetition of pattern surely suggests that we are dealing with something of importance, something related to the social process and something which can therefore be explained.

Merina Oratory and Social Control[4]

If when I was working in the field the tools of political anthropology discouraged rather than encouraged the close analysis of the significance of actual behaviour, two types of phenomena nonetheless focused my interest on the relation between forms of speech acts and social control. The first was a study of politeness and socialisation, and the other was a study of traditional councils.

In studying the process of socialisation I soon became aware that what was stressed above all in the correcting and directing of the behaviour of children in Madagascar was not so much the content of what *can* be said, but the *manner* in which it can be said. This is a familiar phenomenon since in England too, what seems to concern parents to an intense degree is that their children should use such words as "please" and "thank-you" as well as suitable intonations of the voice which are thought of as respectful and not "cheeky". In Madagascar the significant factors in this type of socialisation are the choice of voice (relative or passive),[5] gestures and body position. The reason why there is such stress on the manner in which things are said rather than on what is said, seems to be that by defining and regulating the manner the content is also, albeit indirectly, restricted. This type of restriction is, as we shall see, much more powerful than a direct attack on content, since it goes right through the whole range of possible responses. The way in which form affects content however is elusive. The mechanisms underlying this elusiveness will be examined below, but the very fact that it

4. Fieldwork was carried out among the Merina from 1964–1966 thanks to a grant from the Nuffield Foundation of Great Britain and again in 1971 thanks to a grant from the Social Science Research Council.
5. The relative is referred to as the circumstantial by E. L. Keenan (1971).

operates a hidden restriction is in itself important since this makes it equally hidden from the actors. As a result the restriction is particularly difficult to challenge since what is operating the restriction is not known. A challenge when it occurs appears mere rudeness, that is, not substantial but *ad hominem* and irrelevant. This is so both for the superior against whom the challenge is addressed, since it appears only to deal with omitted conventions, and even for the challenger, who finds himself misled by these very forms of politeness to attack them and not their effect, in other words not really what is bothering him. Politeness therefore appears as a hidden social control, which like all the more effective forms of social control, misdirects the potential challenge to it, an aspect we shall find again when the effect of some of the forms of political oratory, especially those associated with traditional authority structures, are examined. There is however, a more straightforward way in which the study of "politeness" leads to a study of politics. In the Malagasy case the connection between politeness and political oratory is obvious at an empirical level since those very rules of communication which are imposed on children, whether intonation rules, syntactical rules, vocabulary rules, or rules relating to bodily posture, are precisely the ones which are stressed again as being of importance in political oratory.

The second type of data which seemed to call for an examination of the social control implied in speech codes was a study of Merina councils.

Although before undertaking fieldwork I had planned a study of Merina village councils, I abandoned the project because of the small political content these institutions appeared to have. On my return to Cambridge however I took part in a seminar on Councils and was forced to look at the material again.[6] Merina Councils are extremely formal affairs but they are a regular and well accepted feature of village life. All important decisions on communications are made in Councils and they are used as a tool of the administration to carry out its policy. They are organised according to fixed rules, regulating the place in which the participants sit, the order of business, and the way they are convened (Bloch, 1971a). Most important, however, are the rules for regulating speech-making. It was only when I had tried to find how a political element could be isolated on these ritual and ceremonial occasions that I realised that it was precisely in these elaborate forms of speech-making with their fixed formal styles, their endless quotations and proverbs, that social control was exercised. Yet exactly how this

6. This seminar has now been published under the title: *Councils in Action* (ed. A. I. Richards and A. Kuper), *Cambridge Papers in Social Anthropology*, no. 6, 1971.

happened seemed to be particularly elusive. It did not seem to be that a mere examination of the content would get very far since the speeches were so fixed that everything about them was more or less predetermined from the start. Nonetheless my expectations in political anthropology, and also the way I recorded these Councils, made me concentrate on the types of argument and the types of manipulation which could be revealed by an examination of what they were talking about. The formal aspects of the speeches, the manner in which they were spoken, the endless illustrations and quotations from sources I tended to set aside and consider as secondary, mere "procedure".

The formal speeches made by Merina elders were treated always in the same manner. The speaker began very slowly, hesitantly, and very quietly, head down, and only gradually would he appear to gain more confidence, although at no time did any excess of expression creep into his manner of delivery. He would allow the rhythm of what he was saying to take over his intonation. He would speak somewhat louder as the speech proceeded and by the end he would again move back to the very quiet self-effacing type of speaking with which he had begun. The hearers would listen in well disciplined silence and according to the speaker's status allow a greater or a shorter length of time to elapse at the end.

A Merina speech of this sort is roughly divided into four parts. The first part is a period of excuses, almost entirely fixed, and made-up of standard examples and many proverbs. It is called the *Miala Tsiny* or the removal of guilt (Andriamanzato, 1957; Bloch, 1971b, p. 163). This is the removal of guilt caused by the presumption implied in speaking at all, in other words to speak in a formal way at the meeting is an assertion of the right to do so and the humility expected of leaders requires that they should apologise for this self-assertion before they start. The general spirit of this section is summed up by the frequently included phrase: "I am not a father, I am a mere child, I am not an older brother, but just a younger brother." (See Keenan, pp. 94ff.) There is variation in this part of the speech only insofar as the degree of elaboration varies and this elaboration is in terms of the number of well known stories and proverbs which are suitable here and which may therefore be quoted in abundance. The second part of the speech also shows a characteristic tendency to refer endlessly to sources and make use of an inordinate number of proverbs. It also displays the same formality and predictability. It largely consists of thanks to the authorities by the speaker for having been allowed to speak at all. First God is thanked, then the President of the Republic, then his various Ministers, then the Prefect, then the Sub-Prefect, the Head of the Canton, the

village Headman, the Mayor, the Elders, and finally everyone present; usually a proverb or a little florid line is added to the mention of all these people. It finally ends with a section stressing the value of unity among men and especially in the Council which is associated with the descent group. The third quarter is probably the most significant and this is where a certain freedom of expression can come in and where something, other than the mass of clichés, which compose the first two parts is found. This is not to say that proverbs, illustrations, short poems, do not still abound, but somewhere in between them is the crucial proposal. Finally, the fourth part is again much like the first two, that is almost exclusively made up of thanks to everybody for having listened and ends with the blessing of all present.

This is only a brief outline of the nature of Merina oratory. It has been already discussed more extensively in an earlier publication (Bloch, 1971a) and we again have, in this volume, a particularly fine study of this type of oratory in the chapter by E. Keenan. Nonetheless certain features should be noted here as they are of importance for our argument. First, the orator's words are almost entirely not his own, in the sense that he sees them as handed down from the ancestors. He will have learned all the proverbs, stories and speech forms and his main aim is to repeat them as closely as possible following the Malagasy custom (Keenan, see below, p. 101). Not only is the orator strictly limited in what he can say, but freedom of intonation and loudness which he would have in ordinary conversation is almost totally non-existent. His choice of gesture and also of posture is fixed for him by the rules of oratory. Finally, the usual grammatical choices, which exist between different voices for example, has been diminished, as have his possible choices of vocabulary. Merina speech acts can be seen as a continuum from polite to impolite speaking and oratory is so "polite" that the choice of what can be said and how it can be said has largely disappeared.

This sort of speech-making seems at first very removed from what has been meant by political. It seems that if power is exercised at all it is done very nicely and if decisions are reached they are reached almost mechanically and there is hardly ever a come back. Nonetheless conclusions are reached in these councils, and what is more these conclusions are not normally challenged. How is this possible? There is one factor of the history of Merina councils which in part explains this lack of overt conflict, the unchallenged respect for elders and the quiescent acceptance of the proposals of superior, it is that Merina village councils have since the nineteenth century lost most of their functions, as these have been taken over by the central government.

However, this can easily be over-emphasised, councils do still resolve certain local issues and more importantly they are identical in procedure to the traditional royal councils of the past. Equally significant is the fact that these councils take on the linguistic and procedural forms of any significant occasion in Merina daily life. In the early morning when several closely linked households meet to organise the day's agricultural activity, they sit down in much the same order as they would in a council. The elder or the elders make speeches which, although differing from those made by elders in political councils in terms of degree of elaboration, do not really vary in kind. The process whereby one is caught by the formalisation of oratory into accepting without the possibility of question what is proposed is an everyday occurrence experienced whenever people stop and consider what they are doing. The village Councils are nothing more then than particularly important examples of a much wider general kind of formalised oratorical occasions whose structure is the same and where social control is handled by the same procedures. On these occasions if you have allowed somebody to speak in an oratorical manner you have practically accepted his proposal. The reason is that the code adopted by the speaker contains within itself a set pattern of speech for the other party. What gets said, or rather cannot be said, is laid down by this polite, respectful, behaviour—both linguistic and non-linguistic. When somebody speaks to you in this way there quite simply seems to be no easy way of saying "no" or commenting on the substance of what is said. In these formal interactions if you stay within the code you can only listen in silence and allow a pause to elapse afterwards which in fact means yes. The speaker and hearer have slipped into a highly structured situation which contains the hierarchical situation which only allows for a one way relationship.

This is perhaps a slight exaggeration, in that there is also the possibility of following such a formal speech by another equally formal speech which presents an alternative (Bloch, 1971a). There is also the possibility of refusing the implied authority by not allowing the silence at the end to elapse or by adopting other bodily stances or, most significant of all, turning the speech into ridicule. These possibilities always exist but it should be borne in mind that nearly always they are not necessary. People are not so foolish as to embark on the use of a code which may lead to ridicule; in the great majority of cases the oratory is enough. The extraordinary way in which the highly formalised codes of Merina oratory put people in a situation where they feel compelled against their will to follow a course of action, is well known to the actors and they take all kinds of courses to avoid being addressed in this

way, rather like unwilling witnesses avoiding being served subpoenas. I have often found myself caught in precisely this situation when I have allowed somebody to place both himself and me in the right place for such formal interactions and have allowed him to begin a speech in a formal manner. As the interchange proceeds one becomes aware how the extreme formality and politeness of the procedures removes one's choice of refusing unwelcome requests. What may happen is that you are sitting in your house when you hear a group of people outside wanting to come in. They file in with more formality than usual and arrange themselves in the room in the traditional places which their rank, their age and their sex allocates them. The elders sit in the north-east, the less important people towards the south-west (Bloch, 1968). This special pattern which is found in any formal assembly, or simply at large family meetings, already sets apart the occasion as a formal one and defines and places the event within a schema where relative authority is clearly allocated. From the position of the people and the setting which it creates, who will speak, when and how, is already laid down. The leading elder will make a long formal speech of the kind described above, and the person who is being visited with such formality will accept the suggestion, since the whole situation has put him in a position where acceptance is the only thing he can do. The exercise of power through formalisation and through oratory is therefore not limited to councils but is a part of the way life at any time may freeze up and take on this formal aspect. Such a situation would occur, for example, in most households when in the morning a family organises the agricultural tasks of the day. It occurs whenever a family discusses something seriously and the same element is present whenever two people of unequal status meet; and, because of the nature of Merina society, this means when almost anybody meets, since apart from affines, inequality is almost always as much a premise of social interaction as it would be in India or Ruanda.

This formalised type of communication *kabary* (see Keenan below) which is at present in its clearest form at political meetings is, as we have seen, an aspect of all communication and so when we consider its significance for social control we can and must study it in the whole variety of its manifestations and not isolate its study merely to "political" events. For example, the aspect of compulsion and hierarchy inevitably present in formal Merina oratory can also be seen clearly, but in a significantly different way in that very special and elaborate use of *kabary* characteristic of wedding speeches, discussed by Elinor Keenan in this book. This use of *kabary* is in a sense the negation of its use in a political meeting. The reason is that Merina marriage is based on a

contradiction. The ideal notion behind a marriage is that it should be an alliance between two families of identical status and the best way of ensuring this is the perfect Malagasy form of marriage, that is between close kin (Bloch, 1971b). Marriage however, is of its very nature hierarchical and it is always an unequal exchange. For the Merina, the wife-givers are seen as the losers and are hence inferior. There is thus the contradiction that while marriage should be between equals it creates inequality since it is an unequal exchange. This contradiction is resolved by the strange device that the marriage ceremony acts out the opposite of the real situation. What happens in a Merina marriage is that the wife-takers, the superiors, are humiliated. This idea is present in the very phrase which describes the ceremony "the giving of the backside of a sheep". This is the gift which the groom is said to make to the bride's father and would normally be an act of respect made by an inferior to a superior. In other words, the ceremony says that the groom's family is inferior to the bride's family while in fact the actual transfer of the woman implies the opposite. This contradiction is also manifest in the central aspect of the ceremony which is discussed by Keenan, that is, the speech made on behalf of the groom by an orator. This speech should follow the linguistic rules of all specches made by a superior to an inferior. It is similar in its formal aspect with the speeches discussed above. There is, however, one difference. Since the purpose of the ritual is to show that the groom's family is not superior, a speech-maker for the groom must fail to speak properly and thereby fail to impose his superiority over the family of the bride. His failure is demonstrated by the way he is shown not to have used the right tradi-tional compelling formula, not to have followed the custom of the ancestor and therefore not to be a true superior. The wife-givers, as the Merina themselves recognise, must publicly show their inability to enforce the compulsion implied in oratory. As a result, quite apart from its intrinsic interest, the study of Keenan shows in a particularly, if artificially revealing manner, the norms and constraints of political oratory as seen by the Merina themselves.

The elaborate linguistic ritual described thus depends also on the normal political state of affairs which was discussed above, but it also serves to show the abnormal and anti-hierarchical form implied in marriage, thus, even in this quite exceptional and opposite case of oratory the necessary hierarchical aspects of formalised oratory and its power of compulsion are demonstrated.

FORMALISATION AND POWER[7]

The Malagasy example raises two general questions which must be considered at a theoretical level so that a clear hypothesis can be tested against the other examples which form this book:

(1) How is it that formalisation can become a form of power or coercion?

(2) In what types of political system does one find this "power through form", and in what type of political system is formalisation a less important part of the political process?

If we try to attempt to answer the second question first, it is immediately apparent that the extreme formalisation of language with its accompanying exercise of power is characteristic of traditional authority situations as defined by Weber (1967, p. 226). We find it as part of the political process in Madagascar, or the Councils of Bali described below by Hobart, and some Tikopia *Fono* (see below), while it is found to a lesser extent in systems where the powers of leaders are continually dependent on their manipulation and are at every moment challenged. The oratory of a Mursi orator at a debate, or of a New Guinea Highland Big-Man, as described by Read (1959) for example, shows the features of formalisation which I consider below only to a limited extent, while in Samoa, in Tonga, or in Madagascar, these features are developed to an extreme extent (Sahlins, 1963).

There is thus, as we shall see in greater detail in the next section, a loose correlation between the type of political oratory and the type of political system. The correlation however becomes clearer when we compare the type of oratory with the type of authority exercised at a particular time. The reason is that all political systems and all leaders use a variety of types of coercions, and therefore use a variety of political language. Before examining this more general point we must however concentrate on an analysis of the oratory of traditional leaders when they choose the political tack of formal communication, since only when this is understood will the significance of the *varieties* of political language within and between cultures be clear.

A preliminary answer can therefore be given to the question, in what circumstances is formalisation used for social control? but before we can go further in this direction the logically prior question: why is formalisation a kind of power? must be answered.

In order to answer this, our first task is to define what is involved by formalisation. To do this we can contrast an ideal type "formalised"

7. See Bloch 1974, for a different development of this argument.

with what might be called ideal type "everyday" speech acts in the following way:

Everyday Speech Acts	Formalised Speech Acts
Choice of loudness	Fixed loudness patterns
Choice of intonation	Extremely limited choice of intonation
All syntactic forms available	Some syntactic forms excluded
Complete vocabulary	Partial vocabulary
Flexibility of sequencing of speech acts	Fixity of sequencing of speech acts
Few illustrations from a fixed body of accepted parallels	Illustrations only from certain limited sources, e.g., scriptures, proverbs
No stylistic rules consciously held to operate	Stylistic rules consciously applied at all levels

The first point to notice is that formalised language, the language of traditional authority, is an impoverished language; a language where many of the options at all levels are abandoned so that choice of form, of style, of words and of syntax, is less than in ordinary language. Formalised language corresponds well with what Bernstein has called a restricted code (1972, p. 474), although I am considering a wider range of linguistic phenomena than Bernstein and I am drawing different sociological conclusions from him. The contrast described above is not to be seen as a dichotomy between two types of speech acts but as a continuum between two extremes. In any particular culture not necessarily all the restrictions of formalised speech acts listed above will come into play when formalised speech is used. This will vary both with the cultural tradition and the type of language. How far formalisation goes will also vary in degree both within a culture, since there might be a number of more or less formalised codes to choose from (Gumperz, 1961), and also, between cultures; since, as mentioned above, the relative importance of traditional authority in the political system also varies. We are therefore considering degrees of formalisation though of course the nature of the effect of giving up options in language is of the same kind, however far this process goes.

The kind of restrictions or constraints existing in formalised oratory can be illustrated by looking at several of the examples included in this book for the more formalised codes discussed. All the restrictions listed above occur for the traditional oratory of the Merina and of the Balinese though perhaps nowhere are the restrictions more strongly sanctioned than in Bali where "breaches of order and language convention is interpreted as physical assault" (see below p. 75). Again, in the

most formal of the Tikopia oratory *Oriori*, we find a very partial vocabulary, extremely limited choice of intonation and many stylistic rules consciously applied. The fixity of the overall order of the speeches is stressed among the Tswana and among the Maori. The same is true of the "arrow talk" of the New Guinea Highlanders and, as we would expect, less so but still fairly true of "veiled talk". A wealth of illustrations, proverbs, and scriptural examples, are some of the most clear features of Maori oratory but they are also characteristic of the much less formalised types of speeches which Parkin calls "ideology". It is the use of these fixed examples, as well as certain syntactic and vocabulary restrictions, which mark out the parts of the speeches of Tswana chiefs which Comaroff sees as using the formal code. Even in the case of the Mursi, where the absence of traditional authority is accompanied as we might expect by only slight formalisation, a speech in a debate, as opposed to a discussion, is accompanied by "conventional phrases and expositions" (p. 171).

In all these examples we therefore find at least one code using some of the restrictions discussed above. All the more politically significant codes actually only use these restrictions within certain limits, for reasons which will be discussed below. Nonetheless, all the very formalised codes and also the partially formalised codes use a number or all of the restrictions listed above simultaneously.

This giving up of options on several levels simultaneously, is especially significant because increasing restriction of communication has a geometrical effect on the restriction of forms of speech. If we think of the sentence: "the cat sat on the mat" and assume that there are three alternative nouns for each noun locus we find that there are nine possible sentences. If we say that the verb can be in one of three tenses, then there are twenty-seven possible sentences which can be said in one of three intonations, making a total of eighty-one possible sentences. If we look at this backwards, we see that by just specifying one restriction, say intonation, saying that only one intonation is suitable, the number of possible sentences drops from eighty-one to twenty-seven. If however, we bring in two restrictions occurring at the same time, say that with a certain intonation only certain nouns are acceptable, the effect on the choice of sentences is dramatic. In fact it falls from eighty-one possible sentences to three. This sort of effect is present when a given political system enforces strict rules of "politeness", for example, when the Hageners described by Strathern choose veiled talk rather than straight talk (see p. 189); when the Merina turn to *kabary* (see p. 93); when the Tikopian Maru use a *homilitic* (see p. 42) code, or when African bureaucrats use *ideology* rather than *plan* (see p. 126ff). In real

cases the effect is far greater because of the greater number of restrictions but, of course, the original potential of choice is also very much greater. The reason for this dramatic impoverishment in linguistic choice is that the fantastic creativity potential of natural language which has been so much stressed recently comes from the relative independence of the rules of combination one from another and their further independence from the units which they operate. If, however, some of these rules are removed, or even more drastic, if rules are attached one to another or rules to units, this creativity very rapidly vanishes. In other words, as soon as you have accepted a form of speaking in an appropriate way you have begun to give up, at a bewilderingly rapid rate, the very potential for communication. The process does not stop with formal linguistic aspects but also influences those fields usually referred to as style in the literary sense. One of the features of everyday speech is that it can be enriched by comparisons and cross-references to other events of an extremely wide range. When, however, we look at the language of traditional authority we find that the power of cross-references becomes more and more restricted to a body of suitable illustrations, often proverbs or scriptures.

The effect of always comparing particular events to the same general illustrations reduces the specificity of utterances so that all events are made to appear as though they were all alike. In other words, the ability of language to communicate messages concerning particular events, and its ability to convey specific messages leading to particular action, disappears. This is so because the ability of the particular units of the speech act to relate closely to the experimental world, and the sequencing of speech units to relate closely to a particular experimental process is greatly reduced, as the number of words, illustrations and grammatical sequences that can be chosen to fit reality is reduced. The individuality and historicity of events disappear since irrespective of minor differences these events are all *like* the scriptural examples.

Nearly all the cases studied in this book furnish examples of this process whereby specific events are merged to events which are thought of as always pre-existing. The example of the Tswana chiefs discussed by Comaroff; of the Maori, or indeed of the Hageners, are all instances of this phenomena noted by several of the contributors. Salmond, discussing Maori oratory, points out that the perspective created by reference to traditional genealogies recreates a fixed view of New Zealand and transforms the dangerous and uncertain present into the fixed eternal and orderly past "the effect is a comforting sensation of union within a common heritage." Not only history but geography is revised. Cities become insignificant and landmarks associated with the

past are honoured. Place names in English are replaced with Maori counterparts. New Zealand becomes "*Te Ika A Maui*, a great petrified fish with its head in the south and its tail in the north" (p. 54)

The most important social effect of this merging of the specific into the eternal and fixed, is that it moves the communication to a level where disagreement is ruled out since one cannot disagree with the right order. The move towards the formalised therefore becomes a move in the direction of unity. As the divisions of Giriama society become more and more acute, Parkin notes that the administrators begin to move away from specific references, from "plan" to "ideology" by adopting more and more formalised codes, but as they do this they retain a certain degree of unity at the cost of explicitness and instrumentality. In the same way Firth notes how in Tikopia when the unity of Tikopians in the face of outsiders was all the more necessary, more speeches were made and these were more of the *homelitic* kind.

Unity of all under the aegis of accepted values, is of course, the plus side of formalisation but its negative side follows inevitably. The tendency towards unity via unspecificity means that specific issues cannot efficiently be tackled since if the formalised oratory is a form of social control within a set of fixed norms it cannot deal with individual (hence divisive) innovative action. The problem is perhaps best seen in Bali where the stress on unity and on traditional unity means that the real politicians in the community avoid the arena of oratory altogether, while in the case of the Giriama, the Merina, the Maori and the Balinese, the values of oratory become a field of conflict between those wanting to maintain the traditional authority structure and those who want to change it. Oratory leads back to traditional power and those who want to avoid it try to avoid being caught up in the coercion of formalisation.

The way formalisation removes the tie between speech and particular event, has a yet even more dramatic result. It removes the authority and the event from the speaker himself so that he speaks when using formalisation less and less for himself and more and more for his role. This explains the inability of the speaker to manipulate his power for strictly personal ends. We shall return to this point in the next section, but here it may be noted how this aspect is stressed by several of the writers in this book.

What happens then as a result of this referring back to fixed examples is that the society, the speakers, events and places are transformed from the specific to the general. The order in which things are arranged is not seen as the result of the acts of anybody in particular, but of a state which has always existed and is therefore of the same kind as the order

of nature. It is not surprising therefore to find how often traditional authority is linked with such processes as the passage of the seasons or the periods of the moon.

The formalisation of speech therefore dramatically restricts what can be said so that the speech acts are either all alike or all of a kind, and thus, if this mode of communication is adopted, there is hardly any *choice* of what can be said. Although the restrictions are seen usually as restrictions of form rather than of content, they are a far more effective way of restricting content than would be possible if content were attacked directly. Formalisation goes right through the linguistic range. It leads to a specially stylised form of communication: polite, respectful, holy, but from the point of view of the creativity potential of language, impoverished.

We may also note that the restrictions implied by formalisation are all the more powerful because the abandonment of the freedom implied by natural discourse is in the direction of rare forms of everyday discourse. This itself is due to formalisation. The relative fixity of formalised language isolates it from the processes of historical linguistics and so a secondary result of formalisation becomes the typical archaism of the language of traditional authority and even more the language of ritual (Aitchison, 1966), (Bloch, 1974).

So far, only the effect of the formalisation of language on the speech acts of statements has been considered and we have seen how it disconnects statement from event; in other words, how it increases ambiguity. Ambiguity is also produced, however, by oratorical statements at the level of the lexical unit. The two points are linked together.

As is well known, Malinowski (1935), despairing of being able to translate the language of Trobriand ritual, concluded that this language was meaningless except in the full context of ritual situation. Each of the words used could not be understood unless we plunged ourselves in sympathy with the Trobriander in the whole field of the ceremony. This theory, that the meaning of words exist only in "context of situation", was extended by him to a general theory of meaning and as such ran into considerable trouble right from the start. It was finally shown to need modification by semantic theories derived from transformational grammar, which, in contradiction to Malinowski, stressed the needs of the individual units of meaning to carry their semantic load in themselves irrespective of context, because only in this way could these units of meaning be recombined to create an infinity of fitting utterances, the most famous potential of language (Langoenden, 1968). The criticism of generative linguists is well taken for language in the abstract. However, as Hymes and Halliday (1971) have pointed out,

stressing the potential of language as a tool for the speaker, by which he can say anything he likes at any time, is something of an abstraction and semantic theories which assume this do so at their peril. In real life people rarely find themselves in a situation where they really can say anything they like. In the kind of situation considered here, situations where the power relations are in evidence, the notion of the speaker being able to say anything he likes is plainly ridiculous. As we have seen, the very rules of politeness, of appropriateness, of formalisation, reduce and almost eliminate this potential of language. Now, since the need for meaning to be contained in the unit follows in the need of recombination it follows that where recombination is not necessary the semantic load need not be carried in the units themselves. In ideal intellectual discourse the contextual associations of meaning are continously being sheared off as the units are being re-used in different contexts; but in formalised contexts these are allowed to grow and intertwine with each other. When we are dealing with a system of communication which has largely given up the power of creativity, words keep their contextual halo and these, fused into each other, form solidified lumps of meaning within the political framework. Lyons would deny meaning to units so permanently joined (Lyons, 1963). J. R. Firth when discussing collocation, the regular joining of words together, stresses how this drains the parts of propositional force, giving them a different total semantic effect which cannot be separated from the context.

In other words, as lexical units become buried in formalised language they become more and more ambiguous. This aspect of formalised political language is noted by several of the contributors, but it forms the main focus of the study of Seidel. In some ways her study is very different from the others in the book. It does not deal with a traditional society, nor does it deal with oral data but with French political tracts. Nonetheless, the political problems that need to be handled are much the same and the detail and accuracy of the study would not have been possible in the other cases. It shows how the appeal to traditional authority, whether of the right or the left, is always possible, indeed necessary, to hide divisions but that it is obtained at the cost of specificity. The political dilemma which underlies this and other political situations, will be examined in the next section of this introduction.

What are the implications of abandoning the creativity potential of speech? The first and the most obvious of the implications of abandoning linguistic choice is that an utterance instead of being potentially followed by an infinity of others can be followed by only a few or possibly only one. Because of the linear nature of speech acts this can best be represented in the following way: if we start with a hypothetical

situation where all the systemic freedoms of language are retained and where there are no extra linguistic restrictions on speech, we can see that any speech act A may be followed within the formal rules of language by a very large number, an almost infinite number, of possible speech acts B, since from a purely structural point of view there is an almost infinite number of grammatical utterances which can follow a particular sentence. We can say that A in no way predicts by its form, B. If, on the other hand, we are considering a situation where language is greatly restricted, where its creative potential is abandoned by the fact that the speakers have accepted "appropriate" or formalised types of speech, we can see that the number of speech acts B which can follow a speech act A become very seriously restricted. Indeed, in the extreme situation where we are dealing with traditional discourse repeated from a traditional body of knowledge, only one speech act B can follow speech act A. In other words, with increased formalisation, A predicts to an ever greater extent B. In terms of the experience of an individual it means that as he uses formalised language he very largely implies his last words by his first, since once he is speaking in the right way, there is only one predetermined line along which he can proceed. (Shegloff, 1972, p. 365.)

In fact even more is implied by the acceptance of formalisation, because if the utterance of a speaker predicts what sort of things he will say, it also predicts the answer of the other person so long as this other person is also accepting the code. The reason for this is that groups of people may find themselves in situations where a certain *form* is *appropriate*, which is the experience of everybody at any political occasion in a society where traditional authority is dominant. In such circumstances not only will one part of a speech act of a speaker predict the next, but the speech act of one man will predict that of another. If a superior addresses an inferior, the latter, if he accepts to answer within the formalised code imposed on the situation (and he will rarely be in a position to do anything else) will find himself in a position where he cannot say "no". The reason is to be found in the fact that because the formalised speech of the superior has meant that one speech act predicts the next, this predictive power has jumped the gap from one speaker to the next. There is nothing strange in this since just as one part of a speech act needs to be appropriately joined to the next, so the speech act of one person must be appropriately joined to those of another. In a situation where the articulation of one part of a speech act to another is free, there is a very wide choice of acceptable answers. In formalised speech the features of articulation have been, as we have seen, rendered arthritic and so the possible answers are dramatically reduced, perhaps

even to one. This means that an inferior, in a political situation with a high degree of formality, usually finds himself handling a communication code where he can only accept what is said if he is to stay within the rules of appropriate behaviour. There is another way we can see this, namely, by considering the possibility of arguing back. As we are moving towards a more formalised code, the possibility of contradiction becomes less and less. This is simply because contradiction implies a potential choice of speech act B following speech act A. There are intermediary situations where formalisation has not totally restricted the possibilities of speech act B, but this is so only to a certain extent namely, the limit within which contradiction is possible.

It is because the formalisation of language is a way whereby one speaker can coerce the response of another, that it can be seen as a form of social control. It is really a type of communication where rebellion is impossible and only revolution could be feasible. It is a situation where power is all or nothing, and of course in society total refusal is normally out of the question.

If the relation between formalisation and traditional authority can be accounted for in the way suggested above, it is important to consider further the effect this has on semantics. If, as has been suggested by several linguists, there is a close connection between syntax and semantics (McCawley, 1971) it is clear that a radical change in syntax, in this case a severe restriction, implies an equally radical change in the nature of the propositional content of language. In other words, once the processes of formalisation are underway any notion of meaning derived from the way ordinary language works will be misleading unless heavily qualified. Lyons has made this general point in an extreme form:

> In accordance with the principle "meaning implies choice", I shall say that any linguistic form, up to and including the complete utterance, whose occurrence is not determined by the context, has meaning in that context and, conversely, that any linguistic item whose occurrence in a given context is completely determined has no meaning in that context. It is important to realise that having meaning, as the notion is here defined, is a matter of *how much* meaning items have in context—that is, their contribution proportionately to the meaning of the whole utterance—not of *what* meaning they have. (Having no meaning is merely the limiting case of complete predictability.) (Lyons, 1963.)

This statement seems to go too far in that fixity does not seem to me to imply no meaning but, as we shall see, a different kind of

meaning. However, to look for "meaning" in a fixed utterance without qualification is clearly misleading. In order to understand what *kind* of qualification is necessary it is useful to look again at the assumption made in the work of several linguists (e.g. McCawley, 1971) that semantics can adequately be represented by symbolic logic, the implication being that the articulating properties of language are what makes language capable of carrying a logical argument, and that logical presuppositions (e.g. see the studies in Fillmore and Langoenden) are the very stuff of semantics.

Logic implies that one postulated connection between units is more right than another because of the innate relation between the parts of the logical argument. One can therefore say that to be logical, an argument must be couched in a form within which contradictory or alternative arguments are possible but excluded, not because of the way they are said, but because they are untrue: to be logical an argument must be formally contradictable in order to show its logical nature. Normally any statement is open to contradiction and replacement and since this is so in ordinary situations argument and reason are possible. By contrast, formalised language rules out the two prerequisites for logic, the potential of one statement to be followed by a large number of others and the possibility of contradiction. Formalised language is therefore non-logical and any attempt to represent it as such, whether by a paraphrase into ordinary language which implies "explanation" or by the use of tabular representation containing a logical form, is misleading.

If the connection between the units in formalised language is not logical, that is, if their connection does not come from their fit, we may well ask what is the nature of their connection? The answer is easily found in what has been said above. The connection between units is given by the medium of expression since the fixity of articulation predicts the order of the argument. There can thus be no true or false explanations, no explanations that are better or worse since the potential for substitution which is employed in the notion of true or false or better or worse has been eliminated by the way the proposition has been put. To put it simply, we can say that logic depends on the flexibility of articulation in language and if there is no such flexibility there can be no argument, no logic, no explanation, and in one sense of the word, no semantics. The effect of removing the possibility of alternatives from the mode of communication, as is done by formalisation, makes what is being said beyond logic, its force being traditional authority, but disguised in that it has been accepted unconsciously before the event by the acceptance of the proper, of the polite, or the appropriate way of

behaving. What is being said is the right thing because by the accept-
ance of the formalisation of language it has become the only thing.

To say this, of course, is not to say that such language is meaningless.
We can distinguish two kinds of meaning. One is the propositional force
of language, the ability of language to corner reality by adapting
communication to past perception and connecting this with future
perception. This is the power of language which linguists have been
most concerned with (propositional force). This potential of language is
lost by formalisation, but there is also the aspect of meaning which we
can refer to as "illocutionary force", or perhaps "performative force".
"Not to report facts but to influence people" (Austin, 1962, p. 234) and
here we are back with politics.

LIMITATIONS ON THE POWER OF FORMALISATION AND PRACTICAL POLITICS

The reason why formalisation is a form of social control, lies as we have
seen, in the fact that it uses a code where one part of the communication
can appropriately only be followed by one other instead of a large
number of alternatives as in ordinary communication. In this way by
using such a code a "superior" can coerce the response of an "inferior"
since the superior's speech act predicts the inferior's response. The self-
same process also rules out the possibility of contradiction since this is
only possible where a number of alternative responses to a statement
exist: it increases ambiguity and it de-specifies communication. We shall
now go on to consider the use of such a form of control in practice and
the examples in this book enable us to do this against a certain amount
of evidence. In the process other characteristics of formalisation and its
limitations as a political tool will become clear.

The first limitation on the use of formalisation which must be
examined is concerned with access. Clearly if formalisation is a form of
power to be effective it must be restricted. This occurs in two ways.
First, it is restricted because of the skills required in its use. Second, it
is restricted by the existing political situation. Oratory is not a skill
which is easily acquired. In all the examples discussed below, its attain-
ment is seen as difficult, demanding native skill, but above all practice
and sometimes special tuition. Training in oratorical techniques is in
several cases part of the formal teaching given to a leader and in this
way education is limited to rightful heirs. A less obvious way in which
access is limited is what happens among the Merina of Madagascar,
where the complex form of speaking, characteristic of an elder is the
same, only better than that which would be adopted by any person in

authority. The head of a family, for example, whenever he is addressing the other members, finds himself in such a position and having to use this type of language which is also the case of any senior respected person at any gathering of his juniors. This means that the more senior a man is, the more likely he is to get practice in speaking in this particular way. In other words, only somebody with high standing and who has found himself again and again in positions of authority is likely to succeed in any large gathering, because only such a man will have gained the essential practice for oratorical speaking. This achieved element in what is often seen as an innate skill serves to explain much of the subtle effects of stressing oratory as an essential aspect of leadership. The kind of hidden restriction on who can get the essential practice to be an orator depends to a certain extent on the lack of easily available written models for speeches, though even where such models are available practice is also important. It is also often the case, as for example in Madagascar, that this written material may itself only be available to political leaders, either directly of indirectly when it is in the hands of a literary class who are in the employ of the political leaders. What all this amounts to is that although oratory seems a skill it is normally a skill only available to those with power. Furthermore, oratorical skill is judged by other members of the community and as Turton puts it "it is impossible to separate out the effects of what he says and how he says it from the effects of the audience's awareness of who is saying it" (p. 177).

Formalisation is thus a form of power for the powerful rather than simply a tool of coercion available to anybody. The reason for this can be seen if we consider once again the implications of the predictive sequential nature of formalisation. In ordinary discourse every potential articulation point is a point where a choice is made by the speaker in terms of the empirical situation as it appears to him. At every point a speaker reacts to the hearer and modifies his course. The inter-relationship is thus, in the true sense of the word, a dialectic. In a power situation every moment depends on new assertion and new acceptance or rejection by the hearer. The relationship between the speaker and the hearer can thus be described in this way:

*Empirical Evaluation
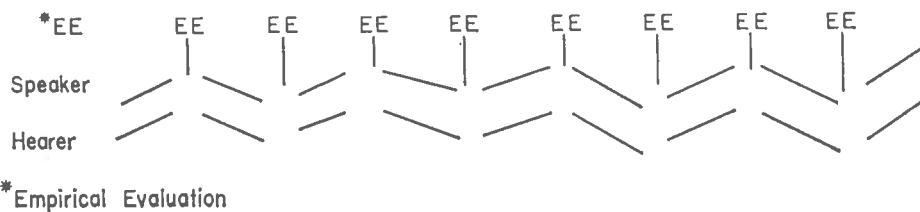
The superior first asserts his authority in a speech act, watches for the response that empirically evaluates the situation, and modifies his next speech act in terms of that response and in terms of the best strategy available. At every point therefore he makes use of the linguistic choices available in unformalised language. Similarly the hearer modifies his response in terms of the speech acts of the speaker as the communication takes place through time. In a sense it can be said that the power relation between speaker and hearer is continually undergoing a renegotiation. This is the situation which exists between most equals most of the time, and between superiors and inferiors when the superior's authority is achieved rather than ascribed.

The situation in the case of traditional authority and with formalised communication is different. Continual renegotiation is ruled out by the arthritic nature of the features of articulation employed by formalisation. Once accepted, for the reasons discussed above, the formalised code contains within it the hierarchical relationship and it is therefore a tool of coercion. However, this is so only because of the initial acceptance of the code by both speaker and hearer. Instead of there being a series of minor choices taking place at all stages in the communication there is one fundamental choice made *ab initio* from which everything else follows. It is as if all the small sequential choices of communication had been accumulated in advance. The situation can be represented therefore in the following way:

Empirical
Evaluation

Speaker

Hearer

Once the hearer has allowed the speaker to use formalisation, a communication becomes like a tunnel which once entered leaves no option of turning either to left or right, but ultimately the power of formalised oratory does not simply spring from its form, it springs from the forces of social power, the initial decision to enter the tunnel. It implies the acceptance of who is top, it does not produce it.

The form such accumulation in advance of choices gives to interaction is the strength of formalisation as a tool for traditional authority but in another way it can also be seen to be its weakness. By staking all on the initial acceptance of the code means that when a potential rejection of the code occurs, for example the refusal to respond to someone adopting this code, this implies a total rejection of any status and humiliation of the superior. This normally takes the form of ridicule which in several of the examples in this book is the punishment for failure to

impose formalisation. It implies a total refusal of the power of formalisation and is necessary since only total refusal is possible in the face of total imposition. A political leader by using formalisation is therefore taking the risk of being totally humiliated. In the actual cases considered in this book however, because formalisation is used only to a limited and varying extent, this risk also varies with the extent. It is really a question of the number of potential sequential choices as represented in diagram A that have been cumulated in advance by a major choice as in diagram B which determine the extent of the danger of drastic failure. The same problem manifests itself in several of the studies in this book, especially those dealing with Bali, Madagascar and the Maori, but each in a different way. There the total refusal of authority implied in the oratory comes from a refusal of the code not by ridicule but by an attempt to replace it with a totally different one; in this case a code linked with school learning and justified by notions of modernity. This reflects a challenge to traditional political order by new power holders, but because the old power holders work within a code of formalisation, their power cannot be challenged gradually but only altogether by almost deliberate sacrilegious disregard for a traditional culture which the holders of the old power are busily creating and evermore formalising to exclude the usurpers. In the same way as in the traditional system with ridicule, the challenge has to be total.

There is another limitation to the use of formalisation for power, other than the problem of the total challenge which it gives rise to, and this comes from formalisation itself. Formalisation has been considered up to now as a way by which a speaker controls the hearer. This however, is also necessarily achieved at great cost to the political freedom of the speaker. The reason is that by slipping into a formalised code, the orator loses his own choice of what he can say. His first words, as we have seen, very largely predict his last. This does not matter when the speaker is simply attempting to establish his authority or that of his office in a general way and along well expected lines. The authority structure contained in the formalised communication will do this admirably. Politicians, however, always need to do more than this. They need to strengthen their position not only in a general way but in a particular way, fighting off rivals, affecting specific political events, etc. Formalised oratory cannot do this because it leads to a non-historical, non-specific and highly ambiguous language which reduces events to being merely instances of a recurring eternal order.

As a result of this aspect of formalisation the movement of a political leader into a code where he cannot be contradicted or criticised is done at the cost of impotence. If pushed very far, formalisation becomes the

affirmation of an order rather than of a policy, an affirmation of the role of leader rather than of the leader himself. It moves the communication out of the realm of what is normally understood by the political into the realm of religion. For this reason the power of formalisation can only be *one* tool used by a political leader. It needs to be combined with other types of communication. The resulting type of combination is illustrated in all the studies here. Several of the examples illustrate the process whereby political communication is split into two or more codes of differing formality. The more formal code is used to handle and reinforce the static order and the coercion implied in its restatement in an unchallengeable form while political manipulation is handled by a different code which could be recognised on linquistic criteria alone. This split between codes handling different aspects, occurs in one of three ways. It might be that within a speech, parts of differing formality handle the different aspects. A most striking example of this sort in this book is the Tswana case described by John Comaroff. There the speeches fall into distinct halves referred to by Comaroff as the "formal part" and the "evaluative part". The formal parts carry the traditional authority structure, while the evaluative parts carry the manipulation. Again a similar distinction between parts of speeches can be seen in the Merina case as sketched above.

The second way in which this split occurs, is not within speeches, but between them. Salmond distinguishes between two types of meetings: "formal" and "informal" meetings. In the formal ones "the orators are guardians of the group's dignity setting the occasion in traditional times and space and framing it with ritual tracery". There the *Mana* of the speakers is at stake. In the informal meetings, on the other hand, the important political (in the sense of manipulative) tasks are done. There "plans" may be made.[8] Leaders of course act in both types of meetings and they need to since the two aspects of their power are essential to them; backing up each as they do, but also necessarily conflicting. It is interesting to note that in the Maori case where no clear hierarchical structure between leaders exists, formal statements become inevitable ritual demonstrations of equality in opposition. This is the case too for the Hageners described by Strathern where the most formal code "arrow talk" is the code of confrontation from status. The next most formal code, "veiled talk", handles the traditional authority of the leaders when they are not faced by rivals of equal status, while "straight talk", the least formalised, is used for practical politics. Again the same distinction can be seen in the case of the Mursi, where Turton chooses

8. Convergence of vocabulary in Salmond's and Parkin's articles, both written quite independently, are very interesting.

to make a similar distinction between more formal occasions, "debates", and less formal ones, "discussions". The former are associated with rituals and stress an unchanging social and cosmic order canalised through the priests to the secular leaders who therefore oscillate from the religious level to more mundane matters by using differing degrees of formality. Here again we see the contradiction in traditional authority. Its code implies its final justification but also it implies impotence.

The third way in which the split between the multiplicity of codes is produced is neither by internal divisions in speeches nor distinctions between types of speeches. There the codes are handled by different people who are in one sense representatives one of each other, the one acting as orators for the other. Already in the Mursi case we have seen how in one sense the political leaders can be considered as the speakers for the priests who cannot damage their impartial and unchanging image by descending to the necessary manipulations of day-to-day politics. In this sense the leaders can be said to be orators in a "lower chamber" for the priests, although this ideological representation is probably a reversal of the truth since the priests carry the impotent code for the legitimisation of those who are really in control, namely, the secular leaders. The division of the role of leader to roles each associated with a different code is the logical resolution of a contradiction in the nature of traditional authority. Instead of switching codes at all moments like the Maori or the Tswana the necessity is replaced by employing somebody to speak for you with the other code. The clearest example we have of this in this book is the relationship between orators and patrons analysed by Hobart, who shows how the depersonalising, despecifying formal code of councils makes it unsuitable for the sectarian interests of patrons who therefore employ orators to represent them and express pious sentiments on their behalf, while they pay fines for non-attendance and are able to carry out their divisive interests in ordinary language outside the council. A similar situation, although at first sight it appears almost the reverse, is that discussed by Firth for Tikopia where in the case of secular *Fono* or meetings the chief is represented by his *Maru*, executive officer, for the day-to-day bargaining for the manipulative and persuasive functions of speech-making, while he reserves, for himself the formal code to keep the impersonal mantle of traditional authority untarnished. This is the Balinese situation in reverse, since there the carriers of the less formal code are in control while in Tikopia it is the chiefs, the carriers of the more formal code, who have supreme power. Nonetheless, the recent history of Tikopia suggests the possible reversal of the situation which would result in a state like that of Bali and many other parts of the world,

where the carriers of the formal code because of the gradual impotence which it causes, are "kicked upstairs" by the carriers of the informal code.

So far I have considered the necessary existence of several codes implying differing types of control as varying tools for those in power. However, one can also look at the use of these tools as a situation develops through time. This can be seen in several of the studies, especially those of Comaroff and Firth. Interestingly enough, this can even be seen in the example of the language of political tracts of Paris 1968. The move to greater ambiguity and formalisation on the part of the Gaullists when under attack is noted, but it can be seen even in the language of the students as they retreat from practical details to overall ideologies referring back to a new traditional and natural rule. The most clear case is, however, that chosen by Parkin who discusses this process. He identifies the different codes in terms of their content rather than their linguistic form, but the correlation between "ideology", "quasi plan" and "plan" with increasingly formal codes is very clear. It shows once again the strength of traditional authority, but a strength only resorted to in the last instance, since by removing the communication from specific place, time or logic, it cannot be used for a "plan".

CONCLUSION

What I have tried to show in this introduction is the way the close study of how things are said in political situations, is important for our understanding of political anthropology. We cannot ignore this aspect and simply use as our data a vague feeling of what has been said. I have also tried to show that tackling the problems set by this data in terms of general theoretical concepts helps to understand the implications of these phenomena and to explain their presence as an essential part of the process of social control. I hope also to have opened up a discussion of a neglected area of anthropology and linguistics.

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