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# Other Times, Other Customs: The Anthropology of History

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The nature of institutions is nothing but their coming into being (*nascimento*) at certain times and in certain guises. Whenever the time and guise are thus and so, such and not otherwise are the institutions that come into being—Vico, *The New Science*.

WESTERN HISTORIANS HAVE BEEN ARGUING for a long time over two polar ideas of right historiography. As opposed to an elite history, narrated with an eye singular to the higher politics, others propose a study whose object would be the life of communities. "For the last fourteen hundred years, the only Gauls, apparently, have been kings, ministers and generals," Voltaire complained, and vowed to write instead a "history of men." The latest "new history" is also of the populist persuasion. Sometimes client of the social sciences, it is concerned with such matters as unconscious structures, collective mentalities, and general economic trends. It tends to be populist in the salience it gives to the practical circumstances of underlying populations. A distinguished historian (Stone 1981:23) invokes Thomas Gray: "Let not . . . grandeur hear with a disdainful smile, / The short and simple annals of the poor." The idea is that history is culturally constructed from the bottom up: as the precipitate, in social institutions and outcomes, of the prevailing inclinations of the people-in-general.<sup>1</sup>

Yet before we congratulate the new history on having finally learned its anthropological (or political) lessons, we should recall that the passage from an elite to a more collective consciousness actually occurred in the history of Western society, as a difference in real-historical practice, and this long before the decline of monarchy in favor of popular democracies and market economies made the mass production of history seem the self-evident truth of our own—should we not say, our bourgeois?—social experience. Jean-Pierre Vernant (1982) brilliantly analyzes the same transformation in the first millennium B.C., in the passage from the sovereignty of Mycenaean god-kings to the humanized institutions of the Greek *polis*. Or is it that we have to do, in society and consciousness both, with a "structure of the long duration": a cyclical alternation between Caesarism and the power of the people, the *gumsa* and *gumlao* of Indo-European history, each social form always pregnant, at least a little bit, with its historic opposite?

Vernant, in fact, begins by comparing Athenian royal traditions with the divine kings of Scythian legend. In repeated quarrels over the succession, the Athenian princes eventually divide between them the functions—priestly, military, and economic—that were characteristically united in Indo-European kingships of the heroic age. So commences

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the idea of politics as the mutual accommodation of differences, whose more democratic form will be achieved in the *polis*. But in contrast to the Athenian princes, the divinely favored grandson of the Scythian Zeus is alone accorded royal power by his older brothers, as he alone is able to carry off the prototypical golden objects emblematic of the Dumézilian three functions: the libation cup, the war ax, and the plow. Here the sovereign is classically presented "as a person above and beyond the various functional classes that made up society, since he represented them all; and since all equally found in him the virtues by which they defined themselves, he no longer belonged to any one of them" (Vernant 1982:42). At once encompassing and transcending the society, the divine king is able to mediate its relations to the cosmos—which thus also responds, in its own natural order, to his sovereign powers.

In the *polis*, however, an organization constituted by its self-awareness as a human community, the *arche* (sovereign power) "came to be everybody's business" (women and slaves, as usual, excepted). Rotating the authority among the several groups of citizens, thus making domination and submission alternating sides of the same relationships, rendering decisions by public debate among equals in the public square, hence as open covenants openly arrived at, so elevating speech to preeminence over all other instruments of power, speech that was no longer the compelling ritual word pronounced from on high but an argument to be judged as persuasive in the light of wisdom and knowledge verifiable by all as something called truth, the *polis*, by these and many other means, subjected social action to the collective will and made men conscious of their history as human history.

I take up Vernant's thesis as the general point of this lecture: that different cultural orders have their own modes of historical action, consciousness, and determination—their own historical practice. Other times, other customs, and according to the otherness of the customs, the distinctive anthropology that is needed to understand any given human course. For there is no simply "human" course (*devenir*), as Durkheim said, "but each society has its own life, its own course, and similar societies are as comparable in their historicity [or mode of development] as in their structure" (1905-06:140).<sup>2</sup> This mention of structural types is perhaps enough to forestall the idea that I am making merely an idiographic point of historical relativity. Rather I begin with certain reflections on divine kingship, the type of structure from which the *polis* took radical departure, in order to examine the general cultural practice of heroic history.

### HEROIC HISTORY

The idea is from Vico, after Homeric precedents, but as further worked out in the anthropology of archaic kingship by Frazer and Hocart, and tempered in Dumontian concepts of hierarchy.<sup>3</sup> The historical implications follow from the presence of divinity among men, as in the person of the sacred king or the powers of the magical chief. Accordingly, the principle of historical practice becomes synonymous with divine action: the creation of the human and cosmic order by the god.

Of course, I am not suggesting some neolithic form of the great-man theory of history. Nor do I speak of "charisma"—unless it be the "routinized charisma" that structurally amplifies a personal effect by transmission along the lines of established relationships. In a version of the Social Contract that still stands as the philosophic Magna Carta of the General Will, Rousseau argued that "each State can have for enemies only other States, and not men; for between things disparate in nature there can be no real relation." Yet ethnography shows that the Maori chief "lives the life of a whole tribe," that "he gathers the relationship to other tribes in his person" (Johansen 1954:180). His marriages are intertribal alliances; his ceremonial exchanges, trade; injuries to himself are cause for war.

Here history is anthropomorphic in principle, which is to say in structure.<sup>4</sup> Granted that history is much more than the doings of great men, is always and everywhere the life of communities, but precisely in these heroic polities the king is the condition of the possibility of community. " 'If I eat,' " says the Kuba man, " 'it is the King; if I sleep, it is the King; if I drink, it is the King' " (Vansina 1964:101).<sup>5</sup> The general life conditions of the people are ordered, as social form and collective destiny, by the particular dispositions of the powers-that-be. Nor is the process a reflexive "ideology" merely, since the general will is not for all that the sovereign interest, except as it is the interest of the sovereign. Hence the pertinent historiography cannot be—as in the good Social Science tradition—a simple quantitative assessment of the people's opinions or circumstances, based on a statistically random sample, as if one were thus taking the pulse of fundamental social *tendencies*. Heroic history proceeds more like Fenimore Cooper Indians—to use Elman Service's characterization: each man, as he walks single-file along the trail, is careful to step in the footprints of the one ahead, so as to leave the impression of One Giant Indian.

So for over a century after their conversion by Methodist missionaries, Fijians could still refer to Christianity as "the religion of Thakombau" (Derrick 1950:115).<sup>6</sup> Thakombau was the ruling chief of the great Mbau confederacy, the dominant power in 19th-century Fiji. On April 30, 1854, he finally declared for Jehovah, after more than 15 years of missionary hectoring. Earlier, in mid-1852, the missionaries had counted only 850 "regular worshippers" in the Mbau area (Methodist Missionary Society: Fiji District, 1852). But directly on Thakombau's conversion, together with certain military successes, "the Holy Ghost was poured out plentifully" in the Mbau dominions, so that by mid-1855 church attendance had increased to 8870 (Williams and Calvert 1859:484). This proves that in the mathematics of Fijian history,  $8870 - 850 = 1$ . The statistical difference was Thakombau.

On the other hand, the figure of 850 for 1852 by far underestimates the number of Fijians, including Thakombau, who for years had acknowledged the "truth" of the foreigner's god. Even many of the Fijian gods, speaking through priests, had already conceded the supremacy of Jehovah and fled elsewhere, or else indicated they were themselves prepared to become Christians.<sup>7</sup> "Confessing that Christianity was true," Thakombau in 1850 counseled Brother Calvert to have patience, as when he himself turned, "all would follow" (ibid.:445-446). And this proves that the politics of conversion is no simple expression of conviction.

The repeated reference to "truth" in these archives indicates that the widespread disposition to heed Christianity was a matter of Fijian mythopoeitics, if not yet of chiefly politics. For the Fijian 'true' (*dina*) is a gloss of *mana*, as Hocart (1914) observed, denoting a power of bringing-into-existence, even as an action that fails for want of *mana* is a 'lie' (*lasu*). So the Fijian chief said to the Methodist missionary, "True—everything is true that comes from the white man's country; muskets & gunpowder are true, & your religion must be true" (Schütz 1977:95, cf. Waterhouse 1866:303). The extraordinary European presence was for Fijians a "total" social fact, "religious" at the same time it was "political" and "economic." More exactly, it could be made intelligible only in the terms of a native theory that stood Marx on his head by its determination "in the final analysis" by the spiritual superstructure. In 1838, the paramount chief of Rewa, soon to be Thakombau's great enemy, but never a professing Christian, admits the missionary's point that "the gods of Fiji are not true: they are like the Tongan gods," he says, of whom it has been shown that "they are not gods; those who trusted them have been destroyed, and those who attended to the religion of the foreigners are prosperous" (Cross: Oct. 22, 1838). If the missionaries labored for years in central Fiji without famous success—save most notably among the sick, who supposed by the same theory that the Wesleyans' god

made their medicines work—it was not for lack of credence in popular opinion. Rather, the issue turned on the ruling chiefs, especially of Mbau and Rewa, who had been fighting each other since 1843.

Asked why they did not heed God's word, the people of Viwa Island, subject to Mbau, would tell Brother Cross, "I wait for [my chief] Namosimalua" (Methodist Missionary Society, District Minutes, 1841). So "the common people wait for their Chiefs," as another missionary complained, "one Chief waits for another [superior chief], one land waits for another land, thus there is in many areas a stalemate" (Jaggar: Oct. 21, 1839). "If Rewa would take the lead," says a third, "we should soon have one hundred thousand *professed* Christians in Fiji" (Williams and Calvert 1859:408). But as one chief thus waited for another, the other was waiting for the right moment. Thakombau was not about to change gods in midwar. And when he finally did change, the same option was precluded for his rival, the Rewa chief: "'If we all *lotu* [become Christian],' " the latter said, "'we must give up fighting; as it will not do to pray to the same god, and fight with each other'" (ibid.:356). The conversion came only as a tactic of despair.<sup>8</sup> In the 12th year of war, Mbau was virtually under siege by Rewan forces, even as its European trade was also under embargo by disaffected merchants and its allies were deserting to the enemy by the clan, village, and chiefdom. At this juncture, Thakombau found "the true God"—together with certain windward Christian soldiers, from the Tongan Islands. Aided now by missionary intrigue and the decisive military support of the Christian King of Tonga, Thakombau was able to rout his enemies at the battle of Kamba in 1855. He was indeed saved.

The old religion then gave birth to the new. For as Fijians say, "in olden times, the chief was our god," and Christianity owed something to this ancient conception of divinity. Christianity was destined to become "the religion of Thakombau" because it was won in a battle whose causes were as identified with the chief as the reasons men fought lay in their constituted obligations to serve him, the terms and modes of that service (*nqaravi*) being the same as ritual adoration of the God. Moreover, the same sense of divinity orchestrated the course of battle, with a parallel domino effect on the outcome.

The Fijians fought like Tacitus' Germans: "The chief [*princeps*] fights for victory; the followers [*comites*] for their chief" (*Germ.* XIV).<sup>9</sup> A few weeks before the decisive engagement at Kamba, the paramount chief of Rewa died suddenly of dysentery, without regaining consciousness or passing the charge of war to a successor. Immediately and quasi-totally, the principal Rewan opposition to Mbau disintegrated. The surviving notables sued Thakombau for peace, telling also of their willingness to follow Jehovah. It cannot be that they were merely crypto-rationalists who knew how to find good ideological reasons for extricating themselves from an untenable military situation, since all this happened when they were on the threshold of victory. On the other hand, in the ensuing battle of Kamba, the absence of the main Rewan host proved a serious if not fatal weakness for Thakombau's remaining adversaries. The real correlation of forces and consequent course of events—with effects still visible in the structure of Fijian politics—had turned on the being of the sacred chief, whose sudden removal dissolved the purpose and articulation of his armies.

This really *is* a history of kings and battles, but only because it is a cultural order that, multiplying the action of the king by the system of society, gives him a disproportionate historical effect. Briefly, I recapitulate certain interrelated tendencies of the Fijian case, on the conjecture that they are paradigmatic of a history in the heroic mode. First, the general force of circumstance, such as the European presence, becomes the specific course of history according to the determinations of the higher politics. The infrastructure is realized as historical form and event in the terms of ruling interests, and according to their conjuncture. Second, this history shows an unusual capacity for sudden change or

rupture: a mutation of the cultural course, developing as the rapid popular generalization of an heroic action. Hence the statistical quantum leaps. As a corollary, a history of this structural type produces great men, even geniuses, by transforming the intelligent acts of individuals into fateful outcomes for the society—consider the brilliant results of Thakombau's conversion. Or more generally, where history thus unfolds as the social extension of the heroic person, it is likely to present a curious mixture of tactical geniality and practical irrationality. If Thakombau consistently exemplifies the first, the collapse of Rewa at the death of its chief and on the brink of victory makes an example of irrationality that sorely tries our own native sense of hardheaded surrealism. Still, Chadwick (1926:340-341) found analogous episodes—the capture or death of the enemy king leading to “destruction of the enemy's organisation” and “forthwith to the end of hostilities”—a recurrent feature of the Germanic heroic age, both as poetry and as history. And anthropologists could come up with many exotic events of the same structural form, if at the risk of obliterating the distinction between history and ritual.

Consider the incident famous in Zulu annals where the triumphant army of Shaka's predecessor Dingiswayo suddenly dissolves upon the abduction and assassination of the latter: a complete reversal of fortune that elicits from the missionary-ethnographer unflattering comment on “the innate helplessness of the Bantu people when once deprived of their leader” (Bryant 1929:166). Indeed, the whole Mtétwa confederacy fashioned by Dingiswayo broke up at his death, making the opening for Shaka, leader of the subordinate Zulu “tribe.”<sup>10</sup> The rest, as they say, is history, including the crises of cosmic proportions that attended attempts on Shaka's life, and again at the death of his mother, female complement of the Nguni dual sovereignty (see Heusch 1982). The entire Zulu nation was plunged into paroxysms of internal slaughter, seeking to forestall, by these massive purges of evil, the conjunction of Sky and Earth that would naturally follow the fall of the heavenly ruler.<sup>11</sup>

I purposely associate the cosmological catastrophe with the military debacle on grounds that the two are the same in principle. The disarray of the victorious army bereft of its leader is an enactment, in the modality of history, of the same ritual chaos that sets in at the death of the divine king, well known to ethnography as the return to an original condition of cosmic disorder. In Hawaii, men then wear their loin cloths on their heads, and chiefly women fornicate in public places with commoner men they would otherwise disdain. Giving vent to their grief in various forms of self-mutilation, the people in general so die with their king. The world thus dissolves, until the heir-apparent, who had been kept apart from such pollution, returns to reinstate the tabus and redivide the lands—that is, to recreate the differences that make up the natural and cultural order.<sup>12</sup> Yet we speak of this as “ritual,” while holding apart the homologous collapse of armies as “battle,” and by such means merely mark our own distinctions between “make-believe” and “reality,” while preserving a sense of history as the kingdom of practical reason. Could we remove the praxological scales from our eyes, it would be seen that all these and other events, ranging from the fratricidal strife of the East African interregnum to the seclusion of the king in Polynesian rites of world-renewal, refer to the same system of hierarchy. But I cannot rehearse here the whole text of *The Golden Bough*.

Suffice it to call attention to certain sociological aspects of the kingship as a cosmic principle of order. I mean the various social forms underlying the generalization of heroic action, or the One-Giant-Indian effect. Those I single out—heroic segmentation, hierarchical solidarity, positional succession, division of labor in historic consciousness—are not universal in the heroic societies, but they are probably sufficiently typical.

Old-time students of social structure will appreciate the differences between heroic modes of lineage formation and developmental processes of the classic segmentary lineage system. The segmentary lineage reproduces itself from the bottom upwards: by

natural increase among its minimal groups and fission along the collateral lines of a common ancestry. Societies such as Zulu and Hawaiian, however—or the Nguni and Polynesian chiefdoms generally—present also the reverse evolution. The major “lineage”/territorial divisions develop from the top of the system downward, as the extension of domestic fission in the ruling families. Call it “heroic segmentation.” Initiated by the centrifugal dispersion of the royal kindred, typically in anticipation of a struggle over succession, the process entails redistribution of the underlying (or defeated) people among members of the ruling aristocracy. The principles of descent are in effect superseded at the higher levels of segmentary order by the privileges of authority. Barnes (1951, 1967) supplies notable examples from the Ngoni: the establishment of “quasi-agnatic” communities around the several royal wives and their respective sons, whose rivalry may issue finally in independent kingdoms. Organized by the relations of power among contemporary princes, rather than by ancestral reference, the main political groups are thus constituted as the social projections of heroic ambitions.<sup>13</sup>

Parenthetically (and speculatively), might not the whole remarkable expansion of Nguni states since the late 18th century, including Zulu, Swazi, and Ndabele, be the historic trace of such heroic processes? The state probably originates as the structural means of some personal project of glory.

We need a notion of “hierarchical solidarity” to go alongside Durkheim’s mechanical and organic types. In the heroic societies, the coherence of the members or subgroups is not so much due to their similarity (mechanical solidarity) or their complementarity (organic solidarity) as to their common submission to the ruling power. The corollary of hierarchical solidarity is a devaluation of tribalism as we know it, since the collectivity is defined by its adherence to a given chief or king rather than by distinctive cultural attributes—even as bonds of kinship and relations to ancestral lands are dissolved by such processes as heroic segmentation. Chadwick repeatedly remarks on the absence of “national” sentiment or interest in the European heroic age, by comparison to the prevailing concept of a state apparently “regarded as little more than the property of the individual” (1926:336). And Benveniste observes that, apart from Western Europe, a term for *society* does not appear in the classical vocabulary of Indo-European institutions. Instead, the concept “is expressed in a different fashion. In particular one recognizes it under the name of *realm* [*royaume*]: the limits of society coincide with a certain power, which is the power of the king” (1969 vol. 2:9). In this light, the potential for *déracinement* which we have seen in Africa, and which could be matched for migration and conquest by Germania, Mongolia, or Polynesia, appears as characteristic of the heroic age: the counterpart in historicity of a certain hierarchy.<sup>14</sup>

Beyond personal ambition and glory, the battle royals at the center of these historic maelstroms must also refer to certain structures. I can show this for the fratricidal strife of Fijian chiefly families, and the explication would probably hold for Nguni states, likewise marked by the polygynous alliances of the rulers to ranking women of strategic clans or neighboring states. Such alliances make up the larger set of political relations. But in the event, the sons of a given paramount, as representatives of their respective mothers’ peoples, condense in their own persons the entire regional system of political interests. An extensive correlation of social forces is realized in and by the interpersonal relations of royal households, especially the rivalries of paternal half-brothers—and rides on their outcome. Uneasy then lies the head that wears the kingly crown. The structural weight that aristocratic kinship is forced to bear helps explain the Byzantine intrigue, climaxed by cruel scenes of fratricide or parricide, so often told in the annals of heroic history.<sup>15</sup>

And insofar as all the dead generations structurally “weigh like a nightmare on the brain of the living,” these struggles may never end. “Yes, 1852,” said the Tongan, “that was the

year . . . I fought King Ta'ufa'ahau." But, comments the ethnographer, "the actual person who fought King Ta'ufa'ahau was the speaker's great-great-great-grandfather" (Bott 1981:23). We have all heard of the "royal we." Here, as an expression of *positional succession*, is an even more radical "heroic I." Thus a subclan headman of the Luapula Kingdom of Kazembe:

We came to the country of Mwanshya. . . . I killed a puku [antelope]. . . . We gave some of the meat to Mwanshya. He asked where the salt came from and he was told. So he sent people who killed me. My mother was angry and went to fetch medicine to send thunderbolts. She destroyed Mwanshya's village. . . . Lukoshi then told me to go forward and that he would stay and rule Mwanshya's country. So we came away. . . . Lubunda . . . heard about my strength. He came to see us and married my mother. They went away and I remained [Cunnison 1959:234, cf. Cunnison 1951, 1957].

All these events, including the narrator's death, transpired before he was born.<sup>16</sup>

By the heroic I—and various complements such as perpetual kinship—the main relationships of society are at once projected historically and embodied currently in the persons of authority. Contemporary ancestors, such heroic figures are structuring simply by being, insofar as the existence of other people is defined by theirs. In European talk this is "power," but "power" then is a positional or systematic value, that may work as well by influence as by coercion. Moreover, the structure as incarnate in such powers-that-be may thereupon prove immune to what other people actually do. At issue is the historical relation between cultural order and empirical practice—which I illustrate again from Fiji:

Dynastic legends tell of the origin of the ruling line from the union of an immigrant prince with a ranking woman of indigenous people.<sup>17</sup> The chiefs henceforth stand as wife-takers and sisters' sons to the people of the land. This helps explain why Fijians say, "The chief is our god." For the paradigmatic privilege of the uterine nephew is to seize the sacrifices made to the god of his mother's people (Hocart 1915, 1936). Consuming the offering—which is to say "tribute" and "trade," in ethnographic pidgin—the chief thus takes the place of the people's god. Now it does not matter, structurally, that certain current marriages between lesser women of chiefly clans and men of the people may run counter to the divine status of the ruling line as wife-takers. Precisely, what ordinary people do is not systematically decisive, in comparison with the higher-order social effects sedimented by aristocratic relationships. And high Fijian chiefs, we have seen, continue to differentially make history by polygynous marriages that amount to systems of intertribal alliance. The structure is not statistical. It is not the expression in institutions of the empirical frequencies of interactions. As the Maori proverb goes, "the great man is not hidden among the many."<sup>18</sup>

Writing of the new history, Barraclough (1978:58) tells us that "all generalizations," including such historical judgments as "significant," are "inherently quantitative"—which presumably also goes for what he just said. For heroic history, then, the effective statistical rule would be something like a Principle of the Significant One: the one who counts. This demonstrates, quantitatively, that "significance" is a qualitative value—in the first place (see Thompson 1977:254-255).

The complement of such heroic statistics is a political division of labor in cultural and historical consciousness. The time of society is calculated in dynastic genealogies, as collective history resides in royal traditions. In the state rituals and political councils of the elite, the cultural schemes are subject to manipulation and comment by specialists, such as priests and genealogists, attached to the ruling interests. Whereas, in the villages, anthropologists encounter a certain indifference to the historic Great Tradition, coupled with an inclination on the people's part to offer improvised pragmatic responses to questions about "custom," in place of the exotic exegeses on the meaning of things their in-



terlocutors had been trained to consider "the culture." The short and simple annals of the poor.

"There are probably no people possessing an equal amount of intelligence," wrote an early White trader among Zulu, "who are less well-acquainted with their history than the Kaffirs" (Fynn in Bird 1888:104). Judging from Bryant's (1929) success in collecting a detailed Zulu tradition, the assertion must refer to the generality of common folks. Besides, Europeans residing early and late among the equally intelligent Austronesians have run into the same experience, at least in certain quarters. The missionary Hunt said of Fijians that "they know next to nothing of their past. Their origin and history are both a complete mystery to them" (Oct. 28, 1843). Malani of Lakemba (Fiji) was garrulous enough, Hocart found, "but was said to know little because he had been brought up among the common people and not the nobles" (Hocart, n.d.:22). Similarly, a recent notice of Madagascar relates: "History is not evenly distributed because to have it is a sign of politico-religious power and authority" (Feeley-Harnik 1978:402; cf. Fox 1971, on Roti). Examples could be multiplied, but the best would probably remain Cunnison's brilliant analysis of political distinctions in historical consciousness among the Luapula peoples (1951, cf. Cunnison 1957, 1959).

Pocock's well-known article on the anthropology of time-reckoning (1964) makes the differential historical consciousness an aspect of the formal logic of hierarchy. "The larger co-ordination," Pocock writes, or higher level of social system, "subsumes the less." The kingship thus provides a general time indication for the diverse incidents of lineage tradition or personal recollection which, taken by themselves, would be, in a strict sense, socially meaningless and temporally mere duration. Just so, in exemplary expressions of hierarchical encompassment, the old-time Hawaiian figures his own biography in terms of the king's activity: "I was born when Kamehameha conquered O'ahu"; "I was old enough to carry stones when Kamehameha built the fish pond at Kiholo"; and the like.<sup>19</sup> Their own lives are calqued on the king's—

Upon the king! Let us our lives, our souls,  
Our debts, our careful wives,  
Our children, and our sins, lay on the King!

Henry V. IV, i.

At the extreme, the people verge on "historylessness." In Hawaii, the continuous redistribution of lands among the ruling chiefs preempts any local lineage formation, reducing genealogical memories among the common people largely to personal recollections. Having lost control of their own social reproduction, as Bonte puts it for the analogous situation of Tuareg, the people are left without a historical appreciation of the main cultural categories (Bonte and Echard 1976:270ff.). For them, the culture is mostly "lived"—in practice, and as *habitus*. Their lives are run on an unconscious mastery of the system, something like Everyman's control of the grammatical categories, together with the homespun concepts of the good that allow them to improvise daily activities on the level of the pragmatic and matter-of-fact. Such unreflexive mastery of percept and precept is what Bourdieu calls *habitus*: "schemes of thought and expression . . . [that] are the basis for the intentionless invention of regulated improvisation" (1977:79).

The people's code, however, is not altogether so "restricted." True, Hawaiian kings have genealogies going back 963 generations, associated with cosmic myths and royal legends whose telling, especially in political argument, is an express manipulation of the cultural categories. Yet the common people for their part have scores if not hundreds of contemporary kith and kin about whom they endlessly "talk story"—tell the news. Now news is not just anything about anybody; it is likewise a selective determination of what is significant according to canons of cultural value. If "So-and-so, the youngest son of So-

and-so, married So-and-so—you know the adopted favorite daughter of the Kealoha folks—and moved inland to take up farming," then a whole series of distinctions and relations between land and sea, agriculture and fishing, junior and senior, birth and adoption—the same sorts of difference that make a difference in royal rite or myth—are being engaged in the recitation of the quotidian and mundane. Besides, the people's gossip often retails enchanted happenings as fabulous as those of myth. It is something of the myth of everyday life.<sup>20</sup> The cultural consciousness objectified in historical forms among the elite appears rather in the practical activities and current annals of the people: a division of cultural labors corresponding to the heroic mode of historical production.

We need not exaggerate the contrast to ourselves, given that the general interest of the bourgeois state is the particular interest of its ruling classes, as Marx taught. But capitalist society does have a distinctive mode of appearance, therefore a definite anthropological consciousness, pervasive also in the theoretical dispositions of the Academy. The native "Boo-jwas" theory is that social outcomes are the cumulative expressions of individual actions, hence behind that of the prevailing state of the people's wants and opinions, as generated especially out of their material sufferings. As if by an Invisible Hand, the society is constructed as the institutional sum of its individual practices. The classical locus of this folklore is, of course, the marketplace, where the relative success of autonomous individual agents, thus the political order of the economy, is measurable by the quantitative shares respectively obtained in the public boodle at the cost of whom it may concern—while at the same time this social process is *experienced* by the participants as the maximization of their personal satisfactions. And since all such satisfactions, from listening to the Chicago Symphony to calling home by a long-distance phone call, require the reduction of diverse social conditions and relations to their lowest common denominator of pecuniary expense to rationally allocate one's finite resources, the impression is given that the whole culture is organized by people's businesslike economizing. This impression is doubled by the democratic political process in which Everyman counts as "one" (vote), so representing the governing powers as "the people's cherce." The prevailing quantitative, populist, and materialist presuppositions of our social science can then be no accident—or there is no anthropology.

On the other hand, the different cultural orders studied by anthropology have their own historicities. Even the kinship orders. Ignoring the passage of time and generation, Crow/Omaha kinship turns contingent events of marriage into perpetual relationships by freezing whole lineages into the familial positions assumed at an initial alliance. Likewise, the elementary marriage systems would reproduce indefinitely the relationships of intermarrying groups; whereas the complex systems, defined negatively by rules against kin marriages, introduce discontinuity in group alliances and their reformulation generation to generation. The Ilongot act on the sense that they invent their own social lives, each generation as it were rediscovering the Philippines (Rosaldo 1980). But do they not thus refer to a system of complex marriage, combined with optative (cognatic) filiation, which besides generates long-term closure of its moments of kindred and residential dispersion? Only that for the Ilongot, as for the Americans, the structure is reproduced as travestied in the aphorisms of the *habitus*—"we follow our hearts"—and through the unreflected mastery of its percepts. The issue is not the absence of structure, but its inscription in *habitus*, as opposed to its objectification as mythopoetics.<sup>21</sup> Here is a main distinction of structures, cross-cutting the others to which I alluded: between those that are practiced primarily through the individual subconscious and those that explicitly organize history as the metaphor of mythical realities. I turn to an extended example of the latter, chosen again for the scandal it makes to a received historiography.

## MYTHO-PRAXIS

In his introduction to the *Peloponnesian War*, Thucydides tells of his intention to eliminate all elements of the marvelous from his history since, as he modestly explained: "My work is not a piece of writing designed to meet the taste of an immediate public, but was done to last forever." So begins the Western historiography of the Unvarnished Truth or the triumph of *logos* over *mythos* (see Vernant 1979:196ff.). Curious then that Sir George Grey, in the preface to his *Polynesian Mythology*, tells how he was compelled to gather his great corpus of Maori myth in order to fight a certain Polynesian war. Appointed Governor of New Zealand in the midst of a Maori uprising, Sir George soon discovered that he could not negotiate the critical issues of war and peace with Maori chiefs unless he had a sound knowledge of their poetry and mythology:

To my surprise . . . I found that these chiefs, either in their speeches to me or in their letters, frequently quoted, in explanation of their views and intentions, fragments of ancient poems and proverbs, or made allusions which rested on an ancient system of mythology; and, although it was clear that the most important parts of their communications were embodied in these figurative forms, the interpreters . . . could . . . rarely (if ever) translate the poems or explain the allusions. . . . Clearly, however, I could not, as Governor of the country, permit so close a veil to be drawn between myself and the aged and influential chiefs whom it was my duty to attach to British interests and to the British race. . . . Only one thing could under such circumstances be done, and that was to acquaint myself with the ancient language of the country, to collect its traditional poems and legends, to induce their priests to impart to me their mythology, and to study their proverbs. [Grey 1956 (1855): unpagged front matter]

The documented history of the Polynesian wars thus begins where the landmark history of the Peloponnesian wars left off. And if anthropology then inherits a famous collection of myths from the practicalities of battle, it is because the Maori, who think of the future as behind them, find in a marvelous past the measure of the demands that are made to their current existence.

I exemplify by a letter composed in the style of public oratory, in the course of which the author, a chief, sends a threat of war to another chief in the form of a love song (Shortland 1856:189-192). According to the *pakehā* (European) authority to whom the example is due, the threat lies in the refrain, "The hand that was stretched out and returned *tapu* shall become *noa* [i.e., 'free from *tapu*,' 'profane']." The woman in this way tells her previously rejected suitor that if he tries again he will have better success—presumably that what was before untouchable (*tapu*) shall become touchable (*noa*).<sup>22</sup> So the chief is telling his enemy that although last time he came away unscathed, if he dares to return he can expect a warm welcome. Maori will get the allusion since from the beginning of mankind sex has been a battle that women win, turning the death of the man (detumescence) into the life of the people (the child). Maori say, "The genitals of women are killers of men." Behind that too is the myth of the origin of death wherein the trickster Maui, in a vain attempt to win immortality for mankind, is crushed in the vagina of the ancestress-guardian of the underworld (Best 1924 vol. 1:146ff.; 1925:763-767, 944-948; Goldie 1905; Johansen 1954:228ff.; J. Smith 1974-75).

Clearly, Maori are cunning mythologists who are able to select from the supple body of traditions those most appropriate to the satisfaction of their current interests, as they conceive them. The distinctiveness of their mytho-praxis is not the existence (or the absence) of such interests, but exactly that they are so conceived. The Maori, as Johansen says, "find themselves in history" (1954:163).<sup>23</sup>

Although there are extant examples of such mythic discourse from the very rebellion that brought Sir George (then Captain) Grey to New Zealand, I am rather in the same quandary as he in trying to decode them.<sup>24</sup> Perhaps, then, I may be allowed to make use

of a similar speech from John White's (1874) reconstruction of the daily life of the Ngapuhi, the tribe that instigated the uprising in question. The speaker, Rou, a man of some standing in the community, although not the highest, had lost a son in battle and is now protesting the decision of the tribal notables that the enemy victims taken in revenge be buried instead of eaten, because of kinship relations between the warring groups. Rou begins by reciting the legend of the origin of the clan, hence the common descent and character of himself and the elders. This leads into a disquisition on the relation of microcosm and macrocosm: "Man is like this world. . . . He has a voice: the world has its wind. The world has soil: man has a heart," and so forth. Rou acknowledges the chiefs' powers over the cosmos, however, and enunciates the principle of heroic generalization: "Man is like the wind. If the wind blows one way, it all blows that way. If one man praises the chief, all men praise him. . . . As the wind blows in one way, so men blow in the direction you indicate. . . ." But now he sets forth his disagreement, which begins at the origin of the world. He recites the myth of the Children of Rangi (the Heavens)—myth collected by Grey, incidentally, in *Polynesian Mythology*. The story tells of the origin of cannibalism among the divine ancestors, a cannibalism that is also the institution and possibility of human existence. Tū, ancestor and patron of man as warrior, defeats his older brothers, the other sons of Rangi, who are the parents of birds, trees, fish, wild and cultivated foods. To defeat is to render *noa* (without *tapu*) and consumable. Tū is thus able to consume his brothers' offspring, power he passes on to mankind. "If then the gods eat each other," Rou argues, "and they were brothers . . . I ask, why was I not allowed to eat those who killed my child?" Rou goes on to double this mythical argument with another about the divine origin of witchcraft, which explains how evil came into the hearts of men, including his own project of cannibal vengeance. Assuring the chiefs he will not now go against their wishes, he nonetheless concludes by citing two proverbs that signify he will alone and in due time have satisfaction. "You know the proverb that says, 'The anger of relatives is a fire that burns fiercely' [i.e., his own anger at his son's death], and another that says, 'the hand alone can get food to spare for its own body'" (White 1874:185-193).

The Maori past is a vast scheme of life possibilities, ranging from ancient myth to recent memory through a series of epochs parallel in structure and analogous in event, while successively changing in content from the abstract and universal to the concrete and individual, from the divine to the human and on to the ancestral group, from the separation of Heaven and Earth to the delimitation of the clan territories.<sup>25</sup> The kind of transformation between sacred myth and historic legend that Dumézil (1968) finds operating between different branches of the Indo-European stock thus appears within the Maori tradition as a connected succession of stages, with the added consideration that the movement from the cosmic to the "historic" is consummated by the ultimate expression of the same structure as—real life. In the cosmic myths are the generic possibilities. Birth, death, illness, sex, revenge, cannibalism: the elementary experiences are constituted by the deeds of primordial gods/ancestors. But each 'tribe' (*iwi*) also has a humanity specific to itself, arising from the attributes of its particular ancestors and the saga of their migration from Hawaiki, spiritual homeland of the Maori (see the examples in Simmons 1976). The order of social structure is then established by the progression through the New Zealand landscape of tribal and clanic ancestors, leaving their respective traces in the local set of geographic features named from their doings, and in the particular set of persons, both human and "natural," descended from their multiple unions with women of the indigenous 'land people' (*tangata whenua*). In this, social structure is the humanized form of cosmic order. The prototype is the primordial search of the divine ancestor Tāne—Tāne, the Fertilizer—for the *uha*, the female element: search that gave rise, in a series of exotic sexual experiments, to various kinds of birds, trees, insects,

waters, and rocks, and eventually to humanity through the mating of the god with a woman fashioned from the *mons veneris* of the Earth Mother (Papa). As Tāne did on an elemental scale, thus did the tribal ancestors in New Zealand. So the main cultural relationships devolve through a series of progressively distinctive and delimited forms, corresponding to the devolution in social sphere or segmentary level, from primordial myths to tribal and clan legends, and from clan legends to family histories, until—as carried forward in the ancestral references of proverbial sayings, proper names or the pronoun “I”—they become the order of present existence. The final form of cosmic myth is current event.

“The life that the ancestors lived forth in history is the same as that active in the living” (Johansen 1954:163). Johansen thus introduces a contrast of the Maori to the Western historical sense analogous to Furet’s deft critique of *l’histoire événementielle* as necessarily the client of finalist ideologies, there being no other way of making intelligible events conceived as sudden eruptions of “the unique and the new into the concatenation of time” (1972:54). For Maori, such events are hardly unique or new but are immediately perceived in the received order of structure, as identical with their original. Hence where Western thought struggles to comprehend the history of contingent events that it makes for itself by invoking underlying forces or structures, such as those of production or *mentalité*, the Maori world unfolds as an eternal return, the recurrent manifestation of the same experiences (see Eliade 1954). This collapse of time and happening is mediated for Maori by a third term: *tihanga*, the distinctive action of beings and things that comes of their particular nature. If the present reproduces the past, it is because the denizens of this world are instances of the same kinds of being that came before. This relation of class to individual is the very notion of descent, that is, of the relation of ancestor to descendant, and as is well known the whole universe is for Maori a gigantic kin of common ancestry. Such being the ontological case, we should be wary, as Johansen cautions, of imputing to Maori our own ideas of the individuality of event and experience: “We find it quite obvious that once an event has happened, it never returns; but this is exactly what happens” (1954:161). Hence the very experiences of the past are the way the present is experienced:

It was a source of pure, unadulterated joy for the old time Maori, to be able to say to an enemy, “I ate your father” or “your ancestor,” although the occurrence may have occurred ten generations before his time. . . . [Best 1902-03:71; emphasis added]

For Maori, ontogeny “recapitulates” cosmogony. The human sexual act recreates the original union of male Heaven (Rangi) and female Earth (Papa). In particular, the incantations used in conception rites are those that enabled the first parent Tāne to produce human offspring with the Earth-formed woman (Hine-ahu-one) fashioned from Papa. The physiology of birth becomes the saga of creation (see Goldie 1905; Best 1929). The womb is the *pō*. *Pō* in myth is the long night of the world’s self-generation, issuing finally in the *ao*, the ‘day’ or world of humans and gods (*ao marama*). A synonym for the placenta is *whenua*, otherwise ‘land’ or ‘earth,’ a reference thus to the primordial mother. The umbilicus attaching this earth to the child, product of the divine male seed, is itself called the *iho*, a term also denoting the heart and strength of a tree (H. W. Williams 1975:75). Here again is Tāne, parent and body of trees, who in myth assumed just this position between the Earth and the sacred Heavens. The “self-extolling,” the “degeneration-causing” younger brother of the gods, Tāne stood upon his head, pressed against the Earth Mother and in an act likened to parricide pushed the Sky Father from her embrace. By then propping up the Sky with four poles, Tāne and his divine accomplices—including the warrior Tū, who performed the necessary (human) sacrifice—made it possible for their human progeny to take possession of the Earth (see Grey 1956; Best 1976; J.

Smith 1974-75; S. Smith 1913-15; White 1855). Or again, at a later time man 'descends' (*heke*, 'migrates') across the waters from the spiritual homeland of Hawaiki to New Zealand, by means of a canoe fashioned of a tree, another body of Tāne. Creation, migration, and parturition are so many versions of the same story. So the father chants to his newborn son:

It was he [Tāne] who put the poles of heaven above us,  
Then you were born to the world of light. [Johansen 1954:161]

We thus return directly to history, in fact to the very uprising that brought Sir George Grey to New Zealand and (to close the circle) gave us the canonical texts of this mythology. The whole revolt of 1844-46 was about a certain pole, likewise having to do with possession of the Earth: the flagstaff flying the British colors above Kororareka in the Bay of Islands, long the most populous European settlement. I am not speaking figuratively (merely). On four separate occasions between July 1844 and March 1845, the Maori "rebel" Hone Heke and his warriors of the Ngapuhi tribe cut down that flagpole. And Heke's persistence in downing it was matched only by the British insistence on resurrecting it. Following the final storming of the pole, British troops, aided by certain Maori "loyalists," fought three major engagements with Heke and his allies—in the first two of which the colonials were well and truly beaten. But throughout, for Heke, the flagstaff itself remained the *putake o te riri*, the 'root cause of the war,' in the sense also of the strategic objective.<sup>26</sup>

"He contends for one object only," reads a contemporary newspaper account, "the non-erection of the flag-staff" (Carleton 1874 vol. 2: appendix, vi). Nor did Heke condone the interest in plunder that seemed to motivate certain others. " 'Let us fight,' he told his ally Kawiti, " 'with the flagstaff alone' " (ibid.: xlv). For the fourth assault, of March 11, 1845, Kawiti and his warriors were deployed to make an attack on the European settlement at Kororareka as a *diversion*, so that Heke could go up the hill and take the flagpole! Their own mission accomplished, Heke and his men thereupon sat on the hillside to watch the fracas in the town below. In May, Heke was discussing with Reverend Burrows the governor's possible terms for peace: " 'One condition,' he said, 'must be that he [the governor] does not erect another flagstaff' " (Burrows 1886:30).

For their part, the British, if they did not attach exactly the same finality to the flagstaff, knew how to appreciate its "symbolic" value and to take the appropriate response—of general panic. Nearly every time the pole went down, fresh calls for reinforcements were sent to Australia: to show the Maori, as one dispatch urged, that Britons were willing to protect their women from insult and their flag from "dishonour." But when the Maori insurgents made their attack on Kororareka, the British, after at first beating them off, precipitously abandoned the town, to the utter "mystification" of the Maori, who "had never asked for it, or fought for it," and in their "bewilderment" even hesitated momentarily before they looted it (Carleton 1874 vol. 2:93). About the flagstaff itself, the colonials had always shown a better resolve. The government considered it an imperious necessity to "show the colours" and provided the flag with greater protection upon each occasion of its replacement, the fourth time surrounding the pole with a stockade and blockhouse.

There may have been some working misunderstanding here, since the Maori seem not at all as interested in the flag as they were in the pole. At the third assault, Heke, having toppled the flagstaff, was content to leave the flag itself in the hands of certain Maori "friendlies" who had been set to guarding it. Yet the blockhouse ultimately must have confirmed the rebels' interpretation, for the whole construction now plainly resembled a Maori *tūāhu*: a fenced altar within which were erected one or several poles, such as constituted the sacred precincts of Maori settlements and embodied their ancient claims to

tribal lands. Essentially, then, the British would agree with the Maori view. In September 1845 the governor sent a letter to Heke outlining the British terms of peace, which were: first, that the 1840 Treaty of Waitangi yielding "sovereignty" to the Queen be respected; and second, "the British colours to be sacred" (Buick 1926:207). Indeed, in April 1845, when 470 British troops sailed into Kororareka to reestablish "the Queen's sovereignty," their first act upon landing was to hoist the Union Jack on the beach.

Likewise when the ancestors of the Tūhoe and Ngatiawa people landed at the Bay of Plenty, "the first serious task performed by the immigrants was the making and sanctifying of a *tuahu*, or sacred place" (Best 1925:724). Best describes this sacred precinct, also called a *pouahu* or 'post-mound,' as a post or tree set in a low mound. The installation is mimetic of the god Tāne's fructification of the Earth Mother, from which issued mankind, or else of Tāne's primordial separation of Heaven and Earth — Tāne, of course, being a tree. In the ancestral *tūāhu* of the Tūhoe, a physical emblem (*mauri*) was placed, representing the prestige and stability of the tribal group. Descriptions from other areas have an old canoe-end (again Tāne) as the central post of the shrine, and the emblem kept near or in the post was the people's god, likewise housed in its 'canoe' (*waka*) or special container (Skinner 1911:76; Hiroa 1977:480-481). Given this association between the *tūāhu* and the ancestral land claim, one can understand why Hone Heke always said that the British flagstaff meant their possession of the land — else why did they persist in re-erecting it? On the other hand, contemporary chronicles are virtually unanimous in saying that Heke was put up to his attacks by outside agitators, notably the local American consul. Only Reverend Burrows (1886:6) writes that the flag above Kororareka was pointed out to Heke as "a *tohu*," a 'sign' that "their country had gone from them." Otherwise, we are supposed to believe that Heke and other chiefs were being told by certain interested White men that the Maori could put an end to British domination by cutting down the flagpole. One may judge the message as understood by Heke, however, from his own discussion of it:

I said, "what meaning is there in the flagstaff?" The white people told me, "the *mana* of the Queen is in the flag, there are three tribes [*iwi*] in it." I said, "God made this land for us, and all our children." [Carleton 1874 vol. 2, appendix C:xlvii-xlviii]

The "three tribes" are probably the English, Scots, and Irish.<sup>27</sup> In any event, the Maori had already manifested their own interpretation of similar poles in 1836, when a French man-of-war and two merchant vessels anchored at the Bay of Islands and set up small flags about the harbor for surveying purposes. The local Maori attacked these erections of the "Oui-Ouis" — so the French tribe was known — as they had immediately concluded "that the country was being taken possession of" (Carleton 1874 vol. 2:29).<sup>28</sup>

There are traditional Maori rituals, practiced within or outside the sacred precincts (*tūāhu*), which involve the use of poles set in mounds analogous to the manipulations performed by Heke on the flagstaff set upon the hill. A negative, female pole of death (*toko mate*) called 'Great Mound (or Mons Veneris) of Papa (Earth)' is overthrown, leaving erect a 'Tūāhu of the Heavens' or male pole of life (*toko ora*), all with appropriate incantations signifying the expulsion of undesirable effects (see Best 1925:1072-1074).<sup>29</sup> But in the myth of Manaia, as rendered in his own *Polynesian Mythology*, Sir George Grey could have found the most exact interpretant of Hone Heke's apparent flagpole fetish. The myth rehearses a common Maori motif of contention over land between successive parties of immigrants from Hawaiki. By a *ruse*, the people of the *second* canoe are able to prove that the local *tūāhu* is theirs, or else that theirs is the older one — "Then they looked at the poles of the *tūāhu*; the poles of the Arawa's *tūāhu* were raw [i.e., still green]; those of the Tainui were cooked by fire in order to speed up their drying" (H. W. Williams 1975:444). In the face of such arguments, the original settlers can do nothing, and are forced to leave their lands, go elsewhere.<sup>30</sup>

The mytho-practical force of the argument is that the sacred precinct, in recreating at the level of community Tāne's original separation of Heaven and Earth, recreates the act that allowed humans to inherit the Earth. Such separation of Heaven (Rangi) and Earth (Papa) or darkness (*pō*) and light (*ao*) is, as Johansen says, "the proper substance of creation, what makes the world fit to live in for a Maori" (1958:85). The fence or corner uprights of the *tūāhu* are the *toko*, term used in the Tāne myth to designate the poles propping up the Sky-Father, and meaning as a verb 'to support,' 'to push to a distance,' and 'to divorce.' *Toko* may be used for the central pole or posts too; alternately the term is *pou*, which as a verb denotes 'to fix; to render immovable' (H. W. Williams 1975:297, 434; Tregear 1969:528-529). It follows that the establishment of a *tūāhu* or *tapu* house of the god amounts to the separation of Heaven and Earth on the terrestrial plane itself—leaving the better part of that plane free (*noa*) for human occupation. Hence it is said that "the chief of any family who discovered and took possession of any unoccupied land"—the *tūāhu*, as we have seen, being the sign of such possession—"obtained what was called the *mana* of the land" (Shortland 1882:89).<sup>31</sup>

In a way, then, Hone Heke's war was already many generations old before it began. He once tried to explain to the governor that his own unruliness also was "no new thing" but inherited from his ancestors; a prominent Maori adversary indeed confirmed that it had been going on for five generations (Buick 1926:42, 198). The war had immediate precedent, however, in the career of a famous Ngapuhi chief of the previous generation, Hongi Hika, whose conquests, alliances, and person Hone Heke sought to assume. Heke's career followed a traditional mode of usurpation, or at least of upward mobility, by the warrior-chief of demonstrated *mana*, including even Heke's marriage to Hongi Hika's daughter. This respect for precedent extended to Heke's tactical choices of battle sites, taken in the first instance with a view toward the historic associations with Hongi. In the event, the tribal alliances and enmities of the last generation were engaged in the opposition of rebel and pro-British forces during Heke's uprising, albeit many of these relationships of the early 19th century were but recent residues of ancient memories of revenge.<sup>32</sup>

A Ngapuhi chief who fought on the British side has left an enchanted account of the war, full of the mythopoetic deep structures of Maori politics, as well as fabulous tales of battle of the kind Thucydides taught us to ignore (Anonymous of Ngapuhi, in Maning 1906:220-323; cf. White 1855:144-146, 175, 176). Such ignorance was indeed one of the problems the British had, according to this account: they were excellent fighters, but they just didn't know a thing about omens. However, one could perhaps take a clue from the received Western historiography and, making a virtue of the limits of time as well as theory, resolve all this mytho-praxis to the basic utilities of the economic conjuncture. The mystical activity must have really been practical—or was it that the practical activity was really mystical?

Between 1840, when the British took over New Zealand, and 1844, the northern part of the country experienced a serious decline in European trade, depriving the Maori of foreign goods to which they had become accustomed. The depression was due in part to *pakehā* depopulation in favor of the new capital at Auckland, in part due to port duties imposed by the new Colonial Government. Still, a simple economic explanation of the 1844 rebellion would be problematic, since many of the Maori loyalists were suffering (if that is the word) as much as Hone Heke's insurgents. The loyalists were led by men of aristocratic lineage opposed in Maori principle to Heke's pretensions, and notably included clans and tribes that had been victims of Heke's predecessor Hongi. But if the structure of the conjuncture cannot be determined directly from material interests, Heke's tilting at the flagstaff does seem logically appropriate to the economic crisis. Or at least, this Maori response to the colonial situation was as mythological as the pragmatics of the European presence were metaphysical. For the Maori, the material crisis was the



revelatory sign of something more intangible and enigmatic: of what had happened in 1840 when the chiefs, agreeing to the Treaty of Waitangi, gave up what the British were pleased to call "the sovereignty."<sup>33</sup>

We all tried to find out the reason why the Governor was so anxious to get us to make these marks. Some of us thought the Governor wanted to bewitch all the chiefs, but our pakeha friends laughed at this, and told us that the people of Europe did not know how to bewitch people. Some told us one thing, some another. . . . We did not know what to think, but were all anxious [the Governor] might come to us soon; for we were afraid that all his blankets, and tobacco, and other things would be gone before he came to our part of the country, and that he would have nothing left to pay us for making our marks on his paper. . . . and when when we met the Governor, the speaker of Maori [i.e., the interpreter] told us that if we put our names, or even made any sort of mark on that paper, the Governor would then protect us, and prevent us from being robbed of our cultivated land, and our timber land, and everything else which belonged to us. . . . The speaker of Maori then went on to tell us certain things, but the meaning of what he said was so closely concealed we never have found it out. One thing we understood well, however, for he told us plainly that if we wrote on the Governor's paper, one of the consequences would be that great numbers of pakeha would come to this country to trade with us, that we should have abundance of valuable goods. . . . We were very glad to hear this. [Anonymous of Ngapuhi, in Maning 1906:223-225]

For sheer mystification, the curious hieroglyphs the Maori chiefs appended to the Treaty of Waitangi could be equaled only by its several provisions. Her Majesty's Government had been moved to intervene by the extensive project of land acquisition announced by the New Zealand Company. Initially, the government meant to forestall the company and protect remaining Maori lands. Hence the treaty was urgently pressed (together with the usual gifts) upon the chiefs as an economic good thing, the assurance of their future prosperity. On the other hand, the combination it offered of yielding the sovereignty to the Queen and keeping the land to themselves would be perfectly unintelligible to Maori: "The speaker of Maori then went on to tell us certain things, but the meaning of what he said was so closely concealed we never have found it out." Just before the Ngapuhi chiefs signed at Waitangi, the Reverend Mr. Colenso respectively intervened to ask the Governor (Hobson) if he thought the Maori understood the terms. "I have spoken to some of the chiefs concerning it," Colenso said, "who had no idea whatever as to the purport of the treaty" (Buick 1936:155).<sup>34</sup>

The Maori text would be enough to keep its own secrets. In Article One, the "sovereignty" the chiefs agree to surrender is glossed by an adjunctive (or concreative) form of the English loanword for 'govern/governor,' *kawanatanga*, concept of which the Maori as yet had little or no direct experience. But in Article Two, the Maori are solemnly guaranteed the *rangatiratanga*, the 'chiefship'—or, if you will, the 'sovereignty'—"of their lands, their settlements and all their property" (Buick 1936:360-362).<sup>35</sup> And while the English missionaries, Henry Williams especially, were pleased to think they had on numerous occasions satisfactorily explained the treaty to the Maori, it was precisely the missionaries' deceptions in this regard that Hone Heke brought up when they remonstrated with him about the flagstaff. "Heke did not allow this opportunity to pass without alluding to the Treaty of Waitangi, and of having been deceived by the Archdeacon [Williams] and others in inducing so many chiefs to sign it, when they [Williams et al.] must have known that they (the chiefs) were signing away their lands, etc." (Burrrows 1886:9, cf. p. 32). Problem was that the distinction between political supremacy and the occupation of (or "title to") the land was not pertinent to Maori. So long as a chief and his people maintained residence on their ancestral land, and the willingness to defend it, no other chief could rule there. Beyond all Western ideas of property or sovereignty, the land is "the inorganic body of the clan community" (to adopt Marx's

phrase). It is the objectified *mana* of the kinship group. Maori and Western concepts on this score are incommensurable. Still, Firth must be right when he says that "the concept of *mana* in connection with land is . . . most nearly akin to the idea of sovereignty" (1959:392; cf. White 1855:190-191). For when Heke determined that the Treaty of Waitangi was proposing some new sacred arrangements of property, he concluded that it must mean for Maori the loss of the *mana*—as occurs in conquest, dispossession, and enslavement. The British were putting up their own *tūāhu*.

In this respect, the economic deprivations that followed upon the treaty were symptomatic merely of a larger issue: the meaning of the British presence; or the fate of the Maori. Maori said that the government claimed to be a parent, but only showed itself to be "soldiers, barracks, constables and gaols" (Sinclair 1972:31). Debate continued among Maori chiefs about what the treaty had signified. Various metaphysical speculations were improvised. The best known, by one Nopera Panakareau, ran to the effect that "the shadow of the land goes to Queen Victoria, but the substance remains to us." That he said in May 1840. Already, by the following January, Nopera had reversed the terms: "The substance of the land goes to the Europeans, the shadow only will be our portion" (cited in Wards 1968: front matter). Whatever the treaty meant, says the Anonymous of Ngapuhi, "this one thing at least was true, we had less tobacco and fewer blankets and other European goods than formerly, and we saw that the first governor had not spoken the truth, for he told us that we should have a great deal more" (Maning 1906:230-231). The whaling and trading ships had nearly stopped coming and the *pakehā* were leaving the northern districts. The government had acted in mysterious and deceptive ways. Or was it not that these adverse effects had made Maori aware that the true issue in the treaty was the *mana*. In this respect, Heke's work on the flagpole was a demystification. It was a reminder that the same had happened before, when the chiefs first came to this New Zealand from Hawaiiki, and built their sacred sites (*tūāhu*) on the land, and took control from the original 'people of the land' (*tangata whenua*).

One myth is thus decoded by another (just as Lévi-Strauss says). For the Treaty of the Waitangi was a myth, even in European terms. In one of the most scholarly accounts going of Heke's rebellion—albeit written from a *pakehā* vantage—Wards (1968:171) has to admit that "the Treaty was a device to blind and amuse ignorant savages," as contemporary criticism had said. Without undue expense, "quickly and quietly," the Crown had got possession of New Zealand. And if the treaty, in ostensibly providing for the welfare of the Maori, was not an outright deception, since such a purpose could hardly be reconciled with the massive colonization by Her Majesty's White subjects already underway, it was at the least a contradiction, since the government had no means to secure Maori interests and soon abandoned the intention. Moreover, the Colonial Office well knew in advance that the difference between sovereignty and property would not be received by the Maori, as was stated in preliminary drafts of the instructions to Captain Hobson for negotiating the treaty. All these drafts indicate "that it was not believed that the Maoris understood the distinction between sovereignty and property rights" (Wards 1968:28). But no statement to this effect is to be found in the instructions as issued, "clearly because it was not politic to make such a public admission" (*ibid.*:29). The treaty had been negotiated in bad faith.

Or, in other words, the essential unrealities as well as the impracticalities of the situation had been laid on by the British. Attacking the flagpole, Heke showed he was able to penetrate, become conscious of and objectify the meanings the *pakehā* were prepared to conceal sometimes even from themselves. If the response still seems to us displaced or "symbolic," we should not forget that the decisive issue, as Wards also admits, was equally abstract: Heke "was suffering the inevitable pangs of one who sees, or senses, the eclipse of his own way of life by another" (1968:145).

## A STRUCTURAL, HISTORICAL ANTHROPOLOGY

In an oft-cited remark from the preface to *Search for a Method* (1968), Sartre asks, "Do we have today the means to constitute a structural, historical anthropology?" Yes, I have tried to suggest here, *le jour est arrivé*. Practice clearly has gone beyond the theoretical differences that are supposed to divide anthropology and history. Anthropologists rise from the abstract structure to the explication of the concrete event. Historians devalue the unique event in favor of underlying recurrent structures. And also paradoxically, anthropologists are as often diachronic in outlook as historians nowadays are synchronic. Nor is the issue, or this lecture, merely about the value of collaboration. The problem now is to explode the concept of history by the anthropological experience of culture. The heretofore obscure histories of remote islands deserve a place alongside the self-contemplation of the European past—or the history of "civilizations"—for their own remarkable contributions to an historical understanding. We thus multiply our conceptions of history by the diversity of structures. Suddenly, there are all kinds of new things to consider.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Stone's chapters on historiography (Part I) in *The Past and the Present* (1981) afford an excellent introduction to the "new history." Barraclough (1979) on the same subject also refers to Thomas Gray—a custom of English historians in America? The remarks from Voltaire's *Essai sur les mœurs* are noted by LeGoff (1972) in an essay of his own most pertinent to the present discussion; cf. Braudel (1980), Dumoulin and Moisi (1973), Gilbert and Graubard (1972), Hexter (1972), LeGoff and Nora (1974), Ricoeur (1980).

<sup>2</sup> I have translated freely, especially taking liberties with *devenir*, yet I think without altering Durkheim's intent.

<sup>3</sup> Besides Frazer (1911-15), Hocart (1927, 1936) and Dumont (1970), the ideas on divine kingship and hierarchy presented here draw especially on recent anthropological studies by Heusch (1962, 1972, 1982), Valeri (1983), Geertz (1980), Tambiah (1976), and Adler (1978, 1982), as well as such earlier classics as Evans-Pritchard (1962 [1948]), Frankfort (1948), Dumézil (1948), Meek (1931), Kuper (1947), Krige and Krige (1943); cf. Sahlins (1981a, b). I make no taxonomic issue of the differences between "divine kings," "sacred kings," "magical kings," and "priest-kings"—or even between "kings" and "chiefs." With regard to the last, I rather agree with Heusch that the state is a creation of the divine king, instead of the other way around, in which case the principal reason for differentiating divine kingship from divine chiefship loses its force. For a discussion of the taxonomic problems surrounding divine kingship, as well as an excellent analysis of Jukun, see Young (1966). No doubt my decision to go with a broad category of heroic polities, without fine regard for the variations, can be advantageous for present theoretical purposes and over the short run only. I have no illusions about the greater durability or value of the category.

<sup>4</sup> Besides, in the Fijian case, quite literally, a chief can be the sister's son to another chiefdom (e.g., *vasu ki Rewa*, *vasu ki Mbau*, etc.). The personifications of political forces entailed in Fijian *vasu* (uterine nephew) relationships are discussed below.

<sup>5</sup> The informant cited, however, is one of the "skeptics" in a fascinating debate among Kuba, reported by Vansina (1964:101-102), concerning the divinity of the king. The skeptics take a functionalist view of the royalty as a necessary condition of order in a society otherwise segmentary, conceding that the king has powerful magic but denying he has divine powers. Apart from such ideological arguments, the Kuba practice a classic set of rituals by which the king, deprived of his natal kinship relations, is placed above as well as outside the clan order of the society—at once as a force of nature, a representative of the god and an incestuous sorcerer.

<sup>6</sup> The usual phrase is *na lotu nei Ratu Cakobau*, in orthodox Fijian spelling. In the present article, I have reverted to an earlier and unorthodox orthography, easier for English speakers to pronounce. When asked once why he did not learn English, Thakombau said it was because he had heard Englishmen speaking Fijian.

<sup>7</sup> On the other hand, when certain Mbau gods resisted Christianity even after Thakombau had converted, the chiefs assembled their priests and whipped them (Waterhouse 1866:265-266). The earlier relations of Fijian priests/gods to Jehovah may be followed in the journals of Cross (e.g., Oct. 24, 1840), Hunt (Feb. 18, 1839; May 10, 1839), Calvert (Aug. 15, 1841; Oct. 20, 1841), among others.

<sup>8</sup> Thakombau's intelligent resistance to missionary preaching is documented throughout Waterhouse's *The King and People of Fiji* (1866). This includes his indifference to the suggestion of a passing Catholic bishop, who told him that the reason the Methodist missionaries had failed to get access to Mbau was that the Virgin Mary was keeping the place for Catholicism: "Whereupon the king told the bishop to leave him and his city to the care of the Virgin, and to come back again when the Virgin had converted them" (ibid.:196).

Two decades earlier, Protestant missionaries in Hawaii were being subjected to similar experiences as their Fijian colleagues. "If he [King Liholiho] embraces the new religion," Reverend Ellis was told in 1822, "we shall all follow" (Ellis 1969:41). One day when the missionary Hiram Bingham went to remonstrate with the royally drunk King, "and told him God was not pleased with such conduct," Liholiho replied, "I am god myself. What the hell! Get out of my house" (Hammatt: Jan. 6, 1823). In the ensuing events, which included Liholiho's death, Christianity was taken up as an instrument of rule by the King's foster mother and her brothers, the effective governing group, and as in Fiji it became an overnight sensation (cf. Bingham 1969). Indeed, we seem to be in the presence of a great regularity or law of conversion valid for the Polynesian heroic polities. In New Zealand also there was a quantum statistical leap forward in the conversion process about 1838-39, after a long period of relatively desultory success (notably among Maori slaves). Once again, the lead was taken by the chiefly class (Wright 1959:141ff.).

<sup>9</sup> During the Mbau-Rewa war, when an important chief defected to the enemy, as Thokanauto of Rewa, for example, went over to Mbau, a considerable number of clans and villages subordinate to the chief accordingly changed sides. The change was effected without great embarrassment, since, as Reverend Hunt remarks, "whatever party they fought for, they were fighting for their own chief" (Oct. 19, 1845). Derrick likewise paraphrases Tacitus: "As for the common people, their chief's cause was their cause" (1950:73). These defections are a good demonstration of the relation between hierarchical solidarity and "tribal" or "national" consciousness, on which more is said below.

<sup>10</sup> The mutations in organization that followed also testify to an heroic historicity, not only by Shaka's capacity to introduce rapid and general change, but in the attention he gave to hierarchical solidarities while reconstituting the conquest state. Repeating the victories of Dingiswago, Shaka was careful not to repeat his predecessor's policies of leaving intact the leadership and organization of the conquered tribes. Liquidating the one with the other, and regrouping the remnants of the enemy armies in the Zulu regimental system, Shaka constructed an order that avoided the faults in Dingiswago's hegemonic ambitions, namely, the confederate system that had divided the interests of the tribes by the existence of their leaders (Bryant 1926; Fynn, in Bird 1888; Isaacs 1970; Krige 1936; Wilson 1969).

<sup>11</sup> Firsthand accounts of these incidents are given by Fynn (in Bird 1888:81-84, 91-93) and Isaacs (1970:108ff.). John Kelly has written an excellent M.A. thesis, "Mongol Conquest and Zulu Terror: An Analysis of Cultural Change," with a detailed cultural analysis of the Zulu scheme of heroic dominance (University of Chicago, Department of Anthropology).

<sup>12</sup> On the death rites of Hawaiian high chiefs, see Handy and Pukui (1972:156-157), Kamakau (1961:222), Malo (1951:104-107), Ellis (1969:175ff.), Stewart (1970 [1830]:216). Hawaiian history also shows numerous examples of the collapse (or the incapacity) of a collective response in the absence of the ruling chief. The British naval commander Broughton provides an example from a revolt in 1796, when a rival chief, profiting from the absence of King Kamehameha, easily seized the greater part of Hawai'i Island. Nor could much resistance be expected, according to Broughton, as there was no one to lead it:

He [the rebel, Namakaeha] now possessed four out of [the Island's] six districts, and was approaching near to Karakakooa [Kealakekua], where there was little chance of resistance, as the people were averse to fighting, having no chief in whom they confided to lead them on; indeed

the only person of that rank was Mahooa, who had lost his eye-sight. He wished much to go with us to Wohahow [O'ahu] that he might explain what happened To Tamaahmaah [Kamehameha], but the people, having no other chief, would not permit him. [Broughton 1804:69]

<sup>13</sup> Gifford's description of heroic segmentation in the Tongan Islands was destined to become a celebrated locus of sociological argument among Polynesianists:

Everything points to the necessity of a line of powerful chiefs as a nucleus about which the lineage groups itself. Without such chiefs it appears to wilt and die and its membership gradually aligns itself with other rising lineages. This process of realignment naturally contravenes the rule of patrilineal descent, which theoretically, and largely in practice, determines lineage membership. [Gifford 1929:30]

The arguments have been laid to rest (or should have been, anyhow) by Elizabeth Bott's (1981) careful description of the Tongan organization, together with excellent examples of the segmentation process in question (pp. 41ff.). One of the lessons of the controversy might be that we should not expect a "lineage consciousness" in the underlying populations of the hierarchical Polynesian societies. Indeed, in Hawaii, where heroic segmentation is taken even further, with the leadership of the districts down to relatively low levels of segmentation redistributed by each ruling chief among his kinsmen at his accession, the local lineage order has been completely eroded. Nor could it be expected that the people would have their own extensive genealogies, hence their own senior lines and collateral relations of solidarity, in opposition to the chiefs constantly being imposed on them. The more subtle ways that Maori "clans" (*hapū*) are formed by dominant chiefs and as political alliances have been sensitively documented by Schwimmer (1963, 1978).

<sup>14</sup> Chadwick writes of "the instability of heroic society":

The military followers of a peace-loving king, unless he was very wealthy and generous, were liable to drift away, while the bulk of the population counted for nothing. In the absence of any truly national organisation or national feeling all depended on the personal qualities of the leaders. Under Theodric the Ostrogoths were the chief power in Europe; but within thirty years of his death they disappear and are not heard of again. Under Dušan the Servians seemed destined to absorb all that was left of the Greek empire; after his death they failed to offer any effective resistance to the Turks. The kingdoms of the Greek Heroic Age seem to have succumbed to much less formidable antagonists. So numerous indeed are cases of this kind that one is perhaps justified in regarding national disaster as the normal ending of such epochs. [Chadwick 1926:461-462]

<sup>15</sup> On the royal intrigues of the Fijian states of Mbau and Rewa, see Waterhouse (1866), Derrick (1950), or Wilkes (1845 vol. 3); for Lau, Hocart (1929), Reid (1977). For European analogues, see Chadwick (1926:338ff.).

<sup>16</sup> The "heroic I" is found in Maori, Tonga, Fiji, among Yoruba as well as Luapula, and probably numerous other hierarchical orders. This usage is discussed in Sahlins (1981a) as "the kinship I" following Johansen (1954) on Maori. The Maori case is indeed relatively democratic, although the chief is more likely than other people to use the first-person singular in reference to noted ancestors or the clan (*hapū*) as a whole.

<sup>17</sup> I have elsewhere (Sahlins 1981a, 1982) analyzed the Fijian polity in greater cultural detail.

<sup>18</sup> The long-term constitution of relationships by a "founding marriage," perhaps legendary, is of course characteristic of systems of positional succession. And the differential weight attached to aristocratic marriage generally is a principled reason, valid at least for societies of a certain type, why the distinction between prescriptive and preferential marriage rules need not be received by a structuralist analysis. The rule of generalized exchange, operating sometimes among the highest chiefs, seems as critical in the organization of Tongan society as it is minimal in social practice. In any event, in the Polynesian societies, the ordinary people hardly marry at all, ritually speaking, as opposed to a "living together" (*noho pu*) whose duration and outcome are uncertain until children are born and acknowledged.

<sup>19</sup> Excellent examples of this type of autobiographical perception can be found in the testimonies of the Boundary Commission of the Hawaiian Kingdom in the 1860s: Department of Land and Natural Resources, Boundary Commission Books, in the State of Hawaii Archives.

<sup>20</sup> The relation between ordinary gossip and, say, royal genealogies is happily illustrated among Luapula peoples by the etymology and fate of the term *ilyashi*, referring to group "affairs" or "traditions." It comes from plateau Bemba where it means mere "gossip," yet latterly has been replaced by the English word *meaning* (Cunnison 1951).

<sup>21</sup> The Ilongot historical practice is in so many respects the antithesis of the Maori "mytho-praxis" about to be described that it is necessary to underscore Rosaldo's observation that "even the most brute of brute facts I found to be culturally mediated. . . . Ilongot statements about their past were embodied in cultural forms that highlighted certain facts of life and remained silent about others through their patterned way of selecting, evaluating, and ordering the world they attended to" (1980:17-18). Otherwise the Ilongot ideology might evoke on the ethnographer's part a rabid methodological individualism. Fortunately also, Rosaldo is able to link Ilongot historical consciousness to the system of marriage, a combination of complex and exchange-marriage that unifies each generation while opposing it to adjacent ones, and to show too the cycles of kinship repartition and coalescence (*ibid.*:199).

<sup>22</sup> Or else the meaning is that the male who before preserved his tapu shall next time mix with the woman, and thereby lose it, an interpretation supported by the Maori concept of sexual intercourse as the death of the man (see below).

<sup>23</sup> Maoris . . . describe the past as *nga ra o mua*, "the days in front," and the future as *kei muri*, "behind." They move into the future with their eyes on the past. In deciding how to act in the present, they examine the panorama of history spread before their eyes, and select the model that is most appropriate and helpful from the many presented there. This is not living in the past; it is drawing on the past for guidance, bringing the past into the present and the future. [Metge 1976:70]

<sup>24</sup> The speeches made by friendly Maori chiefs during a meeting with the government in the course of this war are partly preserved in the correspondence of the then governor, Fitzroy. But the speeches "were so full of allegorical references and responses to ancient Maori customs, that much of them was not understood by the missionaries, who could not render them into English" (Buick 1926:41n.; cf. Carleton 1874 vol. 2:78-79). Just so, Best describes the traditional war councils of chiefs, when "the most stirring and eloquent speeches were made, speeches teeming with strange old saws and aphorisms, with numerous allusions to the famed deeds of ancestors and to the classic myths of the Polynesian race" (1903:46).

<sup>25</sup> The ideas on the Maori sense of history presented here were especially stimulated by and are much indebted to Johansen (1954) and an unpublished paper by Gregory Schrempp, "The Pattern of Maori Mythology."

<sup>26</sup> The principal sources of the present discussion of Hone Heke's rebellion are: Buick (1926), Burrows (1886), Carleton (1874), Cowan (1922), Sinclair (1972), Wards (1968), W. Williams (1867) and the account given to Maning by an anonymous chief of the Ngapuhi who fought on the British side (Maning 1906:220-323). Unfortunately the books of Rutherford on Heke's war and the Treaty of Waitangi have not been accessible to me at this writing (but see Rutherford 1961:chap. 8).

<sup>27</sup> Alternatively, Heke was referring to the British, French, and Americans, all three varieties of *paheka* being pertinent to this period of Maori history, or even to the soldiers, sailors, and settlers, the main divisions of local Europeans during the rebellion, also considered by Maori as distinct ancestral kinds. The Anonymous of Ngapuhi speaks thus of British soldiers and sailors at the first battle with the Maori rebels:

What a fine-looking people these soldiers are! Fine, tall, handsome people; they all look like chiefs; and their advance is like the advance of a flight of curlew in the air, so orderly and straight. And along with the soldiers came the sailors; they are of a different family, and not at all related to the soldiers, but they are a brave people, and they came to seek revenge for the relations they had lost in the fight at Kororareka. They had different clothes from the soldiers, and short guns, and long heavy sword[s]; they were a people who talked and laughed more than the soldiers, and they flourished their guns about as they advanced, and ate tobacco. [Maning 1906:248]

<sup>28</sup> Conceivably, these poles were taken as tapu signs (*rahu*), which was also a certain Maori opinion of the flagpole at Kororareka, at least while the customs duties were still in effect (before

September 1844). Even so, the pole would have essentially the same significance as those of the *tūāhu* and other poles (see below).

<sup>29</sup> The existence of a negative (or "dark") pole in the *tūāhu*, by opposition to the positive (or "light") pole, is generally related to the function of preservation by the absorption or neutralization of malevolent effects—thus the female aspect of the negative pole, with analogies to the role of living women in tapu transformations. The chief's hair clippings, for example, might be put in the *tūāhu*, protecting both chief and community against careless exposure of such dangerous substance. Hence the village latrine—notably, the bar on which one squats, separating life (before) and death (behind)—may also be known as a *tūāhu*, being the site of famous rituals.

<sup>30</sup> See Shortland 1882:69–70. The twist in Grey's Manaia story is that the original settlers had neglected to construct a *tūāhu*, so that when the newcomers were able to point out the sacred place they had built, Manaia was forced to acknowledge their claims to everything else, including the houses and clearings he and his own people had made (Grey 1956:179–180). Best's Ngati-awa informant provides still another version, perhaps the most pertinent to the present discussion. Pio, who took pride in his descent from the indigenous people of the land (*tangata whenua*), was careful to point out to Best that the *tūāhu* of the immigrants from Hawaiki was really the sacred place (*pouahu*) of the original people, thereby condensing in a phrase the usurpation by aristocratic and violent foreigners (Best 1925:724, 1045).

<sup>31</sup> Considering the general and productive value of the Tāne myth, it is not surprising that the ritual erection of poles, in the interest of the preservation of some group or individual, is also found in numerous contexts outside the *tūāhu*. The pole at the right-hand side of the entrance to a Maori fortification might house the *mauri* of the place; called *pou reinga*, it apparently connected the fort with Hawaiki (= Reinga; see Skinner 1911:76; H. W. Williams 1975:297). Tūhoe might set up a pole as the personal *mauri* of a child, analogous to the practice elsewhere of planting the branch used in "baptismal" (*tohi*) rites (Best 1976:365).

<sup>32</sup> Hone Heke was certainly a *parvenu* in generational terms, and within the Ngapuhi "tribe" probably also in genealogical terms. It was on such grounds (among others) that Tamati Waka Nene—himself apparently a Ngapuhi chief of the blood (see Wilkes 1845 vol. 2:383–384)—rallied the Maori opposition against Heke (Burrows 1886:5, 14–15; Davis 1876:80; Shortland 1856:264; Carleton 1874:passim; Rutherford 1961:78). With regard to his famous precursor Hongi Hika, Heke's career is indeed classic, not only in terms of his marriage to Hongi's daughter, but also by the fact that Heke was Hongi's sister's son, or at least a classificatory sister's son, as I judge from Carleton's somewhat unclear remarks (1874 vol. 2:13–14n.). It might be noted that Hongi had sons, who inherited his property, at least two of whom were alive during Heke's rebellion (Carleton 1874 vol. 2:61–62; Davis 1876:56). On the other hand, there is no doubt that Heke assumed Hongi's place or even person, in Maori eyes, hence he also assumed certain of Hongi's enemies: "They came to help Walker [Tamati Waka Nene] in search of revenge against Hongi Ika, for Heke and Hongi are the same" (Anonymous of Ngapuhi, in Maning 1906:241, cf. p. 232). Heke chose to make his first stand against the British where Hongi is supposed to have uttered his dying words, *hia toa! hia toa!*, "Be brave! Be brave!" At this place, Mawhe, Heke built a fort named Te Kahika, "The Ancestor."

The system of alliances and enmities developed during Hongi's time, many of which go back for generations before that, became in turn a *trace structure* (as it might be called) in Heke's revolt (see Smith 1910; Buick 1926:100n.; Wright 1959; Maning 1906). This structure was inherited with all its faults, or geographical divisions cum oppositions within Ngapuhi, since it is clear that the Ngapuhi "tribe" was put together in large measure by Hongi (see Binney 1968:58n.; Carleton 1874 vol. 1:65–68, vol. 2:41–43). Dialectically and selectively, the trace structure was brought to bear in 1844–46 by the conflict between Waka and Heke. Whereas Waka, for his part, and on a traditional Maori model, invoked biographical ties with the *pakehā* ("Europeans") in explanation of his alliance with the Government (Maning 1906; Davis 1876:18–19, 34ff.; White 1887–1890, vol. 5:210–211; Shortland 1856:232–234).

<sup>33</sup> The view taken here is close to that of Sinclair, who speaks of the economic depression of 1840–44 as the catalytic, although not decisive, circumstance of the war, by virtue of the revelations it afforded the Maori about the colonial situation (1972:65–66).

<sup>34</sup> The hieroglyphic signatures on the treaty are usually said to be attempts of the chiefs to im-

itate their facial tattoos (for a facsimile of the treaty signatures, see Buick 1936: facing 352). Hone Heke was the first to so sign the Treaty of Waitangi. Whether on the previous day he had also strongly supported the Treaty or vehemently attacked it is a vexed documentary issue (cf. Buick 1936: 140n.).

Charles Wilkes, commander of the U.S. Exploring Expedition, was at the Bay of Islands two months after the signing of the Treaty. His remarks on the understanding of it by the Maori chiefs in general and the important Ngapuhi chief Pomare in particular are serving of American interests, no doubt, but the content does not seem any less Maori in character:

So far as the chiefs understand the agreement, they think they have not alienated any of their rights to the soil, but consider it only as a personal grant, not transferable. In the interview I had with Pomare, I was desirous of knowing the impression it had made on him. I found he was not under the impression that he had given up his authority, or any portion of his land permanently; the latter he said he could not do, as it belonged to all his tribe. Whenever this subject was brought up, after answering questions, he invariably spoke of the figure he would make in the scarlet uniform and epaulettes, that Queen Victoria was to send him, and 'then what a handsome man he would be!' [Wilkes 1845 vol. 2:376]

<sup>35</sup> After these lines had been penned, I was happy to find good anthropological authority for them:

There are two versions of [the treaty], one written by Captain Hobson in English and another, substantially ambiguous one, written by Reverend Henry Williams in Maori. The English version said the Maoris were to cede their 'sovereignty.' The Maori version said they were to cede their 'kawanatanga,' a word coined for the purpose of the treaty and meaningless except in the context of western constitutional law of which the Maori signers were ignorant. The treaty, in English, guaranteed to the Maoris the 'possession' of their land; in Maori this word was rendered as 'rangatiratanga' which may, indeed, mean possession but which may equally well mean 'chiefship.' A Maori would be hard put, in 1840, to tell the difference between what he gave up (kawanatanga) and retained (rangatiratanga). [Schwimmer 1966:107]

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