

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SYSTEM OF CLASSIFICATION, SELECTION OF SYMBOLS, AND SYSTEM OF PROHIBITIONS

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Introduction

In every society, whether it is simple or complex, we always find some systems of classification. The basic type of classification is dichotomous partition, i.e. all things in the human and natural world are split into two groups, such as moieties, binary opposition of good and evil in Java or yin-yang in China. Concomitant with the basic classification, in some societies we might still find other classification of triadic categories, of four-sections, of five-classes, of seven-groups, and of nine-divisions. The preliminary purpose of classification is to simplify all things in the human environment.

Theoretical Reference

First of all, the concept of classification itself means, according to Needham, "a systematic set of classes, a class being regarded as a conceptual grouping of things by virtue of particular resemblances that in some way or another associate them together" (1979: 3). This definition seems to emphasize the characteristic relationship among things in a class or a group. The principal procedures for classifying things, living creatures, events and so forth are to determine their basic relation of inclusion or exclusion. Between inclusion into a group and exclusion from another groups, there must be a boundary, a concept which is also very fundamental in this essay. In supplementing the above definition, it is better to present another complementary definition i.e. "...to classify things is to arrange them in groups which are distinct from each other, and are separated by clearly determined lines of demarcation" (Durkheim et. al. 1969: 4).

We are going to discuss the concept of symbol. "A symbol is any object or event that refers to something" (Spradley, 1979: 95), or "something that stands for something" (Needham, 1979: 3). These definitions tell us that symbol is a tool of communication like language, which encodes one or more messages. However, these definition do not differentiate the grade of decoding the messages. So, in this respect, they do not differentiate among signal, sign, symbol and icon.

Correspondingly, Edmund Leach presents a terminology for naming every certain message which can be differentiated from each other. To follow his diagram, messages can be defined as "bearing entity A conveys information message B" (1976: 12). It is simply two aspects of the same thing. A message can be an index or a signal. It is a signal when the bearing entity A causes message B, and obtains a trigger response such as shaking head and bell ring. Then, an index means A indicates B, and can be a signum or a natural index. It is a natural index whenever "A is associated with B by nature, but selected as an index of B by human choice" (Leach, 1976: 12), for example lightning is an index of thunder. Accordingly, a signum indicates that A stands for B, as a result of arbitrary human choice, and it can be a symbol or a sign. A message will be a sign whenever A stands for B as part for whole (metonymy), for instance an insignia is a sign for a certain organization. So far, symbol A stands for B by arbitrary association, but "there is no intrinsic prior relationship between A and B, that is to say A and B belong to different cultural contexts (ibid: 14). For example, a crown is a sign for royalty but if it is used as

a trade mark for whisky, it is a symbol, simply because of no intrinsic prior relationship between the two. The crown belongs to the royalty and whisky belongs to manufacturing product. There is further differentiation of symbol i.e. standardized symbol, nonce symbol (private symbol), conventional arbitrary symbol and icon. All of the symbols are based mainly on metaphor which depends upon asserted similarity.

Furthermore, the identification of messages into a certain category is not absolutely exclusive. In other words, it is relative to its context. Very often the meaning of a message depends upon the context of event, for as Leach says "whether a particular signum is to be regarded as a sign or symbol will depend upon how it is used" (1976: 13). For example, when the letters of the Roman alphabet are used in mathematical equations they are symbol, but when used in the context of verbal transcription, they are signs. So, there are alternative meanings of message depending upon where it is applied.

As has been mentioned above, the boundary is by-product of symbolic classification of things, events, and also living-creatures. A boundary is naturally continuous and has no dimensions. However, when the border of gardens or frontiers of states need marks on the ground, the markers themselves will take space. This principle is valid for every boundary in classification systems, including symbolic classification.

The boundary line itself is not inclusive or exactly exclusive of a certain group. So, it is in an ambiguous position and characterized as dangerous. It can become a source of conflict, anxiety, and in certain cases express an anomaly. Such conditions can be either sacred or polluting. It is sacred whenever it is a border line of state frontiers or passages along life-cycle, passages along calendrical phenomena etc, because every boundary is marked by a sacred object or curse, and cannot be crossed without the risk of supernatural sanctions. On the other hand, it is polluting whenever it is an ambiguous or anomalous expression of things, natural events or living-creatures, for instance a calamity, an albino or a dwarf creature. The anomalous things usually locate in the periphery or the margin of pattern. According to Leach:

A boundary separates two zones of social space-time which are normal, time bound, clear-cut, central, secular, but the spatial and temporal markers which actually serve as boundaries are themselves abnormal, timeless, ambiguous, at the edge, sacred (1976: 35), or polluted, as I have stated above.

According to Durkheim, the sacred is contagious.

They are merely ideas awakened by the experience of society, merely collective ideas projected outwards, mere expressions of morality, ... Therefore, they are ultimately rootless, fluid, liable to become unfocused and flow into other experiences. It is their nature always to be in danger of losing their distinctive and necessary character. The sacred is to be continuously hedged in with prohibitions. The sacred must always be treated as contagious because relations with it are bound to be expressed by rituals of separation and demarcation and by belief in the danger of crossing forbidden boundaries (quoted by Douglas, 1985: 21 - 22).

In addition, pollution and uncleanness can also be characterized as contagious as well as sacred, and take part in its opposition. So, in this respect, the system of prohibition is used as a fence to prevent the sacred flowing out and pollution flowing in.

This theoretical frame of reference will be used as guideline for discussing the problem of the relationship between the way people classify the world, their selection of symbols and the system of prohibition. Subsequently, this essay will consider two main themes, i.e. 1) Human classification, 2) Spatial and animal classification.

Human Classification

Classifying things, events or living-creatures is to arrange them into categories, based on particular relations, which are different from each other and separated by boundaries. There are many kinds of classification, but these can roughly be grouped into two, mundane and symbolic classification. The former is based on the resemblances among natural kinds, which can be further classified into species and kinds, subsuming them one under the other, as being simple, for instance flora and fauna taxonomies for scientific purposes. On the other hand, the symbolic classification is not only based on the resemblances of things, but also on the "association of ideas and law of contiguity and similarity between mental states,..." (Durkheim, et.al. 1969: 5). We can also use flora and fauna categories for symbolic classification, such as when an

eagle stands for a nation, or a lion stands for power. In the following discussion we do not deal with both kinds of classification, but rather stress symbolic classification, and the mundane classification can be analysed in another discussion.

The essential problem has been put forward by Durkheim and Mauss, namely:

that men classify quite naturally, by a sort of necessity of their individual understandings, we must on the contrary ask ourselves what could have led them to arrange their ideas in this way and where they could have found the plan of this remarkable disposition (1969: 9).

So far, to solve the problem they try to adduce certain evidences by investigating "...the most rudimentary classification made by mankind ..." (ibid). By this approach, they want to see with what element the classification has been constructed.

Presumably, because "... the human mind lacks the innate capacity to construct complex system of classification such every society possesses, and which are cultural products not to be found in nature" (Needham, 1979: 25). So, at the outset, groupings were found in social categories. The things in social life, which could immediately be classified, are classes of human beings into male and female. The necessity of such classification is to identify for example, who a man may marry and who he is forbidden to sleep with. We can imagine that in all human societies, there are always dichotomous distinctions between those women who are sexually accessible and those who are not.

Among the tribes of Australia, the divisions have become more complex and are expressed in terms of moieties, classes and clans. In general, every tribe is divided into two large basic partitions which are called moieties. Meanwhile every moiety is segmented into two classes which are called 'marriage-classes'. The purpose of dividing into classes is to regulate marriages among the members of the tribe. A member of a particular class of a moiety may only marry a woman of a certain class of another moiety. A man is forbidden to marry a girl in his class and moiety. Consequently, the girls who belong to his class must be given to men from another class and moiety. So, there is a fundamental rule of giver and receiver of the bride, and the former is higher in status than the latter. Furthermore, each moiety consists of a number of clans, which

are groups of individuals with the same totem. Totem affinity is a form of symbolic classification. The principle of totemism for Durkheim is that:

The individual himself loses his personality. There is a complete lack of distinction between him and his exterior soul or his totem. He and his fellow-animal together compose a single personality. The identification is such that the man assumes the characteristic of the thing or animal with which he is united (Durkheim, et. al. 1969: 6).

For example, among the people of Mabuiag Island "people of the crocodile clan are thought to have the temperament of the crocodile; they are proud, cruel, always ready for battle" (Haddon, quoted by Durkheim et. al. 1969: 6). Among the people of Sioux, "there is a section of the tribe which is called red, and which comprises the clans of the mountain lion, buffalo, and elk, all animals characterized by their violent instincts; whereas the farmers, people who are naturally peaceful, belong to clans of which the totems are essentially pacific animals" (Dorsey, 1884 quoted ibid).

Correspondingly, totemic system among Australian aborigines are similar to the above principle as Durkheim and Mauss described among the Wakelbura. The Wakelbura (quoted from Howitt, 1889 a., and Curr, 1886), a tribe which lives in north-central Queensland, are divided into moieties, i.e. Malleria and Wutaru. Every moiety is also divided into marriage-classes. So, there are four marriage-classes, each of which has a certain name. In the Malleria moiety there are Kurgila and Bambey; and in the Wutaru moiety, there are Wongu and Obu. Hence, the entire universe is divided between Malleria and Wutaru, in which water, rain, fire, and thunder each belongs to to each classes, all foods eaten by the Kurgila and Bambey are called Mullera, and those of the Wongoo and Oboo are called Woothera. However, some sorts of foods are only allowed to be eaten by a certain marriage-class, and not by others. The Bambey are restricted to opossum, kangaroo, dog, honey of small bees etc; while the Kurgila live on porcupine, plain turkey etc. The Wongoo are allowed to eat emu, bandicoot, black duck, black snake, brown snake etc; and the Oboo eat carpet snakes, honey of the stinging bees etc. It seems to be an exception that in Wakelbura, each moiety or class consumes their totemic animals and is forbidden to eat totemic animals belonging to

others. Whether this applies in ritual events or in everyday life is not known.

Presumably, the system of classification has entered their whole way of life and been embodied in all principal rites. In the Wakelbura society:

death is never considered as natural event, due to the action of purely physical causes; it is almost always attributed to magical influence of some sorcerer, and the determination of the guilty party forms an integral part of funeral rites. ...the classification of things by moiety and marriage-class which furnishes the means of discovering the class to which the person responsible belongs, and perhaps the very individual. The warriors smooth out the earth under the scaffold on which the corpse rests, and round about it, so that slightest marks shall be visible. The next day they carefully examine the ground under the corpse. If an animal has passed by, its tracks are easily discovered; from this the blacks infer the class of the person who has caused the death of the relative. For example, if the tracks of a wild dog are found they will know the murderer is Maller and Bambey; for this animal belongs to this moiety and to this marriage-class (Durkheim et. al. 1969: 15 - 16).

In this respect, death (natural event) is imagined to be caused by sorcery, which is thought to be done by the other class. Finding out the sorcerer is through identifying the tracks of the totemic animal, which is approaching under the corpse. The mind behind the facts is symbolic association.

Furthermore, men could also be classified in terms of age groups. Every individual in a society has to pass through every phase of the life-cycle. Someone in the society cannot automatically move from one phase to the others without the risk of supernatural sanctions, simply because the boundary is always in a sacred condition and dangerous. Crossing the boundary involves being purified in a symbolic ritual and the respect of certain prohibitions. The prohibitions are to avoid doing or eating something which might hedge sacredness flowing out and uncleanness flowing in.

Some complex classifications and associated rites can be found in Javanese society, among people who live in the densely populated parts of Central and East Java, Indonesia. Culturally, there are several variations which are slightly different from each other. The most traditional form of Javanese culture, which is well-known nowadays, is in the east part of Central Java, where the two remaining Javanese Kingdoms are located, and which still retain many of their customs. One Javanese system of classi-

fication is based on age-groups. They group the individual life-cycle into pregnancy, birth and infancy period, childhood, adult and death period. When moving from one stage to the other, they always carry out rites of passage.

Let us look at an example of the pregnancy rites in more detail. Javanese women are regarded by men as being congenitally impure; but if she is pregnant, a woman becomes sacred, and throughout her pregnancy she is in a dangerous condition. She must be purified in some rituals and is forbidden to do or to eat some things, in order to prevent every danger that menaces her. The rituals take place every month since she becomes pregnant, but the most elaborated ritual is performed in the seventh month, particularly in the first pregnancy. The rite is called *mitoni* (seventh) or *tingkeban*, and must be performed on the odd date of a Tuesday or a Saturday, and in the first half of the month of the Javanese calendar.

The core of the ritual is to take off the old clothes, to bath with holy water and to put on new Javanese *batik* cloths as many as seven times, which is associated with seven months of the pregnancy. During putting on the last cloth, just before the cloth is put properly on, there is another important ritual act. A wooden shuttle used in weaving and two young yellow coconuts, on which have been painted good-looking deities or heroes (male and female), are dropped in front of her belly inside her *batik* cloth. These rituals symbolize the expectation that the next delivery will be as quick as dropping the wooden shuttle and that the baby will be as good-looking as the deities depicted.

After all the purification and expectation rites, there follows a *slametan* (safety) ritual, which is embodied in a sacrificial meal ceremony. It is a typical rite in Java, but actually there are some sorts of sacrificial meal that are slightly different from others, depending upon which supernatural beings are to be addressed. Geertz's description about the matter is quite thorough:

The *slametan* is the Javanese version of what is perhaps the world's most common religious ritual, the communal feast, and, as almost everywhere, it symbolizes the mystic and social unity of those participating in it. Friends, neighbors, fellows workers, relatives, local spirits, dead ancestors, and near-forgotten gods all get bound, by virtue of their commensality..

into a defined social group pledged to mutual support and cooperation (1976: 11).

It is true to say that *slametan* reflects social unity through all the guests sitting together on the floor mats around the food. Everyone is treated equally, but actually where one should sit is determined by social status. The closer a person sits to the chanter and the host, the higher a person's status is.

Meanwhile, the *slametan* also symbolizes mystic unity, not only with local spirits, dead ancestors and near-forgotten gods, but also with God Almighty. This is particularly manifested in the form of the main sacrificial meal, i.e. a conical form of rice like a mountain. It is a submissive or surrendering representation of the host himself to God.

Furthermore, according to Javanese thinking, the pregnancy period is deemed as beyond the ordinary condition. A woman becomes sacred after the first rite is performed. She and her husband become the subject of prohibition in preventing risk of supernatural danger. For instance, she is not allowed to sit down in the centre of a door. Her position is neither indoors nor outdoors. Because, if she does this, she will endanger the pregnancy, have miscarriage, catch a cold and suchlike. This is simply because she herself is in a liminal condition, and at the same time undergoing a transition. So, at the moment she is in danger and vulnerable. She also cannot eat all kinds of meat of animals which were born in an upside-down position (*sungsang Jv.*), because it is thought that her fetus will be in the same position. She, and also her husband, cannot kill or hurt any animal, because it is thought that the newborn baby will be defective, malformed or abnormal. These sorts of thinking are contagious association.

Spatial and Animal Classification

Very often arranging the world into spatial categories binds all things or objects related to each of them. An interesting example is of partition by five categories in the Javanese culture, "human society there was thought to be interwoven with other phenomena and to form a greater unity of existence. Man's social and economic position was part of a cosmic order" (Duyvendak 1954, quoted by Needham, 1979: 11). By the conception the whole human character, social and cultural traits and

nature are divided into five categories. Four categories are associated with the cardinal points and the last with the center. So, every category consists of a specific human passion and character, its cosmic element, a particular colour, a metal, Javanese style week day, a deity, some kind of profession, natural phenomena, and so forth.

A similar system can be found in the village of Baan Phraan Muan, north-eastern Thailand, described by Tambiah. Here, each of four directions has its certain values in relation to direction of house building, human destiny, character etc. They are:

east is auspicious, represents life, is sacred ... and is the direction of the rising sun. East is also, when one faces north, the direction of the right hand and represents the male sex. West is inauspicious and represents death, impurity and the setting sun. It also represent left hand and the female sex. North is auspicious and is associated with elephant, an auspicious animal because of its size, its natural strength, and its associations with royalty and Buddhist mythology. South is of neutral value (Tambiah, 1977: 134).

The direction of cardinal point values, according to Tambiah, can be related to building and arranging spaces of a house and also with placing domestic animals in the spaces under the house. Most houses in the village are raised from the ground on wooden stilts or columns. All floors are divided into four divisions, each of which has its name. The lowest level (level 0) is the washing place (*haung naam*); the next level (level 1) is an entrance floor (*saan*), including the kitchen, which is on an upper floor without roof; reaching this floor one must step up a ladder as the first 'threshold' (*kan dai*). The higher level (level 2) is the guest room (*huan nau*), which is roofed and has walls, and its limits are fixed by two pillars. The highest level (level 3) is the sleeping room (*huan yai*), which means large house. Entering the sleeping room, one must pass the second threshold that separates it from the guest room. This passage is marked by two pillars (*saaw khwan* 1 and 2). "These levels are not accidental but are symbolic of the various values assigned to the divisions of the house" (Tambiah, 1977: 134).

Presumably, most of the houses in the Baan Phraan Muan stand in a southerly direction. Consequently, when a person enters a house, he should face north. Everything or parts of the house which are re-

garded to be lower or impure, are located in the west or left side, such as the kitchen, washing place, son-in-law's sleeping room etc. On the other hand, higher status or pure things are always located in the east or right side, such as parents' room, water jar etc. The sleeping room is the most sacred place and divided into two parts by an invisible border. Those are the eastern half part (*haung phoeng*) for the parents' room and western half part (*haung suam*) for the son-in-law and married daughter's room. "Thus the relation of parents vis-a-vis son-in-law and married daughter in the house is expressed by values associated with east and west" (Tambiah, 1977: 134-135). It reflects the binary opposition between goodness-badness, auspicious-inauspicious, right-left, purity-impurity, male-female and so forth.

In between the binary opposition there must be a boundary and it causes a prohibition condition. In the case of the village it is expressed inside the sleeping room where the son-in-law must not enter his parents-in-law's sleeping room or pass by its doorway. At his wedding ceremony he is allowed to enter through it, after undergoing a certain ritual of *sukhwan* (binding the soul essence to the body). "This symbolizes that he is accepted into the house by the bride's parents and that he is legitimately allowed into the sleeping quarter as a son-in-law" (ibid, 135). Just after marriage, the son-in-law lives in his parents-in-law's house, sleep in the western side of the sleeping room, with his wife to his right, while his wife's father sleeps to her husband's left in the eastern side. The idea behind the spatial arrangement, according to Tambiah, is precautions against separating the junior and senior generation. The reason why the son-in-law is placed left, to show respect for his wife. It symbolizes that he is in an inferior position in his wife's house. He is strictly prohibited to have sexual intercourse with his wife's sisters, by placing him in that position.

Beyond the members of the household, only the close relatives of the parents and the first cousins are permitted to enter the sleeping room, but they are not allowed to sleep here. They are not marriageable to the members the household. Nevertheless, on ritual occasions such as funerals, marriages, and merit-making ceremonies when monks are invited, the atmosphere is different. On those occasions the ritual proce-

dings take place inside the sleeping room and all guests can enter. Meanwhile, the atmosphere in the guest-room is always that of ordinary everyday life. This is a place for receiving guests, including marriageable people to the household members, such as distant cousins, neighbours, and friends.

One type of animal classification in traditional societies is almost always linked with space. For example, in the Thai village, domestic animals are called *sad baan* and animals of the forest are called *sad paa*. In Javanese culture there are also concepts of such classification. The first is called *sato* or *kewan omahan* and the second *sato* or *kewan alasan*. In Kalam society of the New Guinea Highland, part of the animal classification is related to habitat. For example, "forest birds are to be distinguished, and more highly evaluated than birds of the open country; arboreal birds are to be distinguished, and more highly evaluated than terrestrial birds" (Blumer, 1977: 63).

In the following discussion, I return to the classification of domestic animals of villages in Thailand, as described by Tambiah. He tried to relate the spatial classification of a house with both kinship categories and the animal classification. In this respect, how the villagers regard the sacredness of rooms in their house is related to animal categories, dietary rules and sexual accessibility which will be discussed in the following section.

According to Tambiah, the domesticated animals in the village of Baan Phraan Muan are dog, cat, ox, buffalo, pig, chicken and duck. The goose is rare in the village, and others are not found. At night the animals, which have economic and ritual value, are placed in a certain place underneath a certain room of the house. The ox and the buffalo are penned under sleeping quarters (*huan vaa*). The pig pen is located under the guest room (*huan nau*). Chicken and duck pen may also be located side by side with the pig pen or somewhere else, but never kept under the sleeping room.

The dog and the cat enjoy most freedom, being allowed to move in and out of the house. Tambiah alleged that "of all animals they are in a sense closest to human beings" (1977: 139). The dog is faithful to the owner, in one sense a friend of man. It is treated casually, given freedom and little care. The villagers are definitely forbidden to eat dog flesh, simply because the act of

eating dog is disgusting. The dog is viewed as a low creature and eats faeces, and is also an incestuous animal, that is why it is unclean and inedible. Thus, the description shows us that the attitudes to the dog are paradoxical. The cat is similar to the dog in its food habits and sex behavior, but arouses different attitudes. It is not a pet in the same way as the dog and is also inedible. There is no prohibition on consuming cat flesh, but they just do not eat it. It is viewed as a useful animal because villagers say "the Buddha created the cat in order that it may eat the rat, which is harmful to man because it gnaws his cloths, ... that the cat brings coolness to the house" (Tambiah, 1977: 140). A cat is also used in rain-making ritual: showing a cat to the sun or washing it attracts rain. It is also allowed to enter and sleep in the sleeping room, while the dog is not.

It thus seems that the cat and dog, both of which live with man in the house, represent opposed values centering around a single problem. The dog is debased, unclean, tabooed as food, and incestuous; eating it is as repulsive as incest. The cat is clean, useful, and cools the house, its appearance in rain-making ritual also connotes valued fertility; not eating it appears to be associated with its positive metaphorical representation of proper and prosperous family relationship (ibid: 140).

The habits and appearances of the dog and cat, more or less, are the same as those in Javanese culture. The definitive prohibition of eating dog comes from Islamic dogma. However, we do not see the opposition of uncleanness against cleanliness between the two. The Javanese identify the two animals as enemies. The cat guards inside the house and the dog outside.

Presumably, the Thai villagers treat their oxen and buffaloes in the same attitudes; both are not opposed to each other. At night both animals must be penned underneath the sleeping room, which other animals cannot. The villagers believe that if a buffalo or an ox, by accident, sleeps in the washing place or under the entrance platform, an inauspicious thing may happen and a ceremony must be conducted for removing bad luck. Both are also kinds of important livestock in economic assets, that can be used for plowing rice fields and pulling carts. It is looked after with great care, and there is ostensibly an emotional relationship with the owner. The villagers usually hold a ritual for its guardian spirit before plowing starts. They ask

for health for themselves and their buffaloes and for generous yields. The same ritual is held after harvest for the blessing. It is also an object of taboo associated with the Buddhist 'sabbath' in that there is a prohibition of plowing a rice field on that day.

The crucial thing among the villagers is that the buffalo and ox are eminently ceremonial food.

A buffalo or an ox is killed to provide meat for village Buddhist calendrical feastivities such as *Bun Kathin* and *Bun Phraawes* (large-scale collective merit-making rites), and household and family ritual, i.e. house blessing, marriage, mortuary rites and the ordination of a son of the household (Tambiah, 1977:142).

This is not regarded as an animal sacrifice in a ritual, but rather simply provides the most appropriate food. Nevertheless, there is a general attitude concerning the killing of both animals. When they carry on the collective village ritual, they do not want to slaughter the animal that belongs to the village. Again, when a family or household carries on a ritual or ceremony, no animals reared in the house may be slaughtered there. It should be acquired from other households or villages. The villagers believe that if they break the ethical norms, inauspicious events will inflict the village or household, such as loss of the animals through death or difficulty in rearing animals.

According to Tambiah, "The attitudes toward the buffalo and ox in respect to their killing and eating thus show a correspondence to the attitudes relating to proper marriage and sex relationship among human being" (ibid: 142). Sex relationship within the house are legitimate if the marriage partner comes from another household and beyond the range of forbidden kin. Meanwhile, in a ritual festivity, a villager must not slaughter and consume a buffalo or an ox belonging to his household which corresponds to the rules of correct exchange in marriage and sex relationship. Then Tambiah also relates food taboos concerning the dog with parallel negative attitudes toward incest and uncleanness.

The associations in the above cases are logical correspondences but this raises the question as to whether the associations among these matters reflect the exegetical explanation of the villagers. For example, is the prohibition of slaughtering and eating their own animals a deliberate symbol of incest prohibition? In the Javanese traditions, although there is no definitive norm, people

tend to buy slaughtered animals for ritual or ceremony rather than kill their own animals. However, it seems to be not an expression of an incest prohibition, but rather perhaps, the feeling of pity of the owner toward the animals.

The role of the pig in Thailand as ceremonial food is more or less the same as those of the buffalo and ox, but it is the second preference. At night it is penned under the guest room, side by side with the duck and the chicken. It raises a question of why the pig is penned under the guest room. Does it happen by chance or has it a meaning?

The duck is associated with negative ritual attitudes; it should not be eaten at feast or ceremony, which is in contrast to those toward the buffalo on the one hand, and chicken on the other. It is reared for economic purposes, as is the pig. The prohibition on serving duck meat at marriage feasts is regarded as having symbolic meaning linked to its laziness to hatch its eggs, a characteristic inappropriate when celebrating the formation of a new household with reproductive responsibility. There is no prohibition on killing a duck and a chicken for consumption that belongs to the house and no ritual prohibitions are linked to the chicken. It can be served as an ordinary food and at feasts as well.

Conclusion

Symbolic classification is the association of ideas, and of the law of contiguity and similarity between mental states. What could have led native people to arrange their ideas in this way and where they could have found the plan of this remarkable disposition is by discovering the most rudimentary classification made by human beings. Presumably, at the outset where those most available for classifying the world, principally the social categories split into male-female, with the purpose of identifying marriage preferences. There are always dichotomical distinction between marriageable women. Formal groups such as clans characteristically prohibit its men from having sexual relations with their own women, so that they have to acquire from other groups by taking or exchanging their women. As a result, the most simple classification was formed into the groups, i.e. moieties. Furthermore, all things, events, living creatures and natural

phenomena were associated to one or to the other group.

In the more complex classification, there are correspondences among human classification, sexual accessibility and animal classification in terms of totems. Each moiety tends to break down to some marriage-classes or clans, which usually affiliate to a totem. A totem, an animal or something else, was chosen as a representation or expression of the group's characters. Usually the members of a group are forbidden to eat their totemic animal, but the Wakelbura of central Australia are an exception. They eat animals belong to their clan and are prohibited from eating animals belonging to other clans.

Symbolic classification in a tangible world is also associated with supernatural power or religious belief. The Wakelbura associated death as the result of sorcery by another moiety's member. To find the sorcerer it is necessary to identify the owner of the totemic animal which passed by under the scaffold on which the corpse rests. Another example, in Javanese culture, shows us that every transition from one social group to another or between age groups along life-cycle must be accompanied by some rites which symbolize purification. At that moment, the actor is in total submission to the supernatural, represented by sacrificial meal or animal. These rites have two dimensions, the first is a vertical relationship mankind and supernatural power, and the second a horizontal relationship in terms of social level. Meanwhile, he and his family are always in the prohibited condition, and are not permitted to do anything that might pollute their minds.

Symbolic classification is also reflected in the relationship among human categories in terms of sexual accessibility with the spatial and animal classification. In Thai villages, the cardinal points correspond to house building. Arranging the house space into five symbolic levels relates to placing domestic animals, dietary rules and marriage rules. Everything or part of the house which is regarded to be lower or impure is located in the west or left side, such as the kitchen, the washing place, the son-in-law's sleeping room, and the son-in-law himself. On the other hand, higher status and pure things are located in the east or right side, such as the parents' sleeping room and the water jar. Between the two sides in the sleeping

room there is a boundary, which in everyday life only the lower status in the house cannot cross to enter the sacred place, particularly the parents' sleeping room. However, in a ritual event, everyone could enter the sacred place.

Placing domestic animals and dietary prohibition are also involved in an interwoven chain of symbolic classification. The dog has a close relationship with man, but its debased status and incestuous reputation are reflected in a prohibition on eating its flesh. The cat is also close to man and symbolizes incestuous prohibition, but it has positive and ritual value. At night the buffalo and ox are always penned under the sleeping room and they are reared with great care. Their meat is eminently ceremonial food, but there is an ethical norm that the buffalo or ox which will be slaughtered must not belong to the village or the household. It is related to sexual accessibility.

Obviously, in every society we always find systems of associated ideas about categories of things, events, living-creatures and natural phenomena. In the symbolic domain, the association of ideas is by metaphor, a by-product of classification, and there is always a boundary which is identified as ambiguous or anomalous and has sacred or polluted values, and which is often regarded as dangerous. So, it becomes an object of prohibition, preventing the sacred flowing out and pollution flowing in.

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