

LANGUAGE AND COMPARATIVE POLITICS
A STUDY OF SYSTEMATIC DISTORTION IN
COMPARATIVE POLITICAL SCIENCE DISCOURSE
WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO
AFRICAN STUDIES

by



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ABSTRACT

This thesis studies the constitutive relationships between language, politics and comparative political discourse. It examines the linguistic practices of comparative politics and shows that the instrumentalist theory of language, on which is based the science of cross-cultural law-like generalizations, is contradicted by the linguistic consciousness that comparative political discourse presupposes as its condition of possibility. It demonstrates that the instrumentalization of language and the occlusion of its constitutive nature lead to a systematically distorted discourse. The nature and modes of this distortion are considered through analyses of comparative discourse on method, politics and cases of African political practices. Simultaneously, an interpretative comparison, based on the recognition of the constitutive nature of language, is shown to offer non-distorting explanations of political phenomena. Certain African political practices are studied to illustrate this.

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RESUME

Nous nous proposons, dans cette thèse, de mettre en évidence les liens constitutifs existant entre les sciences politiques comparées et le langage. Nous désirons ainsi faire ressortir l'effet de distortion résultant de la contradiction existant entre la conception instrumentale du langage, fondement même de la scientificité présumée des sciences politiques comparées, et la présence du langage comme condition d'existence de tout discours comparatif. Nous analyserons la nature et les modalités de cette distortion et les mettrons en évidence à travers une lecture du discours comparatif sur la méthode, la politique et certaines pratiques politiques africaines. Une fois mis en évidence les liens existant entre le discours politique et la pratique politique, nous proposons enfin l'utilisation d'une méthode de comparaison interprétative fondée sur la reconnaissance des liens constitutifs existant entre la pratique linguistique d'une société donnée et sa réalité politique. Quelques exemples africains viennent étayer notre démonstration.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
PREFACE	IV
INTRODUCTION	VII
CHAPTER	
I. THE PROBLEMATIC NATURE OF COMPARATIVE POLITICS	1
Introduction.....	1
The Rise of Comparative Politics	2
Empiricism and Comparative Politics	11
The Primacy of Method in Comparative Politics	18
Criticisms Made Against Comparative Politics	22
The internal critique of comparative politics	23
The external critique of comparative politics	26
Other critiques of comparative politics	31
The Limitations of the Criticisms	32
Footnotes	40
II. LANGUAGE IN COMPARATIVE POLITICS	51
Introduction	51
Empiricism and Language-Instrument	55
Language-Instrument and Empirical Political Theory	66
Language-Instrument in Comparative Practice	74
Contradictions of the Instrumentalist Theory of Language..	81
Footnotes	86
III. A NON-INSTRUMENTALIST THEORY OF LANGUAGE	95
Introduction.....	95
Background of the Humboldtian Theory of Language	96
The Humboldtian Theory of Language	105
Language as speech	105
Speech as interlocution or common speech	107
Common speech and the socio-political world.....	110
The assumption of a universal language.....	116
The assumption of linguistic innocence.....	118
The assumption of linguistic anonymity.....	120
Common speech, cultural relativity and objectivity....	123
The cultural relativism of Sapir and Whorf	126
The conceptual relativism of Winch	127
Common speech and understanding	129
Common speech and political facts	134
The Implications for Comparative Politics.....	138
Comparative politics and social practice	140
Comparative politics and history	144
Conclusion	147
Footnotes	149

	<u>Page</u>
IV. POLITICAL PRACTICES AND HOLOPHRASTIC CONCEPTS.....	163
Introduction.....	163
The Experiential Universe and Politics.....	164
Holophrastic Concepts	175
Holophrastic Concepts, Contestability and Censored Practices	186
Footnotes	201
V. THE HOLOPHRASTIC DIMENSIONS OF COMPARATIVE PRACTICES.....	208
Introduction.....	208
Method and Comparability as a Given.....	208
The Mono-Linguistic Method of Comparative Politics	211
The fallacy of asocial translation	215
The fallacy of ahistorical translation	221
The Social and Political Nature of the Interview	226
The interview as a political practice	230
The subject-in-questioning	235
Participant observation	240
Coding	244
The Narrative Infrastructure of Method.....	247
Footnotes	257
VI. METHOD, POLITICAL CULTURE AND POLITICAL EPISTEMOLOGY	267
Introduction	267
The Political Culture of Method	269
Political Culture and Political Epistemology.....	277
Political space	277
Political time	284
Conclusion	295
Footnotes	297
VII. SYSTEMATIC DISTORTION IN COMPARATIVE POLITICS	304
The Metonymic Discourse	304
Data or the metonyms of social practices.....	307
The metonymic reduction of histories	309
Tradition as the metonym of histories	313
The metonymic (African) subject.....	322
The Metonymic Operation	325
Metonymy, the pre-text other and teleology.....	325
The fictional discourse of comparative politics.....	331
Metonymy, mimos and comparative discourse	340
Metonymy, repression and comparative discourse	348
The Dilemma of Being a Comparativist.....	352
Footnotes	357

	<u>Page</u>
VIII. TOWARDS AN INTERPRETATIVE COMPARATIVE POLITICS	368
For an Interpretative Approach in African Studies.....	368
The Anthropology of the Political Party	375
The Western political party.....	377
Conflicts of interpretation regarding the African political party.....	382
The Anthropology of African Social Practices.....	389
The historical self-understanding of Africans	391
The understanding of the social in African practices...	396
The understanding of the economic in African practices.	410
The understanding of social organization in African practices.....	424
The African Thematics of the Political Party.....	429
The African narrations of the political party	431
Politics and the Political Universal Tribe	443
Equality and African politics.....	448
Freedom and African politics	452
The Contradictions of African Politics and the Political Universal Tribe	456
A Comment on the Leninist Discourse on the African Political Party	462
Footnotes	468
EPILOGUE: THE MORAL AND POLITICAL PRECONDITIONS OF COMPARISON....	497
Footnotes	506
BIBLIOGRAPHY	507

PREFACE

This thesis examines a question which has been virtually ignored in comparative politics and in political science as a whole. This is the question of the constitutive role language has in political practices and the knowledge we claim to have of these. The contemporary scientific study of politics considers language as a mere instrument. The thesis argues that the instrumentalist theory of language, which informs cross-cultural law-like generalizations, presupposes a linguistic consciousness that the instrumentalist conception of language cannot account for. It demonstrates that an adequate understanding of different political practices and the elaboration of comparative discourse with regards to these require that we recognize the constitutive nature of language. The thesis brings out the nature of these two conceptions of language and the consequences they have in the study of different political practices. It develops, based on Humboldt's seminal work on language and drawing on phenomenology, hermeneutics, the ethnography of communication, linguistic philosophy and anthropology, a theory of language capable of accounting for the linguistic consciousness presupposed, but unrecognized, by comparative political discourse.

By accounting for the linguistic consciousness presupposed by comparative political discourse, the thesis brings out the systematic distortion effected by the discourse of comparative politics. It does this by showing how the instrumentalist conception of language in comparative politics leads to a synecdochic identification of social practices and to a metonymic discourse which systematically excludes, a priori, the different other. This examination of the narrative practice of comparative politics reveals that its instrumentalist discourse articulates a technical cognitive interest which compliments and legitimates control, manipulation and domination. It demonstrates that comparative political science censors the questions of understanding, interpretation, action and emancipation by reducing them to technical ones and making them objects of effective instrumentalities derived from "causal laws" which are assumed to explain and predict "development" and "modernization". The

thesis thus shows that the technical cognitive interest which structures comparative discourse severs it from the questions of practice and critique in the study of politics. This is shown to produce a systematically distorted discourse whose narrative order is governed by the same principle as that of domination. The nature and modes of this systematic distortion are analysed through an examination of comparative discourse on method, politics and African political practices. The discussion of this systematic distortion indicates that an interpretative approach, based on the recognition of the constitutive role of language in social practices, is indispensable if the student of politics is to produce a non-distorting knowledge and comparison of different polities.

This analysis of the linguistic practices of comparativists is concretely anchored in case studies drawn from comparative political studies of African politics. The thesis in fact concludes with an interpretative study of one African political institution, the African "political party". This final chapter, which is based on the critical discussions of the previous seven chapters, illuminates certain African social practices in a way which shows their historically original modes of sociality and rationality.

This thesis thus makes three important contributions to the study of politics. It is, I believe, the first study of comparative politics which offers an account of its condition of possibility as a discourse. Second, it is the first study which systematically analyses the distorting operations of comparative political discourse whose scientificity is founded on the instrumentalist theory of language. Third, by elucidating the relationships between discourse and political practices, it offers an original explication of certain features of African political practices.

Because of the novelty and complexity of the topic and the absence of such a study in the discipline, and also because the thesis challenges many established ideas in comparative politics, I have been obliged to

deal exhaustively with the subject-matter. This has made the thesis considerably long. But this, I believe, was the only way of dealing with the subject in order to do justice to the importance of the questions raised by it.

INTRODUCTION

This thesis is divided in eight chapters. In chapter I, I bring out the problematic nature of comparative politics through a discussion of the intellectual and historical contexts which permitted its rise as a "scientific" discipline. At the same time, I discuss the criticisms made against it, and show the limitations of these criticisms by indicating that they miss precisely that point where comparative politics and political practice meet, that is to say, language.

In the second chapter, I consider how language is conceptualized in comparative politics. Language, I point out, is conceptualized in comparative politics as an instrument. I examine how linguistic instrumentalism and empiricism are linked and made to be the guarantee of the scientificity of comparative politics. The discussion brings out the fact that the instrumentalist conception of language, that is deemed to make possible cross-cultural law-like generalizations, is contradicted by the linguistic practices of comparativists which presuppose linguistic consciousness, and therefore a non-instrumentalist conception of language.

In the third chapter, I study the nature of the non-instrumentalist theory that is tacitly presupposed by comparative political discourse. To do this, I develop, based on Humboldt's seminal works, a constitutive conception of language which can account for the linguistic consciousness comparative political discourse presupposes but cannot account for by its theory of language-instrument. The discussion shows that a constitutive conception of language gives us an understanding of political practices that does not deny their sociality and history.

In chapters IV, V and VI, I systematically draw the implications of the recognition of the constitutive role language plays in social practices, and the knowledge we claim to have of these, for the practice of comparative politics.

In chapter IV, I discuss how the constitutive nature of language obliges us to discover the experiential universe articulated by political practices and speech. This leads us to the recognition that political speech is essentially holophrastic, and consequently open to conflicts of interpretations and practices. This raises the question of the nature of the language of comparative politics as a discourse about political practices. I consider this question in chapter V and indicate that comparative linguistic practices have holophrastic dimensions that characterize men and their social practices in certain specific ways. This I do through the examination of the different linguistic practices - from translation to coding - that, comparativists claim, can produce ahistorical and asocial data. This examination permits the recognition of comparative method as an expression of historically produced conceptions of man, polity and rationality. I show that this method operates precisely because it is sustained by a narrative infrastructure which gives it sense and direction.

In chapter VI, I indicate how the comparative category of "political culture" cannot, despite claims to the contrary by comparativists, account for the meanings that inform political practices. I indicate that method is an expression of a specific political culture articulated by a specific political epistemology. This permits us to examine the idea that every political culture is articulated by a tacit political epistemology which must be brought out to explain political practices. To illustrate this, I study the ideas of political time and political space in African and American political practices. This discussion suggests that all social practices have narrative structures. It thus points out that the universalization of method occludes conflicts of interpretations, histories, practices and conflicts of historical agents. I show that the consequence of such an occlusion is the production of a systematically distorted discourse, that is to say, a discourse which eliminates the practical and critical cognitive interests from the study of political practices. This calls for a clarification of the nature and modes of occlusion and distortion of comparative discourse.

In chapter VII, I study the nature and modes of distortion of comparative political discourse. I show that comparative political discourse is essentially a metonymic discourse produced through the reduction of social practices to synecdoches and then to metonyms, which thus appear as free-floating brute data, giving the impression of politics-free comparative discourse. I indicate that this produces a discourse that censors different social practices and occludes the relationships of domination that characterize contemporary political relations at both the national and international levels. It is this censorship of the different other and the occlusion of domination effected through the instrumentalization of language that I call distortion. The metonymic and thereby the systematically distorted character of comparative discourse are discussed in detail in this chapter.

In chapter VIII, the indications made in the previous seven chapters as to the possibility of a non-distorted comparison, that is, a comparison that does not deny the historicity and sociality of the different other and the existing relations of domination, are brought together. It is argued through an interpretative study of certain African political practices based on an examination of one African political institution - the African "political party" - that only an interpretative approach to political phenomena can avoid a distorted knowledge of other polities. This interpretative study, though brief, permits us to see the historical meanings of African social practises - meanings that are occluded by comparative political discourse. It indicates that novel conceptualizations of man and polity are being worked out in African practices through the synergies of contradictory images of man and the polity.

I conclude my study by indicating in the Epilogue that certain moral and political preconditions are necessary for the conduct of comparative research which aspires to avoid the distortions produced by the discourse of mainstream comparative political science.

7

Throughout the thesis, I have used examples from African political practices and cases of African studies from comparative politics to clarify my ideas and arguments.

CHAPTER I

THE PROBLEMATIC NATURE OF COMPARATIVE POLITICS

Introduction

Comparative politics, or the "new comparative politics"¹ is, in the words of Robert E. Ward, "an American monopoly."² This American science of politics has as its aim the development and testing of general theoretical statements about political behaviour through cross-cultural comparisons. Its ultimate goal is to produce a scientific theory of politics which permits the explanation and prediction of political phenomena across history and cultures.³ It is to this specific discipline that I refer when I use the terms "comparative politics" or "comparative political science". The term "comparativist" is used to refer to those who practice this discipline.

In this chapter, I will try to indicate the problematic nature of this discipline by pointing out certain fundamental questions that the discipline has not fully confronted. The most important of these, I will indicate, is the question of the understanding of language that informs the theory and practice of comparative politics. How the language of comparative politics emerges as the important but forgotten question of the discipline requires that I describe the emergence, aims and contradictory development of comparative politics. To do so, I will briefly discuss: the rise of comparative politics as an answer to questions that are both intellectual and political; the constitution of the discipline on the basis of an empiricist theory of knowledge, and the primacy given to method to the detriment of both "politics" and "comparing"; the criticisms, both internal and external, that have been directed against the discipline as a reaction to its unfulfilled promises; the limitations of the criticisms and the triumph of comparative politics. Based on the discussion of these items, I will finally suggest that an examination of the theory of language that informs comparative politics can throw a new light on these questions.

The Rise of Comparative Politics

In 1944, the Committee on Research of the American Political Science Association, formed in 1942, reported that "comparative government, in the narrow sense of descriptive analysis of foreign institutions is an anachronism."⁴

The Report adds:

Only rarely is the attempt made to compare political institutions and functions in the sense that a common denominator for diversified phenomena is found and deviations from the standard pattern are explained.⁵

The report argues that the traditional institutional approach should be discarded and that a "genuinely comparative approach should operate freely along trans-national lines."⁶ Comparative government, the Report specifies, must "assume the character of a 'total science',"⁷ and adds, optimistically, that "comparative government ... is to undergo a rejuvenation not hoped for by its most ardent devotees."⁸ The Report clearly advocates the grounding of the study of comparative government in methodological and systematic empiricism and the need to "bring into play economics and statistics."⁹ However, it does not advocate a radical separation between political science and political philosophy, although one can already read the possibility of such a separation in the emphasis put on method. On the contrary, one reads in the Report that the study of comparative government should be widened to include not only economics and statistics but also "social psychology and political philosophy, cultural anthropology and intellectual history."¹⁰

This ambiguity of the Report may be one that is common to all activities of transition, or it may be a sign of an intellectual resolve not yet fully taken. But it can also be seen as an intellectual response to the historical experiences of the period - that of the end of the Second World War - and the awareness of the havoc produced by the civilized countries of Europe. Indeed, the Report itself situates the need for the transformation of comparative government into what it called

a "total" science, not only in a purely academic context, that is, not only as a response to problems that arose in political science, but also as a response to political problems in the global political world. It states:

... the group realized that the rationale of research in this period of revolutionary reevaluation of values is changing. Research which satisfies only the intellectual curiosity of the person engaged in it becomes rather pointless unless it can be utilized for the pragmatic tasks of the time and place when and where it is undertaken.¹¹

And, it adds, in a way that indicates the underlying ambiguity of the new project of a "total" science of comparative government, that the political scientist's "work is conditioned by the political environment and climate."¹² The "political climate" that is hinted at in the Report is indeed a complex one. It is not only the end of the Second World War and the discovery of what has happened, it is also the rise of a new political creed - communism, the start of the Cold War and, perhaps most important of all, the intensifying struggles for independence in the colonized countries. In this context, the intersection between knowledge and power cannot but be part of the political climate. In fact, one reads in the Report:

A heavy competition has arisen in the work done in the field by various government agencies, especially the Department of State, the Office of Strategic Services, the Office of War Information and the Federal Communications Commission, which in charge of political warfare, could not fail to poach on our domain.¹³

This lucid recognition of the interpenetration of knowledge and political power is partly rationalized by the Report on pedagogical and moral grounds. It asserts that "for pedagogical reasons, instruction on foreign political institutions cannot be conducted without constant reference to our own political existence."¹⁴ It also claims, as if to

rescue comparative government from "political warfare" a moral obligation for the need of such a science. It states:

American political science has become conscious of its responsibility toward other nations, which imposes upon us the obligation to make the experience of our advanced democratic civilization accessible to others as much as we may profit by theirs.¹⁵

The importance of the 1944 Report is that, contrary to the scientific myth that the new discipline "flowed almost naturally from the desire for scientific rigor in the field"¹⁶, it indicates clearly that the rise of comparative politics is a response to political, moral as well as intellectual challenges that afflicted the interwar and postwar periods.

The ambiguity, the hesitation, and one can even say the historical consciousness that permeated the 1944 Report almost disappear in the 1953 Report on comparative politics prepared by Roy Macridis and Richard Cox.¹⁷ Macridis and Cox launch an uncompromising assault on the traditional discipline of comparative government which they accuse to be parochial, descriptive, formalistic, and ill-defined.¹⁸ The missionary as well as the pragmatic intentions that informed the 1944 Report are now replaced by a concern for a method that would not attract the "admonition of natural scientists."¹⁹ Philosophy, anthropology, and history, mentioned as partners in the 1944 Report, are banished in the 1953 Report. They write that "the problem of comparative method revolves around the discovery of uniformities."²⁰ Contrary to the 1944 Report which sees the need for the transformation of "comparative government" as a response to a new international political era, the 1953 Report considers the need for a science of comparative politics as a response to problems in the discipline. One reads:

Today we have many facts but we do not know why we have them and we are unable to decide what to do with them. By agreeing on a scheme of inquiry or upon alternative schemes of inquiry, therefore, we have to elicit empirical research and investigation which will be systematically oriented to the major problems of the field.²¹

In eight grand points, the Report sets down the guide lines for the new science. The core of these guide lines is given in point 7:

That comparative study, even if it falls short of providing a general theory of politics, can pave the way to the gradual and cumulative development of theory by (a) enriching our imaginative ability to formulate hypotheses in the same sense that any "outsideness" enhances our ability to understand a social system; (b) providing a means for the testing of hypotheses, and (c) making us aware that something we have taken for granted requires explanation.²²

With the 1953 Report comparative politics is firmly committed to empiricism, to the development of a natural science of politics, and to the "outsideness" of comparativists with regard to the political world they study, and in which they live.

The formation in 1954 of the committee on Comparative Politics and the publication in 1955 of Roy Macridis's enormously influential book, The Study of Comparative Government,²³ may be considered as the turning point in the practice and theory of "comparative government" - a term evicted progressively by the new name of the discipline: "comparative politics."²⁴

Macridis's book takes off from the 1953 Report. It expounds on the idea presented in this Report, and criticizes the "traditional" approach for being essentially non-comparative, descriptive, parochial, static and monographic.²⁵ He argues for the development of "an analytical scheme...formulated in such a way as to be applicable to as many political systems as possible."²⁶ After pointing out that in "the present state of political science there is no such conceptual design", he goes on to suggest a scheme "of general and abstract analytical categories in the light of which particular phenomena and institutions in as many countries as possible can be studied and whole systems compared."²⁷

More than his criticism of the traditional approach, already made in the 1953 Report, what is interesting to consider is the nature of this first comprehensive suggestion of a scientific scheme for conducting

comparison of political phenomena across systems. The natural science of politics that Macridis suggests seems to have borrowed its concepts, categories, expressions, and notions of political practices from the political experiences of the West, and primarily from the American political universe. His scheme suggests a link between the language of the proposed political science and the language of American politics. This can be noted by briefly examining the terms of his discourse. Macridis writes that "Decision-making is the most pervasive function of politics. It can be discovered in any political system" and goes on to add that it is "an analytical concept which involves a set of questions and categories in the light of which concrete institutional realities can be identified, described, and compared."²⁸ In his scheme, he presents as important points matters dealing with selection of decision-makers, "composition of political elites", and the "deliberative process".²⁹ He defines political power as "that segment of social power which is exercised by recognized and accepted organs to achieve certain commonly shared objectives and purposes of the society."³⁰ To the categories of decision-making and power, he adds "political ideology" as a third category. He defines it as "the patterns of thought and belief - related to the state and the government that constitute at one and the same time a source of obedience and consent and a mechanism of control."³¹ He then discusses "the political system" under the category of "Institutions". "Political institutions", he writes, "are social instrumentalities for the attainment of certain kinds of community goals."³² He suggests that political systems be studied in terms of: "(1) the organization of political authority; (2) the relation between the established political authority and the members of the community; and (3) the position of the individual".³³

All this is certainly interesting and stimulating. However a few questions are in order. Macridis takes for granted that terms such as "decision-makers", "political elites", "deliberative process", "political power", "social power", "ideology", "state", "obedience", "consent", "control", "political institutions", "social instrumentalities", are monovocal and have universally accepted referents available in all polities.

He approaches the study of politics as if the language he uses and the language used by the political actors are external to politics. That is, he tacitly claims to define politics a-linguistically.

And yet, to understand and apply the categories he mentions, the distinctions and relationships he makes, presupposes a shared knowledge of specific political practices, and a shared knowledge of how we talk about these. A glance at the political language that informs American political practices suggests that the categories and distinctions Macridis makes in his scheme owe their meaningfulness to the American practices expressed and articulated by his categories. Indeed, it would be quite difficult for a person not acquainted with the political practices, language, and meanings of the American polity to fully understand or apply concretely Macridis's scheme. His scheme then implies, inadvertently to be sure, that there can be and, as I will argue later on, that there is in fact an interpenetration between the language of the new science - comparative politics - and the language of American political practices and institutions.

But Macridis does not take note of this implication produced by his scheme. One reason for this seems to be the identification of the language of knowledge in political science with that available in the natural sciences. Macridis uses "natural scientists" as his reference group. It is true that natural scientists practice their science on objects which neither share their language nor have the power of speech. Thus, a student of natural science is expected to know no more than the language of natural science as spoken by natural scientists. In political science, however, a different situation obtains. The language of knowledge in political science shares its very capacity of being such a language with the language spoken by those whose political practices are being studied. This capacity or power expressed by all languages, as I will show, is that of speech. Macridis's tacit equation of the language of political science with that of natural science would

be true if it can be shown that language can be external to and independent of political reality. But Macridis does not show this. Thus one cannot but assume that to apply Macridis's "scheme of analysis" one is obliged to know more than what is denoted by the terms he uses. That is to say, to study a foreign polity, one must at least be acquainted with the political languages and practices of the Western, and especially, American polity. Indeed, the latter seems to be a pre-requisite to understand Macridis's "scheme of analysis" although this scheme is assumed to equally apply to "as many countries as possible." Macridis does not note this paradox which makes the American polity the a priori category of the political mind.

But this paradox can be seen if only one questions the link that Macridis takes as natural between the American political language and the language of political science.

In fact, not questioning this link is the act which answers the question - both political and intellectual - specific to the era of the rise of comparative politics. Not questioning this link seems to have been the political and scholarly way of reading the new meanings American political practices were expressing against the backdrop of a tumultuous emerging international (dis)order. In this historical period, the international political arena, wherein the United States was holding the new place of the universal guardian of the "democratic" order, seems to have permitted the perception of the world as a problem - an American problem - of order for the world. The historical situation seems to have imposed, avant la lettre, a comparative understanding of the world - of the interacting polities of the era - which seems to have made America the "natural" Archimidean point of the new international order. This seems to have invited a reading of the world in terms of the universal criteria of political order which were perceived as being expressed in American political practices. By this, I am not suggesting a sociological determinism of knowledge but rather pointing out that the "new comparative politics" was not only an expression of an epistemological revolution but also of a worldwide political upheaval. One can then

suggest that in the new comparative politics, there is a meaningful interpenetration between the emergence of American political practices as presumably universally valid practices, at least in principle, and the rise of a universal political science borrowing its language from the American political universe. In this sense, Macridis's very failure to recognize the specificity of the language of the new comparative politics indicates the force and universality of the challenges - both intellectual and political - raised by the new political world. This whole question - eminently political - is presented by Macridis as a problem in political science with at best some technical (policy) implications.³⁴

It is of interest to note that in this book, published in 1955 and claiming to deal with categories in the light of which political phenomena "in as many countries as possible can be studied", no significant reference is made to the already clearly visible and enormously important political struggles for independence that were transforming the politics of Asia and Africa. True, Macridis protects his scientific flanks by writing that it is "too premature to attempt even to suggest a general theory for the study and comparison of political systems."³⁵ But it is hard to explain how a consideration of the very possibility of such a "general theory" can afford to neglect the implications of the elaboration of new political practices and conceptualizations in so many parts of the world. In a sense, the fact that the language of comparative politics unconsciously borrowed its universal concepts from the language of American politics makes plausible the idea of a natural science of politics, for it presupposes, by the exclusion of the "unnatural, i.e. the colonized, politics, the existence of a "natural" polity..." - the American polity, and consequently a natural science of politics.³⁶

It is perhaps Sigmund Neumann who, two years after Macridis's book, makes a lucid and penetrating appraisal of the new comparative politics and its conditions of inception.³⁷ He asks the question "What brought the discipline into being in the United States...?"³⁸

And he answers:

This is an age of revolutions. And it is the very coincidence and confluence of these diverse streams that dramatize the dynamics of our time and make it difficult to grasp the direction it is taking. The contemporaneity of the much heralded liberation from "imperialism" with democratic, national and social revolutions indeed creates a combination, which presents an altogether new phenomenon even if its component parts are still described with familiar labels.³⁹

Neumann thus suggests that the world seen from America, by both politicians and political scientists, presented itself as a problem - new, incomprehensible, and threatening to a certain extent. But given the political ascendancy of the United States in the inter and post-war era, the perception of the world as a problem cannot but facilitate the understanding of the world as an American problem, and academically, as a problem of and in American political science. This relationship between global politics and the universal science of politics is alluded to by Neumann when he writes that "this is an age of international civil war" and that "comparative politics must reach out from its national basis into the age of international power politics".⁴⁰

Although political scientists claim that the new discipline is the result of a scientific revolution, they tend to recognize that its rise was also a response to the political situations mentioned above. But this recognition is given mostly an anecdotic status. For example, in an article published thirteen years after the publication of Macridis's book, Lasswell, a defender of a natural science of politics, recognizes that "comparative politics" arose as a response to the political challenges of the post-World War II period. But he goes on to interpret these challenges as phenomena that require a "scientific" understanding.⁴¹ But why such a non-political - if it is - understanding is the right way to explain the new political world is not seriously considered. The link between the historical and political context and the rise of comparative politics is episodically recognized. But why this link is

reduced to a problem in science, and why a natural science of politics is the most appropriate response, is not thematized. True, the success of the natural sciences is held up as an example of successful explanation and prediction of natural phenomena. But the question of the condition of the possibility of comparative politics as a discourse, compared to that of the natural sciences, is not examined. Language is unhooked from the political world and used as an instrument on a presumably a-linguistic political world. The exclusion of language from the world thus makes plausible the equation of science with empiricism.⁴²

Empiricism and Comparative Politics

Now, the terms empirical and empiricism have a long history during which their meanings have considerably changed. Empiricism is now an umbrella term which is used to cover fields such as logical empiricism, ordinary language analysis, operationalism, instrumentalism. What is generally meant by empiricism is, on the level of method, a procedure of observation and verification that is repeatable, and generates as evidence only those experiences that are replicable. On the theoretical level, it aims at the construction of empirical generalizations or causal connections of observational terms that are valid cross-culturally. Thus Easton writes that political science has undergone "two revolutions simultaneously".⁴³ These are methodological and theoretical; the first is made possible by "absorbing the basic assumptions of the scientific method", and the second by relating "behaviour...to some empirical theoretical context".⁴⁴ Moreover, it is claimed that, to be scientific, the knowledge of politics must be formulated in the hypothetical - deductive form.⁴⁵ Thus, Smelser claims that a knowledge of a polity that is not expressible in this form is "nothing". He writes:

To constitute a theory, the propositions must take the forms of a deductive system. One of them, usually called the lowest order proposition, is the proposition to be explained, for example, the

proposition that the more thoroughly a society is industrialized, the more fully its kinship organization tends toward the nuclear family. The other propositions are either general propositions or statements of particular given conditions. The general propositions are so called because they enter into other, perhaps many other, deductive systems besides the one in question. Indeed, what we often call a theory is a cluster of deductive systems, sharing the same general propositions but having different explicanda. The crucial requirement is that each system shall be deductive ... A theory is nothing - it is not a theory - unless it is an explanation.⁴⁶

In other words, political knowledge is scientific only when it is produced as causal laws of the type, if C then E under situation X, where C, E, X, are variables specified in terms of or some relation to observational properties, indicating therefore that the event was to be expected because universal laws state that under the conditions in which it occurred its occurrence was predictable. True, empiricists admit that the ways of discovering new facts and hypotheses may differ between the natural and social sciences. But as Rudner points out, the discovery of new hypotheses and relevant facts is not part of science, but part of the context of discovery which, it is assumed, has no logic; science is limited by to the context of validation.⁴⁷ In the context of validation, the logic of validation, of explanation, and of prediction, the logic of concept formation, theory construction and hypothesis testing are assumed to be the same in both the social and natural sciences.⁴⁸ This is the ideal of science that is espoused by comparativists.⁴⁹ This understanding of science held by comparativists is not one that results from a reading of their own practices of comparing. It is one which, according to Almond and Genco, rests on "epistemological and methodological assumptions... taken from the hard sciences".⁵⁰

They write:

- (1) that the purpose of science is the discovery of regularities in, and ultimately laws of, social and political processes;
- (2) that scientific explanation means the deductive subsumption of individual events under "covering laws" and
- (3) that the only scientifically relevant relationships between events in the world are those which correspond to a physicalistic conception of causal connection.⁵¹

Empiricism in comparative politics cannot however be considered only as a theory of knowledge. One can suggest that it is also a theory of man and his world, of the relationship between man and man and his (their) world. In this sense, empiricism can be seen as a metatheory that sets the limits of the world and the knowable, and legislates as to what counts, in comparative politics, as comparison, politics and knowledge. The big question here is of course how empiricism accounts for its linguistic presence in an empirical world. As this question will be dealt with in a subsequent chapter, it suffices to point out here the paradox that empiricism cannot conceive its own linguistic body as part of the world, for to do so would introduce a plurality in the world thus denying the ontological homogeneity empiricism assumes in its conception of knowledge. Empiricism thus legislates its own relationship to language and to the world as being external and contingent in spite of the fact that this very legislation of externalities presupposes, to be understood and accepted, that which makes the world understandable, viz., language. But the self-legislation of empiricism as a-world and a-linguistic permits political scientists to jump over the interpretative problem that the evidence available to them, either from their practices or from the political world, leaves their choice of "empiricism" as a theory of knowledge of politics completely underdetermined. And yet the difficulties created by this underdetermination seem to have led political scientists into a tremendous effort, perhaps even unparalleled in the natural sciences, of legislating what a fact is and is not, and its relationship to values and actions. All that which can be interpreted is banished from the realm of "facts". Facts are legislated to be mute components

of the political world, their muteness being the condition of their replicability.

Thus one reads:

Facts, publicly verifiable and sensually perceived are regarded as the only valid basis of truth or reality. Values are seen differently as normative preferences whose validity is not subject to scientific proof.⁵²

This distinction between facts and values is in fact a distinction between content-less language - that which can be universally used to refer to the "verifiable and sensually perceived", and "private" language - that which cannot be part of the scientific language, for what it refers to "is not", so believe political scientists, "subject to scientific proof". Thus Easton writes that "values can be reduced to emotional responses conditioned by the individual's total life-experiences".⁵³ The existence of values is not denied by this metatheory of politics. But their intersubjective nature is denied through the instrumentalization of language. Because the language of values does not permit, according to empiricists, the production of "verifiable and sensually perceived" data, it is legislated to be non-intersubjective. As such values are seen to be no more than private grunts, expressed in a presumably private language. They are thus made irrational, and opposed to the measurability, calculability and "rationality" of facts.⁵⁴ True, the possibility of "scientifically" studying "values" is not denied by contemporary political scientists. But they can be studied, they claim, only as reported facts (of private grunts).⁵⁵ According to Waldo, values are "to be studied empirically, from the outside".⁵⁶ And Bierstedt adds that the social scientist "is interested not with what is right or wrong or good or evil but only in what is true or false".⁵⁷

But the distinction between fact and value is not a distinction-in-itself, but a distinction that expresses a certain linguistic articulation of the social world. It is then a result of a linguistic practice

which assumes that meaning is rooted in discourse and that such discourse permits to make certain logical distinctions. It is the occlusion of this question of language as the condition of the possibility and validity of discourse which renders plausible this distinction between fact and value as a distinction given independently of human subjects. But this occlusion of the condition which makes possible the comparative discourse prevents comparativists from being able to account for the meanings of the terms they use. Thus they have failed to raise precisely those questions which must be answered in order to justify a natural science of politics. Do concepts such as explanation, prediction, causality, cumulation, distinctions such as fact-value, true-false, have the same articulations, expressions and meanings in nature and society, in the natural sciences and the social sciences? The manner with which comparativists deal with these questions raise many paradoxes. To illustrate this, let me take the fact-value and true-false distinctions made by comparativists.

Is the distinction between fact and value one which has the same meaning for a natural fact - say a molecule of water - and a political fact, say a vote? Even if one grants that such a distinction can be made in both cases, comparativists have not shown that it has the same meaning in both cases. Comparativists claim that a value-free political science is possible. Value concepts are considered as not open to discussion and absolute whereas empirical concepts are assumed to identify things in the real world.⁵⁸ Empirical concepts are seen as radically different from evaluational concepts because the first are assumed to identify verifiable things in "the real world", one by one, whereas evaluational concepts are assumed to express personal preferences.⁵⁹ A fact, it is claimed, does not lead to a value. Now, this is true as long as we are dealing with single facts and singular statements. Thus the singular factual statement that "A tore a piece of paper into two and put half of it in a box marked X and the other half in his pocket" does not of course lead to a value judgement. But what comparativists, however, have not shown is that factual statements, as made by comparativists in their practice, are in fact singular statements of fact. If we take the above statement

in the context of voting, to write "A tore the ballot into two and put half of it in the ballot box and the other half in his pocket" is not a singular factual statement. It is a statement that individuates an act that immediately raises questions related to the meaning and appropriateness of tearing the ballot which in turn involves, to recognize and understand A's act, a knowledge of the background political structures, organizations, practices, problems and aspirations. In other words, what is individuated as a fact is much, much more than what is referred to by the singular factual statement. If so, there are no singular factual and singular value statements in comparative political discourse. For a fact of politics is visible, understandable and explainable only against the background of a society, with its self-conceptions and institutions and practices. In a way, it is always a compound fact. Its political nature is not an addition to the "fact" but the realization of the "fact" itself as a political fact. If there are only political facts and not "facts", then there cannot be a singular statement of fact in political science unless one shows that facts can be unhooked from a given society's self-conceptions, institutions, practices and the way the members of this society talk about them. What appears as a singular statement of fact is a sign of a certain political reality as a whole. Comparativists, in their practice, never make singular factual statements but statements about facts that stand as signs of a certain political reality as a whole. And yet, the ideal of a value-free political science is founded on the possibility of making singular factual statements. But comparativists have yet to demonstrate, either in practice or theory, that it is possible to make singular factual statements about politics.

The second question that arises is in relation to the oft-made claim that the political scientist is concerned only with what is true or false. Here also comparativists have failed to ask the question of whether the intentional problem of truth is the same in the natural and social sciences. Empiricists claim that the "ultimate criterion" by which "one accepts or rejects statements about social life...is the method by which they are gathered".⁶⁰ Such an approach may be valid in the

natural sciences, for there one deals with individual facts that do not express more than themselves. As Heller points out, in the natural sciences "truth is synonymous with adequacy to the object" since their objects are "value free".⁶¹ In the social sciences, science is not, in the practice of comparativists, an investigation of individual facts, but of individuated facts. If so, comparativists have yet to show that the meaning of "true", "false" are the same in the natural and social sciences. What comparativists forget is that when they speak of the "empirical aspects of political life"⁶², the "empirical" already involves language as a condition that makes possible the individuation of political phenomena as "facts", making the facts involve something more than themselves - viz., the polity from which they are abstracted. Can, then, the empirical method translate these politically informed facts into apolitical facts? In other words, can the political be abolished from comparative politics? Comparativists claim it can be done. They claim that political practices and entities can be translated into "a set of symbols or variables", amenable to "a set of rules that relate those symbols to empirical generalizations" and to "a closed logical structure or calculus consisting of rules for manipulating symbols".⁶³ Thus Przeworski and Teune consider the substitution of "names of variables" for "the names of social systems such as Ghana, United States, Africa or Asia" to be essential to the project of the scientific discipline of comparative politics.⁶⁴ The implication here is that the political that specifically characterizes a given polity, and illuminates it as a different polity, can be evicted and its place taken by "names of variables" which are amenable to the science of comparative politics. This may be possible. But it cannot be glossed over as a scientific activity that replaces "names of variables" for "names of social systems". The very act of abolishing the "political" is a non-scientific act in as much as the "names of variables" repress and hide, through their use as neutral replacements, the political struggles and dominations, the conflicting political practices, both internal and external, of the so-called "social systems". True, in the logic of comparative politics, the use of "names of variables" presents the existing polities and international system as natural objects, making them appear as potential

objects of natural science. But the substitution of "names of variables" for political practices and entities, while making possible a natural science of politics as understood by comparativists, renders this science thoroughly political, for its discourse becomes one that is open to political speech and practice which consider the existing order to be natural. Simultaneously it also becomes a discourse that is closed to political speech and practice which contest the naturalness given to those political practices and entities. For, not naming these politically, and substituting for them names of variables, is occluding them as political experiences. In other words, the names of variables, being linguistic articulations of political experiences, cannot be considered content-less. That is to say, they are not free from political language and practices.

One cannot say comparativists are not aware of these questions. They are. But instead of tackling them at the level where they are present in the world, as articulations of experience, they split them from their locus, which is political language, and subject them to method. Method is given primacy over experience. Method is assumed to abolish the question of language and meanings.⁶⁵

The Primacy of Method in Comparative Politics

The emphasis on method in comparative politics, both as an instrument of research as well as a topic of discussion, seems to suggest that in some way, not clarified by comparativists, method is a response to an intractable and inescapable substantive question.⁶⁶ This inescapable question is: how does one deal with language-communities that have not produced the language of method as an expression of their world? The corollary to this is: what is the place of the other in a political science which denies it (the other) as-a-difference? One way of solving these questions is by making the other an object of monological relationships with the political scientist. This eliminates the other-as-a-difference by making him a ready-made furniture of a closed world.

The other-as-a-difference is made a-linguistic and made the object of the universal language of method. It is this repression of the other-as-a-difference that appears in comparative politics as a consensus on the primacy of method over the political world. This primacy of method over the object of study can be seen therefore as a reaction to the resistance of the object of study to method itself. Method and the primacy of method can then be seen as social practices expressive of a social relationship between comparativists and the compared. This methodical social relationship articulates the domestication of political facts and their disintegration into data which can be assembled in a universal comparative order.⁶⁷

This however raises an important question regarding the comparability of the other, once the other is stripped of its language. In such a presentation, the other is not comparable in its own right, for comparability is not a primary quality.⁶⁸ The comparability of the other is then a reading of the other in a language, which, in the process of denying the linguisticness and sociality of the other, imposes on it the criteria, categories, dimensions and meanings of comparison which are not shared with the other. In other words, comparison is a monologue of the same on the excluded other. In this denial of the other, empiricism is allied to rationalism. As early as 1959, Almond has discussed the possibilities of applying formal logic and mathematics to the study of politics. And it is the considered view of such influential theoreticians of comparative research as Holt and Richardson, Przeworski and Teune that it is impossible to have cross-cultural law-like generalizations and an empirical theory of politics without the use of mathematics.⁶⁹ Indeed, it is assumed that in the same way that "potentially at least, all segments of political science can be treated behaviorally"⁷⁰, "there is no idea or proposition (in the social sciences) which cannot be put into mathematical language..."⁷¹ This alliance of formalism and empiricism in method is rooted in the sharing of a certain conception of language.

Both subscribe to the idea that language is an instrument, that "meaning" is not grounded in discourse, and that reality and language are independent of each other. These are indeed substantive claims, evoked by method, regarding the nature of man, the political world and the interaction between the two.

The primacy of method then suggests the primacy of a certain concept of man and the world. In this sense, it can be suggested that method is a way of talking about politics that is believed to overcome political meanings by grasping them at the level of their constituent elementary components, which are presumed to be not open to interpretation. But such a claim for method hides an additional claim - that it, in fact, demarcates the political from the non-political, or that it is not affected by the demarcation between the political and the non-political, for method would be beyond language itself. Now comparativists do not formulate their claims in this way. Rather, they adopt the clever distinction between the context of discovery and the context of validation. But this distinction does not help us to see how method is outside the language of politics. Rather this distinction raises additional paradoxes.

Comparativists have not made clear the meaning of the distinction between context of discovery and context of validation in the study of politics. It is easy to understand the sense of this distinction in the natural sciences. The context of discovery rests on a unilateral relationship between the natural scientist and his object of study, with the natural scientist as the reflexive, the discovering pole, of the relationship. The objects of study are merely the mute substratum of this activity. They are not related to the natural scientist in a sense that evokes the experience of domination, unless one wants to speak in a metaphor borrowed from the relationships of power that exist among humans. The question then is whether the distinction between the context of discovery and the context of validation has the same neutral and non-political meaning in the study of politics.

Comparativists have not tackled this question. At best, they interpret this distinction as one between interpretation and explanation. But this is not enough. If one wants to claim that this distinction has the same meaning in natural science and comparative politics, as comparativists do claim, one must first deal with the anthropological meaning of this distinction. This distinction implies a distinction between a discoverer of meanings and discovered meanings, between a discovering subject and discovered subjects in a relationship where the denial of reciprocity has a meaning radically different from the one that obtains in the natural scientist - nature relationship. A natural scientist may discover the law of gravity or atoms but the reverse is impossible by definition. The context of validation is for him, a recovery of the reciprocity he loses in his confrontation with the non-human. The denial of reciprocity, without political meaning in natural science, has in comparative politics the effect of denying recognition to the studied subjects, and making them objects of domination through the very process that permits the comparativist to recuperate himself as an autonomous being, and as the necessary condition of the visibility of the other. Thus, the student of comparative politics is forced to ask whether the very conception of method in comparative politics does not presuppose political inequality, and whether the content of comparative reason or method is not domination.

At the least, this suggests that method is an application of a certain conception of man and the world. In comparative politics, its operation then cannot but suggest certain norms. For, if comparative politics were really a natural science, it would enable us to form political engineers, who would be effective manipulators of political reality. But in this very process, they will be doing something else which natural scientists cannot do; they will be defining norms. Comparative politics would then be a science of norms. Now, this means that it does this precisely to the extent that it is not what it pretends to be, viz., a science like physics.

Some of the questions raised here did lead to criticisms of comparative politics. However, although some of the criticisms were pertinent, most did fail to have an appreciable impact on the discipline. The very resistance of the discipline to these criticisms, many of which did bring out important shortcomings, and its increasing triumph suggest that there is more to comparative politics than mere scientific method. I will make a suggestion on this, after discussing the major criticisms made against comparative politics.

Criticisms Made Against Comparative Politics

Some comparativists claim that political science has a paradigm. But this claim is not accepted by all political scientists.⁷² For Holt and Turner, comparative politics is in a "pre-paradigmatic" state.⁷³ Meehan considers the major approaches in political science as quasi-theories or intellectual frameworks; not that he questions the scheme of a political science but rather on the grounds that it is not yet scientific.⁷⁴ While some, like Easton, Apter, claim that the scientific revolution has taken place,⁷⁵ others deny the very existence of such a revolution.⁷⁶ Indeed such denials are made not only by the "anti-scientific" but also by those who are committed to a natural science of politics.⁷⁷ Although the reasons are different, both the natural scientists of politics and the philosophers of politics agree that comparative politics has yet to deliver its promises of cross-cultural law-like generalizations.

The generalizations comparative politics has produced until now do not seem to have advanced our understanding or explanation of contemporary political phenomena. Nor have they generated scientific interest or excitement even among comparativists themselves. Some examples of such generalizations can explain why. One reads in Mancur Olson Jr.: "If men still anticipate future gratifications...political violence is less likely to occur in the present".⁷⁸ In L.W. Doob, one finds that "People are likely to accept a proposed change when it is not in conflict with traditional beliefs and values which are proving satisfactory".⁷⁹ The

paradox with such generalizations is not only that they have the ring of common sense, but they could also be reached with the more parsimonious and elegant analysis known in the trade as traditional political theory.⁸⁰ Indeed, Goldberg, an advocate of a natural science of politics, denies to Berelson and Steiner's inventory of "scientific findings" a scientific status and qualifies it as "a source of stimuli for questions which might be answered scientifically".⁸¹

Besides, some of the generalizations, such as the ones made by Huntington regarding "social frustration", "political participation" and "political instability",⁸² or Apter's generalizations on "instrumental-hierarchical" and "consumatory-pyramidal" systems,⁸³ are so ambiguous, as Ben-Dor has pointed out, that they require an extensive work of re-interpretation before one can even sort out what is empirical and not empirical, what is insight and what is "empirical generalization".⁸⁴ In spite of the fact that the scientific method has been discussed, elaborated and massively applied since the rise of comparative politics, in spite of the numerous empirical generalizations that have been attempted, it is extremely difficult to identify a single study in comparative politics that has fulfilled the requirements of what knowledge is according to the epistemology that supports the project of comparative politics. No genuine cross-cultural law-like generalization has been produced. This has been recognized even by advocates of science.⁸⁵ The generalizations one meets in the social and political sciences are at best "concerned with human rationality in general", comments MacIntyre, and adds that "they do not have any specific connections with politics and they do not belong to political science, but to our general understanding of rationality".⁸⁶ In the wake of this failure, the scientific approach has been subjected to a wide-ranging criticism both from within and without.

The Internal Critique of Comparative Politics

The euphoria and optimism that accompanied the adoption of a natural science of politics and that one feels in the writings of Almond, Powell,

Coleman, Verba, Apter, Easton, seem to be giving way to certain doubts regarding the project of a natural science of politics. This is not only due to the failure to produce genuine cross-cultural law-like generalizations. This is not only due to the anomalies created by the "normal science" of comparative politics. Doubts started seeping into the discipline due to the fact that the political world was behaving as if it did not care much about the tremendous effort political scientists were putting in to discover its natural laws.⁸⁷ The predictability of political events in Africa, Asia and Latin America in terms of the frameworks of comparative politics is so shaky that some political scientists do think justified to question the basis of their practice, while others advocate a total retreat of political science from the political world,⁸⁸ or an exclusion from political science of those unpredictable events - events LaPalombara disingenuously calls the "Zanzibar Ploy"⁸⁹ - that take place in the so-called Third World.

Teune attributes this failure to the misunderstanding of the scientific method by what he calls "some self-identified comparative researchers".⁹⁰ He suggests that the "primary concern" of comparative research be "the predictions from some general theoretical statements" rather "than be concerned with the statistical evidence to establish the relationship between the observations and the generalizations across a set of systems".⁹¹ Melanson and King explain this failure as follows:

...the prominent schemes of comparative politics have employed the language of theoretical explanation without basing their inquiry on the epistemic prerequisite of such inquiry: the formulation of explicit hypothesis, the specifications of rules of evidence and correspondence and the explication of causal interrelations.⁹²

Gabriel Almond - one of the first advocates of the new discipline - is subjected to the same criticism by Holt and Richardson. They write:

The lack of clarity in the definition of basic concepts and a certain confusion in their logical interrelationships make it very difficult to determine the theoretical aspects of Almond's program. That is, we cannot identify clearly which propositions are theoretical and thus are empirically testable and which are logical and true by definition.⁹³

In the same vein, Holt and Turner have scientifically criticized the seven books published under the auspices of the Committee on Comparative Politics,⁹⁴ After declaring that "a body of precise, rigorous, and general propositions with real deductive power is a sine qua non of a science of politics", they go on to show that these studies on political development and modernization do not meet any of these requirements.⁹⁵ They conclude:

...given the objective of theory building - a coherent and interdependent set of propositions in terms of which political development can be explained - we feel that the Committee's work has fallen short of the target.⁹⁶

Burrows considers that "empirical generalizations about whole political systems" based on "A Decade of Cross-National Political Research" is atheoretical and "marred by ad hoc attempts to explain the empirical results that emerge in the course of analysis".⁹⁷ He considers this to be a consequence of the techniques of data-production, research designs and analysis.⁹⁸ The project of an empirical theory of politics is not however questioned. A similar view is taken by Tufte; improving data analysis is seen as providing the solution to the problems of comparative political research.⁹⁹ Holt and Richardson consider that to "improve the description, explanation and prediction of political phenomena" political scientists "must turn to mathematics" and "not statistics".¹⁰⁰

The consequence of the internal critique of comparative politics has been a proliferation of approaches, frameworks, techniques, and a burgeoning literature on method. The internal critique of comparative politics is, like comparative politics itself, founded on a fixed, second-hand conception of science, which it uses as the basis for its inter-

pretation of what science is and what a political science should be. The internal critique is based on the empiricist metatheory that is also the foundation of comparative politics. In other words critiques and practitioners share the belief that a natural science of politics is possible. It is not surprising then that the internal critique seems to accentuate, rather than to question, those features of the discipline which seem to lead it into a political and theoretical cul-de-sac. It is perhaps of interest to note that G. Almond, one of the early promoters and active advocate of the scientific method, has come to a point where he characterizes the "science" in comparative politics as "a kind of 'bargo cult', fashionable cardboard imitations of the tools and products of the hard sciences in the hope that our incantations would make them real".¹⁰¹

The External Critique of Comparative Politics

The internal critiques all share an Archimedean point of reference - the scientific method as read out of the natural sciences. The external critiques do not share such a common conception of the world and knowledge. They belong to different philosophical persuasions. However, they all consider the empiricist theory of knowledge as inherently inadequate in the acquisition of knowledge about political phenomena. These critiques subscribe to currents as diverse as classical political theory, phenomenology, hermeneutics, marxism and ethical cognitivism.

Leo Strauss represents the critique of the first type.¹⁰² He points out, based on Greek political theory, that there cannot be a value-free study of political science by reminding the scientists that politics is not any activity but an evaluative activity. It is, according to him, an activity that is involved, not in contemplation, but in the practical acts of setting goals for society, of settling conflicts bearing on power and justice, and ultimately in the constitution of a just society. According to Strauss, political science is an ethical science in the sense that inquiry into political actions involves evaluations of these actions and the different claims to power and justice they express.¹⁰³ From this point of view then, the project of cross-cultural

law-like generalizations would be as effective in understanding politics as a sieve would be in carrying water. What matters - the political world of men acting, struggling, fighting, succeeding and failing in their pursuit of their conception of what the best political regime is - would be simply lost.

Those inspired by phenomenology criticize the project of a "science" of politics by pointing to the rather restricted conception of experience one meets in comparative politics. According to phenomenologists, political scientists have tended to psychologize political experiences, and to repress the pre-objective life-world wherein the political agent and the political scientist are active participants.¹⁰⁴ Phenomenologists claim that "political science as a purely empirical discipline cannot deal" with questions which are central to the study of politics, to wit: "(1) the nature of the knowledge of political things, (2) the basic unit of political analysis, and (3) the nature of values in the theory of politics".¹⁰⁵ What phenomenologists consider as a fundamental shortcoming in the practice of political scientists is their total neglect of the fact that the political world is a shared life-world which cannot be radically separated from the practices and conceptions that express it as a polity.¹⁰⁶ From this point of view also, a project of cross-cultural law-like generalizations to explain and predict political phenomena would be totally misguided. It forgets that which makes possible the political world and the science of politics - the subject who in comparative politics seems to have become anarthric. Hermeneuticians share similar concerns but they emphasize the historical dimension of the transmission, sharing and creation of meaningful structures that are intelligibly expressed and articulated through speech and language.¹⁰⁷

The marxist critique of comparative politics, as it bears on the so-called developing countries, was first comprehensively articulated by A.G. Frank in his seminal essay the "Sociology of Development and Underdevelopment of Sociology". Frank found modernization and political

development theories to be wanting in "empirical validity", "theoretical adequacy" and "policy effectiveness".¹⁰⁸ In general, the Marxian critique points out the apologetic function of comparative politics by emphasizing the fact that comparative politics considers the given political world - which is manifestly a world of injustice and violence for the majority of the polities studied by comparativists - not as a world to be changed but as one to be contemplated.¹⁰⁹

Comparative politics has also been criticized for the way it has transmuted the fact-value distinction into the idea of a value-free science. Wolin recuses the very choice imposed by the new political science - that between normative and empirical theory. According to Wolin the very distinction between normative and empirical theory is the consequence of an unpolitical - that is a methodist - perception of politics.¹¹⁰ According to him:

The issue is not between theories which are normative and those which are not: nor is it between those political scientists who are theoretical and those who are not. Rather it is between those who would restrict the "reach" of theory by dwelling on facts which are selected by what are assumed to be the functional requisites of the existing paradigm, and those who believe that because facts are richer than theories, it is the task of the theoretical imagination to restate new possibilities.¹¹¹

Wolin thus contests the very concept of a fact as a "simple, discrete perception of something in the real world"¹¹² as being an unwarranted impoverishment of what facts are in the political world.

The separation between the "is" and "ought" that is a canon of the theory of knowledge (empiricism) on which the scientificity of comparative politics is made to stand has been challenged also from the point of view of "institutional facts" which indeed seems to be the nature of most, if not all, political facts. According to Searle, the "is - ought" separation cannot cope with institutional facts and consequently with the facts of social life. He writes:

It is often a matter of fact that one has certain obligations, commitments, rights and responsibilities, but it is a matter of institutional not brute fact. It is one such institutionalized form of obligation, promising, which I invoked to derive an "ought" from an "is". I started with a brute fact, that a man uttered certain words, and then invoked the institution in such a way as to generate an institutional fact, by which we arrived at the conclusion that, as regards his obligation, the man ought to pay another man five dollars.¹¹³

What this suggests is that institutional facts are such that they require from the political scientist certain stands and commitments. Generally, political scientists reject such a conclusion by reducing values to private sentiments. However, some political scientists seem to be aware of the dilemma involved here. Thus Meehan asks: "Would the scientist make moral judgements if his subject-matter required it?" And he answers: "This is an unanswerable question."¹¹⁴

Now, why is this question "unanswerable"? It is a question which is unanswerable precisely because it is a question which is raised within a framework that denies the linguistic nature of evaluations. This, suggests Taylor from a different angle, is an understanding of evaluations that refuses to recognize their openness to explanations. According to Taylor, moral utterances differ from expressions of sentiments.¹¹⁵ The former require reasons for commending and these are rooted in explanatory frameworks. Values are not a species of emotive expressions - but assertions that require to be supported by reasons. It is then not the case that explanations and evaluations are mutually exclusive. On the contrary, value-judgements rest on explanations. Conversely an explanatory framework secretes a set of value-judgements that find their justification in the explanations the framework holds. Likewise it excludes value-judgements that cannot find explanations in that framework. In other words, explanatory frameworks delimit a certain "schedule of wants, needs and purposes". Whereas one may claim that a singular statement of fact is independent from a singular value-judgement, one cannot claim such mutual exclusiveness of the two when we are dealing with a structure of

statements or concepts or an explanatory framework. For the framework deals, not with isolated facts, but with already organized (social, political, economic) facts. Each framework permits, not only a certain ordering of facts as political or not political, but also and simultaneously a certain evaluation of these facts and the polity wherein they are given. The flow then is not only from value to facts, but also from facts to values, in as much as these facts, when supported by an explanatory framework, entail valuations in terms of the delimitations of human rationality, needs, purposes and wants that are secreted by the framework. Facts do not enter and leave explanatory frameworks as brute data. They enter it as complex social practices, already evaluated and ranked according to their range, capacity and intensity, and are evaluated in the framework in terms of the "human needs, wants and purposes" the framework supports. Thus, according to Taylor, the theoretical findings of political science instruct us on "how we are to judge of good and bad..."¹¹⁶

Comparativists seem to construe the different criticisms made against the claims of value-free science as criticisms that invite political scientists to study political values or as criticisms that invite political scientists to become policy scientists. But this is a misunderstanding. The above critiques are not inviting political scientists to study political values for the simple reason that empiricists have never claimed that values do not exist or that they cannot be studied. Nor is this a mere call for "relevance" as Easton interprets it, thus making "science" and "relevance" mutually exclusive and considering the latter as a derogation from science.¹¹⁷ What the critiques are suggesting is that there cannot be a science of politics that is not inherently evaluational.

The response of comparativists to the above critiques has been one which integrates values as facts, or reduces values to choices amenable to calculations such as the one provided by game-theory. This seems to be the direction taken by Almond *et al.* in their historical studies of political development.¹¹⁸ This double reduction of evaluation to values first, and of values to facts second, is best articulated by E. Meehan. He writes:

The concept of value-judgement as it is used here, refers to the analytic properties of human behavior, not to the intentions of the actor; the decision of what value-judgement has been made in a situation is determined by the observer, and the same act of behavior can be conceptualized in an infinite number of different ways ...¹¹⁹

The consequence of such an approach is that when these criticisms are taken into account, they are so after being translated into the discipline in terms of the permissible ranges established by the empiricist framework. This has resulted in a distorted cooptation of the critiques. Thus the Marxian idea of "domination" is translated into "penetration"; the phenomenologist idea of "intersubjectivity" is translated into "political culture"; the criticisms that show the evaluative nature of political science are translated as meaning "applied research".¹²⁰

Other Critiques of Comparative Politics

Besides the ones discussed in the above section, other criticisms have been directed at comparative politics both from within and without. Most of these deal with the choice of areas of research, type and range of hypotheses, the identification of variables, levels and types of analysis. In general, these criticisms do not seriously question the empiricist metatheory of comparative politics. However, there are certain criticisms that require to be mentioned. As early as 1968, Macridis, one of the political scientists instrumental in the rise of the discipline, lamented "the gradual disappearance of the political" from comparative politics and advised political scientists to pay more attention to political elites, based on his assumption that "decision-making is an elitist conspiracy".¹²¹ This of course is no more than a quarrel of variables.

A criticism which is quite wide-spread is one which considers comparative politics to be ethnocentric in spite of its claim to be objective, value-free and universal. Nisbet suggests that at the basis

of the discipline there is a belief that the history of the West provides the "necessary clues to arrangement of the cultures of the world".¹²²

Ali Mazuri has made similar suggestions. He considers the categories of comparative politics as culture bound and their claim to universality as a manifestation of "cultural pride".¹²³ However, comparativists do not consider this criticism as justified or insurmountable. In his study on the Congo, J.C. Williams writes that "the familiar argument that theoretical concepts borrowed from Western political sociology are irrelevant to supposedly alien experience" is a false one. He adds:

This assertion of ethnocentrism is based on the widespread but erroneous belief that the study of developing areas requires methods quite different from those used in the analysis of European socio-political forms.¹²⁴

O. Barr, Spain and Tessler consider the question of ethnocentricity as a non-theoretical issue. They write that "to a considerable extent, this debate will ultimately be resolved on empirical grounds".¹²⁵ Similar views are held by Kautsky. He suggests that ethnocentrism is not an insurmountable obstacle and that it can be avoided by raising "less culture-bound and more universal" questions such as "who is in conflict with whom over what and what is that changes and how it changes..."¹²⁶ Such questions, he believes, overcome ethnocentrism.

The Limitations of the Criticisms

What one discovers in examining comparative political studies and the criticisms made against them, both internal and external, is the resistance of the object of study to comparative politics, viz., the resistance of foreign political practices to the categories, frameworks and techniques of comparative politics. One of the symptoms of this resistance is the failure of comparative politics to produce genuine cross-cultural law-like generalizations.

But the nature of this resistance of the subject-matter is not recognized fully by either the comparativists or the majority of its

critiques. The internal critiques ask for more "science" to overcome this resistance of the subject matter. Such is the program laid down by Holt and Richardson.¹²⁷

The external critiques claim that it is precisely this project of a natural science of politics which is the real cause of the sterility of comparative politics. But their criticism of comparative politics is not extended to bring out its images of man and the world, and the relationships of these images to the different manifestations of being a political man-in-the-world that are expressed in the different polities studied by comparative politics. The consequence of this neglect is that neither the presence of the compared in the discourse of comparative politics nor the nature of this presence have been elucidated.

Yet, it can be suggested that the resistance of the object of study to the categories of comparative politics is also the presence, in a certain way as yet not elucidated by the critiques, of the compared in the discourse of comparative politics. This resistance is expressed not only as lack of genuine cross-cultural generalizations but also, in the discourse of comparative politics, as a deficiency in the object of study itself. The ethos, as it were, expressed in the terminologies of comparative politics such as "developing", "modernising" ... etc., suggests that comparative politics is a rational discourse on the irrational other. A few examples can indicate this. Zolberg considers African polities as an "institutionless arena".¹²⁸ Levine claims that the African political leaders' self-conceptions and practices of politics show "inconsistency".¹²⁹ Post and Vickers consider the political practices of Nigerians as a "politicization" of the unpoliticizable.¹³⁰

It may be of interest to note the historical similarity between the comparative political discourse on the other (African here), and the colonial discourse on the other (the colonized or the "discovered" African). It seems that in both cases the other is made intelligible by considering it as part of the realm of nature, wherein the colonial discoverer and the comparativist appear as the only representatives of "nature-conscious-of-itself" confronted to non-conscious or external nature. To see this point one can compare Barbot's and Coleman's descriptions of Africa.

Barbot wrote in 1732 about West Africans that "the public administration of affairs among the blacks is so confused and irregular that there is scarce any comprehending much less giving a good description of it".¹³¹ Two hundred and twenty seven years later, James Coleman, using the scientific language of comparative politics, describes African political systems:

In much of Africa, however, many aspects of the political systems are indeterminate - boundaries are in flux, existing structures are being abolished or radically transformed, new institutions are being introduced, and roles are undefined, or defined by their incumbents, who are fleeting - or fleeing.¹³²

One finds in comparative politics, Barbot-like characterizations of African political practices, but repeated this time in a scientific language as I have shown in the various quotations above. The question then is: What is this condition of discourse shared in common that leads the colonialist and the comparative political science discourses to similar understandings of alien political practices in spite of the fact that their purposes (that of the first being power and that of the second explanation-prediction), their epistemologies, their methods are different? What seems to be shared by both discourses is a way of talking about other polities that radically excludes the way of talking that the others have of themselves and their practices.

It is this linguistic nature of comparative political science discourse, and indeed of all discourses on men and their world, that the critiques of comparative politics have not seriously and thoroughly examined. The neglect of the linguistic nature of politics and comparative politics has deprived the critiques and comparativists of the capacity to see the systematically distorting nature of comparative political discourse. Indeed many of the critiques we have seen above argue from within the framework of the language of comparative politics, to be sure, inadvertently, and therefore, their criticisms tend to be marginal and ineffective.

For instance, to argue that a value-free political inquiry is not possible is a partial criticism, for it is in fact to argue from within the structure of questions of comparative politics itself. The question of whether value-free political science is possible or not is itself a question that is rooted in the empiricist metatheory of comparative politics. It pre-gives the answer as a choice between a "yes" or a "no" leading to a sterile and interminable debate, each side repeating its "yes" and "no" in different formulations. The crucial question of what politics is, is forgotten in this debate. It is, I think, precisely because the critiques have tried to meet the challenge of comparative politics from within its problematic that they have failed to influence the discipline to a great extent. Thus many critiques confront comparative politics as if the question of value-free political science is the crucial question. Likewise, critiques of Greek political theory persuasion, although sensitive to the question of the nature of politics and thereby sensitive to its related question as to the place of political science in politics, however confront comparative politics as if the practices and conceptualizations of politics have not changed their expression since the Greeks. The Marxian critique, although it takes into account the relationships of dominations that exist between polities, suffers from a conceptualization of politics which, in many respects, seems to share the implicit assumption of comparative politics - that there can be apolitical politics.¹³³

Nor is the criticism of ethnocentrism a convincing one either. Except for the fact that the term is used in a pejorative sense, what is meant by ethnocentrism is not clear. If by ethnocentrism is meant that people use their culturally available meanings and values to describe or evaluate members of other cultures, then this is no more than pointing to the human condition which requires that we be involved, because we speak, in our description and understanding of others. If by ethnocentrism is meant that people judge their culturally available meanings and values as superior to those of others or that they want to impose them on others, then the first is racism and the second oppression and to reduce these to ethnocentrism is rather disingenuous. If the critiques mean that only the categories of comparative politics are ethnocentric, then the critiques

tacitly share the assumption of comparative politics, to wit, that it is possible to have "non-ethnocentric" categories, with the proviso that the comparativist has not yet found them. But then, the comparativist is justified in ignoring this criticism, for what is being criticized is not the principle but its application. This, say the comparativists, is an empirical question.¹³⁴ The "ethnocentric" criticism is in fact a self-defeating one.

Nevertheless, many of the criticisms that have been made by the external critiques have brought out some important problems that comparativists have to resolve in order to claim the status of natural science to their science of politics. But comparative political science is still massively dominated by empiricism in both theory and practice. So the question arises as to why empiricism is still dominant in comparative politics in spite of the criticisms that have been made against it.

It may be that comparative politics is more than an empty discourse. Its project of cross-cultural law-like generalizations coincides after all with the liquidation of colonialism and the rise of the cross-cultural, some would say, trans-national (multi-national) enterprises obeying the cross-cultural, "natural" laws or the "invisible hand" of the universal market. It is here perhaps that one can see the profound, although perhaps unconscious, contribution of comparative political science, a contribution that is missed by its critiques, thus weakening their criticisms of comparative politics.

The project of cross-cultural law-like generalizations is indeed a non-thematized recognition of the fact that the contemporary world comprises a single world economy. The consequence of this is that it is no more possible to see the world as a sum of individual polities. Rather, each polity is, in an important way, an expression of the contemporary world. This is an important consequence of the recognition of the unity of the world that informs the project of cross-cultural law-like generalizations. The paradox of comparative politics is that it is completely blind to its own pre-supposition. It recognizes the unity of the world and yet speaks

of developed and underdeveloped, modern and traditional polities, as if the contemporary world were only an aggregate of discrete units. Yet the pre-supposition of the unity of the world that unconsciously informs the project of comparative politics forces us to see these distinctions as utterly false. For, if every polity is an expression of the contemporary world, it is the world itself which is both developed and under-developed, modern and traditional and not each polity. In other words, in terms of the insight, although denied, offered by the project of comparative politics there are no developing, modernizing, traditional polities. All contemporary polities are developed and modern polities. The question then is why and how does modernity and development express themselves in so different ways? Why and how are they expressed as wealth in one country, poverty in another; as oppression in one and freedom in another polity... etc.? It is this question which almost verges on the frontiers of comparative politics but disappears completely to reappear in a distorted form as the question of political development and modernization of individual and discrete entities. In a way then, one can suggest that the language of method in comparative politics is a language that represses the question raised by the conditions that made the discipline itself possible. As indicated earlier, comparative politics is partly a response to the political conditions of the inter and post-war world, and the political and intellectual challenges it addressed to an American polity, which in that historical juncture, saw itself and was seen by many, as the representative and guardian of certain universal political practices and values. Its political language was seen as the universal language of the politics that was deemed fit for the political universe of the time. Comparative politics cannot but articulate this claim to universality as a claim of a universal science of politics as long as it did not question the historical place of the American polity in the international political order of the time. The new political order that was emerging was a challenge, not only to the American polity for whom the world has become a problem, but it was also a challenge to American political science itself, a challenge articulated in terms of the political language (deemed universal) that sustained American practices.¹³⁵ In this sense, comparative

politics is as much an answer to certain political questions, the most important of which was the nature of the unity of the world that was emerging, as it is to certain intellectual ones, of which the most important and a new one at that, was the challenge of expressing a new order in a parochial language - the American political language - in a way which expresses this new unity of the world. In this sense comparative discourse is a political discourse.

The criticisms directed at comparative politics however seem to challenge comparative politics only as a "scientific" discourse and not as a political discourse. In other words there is an asymmetrical rapport between comparative politics and its critiques. Whereas comparative politics speaks to the world (and its critiques) as both science and politics, its critiques fail to hear its political, and perhaps more important, voice and respond only to its scientific voice, showing it its false notes. The implication of this asymmetrical rapport is that the failure of the critiques is less an intellectual and more of a political failure.

The question then is whether it is possible to engage comparative politics both as an intellectual and political discourse in order to grasp the political practice that is articulated as a scientific discourse called comparative politics. I think that such a study of comparative politics is possible if attention is paid to the language that is shared by politics and comparative politics. Such an approach tackles comparative politics not only from the epistemological and methodological point of view but also from the practical point of view. For to consider the nature of the language that makes the comparative discourse possible is, simultaneously, to interrogate not only its relationship with political discourse with which it shares the characteristic of being a linguistic expression, but also its relationship to the speakers - the comparativist and the political agent - and his world.

In this chapter, I have pointed out that comparative politics tends, as a science, to see itself as an outsider - objective, impenetrable and apolitical. This implies that comparative politics is informed by a

certain theory of language which is not only a theory of communication but is also theory of the speaker and the spoken world. I will call this theory of language that structures and informs comparative politics the instrumentalist theory of language. It is, I will try to show in this study, this theory of language that must be brought out to the surface in order to point out the limitations of comparative politics and its potential for a systematic distortion of our political and theoretical understanding of other polities.

FOOTNOTES

1. James A. Bill and Robert L. Hardgrave Jr., Comparative Politics-The Quest for Theory (Columbus, Ohio: Charles E. Merrill Publishing Co., 1973), p. 10. They attribute this expression to J. LaPalombra.
2. Robert E. Ward, "Culture and the Comparative Study of Politics", in Political Science and Area Studies: Rivals or Partners? ed. Lucien W. Pye (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1975), p. 46. See also Bernard Crick, The American Science of Politics (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1969).
3. Robert T. Holt and John E. Turner, "The Methodology of Comparative Research" in The Methodology of Comparative Research, eds. Robert T. Holt and John E. Turner (New York: The Free Press, 1970), pp. 1-21; Philip H. Melanson and Lauriston R. King, "Theory in Comparative Politics: A Critical Appraisal", Comparative Political Studies, 4, No. 2 (July 1971), pp. 205-231; Peter H. Merkl, Modern Comparative Politics (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1970), pp. 9-21; Howard A. Scarrow, Comparative Political Analysis: An Introduction (New York: Harper and Row, 1969); Roy C. Macridis and Bernard E. Brown, eds., Comparative Politics: Notes and Readings (Homewood, Ill.: The Dorsey Press, 1975); Harry Eckstein and David E. Apter, eds., Comparative Politics: A Reader (New York: The Free Press, 1963); G.A. Almond and James S. Coleman, The Politics of the Developing Areas (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1960).
4. Karl Loewenstein, "Report on the Research Panel on Comparative Government", The American Political Science Review, 38, No. 3 (June 1944), p. 541.
5. Ibid, p. 542.
6. Ibid, p. 543.
7. Ibid, p. 541.
8. Ibid, p. 540.
9. Ibid, p. 542.
10. Ibid
11. Ibid, p. 543.
12. Ibid
13. Ibid, p. 545.
14. Ibid, p. 546.
15. Ibid, p. 543.

16. Harry Eckstein, "A Perspective on Comparative Politics, Past and Present" in Harry Eckstein and D.E. Apter, eds. op. cit. p. 25.
17. Roy Macridis and Richard Cox, "Research in Comparative Politics" The American Political Science Review, XLVII, No. 3 (September 1953), pp. 641-657.
18. Ibid, p. 641
19. Ibid, p. 642
20. Ibid
21. Ibid, p. 643
22. Ibid, p. 647
23. Roy Macridis, The Study of Comparative Government (New York: Doubleday, 1955).
24. Ibid, p. 22
25. Ibid, pp. 5-12.
26. Ibid, p. 34
27. Ibid, pp. 34-35.
28. Ibid, p. 37
29. Ibid, pp. 38-39
30. Ibid, p. 45
31. Ibid, p. 50
32. Ibid, p. 56
33. Ibid, p. 57
34. Ibid, pp. 66-69
35. Ibid, p. 72.
36. George M. Kuhin, Guy V. Paulker and L.W. Pye, "Comparative Politics of Non-Western Countries" American Political Science Review, 49, No. 4 (December 1955), pp. 1022-1041. They write :

"There is a wide recognition that in the non-Western world profound social and cultural changes are taking place as traditional societies have been exposed to the ideas and the ways of the West. There is also agreement that new political patterns and relationships are evolving in these countries. However, with respect to most non-Western countries, it remains difficult to foresee whether the consequences of social change are to be stable, viable practices or endemic instabilities in government. In many cases it is still an open question whether the future will bring them a liberal democratic form of politics or some type of authoritarian rule such as communism." (p. 1022)

This first major formulation of the place held by politics other than those of the West in the structure of concerns of the new discipline merits a closer attention. The very language suggests Western political practices to be positive practices in terms of which other politics appear to the scientific consciousness as "Non-Western". The otherness of these politics is thus given as a challenge to both the political practices of the West and to its science of politics, or as Kahin *et al.* write, "a challenge to comparative politics" [p.1041]. There is a tacit identification of the West and comparative politics as if each were expressing, one in practice and the other in discourse, the science of universal politics and the universal science of politics respectively.

37. Sigmund Neumann, "Comparative Politics: A Half-Century Appraisal" The Journal of Politics, 19, No. 3 (1957), pp. 369-390.

38. Ibid, p. 370.

39. Ibid, p. 384-385.

40. Ibid, p. 388-389.

41. H.D. Lasswell, "The Future of Comparative Method", Comparative Politics, 1, No. 1 (1968), pp. 3-18.

42. I discuss the mechanisms of this unhooking of language and the world in the following chapters.

43. David Easton, A Framework for Political Analysis (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice Hall, 1965), p. 8.

44. Ibid, p. 10.

45. It may be of interest to note that the hypothetico-deductive model is being discarded in simulation and modeling approaches. On this and the different approaches that claim to be "scientific" see Paul Diesing, Patterns of Discovery in the Social Sciences (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1971).

46. Neil J. Smelser, Essays in Sociological Explanation (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1968), pp. 811-812.

47. Richard S. Rudner, Philosophy of Social Science (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1966), pp. 10-47.

48. Carl G. Hempel, Fundamentals of Concept Formation in Empirical Science (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1952); Karl Popper, The Logic of Scientific Discovery (New York: Basic Books, 1959); E. Nagel, The Structure of Science (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, 1961).

49. Moshe M. Czudnowski, Comparing Political Behaviour (Beverly Hills: Sage Publications, 1976). He writes that comparativists

"...espoused in varying degrees the methodology of behavioural - i.e. empirical - political science...[this] was neither available nor relevant to the traditional approach...[A]nd most importantly, it combined an interest in substantive findings with a theoretical goal: the discovery of regulations of patterns of behaviour across systems for the purpose of making generalizations and establishing the boundaries or conditions under which generalizations hold true." [p.11]

See also Gideon Sjoberg "The Comparative Method in the Social Sciences" in Comparative Perspectives: Theories and Methods, eds. Amitar Etzioni and Frederic L. Dubow (Boston: Little, Brown and Co. 1970), p. 25.

50. Gabriel A. Almond and Stephen T. Glenco, "Clouds, Clocks and the Study of Politics", World Politics, XXX, No. 4 (July 1977), p. 497.

51. Ibid, pp. 497-498

52. R.V. Prethus, Behavioral Approaches to Public Administration (Alabama: Alabama University Press, 1965), p. 19.

53. David Easton, The Political System: An Inquiry into the State of Political Science (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1967). He writes:

"In this interpretation, although in practice no one proposition need express either a pure fact or a pure value, facts and values are logically heterogeneous." [p.221].

This claim is possible only if we accept that meaning is not rooted in discourse but in logic. This may be so. But comparativists have not yet demonstrated it. If meaning is rooted in discourse, what Easton calls "the moral aspect of a proposition" and which he claims "expresses only the emotional response of an individual" [ibid.] can in fact be open to discussion as much as a fact is.

54. For the Weberian roots of this irrationalization of values see George Luckas, "Max Weber and German Sociology" translated by Anthony Cutler,

Economy and Society, 1, No. 4 (November 1972), pp. 386-398.

55. Eugene J. Meehan, The Foundations of Political Analysis: Empirical and Normative (Homewood, Ill.: The Dorsey Press, 1971), Part II.

56. Dwight Waldo, The Study of Public Administration (Garden City, New York: Doubleday, 1955), p. 44.

57. Robert Bierstedt, The Social Order (New York: McGraw Hill, 1957), p. 20.

58. George J. Graham, Methodological Foundations for Political Analysis (Waltham, Massachusetts: Xerox College Publishing, 1971). He writes that empirical concepts

"...are used to identify existential quantities and qualities; that is, they refer to the real world condition which are a central concern of political analysis. The facts of politics which one attempts to organize in his analysis are identified and categorized by these concepts. Empirical concepts provide the basis for the development of statements, generalizations and theories about politics." [pp. 55-56].

59. The philosophical underpinning of this stand is developed by A.J. Ayer, Language, Truth and Logic (New York: Dover Publications, 1952), pp. 102-120.

60. G.A. Almond and S. Verba, The Civic Culture (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1963), p. 43.

61. Agnes Heller, "Towards a Marxist Theory of Value", trans. Andrew Arato, Kinesis, 1, No. 1 (Fall 1972), pp. 52-57.

62. Robert A. Dahl, "The Behavioral Approach to Political Science: Epitaph for a Monument to a Successful Protest", American Political Science Review, 55, No. 4 (December 1961), p. 767. He writes that empirical political science is

"...an attempt to improve our understanding of politics by seeking to explain the empirical aspects of political life by means of methods, theories and criteria of proof that are acceptable according to the canons, convention and assumption of modern empirical science." [p. 767].

63. E. Meehan, The Foundations of Political Analysis, p. 63.

64. Adam Przeworski and Henry Teune, The Logic of Comparative Social Inquiry (New York: Wiley and Sons, 1970), p. 8.

65. George J. Graham, op. cit., pp. 36-54.
66. Arendt Lijphart "Comparative Politics and the Comparative Method" in Roy C. Macridis and Bernard E. Brown, eds. op.cit. p. 51; Richard L. Merrit, Systematic Approaches to Comparative Politics (Chicago: Rand McNally, 1957), p. 3; Theodore W. Mechstroth, "Most Different Systems and Most Similar Systems: A Study in the Logic of Comparative Inquiry" Comparative Politics, 8, No. 2 (July 1975), p. 81; G. Almond, "Introduction: A Functional Approach to Comparative Politics" in Gabriel A. Almond and James Coleman, op.cit. p. 11; David E. Apter and Harry Eckstein, "Preface" in David E. Apter and Harry Eckstein, op.cit., p. VIII; G. Hecksher, The Study of Comparative Government and Politics (London: Allen and Unwin, 1957), p. 17; Alan C. Isaak, Scope and Methods of Political Science (Homewood, Ill.: The Dorsey Press, 1969), p. 73; B.G. Glaser and A.L. Strauss, The Discovery of Grounded Theory (Chicago: Aldine, 1966), pp. 22-31; Robert T. Holt and John Richardson, "Competing Paradigms in Comparative Politics" in Robert T. Holt and John E. Turner, op. cit. p. 6; Philip H. Melanson and Lauriston R. King, "Theory in Comparative Politics: A Critical Appraisal", Comparative Political Studies, 4, No. 2 (July 1971), p. 208; Neil T. Smelser, "The Methodology of Comparative Analysis" in Comparative Methods, eds. Donald P. Warwick and Samuel Osherson (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall 1973), p. 33.
67. R.C. Merritt, op.cit. p. 6.
68. B.G. Glaser and A.L. Strauss, op.cit., pp. 22-31.
69. Robert T. Holt and John T. Richardson, "Competing Paradigms in Comparative Politics" pp. 58-71; Adam Przewoski and Henry Teune, op.cit., pp. 74-87.
70. Heinz Eulau, "Segments of Political Science Most Susceptible to Behavioristic Treatment" in Contemporary Political Analysis, ed. James C. Charlesworth (New York: The Free Press, 1967), p. 33.
71. Paul F. Lazarsfeld, "Introduction: Mathematical Thinking in the Social Sciences" in Mathematical Thinking in the Social Sciences, ed. P.F. Lazarsfeld (Glencoe, Ill.: The Free Press, 1955), p. 4.
72. Gabriel A. Almond, Political Development (Boston: Little, Brown & Co., 1970), pp. 235-259. And in general for political science, see Heinz Eulau, The Behavioral Persuasion in Politics (New York: Random House, 1963); D. Easton, "The Current Meaning of Behavioralism in Political Science" in James Charlesworth, ed. op.cit., pp. 11-32.
73. Robert T. Holt and John E. Turner, op.cit., pp. 21-73.
74. E. Meehan, Contemporary Political Thought: A Critical Analysis (Homewood, Ill.: The Dorsey Press, 1967), pp. 23-26.

75. David E. Apter and Charles Andrian, "Comparative Government: Developing Nations" in Political Science, ed. Marian D. Irish (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1968) pp. 86-126; David Easton, A Framework for Political Analysis, pp. 8-10.
76. Charles McCoy and John Playford, eds. Apolitical Politics (New York: Thomas Cronwell, 1967); Christian Bay, The Structure of Freedom (New York: Atheneum, 1968); Ivan Oxaal, Tony Barnett and David Booth, eds., Beyond the Sociology of Development (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1975).
77. Robert T. Holt and John M. Richardson, Jr., op.cit., pp. 73-123.
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81. Arthur S. Goldberg, "On the Need for Contextualist Criteria: A Reply to Professor Gunnell", American Political Science Review, 63, No. 4 (December 1969), p. 1249.
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1. $\frac{\text{Social mobilization}}{\text{Economic development}} = \text{Social frustration}$
 2. $\frac{\text{Social frustration}}{\text{Mobility opportunities}} = \text{Political participation}$
 3. $\frac{\text{Political participation}}{\text{Political institutionalization}} = \text{political instability}$ "
- [p.55].
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- "...instrumental-hierarchical... systems are highly resistant to political rather than other forms of modernization, and in particular cannot easily supplant the hierarchical principle of authority with a representative one...
- Consumatory-pyramidal systems are highly resistant to

all forms of innovation, and the consequences of change are external political groupings that form as new solitary associations cutting across the older ones." [p.117].

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131. John Barbot, A Description of the Coasts of North and South Guinea (London: n.p. 1732), p. 286.
132. James S. Coleman, "The Politics of Sub-Sahara Africa", Gabriel A. Almond and James S. Coleman, op.cit., p. 333.
133. Amilcar Cabral, Revolution in Guinea (London: Stage One, 1969), p. 77. He points out that Marxists have a tendency to forget that non-Europeans also have history and that therefore there cannot be only one true politics.
134. O. Barr et. al. op. cit.
135. Sigmund Neumann, "The Comparative Study of Politics", Comparative Studies in Society and History; 1, No. 2 (1969) pp. 105-112. For example, Alan Ryan writes about politicians and political science:

"Suppose we go on to raise the question of how readily the terms in which politicians understand themselves translate into those in which the political scientist understands them. Now the situation is a good deal less tidy. It seems that many American politicians do see themselves as playing the rôle of honest broker to competing interests - in other words that their normative paradigm matches Almond's descriptive paradigm."

[Alan Ryan, "Normal Science or Political Ideology" in Peter Laslett et al., Philosophy, Politics and Society, Fourth Series (Oxford, Basil Blackwell, 1972), p. 95.] Ryan is drawing attention to the fact that the political scientist and the politician share a language whose common meanings enter into, on the one hand, the political science conducted in that language, and, on the other, into the discourse of the politician.

CHAPTER II
LANGUAGE IN COMPARATIVE POLITICS

Introduction

The practice of comparativists is inherently linguistic. Comparativists conduct surveys; they question, listen, take notes, make hypotheses, interpret, explain and make texts out of the linguistic material they collect. Those they study relate themselves to comparativists as speakers and listeners, as subjects that express and articulate their political existence in their actions and talks. Their actions, or the absence of these, are linguistically expressed by themselves and, when studied, by comparativists. In short then, the practices of comparativists involve linguistic consciousness, linguistic practices and heritages. Comparativists, even the most scientific, do not consider "physical movements" as mere "physical" movements, linguistic sounds as mere "sounds", linguistic marks as mere "marks". They immediately understand them as actions, behaviours, answers, speech or documents. They thus go beyond physical movements, sounds and marks and consider these as linguistic and meaningful phenomena. They recognize tacitly that these experiences are already infused with meanings. Tacitly, they recognize that not all "physical" movement is behaviour, that not all sounds are speech, that not all marks are documents. This tacit recognition of the interpretative character of experience and meaning, of the political world and political language, must be brought into focus to see the role comparativists give language in their scientific practice.

To do so one can start by raising the questions Dell Hymes addressed to comparativists at the beginning of this decade: "(1) Does language affect politics? (2) Does language affect what one finds about politics?"¹ If we turn our attention to the practice and theory of comparative politics, we find answers that are rooted in the empiricist tradition - that language is only an instrument of communication, and that it is not a condition for the possibility and validity of politics and political knowledge. The relation of language to political practice and political knowledge is considered to be that of a tool to an object (i.e. politics). Thus, language and questions related to language (such as

that of translation) are considered in comparative research within the framework of instrumentation. The diversity of languages is considered as a diversity of denotations and thus problematized in terms of "instrumentation errors" and "translational inadequacies".²

Prima facie, one may think that the question of language is important for a discipline devoted to the study of political practices in different language-communities. One may thus expect a deep and widespread concern regarding this question among comparativists. But this is not the case. At best, language is studied, as in O'Barr and O'Barr, as an object of politics, as for example in multi-lingual countries.³ When we turn our attention to studies on political culture, socialization and participation, "where one would expect to find a thorough treatment of the language and politics relationship",⁴ the student is struck by the total absence of concern regarding the relationship of language and politics.⁵ And yet, these are fields where one would expect to see recognized the question of language in political practices and in the understanding of political practice. In all these studies, what we are confronted with is a conceptualization, based on an empiricist epistemology, of language as an instrument of politics and political knowledge. Whether this very linguistic practice of conceptualizing language as an instrument does not undermine the pre-supposed instrumentalist conception of language is not raised at all. Even those comparativists who feel uneasy about the absence of this question are caught by the language - instrument conception that reigns in comparative politics.

Thus, Bretton, who acknowledges, albeit partially, the legitimacy and importance of such a question writes:

Language is at the same time a delicate, sophisticated instrument and a blunt tool. It serves as a direct means of communication from man to man and it serves as an issue, or a foil, to achieve social and political goals. Whatever function we consider, it is necessary to keep in mind the enormous potential of language as a multi-purpose instrument: the same phrase, the same figure of speech can convey substantially different meanings in different situations.⁶

All what Bretton says about language is in a sense true. That is, we communicate through language; we persuade, convince, foil an issue through language. But it does not follow from this, that language is an instrument - even a "multi-purpose" one. Bretton's last statement, that "speech can convey substantially different meanings in different situations," indeed subverts his claim that language is an instrument. Indeed, he adds further on:

There is of course no such thing as an 'apolitical' language as there is no such thing as an 'apolitical' person ... politics is human relations, and language is an organic component of such relations. It is simply impossible to disassociate languages from the contexts in which they are learned and used.⁷

Thus Bretton goes in fact further than his claim that language is an instrument by suggesting that language being never 'apolitical' is more than an instrument of politics or political knowledge. But the study of this question is so underdeveloped in the discipline that Bretton justifies his stand by falling back on the "Sapir-Whorf hypothesis".⁸ That is, to the universal language-instrument of mainstream comparative politics, Bretton seems to be tempted to offer as an alternative a specialized language-instrument for each polity. As I will indicate in the following chapter, the "linguistic relativity" thesis associated with Sapir and Whorf can in fact be considered as a variant of the language-instrument thesis. Each language is presented as the specialized language of the community that possesses it. In both cases one can show, following Danto's suggestion, a referential connection between language and the world.⁹ In both cases, the comparativist is separated from the world, and made to work on the latter through an instrument called language. Language is made to intervene between the comparativist and the world in a way which separates the two.

It is perhaps important to clarify what is meant by instrument. As mentioned earlier, Bretton characterizes languages as an "instrument". Meehan considers language in political science as an "instrument", and writes that "the meaning of words lie in the conventions that define their use".¹⁰ Language is characterized as an "instrument" by writers as

diverse as Locke, Dewey and Wittgenstein.¹¹ The term "instrument" is widely used to characterize language but not with the same meaning. Some use it in the sense that language is an instrument of communication in the same way that a pen is an instrument of writing. Others use it in the sense that language can be used as, or as if it were an instrument, or in the sense that language can or may be used instrumentally.

In comparative politics, language is understood as an instrument of communication, that is to say, as an instrument for observing, explaining, theorizing, communicating.¹² It is considered to be distinct from the world and to double over the world as a system of signs. It is as such closed spatially and temporally and made incapable of going beyond referents. It is considered to be indifferent to values, norms, purposes, and intentions. Reality is conceptualized then as that which can be an object of this instrument. This makes possible the unquestioned exclusion of non-informative sentences and so-called non-observables from scientific discourse on the world. The scientificity of political science is squarely based on this instrumentation of language. This is explained and defended in political science by Gregor as follows:

The social scientist, attempting to exhibit meanings and establish truth, necessarily invokes other than ordinary speech. This means that his concepts will have special, often stipulative meaning, which deprives ordinary language concepts of the multiplicity of meanings that attend them in common parlance. To construe this as a shortcoming, rather than a special virtue, is a prejudice common to a variety of critics. A concept can only be understood to mean what its definition says it means ... Definitions are conventions, warranted by their function within complex linguistic artifacts called theories.¹³

Gregor's articulation of language as an instrument refers to the language of political science as a "complex linguistic artifacts called theories". This is set within a framework that considers language as "any formalized and conventionalized set of spoken, written or gesticulated

signs which are employed in encoding, transmitting and decoding feelings and thoughts".¹⁴ That is, the language - instrument of political science is developed within the general framework that considers language as an instrument of communication, as a means to an end which is non-linguistic, and as such radically external to the means, that is, to language.

In the understanding of language as an instrument then, the comparativist works "with language on something else for something else" and thus, as Rossi Landi points out:

...the other parts must be materials and products. According to this point of view materials are not allowed to be linguistic otherwise they would turn into instruments. The construction of messages by means of the language would then lie in working on non-linguistic materials by means of linguistic instruments.¹⁵

To say then that language is an instrument is to also claim that politics and knowledge of politics exist independently of language. It is to say that language is a kit of tools that can be used on different political objects indifferently; it is to claim that the political agent, the political scientist, and political objects are pre and non-linguistic phenomena.

This understanding of language as an instrument has its roots in the empiricist tradition. Bringing out this empiricist dimension will help delineate the problems that such an understanding of language creates for the practice and theory of comparative politics.

Empiricism and Language-Instrument

For the premodern and especially Aristotelian and Medieval political theories the world was understood as a semantic field to be read. The relationship between language and the world was considered as being internal in the sense that defining a thing was seen as revealing its essence.¹⁶ Indeed, it is pointed out by Beneveniste, among others, that the Greeks devised their ontological categories of world-interpretation

from their language.¹⁷ The same holds true for the Medieval doctors who considered the understanding of language (viz., Latin which they assumed to be a universal language) as a way towards the understanding of the world.¹⁸ This language-realism of the scholastics was criticized by William of Ockham. He advocated the reduction of meaning to reference, thus initiating a conception of language that has progressively been elaborated to ultimately become the understanding of language in social science. As Pinborg points out, for Ockham:

...concepts are identified with the acts of the intellect which directly regard the object signified. Thus the meaning of a term is reduced to its being used for an object or a class of objects, nor is it relevant to speak of the same meaning considered in this or in some other way.¹⁹

Thus, for Ockham, "nothing exists besides signs and the objects referred to."²⁰ Ockham thus considered language and reality, language and knowledge as being external to and independent of each other. In this sense, he launched a new understanding of the world - as an objective world detached from the subject, and a new understanding of language - as a set of signs used for communicating. Ockham thus launched the suspicion of language that is to characterize increasingly the Western study of man and society. But it must also be remembered, as Apel points out, that Ockham's Nominalism was "a progressive and indispensable step" for his historical period, a period dominated by the "verbal authority of the Scholastic tradition."²¹ But Ockham's progressive step which liberated men from the blindness to the world imposed by linguistic realism seems to have reached us frozen into a new form of blindness that separates the modern doctors from the modern world. His progressive step has been gradually erected into the modern absolute dogma of language-instrument and of an a-linguistic world.

Bacon may be considered as a major figure in the systematization of this transformation of the understanding of language and the world. Bacon generalized Ockham's suspicion of language into a suspicion of the

human mind which, borrowing a metaphor from the Medieval Humanist Ramus, he characterized as an "uneven mirror",²² and set himself as a task the "expurgation of the intellect"²³ from the "Idols which beset men's minds".²⁴ Indeed, the four Idols of Bacon can be considered as four kinds of errors that language infuses into our knowledge of things. "Our only hope" to escape these snares of language lies, according to Bacon, "in a true induction".²⁵ To make this possible, Bacon suggests a new logic (The New Organon) for the purification of the mind. Bacon's "mistrust of language,"²⁶ leads him to suggest that one must make up names that refer precisely to things. For Bacon, science is possible only when the human mind and the human world are purified of the distortions created by language, and when knowledge is based on experimentation and induction. As Rossi points out, for Bacon "reality" is "foreign to and independent from language."²⁷

Hobbes completes the revolution started by Ockham by giving nominalism an anthropological foundation. By making language the instrument of exchange of ideas among naturally asocial men, he strips language completely of its intersubjective dimension. Language then cannot create more than an artificial link among men. This is the nature of the Hobbesian link between language and polity. For Hobbes, speech is an individual activity of naming, marking and noting. It is not a manifestation of the natural sociality of man.²⁸

Hobbes did not derive his concept of polity from political arguments. He did not, like the Greeks, give it a natural foundation or, like the Medieval thinkers, a transcendental justification. He derived his concept of the "Leviathan" from an anthropology which considered self-preservation or maintaining life in motion, as the principle of life of the individual and the Leviathan. For Hobbes, the human world is not conceived as a system of ends that men assume as final goals, and towards which they strive.²⁹ Individuality and separation precede sociability, for, according to Hobbes, the "Natural condition of mankind" is that of fear and self-preservation and as such of separation and conflict.³⁰ The society built on the basis of this "natural condition

of mankind" is totally contingent. Its norms, laws, values are not rooted in either a natural or divine order. Society makes and self-determines, its own norms, laws and values. It is an arrangement between self-preserving individuals for self-serving purposes in their pursuit of self-preservation. Language appears then in Hobbes as one of the instruments of the interest of self-preservation. The pre- and post-Leviathan use of language is essentially that of an instrument of communication in defense of an already constituted self. Being already in possession by the pre-Leviathan man, and thus rooted in the "pathological anthropology" which is the foundation of the polity or the Leviathan,³¹ language cannot overcome the pathology of separation with which Hobbes burdened the natural condition of mankind. Being an instrument by which the contractual creation of the Leviathan is accomplished, language is no more than an instrument of negotiation, and a cumbersome, limiting instrument at that.³² Language is not, in Hobbes' anthropology, an expression of the individual's natural sociality; it is the instrument of an asocial, apolitical and self-preserving man. Consequently, for Hobbes, language cannot have any social intention. It cannot go beyond the immediate experience of political existence. It cannot call upon history, tradition, norms, values and community as a source of shared meanings. It is an instrument of exchange between self-determining individuals.

It is within this framework of Hobbes' anthropology that one can understand the import of the instrumentalist conception of language.³³

For Hobbes:

The use of words is to register to ourselves and make manifest to others the thoughts and conceptions of our minds. Of which words, some are the names of the things conceived: as the names of all sorts of bodies that work upon the senses and leave an impression in the imagination. Others are the names of the imagination themselves; that is to say, of those ideas or mental images we have of all things we see or remember.³⁴

Thus words stand for "things conceived." Hobbes is of course consistent with his materialist anthropology. According to Hobbes, "there

is no conception in a man's mind which has not at first, totally or by parts, been begotten upon the organs of sense. The rest are derived from that original".³⁵ Language does not give us any conclusion about the nature of things. Likewise, according to Hobbes, reasoning also depends on names and consequently reason also does not give us any conclusion about the nature of things. Reason, he writes:

...is nothing but reckoning - that is adding and subtracting - of the consequences of general names agreed upon for the marking and signifying of our thoughts; I say marking them when we reckon ourselves, and signifying when we demonstrate or approve of our reckonings to other men.³⁶

For Hobbes then, speech, reason, are instruments of naming, marking, registering, exchanging ideas and reckoning. Now, for the purpose of my discussion, it is not important to consider whether Hobbes has a mentalistic, or behaviouristic or use or referential theory of meaning, or indeed, whether he has or not a theory of "meaning" in the modern sense.³⁷ What is important to consider is how Hobbes conceptualized the relationship between language and the world, between speech and what is spoken. On this question Hobbes is very clear. According to Hobbes:

The general use of speech is to transfer our mental discourse into verbal, or the train of our thoughts into a train of words; and that for two commodities, whereof one is the registering of the consequences of our thoughts which, being apt to slip out of our memory and put us to a new labour, may again be recalled by such words as they were marked by. So that the first use of names is to serve for marks or notes of remembrance.³⁸

For Hobbes then, there is "mental discourse" prior to and independent of linguistic discourse. The relationship between the two is external. Language doubles over a pre-existing world of mental discourse, and is used as marks and notes that signify it. Its capacity to signify, that is, language's efficiency to mark, note, communicate depends on its repeated and ostentive use, or, in Hobbes' words, "When many use the same words to signify, by their connection and order, one to another, what they conceive

or think of each other."³⁹ For Hobbes, language is not inter-subjectively shared. He writes:

When a man has so often observed like antecedent to be followed by like consequent, that whensoever he hath the antecedent, he looketh again for the consequent; or when he seeth the consequent, maketh account there hath been like antecedent, then he calleth both the antecedent and the consequent, signs one of another...⁴⁰

Language for Hobbes is thus contingent and empirical. It is not intrinsic to man and to the human world. It is, together with reason, an instrument of the self. In the acquisition of knowledge about the human world, the language of knowledge cannot but be the use of language as a tool, as "the right definition of names", that is, as an instrument for eliciting "Antecedents" and "Consequents" in a world deprived of inherent meanings, and indifferent to human purposes.⁴¹ It is Locke who systematically studies this connection between language and knowledge and its consequences "Concerning Human Understanding".⁴²

It is generally believed that Book III of the Essay Concerning Human Understanding is the first modern treatise specifically devoted to the study of language. Locke explicitly connects his inquiry into language with his inquiry into knowledge and human understanding. He indeed writes that "it is impossible to speak clearly and distinctly of our knowledge, which all consists in propositions, without considering first, the nature, use and signification of language."⁴³

As for Hobbes, for Locke also there is such a thing as a mental discourse (or ideas) that pre-exists language and is independent of it. "Words" are "external sensible signs" by which "those invisible ideas" are made known to others: words are used as "sensible marks of ideas, and the ideas they stand for are their proper and immediate signification."⁴⁴

And he adds:

The use men have of these marks being either to record their own thoughts for the assistance of their own memory, or, as it were, to bring out their ideas, and lay them before the view of others; words in their primary or immediate signification stand for nothing

but the ideas in the minds of him that uses them... Words being voluntary signs, they cannot be voluntary signs imposed by a man on things he knows not... A man cannot make his words the signs either of qualities in things, or of conceptions in the mind of another, whereof he has none in his own.⁴⁵

According to Locke then, the word is an arbitrarily chosen sign. There is no natural connection between a word and what it signifies, nor does the word resemble what it signifies. The word does not stand for an object. It "stands for nothing but the ideas in the mind of him that uses them." Consequently speech is neither common speech or speech about the world. Speech is a translation of a mental discourse. This theory of Locke becomes clear when one considers it in conjunction with his theory of ideas and perception.

According to Locke, the mind is a clean slate on which are imprinted ideas conveyed by sensation and reflection. He writes:

Let us then suppose the mind to be as we say, white paper, void of all characters, without any ideas; how comes it to be furnished?... To this I answer, in one word, from experience: in that all our knowledge is founded, and from that it ultimately derives itself. Our observation, employed either about external sensible objects, or about the internal operations of our minds, perceived and reflected on by ourselves, is that which supplies our understandings with all the materials of thinking. These two are the fountains of knowledge, from whence all the ideas we have, or can naturally have do spring.⁴⁶

In other words, man's relationship to experience, viz., sensation and reflection, is accomplished independently of language. Man experiences himself and the world without the mediation of language. Once this is accepted, then it is easy to see that language has only a secondary and instrumental use in the perception and cognition of the world. Knowledge becomes "the perception of the connection and agreement, or disagreement and repugnancy of any of our ideas."⁴⁷ The language of society as well as the language of knowledge of society are purely conventional and instrumental. Thus with Locke, empiricism and the instrumentalist understanding of language

are integrated with each other. From Locke through Berkeley and Hume the idea that there is a discourse of ideas prior to and independent of language becomes wedded to the empiricist principle that there is a discourse, as it were, of things, of experience, independent of language.

Thus in the culmination of these ideas that one meets in Hume, the relationship of man to himself disappears into a bundle of sensations.⁴⁸ According to Hume, a science of man to be true must be a study of the nature of man's "ideas" founded on experience and observation, these being independent of the language through which they are articulated. The science of man would be cleansed from the errors of language by inquiring into the "impressions" that "ideas" are derived from. He writes:

All the objects of human reason or inquiry may naturally be divided into two kinds, to wit, relations of ideas and matters of fact. Of the first kind are the sciences of geometry, algebra, and arithmetic, and in short every affirmation which is either intuitively or demonstratively certain... Propositions of this kind are discoverable by the mere operation of thought, without dependence on what is anywhere existent in the universe ... Matters of fact, which are the second objects of human reason, are not ascertained in the same manner, nor is our evidence of their truth, however great, of a like nature with the foregoing... The contrary of every matter of fact is still possible... All reasonings concerning matter of fact seem to be founded on the relation of cause and effect. By means of that relation alone we can go beyond the evidence of memory and senses.⁴⁹

Thus the first type of knowledge, "relations of ideas", tells us nothing about the world; the second type tells us something about our impressions but, once more, nothing about the world. The discourse of ideas, as well as the discourse of impressions are completely separate from the language through which they are expressed and by which they are made public.

In this tradition, to use a word is to denote an idea, to indicate its referent. Language is purely conventional. It is an instrument of

marking, noting, reckoning, exchanging ideas. It is essentially an instrument, a private instrument of communication. Men understand their ideas, themselves, their world as individual egos that do not presuppose membership in a speech community. It is this cluster of ideas about language and its relationship to the speaker and the world, a cluster of ideas that have evolved from Ockham to Hume, that has dominated and still dominates in various interpretations, modifications, and development, the understanding of the role of language in politics and political science among mainstream political scientists. The impact of this problematic of language on contemporary studies of language itself is such that as late as 1977 a student of both philosophy and language felt it necessary to ask the question "How/ why does linguistic matter to Philosophy?" and to answer it, after a review of contemporary linguistic literature, that it "just does not matter to philosophy" for one looks "in vain for an account of the relation between language and the world" in mainstream linguistics.⁵⁰ This may be an overstatement, but it points out clearly the separation between language and the world effected by the empiricist conception of language.

True, contemporary empiricists reject Locke's theory of "private language". They do not accept Hume's denial of the existence of a world beyond our "impressions" as justifiable. They do not speak of "mental discourse" as the referent of "linguistic discourse" as the classical empiricists used to do. But what is important to note here is not where and what the referent is, but rather the relationship established by them between speech and that which is spoken of, between speech and the speaker, between language and the world, and the characterization of language in this relationship. In this respect their consideration of language as external and instrumental to the speaker and to the spoken as discussed in this section is still actively pursued by contemporary social scientists. As Quine points out:

The old empiricist looked inward upon his ideas:
 the new empiricist looks outward upon the social
 institution of language. Ideas dwindle to meanings.
 The old inner-directed empiricists - Hobbes,
 Gassendi, Locke, and their followers - had perforce
 to formulate their empiricist standard by reference
 to ideas; and they did so by exalting sense impres-
 sions and scouting innate ideas. When empiricism is
 externalized, on the other hand, the idea itself

passes under a cloud; talk of ideas comes to count as unsatisfactory except insofar as it can be paraphrased into terms of dispositions to observable behaviour.⁵¹

Thus the difference between the classical and contemporary empiricists is not in the conceptualization of the relationship of language to experience but rather in the substitution of "meaning" or an external referent for "idea" or the internal referent. Thus logical atomism, logical empiricism or logical positivism considered statements (propositions) rather than ideas as the basic unit of meaning.⁵² At the same time they considered statements about the external world as translatable into statements about sense-data. But the impossibility of producing a finite set of statements about sense-data, actual and potential, as a translating machine for statements about the external world led to the rejection of this solution. In this respect logical positivism is of course a dead horse.⁵³ But the rejection of the Lockean thesis of private language and of the Humean disintegration of the world into impressions did not lead to a new appreciation of the role of language in human experience. It only led to the rejection of the doctrine that limited the objects of experience to private sensations. This rejection did not however go as far as recognizing the importance of reflecting upon language as a condition of the possibility and of the intersubjective validity of human experience and our knowledge of it. It did not go as far as considering the syntactical and semantical categories of language as forms of possible experience. It in fact reaffirmed the instrumentalist and contingent character of language. But this time however, in order to avoid the problems generated by the thesis of "private language", private sense impressions were replaced by publicly observable things. That is,

...contemporary empiricism is Humean empiricism without sense-data. Like Hume, the contemporary empiricist holds that a priori knowledge is analytic; he holds that observation - now of publicly observable things - together with memory is the only source of empirical or a posteriori knowledge; he holds that any reasoning taking us beyond this source, i.e. any nondemonstrative (non-reductive) reasoning is basically empirical generalization from observations; and he holds that all meaningful ideas must ultimately come from experience.⁵⁴

In this new view of empiricism a word that enters into a scientific discourse and purports to be descriptive must be an ostensive word or definable in terms of ostensive words. In other words, language is accounted for by publicly observable facts, and connected to non-linguistic facts in a referential way.⁵⁵

Contemporary empiricists make a distinction between the language of science, considered as "intersubjectively" verifiable, and natural language, although they in fact use their natural language as a metalanguage of their scientific language without clarifying the implications of such a practice. May Brodbeck writes:

Most probably, in practice subject and scientist must, as we say, speak the same language. But our saying this leads to a ... confusion, namely between the scientist's language and that which he shares with the subject ... The language that the scientist uses to describe what he learns about his subject is in principle not the same language that he may use to communicate with him. What Jones says (and what the investigator says to him in Jones' language) is part of what is going on, which the investigator describes in his own language. In other words, everything that Jones says occurs only within quotation marks in the investigator's language.⁵⁶

This distinction between the language of social science and that of the subject is a distinction which is based on the perception of language as a process of transmission of signs where the subject's speech is recognized by its form, irrespective of its content, and congealed in "quotation marks". The language the scientist uses "to describe" is also defined by its form, and it refers to the congealed speech of the studied as an object-language. In other words, what contemporary empiricism tries to account for is the intersubjectivity of the form of communication as an instrument, and not the content of the communicated which is still, as in classical empiricism, considered as essentially private and adorned with quotation marks. Thus verification and repeatability, which are the marks of contemporary political science, do not deal with the content of what is being verified and repeated, but with the form of the object

that is referred to by the language-instrument.⁵⁷ Briefly then, one can say that the concept of language-instrument: (a) denies that language itself is the presence of the world, (b) considers language as one object among other objects in the world, (c) considers the speaker as existing prior to and independently of language and a speech community, (d) considers the social world as existing independently of language, (e) assumes language to be a conventionally established instrument of communication used as a means of referring to anything within the world, (f) treats language as method, that is, as contentless, and as a subject of logic in the acquisition of knowledge. It is this concept of language which informs contemporary political science and its project of empirical political theory.

Language-Instrument and Empirical Political Theory

Contemporary comparativists operate on the assumption that the language of politics is not itself a political language, that the language of political science does not extend political languages and practices, and that the activity of doing political science is not an extension or a mode of political activity. Political science is considered to be independent of political language, political activities, and political interests. In this scheme, language is no more than a functional requisite, to use Parson's expression.

According to Parsons, language is a "functional requisite" in the existence of society. It is, writes Parsons in a text which had an enormous influence in the development of mainstream social science including comparative politics, one of the:

...minimum social conditions necessary for the production, maintenance and development of cultural systems in general and of particular types of cultural systems. It may be presumed that disruption of the communication system of a society is ultimately just as dangerous as disruption of its system of order in the above sense of motivational integration. This is an aspect of "anomie" which deserves much more explicit analysis than it has

received. Perhaps the most obvious example is provided by the role of language. We know quite definitely that the individual does not develop language spontaneously without undergoing a socially structured learning process in relation to others. It is quite definite that this process must be part of a system of social relations which is orderly within certain limits, however difficult it may be to specify the limits in detail. It is altogether probable that many proto-human groups failed to make the transition to the human sociocultural level of action because of failure to fulfil the prerequisites of the emergence of language or of some other functionally essential aspects of culture.⁵⁸

Language is a functional requisite for a "communication system" whose "disruption" constitutes an aspect of "anomie". In other words, language is conceptualized essentially as an instrument of communication. As such, it is learned as a functional instrument "besides some other functionally essential aspects of culture" necessary for the "production, maintenance and development of cultural systems". It is not constitutive of these, for being characterized by its function, it is, as an instrument, external to them and logically replaceable by any other instrument that can fulfill this function of communication.

Given the enormous influence of Parsons among contemporary comparativists, it is perhaps interesting to explore further the implication of this functional understanding of language. Following Max Weber who defined "action", as "all human behaviour when and in so far as the acting individual attaches a subjective meaning to it",⁵⁹ Parsons writes that his "theory of action" looks at behaviour "from the subjective point of view".⁶⁰ But what Parsons considers "action" is not really what one can characterize as a productive, creative, or transforming activity. What he considers to be "action" is, first and foremost, the choices individuals make, the attitudes individuals adopt to various means and ends. If then we take his conceptualization of language as discussed above, what counts as a linguistic "action" is not the linguistic activity itself, the production of speech, but rather the choice of linguistic instruments as means to certain ends. It is not the production of meanings but the

exchange of already given meanings through the functional instrument that counts as "action".⁶¹ This rather original conception of action has an interesting consequence. The action that is characterized as "social" or "political" is so characterized by relating it to the "subjective point of view" which, being external to language, is in fact pre-social or pre-political. This means that the "meaning", social or political, that Parsons and contemporary social scientists talk about is not and cannot be the product of language or be constituted by it. Rather, it is a social or political meaning that precedes its being communicated by language. Moreover, this social or political meaning can be communicated, in principle, by any instrument that can fulfill the function of carrying the "subjective point of view". In principle then language is dispensable and politics knowable independently of language.

It is this instrumentalization of language that is the foundation of the practice of mainstream cross-cultural political science. It permits the interpretation of political culture as subjectively produced cognitive, affective and normative data that are ostensibly collected as if they were pre-linguistic "meanings" which do not require interpretation. The language in which they are expressed is treated as a disposable container. Thus Almond and Verba consider political culture as an aggregate of data not requiring interpretation and write:

The political culture becomes the frequency of different kinds of cognitive, affective and evaluative orientations toward the political system in general, its input and output aspects and the self as political actor.⁶²

This stripping of political practices of the language in which they are expressed is the modern version of nominalism, for such a stripping postulates that every term cannot but have an individual concrete object as a real referent. This nominalism with regards to social, political actions and structures is characteristic of mainstream political science. Thus according to Graham, "political science is whatever political scientists do. All activities pursued by political scientists as researchers

are included within this conception of the discipline".⁶³ Even when it is claimed that the bounds of the political are set objectively in terms of certain "functions", these functions are defined a-linguistically.⁶⁴ Self-interpretations are denied any relevance and language is unhooked from political practices.⁶⁵ In fact, comparativists go back and forth between a theory of arbitrary fiat and the idea of an objectively-bounded domain. In both cases, however, the language of political science is assumed to be uniquely "a system of symbols... developed for the purpose of communication."⁶⁶ Thus, Isaak writes that in political science,

...we deal only with nominal definitions. Science has no place for real meanings and essential characteristics. Concepts are used to describe the world as we observe it, and so the very notion of essentiality is foreign to science. A nominal definition then takes the form: "power" (the name of the concept) = characteristics X, Y, and Z. In effect, real and nominal definitions start from different directions. The former begins with a word and tries to reveal its essential nature. In the case of a nominal definition, on the other hand, a configuration of empirical characteristics is observed and described, as postulated and assigned a label.⁶⁷

Czudnowski, in his discussion of the scientific status of comparative politics, indicates that "sociological models have to be constructed in "nominalist" terms, that is to say, in terms of individuals, their attitudes, expectations, relations and overt behaviour."⁶⁸ The language of political science is characterized as "a set of rules for formulating knowledge ... for presenting formalized knowledge about relationships among political phenomena."⁶⁹

In this language of political science a "word ... is really nothing more than a sound or a collection of letters that is used as a tag or an indicator for what one individual wants another individual to bring to mind";⁷⁰ a "fact ... refers to a single discrete perception of something in the real world"⁷¹ and the "concepts" of political science are "used to identify things in the real world".⁷² Each "definition of a

concept must include a carefully specified empirical referent."⁷³ Both facts and concepts are conceived as discrete entities. Facts do not implicate other facts; concepts do not implicate other concepts. They are pieced together. A language of political science thus constructed is assumed to give us, according to Frey, "a universal 'metalanguage' that we could employ to query respondents and understand the differences and equivalence in the current specific languages of the world."⁷⁴

It is perhaps Przeworski and Teune who have best articulated this exclusion of language from the world in order to make comparative research "scientific."⁷⁵ In line with the nominalist conception of language, they write that the language of comparison must be "explicit". By "explicit" they mean language which "requires only a grammar and rules of empirical interpretation invariant across cultures and societies."⁷⁶ Such a language is assumed to be capable of carving into all polities irrespective of socio-historical differences between polities, and without, if necessary, even understanding the meaning of the linguistic operations involved. For, the language of political science being an instrument, it is not in fact necessary for the political scientist to understand the meanings of his linguistic operations. According to Rudner,

...it is indeed the case that if a list of the elements of a language as well as a list of its grammatical rules is available ... then the language may be generated without knowledge of, or without taking into account the meaning of any word of that language.⁷⁷

Przeworski and Teune do not however simply brush aside linguistic differences that exist in different language communities. They, contrary to many comparativists engaged in "normal science", give them a serious consideration.⁷⁸ They claim that differences of meaning regarding certain words and expressions occasioned by contextual differences must be resolved by developing "general statements defining the meaning of a specific observation in terms of its systematic context."⁷⁹ That is, (linguistic equivalences must be generated in such a way that they must be valid within their contexts, and be reliable as cross-cultural terms. This linguistic equivalence is generated in terms of indicators that measure

what they intend to measure in each language. This gives validity which "is system specific".⁸⁰ It requires that a text, a question, an answer in one language be translated into a different language without producing a different meaning, that is, referent. When this is the case, it is assumed that there is a cross-cultural, a cross-system reliability, even if the indicators, at the system-specific level, are different. What is important is the similarity or difference of the structure of indicators. They write:

The similarity of the structure of indicators is the criterion for establishing the equivalence of measurement instruments. The similarity of structure can be defined in terms of the patterns of intercorrelations among indicators. If the indicators for particular systems, hypothesized to belong to the domain of the same concept are intercorrelated with each other in the same way in each system, the structure of the indicators is said to be the same.⁸¹

Przeworski and Teune thus use system-specificity, or the specificity of the polity (taken as a context) itself as a means of producing a non-specific (a cross-cultural) scientific language. What this complex procedure is based on is however the empiricist theory of language itself. Przeworski and Teune accept the fact that indicators could be heterogeneous, that is, different from one polity to the other. But this, they say, should not be seen as an obstacle as long as similar referents can be tagged to heterogeneous indicators. Thus what they call the "equivalence of linguistic measurement" across systems is established by pre-supposing a referential theory of language. Consequently they write:

Any language is indifferent to the reality to which it is applied. A language of ranking can be applied to a hierarchy of social classes as well as of angels. In the latter case, the classes of this language would be empirically empty.⁸²

And such a language would, according to them, have the following characteristics:

First, the language in which the observations are exposed must contain rules of empirical interpretation. It must be uniformly applicable to all observations. This language must, second, specify the classes or

magnitudes that can be assigned to observations. Finally, the relationships among classes and hence the admissible transformations must be stated. If these criteria are met, then it is possible to say that more Indians agree with a question than Americans.⁸³

Thus we are given a content-free universal language which is assumed to equally carve into the political practices of "Americans" and "Indians". This language is given as neutral and external to both political subjects and political scientists. It is on this understanding of language that the project of empirical political theory is founded.

Empirical political theory would be then a political theory that is free from historical and spatial specificities. It is considered to be a logical instrument - free from political meanings - which brings order to a body of empirically confirmed facts and cross-cultural generalizations. It would permit the conduct of political inquiries according to certain logical requirements without implicating political meanings and practices. Being a construct of intellectual tools known as axioms, hypotheses and laws, it would permit, like theories in the physical sciences, the explanation and prediction of political phenomena, without expressing a political stand. Empirical political theory, being a sheer instrument working from the outside on something else which is not non-linguistic, i.e. political phenomena, is thus presented as a theory external to the political world. Thus it is asserted by empirical political theorists that,

...whatever is out there to be taken as reality does not have any meaning until it is subsumed under the rubric of a theoretical scheme. Politics is not politics until it is conceptualized as such ... Reality vs nonreality is not the issue. It is whether we can know events without a mental framework. The instrumentalist claim is that we cannot. Hence a theory of some sort is necessary in order to get at any reality one postulates; whether this reality exists independent of one's conceptual scheme does not bear on this requirement.⁸⁴

Thus, theory and reality are claimed to be radically external to

each other.. Theory would be the instrument that the political scientist fashions to observe and piece together a presumably silent political reality. Theory is thus believed to be totally divorced from political concerns and aspirations.

The advantage, from the comparativist point of view, of such a conception is that it eliminates language as a problem - in many ways. Self-definitions and interpretations are left out in the cold. The relationship between the subject and the political world is conceived as unproblematic by postulating the political order as an artificial (conventional) order rooted in the "subjective" i.e., pre-social dimension of the individual. The problems of obligation and legitimacy become "ideas" in the Lockean sense, i.e. psychological problems. The political scientist need not know what kind of relations exist between himself and what he is talking about; between what he is talking about and the polity he is studying. The instrumentalization of language thus permits the carving out and unhooking of "political realities" from different polities for the sake of comparison. Since political science is separated from political life, and indeed since the latter is given its boundaries through the science of political science, "politics" would be spatially and temporally closed. It would be neither historical nor intersubjective. It would be a non-linguistic object, subject to complete empirical verification carried out according to an explicit scientific method. It is this claim of unhooking language from politics that is the guarantee of the scientificity and value-freedom of mainstream political science. But the foundation of this guarantee - the instrumentalist conception of language - is not thematized. It is simply taken for granted and asserted by comparativists. To see the problematic nature of such a conception of language, I propose to read a cross-cultural comparative study by taking into account the (self) interpretations comparativists give to their linguistic practices. To carry out such a reading, I have chosen Inkeles and Smith's cross-cultural study of individual modernity in six countries: Nigeria, India, Argentina, Chile, Israel and East Pakistan.⁸⁵ This book

has been acclaimed as a great scientific work of comparison by some mainstream comparativists. Of it, Henry Teune writes: ✓

The research that has gone further than any other in "universal" explanation is that of Inkeles and Smith, primarily showing the universal impact of educational and work experiences on individual attitudes and values.⁸⁶

Language-Instrument in Comparative Practice

In this section, my intention is not to deal with the technical virtuosity of Inkeles and Smith. My intention is to show how the concept of language-instrument is made to work in practice by reading the practice and understanding comparativists have of their production of language as an instrument.

Inkeles and Smith believe that it is possible to make cross-cultural "timeless propositions", that is, propositions that are free of historical, cultural and linguistic influences. They write:

We believe certain panhuman patterns of response persist in the face of variability in cultural context. These transcultural similarities in the psychic properties of individuals provide the basis for a common response to common stimuli.⁸⁷

Indeed there is nothing scientific nor original in the above statement. In every culture, as anthropologists have indicated, one meets claims about certain presumably panhuman qualities, even when such claims are not specifically expressed as such.⁸⁸ It is precisely the existence of such claims about presumably panhuman properties which make possible bias and prejudice against people who do not seem to possess or manifest the presumably panhuman properties. One can consider such claims as paradigms, in a large sense, of narrations which structure our knowledge of others. What is original in Inkeles and Smith's claim is the assumption that these panhuman properties are independent of their linguistic body; that they exist as autonomous and universal objects whatever may be the "variability in cultural context". The "panhuman",

i.e. that which is human universally, is assumed to be external to languages. After thus assuming languages and cultures as shells that contain things radically other than themselves, they study one of the inhabitants of these shells: modernity. They assert that "the modern man is a cross-national trans-cultural type who can be identified by our scales whatever the distinctive attitudes, with which his culture may otherwise have endowed him."⁸⁹

This modern man when stripped of his "otherwise" culture would be given in a homogeneous objectified numerical cosmos wherein the following behavioral traits can be measured: a) openness to new experiences, b) readiness for social change, c) growth of opinion, d) information acquisition to form his opinion, e) time orientation to the present or the future rather than the past, f) efficiency, g) planning, h) calculability or trust, i) valuing of technical skill, j) aspiration in education and occupation, k) dignity, l) understanding production.⁹⁰ These traits are assumed to be behavioural, observable and quantifiable. They are given as "dependent variables" or outcomes of certain inputs or "independent variables" such as schools or factories.⁹¹ Both the dependent and independent variables are assumed to belong to a meaning-free numerical cosmos and are as such considered to be detachable from their linguistic shells. In other words, the data that enter into the computation and comparison of modernity are presumed not to require interpretation and thus to be free from disputes and the "idols" of language.

However, between these independent and dependent variables are subjects known as the interviewee and the interviewer. As the interviewees do not relate themselves to language in a "scientific" manner, the inquiry may be derailed from its scientific tracks. The same situation can obtain if the interviewers do not have a "scientific" linguistic comportment. Given the assumption that language and reality, language and knowledge are conceived as external to each other, the search for "panhuman patterns of response" and their explanations presuppose a de-linguaging, if one can use such a barbarism, of the speakers and of the spoken. It is this

process of silencing, as it were, of the speakers, (both the interviewers and the interviewees) and of the spoken that is of interest to us here. This process of silencing is in fact what constitutes the method of Inkeles and Smith.

To reach this other than language Inkeles and Smith try to control the speakers. In all six countries they chose interviewers who were committed to their epistemological framework: "local scholars who (can) communicate effectively with us", they write,⁹² although they do not interrogate themselves on the condition that makes possible such an effective communication among scholars who adopt a framework where each cannot but be a fact to the other. Where such scholar-facts are not available they preferred to use "some academically less brilliant interviewer to those who could not face the strains of the interviews without impatience and grudge."⁹³ Although one can see why the epistemology they adopt requires interviewers who cannot talk, as it were, what is important to note is that this bizarre requirement is in fact an expression of the neutralization of the speaker that is required in order to eliminate the "noise" that language is assumed to be when it is not instrumentalized properly.

But the survey situation does not bring in only the self possessed, disciplined and "silent" social scientist who is decontaminated from the ills of language, but also the questioned, the interviewee who, unfortunately, does not, like the comparativist, always speak instrumentally, and is as such a continuous victim of the "idols" of language, thus leading him "to bias" his "answers in some misleading fashion". Thus one reads:

The majority of our interviewees were not accustomed to long verbal exchanges. The issues raised by our questions sometimes had never been presented explicitly to them before. Even in the case of problems they had previously encountered no one had ever before asked them to express their opinion. The whole idea of an interview was something new in many countries. In any event, most of the men in our samples had never heard of the idea let alone met anyone who had had the experience.

We had to be sure therefore that the way in which we conducted the interview did not induce men to bias their answers in some misleading fashion.⁹⁴

Such a situation can create "drift," they write, i.e. a non-instrumental use of language and thus an uncontrolled response which they claim, "might, in the end, have left us with only minimal comparable questionnaires in the several countries."⁹⁵ One can note in passing that Inkeles and Smith claim to have an intention, a purpose which is to produce "comparable questionnaires in the several countries". What the status of such an intention is within their instrumentalist linguistic framework is not clarified. To control "drift", i.e. the speaking-activity of the interviewee, they take certain steps which are assumed to de-contaminate and control the language of the interviewee.

The language of the questions to be asked is purified. The assumption is that language is a source of error and that its instrumentation requires that it be made transparent so that we can see the things it stands for. They write: "our questions had to be couched in the simplest possible language."⁹⁶ But this is not enough. Given the danger the respondents, who more often than not are not empiricists, pose, the instrumentation of language requires that language be taken out of their hands. They write: "We suggest to ease their [the respondents] task by offering them nicely balanced alternatives from which a man might choose thus freeing him of the necessity of formulating the matter by himself."⁹⁷ Language is thus operationalized as an extrinsic addition to the interviewee.

Even after having been given such a freedom and a simple language, a respondent may try to understand the questions as questions that implicate others instead of considering them, as an empiricist should, as a collection of discrete questions. Inkeles and Smith consider that such an effort by a respondent may render inefficient their language-instrument which, to be "scientific, is assumed to be constructed of linguistic units that are combined additively. To avoid this danger, they de-intentionalize their questions in order to guarantee their instrumental nature. They write:

In addition to varying our question, style and format, and offering balanced alternatives, we sought to offset the effects of responses by the organization of

our questionnaire ... We felt that the form and content of our questions did a good job of concealing our purpose... It would have taken a very perceptive and alert person indeed to discern that we were really more interested in analytic variables, like dignity, than in the topics like family life.⁹⁸

Thus the interviewees are transformed into facts. From producers of speech they are transformed into instruments of production of answers whose speech does not belong to them anymore. This unhooking of the interviewees from their speech and speech-communities is accompanied by the objectification of what they say. What they say is unhooked from the language in which it is expressed and is pinned down as a cross-culturally generated data.

As their research was conducted in different language-communities they had to solve the problem of "meaning equivalents" which more appropriately should be called "referent equivalents" for that is what they try to elicit. This, they write, raised "formidable problems of translation as we moved from culture to culture and language to language."⁹⁹ If we examine their questionnaires, we find terms such as union, public, politics, church, truth, trust, opinion, age, club, worker, friend, leader, honest, vote, time, family, citizen, savings, life, news, nation...etc.¹⁰⁰

Surely, Inkeles and Smith are not looking for "sound" or "mark" equivalents for these terms. In what sense do they elicit equivalents? In his Methodological Foundations for Political Analysis, Graham writes that a word is "nothing more than a sound or a collection of letters that is used as a tag or an indicator."¹⁰¹ If so, the equivalence that is looked for is a referential equivalent.¹⁰² The equivalents that Inkeles and Smith are looking for are entities which are independent of the language in which they appear but by which they are denoted; entities whose identity are established ostensibly or in terms of ostensibly established indicators. By adopting such a referential theory it is assumed that in "every proposition we can apprehend ... all the constituents are really entities with which we have immediate acquaintance."¹⁰³ Translation is dealt with as a technical question of fashioning tools with which the object of study, "modernization", is extracted from the speech of the interviewees. Having

thus conceptualized language as an instrument, they do not consider seriously the possibility that the "learning" of "modernization" may be a complex process of cultural synergesis that results in the emergence of new meanings and practices making terms such as "learning" and "modernization" enormous semantic connotations¹⁰⁴ when they are used referentially in all contexts. They write:

Our entire study rested on the assumption that men can learn to be modern. And we maintained that this prospect exists not just for those who are well prepared for the new experiences from the start, but also for those who enter the race with a substantial handicap. We were, in short, convinced that no one is obliged to carry traditional attitudes and values with him all his life, because later experience can bring about a fundamental change from whatever has been true of the individual's formative years.¹⁰⁵

There is of course nothing original in this were it not for the framework within which it is stated. Certainly, that men change their habits and traditions, that they learn new ways, that they can sometimes even change quite radically as in religious and ideological conversions, is something that is commonly accepted. What is original in Inkeles and Smith is the assumption that such a change reduces the past into a tabula rasa. By espousing a conception of language that relates it to man and the world as one tool among others, the experience of modernization is presented as an experience that impinges on men without going through a process of interpretation; it is seen as an experience that bypasses language and as such bypasses historicity. "Meaning", modernization in this case, is assumed to be produced and learned independently of language. We can thus see the enormous importance that struggling against the speakers and their speech has in this research for its aim is to get at modernization - in - itself as a set of propositions referring to "entities with which we have immediate acquaintance".

Thus, in practice, the instrumentalist conception of language leads to an unremitting struggle against the subjects who are being studied in as much as their linguistic activities are considered to be external screens that hide what they do and what they are. The subjects are not "accepted

as moments, as "vigence sociale", of their society.¹⁰⁶ In Inkeles and Smith, and this is indeed the case in mainstream comparative political science, this struggle against subjects is unavoidable given their understanding of the role of language in social life and knowledge. The social world is seen as given ontologically, and not as the production of men in certain conditions. Science is assumed to be the knowledge of an autarchic social world.

Inkeles and Smith congratulate themselves on their research. They write that their results "validate the OM scales beyond any reasonable doubt for use in cross-cultural research on individual modernity in developing nations."¹⁰⁷ They believe that their results "indicate that our causal models have some significant core of valid relationships across countries and add:

...it may be amazing to some that, with all of the inherent difficulties of doing cross-cultural survey research on a complex topic we have been able to control errors of all kinds sufficiently to find very comparative results across samples from six countries.¹⁰⁸

But as we have seen, what Inkeles and Smith consider as "inherent difficulties" and "errors of all kinds" are the speakers themselves and their speeches. And of this they are aware, for in a surprising passage they write lucidly that their search for knowledge is oriented not to the subjects, their deeds and speeches, their actions and their works, but to something vis-à-vis which the subjects are obstacles to be overcome. They write:

If the core of the modernity syndrome has been markedly different in each country, we could not talk of "modernity" in general but would have been obliged to affix a national tag to the term modern whenever we use it. Moreover, whenever we sought to relate our measure of individual modernity to the independent variables, we should in effect, have been relating those variables to something different in each country. If, then, the diverse modernity measures have responded differently to the standard independent variables in each country, we would have been unable to tell whether that was so because the modernity measures were different or because their

relation to the independent variables had a truly special character in each country. Perhaps we would successfully have mastered this challenge, but only through an enormously complex analysis country by country. Even after having developed a measure of individual modernity which had basically the same content and structure in each country we could not be sure that it would relate to the independent variables in the same way in all our six countries. If we had had to work with a measure of individual modernity having different content in each country, there would have been only a very small probability of reaching any generalization valid cross-culturally.¹⁰⁹

They cannot work with a "measure of individual modernity having different content in each country" for this would mean not only, as they
 , "a very small probability of reaching any generalizations valid cross-culturally," which is true, but also, and more importantly, it means orienting their search for knowledge to the subjects themselves as society-expressing-entities, as "holist" subjects, as it were.¹¹⁰ The peeling of their speech from their actions and their world would give way to a concern that will recognize their speech and their language as spatially (materially) and temporally (historically) engaged. Such a recognition would make their speech and language necessary moments in the elaboration of knowledge that pertains to them. It is this possibility that is thrown overboard with the instrumentalization of language through an a priori commitment to a science which is equated with empiricism.

Contradictions of the Instrumentalist Theory of Language

The instrumentalist conception of language is riddled with contradictions in both theory and practice. As we have seen, replacing the seventeenth century postulate of private ideas, private impressions and private language by an objective description of the use of language as publicly verifiable behaviour does not change the nature of the relationship that is postulated to exist between language and the world. The two are split and hooked instrumentally in the case of the "private world" as

well as that of the "public world". In both cases, whether the facts are internal (ideas) or external (publicly verifiable), language is seen as a mnemonic device that tells us nothing about man and the world. The advantage of this to the comparativists is that it puts an end to disputes of interpretation and permits them presumably to get down to the real job - that of developing an empirical political theory through cross-cultural generalizations. But in the framework of this theory of language it is not clear how comparativists can ever get down to the real job without transgressing continuously the condition they have set down regarding the use of language.

Comparativists claim that political science is knowledge that is intersubjectively verifiable according to an explicit scientific method. But comparativists have not shown and perhaps they cannot, that inter-subjectivity is a law of nature. Until such time that comparativists show that intersubjectivity is a law of nature, their claim of intersubjectivity is in contradiction with their instrument-language thesis on which the very possibility of cross-cultural generalization stands.

In practice then comparativists adopt a different conceptualization of language when they work and communicate the results of their scientific work. When a comparativist A reads or listens to the scientific work of comparativist B, comparativist A tries to understand the meaning of the work of comparativist B. Indeed comparativist B is telling, explaining, justifying, arguing in order to validate his intention and work: the elaboration of cross-cultural generalizations. Comparativist A and others who read the work of comparativist B understand the behaviour of B. Because they understand him, they can validate or invalidate his work. Because they share, in understanding, his world, they can follow his method. That is, his language-instrument presupposes, to be followed by his colleagues, more than a competence in the manipulation of a language-instrument. It presupposes a "communicative competence" which takes account of "language" as a condition of the possibility and of the intersubjective validity of what he says and does.¹¹¹ We find this "illicit" situation, illicit in terms of their language-instrument thesis, in the practice of comparativists.

This "illicit" situation covers also the relationship of the comparativist to the studied, but in a different manner. We have seen how Inkeles and Smith lay out their project, how they anticipate and interpret the possible responses, reactions and understandings of their respondents. In this mode of operation there is a tacit claim that they understand more than what the respondents can even say, and that the respondents' answer can mean more than the questions to which they respond. Smith and Inkeles work with these tacit assumptions without showing how these assumptions are rendered null and void in the process of their language-instrumentation. They reserve the reflexivity implied by these tacit assumptions to their own linguistic practice and repress it in the speech of their respondents. They assume that the common words used by the different parties involved have "equivalent" meanings. But in their own practice, these meanings are for them the fruits of their reflexion and project. And yet this expressivity is denied to the respondents.¹¹²

Comparativists may claim that they deal only with denotations. But let us take an example from African studies which is generating a heated debate among Africanists. Are Africa's rural inhabitants "peasants"? To call them "peasants" would, from the instrumentalist point of view be denoting an "objective" fact, or a brute fact. And this would have solved the problem. But in reality it does not. Fallers claims that African rural inhabitants are not peasants; Derman questions Fallers' interpretation; Saul includes "pastoralists" in his term "peasant"; Leys claims that it is capitalism that has produced peasants in Africa.¹¹³ If it were only a matter of denotation, why then the debate? Is to call them peasants merely denoting an "objective" fact, a brute datum? Or is it an application of a linguistic, inherited and shared meaning, an application which engages certain criteria of life, a certain social intention, a certain conceptualization of action, certain notions of rationality, practice, society, politics and justice? If the use of a "familiar" word like "peasants" does not "proceed from an act of logical

subsumption, through which an individual is placed under a universal concept"¹¹⁴ how can then one proceed to use terms such as individual, society, politics, history, tradition, culture, elite, development, modernization, votes, elections, political parties without engaging in interpretations?

This question leads directly to comparative politics itself.¹ It suggests the possibility that the instrumentalist conception of language in comparative politics may be not only a method of studying politics but also, and more importantly, a way of conceptualizing and practicing politics. Is the language of comparative politics then instrumental only in a secondary sense? Is it a language which in fact expresses and articulates a determinate political life-world? If so, wouldn't its use as a non-rooted, objective, universal, political meta-language for the study of diverse polities lead to a systematically distorted political and theoretical understanding of those polities who do not share the language of comparative politics, and whose political languages are objectified to become the raw material of the language of comparative politics?

The questions raised in this chapter are unavoidable when one explores the assumptions, practices, and outcomes of the instrumentalist conception of language in comparative politics. But this conception of language, because it denies its linguistic foundation, cannot help us answer any of these questions. To answer these questions and to discover the meanings and consequences of mainstream comparative politics, we have to develop a theory of language which accounts for the assumption, a tacit one indeed as we have seen, that comparativists possess a transcendental language that constitutes all languages as instruments. In this tacit assumption is lodged a constitutive conception of language - a conception that considers language to be the condition of the possibility and of the intersubjective validity of all knowledge - be it scientific or everyday knowledge. This conception first articulated by Vico and developed by Herder¹¹⁵ culminates in what is considered by many as the first major work of the philosophy of language, that of W. Von Humboldt.

Because of the original and seminal nature of Humboldt's writings regarding the constitutive nature of language, I will in the following chapter organize my study of the interrelationship between language, the speaker and the world around Humboldt's philosophy of language. With the help of his ideas I will indicate in what sense language is constitutive of knowledge and of the social world. I will, in the subsequent chapters, unpack the constitutive role of language in comparative politics and the political practices it studies. In the process, I hope to answer most of the questions I have raised up to now.

FOOTNOTES

1. Dell Hymes, "Linguistic Aspects of Comparative Political Research", Robert T. Holt and John E. Turner, op.cit., p. 297.
2. D.T. Campbell, "Perspective, Artifact and Control" in Artifact in Behavioral Research, eds. R. Rosenthal and R. Rosnow (New York: Academic Press, 1964), pp. 351-382. Also see Richard W. Breslin et al, Cross-Cultural Research Methods (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1973), p. 17.
3. William M. O'Barr and Jean F. O'Barr, eds., Language of Politics (The Hague: Mouton, 1976).
4. Henry L. Bretton, "Political Science Language and Politics" in William M. O'Barr and Jean F. O'Barr, op.cit., p. 431.
5. Ibid. Breton writes:

"One major political science study where one would expect to find a thorough treatment of the language and politics relationship is Karl Deutsch's The Nerves of Government (1963) subtitled Models of Communication and Control. But the word language does not appear in the index nor is it found under 'communication'.... Another likely source of substantive enlightenment on language and politics, Lucien Pye's Communications and Political Development (1963), does not mention language except in the vaguest sense and then far too briefly... These two illustrations are representative of general neglect of language by political scientists [p.931].

See also the following where the question of language is neglected. Lester W. Milbrath and M.L. Goel, Political Participation (Chicago: Rand McNally, 1977). This is the standard book on the subject. The question of language, which one may feel is important in the discussion of political participation is not at all considered. The term does not even appear in the index. Other examples are: Gilbert Abcarian and John W. Soule, Social Psychology and Political Behaviour (Columbus, Ohio: Charles Merrill Publ. Co., 1971); Heinz Eulau et al., eds., Political Behavior: A Reader in Theory and Research (Glencoe, Ill: The Free Press, 1956); Gabriel Almond and Sidney Verba, The Civic Culture (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1963); Douglas E. Ashford, Ideology and Participation (Beverly Hills, Calif: Sage Publications, 1972); Lewis Bowman and G.R. Boynton, eds., Political Behavior and Public Opinion (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1974); S. Sidney Ulmer, ed., Introductory Readings in Political Behavior, (Chicago: Rand McNally, 1961); Sidney Verba et al., Modes of Democratic Participation: A Cross-National Comparison (Beverly Hills, Calif: Sage Publications, 1971); Walter A. Rosenbaum, Political Culture (New York: Praeger, 1975). This is an excellent survey of the state of this concept in the discipline and which is an example at the same time of the quasi-total neglect of the question of the relationship between politics and language. Other examples are: Lucian W. Pye and Sidney Verba, eds. Political Culture and Political Development (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1965); Richard E. Dawson and Kenneth Prewitt, Political Socialization (Boston: Little, Brown, 1969);

Herbert H. Hyman, Political Socialization: A Study in the Psychology of Political Behavior (New York: The Free Press, 1969); Kenneth P. Langton, Political Socialization (New York: Oxford University Press, 1969); Dennis A. Kavanagh, Political Culture (London: Macmillan, 1972).

6. Henry L. Bretton, op.cit., p. 434.
 7. Ibid., p. 437.
 8. Ibid., p. 438.
 9. Arthur Danto, "Semantical Vehicles, Understanding and Innate Ideas" in Language and Philosophy, ed. Sydney Hook (New York: New York University Press, 1969), p.136. Danto suggests that "the linguistic relativisms of Whorf and, to some degree of Quine" ... pertain "to the theory of reference".
 10. E.T. Meehan, The Foundation of Political Analysis, op.cit., pp. 9-13.
 11. John Locke, An Essay Concerning Human Understanding (Oxford: Clarendon Press, n.d.), Bk III: 1. Locke characterizes language as the "instrument" of society. John Dewey, Experience and Nature (New York: Norton, 1929), p. 168. Dewey characterizes it as "the tool of tools". Ludwig Wittgenstein, Philosophical Investigations translated by G.E.M. Anscombe (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1972), p. 151e, #569. He writes:

"Language is an instrument. Its concepts are instruments. Now perhaps one thinks that it can make no great difference which concepts we employ. As, after all, it is possible to do physics in feet and inches as well as in meters and centimeters; the difference is merely one of convenience. But even this is not true if, for instance, calculations in some system of measurement demand more time and trouble than it is possible for us to give them."
- True "instrument" is not understood in the same sense by the empiricist Locke, the pragmatist Dewey and by the language analyst Wittgenstein. But it shows that the term "instrument" is a widespread characterization of language.
12. David H. Everson and Joann P. Paine, An Introduction to Systematic Political Science (Homewood, Illinois: The Dorsey Press, 1973); pp. 27-41, 127-143, 191-225.
 13. A James Gregor, An Introduction to Metapolitics: A Brief Inquiry Into the Conceptual Language of Political Science (New York: The Free Press, 1971) p. 353.
 14. Ibid., p. 373.
 15. Ferruccio Rossi-Landi, "Ideas for the Study of Linguistic Alienation", Social Praxis 3, No. 1-2 (1975), pp. 80-81.

16. Aristotle, On Interpretation, trans. Harold P. Cook (Cambridge, Mass.: M.I.T. Press, 1962); Miriam Therese Larkin, Language in the Philosophy of Aristotle (The Hague: Mouton, 1971).
17. Emile Benveniste, Problèmes de Linguistique Générale (Paris: Gallimar, 1966), pp: 63-74.
18. E. Gilson, A History of Christian Philosophy in the Middle Ages (New York: Random House, 1955); R.H. Robin, A Short History of Linguistics. (London: Longman, 1967).
19. Jan Pinborg, "Some Problems of Semantic Representations in Medieval Logic", in History of Linguistic Thought and Contemporary Linguistics, ed. Herman Parret (New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1976), p. 264.
20. Ibid, p. 265.
21. Karl-Otto Apel, "The Transcendental Conception of Language, Communication and the Idea of a First Philosophy", Herman Parret, ed. op.cit., p. 41.
22. Francis Bacon, The New Organon and Related Writings, edited with an Introduction by Fulton H. Anderson (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1960), p.25.
23. Ibid, p. 26.
24. Ibid, pp. 47-48. Bacon gives four Idols: Idols of the Tribe, Idols of the Cave, Idols of the Market Place and Idols of the Theatre.
25. Ibid, p. 41.
26. Paolo Rossi, Francis Bacon: From Magic to Science, translated by Sacha Rabinovitch (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1968), p. 170.
27. Ibid, pp. 166-172.
28. Thomas Hobbes, The Leviathan, Parts One and Two, with an introduction by Herbert W. Schneider (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1958).
29. For the central place Hobbes' anthropology holds in contemporary thinking see Dieter Herrich, "The Basic Structure of Modern Philosophy", Cultural Hermeneutics 2, No. 1 (1974), pp. 1-18.
30. T. Hobbes, op.cit., pp. 104-109.
31. David Rasmussen characterizes Hobbes anthropology as "pathological". David S. Rasmussen, "The Marxist Critique of Phenomenology", Dialectics and Humanism, II, No. 4 (1975), p. 60.
32. T. Hobbes, op.cit., pp. 143-152, p. 178.

33. Ibid, chapter 4 is entitled "Of Speech"; Chapter 6 is entitled "Of the Interior Beginnings of Voluntary Motions Commonly Called the Passions, and The Speeches by Which They are Expressed"; Chapter 7 is entitled "Of The Ends or Resolutions of Discourse".
34. Ibid, p. 9.
35. Ibid, p. 25.
36. Ibid, p. 46.
37. That Hobbes' writing can indeed be interpreted in any of these ways, at least partially, is discussed by Ian Hacking, Why Does Language Matter to Philosophy? (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975), pp. 15-26.
38. T. Hobbes, op.cit., p. 38.
39. Ibid.
40. T. Hobbes, Body, Man and Citizen, ed. Richard S. Peters (New York: Collier Books, 1967), p. 195.
41. Regarding the connection between Hobbes' theory of language and the "new scientific method" see J. Weinberger, "Hobbes' Doctrine of Method", American Political Science Review, LXLX, No. 4, (December 1975), pp. 1336-1353.
42. J. Locke, An Essay Concerning Human Understanding (Oxford: Clarendon Press, n. d.).
43. Ibid, Book II, Chapter XXXIII, paragraph 19. I will henceforth use the generally accepted mode of referring to quotations from the Essay, i.e. 2.33.19.
44. Ibid, 3.2.1.
45. Ibid, 3.2.2.
46. Ibid, 2.1.2.
47. Ibid, 4.1.2
48. David Hume, An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding included in The Empiricists (New York: Doubleday - Anchor Books 1974), pp. 307-517.
49. Ibid, pp. 322-323.
50. Francis Jeffrey Bellietier, "How/why Does Linguistics Matter to Philosophy?" The Southern Journal of Philosophy, XV, No. 3 (Fall 1977), pp. 393-426.
51. W.V. Quine, "Linguistics and Philosophy", Sidney Hook, ed. op.cit. pp. 97-98.

52. R. Carnap, The Logical Structure of the World (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1968).

53. In this tradition two books are of special interest to political scientists in as much as they show the limits of this type of empiricism in our quest to understand and explain political practices as political practices. T.D. Weldon, The Vocabulary of Politics (London: Penguin, 1953); T.D. Weldon, States and Morals: A Study in Political Conflicts (London: Murray, 1962).

The "private language" criticism is derived from the following comment by Wittgenstein, op.cit., p. 883, No. 243:

"But we could also imagine a language in which a person could write down or give vocal expression to his inner experiences - his feelings, moods, and the rest - for his private use? - Well, can't we do so in our ordinary language? - But that is not what I mean. The individual words of this language are to refer to what can only be known to the person speaking; to his immediate private sensations. So another person cannot understand the language."

For some of the interpretations regarding this argument - an argument that different commentators seem to understand in rather different if not contradictory ways, see E.D. Klemke, ed. Essays on Wittgenstein (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1971), pp. 173-447.

54. Harold Morick, "The Critique of Contemporary Empiricism" in Challenges to Empiricism, ed. Harold Morick (Belmont, Calif.: Wadsworth Publishing Co. 1972), p. 13.

55. See for example R. Carnap, Introduction to Semantics (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1959); C.K. Ogden and I.A. Richards, The Meaning of Meaning (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1930).

56. May Brodbeck, "Meaning and Action" in Readings in the Philosophy of the Social Sciences, ed. May Brodbeck (New York: MacMillan, 1968) pp. 69-70.

57. Eugene J. Meehan, The Foundations of Political Analysis: Empirical and Normative, pp. 241-256.

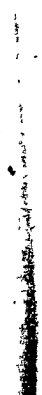
58. T. Parsons, The Social System (New York: The Free Press, 1963), p. 33.

59. Max Weber, The Theory of Social and Economic Organizations, Edited with an Introduction by Talcott Parsons (New York: The Free Press, 1964), p. 88.

60. T. Parsons, The Structure of Social Action (New York: The Free Press, 1968), p. 77.

61. That Parsons' concept of "action" is rather idiosyncratic is brilliantly discussed by Goran Therborn "Social Practice, Social Action, Social Magic", Acta Sociologica, 16, No. 3 (1973), pp. 157-174.
62. G. Almond and Sidney Verba, The Civic Culture (Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1963), p. 17.
63. George T. Graham, Methodological Foundations for Public Analysis (Waltham, Mass.: Xerox College Publishing, 1971), pp. 21-22.
64. Gabriel Almond and James Coleman, ed. op. cit. pp. 33-34; Gabriel Almond and G. Bingham Powell, Comparative Politics: A Developmental Approach (Boston: Little, Brown, 1966).
65. George T. Graham, op.cit., p. 21.
66. Ibid, p. 38.
67. Alan C. Isaak, Scope and Methods of Political Science (Homewood, Illinois: The Dorsey Press, 1969), p. 63.
68. Moshe M. Czendrowski, Comparing Political Behavior (Beverly Hills: Sage Publications, 1976), p. 29. Czendrowski subscribes to this nominalism. According to nominalism, terms have as referents only individual concrete objects and science is considered to be a method of ordering a quantitative ordering of experience. See Leszek Kolakowski, The Alienation of Reason, trans. Norbert Guterman (New York: Doubleday, 1969), pp. 5-7.
69. George J. Graham, op. cit., pp. 27-30.
70. Ibid, p. 38. Note the Lockean flavor of this statement.
71. Ibid, p. 56.
72. Ibid, p. 55.
73. Ibid, p. 88.
74. Frederick W. Frey, "Cross-Cultural Research in Political Science" Robert and John E. Turner, op.cit., p. 279.
75. Adam Przeworski and Henry Teune, The Logic of Comparative Social Inquiry (New York: Wiley - Interscience, 1970), p. 91.
76. Ibid, p. 92.
77. Richard S. Rudner, Philosophy of Social Science (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1966), p. 13, emphasis in text.
78. Shanto Iyengar, "Assessing Linguistic Equivalence in Multilingual Surveys", Comparative Politics, 8, No. 4 (July 1976), p. 579. He comments that political scientists neglect to "investigate the effects of language".

79. Adam Przeworski and Henry Teune, op. cit., p. 92.
80. Ibid, p. 114.
81. Ibid, p. 117.
82. Ibid, p. 93, emphasis added.
83. Ibid.
84. Fred M. Frohock, The Nature of Political Inquiry (Homewood, Ill.: The Dorsey Press, 1967), p. 10.
85. A. Inkeles and D.H. Smith, Becoming Modern (Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1974), p. 12.
86. Henry Teune, "Comparative Research Experimental Design and the Comparative Method", Comparative Political Studies 8, No. 2 (July 1975), p. 199n.
87. A. Inkeles and D.H. Smith, op.cit., p. 12.
88. I.C. Brown, Understanding Other Cultures (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1963).
89. A. Inkeles and D.H. Smith, op.cit., p. 118.
90. Ibid, p. 19-25.
91. Ibid, p. 49.
92. Ibid, p. 51.
93. Ibid, p. 58.
94. Ibid, p. 60.
95. Ibid
96. Ibid, p. 61.
97. Ibid, p. 63.
98. Ibid, pp. 65-66.
99. A. Inkeles and D.H. Smith, op.cit., p. 58.
100. Ibid, pp. 320-350.
101. G.J. Graham, op.cit., p. 38.
102. For a cogent argument in defence of the referential theory of



meaning see Bertrand Russell "On Denoting" in Problems in the Philosophy of Language, ed. Thomas M. Olszewsky (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1969), pp. 300-312. For a critique of this theory, see P.F. Strawson, "On Referring", M. Olszewsky, ed. op. cit., p. 312-333.

103. B. Russell, op.cit., p. 311.

104. The referential use of language has always involved semantic conflation since Hobbes. The modern examples of such semantic conflations are of course "Stimulus" and "Response". Qualitatively different experiences are stuffed into stimulus or response categories as the case may be. For example, political speech makes distinctions between "manipulation, guidance, counselling, pressure, hypnosis, suggestion, extortion, blackmail, coercion, advising, instructing, commanding, demanding". (David Bell, Power, Influence and Authority (New York: Oxford University Press, 1975), p. 7. And one can add to these terms such as imposing, forcing, influencing, impressing, convincing ... etc. to describe different nuances of certain types of political relationships. Such nuances disappear into single items such as "power" or "influence", or even worse into terms such as "inputs", "outputs", "extractive capacity" ... etc. that one meets in mainstream political science. These terms suffer from semantic conflation, in as much as they gloss over politically important distinctions given in political speech itself. See George E.G. Catlin, The Science and Method of Politics (New York: Knopf, 1927); Harold Lasswell, Politics: Who gets What, When and How, (New York, World Publishing co., 1958); H. Lasswell and A. Kaplan, Power and Society (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1950); G. Almond and J. Coleman, The Politics of the Developing Areas. For critiques see: David V.J. Bell, op. cit., William E. Connolly, The Terms of Political Discourse (Lexington, D.C. Heath and Company, 1974).

105. A. Inkeles and D.H. Smith, op. cit., p. 231.

106. What mainstreamists cannot see is that each subject is "holistic", as it were, for each subject is a society-expressing entity. As such, in the study of society, a single case may throw light on that society as well as or even more than a collection of cases. This is of course not true in the natural sciences, see: A.L. Machado Neto: "L'Intersubjectivité de la Compréhension", Cahiers Internationaux de Sociologie, LX, No. 1 (1976), pp. 43-58.

107. D.H. Smith and I. Inkeles, "Individual Modernizing Experiences and Psycho-Social Modernity: Validation of the OM Scales in Six Developing Countries", International Journal of Comparative Sociology XVI: 3-4, (1975), p. 171.

108. Ibid

109. A. Inkeles and D.H. Smith, Becoming Modern, p. 116.

110. A.L. Machado Neto, op.cit.

111. Jurgen Habermas, "Toward a Theory of Communicative Competence",

in Patterns of Communicative Behaviour: Recent Sociology, No. 2, ed. Hans Peter Dreitzel (London: Macmillan, 1970), pp. 114-151.

112. It is the acceptance of the ideal of manipulation that seems to permit comparativists to forget this contradiction. On this question of manipulation that informs the social sciences see Werner Pelz, The Scope of Understanding in Sociology (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1974), Chapter 5.

113. L.A. Fallers, "Are African Cultivators to be Called 'Peasants'?" in Peasant Society: A Reader, ed. Jack M. Potter et al (Boston: Little, Brown, 1967), pp. 35-42; William Derman, "Peasants: The African Exception" American Anthropologist, 74 (1972), pp. 779-782; John Saul, "Peasants and Revolution", Review of African Political Economy, No. 1 (1974) pp. 41-69; Colin Leys, "Politics in Kenya, The Development of a Peasant Society", British Journal of Political Science, 1, No. 4 (1970), p. 326.

114. H.G. Gadamer, Truth and Method (New York: The Seabury Press, 1975), p. 364.

115. Isaiah Berlin, Vico and Herder: Two Studies in the History of Ideas (London: The Hogarth Press, 1976). See also Chapter III below.

CHAPTER III
A NON-INSTRUMENTALIST CONCEPTION OF LANGUAGE

Introduction

To appreciate the central place language holds in comparative politics and in the study of political practices, one must show more than the inadequacies of the instrumentalist theory of language. That is, a critique of the instrumentalist theory of language must simultaneously elaborate a conceptualization of language that can deal with the practices that the instrumentalist theory of language fails to explain. It must be a conceptualization that is capable of dealing with the problem of linguistic consciousness that is presupposed by all linguistic practices, including those of the comparativists. Such conceptualizations of language have been made, as a response to the inadequacies of the instrumentalist theory of language, by phenomenologists, hermeneuticians, conceptual analysts, anthropologists and certain linguists.¹ These different schools have pointed out, from different perspectives, that to understand a social action is to understand the meaning of that social action. Admittedly, this is the least common denominator shared by these schools, for what are meant by "understanding", "social action", "meaning" differ from one school to another. But they all recognize the activity of the subject as being a constitutive element in social action, meaning and understanding.

The cluster of questions these different schools of thought raise in their critique of the instrumentalist theory of language can be traced back to the fundamental role of speech in the constitution of man and his world. Although the problem of language is one that has held the attention of philosophers since Plato's Cratylus,² the question of language qua speech was first fully formulated by Wilhelm von Humboldt.³ As Ricoeur points out, a consideration of the constitutive nature of language must start with the Humboldtian problematic of language qua speech, and the conceptualization of speech as a mediation between men and the world.⁴

Indeed, Humboldt's writings on language are notorious for their ambiguity, contradictions and vagueness.⁵ But in spite, or even perhaps because of these characteristics, his writings on language have inspired thinkers in the field of linguistics, philosophy, anthropology, ethnology, sociolinguistics and psycholinguistics.⁶ Nevertheless, Humboldt's writings have not enjoyed the attention they merit in the social sciences despite the fact that the questions he raises regarding the role of language in the constitution of social reality, knowledge, understanding, and objectivity are still not adequately answered. There are in fact very few book-length studies in English of Humboldt's writings on language.⁷

However, my purpose in this chapter is not to study Humboldt's philosophy of language. My sole purpose is to bring out the fundamental lines of his demonstration of the constitutive nature of language in order to propose a non-instrumentalist understanding which, I hope, will show the social and historical nature of all linguistic practices including the linguistic practice known as comparative politics.

I will conduct my study in two steps. In this chapter, I will bring out, through an elucidation of Humboldt's conceptualization of language, the questions that comparative politics cannot avoid to consider in order to be a comparative study of different polities. In the chapters that follow, I will, through the use of case studies, draw the implications of the Humboldtian thesis for the study of different polities.

Background of the Humboldtian Theory of Language

Until the advent of contemporary social science proper, political philosophers have considered language as an integral part of the study of political life. That the political existence of men is founded on their capacity to speak is a theme one finds in all the seminal thinkers of political philosophy since Plato.⁸ Even the philosophers considered as the important expounders of the instrumentalist theory of language, such as Hobbes and Locke, reflected on language in a way which made it integral to their political theories. Hobbes devotes a chapter to "speech" in

The Leviathan, whereas Locke qualifies his definition of language as "the great instrument" by adding that it is also a "common tie of society".⁹

The "philosophes" of the Enlightenment were also sensitive to the interrelationship that exists between a theory of language and a theory of society. True, they adopted in the majority, although not without nuance, an instrumentalist theory of language, epitomized by Condillac's theory of language acquisition.¹⁰ But what is of interest to note here is that the "philosophes" did not consider their theory of language to be independent of their social theory. It was part of their theory of Progress. As Turgot wrote, language was considered to be "not only a means of communication" but also "a repository of the history of Progress".¹¹ It is perhaps the recognition of the connection between language and social life that led writers such as Diderot and Buffon to be somewhat dissatisfied with a purely instrumental conception of language. Thus for example, Buffon considered that "le plus stupide des hommes suffit pour conduire le plus spirituel des animaux", because men possess reflection, language and the faculty to invent: possessions considered by him to be the "preuves" for the existence of a "distance infinie entre les facultés de l'homme et celles du plus parfait animal".¹² Buffon added, without realizing the implication, that "l'homme sauvage parle comme l'homme policé, et tous parlent naturellement".¹³

Rousseau of course was the main figure who attacked the dominant conventionalist theory of language of his time.¹⁴ Rousseau considered man as the voice of nature whose language expresses his natural feelings, and wrote that "speech, being the first social institution, owes its form to natural causes alone".¹⁵ What is significant to note here is that the differences in the conceptualization of language between Rousseau and his contemporaries manifested themselves as also differences of social theory.

The instrumentalists, having adopted the idea of language as a tool created by man, espoused a linear and developmental concept of language (the ideal of an exact and universal language) and history (the

ideal of a linear and continuous Progress). Indeed this conceptualization of language was internally related to the new conceptualizations of man, polity and knowledge. Man was no more seen as belonging to the social order through which he was aware of himself. Rather, man was considered to be external to his social order, the latter being now understood as the construction of man. In other words, the instrumentalist understanding of language entailed a vision of man and the world which deprived these of the notion of intrinsic meanings. To know the human world was understood to mean to know how it is constructed from certain basic building-blocks. Whatever meanings and purposes one can identify in the world were considered to be based on contingency, and accessible as psychological contents of the self-possessing subject. In political theory, such a conception of man and the world led to the understanding of the polity as an artificial body-politic, to paraphrase Bentham, constructed as an aggregate of externally and contractually related individuals. Consequently, political life was essentially understood in terms of utilitarian ethics.¹⁶

On the other hand, Rousseau's conceptualization of language as the expression of natural feelings, as "the first social institution (which) owes its form to natural causes alone" led him to criticize the utilitarian conceptualization of the relationship between man and his political life. According to Rousseau, "in order to find the origin of human institutions", it is "always necessary to return" to the question of language.¹⁷ Having identified in language the "expressivity"¹⁸ of man, he considered the political existence of men as enmeshed in this expressivity and not as something external to it. He thus argued that the polity should not be considered as a tool of individual interests, aggregated or not, but as the expression of la "volonté générale."¹⁹

However, the legacy of the Enlightenment, as far as contemporary political science is concerned, is the notion of a world whose meaning and purpose are merely subjective constructs. The subject is conceived as external to the social order and his relationship to it explained causally. The divorce between language and man, between meaning and being, inaugurated by the Enlightenment is consummated in contemporary social science. There

is no doubt that this divorce had a liberating effect on the 18th Century by manifesting the sovereignty of reason in the face of a crumbling irrational social order: whence the explicit consideration by the "philosophes" of the questions of the rational social order in their deliberations on the origin of language. Contemporary social science however has brought the split between language and man initiated by the Enlightenment philosophers to its logical conclusion by evacuating the very question of a rational social order from its social theory. The germ of this consummation was already present in the very conventionalist problematic of language the Enlightenment transmitted to the modern era -- the problematic of the origin of language. For the very problematic of origin presupposes its own answer by structuring the field of inquiry in terms of whether man or language came first, the consequence being a conceptualization of language as external to man. Even Rousseau, who espoused an expressivist theory of language, was led into this cul de sac, because his expressivist theory was formulated within the problematic of the origin of language. He had to postulate what Herder called "Rousseau's phantom, 'man in the state of nature'" to explain the origin of language.²⁰ Herder points out how Condillac and Rousseau, in spite of their differing theories of language, are in fact constrained by the problematic of origin into conceptualizing man in a way which makes their differing images of man the mirror-images of each other. Thus Herder writes:

Condillac and Rousseau must have been in error over the origin of language because they were in error over these various well-known differences, the former making animals into men, the latter men into animals.²¹

It is important to note that Herder's criticism can apply to the conceptualization of language in contemporary social science, because its problematic of language is that of origin. Thus the mainstream social science concepts of replication, verification, falsification are based on what H. Eulau describes as an "intersubjectively agreed" language.²² In other words the language of political science is seen as a construct originating from and conventionally agreed to by autonomous egos. Its

meaning is given to it as a connection established by the subject, as an external relation between a sign and a referent. It is seen as a response to the need to communicate, a response based on the consensus of the subjects who claim to be the originators of the language. But as Herder has pointed out, making the individual the originator of language and founding communication on consensus presupposes a linguistic consciousness that cannot be accounted for within the problematic of the origin of language.²³ Thus the question of language must be tackled differently.

The theoretical cul de sac of this Enlightenment problematic of language was first challenged by Johann Georg Hamann in the middle of the 18th Century.²⁴ According to Hamann, language has a divine origin, and it is "the mother of reason and revelation".²⁵ Hamann, by making the origin of language divine, rejected the conventionalist and instrumentalist theory of language. Language, instead of being invented by men, becomes that which gives them reason and revelation, i.e. that which makes men what they are. Thus by making the divine the origin of language, he already started the destruction of the problematic of origin by pushing it to the limit where the question of its origin loses its pertinence and is replaced by a more important question -- what is the nature of a language that can give man reason and revelation? It is Herder who completed this shift and squarely posed the question of the nature of language as the question that precedes the question of its origin.

According to Herder, "language is as natural to man as his nature".²⁶ It is the "expression"²⁷ of the human mind which unites the diversity of the senses, needs and powers of man; and the human mind is

the totality of the organization of all human powers, the entire economy of man's perceptive, cognitive and volitional nature...it is the sole positive power of thinking which, combined with a certain organization of the body, is called mind...²⁸

Herder dismissed the idea that language is an invention of man as well as the idea that it is of divine origin. According to him language is an

expression of the "spontaneous reflection" of "man, endowed with mind";²⁹
 it is an expression of "an agreement between his mind and himself".³⁰
 It is not the "utterance of sensation" or "an arbitrary social convention".³¹
 It is the "external distinguishing characteristics of our species just as
 the mind is the internal mark".³²

Thus in Herder we meet a different conception of language which leads to a different conception of man, of his actions and of knowledge. Man, Herder considered, cannot be conceptualized as an aggregate that can be broken down into rational and affective components but as a unity of diversity integrated and expressed through language. According to him, man's life is a unity, and his language expresses this unity as a mode of consciousness. Language is not then just a denotative link between sign and referent. Man's actions are manifestations of his power of expression in the sense that it involves the integrating and creative power of his linguistic consciousness or his mind. As this linguistic consciousness is a presupposition of man's knowing, it is not only a subjective element; it is both objective and subjective. It is objective not in the sense that it is given beforehand but in the sense that it inevitably unfolds from within giving a unique and determinate form to that which is realized. "His human essence -- Humanitat -- is not ready made, yet it is potentially realizable" writes Herder in this respect.³³ Herder recuses the instrumentalist conception of language, and instead considers language to be a uniquely human activity that permits self-clarity. Through language, human activity accomplishes its purpose as a "manifestation of an inner power, striving to realize and maintain its own shape against those the surrounding world might impose".³⁴ At the same time, through language, man discovers his identity which is social, for although "no two human beings speak exactly the same language"³⁵ "no man lives for himself alone; he is knit into the texture of the whole".³⁶ In here we meet Herder's principle of unity and diversity. Through language, man becomes conscious of himself and of his relationships with others and the past, for "there

is no such thing as an isolated faculty of reason, so there is no man who has become all he is entirely by his own efforts".³⁷ Consequently man is a social and a historical being who participates in a shared culture and a shared history articulated through and by the language of the community. He gains his awareness of himself through the mediation of this sharing. Herder thus writes:

This indeed is the essence of the history of mankind: without it no such history could exist. Did man receive everything from himself and develop everything independently of external circumstances, we might have a history of one man, but not of man as a species. Since our specific character derives from being born almost without instinct, it is only by training and experience that our lives as men take shape...³⁸

For Herder, then, the realization of each man's life is mediated by the culture and history of his community; and "every distinct community is a nation, having its own national culture as it has its own language".³⁹ What is very important to note here is that Herder, by founding the specificity of a community or nation on language, was in fact criticizing the widespread thesis of his time that the specificity of a community is determined by biology. Such an identification of the specificity of a nation through its cultural, historical realizations permits Herder to, on the one hand, consider "the history of a people (as) the reflection of its way of thinking"⁴⁰ and, on the other, to see in this very specificity the fact that "all mankind is one and the same species upon earth" for all mankind is engaged in the achievement of "Humanitat".⁴¹ Thus he writes:

Nature elected the development of man in society...
nature elected the development of groups among other
groups...international transmission of social cultures
is indeed the highest form of cultural development which
nature has elected.⁴²

Thus Herder's "developmental" (in the sense of unfolding expression) approach to culture and history rooted in the idea of language as the specifically human medium of expression and transmission inaugurates a new approach to the study of human societies, an approach which respects the historical and cultural specificity of the society being studied,

without losing sight of the fact that the specificity itself is a manifestation of "all mankind".

His ideas are pregnant with many consequences. They open the way for the claim that there can be different understandings, representations, explanations and conceptualizations of the human world. Indeed Herder's vigorous opposition to Kant's idea that reason functions as an independent faculty of cognition was founded on his objection to the split between language and reason, and the subordination of the former to the latter. However, in this objection to Kant and in his effort to show the specificity of the individual as a cultural historical being, he neglected to address himself to the question of objectivity dealt with by Kant -- a question which requires a consideration of the relationship between language and subjectivity. He certainly raises the question, in nuce, in his idea of "development", but he did not give it a detailed consideration.

However, his novel conceptualization of language and the resulting images of man, his world, his actions, as well as the implied conceptualization of knowledge, are the foundations on which Humboldt builds. Humboldt takes the final step in the full establishment of the new problematic of language by effecting a sort of "Copernican Revolution" which conceptualizes language as speech.⁴³ In doing this, Humboldt, contrary to Herder, accepts Kant's theory of knowledge, and shows that the objectification of thought is realized through the objectification of the articulated sound. Cassirer summarizes aptly the complex relationship between Humboldt, Herder and Kant. He writes:

But Humboldt was not only a friend and admirer of Goethe's; he was also a student of Kant and a pupil of Kant's philosophy. No other philosophical work had made such a deep impression upon his mind as Kant's Critique of Pure Reason. In his essay, "Verber Schiller und den allgemeinen Gang seiner Geistesentwicklung" Humboldt gave a general characterization of Kantian philosophy that, in spite of all the things that have been said and written about Kant, is in many respects still unsurpassed. But even in the work of Kant, Humboldt could not find an immediate inspiration for his own work. Kant was interested in mathematics, in physics, in ethics; but he was not interested in human speech. When Kant's

Critique of Pure Reason appeared, Herder complained bitterly that in this work, the problem of human speech seemed to be entirely neglected. How is it possible, he asked, to criticize human reason without becoming a critic of human language? That was one of the principal objections raised by Herder. He became a fierce opponent of Kant; he wrote in 1799 his Metakritik der reinen Vernunft. Humboldt went the other way. He accepted Kant's theory of knowledge, but he tried to complete it; he applied the principles of Kant's critical philosophy to the study of human languages.⁴⁴

It is this synthesis of the Herderian conception of language and Kantian epistemology which permitted Humboldt to make a Copernican Revolution of language by rooting it in speech. It is this transformation of the problematic of language to that of speech which, drawing on Herder's achievement, goes beyond it by explicitly dealing with the problem of how the speaking activity constitutes common speech, the social world, the process of understanding, and knowledge.

Humboldt considers language as speech which is essentially an act of interlocution or common speech. He shows that the world is cognized by man through common speech, and that each language articulates a social world. This does not lead him to relativism but to a conceptualization of an objectivity which recognizes the activity of the subject as a constitutive moment of that objectivity. This is rooted in the idea that understanding is the telos of common speech. Consequently the understanding of facts, it follows, cannot be operated independently of the language (those of the actors and the comparativists) involved. This leads us to a concept of comparison that recuses the abstract universalism of an objective and universal cross-cultural scientific language by showing that common speech and social practices are interrelated. In the following sections I will discuss these various ideas which are suggested, more often than not, in nuce, by the Humboldtian conceptualization of language qua speech.

The Humboldtian Theory of Language

I wrote in the previous section that Humboldt finalizes the transformation of the problematic of language inaugurated by Herder. As such, my discussion of Humboldt's theory of language will not repeat those aspects which I have already pointed out to be the achievements of Herder. Therefore, I will concentrate on Humboldt's original contribution to the elaboration of this new conceptualization of language, a conceptualization which builds on what Herder has elaborated but which goes beyond it.

Language as Speech

Humboldt remarks that "man does not speak because he wants to but because he must";⁴⁵ men are human not because they have language but because they speak. Instead of ontologizing language or reducing it to a psychological faculty, Humboldt tries to discover within the speaking activity itself a principle of expression and articulation which he calls the "inner form" (Inner Sprachforme).⁴⁶ He sees this inner form of language not as an abstract model, or as something which causes speech but as an effect present in the articulated sound (sprachlaut)⁴⁷ which he considers to be "the essence par excellence of language".⁴⁸ To clarify this point, we can use the modern idiom and say for Humboldt: the articulated sound, which is speech, is the unity of competence and performance but cannot be reduced to any one of these. The "inner form" is not "an order-of-things" (deep-structure) existing independently of the articulated sound in a way which admits a scientific explanation and prediction of linguistic performances.

Speech operates "la mise en œuvre" of "thought and language" through the articulation of "sound in a manner that corresponds to the operation of the mind",⁴⁹ and of course he understands "the mind" in the Herderian sense. Without this articulation "thought cannot attain distinctness, the image cannot become a concept".⁵⁰ Speech is thus the articulation of sound as the expression of thought. The link between sound and thought in speech is, according to Humboldt an "indissoluble bond" connecting thought, vocal apparatus and hearing to language".⁵¹ This

bond "reposes invariably in the arrangement of human nature".⁵² In other words, speech is the very expression of being human and, as such, is that moment of language which is the universal attribute of all humanity. According to Humboldt, "language is not work ("ergon") but an activity ("energeia")."⁵³ He elaborates this point by writing that

It is after all the continual intellectual effort to make the articulated sound capable of expressing thought. In a rigorous sense, this is the definition of speech in any given case. Essentially, however, only the totality of this speaking can be regarded as language.⁵⁴

Thus, in the relationship between language, as a system, and speech, it is speech which is fundamental and which makes language a "living creation".⁵⁵ It is speech which is "the original arrangement of human nature" and as such is irreducible to either ultimate elementary components or structure. As an "original arrangement of human nature" it is a "factor that defies further clarification".⁵⁶ According to Humboldt, grammar and vocabulary are "dead skeletons", for true language is that which is revealed in speech.⁵⁷ Speech is conceptualized by Humboldt as the entelechia of the mind. Its aim is "the expression of thought".⁵⁸ But Humboldt's recognition of the speaking subject's activity as the condition of language and intelligibility does not lead him to subjectivism. Rather, the consideration of language as energeia permits, according to Humboldt, the realization of an objectivity that recognizes the subjectivity that constructs it. He thus writes:

Subjective activity in thought produces an object, for no idea may be considered a mere receptive contemplation of an already present object. The activity of the senses must be synthetically combined with the intimate operation of the intellect, and from this association the idea is liberated. With respect to the subjective force involved, it then becomes an object which is perceived and which then reverts to the subjective force. For this purpose language is indispensable, for when, in its intellectual striving it makes its way past the lips, its product wends its way back to the speaker's own ear. The concept is thus shifted over into a state of objectivity, without losing its subjectivity. Only language is capable of this.⁵⁹

Thus for Humboldt, speech as the manifestation of the subject is the very condition of objectivity. What we have here then is a conception of the subject who realizes himself through the unfolding effected in the process of fulfilling his purpose. Thus he recognizes himself in what he has achieved. The objectivity that Humboldt recognizes here is not that of the abstract and isolated ego facing the world as an object. The subject is not for Humboldt a self-sufficient theoretical entity, (unlike the subject of mainstream cross-cultural surveys) for speech is, according to Humboldt, an activity of interlocution and not monologue.

Speech as Interlocution or Common Speech

According to Humboldt, language is "forged by speaking"...and "only in social intercourse".⁶⁰ Speech is not produced by a monologic subject. It takes place between men; it is essentially interlocution. It is important to be clear about Humboldt's conception of interlocution. He does not mean by interlocution an exchange of information. Nor does he consider interlocution to be an instrument of communication between self-sufficient egos. To grasp his understanding of interlocution, we can refer to his essay on The Dual where he deals with the question in considerable detail.⁶¹

According to Humboldt, "the dual cannot be reduced to the numerical concept of two, understood as one of the terms in a series of numerical progression".⁶² The dual is founded on "the concept of duality" which is "prior to" the "class of cases" that we recognize as dual; "the dual constitutes a sort of a collective singular" which indicates the unity on which is founded the plurality of the cases recognized as dual.⁶³ In other words, Humboldt is suggesting some kind of a "we" subject that is articulated in interlocution. He is not postulating by this some kind of a supra-individual subject. Rather, he is suggesting that there is a "we" in the "I" who is speaking.⁶⁴ This is how he deals with this concept:

Il y a un tel abîme entre le mot et l'objet auquel
il s'applique, le mot, réduit à la conscience solitaire

qui l'a vu naître, évoque tellement un simple objet fictif, que le langage doit, pour embrayer sur la réalité, exiger autre chose que l'individu livré à lui-même; il ne peut y parvenir qu'au sein de la société, dans l'échange qui articule les uns sur les autres les tentatives et les paris de la parole. Le mot a donc à mériter son essentialité, et le langage son amplification, dans l'échange qui s'institue entre auditeur et répondant. C'est cet archétype de toutes les langues que s'emploie à exprimer le pronom au moyen de la distinction qui sépare la deuxième personne de la troisième.⁶⁵

Humboldt thus roots the meaning of the "word" in interlocution and not in the "solitary" subject. Humboldt shows how this interlocution calls upon something more than the "I" by indicating that the duality in speech qua interlocution is the condition of speech. Moreover, speech on the other can be transformed into interlocution with the transformation of the other into an interlocutor.⁶⁶ This transformation is possible through speech which, being "energeia" has the potential to extend itself to engage the other into a ~~community~~ community of speech. But this extension of speech, to constitute a common speech wherein the other becomes an interlocutor, is bound up, as we shall see in the following sections, with alterations of social practices. For speech, as interlocution, is not talking about the other. Nor is it commanding him, instructing him, receiving reports or answers from the other. Where speech takes these forms, which it often does, what is constituted is a relationship of power expressive of a social context of unequal conditions. Speech, as interlocution, is talking with the other. Interlocution then involves the historical conditions of speech as conditions of its range of possibilities. Where these conditions prevent interlocution, the possibility of extending speech requires the creation of those social conditions that make it possible. That is, the achievement of interlocution is also the realization of a specific type of social reality. For Humboldt, through speech, men do more than communicate; they "contact in each other the same link in the chain of their mental concepts".⁶⁷ Speech is common speech. As common speech it both manifests and constitutes language and the speaking community. It is "the original foundation of sociality in general" and to emphasize this, Humboldt writes that

Even when he is immersed in his own thoughts, man speaks but with another; when he speaks to himself, he acts as if with another: it is by transposing such a model that he establishes the sphere of his spiritual affinities, that he distinguishes those who speak like him and those who speak differently.⁶⁸

Such a conceptualization of speech has important consequences. If speech is, in its very nature, speech-in-interlocution or common speech, a comparativist studying an alien polity must, to understand this polity, achieve a common speech in order to avoid distorted observations and interpretations. The realization of such a common speech is much more than a question of establishing equivalence of meaning; it involves a confrontation of speakers, a confrontation of "we" subjects, as it were, a confrontation of societies. This complex situation cannot be reduced to the problematic of "meaning equivalence" -- a problematic central to cross-cultural comparative politics.⁶⁹ For such a reduction, as Herder has pointed out already, denies that which it presupposes -- linguistic consciousness. Humboldt indicates that such a reduction is impossible unless certain conditions are met. But the conditions implied by such a reduction are such that they are impossible to accept. Humboldt writes on this question:

If a language were used simply and exclusively for the everyday needs of life, its words would merely serve as representative symbols of the resolve or desire to be expressed. Under such conditions, there could no longer be any question of an inherent conception or interpretation permitting the possibility of variety. The material thing or action would in the imagination of both the speaker and his protagonist immediately and directly replace the word. Fortunately, such a language cannot exist among humans who continue to think and perceive.⁷⁰

In other words, to realize the type of reduction required by the problematic of "meaning equivalence" of comparative politics, one must at first show that "the speaker and his protagonist" are not "humans who continue to think and perceive", or that they are so alien to each other that they cannot but confront each other as objects, and that no common speech can be established between them. Now, not only is this patently impossible, but the very practice of "meaning equivalence" is the admission

that: a) "the speaker and his protagonist" are humans who continue to think and perceive (or had these attributes when they were alive), and b) that they are not so alien to each other as to confront each other as sheer objects. But the epistemological, political, anthropological consequences of such an implicit admission are totally repressed in the linguistic practice of mainstream comparativists.

True, people exchange information. People use words and sentences as instruments. People invent communication systems to exchange information. These are what Humboldt calls "indispensable auxiliaries",⁷¹ in the social existence of man. But they do not constitute its sociality; they presuppose it. To make this point clear, we can say that men use instruments, such as the piano, the violin, to make music. But music cannot be reduced to these instruments, rather the instruments presuppose music. We can in fact extend the analogy to a certain extent and say that like speech, which is not an instrument of language, music is not an instrument of culture. Culture impinges on man through music. However, the analogy has a value only in as much as it clarifies the idea that common speech cannot be reduced to an instrument of communication. The world impinges on man through common speech. This brings us to the Herderian moment in Humboldt's theory of language.

Common Speech and the Socio-Political World

According to Humboldt, the continuous flux of experience is ordered through the articulated sound or speech. He writes:

The incisive sharpness of the phoneme is indispensable to our understanding of physical and other objects, for objects in external nature, as well as in the internally excited activity, exert a compulsion upon man, penetrating his being with a mass of characteristics. He, however, strives to compare, distinguish, and combine. Furthermore, he aims at the formation of an ever more comprehensive unity. He demands, therefore, to be able to comprehend objects in terms of a definite unity and requires the unity of sound to represent them appropriately.⁷²

Speech, then, mediates between man and the world. Thus the articulation, cognition and conceptualization of the world is made possible by the unit of sound, the word. The word possesses a unity and a definite shape. It individualizes an experience. "The individual sound", writes Humboldt, "intervenes between object and man."⁷³ This can be illustrated by the proverbial examples of the ice and the camel whose different varieties are individualized as specific experiences by the Eskimos and the dwellers of the Sahara, whereas for foreigners, the different varieties of ice and camel are each individualized as simply ice and camel. Thus for different peoples the world impinges on man differently through their differing common speeches. The "totality of this speaking" intervenes between man and the world "acting upon him externally and internally".⁷⁴ In other words, the common speech by which the world impinges on man can neither be reduced to the speakers (subjectivism) nor to the world (objectivism). This does not mean that language and the world are indistinguishable. Rather it points out that the synthesis of common speech and the world is prior to the analytical distinction between language and the world. This synthesis is described by Humboldt when he writes that man

...surrounds himself with the ambient of sounds in order to assimilate and process the world of sounds. These expressions do not in any way exceed the measure of simple truth. Man lives principally, or even exclusively with objects, since his feelings and actions depend upon his concepts as language presents them to his attention. By the same act through which he spins out the thread of language he weaves himself into its tissues.⁷⁵

This passage suggests that common speech ("ambient sounds") constitutes a world wherein objects, actions, feelings are what they are to humans. Common speech presents them to the attention of men, or gives them the capacity to be so present, and establishes them as part of the world of men, in a way specific to the language-world constituted by each common speech. Thus for example the centrality of the tooth-brush (object), measurement (action) and N-ach (McClelland's "need") in the American language-world requires a grasp of the American common speech. The

corollary of this is that the simple extension of this common speech to other polities can have a distorting effect, for such an extension presupposes a community of practices. Thus when McClelland extends the language of N-ach⁷⁶ to the study of Non-American polities, we do not have an extension of common speech. For extension of common speech requires an interlocutor who is engaged in a community of practices which result from practical relationships, whether these are cooperative or conflictual, and which permit the recognition of each other as the expression, even if contradictory, of their society. In other words, a common speech requires shared practices, which of course are not necessarily similarly experienced, or equally shared, or similarly interpreted. The point is, whatever the differences between the interlocutors, whatever the struggles that exist between them, each in speaking of his experiences also speaks, in a way that may not even be accepted by the other, of the experiential universe of the other. These shared practices constitute the parties involved as "we" subjects. Now, it is this whole complex idea of "common speech" that is eliminated in the instrumentalist conception of language. In mainstream comparative discourse, the alien is not recognized as a real interlocutor. He is essentially abstract and yet to be a real interlocutor. For he is inducted into a speech which he does not share, and in which he can therefore exist only as an isolated ego. His speech and practices are thus discrete and random.

It is such an "imperialistic" extension of speech that is criticized and its defects shown in the Herderian-Humboldtian idea that the world impinges on man through his common speech. For Humboldt the production, articulation and assimilation of the world through common speech is in a certain sense the production, articulation and expression of the world of men within each language-world. This insight makes Humboldt the forerunner of thinkers like Marx and Habermas.

For Marx, there is an inner link between the production of speech and the production of the socio-economic and political world, a link which is internal and specific to each historical epoch and social formation.⁷⁷ Habermas follows Marx in this respect but makes a distinction between

labour and speech, a distinction which he feels Marx has not made adequately: speech, he writes, is the realm of the communicative-reflective whereas labour is the realm of instrumental rationality.⁷⁸ However, Habermas points out that the two are interrelated for the latter can create a distorted context of communication.⁷⁹ What Habermas does is bring out the constitutive role of language in social relations, a role that Marx was aware of but did not elaborate upon. It can be said then that both Marx and Habermas consider language in a Humboldtian fashion as, to use Marx's expression, "practical consciousness".⁸⁰

Indeed, one can say that Humboldt suggests an understanding of the relationship of language and the world more profound than the one presented by Habermas when he writes that "physical nature is the other half of moral nature".⁸¹ This suggests that nature is in an intimate relationship with human subjectivity, and that therefore the emancipation of man cannot be separated from the "emancipation" of nature - a point of view that Habermas qualifies as romantic in his critique of Marcuse, who interprets Marx as relating the emancipation of man to that of nature.⁸² But one need not subscribe to Marcuse's idea of "New Science"⁸³ to see the importance of Humboldt's idea that human subjectivity is engaged in the world - including nature. Because man weaves and interweaves himself and his world through common speech, the production of language as common speech, and the production of the material world are, according to Humboldt, intimately interrelated in the sense that the production of objects is also a production of meanings.⁸⁴

It is not then surprising that Humboldt is, according to G. Steiner, the first writer to see the possibility of language turning against man.⁸⁵ The moderns would say that commodity fetishism cannot but reduce speech to an instrument of exchange which hides the speakers from themselves and others. Humboldt anticipates this by pointing out that in certain conditions, "language also possesses the power of alienating".⁸⁶ And within Humboldt's conception of language-qua-speech, the power of language to express and articulate alienation cannot but be rooted in the activity of the subject.

Moreover this complex idea of common speech as constitutive of the shared world - including nature - has an important epistemological implication for it questions the radical Diltheyian distinction between human studies (Geisteswissenschaften) and the natural sciences (Naturwissenschaften)⁸⁷, as well as the Habermasian distinction between instrumental action and communicative action, by pointing out the unity of these in human inter-subjectivity, and making the latter the centre of gravity of all the sciences. Common speech then is, in both practice and theory, a speech of a commonly produced, articulated, assimilated and shared world. The very experience of nature is mediated by common speech. It is through this mediation that nature is part of the human world, that "Physical nature is the other half of moral nature". Such a thesis then cannot but suggest a radically different understanding of the socio-political world in which we live from the understanding promoted by mainstream comparative politics.⁸⁸

Humboldt's consideration of language as common speech implies that speech is inscribed in and is constitutive of the socio-political world. Common speech articulates the "perception, sensation, thought, speech, deed" of those who are interlocuting in that common speech.⁸⁹ As such, common speech constitutes and manifests a shared culture and history that are distinctive of the people, or the "nation", to use Humboldt's term, who speak it. Thus, "Every language receives a definite individuality from the nation and reacts in a uniform manner upon it."⁹⁰ The specificity of the socio-political world that is realized through common speech by each nation is such that "languages cannot contain the self-same factor in themselves".⁹¹ Here Humboldt is in fact anticipating the discoveries of contemporary ethnographers of speaking.⁹² According to Humboldt, language as "energeia" constitutes common speech, interlocution, the speaker, the interlocutor as well as the "indispensable auxiliaries", such as the modes and means of social exchange of information, communication, in ways that are specific to each people. These, however, are not identical, are not "self-same" factors, in all language-worlds. Thus to speak, to communicate, to question, to answer, are not identical operations in all language-worlds.

In comparative politics, these activities are carried out in different cultures as if talking, listening, asking, answering were "self-same factors" in all societies. Echoing Humboldt, the modern ethnographer of speech Dell Hymes writes that social scientists have not paid enough attention to "speech" and have wrongly assumed "its functions...to be universally the same".⁹³

Thus, according to Humboldt, each language qua common speech, constitutes a social, political world which specifies the kind of social, political beings we are. The individual derives the kind of social, political being he is, he becomes aware of his social, political identity, from and through the mediation of his particular social, political world, which he shares with others by virtue of the fact that he is an interlocuting member of that language-world.⁹⁴ Each language is a socio-historical institution that is "handed down" to the speakers as a common and shared heritage of meanings, articulating a common and shared social, political world. Thus in a confrontation between language-worlds, as for example in cultural borrowing, or "institutional transfer" as Apter calls it,⁹⁵ and in cross-cultural research, "no nation could animate and fructify the language of another with the spirit of intellect native to it without reconstructing it into a different one".⁹⁶ Humboldt is not saying that interlocution between members of different speech-communities is impossible. Rather he is saying that for "interlocution" to be possible, a common speech must be constructed by both, and the very process of this "construction" makes possible the transformation of the He and I into a "We".⁹⁷ As this is a very important point, it must be met head on and explicated in more detail, for Humboldt is more often than not presented as a theoretician of language-as-a-Weltanschauung. Humboldt writes:

Each language draws a circle about the people to whom it belongs, and it is possible to leave this circle only by simultaneously entering that of another people... every language contains the entire fabric of concepts and the conceptual approach of a portion of humanity. But this achievement is not complete because one always carries into a foreign tongue to a greater or lesser degree one's own cosmic viewpoint -- indeed one's personal linguistic personal pattern.⁹⁸

Now, this Herderian point of view, that "each language draws a circle about the people to whom it belongs" must be understood from within Humboldt's conceptualization of language qua speech. Otherwise, one misses the specifically Humboldtian understanding of this "circle" and misconceives it as a closed world-view; a misconception which produces its own question, that of cultural relativity. I will discuss below this famous question of cultural relativity that many seem to believe follows automatically from a consideration of language as constitutive of the social world. But first, I would like to elucidate the understanding of the Humboldtian "circle" in terms of language qua speech. When language is considered as speech, the Humboldtian "circle" can be seen in fact as the ground from which common speech can reach out, and come to terms with the experience of other "nations". To point this out, I will consider the Humboldtian notion of the "circle" by opposing it to the fundamental mainstream assumptions regarding cross-cultural research; to wit: a) the assumption of a universal language, b) the assumption of linguistic innocence, and c) the assumption of linguistic anonymity.

The assumption of a universal language

According to Humboldt, although each language "draws a circle about the people that speak it, it does not create a chasm that separates that people from the other nations of humanity. Rather, it expresses "the intellectual development of humanity itself", as the achievement of the common speech of that "portion of humanity".⁹⁹ In other words, each language-world, each nation is, in its very specificity ("circle"), a concretization of a universal quality of mankind, which is that each people works out its existence in a way that expresses its purposes, and the adversities it has to overcome to realize itself. Even within the nation itself, the development of its specificity is not the production of a homogeneous language-world. The specificity of the nation itself is articulated in a way that expresses the experiential differences of the interlocutors as individual speakers, or as speakers belonging to different "generations, the sexes, the classes".¹⁰⁰ Thus, the "circle" is not a homogeneous closed and static "circle", but an articulation of the

different speech-communities within the nation. It expresses the history of their inter-connections and interrelations among themselves, with objects, with nature, and with other polities. It is a "circle" that although present as realized work (ergon) is open through speech (energeia). It is this very "dual" (in Humboldt's sense) nature of the "circle" which permits, what Herder called, "international cultural transmission".

From this point of view, to consider one language as a universal language, an assumption that is the foundation of back-translation and meaning equivalence in comparative politics,¹⁰¹ is to go beyond the concrete universality achieved by each specific language-world. It is to reduce humanity to the "circle" of one language-world, an act that Herder qualified as "a blatant insult to the majesty of Nature".¹⁰² It is to consider the common speech, the "perception, sensation, thought, speech, deed" realized by a portion of humanity, i.e. the American portion of humanity, as the only achievement of all humanity. It is precisely closing the "circle". Thus it is not the Humboldtian notion of the "circle" that is closed; it is the mainstream comparativist notion of universal language that tacitly postulates a closed circle. For, contrary to Humboldt who shows that the "circle" is open through language *qua* speech, or "in a subjective manner", comparative political science is locked into one language-world because it recognizes language only as "ergon". Thus in its understanding of other polities through its instrumentalist use of language, it objectifies other language-worlds, and makes them the objects of the closed language-world of the comparativist. Thus, when Almond and Verba compare different polities, the different practices of politics are grasped in terms of the American common speech, that is, the practices of politics in the other countries such as Mexico, Italy, Germany, the UK are caught in the closed circle of the American language-world.¹⁰³ As McIntyre points out, Almond and Verba start their comparison without identifying "the different range of virtues and emotions incorporated in the different social institutions",¹⁰⁴ or to use a Humboldtian language, without identifying the "circle" of each nation.

The consequences of such a comparative practice is that languages

are put in a relationship of stratification where the language of the comparativist is more "human", as it were, than the languages of the compared aliens. This is so, because the "circle", the language-world of the comparativist into which the alien polities are read, is, in the very process of this reading, opened through its language qua "energeia", assimilating the other language-worlds as closed and finished products or as "ergon". Indeed, this can be seen as a dominant characteristic of the language of Western social science which, in the main, has consistently refused the other as an interlocutor, and which, in the course of its confrontation with the different other, has even evolved the notion of "primitive language", in the sense of a language not yet "universal" and "real".¹⁰⁵ Surprising as it may seem, the Humboldtian concept of "circle" indicates that the comparative political assumption of a universal language perpetuates, in a certain sense, this tradition of linguistic (political) stratification. Humboldt's notion of the "circle" introduces the notion of linguistic equality that, contrary to mainstream comparative politics, meshes in with the ideal of political equality between different language-worlds, each being a concrete manifestation, and all being diverse manifestations of mankind. In doing so, Humboldt points to a very serious question -- that mutual understanding between different language worlds is not possible when the social-historical context of communication denies this linguistic equality. He hints at this idea when he writes that "the development of the original peculiarities of colonial peoples is often nipped in the bud..."¹⁰⁶

The assumption of linguistic innocence

In practices such as participant observation and back-translations,¹⁰⁷ comparativists elaborate their linguistic practices as if men were a linguistic tabula rasa. Humboldt's conception of "circle" points out the fallacy inherent in such an assumption of linguistic innocence provided that we understand the "circle" as the realization of language qua speech.

The "circle", as the effect of common speech, enters into common

speech as a constitutive moment. The individual, as a speaking-member of that language-world, expresses and articulates that "circle" in his speech. Novelty is not a total eradication of this "circle"; it is not rendering the past, history, culture, and shared meanings and practices into a tabula rasa. Transformations and changes that emerge in a society start from within this "circle". The new owes its novelty to the way it transcends the "circle".¹⁰⁸ Becoming a speaking-member of that language-world, being a participant and learning its common speech is not only a "learning" process, as the theoreticians of political socialization would have it.¹⁰⁹ It is not only a practice of learning the rules, use, grammar and words of a given language-community.¹¹⁰ It is not merely "receiving an instrument of communication".¹¹¹ It is to be engaged in the process of interlocution wherein through the elaboration and achievement of the common speech, the subject realizes his purpose, recognizes himself and gains a certain self-clarity. He develops even the "most singular aspects of his personality" through the active sharing of this common speech and common language-world.¹¹²

This is a non-repeatable experience in the sense that learning a new language is different, and radically so, from learning a "mother language", for the first engages at least two "circles", whereas the second is an original process of the unfolding of the humanity of the child. The learning of a new language is a confrontation, and a call for interlocution, between two different language-worlds, but it does not repeat the experience of the learning of a first language. This "non-repeatability", as Rossi Landi has pointed out, "of every speaker's mother tongue is a factor which conditions the very repetitions he makes in it and WITH it".¹¹³ In other words, one cannot hop from one language-world into another and start as a "child". In this sense, one always brings in one's own "cosmic vision". But this "cosmic vision" which is the sedimented "perception, sensation, thought" about the world, must be considered in terms of the activity (*energeia*) that creates it.¹¹⁴

Thus there is no linguistic innocence. The social world in which

we live makes us the human beings we are. But this lack of linguistic innocence does not commit us to an eternal dialogue de sourds with members of other language-worlds. Rather it imposes upon us the requirement to confront other language-worlds as speaking beings who must forge a common speech with the other through an extension of both speeches. But such an extension of speech requires the construction of a common "circle", as it were. That is, it must be based on social practices which, for both, imply alteration of their practices. This is not at all similar to the pseudo-participation of the participant observer who visualizes the other's experiential universe as a research setting wherein playing roles, in the sense of pretense, is the scientist's epistemological trick that is assumed to produce knowledge about the other.¹¹⁵ Nor can the forging of a common "circle" be reduced to the instant-practice of action research, wherein the other's experiential universe is visualized as a set of technical problems that are resolvable by the social engineering implemented by the "humanistic" social scientist.¹¹⁶ Both the participant observer, and the action researcher avoid, like the comparativist, constructing a common speech and a common "circle" with the other, because they repress and refuse to recognize that which makes speech common speech.

Thus from the Humboldtian point of view, the construction of common speech, as well as its denial, is an activity which involves the political scientist in a confrontation with the other. Comparison is one of these confrontations. As such it involves not only the confronting individuals but also their "circles", and consequently their polities. In other words, comparison is the historical search and task for the construction of common speech in historical situations that, more often than not, prevent its realization. There cannot be linguistic innocence.

The assumption of linguistic anonymity

This third point is related to the second one. In comparative politics the very concepts of repeatability, testing, verification, falsification presuppose linguistic anonymity. Humboldt's notion of a

"circle" suggests that this is a fallacious assumption. Once more, this can be understood only from the point of view of language qua speech. If language were completely divorced from the speaking-subject, then to speak would be only and uniquely to be spoken by that language, in which case one can claim some kind of anonymity. But if we consider language qua speech, then the very individuality and power of language "resides only in the activity of the speaking subject".¹¹⁷ Moreover, this speech of the speaking-subject is not only an instrument of communication. Were it so, it may have been possible to claim linguistic anonymity in as much as the instrument of communication can be seen as external and independent of the user. But speech is not, as we have already seen, only an instrument of communication. Communication is only the external manifestation of interlocution which is the "most fundamental essence of language",¹¹⁸ and the realization of a "community of discourse".¹¹⁹ Speaking is participating in this community of discourse, a participation which gives form to one's "individuality" and "personality".¹²⁰ In this sense, speech and personality, speech and individuality are not external to each other. In speech is engaged not only language as a whole, but also the speaker himself as a person who actively participates in that community of discourse. Moreover, language qua speech, gives man the "choice" as Herder says,¹²¹ or the "freedom" as Humboldt describes it,¹²² which makes possible multiple expressions with finite means. Speech, as the affirmation of this choice and of this freedom, destroys the anonymity of the speaker, and makes him responsible for his speech. For speech being an interlocution, what the speaker chooses to say engages both the interlocutors. Humboldt emphasizes this point. Speech as interlocution, as common speech, vehiculates "the individual totality of the speaking subject...into the soul of the other... to form out of the two individualities thus confronted a new and fruitful contrast".¹²³ Consequently then, linguistic anonymity is a mask.¹²⁴ For speech by its very nature of being an interlocution engages the responsibility of the speaker for what he is expressing and articulating.¹²⁵

Comparativists claim that linguistic anonymity is possible through the use of the "scientific method" which according to Rescher is a "context-free body of machinery" for the generation of scientific explanations.¹²⁶

In other words, method would eliminate the essential characteristic of speech itself -- that of being an interlocution. It would also eliminate the essential characteristic of the speaker -- that of being an interlocutor and responsible for his talk. Method would be then independent of its users, of speech, of language-worlds. What one can point out here is that such a claim for method, and subsequently the claim of linguistic anonymity, cannot be accepted without a defense in the face of the Humboldtian thesis which shows that speech brings the comparativist into his discourse as an active and responsible person, and makes his knowledge a "personal knowledge", in Polanyi's sense.¹²⁷ To consider the subjectivity of the comparativist in the constitution of comparative politics as a contamination that can be purified by method is not to expel the subjectivity of the comparativist from his discourse and make him anonymous. It is to occlude his active and responsible presence in the knowledge he produces, and make method a "machinery" by which the occlusion is realized and the occluding forgotten. In this sense, Devreux's contention that method in the social sciences is "the most effective and the most durable anxiety-reducing device" supports Humboldt's rejection of linguistic anonymity.¹²⁸

Thus, Humboldt's notion of a "circle" considers each language-world to be a specific (as *ergon*) world wherein actions, institutions, thoughts, feelings articulate and express a social world that is different from any other. On the other hand, this "circle" is open through language qua speech, but this opening of the "circle" through language qua speech does not simply let the speaker escape that "circle". The "circle" i.e., the social world is a constitutive element in the speaking activity, and in the talk of the speaker. But it is the speaker who, through his understanding and interpretations of the social world, gives it new meanings. The confrontations between different "circles" or social worlds is, when this confrontation is a search for mutual understanding and comparison, a confrontation that can be resolved only through this extension of speech which nevertheless arises from the "circles" or the social worlds. In

this extension of speech the responsibility of the speakers is engaged, for the extension calls upon, not only on the "circle", but also and crucially on the activities of the persons involved.

In conclusion then, we can say that the Humboldtian theory of language shows that the project of cross-cultural law-like generalizations is based on three fallacies, to wit: the fallacy of universal language, the fallacy of linguistic innocence and the fallacy of linguistic anonymity. But at the same time, the Humboldtian theory of language recuses linguistic and cultural relativism, as it can be seen from the above discussion on the Humboldtian concept of the "circle". Nevertheless, the association of the Humboldtian concept of language with relativism¹²⁹ is so widespread that a separate discussion of the topic is in order.

Common Speech, Cultural Relativity and Objectivity

Many commentators consider Humboldt as the seminal thinker of what is known as linguistic relativity, and his name is often associated with those of Sapir and Whorf.¹³⁰ Penn asserts that Humboldt's Weltanschauung hypothesis represents the extreme position of linguistic relativity, although she admits that there are "ambiguities" and "contradictions" in Humboldt that defy her assertions.¹³¹ Miller makes a similar statement but suggests that "Humboldt is espousing a linguistic, and not a philosophical relativism".¹³² Brown considers that even on the level of language itself, "Humboldt cannot be classified as a total relativist".¹³³

But all these views do not take into account the full consequences of Humboldt's conceptualization of language as speech. They all consider language primarily as "ergon". Indeed it is this conceptualization of language as "ergon" which inevitably produces the opposition between linguistic universalism (the Enlightenment project), and linguistic relativism (the identification of a given social world with the lexical and syntactical structure of its language). In both cases the speaking subjects and speech are excluded. In the first case language is a universal instrument; in the second case it is a specific instrument.

The discourse of linguistic relativism is in fact rooted in a conception of language that is, paradoxical as it may seem, instrumental. For, it juxtaposes language and the world in a relationship of denotation and causality that excludes the subjectivity of the speakers, the opening of language through interlocution or common speech, and the dialectic of energeia and ergon. The operation that leads to linguistic relativism has been tellingly analyzed by Rossi Landi, according to whom the thesis of linguistic relativism is based on the a priori splitting of speech from language, and of language from the world; a splitting which is followed by a bringing together of the separated parts.¹³⁴ In the process of this bringing together of a social world, split beforehand into language and all the rest, is born the thesis of linguistic relativism which imposes a causative relationship between language and the world. Linguistic relativity is then the effect of a non-constitutive conception of language that excludes in advance the speaker from the world to bring him back as the mouthpiece of a creator (language) of the world. Such a mode of analysis is totally alien to the Humboldtian theory of language.

The Humboldtian conception of language qua speech shows that each language-world, as the "ergon" of common speech has distinctive and specific features. By this, what the Humboldtian theory recuses is an atomistic, an asocial, and an ahistorical conception of language. Language qua speech constitutes a social world that is shared through the linguistically available social practices of the people. It is the depository of the historically worked out social world as commonly shared meanings that Humboldt designates as "actions, institutions and thoughts". To this extent, "the work of nations must precede the work of individuals", and the language of a nation is the road that permits an authentic understanding of the people concerned.¹³⁵ True, Humboldt writes that each language "sets certain limits to the spirit of those who speak it; it assumes a certain direction, and, by doing so, excludes many others."¹³⁶ He asserts that "each language contains a characteristic world view".¹³⁷ But, what must not be forgotten is that each language is also an individuation of the "common good of all humanity" as language qua speech.

Each language-world is open to all humanity through language qua speech, i.e. through the extension of common speech, thus transforming the separate language-worlds into interlocutors. Thus Humboldt can write that each language "sets limits to the spirit of those who speak it", and yet add that "under no condition can it become an absolute restriction to man" for "every language possesses the pliancy to absorb everything and is capable in turn of imparting its own expression to everything".¹³⁸

Humboldt thus recognizes the specificity of each language-world without making a closed monad out of it. In Humboldt then we have a type of linguistic relativity which explains itself as the effect of linguistic universality, i.e., as the effect of a power that "wells forth from a depth of human existence which prohibits regarding it generally as a labour and as a creation of peoples".¹³⁹ This dialectic between linguistic universality and linguistic specificity that is operated by speech expresses the "one and the same tendency" for all people which is that of "approaching the objective idea".¹⁴⁰ Thus, knowledge, which is necessarily produced through speech, is not either absolute or relative but expresses the humanization of the knowable -- i.e. of man and the world. It is Herder's idea of "Humanitat" that is transformed by Humboldt into a conception of objectivity that overcomes the problem of relativity without losing the specificity of each language-world. Thus he writes:

The sum of the knowable lies, as the field to be tilled by the human mind, in the middle of, between and independent of all languages. Man cannot approach this purely objective realm other than through his cognitive and sensory powers, that is, in a subjective manner.¹⁴¹

As such, Humboldt even suggests that "civilization and culture gradually cancel out the harsh contrasts between people",¹⁴² that language permits to bring all men to a "closer understanding of the formal impression of nature".¹⁴³ But this is a common task, the result of extensions of speech and practice, and not the result of the imposition of the language-world of "one portion of Humanity" on the others.

It is this dialectic between speech and social reality that is absent in the writings of cultural relativists, which, wrongly, are seen as Humboldt's disciples, or as sharing with him a similar conception of

language. Given the importance of the objection of cultural relativity that social scientists proffer every time the constitutive role of language is pointed out, I will clarify Humboldt's implicit rejection of cultural relativity by comparing him to Sapir and Whorf from anthropology and Peter Winch from philosophy.

The cultural relativism of Sapir and Whorf

According to Sapir, language is:

...a self-contained, creative symbolic organization which not only refers to experience largely acquired without its help but actually defines experience for us by reason of its formal completeness and because of our unconscious projection of its implicit expectations into the field of experience. In this respect language is very much like a mathematical system which, also, records experience in the truest sense of the word, only, in its crudest beginnings, but, as time goes on, becomes elaborated into a self-contained conceptual system which previsions all possible experience in accordance with certain formal limitations.¹⁴⁴

His student Whorf identifies language with its grammar system which, he claims, structures reality, according to its grammatical rules. He writes:

We are thus introduced to a new principle of relativity, which holds that all observers are not led by the same physical evidence to the same picture of the universe, unless their linguistic backgrounds are similar, or can in some way be calibrated -- users of markedly different grammars are pointed by their grammars toward different types of observations and different evaluations of externally similar acts of observations, and hence are not equivalent as observers but must arrive at somewhat different views of the world.¹⁴⁵

Sapir and Whorf neglect however language qua speech and consider it as a lexical or grammatical structure. They consider language primarily as "ergon". In this respect Church correctly points out that the "Whorfian view" is based on "the neglect of utterances."¹⁴⁶ Indeed, Sapir and Whorf develop their thesis in a way that perfectly illustrates Rossi-Landi's analysis of the production of cultural relativity. They carry out an a

priori separation of speech from language, of language from the world, and then bring back together the separated sub-totalities to establish a causative effect of language on the world. By immediately relating language and the world, and thus excluding the energetic moment (common speech) which mediates between man and the world, they deprive themselves of the capacity to account for the interactions and interrelations, the understandings and misunderstandings, between language-communities. Whereas for Humboldt "true language is only that which is revealed in speech"¹⁴⁷ and that grammar and vocabulary are "dead skeletons", for Sapir and Whorf, grammar and vocabulary are identified with language itself.

The conceptual relativism of Winch

Winch, commenting on the Azande, the favorite tribe of epistemologists, writes:

Reality is not what gives language sense. What is real and what is unreal shows itself in the sense that language has. Further, both the distinction between the real and unreal and the concept of agreement with reality themselves belong to our language.¹⁴⁸

Understandably, the project of a cross-cultural law-like generalization is for Winch the result of a misunderstanding of the relationship between language and reality. His argument is that social actions can be treated according to the notion of following a rule -- a notion developed by Wittgenstein in the analysis of linguistic meaning. Winch writes "that all behaviour which is meaningful (therefore all specifically human behaviour) is ipso facto rule governed".¹⁴⁹ The implication of this is that the understanding of social actions in a particular society is possible only in terms of the concepts available in that society.

On the surface this seems close to the Humboldtian conception of language. However it is far from being the case. In fact, Winch's stand may be considered as the "philosophical" counter-part of the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis. Where they saw a non-mediated unity between language (words and grammar) and the world, Winch seems to claim a non-mediated unity

between meanings (concepts) and reality. According to Winch, "to give an account of the meaning of a word is to describe how it is used; and to describe the social intercourse into which it enters".¹⁵⁰ Although, Winch borrows the concept of "use" from Wittgenstein, he seems to understand it in a way which reduces "use" to a non-mediated application. True, Wittgenstein writes that "the meaning of a word is its use in the language".¹⁵¹ But his concept of "use" has a very strong "family resemblance" to the Humboldtian conception of language qua speech when it is understood in terms of what Wittgenstein writes as follows:

But how many kinds of sentences are there?... there are countless kinds: countless different kinds of use of what we call "symbols", "words", "sentences". And this multiplicity is not something fixed, given once for all; but new types of language, new language-games, as we may say, come into existence.... Here the term "language-game" is meant to bring into prominence the fact that the speaking of language is part of an activity, or of a form of life.¹⁵²

In this remarkably Humboldtian passage we find: a) the Humboldtian idea that language is a finite means for infinite ends when Wittgenstein speaks of "countless different kinds of use..."; b) the Humboldtian idea that "speaking" is a creative activity, thus giving to the concept "use" the notion of "energeia" as opposed to Winch's concept of use as only "rule-following", and c) the Humboldtian idea that "speaking is expressing life when Wittgenstein describes it as a "form of life".

Thus Winch's concept of "use" as only "rule-following" eliminates the constitutive and mediational nature of language qua speech that one finds in Humboldt and in Wittgenstein. Thus Winch cannot avoid "conceptual relativism" for, like Sapir and Whorf, he operates an a priori split between speech and language, between concepts and the world, and brings them back together in a way that excludes the speaking subject and speech.

The Humboldtian conception of language is different then from the one maintained by linguistic, conceptual and other cultural relativists, for Humboldt, contrary to what relativists do, roots his conception of language in speech which, as energeia and interlocution, is open to other

social worlds. Thus, the Humboldtian conception does not lead to cultural relativism. On the contrary, it overcomes the false duality of linguistic universalism and linguistic relativism, and offers a cogent and productive critique of both the universal language of social science and the closed language of cultural relativists. It rejects both the social scientific concept of comparison as articulation of polities in a universal language, and the cultural relativist concept of mere description. It offers a different concept of comparison. To delineate this, I will study the conception of understanding that is implied by the Humboldtian conception of language qua speech.

Common Speech and Understanding

Both empiricists and rationalists consider language to be an obstacle to clarity and to the acquisition of scientific knowledge about men and societies. To overcome this presumed obstacle, social scientists have borrowed from the natural sciences the idea of method, which would permit replicable and univocal observations and operations, and the use of mathematical symbols and operations.¹⁵³ Comparative political research skirts the question of cross-cultural understanding by considering speech to be composed of sentences about states of affairs and their logical connections. Comparativists thus write against their critiques that "it is sometimes said that social phenomena are "not comparable" as if it were the nature of social reality rather than a property of statements made about reality that is being disputed".¹⁵⁴

But this presupposes something which comparativists cannot deal with: to say that we deal only with "statement made about reality" presupposes that there is "a reality" independent of the human subject, that it can be recognized, that statements can be made about it, that it can be communicated. One can ask the question of how the comparativist explains the presupposition that makes possible the above claim, to wit: that there is a social reality. That there is a social reality cannot be a matter of social reality unless one accepts a circular argument as one of the tools of science.

It is this conundrum that some comparativists claim to solve by splitting their activity into that of participant observation, or context of discovery, and that of validation. Thus Hopkins et al. write on survey research in Africa:

The ideal research plan is for the researcher, who is competent in the local language, to undertake (either personally or as part of a team) a qualitative study as a preliminary part of his research. The survey then comes naturally as a second stage. By this time, the researcher should know the question he wants to explore quantitatively, should have a basic understanding of the local culture...155

Thus the comparativist first acquires "a basic understanding of the local culture" which permits him to develop the right questions and to "explore quantitatively" the topic he wants. In other words, comparativists admit the fact that the existence of social reality, its structures of experiences, practices and meanings, require the understanding power of the comparativist to be identified as such. This understanding is however considered to be a "preliminary part" of the comparativist's research and external to the activity of validation. In Hopkins et al.'s passage, quoted above, "understanding" is understood as a heuristic device that permits the formulation of questions. In the context of validation, we are supposed to deal only with replicable operations. In other words, "understanding" is understood as internal, subjective, in the sense of private. It is understood as a psychological stunt. Explanation on the other hand is seen as a replicable relationship between specified causes and effects. As a statement, it is considered to be public and intersubjective, because the operations that lead to it can be repeated by all those who have agreed on the method used to generate it. Indeed, once the "understanding" phase is passed, the comparativist who would like to confirm the findings need not even understand the facts. He need only repeat the operations. Thus write Hempel and Oppenheim, after qualifying understanding as a "psychological function":

For the behaviour of psychotics or of people belonging to a culture very different from that of the scientist may sometimes be explainable and predictable in terms of general principles even though the scientist who establishes or applies those

principles may not be able to understand his subjects empathetically.¹⁵⁶

Thus in comparative political studies of other polities "understanding" is seen at best as a psychological function used as a heuristic device for formulating hypotheses and questions; it is assumed to be external to the context of validation. But this is an understanding of "understanding" that, paradoxically, is also tacitly presumed to permit the unhooking of man from both his language and his world in order to carry out an activity that is presumed not to require understanding, viz., validation, explanation and prediction. In other words, understanding in comparative research is in fact given a double job. It would permit to discover hypotheses and questions, and second, it would permit the comparativist to disengage himself and the subject he studies from the activities that made his understanding of the other possible in such a way that the two can confront each other without the mediation of understanding. Comparativists speak only of the first effect of understanding, viz., the discovery of hypotheses, but seem to pass in silence the second effect, viz., understanding as that which makes possible the unhooking of man from language they tacitly attribute to understanding. To examine this blind spot of scientific comparison, we need to turn to the Humboldtian conception of language qua speech and explore the conceptualization of understanding it makes possible.

According to Humboldt, "understanding and speaking are but different effects of the self same power of speech."¹⁵⁷ Understanding is thus a manifestation of "energeia". In its relationship to the social world, to the language-world, to "ergon", understanding engages not only the speaker (or who he understands) but also a) the context (the social world), b) the other (the interlocutor), c) its "external manifestation" (the communication system) and, d) the topic (the expressed, the articulated). Understanding is thus the unity of diversity made possible by common speech, and not an operation "based upon automatic internal response".¹⁵⁸ Understanding is not a reconstruction of social reality, or the discovery of the meaning-in-itself of social practices which would permit the social scientist to confront an

objective entity, and create a situation of validation where the historicity of the scientist and the known become accidental and thus disposable. It is, according to Humboldt, the telos of speech-in-interlocution.¹⁵⁹ It is the extension of speech involved on the one hand in the awareness of differences and as such of the social limits of one's speech, and, on the other, in the effort to mediate these differences and limits and the questions they raise to one's assumptions of life.

Understanding is then a trans-subjective event that involves the social scientist and the other in a confrontation of their structures of experience ("ergon") which, through interlocution ("energeia") they translate or mediate into the capacity to make themselves known to each other in a way which can permit each to know himself more than he did before the encounter, and even to know the other more than he knows himself.¹⁶⁰ When I say that the "Bunge" in Tanzania is the "parliament", or if my respondent answers "I prefer to have friends who have the same mother-tongue as mine", I am not, or my respondent is not, making only statements about facts; nor, when I am listening to my respondent, am I only hearing statements about facts. Each is addressing himself to the other in terms of the topic and the situation (i.e. the historical context, the identity of the interlocutor, the modality and nature of the communication system). This means that the meaning of the said depends on the "circle of the unexpressed", to borrow a phrase from hermeneutics,¹⁶¹ that sustain the topic, the situation, and what is said therein, as ~~understandable~~ and as the themes of understanding. As it is impossible to render explicit all the "circle of the unexpressed" no statement about a social fact can be free from it. Understanding thus involves a claim, and a very crucial one, that one has succeeded in sharing the "circle of the unexpressed". Consequently, understanding is an event that articulates a fact as a trans-subjective reading of social practices and creates a new clarification of what has been articulated as a fact. Contrary to the mainstream comparative political science psychological notion of "understanding", the Humboldtian concept of understanding is rooted in the concept of interlocution. Thus Humboldt writes that "nobody conceives in a given word exactly what his neighbour does".¹⁶² Moreover "all understanding is simultaneously a noncomprehension, all agreement in

ideas and emotions is at the same time a divergence".¹⁶³ Consequently, for its achievement, understanding requires the common activity of both the interlocutors. In other words, understanding is, like common speech, a common understanding. It is not getting inside another person. As Gadamer writes, "to understand what a person says is...to agree about the object" and this "whole process is linguistic".¹⁶⁴ Understanding is a linguistic activity.

Such a non-psychological understanding of "understanding" has important consequences. Understanding, as a manifestation of common speech, constitutes the meanings of the social world and gives them their significance, values, and relates them to social practices and relations. In other words, the process of common understanding is also a process that constitutes values and meanings. Thus we cannot locate where a value enters into our discourse. Contrary to the social science belief that social scientists "do not ask whether particular social actions are good or bad; they seek merely to explain them",¹⁶⁵ the very identification of an experience as a "social action", the very processes of perception, observation, correlation, coding, decoding and the production of findings are shot through and through with valuations because the whole process of social scientific practice is sustained by understanding.¹⁶⁶ This does not mean that one cannot make the analytical distinction between fact and value. One can make such a distinction. However the unity of fact and value precedes the distinction; their distinction is the work of understanding. As such the distinction itself is evaluational and a specific interpretation, mediation or translation of a social practice. The fact-value distinction is a new fact of the understanding, engaging nevertheless "the circle of the unexpressed".

A second important consequence follows from the idea that understanding is common understanding. For this common understanding to be possible must be sustained by an a priori interest, for understanding takes place within a "société compréhensive,"¹⁶⁷ or an understanding society. In other words, the "circle of the unexpressed" that sustains an understanding is engaged by any claim of understanding. Thus, when a comparativist studies a foreign polity he is not only generating data and findings.

He is expressing an a priori interest in understanding, an a priori interest rooted in, and expressive of, the structure and hierarchy of interests of his "société compréhensive". Whether he likes it or not, he is already placed in a context of a "société compréhensive" and is, in comparing, engaged in a conflict of understandings. Indeed, the very project of "comparing politics" presupposes an interest in understanding which cannot be reduced to a psychological stunt. As Apel writes:

The thesis that it is not necessary to "understand" human actions because one can sometimes explain them by general principles without understanding them by empathy can, in principle, be assumed to be true if, and only if, one is a priori not interested in understanding beliefs, reasons, or aims of human beings, but only in covering law explanations of what, in fact, is going on. But this means -- properly speaking -- that one is not interested in making a difference between human beings and their actions on the one hand; and any other natural events on the other, for only by understanding in the context of communication is one able to discover and to validate this difference. 168

Without such an interest, there cannot be a social science, there can only be science where the distinction between comparing Ghanaian and American politics and comparing Ghanaian and American soil fertility cannot be either made or understood. Second, even when there is such an interest in understanding, if "understanding" is not understood as "common understanding", then the comparing of Ghanaian and American politics would be based, not on the extension of speech but on the negation of the other as a "société compréhensive". Understanding then is not a mere psychological phenomenon. It is expressive of a given society and its interests. It is a shared and common practice that engages those enmeshed in common speech. This has an important implication in our identification of political facts.

Common Speech and Political Facts

What is a political fact? is a question that has generated a lot of discussion. In comparative politics the question is not raised fully as such but as the question: "what is a fact?", and the "political" is

assumed to be already known or given. The incomplete question is answered in a sense which makes a fact a homogeneous, univocal and discrete unit that does not require interpretation. It is seen as a building-block of social reality and knowledge. It is segregated from common speech. The meaning it has is understood as being a connection between sign and referent. This connection is considered to be psychological. This is the basis of the comparative political science concept of political culture. Almond and Verba thus claim that they "employ the concept of culture" as meaning a "psychological orientation toward social objects" that can be categorized as cognitive, normative, or evaluative datum.¹⁶⁹

A fact is thus given as a psychological datum. From the Humboldtian point of view of language-qua-speech, such a conceptualization of a fact is very unsatisfactory and, in a very important sense, distorted. From the Humboldtian point of view, a fact is not a monological product. It is an individuation of common actions, feelings, institutions, thoughts, objects, whatever the experience in question may be, made possible through common speech. It is not a matter of fact that there is a fact. It is a matter of common understanding, articulating the world.¹⁷⁰ A fact is not a raw material. It already possesses meanings and values (in the plural) because, as a precipitate of common speech and common understanding, every fact is a common fact, i.e. a fact that implicates the speakers and the social world. A fact, being always a common fact then, is not univocal but plurivocal, for being already an interpretation based on interlocution, it is always open to interpretation. A fact, as an already made interpretation, is not disjointed from the interpretational process that forms it as a fact; it is not disjointed from the social world out of which it arises. Nor does it banish its possible other interpretations. All of these are present as effects in the fact itself. This important point is suggested by Humboldt when he writes that:

...above and beyond the individual detail, there is always an excess to be expressed less definitely; or, rather, to the detail is appended the requirement for further presentation and development which is not directly present in it. Hence the requirement proceeds through an expression in the language into another

expression which is, let us say, invited to complement in its concept the given factor with the lacking one.¹⁷¹

Thus, every fact, as the said, calls upon the unsaid, for its determination. Around each fact "reverberates" the common speech and the language-world wherein is its "truth".¹⁷² As such a fact is a social relation from which the "subjectivity of expression" and the sociality of "ergon" cannot be eliminated.

Consequently, the "acceptability"¹⁷³ of "this" fact rather than "that" fact; the determination of this fact as "political" rather than as "non-political" involve the agents in a certain social relationship of understanding and actions. When is a fact acceptable as "political" rather than as "sport" or "religious" or "economic"? To say that "X" is a political fact is to claim a recognition of the boundaries of the political in a given language-world or social reality and its conceptualization therein. In other words, every fact is, like Mauss's "gift", a total social phenomena implicating political, religious, economic boundaries within the social reality it is given. The point here is not only that what is political in one may not be political in another. The point is that each fact, a) being a product of interpretation, and not self-evident (thus implicating the speaker), and b) being also the form in which the language-world (ergon) is individualized, expresses that which is recognized, lived and practiced as the political in that particular social world.

The elucidation of this political world written in the fact itself requires that we go beyond the appearance of a fact as a discrete element. As pointed out above, every fact is a text which includes its unsaid. Understanding it then requires that we go beyond what it is as a product, a seemingly isolated and self-evident fact of the social world, to the activity that produces it as a fact out of the experienced social world. Doing so exposes the level at which the fact has been accepted as a fact, showing thus what it means as a common fact in that social world, and what, by its appearance as a fact, are the excluded and possible facts. Here we discover each fact as also a process of concealment, the concealed

being the counter-text of the fact. Each fact, by appearing as transparent, unchanging and discrete, as is the case in political culture research, hides both the subjectivity that produces it and its characteristics of being a social relation. Moreover, by freezing the ongoing social relations as this "fact", it "factualizes" them at a certain level of significance and value, and excludes other modes and directions of "factualization". But these excluded "factualizations",¹ which exist as counter-texts, are important for the understanding of what is factualized as the political. This is indeed what Political Theory teaches us. What is factualized as "wage" in one theory can be factualized as its counter-text, "exploitation", in another. What is factualized as "free-trade" in one theory can be factualized as its counter-text "imperialism" in another. Easton factualizes habit as non-political whereas Oakeshot factualizes it as political.¹⁷⁴ The discourse of "modernization" factualizes the presence of the West in Africa as being "modern" whereas the same situation is factualized as "neo-colonialism" by the Marxist discourse. Each factualization, being sustained by "understanding" implicates certain actions and "secretes" certain "value-slopes".¹⁷⁵

Such an understanding of political facts has a very important consequence for the social scientist. For ~~such~~ an understanding permits him to see facts as the unity of the visible and the invisible, and permits him to understand the fact, the situation, the event, more than the agents themselves, who, as agents engaged in their daily lives, factualize their social relations without forcing into the realm of the understanding the concealed and the counter-texts of the facts. It offers a different concept of comparison. This different concept of comparison can be articulated through a Humboldtian reading of mainstream comparative politics so that we can see what a non-distortive comparison is through the very distortions created by a comparison based on a universal language-instrument. This indeed is the purpose of this thesis, and can be elaborated only step by step in the following chapters. However, I would first like to sketch out, as a preparation for the chapters that follow, the general implications of the Humboldtian conception of language for mainstream comparative politics.

The Implications for Comparative Politics

Political scientists claim that it is possible to have a de-anthropologized, de-socialized and de-historicized language that can be used to study all polities irrespective of historical, cultural and experiential differences. This point is made by H. Eulau. He writes:

Whatever philosophical views different scientists may hold about man and the reality of man, they need not interfere with their work in the laboratory or in the field. For there the validity of theoretical propositions about human behaviour, from whatever philosophical position derived, is a matter of intersubjective agreement, not absolutist assertion, and the reliability of observation is a function of measures that are intersubjectively agreed on as well. The very existence of any scientific enterprise is predicated on intersubjectively consensual rather than subjectively philosophical notions about man, reality or universe.¹⁷⁶

In this lies the claim that men and their actions, men and their world, can be unhooked from the languages that narrate their actions and their world. In this scheme, meanings, histories, valuations appear as shells that can be sloughed off to reveal data.¹⁷⁷ The questions regarding the historical, social and political nature of facts are excluded a priori from the conceptualization of the politics of a particular society.

Such an a priori exclusion of meanings has a paradoxical consequence, for the question arises as to how comparativists come to identify polities and political facts; as to how they come to talk and write about politics or on political science. This question cannot be reduced to that of observation, for the political is not an empirical construct. Comparativists consider the problem of meaning as one that arises only at the observational level. As such they deal with it as a question of identifying in different polities those indicators that refer to certain objective phenomena which are assumed to be free of the concepts and interpretations through which they exist and are understood by those who live them. At the theoretical level, comparative concepts are assumed to be free from the problematic of meaning, for the theory which articulates them is

considered to be a tool whose validity is assumed to rest on the payoff it makes possible, that is to say, on its explanatory and predictive efficacy.¹⁷⁸ In other words, in the practice of the science of comparison, comparative concepts are considered to precede the meanings expressed by concrete political practices. Comparative concepts would precede understanding itself.¹⁷⁹ This, of course, permits the comparativist to consider comparative concepts as being asocial and ahistorical. It renders plausible the split between action and language, and the conceptualization of the past - tradition or history - as a storehouse of a-linguistic data. Simultaneously the comparativist's history and sociality are given as mere accidents which can be disposed of. His interest, his concepts and his activities of comparison would stand outside the "société compréhensive" of which he is a member. But this claim cannot be sustained by the linguistic practices of comparativists which go well beyond what the instrumentalist conception of language can account for.

The Humboldtian conception of language persuasively shows that comparative concepts arise within a société compréhensive. A cross-cultural comparative concept cannot but be the result of a "common understanding", and as such is an expression of a claim that the compared practices have been brought together in a way that makes the understanding of each other a shared understanding.¹⁸⁰ Comparativists have not substantiated this tacit claim which sustains the universality they attribute to their concepts. As comparativists and the compared are all members of "understanding societies", comparison cannot but be a confrontation of these "understanding societies", mediated by the comparativists linguistic practices which themselves are expressive of a specific "understanding society". Consequently, cross-cultural comparative concepts cannot precede the activity of understanding another polity. Only out of the clarification of meanings of historically specific confrontations of "understanding societies", of their common practices and common understandings, can cross-cultural comparative concepts emerge. In other words, cross-cultural comparative concepts express then a historically situated practice; they express how these confrontations were clarified or denied.¹⁸¹

The Humboldtian conception of language obliges us then to consider the activity of comparing and the activity of producing comparative concepts as social practices engaged in the sociality and history of those who compare and those who are compared. An appreciation of this requires that we elucidate the meaning of "social practices" and "history" in comparative political discourse.

Comparative Politics and Social Practice

Humboldt's conceptualization of language qua speech suggests that a theory of language is related to a theory of action and membership. This indeed is a view accepted, with different shades, among thinkers as diverse as Wittgenstein, Merleau Ponty, Kenneth Burke and generally students of phenomenology, conceptual analysis and hermeneutics.¹⁸²

From the Humboldtian point of view, language, being common speech, is temporal and social. The social world is constituted as a historical and commonly shared world and given as the unsaid but necessary dimension of common speech. What is articulated in speech is both socio-historical and constitutive of sociality and history. The speaker and speech cannot be extracted from history (the commonly inherited institutions, thoughts, ideas, feelings, values, practices that are lived in the present) and sociality (the mode of sharing what is commonly shared as the social world). This does not mean that the speaker and speech, that political facts, are determined by history and sociality as if these were external to the speaker, speech or political facts. Nor does it mean that the speakers or the members of the social world can determine, as if they were omnipotent beings, their social world and history into whatever they want to. These are the fallacies of relativism (a language-world free from history and sociality and determining its members) and positivism (a subject free from history and sociality, and determining the world).

From Humboldt's point of view, history and sociality are not external to the activity of the subject. They are internal to it and mediated by speech. The social world -- the situation, the object, the interlocutors, the topic, the actions, the context -- enters into speech

as a constitutive element.¹⁸³ In this sense the activity of the agent is a social practice. Our question then is what is a social practice?

If we follow the indications that are suggested above, a social practice is an activity carried out by an agent who is a member of an understanding society. It is an activity which engages him, by the very nature of his acting, in relationships, (social, political, economic., etc.) with other members of his social world - a world which is present in his very acting, as a shared, even if contested, world. A social practice is then a social relation whose meaning (explicit or concealed), values, significance, import, direction are created by certain "constitutive distinctions, constitutive ranges of language"¹⁸⁴ articulated as common speech. A social practice is inseparable from these constitutive distinctions and ranges of language in the sense that a separation from these will make the social practice lose its meaning, value and significance, or change these completely.

For example, in Canada one may "vote" for a member of parliament. But if a Canadian describes his relation to God in terms of voting, if he says that we should democratically "elect" our God, the vocabulary of voting would not make sense in this instance because it does not mesh in with the constitutive distinction and ranges of language we make when Canadians talk of God. Or, we may describe "marriage" as a "union", but if a person describes it as a "federation" we start asking questions. Is he speaking metaphorically? poetically? or has he misunderstood what "marriage" means or what "federation" means? In the same way, being a member of parliament in Canada and being a member of parliament (Bunge) in Tanzania, implicate, in spite of the homonyms involved, different constitutive distinctions and ranges of language. In Canada, the political vocabulary associated with parliament evokes a single public realm, a specific articulation of the public and private realm; it evokes a certain conception of representation and one can even go further and indicate that it presupposes a certain image of man, a certain notion of interpersonal relationship. In Tanzania the political vocabulary gives primacy to the political party over parliament -- something which cannot be properly

articulated in the political vocabulary of Canadians. Indeed this primacy of the political party over parliament can be traced to a different image of man expressing the primacy of the "corporate" understanding of man expressed in the political party over the "individualistic" understanding of man that underlies the Tanzanian understanding of parliament.¹⁸⁵ In other words, the social practices are so enmeshed with the language by which they are constituted that understanding them requires that we do not unhook them from their language.

For example being a minister in Nigeria and being a minister in Canada engage practices which are different social relations. What may pass for corruption in Canada may be described as an obligation in Nigeria; what may be described as a normal obligation in Canada may be described as an abnormal betrayal in Nigeria. In Nigeria to be a minister engages, to borrow Ekeh's description, "two publics -- the governmental and the moral, and both are in certain ways political and private."¹⁸⁶ This complex situation, and perhaps without an equivalent in Canada, results from the fact that the meaning of governing intersects and overlaps in certain ways with the meaning of kinship relations. In other words, there are many social practices in Nigeria whose meanings, values and significance articulate and constitute the political in terms of constitutive distinctions that are not available to Canadians. The vocabulary of the Nigerian kinship system does not describe, as in Canada, only a biological filiation. Rather, it describes a structure of obligations and rights recognized in part as public. We are not dealing here with psychological meanings, as the adepts of "political culture" claim, fixed in the minds of Nigerians and Canadians, but with meanings that are in the practices themselves as shared and common meanings. The point is that the relationship between language and social practices is such that,

The situation...is one in which the vocabulary of a given social dimension is grounded in the shape of the social practice in this dimension; that is, the vocabulary wouldn't make sense, couldn't be applied sensibly, where this range of practice didn't prevail. And yet this range of practices wouldn't exist without the prevalence of this or some related vocabulary.¹⁸⁷

In other words to separate social practices from the common speech wherein they get their descriptions is not only artificial but leads to a distorted understanding of what those practices are in their social world. These social practices are not the result of consensus as the theoreticians of "political culture" seem to believe. Were it so, Nigerians would not be able to criticize their ministers for corruption, as they often do, although they simultaneously practice what they criticize. The social practices themselves are the social realities that make possible consensus or dissent, by constituting a community, which through the activity of the agent is open to different interpretations, conflicts and consequently possible changes.

If social practices are then enmeshed with the constitutive distinctions and constitutive ranges of language in order to be what they are; if they are the social realities themselves, there is a sense and a fundamental one, in which practicing them is defining oneself in a certain way as a member of that social world. For the actor does not all by himself invent those constitutive distinctions and ranges of language, the meanings and values that make them common. They are "the common property of the society".¹⁸⁸ They enter into his activities as constitutive elements. Accomplishing them or engaging in these social practices is constituting oneself as a member, as a subject and thus expressing a certain self-definition, a certain vision of what a subject is, of what a social relation is, of what society is.

In comparative politics the very concept of a social practice is absent. And yet the very project of comparison requires such a concept if comparison is to be a science that pairs or brings together different polities in order to discover and explain their social practices. Moreover, the absence of this concept prevents the comparativist to see comparison as a social practice and consequently discover the conditions and implications of his comparative practice.

Comparative Politics and History

Comparativists consider history as a source of hypotheses and data.¹⁸⁹ In comparative politics history is reduced into a motivational input articulated as, in the case of Africa, tradition or background. To grasp the Humboldtian understanding of history, it is perhaps interesting to start with a distinction Hegel makes regarding the term "history". According to Hegel:

History combines in our language the objective as well as the subjective side. It means both the Historia rerum gestarum and the res gestae themselves, both the events and the narration of events. (It means both Geschehen and Geschichte). This connection of the two meanings must be regarded as significant and not merely accidental. We must hold that the narration of history and historical deeds and events appear at the same time; a common inner principle brings them forth together.¹⁹⁰

Thus Hegel makes a distinction between the understanding of history as events, and history as the narration of these events. Moreover he indicates that the events and the narration of these events are not external to each other but are linked by "a common inner principle". Thus Hegel indicates the diversity and unity between history as events and history as the narration of these events. Humboldt's perspective is similar to this and it can be formulated as follows.

"Events" are what we discussed in the previous section as "social practices". They are the actions of men in their social world; they are the realized social relations and interconnections. It is these practices, relations and interconnections which are sedimented or have left their trace as institutions, deeds, thoughts, feelings, monuments, documents. I will call these "history-action" to underline the fact that these "events" are also social practices. In this sense, history-action, like any social practice, is linguistically articulated and expressed. Its happening is also its constitution in terms of certain vocabularies that describe it in the common speech of the period. The first point then is that the past as history-action is not mute but produced in the linguistic practices

of the people. The second point is that this past is accessible to our present, not as a raw material, but as social practices constituted by language confronting and responding to our present common speech. As Goulemot's study of historical discourses indicates:

Dire l'événement, ce n'est pas le retrouver avec plus ou moins d'exactitude, mais le contraire. L'erreur serait de croire que la narration historique, le dire de l'histoire, est la mise au jour, progressive et cumulative, d'une réalité et d'une vérité gisante et oubliée qu'on rappellerait à la vie par l'enquête et l'écriture.¹⁹¹

Now, this means that, contrary to the practice of comparativists, history cannot be considered as a data-bank; the past cannot be reduced to a residue nor can tradition be treated as the frozen past. Indeed, contrary to the working assumptions of cross-cultural attitude surveys, remembering, recalling the past, having an opinion on what has happened -- all activities involved in answering questions -- cannot be considered as fact-fishing expeditions into the objective and mute past. The past, as well as our present talk about the past--recent or distant--are the works of common speech.

But our present common speech, engaged as it is in our present social practices, cannot but narrate the past in terms of our present vocabularies and practices, i.e. in terms of our interests. And this is history as the narration of the "events". I will call it "history-narration" to underline the fact that our recuperation of the past is the narration of already narrated social practices provoked and articulated by the questions and interests of the understanding society of which the narrator is a speaking-member. Through language, history-action and history-narration are internally related, for our narration of events is a narration of already linguistically articulated and therefore of already meaningful interpretations. Consequently our history-narration in the present cannot but be an interpretative and a language-mediated confrontation between theirs (what we consider as the past) and our common speech. This confrontation is neither a confrontation of "objects" (past

events vis-à-vis present events , or events vis-à-vis narrator) nor "arbitrary" (interest-free narration or narration free from every and all "understanding societies"). This confrontation is, in Aron's words, "the reconstitution by and for those who are living of the life of those who are dead".¹⁹² In other words, our history-narration is guided by our present interests, concerns and practices, elaborated into historiography. Historiography has thus, as Collingwood indicates, a narrative foundation.¹⁹³ To say that our history-narration is guided by our present concerns and interests is to say that what is notable for us is that which is at the present noteworthy, i.e. made noteworthy by our concerns, interests, practices and the questions these produce. As R. Barthes points out:

As soon as language intervenes (as it always does) the fact can only be defined tautologically: we take note of what is notable; but the notable (and already for Herodotus the word has lost its mythical meaning) is nothing more than the noteworthy...the fact can only exist linguistically, as a term in a discourse, yet we behave as if it were a simple reproduction of something on another plane of existence altogether.¹⁹⁴

If then history-narration is the articulating of the past (as already narrated events) in the common speech of the present as a response to our concerns, it is, in every language-world, a "paradigm for human articulation".¹⁹⁵ It is not, to use Humboldt's expression, "a self-same factor" in all language-worlds. True as an articulation of the past in the present through common speech, it is a universal property of all mankind, as speech is. But as a work (ergon) of this articulation, it has its own specificities that are peculiar to the nation to which it belongs. This is a very important point that is brought out by the Humboldtian understanding of history, and helps to overcome the false dilemma of either universal history or particular history. Thus, as Welch points out, "history tells a story" and every history is "a particular interpretation of man"; its medium is "a particular language provided by a particular heritage" which provides the "meaning of selfhood" in that particular society, and fetches the past and forges a future and precipitates a connection at the moment".¹⁹⁶ Thus Welch summarizes succinctly an understanding of history that is remarkably Humboldtian. We can re-formulate it by saying that the past

becomes a "social practice" for us through our narration of it.

This understanding of history, of the dialectic between history-action and history-narration, is totally absent in comparative politics. This absence is a consequence of the unhooking of social practices from their narrations. The result is that in the study of other polities where there is no, to use Humboldt's expression, "previous and original connivence" between the comparativist's language and the social practices of the studied, their past is objectified. To paraphrase Croce, their dead and their past event are not acknowledged to be alive as their present lives demand it.¹⁹⁷ The other's past is thus excluded from his present as a constitutive moment of his social practices when facts are split from the common speech that articulates them, and when the inner link between history-actions and history-narrations is denied. Thus social practices and their narrations are rendered mute. For the comparativist, what is at stake is not the working out of the future, or "development", in Herder's sense, out of social practices that by their very nature engage the past, but the observation of mute facts and the determination of causal connections.¹⁹⁸

Conclusion

The Humboldtian understanding of language suggests strongly that the relationship between the comparativist and the compared cannot be purely understood as a scientific relationship. For this relationship seems to silence and reinforce the historical silence imposed on so many Africans by political and economic conditions that make "development", in the Herderian-Humboldtian sense, a luxury if not a political crime. Silence, as Freire has pointed out, is one of the great political experiences of the so-called "developing" countries.¹⁹⁹ This means that there may be politico-moral preconditions which must be fulfilled in order to carry out a real comparative understanding. For in a relation of domination, certain extensions of speech are impossible. They require alterations of social practices in order to make possible reciprocal

recognition, mutual understanding, and to enable us to make non-distorting comparisons.²⁰⁰

What this exposition of the Humboldtian theory of language indicates is that language and life are constitutively related. The language we use to express and articulate our world and actions, and our knowledge of these, is not an instrument that is external to them. In the study of politics, political practices and the language we use to study them cannot be radically separated from each other without destroying the identity of what we want to study. In other words, we can say, first, that political language is holophrastic, and therefore always involves conflicts of practices, interpretations and contested concepts; second, that the language of political science is an extension of a given political language; third, that what makes possible the production of mainstream comparative discourse is not the anonymity of method but its holophrastic dimension, and fourth, that the production of cross-cultural law-like generalizations cannot but entail a systematically distorted discourse on other politics unless it is demonstrated beforehand that their political languages constitute political practices identical with those given as the holophrastic dimension of the concepts and method of comparative politics. I will deal with these four questions separately in the following four chapters.

FOOTNOTES

1. For the phenomenological point of view see: M. Merleau Ponty, Phenomenology of perception, translated by Colin Smith (New York: Humanities Press, 1962); M. Natanson, ed., Phenomenology and the Social Sciences, 2 vols. (Evanston, Ill.: Northwestern University Press, 1973); A. Schutz, The Phenomenology of the Social World, translated by George Walsh and Frederick Lehnert (Evanston, Ill.: Northwestern University Press, 1967); For conceptual analysis see: Peter Winch, The Idea of a Social Science and its Relation to Philosophy (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1958); A.R. Louch, Explanation and Human Action (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1969); Bryan R. Wilson, ed., Rationality (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1970); For hermeneutics see: H.G. Gadamer, Truth and Method (New York: The Seabury Press, 1975); Karl-Otto Apel, Analytic Philosophy of Language and the Geisteswissenschaften (Dordrecht: D. Reidel Publishing Company, 1967); J. Habermas, Knowledge and Interest, translated by Jeremy J. Shapiro (Boston: Beacon Press, 1971); P. Ricoeur, De l'Interpretation (Paris: Seuil, 1965); For Anthropologists see: E.E. Evans Pristchard, Social Anthropology and Other Essays (New York: Free Press, 1962); M. Mauss, Sociologie et Anthropologie (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1966); For Linguists see J. Gumperez and Dell Hymes eds., Directions in Sociolinguistics: The Ethnography of Communication (New York: Holt Rinehart and Winston, 1972); W. Labov, Sociolinguistic Patterns (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1972).
2. Plato "Cratylus" in The Dialogues of Plato, 3 vols., translated by Benjamin Jowell (London: Sphere Books, 1970) 3: 119-195.
3. Wilhelm von Humboldt, Linguistic Variability and Intellectual Development, translated by G.C. Buck and F.A. Raven (Coral Gables: University of Miami Press, 1971), referred to henceforth as Buck and Raven; Humanist without portfolio: An Anthology of the Writings of Wilhelm von Humboldt, translated with introduction by Marianne Cowan (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1963), referred to henceforth as M. Cowan; "On Thinking and Speaking" (Uber Denken und Sprachen) in "Humboldt's Prolegomena to Philosophy of Language" translated by Natan Rotenstreich in Cultural Hermeneutics, 2, No. 3 (November 1974), pp. 211-212 referred to henceforth as N. Rotenstreich; Wilhelm von Humboldt, The Limits of State Action, edited and translated by J.W. Burrow (Cambridge: at the University Press, 1969), henceforth referred to as J.W. Burrow; Wilhelm von Humboldt, Introduction à l'Oeuvre sur le Kavi et Autres Essais translated with introduction by Pierre Caussat (Paris: Seuil, 1974), henceforth referred to as P. Caussat (Paris: Seuil, 1974).
P. Caussat's translation includes Humboldt's essays on "The Task of the Historian", "Comparative Linguistic Research and its Relation to the Different Phases of the development of Language", "The Dual" and important portions of Humboldt's letters to Schiller and the concluding section of the essay "Latium and Hellas". Wilhelm von Humboldt, De l'Origine des Formes Grammaticales Suivi de la Lettre à M. Abel de Remusat, translated by Alfred Tonnelle (Paris: Ducrus, 1969), referred to henceforth as A. Tonnelle.
4. Paul Ricoeur, La Métaphore Vive (Paris: Seuil, 1975), p. 385.

5. Such views are made on Humboldt's writings by almost all who have studied them. For example see Roger L. Brown, Wilhelm von Humboldt's Conception of Linguistic Relativity (The Hague: Mouton, 1967), chapter VIII.

6. Harold Basilius, "Neo Humboldtian Ethnolinguistics", Word, 8, No. 2 (August 1952), pp. 95-105. Suzanne Ohman, "Theories of the Linguistic Field", Word, 9, No. 2 (August 1953), 123-134; N. Chomsky, Cartesian Linguistics (New York: Harper and Row, 1966); H.G. Gadamer, op.cit. J. Church Language and the Discovery of Social Reality, (New York: Random House, 1961); P. Ricoeur, "Hermeneutique et Critique des Idéologies" Archivio di Filosofia, vol. 2 (1973), pp. 25-61.

7. The commentaries on Humboldt in the English language are very limited. The most important are: E. Cassirer, The Philosophy of Symbolic Forms, 3 vols translated by Ralph Manheim, preface and introduction by C.W. Hendel (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1970): 155-163; George J. Adler, Wilhelm von Humboldt's Linguistic Studies (New York: Wynkoop and Hallenbeck, 1966); Robert L. Miller, The Linguistic Relativity Principle and Humboldtian Ethnolinguistics (The Hague: Mouton, 1968); R.L. Brown, Wilhelm von Humboldt's Conception of Linguistic Relativity, op.cit.; Julia M. Penn, Linguistic Relativity versus Inate Ideas, The Origins of the Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis in German Thought (The Hague: Mouton, 1972); Harold Basilius, op.cit.; Suzanne Ohman op.cit.; Other commentaries are: Ole Hansen Love, La Révolution Copernicienne du Language dans l'Oeuvre de Wilhelm von Humboldt (Paris: Vrin, 1972); Jean Gaudefroy-Demombynes, l'Oeuvre Linguistique de Humboldt (Paris: Maisonneuve Frères, 1931); Luce Fontaine de Wisscher, "La Pensée du Language comme Forme", Revue Philosophique de Louvain 68: 100 (November 1970), pp. 449-471; Joseph Voss, "Aristote et la Théorie énergétique du language de Wilhelm von Humboldt", Revue Philosophique de Louvain 72: 15 (Août 1974), pp. 482-508; A. Schaff, Language et Connaissance (Paris: Anthropos, 1971), pp. 3-193; H.G. Gadamer, op.cit., pp. 397-414.

8. P. Salus, ed., On Language: Plato to Humboldt (New York: Holt Rinehart and Winston, 1969).

9. Thomas Hobbes, Leviathan Parts I and II. (New York: Bobbs-Merrill Company, 1958). J. Locke, An Essay Concerning Human Understanding Book III, Chapter 1, paragraph 1.

10. For three excellent discussions of these questions see: Pierre Juliard, Philosophies of Languages in Eighteenth Century France (The Hague: Mouton, 1970); Michèle Duchet, Anthropologie et Histoire au Siècle des Lumières (Paris: Maspero, 1971); Guy Harnois, Les Théories du Language en France 1660 à 1821 (Paris: Maisonneuve Frères, 1929).

11. Quoted in Pierre Juliard, op. cit., p. 61.

12. Michèle Duchet, op.cit., p. 236.

13. Ibid, p. 244
14. J.J. Rousseau, "A Discourse on the Origin of Inequality" in The Social Contract and Discourses, ed., G.D.H. Cole (New York: E.P. Dutton, 1950). J.J. Rousseau, "Essay on the Origin of Languages" in On the Origin of Language, trans. John H. Moran and Alexandre Gode (New York: Frederick Ungar, 1966).
15. J.J. Rousseau, "Essay on the Origin of Languages", p. 5.
16. Michèle Duchet, op.cit., see also Ernst Cassirer, The Philosophy of the Enlightenment (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1951).
17. J.J. Rousseau, "Essay on the Origin of Language", p. 31.
18. For the concept of "expression" see: C. Taylor, Hegel (London: Cambridge University Press, 1975), pp. 3-51. Commenting on Herder, he writes: "to see life as an expression is to see it as the realization of a purpose"; it is to see this realization as a "development" which is the "manifestation of an inner power, striving to realize and maintain its own shape against those the surrounding world might impose" (p.15). Moreover, "human life as an expression" means not only the realization of purposes but also...the clarification of these purposes. It is not only the fulfillment of life but also the clarification of meaning". Thus "Human life is both fact and meaningful expression; and its being expression does not reside in a subjective reference to something else, it expresses the idea which it realizes". The consequence then is that "man comes to know himself by expressing and hence clarifying what he is and recognizing himself in this expression. The specific property of human life is to culminate in self-awareness through expression" (p.17).
19. J.J. Rousseau, Du Contrat Social/Discours (Paris: Union Générale d'Editions, 1963), pp. 71, 74.
20. J.G. Herder on Social and Political Culture, Translated and edited with an Introduction by F.M. Barnard (Cambridge: at the University Press, 1969), p. 139.
21. Ibid, p. 127.
22. Heinz Eulau, The Behavioral Persuasion in Politics (New York: Random House, 1963), p. 134.
23. F.M. Bernard, op.cit., pp. 117-177.
24. James C.O. Flaherty, Unity and Language: A Study in the Philosophy of Johann G. Hamann (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina, 1952).
25. E. Cassirer, The Philosophy of Symbolic Forms, 1: 150-151.
26. F.M. Bernard, op.cit., p. 158 emphasis in text.

27. For the concept "expression" see above footnote 18.
28. F.M. Bernard, op.cit., p. 131. The whole quotation is in italics in the text.
29. Ibid, pp. 134-135.
30. Ibid, p. 136
31. Ibid
32. Ibid, p. 141.
33. Ibid, p. 266.
34. Charles Taylor, Hegel, p. 15.
35. F.M. Bernard, op.cit., p. 165.
36. Ibid, p. 163.
37. Ibid, p. 311.
38. Ibid, p. 312.
39. Ibid, p. 284.
40. Ibid, p. 238.
41. Ibid, p. 203.
42. Ibid, p. 174, emphasis in text.
43. The expression "Copernican Revolution" to qualify Humboldt's revolution in the study of language is that of Hansen O. Love, op.cit. It of course suggests a parallel with the other revolution in philosophy effected by Kant.
44. Quoted in Harold Basilus, op.cit.
45. P. Caussat, op.cit., p. 178.
46. Ibid, pp. 183-190.
47. Buck and Raven, op.cit., p. 34.
48. P. Caussat, op.cit., p. 210.
49. Buck and Raven, op.cit., p. 45.
50. Ibid, p. 34.

51. Ibid
52. Ibid
53. Ibid, pp. 26-27.
54. Ibid
55. Ibid
56. Ibid
57. Ibid, p. 76.
58. M. Cowan, op.cit., p. 283.
59. Buck and Raven, op.cit., pp. 35-36.
60. Ibid, p. 42, p. 36, p. 127.
61. P. Caussat, op.cit., pp. 99-131.
62. Ibid, p. 117
63. Ibid
64. Ibid, pp. 120-123.
65. Ibid, p. 123.
66. Ibid
67. Buck and Raven, op. cit., p. 130.
68. P. Caussat, op.cit., p. 121.
69. Donald P. Warwick and Samuel Osherson, eds., Comparative Research Methods (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1973). pp. 3-41.
70. Buck and Raven, op.cit., p. 134.
71. P. Caussat, op.cit., p. 119.
72. Buck and Raven, op.cit., pp. 34-35
73. Ibid, p. 39.
74. Ibid
75. Ibid
76. D.C. McClelland, The Achieving Society, (New York: Free Press, 1967).

77. K. Marx, The Grundrisse, edited and translated by D. McClelland (New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1971), p. 71.
78. J. Habermas, Theory and Practice, trans. J. Viertel (Boston: Beacon Press, 1973), pp. 142-170, 195-253.
79. J. Habermas, "Technology and Science as 'Ideology'" in Toward a Rational Society, J. Habermas. (Boston: Beacon Press, 1970), pp. 81-122.
80. K. Marx, The German Ideology, edited with an Introduction by C.J. Arthur (New York: International Publishers, 1970). Marx writes:
 "Language is as old as consciousness, language is practical consciousness that exists also for other men, and for that reason alone it really exists for me personally as well; language, like consciousness, only arises from the need, the necessity, of intercourse with other men. Where there exists a relationship, it exists for me..." [p. 51]
81. M. Cowan, op.cit., pp. 114-115.
82. J. Habermas, "Technology and Science as 'Ideology'", pp. 81-122.
83. H. Marcuse, An Essay on Liberation (Boston: Beacon Press, 1969).
84. Buck and Raven, op.cit., p. 39.
85. G. Steiner, After Babel (New York: Oxford University Press, 1975), p. 82.
86. Buck and Raven, op.cit., p. 131.
87. Rudolf A. Makkreel, Dilthey, Philosopher of the Human Studies (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1975).
88. Especially so in the comparison of different polities, for such a comparison is also getting in touch with a different cultural system. As Berger, Berger and Kellner have pointed out, all contacts between different cultures lead to mutual contamination. In other words, the understanding of another culture is a more complex question than the understanding of sheer nature. Peter Berger, B. Berger and H. Kellner, The Homeless Mind (New York: Random House, 1973), p. 165.
89. Buck and Raven, op.cit., p. 1, p. 121.
90. Ibid, p. 130.
91. Ibid, p. 114.

92. John J. Gumperez and Dell Hymes, op.cit. Dell H. Hymes, "Toward Ethnographies of Communication" in Intercommunication among Peoples, ed. Michael H. Prosser (New York: Harper and Row, 1973), pp. 45-67. J. Gumperez, "The Speech Community" in Language and Social Context, ed. Pier Paolo Giglioli, (London: Penguin, 1973), pp. 219-232. W. Labov, "The Study of Language in its Social Context" in Pier Paolo Giglioli, op.cit., pp. 283-307.

93. Dell Hymes, "The Ethnography of Speaking" in Readings in the Sociology of Language, ed. Joshua A. Fishman (The Hague: Mouton, 1968), p. 131.

94. Buck and Raven, op.cit., p. 131.

95. David Apter, Ghana in Transition (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1972), chapter 13.

96. Buck and Raven, op.cit., p. 134

97. See discussion above

98. Buck and Raven, op.cit., pp. 39-40.

99. Ibid, pp. 1-6.

100. P. Caussat, op.cit., p. 87.

101. see below chapter VI

102. F.M. Bernard, op.cit., p. 311.

103. Gabriel A. Almond and Sidney Verba, The Civic Culture (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1965).

104. Alasdair MacIntyre, Against the Self-Image of the Age (New York: Schocken Books, 1971), p. 263.

105. Hilary Hensen, British Social Anthropologists and Language (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1974), pp. 5-40.

106. Buck and Raven, op.cit., p. 14.

107. See below chapters V and VI.

108. Buck and Raven, op.cit., p. 21.

109. The theory of political socialization treats opinions and beliefs as ready-made predispositions formed by the family or the school. The induction into a political system of the person is theorized as a process of "socialization" or the acquisition of political orientations and patterns of behaviour. This process is essentially a passive one in as much as it does not tackle nor account for new political activities otherwise than

in negative terms as inadequate or improper socialization. Indeed politics is treated as an effect of socialization and not as a determinant of the ways people are constituted as members of a polity. See Herbert H. Hymn, Political Socialization (Glencoe: Free Press, 1959); Richard E. Dawson and Kenneth Prewitt, Political Socialization (Boston: Little Brown and Co., 1969); Kenneth P. Langton, Political Socialization (New York: Oxford University Press, 1969).

110. P. Caussat, op.cit., p. 127, p. 176.

111. Ibid, p. 196

112. Ibid, p. 322.

113. F. Rossi-Landi, Ideologies of Linguistic Relativity (The Hague: Mouton, 1976), p. 6.

114. M. Cowan, op.cit., p. 77.

115. Kai T. Erikson, "A Comment on Disguised Observation in Sociology" Social Problems, 14, No. 4 (Spring 1967) pp. 366-373; I.C. Jarvie, "The Problem of Ethical Integrity in Participant Observation", Current Anthropology, 10 (December 1969) pp. 505-508.

116. A Shostak, ed., Sociology in Action. Case Studies in Social Problems and Directed Social Change (Homewood, Ill.: Dansey, 1966); A.R. Holmberg, "Participant Intervention in the Field" Human Organization, 14, No. 1 (Spring 1955), pp. 23-28.

117. P. Caussat, op.cit., p. 203.

118. Ibid, p. 122.

119. Ibid, p. 195

120. Ibid, p. 322

121. F.M. Bernard, op.cit. p. 256. Herder writes that "man alone has made a goddess of choice, in place of necessity".

122. Buck and Raven, op.cit., p. 122. Humboldt writes that "language requires freedom".

123. P. Caussat, op.cit., p. 33.

124. M. Merleau Ponty, Themes from the Lectures of the Collège de France, trans. John O'Neil (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1970), p. 21. That linguistic anonymity is a "diversion within existence" is of course one that Freud has also shown.

125. Buck and Raven, op.cit., p. 131.

126. Nicholas Rescher, Scientific Explanation (New York: Free Press, 1970), p. 7.
127. M. Polanyi, Personal Knowledge (New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1964).
128. Georges Devreux, From Anxiety to Method in the Behavioral Sciences (The Hague: Mouton, 1967), p. 97.
129. Robert T. Brown, op.cit., p. 118.
130. D.G. Mandelbaum, ed., Selected Writings of Edward Sapir in Language, Culture and Personality (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1903); B.J. Whorf, Language, Thought and Reality, edited by J.B. Carroll (New York: Wiley and the Technology Press, 1956).
131. Julia M. Penn, op.cit., pp. 19-22.
132. R.L. Miller, op.cit., p. 31.
133. R.L. Brown, op.cit., p. 118.
134. F. Rossi-Landi, op.cit., pp. 68-69.
135. Buck and Raven, op.cit., p. 23. See also Humboldt's essay on the "Task of the Historian" in P. Caussat, op.cit., pp. 39-58.
136. M. Cowan, op.cit., p. 245.
137. Ibid, p. 294.
138. Buck and Raven, op.cit., p. 39, p. 197.
139. Ibid, p. 2
140. Ibid, p. 214, p. 40 emphasis added.
141. P. Caussat, op.cit., p. 88, translation of R.L. Miller, op.cit., p. 31.
142. Buck and Raven, op.cit., p. 20.
143. Ibid, p. 40.
144. E. Sapir, "Conceptual Categories in Primitive Languages" in Science LXXIV (1931), p. 578.
145. B.L. Whorf, op.cit., pp. 213-214, p. 221.
146. Joseph Church, Language and the Discovery of Social Reality (New York: Random House, 1961), p. 134.
147. Buck and Raven, op.cit., p. 43, p. 63, p. 76. P. Caussat, op.cit., p. 127.

148. P. Winch, "Understanding a Primitive Society" in Bryan R. Wilson, op.cit., p. 82.
149. P. Winch, The Idea of a Social Science, p. 52.
150. P. Winch, "The Idea of a Social Science", p. 9.
151. L. Wittgenstein, Philosophical Investigations, translated by G.E.M. Anscombe (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1972), paragraph 43.
152. Ibid, paragraph 23, emphasis in text, except for emphasis of "new", "activity" and "form of life."
153. James A. Black and Dean J. Champion, Methods and Issues in Social Research (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1976).
154. Adam Prezworski and Henry Teune, The Logic of Comparative Social Inquiry, op.cit., p. 10.
155. Raymond F. Hopkins and Robert C. Mitchell, "Survey Research in Africa: Some Propositions", African Studies Review, XVII, No. 3 (December 1974), p. 568.
156. G.G. Hempel and P. Oppenheim, "Theory of Scientific Explanation" in Readings in the Philosophy of Science, eds. H. Feigl and M. Brodbeck (New York: Appleton Century Crofts, 1953), p. 331.
157. Buck and Raven, op.cit., p. 36.
158. Ibid, p. 37
159. N. Rotenstreich "Humboldt's Prolegomena to Philosophy of Language" Cultural Hermeneutics, 2, No. 3 (November 1974), pp. 211-212.
160. Cultural and conceptual relativists cannot explain why and how different cultures do indeed interact, for they do not see the openness of these through language qua speech. The Humboldtian conception of language qua speech explains this interaction. Moreover as MacIntyre has shown in his critique of Winch (B.R. Wilson, op.cit., pp. 112-131) cultural and conceptual relativists' concept of understanding excludes notions such as ideology and false consciousness, for the very idea of understanding is reduced to that of reflection or projection. The Humboldtian concept of language and its attendant notion of understanding in fact permits us to distinguish what a misunderstanding is. Thus it can in fact explain how we come to understand a person better than he understands himself, thus permitting us to see whether the agent, in the words of Herder, "deludes himself to such an extent as to choose deception and revel in it" (F.M. Bernard op.cit. pp. 265-266) or whether he understands the reason, significance, value and imports of his actions.
161. Hans-Georg Gadamer, Philosophical Hermeneutics translated and edited

by David E. Linge (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1977), pp. 3-105.

162. Buck and Raven, op.cit., p. 43.

163. Ibid

164. H.G. Gadamer, Truth and Method, p. 345.

165. James A. Black and Dean J. Champion, op.cit., p. 6.

166. The same point is made from a different perspective by C. Taylor "Neutrality in Political Science" in Philosophy, Politics and Society, Third Series, edited by Peter Laslett and W.G. Runciman (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1969), pp. 25-57.

167. Heinrich Ott, "Hermeneutique de la Société", Archivio di Filosofia I (1971), p. 204.

168. Karl-Otto Apel, "The A Priori of Communication and the Foundation of the Humanities", Man and World, 5, No. 1 (1972), p. 18.

169. Gabriel A. Almond and Sidney Verba, op.cit., p. 13.

170. P. Caussat, op.cit., p. 416.

171. Buck and Raven, op.cit., p. 137.

172. P. Caussat, op.cit., p. 253.

173. On the concept of "acceptibility" see Jean Pierre Faye, La Critique du Langage et son Economie (Paris: Galilée, 1973), pp. 45-62. Acceptability of "x" as "this" fact and not as "that" fact presupposes the existence of common speech which permits the realization of a common understanding. As such to claim that "x" is a fact is to claim that it is a common fact. It is this claim that makes the fact acceptable or unacceptable.

174. Whereas Easton limits politics to an authoritative allocation of values, Oakeshott relates politics to deep-seated habits. Michael Oakeshott, On Human Conduct (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1975) and Rationalism in Politics (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1962); D. Easton, A Systems Analysis of Political Life (New York: John Wiley and Sons Inc., 1963), p. 163.

175. C. Taylor, "Neutrality in Political Science", p. 42.

176. H. Eulau, op.cit., p. 134.

177. In the history of Western social science, the search for a language independent of human beings is not new. It has its roots in the Enlightenment project of a universal language, and Leibniz's famous project for a universal language which would consist of small figures for objects accompanied

by various marks representing intangible qualities. [G.W. Leibniz, New Essays Concerning Human Understanding, trans. A. G. Langley (Chicago: Open Court Publishing, 1916), p. 372]. The modern comparativists' search for a language without human meanings differs however in its expressed aims and telos from the Enlightenment project which was internally related to the project of emancipation from a repressive political order, and to the creation of a humane and rational social order. The modern comparativists have totally shifted the ground to the search of a pure apolitical language without in any way recognizing the repressive political conditions of the present and the political implications of this scientific project. Curiously, compared to the Enlightenment project, the contemporary search for a universal scientific language seems to have mystical overtones. It is nearer to the project of Ignatius de Loyola who advised his followers to purify themselves of all languages in order to speak the universal language of God. Commenting on this, Barthes writes:

"Il faut, pour parler à Dieu, faire abstraction de tous les langues antérieurs, en particulier des "paroles obscures". Il faut installer une sorte de vide linguistique, nécessaire à l'élaboration et au triomphe de la langue nouvelle: le vide est idéalement l'espace antérieur de toute sémiophanie".

[R. Barthes, Sade, Fourier, Loyola (Paris: Seuil, 1971), p. 55]. The comparativists' project of content-less, universal language seems to be closer to de Loyola's than to the Enlightenment's project. This seems to throw a new light on the mysticism of evidence that is made to be the foundation of political science.

178. D.H. Everson and J.P. Paine, An Introduction to Systematic Political Science, pp. 127-143.

179. Comparativists import their concepts and categories into other cultures as if these concepts and categories were external to the understanding that is required to recognize what are going to be studied as political practices and events. That such an approach in fact simply excludes the recognition of the other polity is what Louis Dumont shows in his masterly study of castes in India. Louis Dumont, Homo Hierarchicus (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970).

180. Thus when comparativists go into African polities and study "political parties", "bureaucracies" and "voting behaviour", they are in fact claiming that they and the Africans share the same understanding of the practices that are called political parties, bureaucracies and votes. But they do not demonstrate that there is in fact such a sharing.

181. H.C. Gadamer, Truth and Method, pp. 346-347. For a less sophisticated but nevertheless interesting discussion of this question see Clifford Geertz, The Interpretation of Cultures (New York: Basic Books, 1973), pp. 25-28. See also Marcel Mauss, The Gift, Forms and Functions in Archaic Societies, trans. Ian Cunnison (New York: W.W. Norton, 1967), pp. 2-3.

182. L. Wittgenstein, op.cit., M. Merleau Ponty, La Prose du Monde (Paris: Gallimard, 1969); K. Burke, A Grammar of Motives (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1969); J.R. Searle, Speech Acts An Essay in the Philosophy of Language (Cambridge: At the University Press, 1972). These are but few examples.

183. Karel Kosik describes this dialectic between fact, history and sociality in the following manner:

"La réalité sociale comme nature humaine est inséparable de ses produits et de ses modes d'existence: elle n'existe pas autrement que dans la totalité historique de ses produits qui, par rapport à elle, ne sont pas des choses extérieures ou accessoires... La réalité est plus que les rapports et la facticité historique, mais ne plane pas pour autant au-dessus de la réalité empirique."

[in Karel Kosik, La Dialectique du Concret (Paris: Maspero, 1970), p. 102]. The whole passage is in italics in the original text.

184. Charles Taylor, "Interpretation and the Sciences of Man" in The Review of Metaphysics, XXV, No. 1 (September 1971), p. 25.

185. In Tanzania, to be expelled from the political party is to be expelled automatically from parliament. See J.S. Saul, "Elections and the Politics of Socialism in Tanzania, 1965-1970" in Socialism and Participation by the Election Study Committee (Dar es Salaam: Tanzania Publishing House, 1974), pp. 44-60.

186. P.P. Ekeh, "Colonialism and the Two Publics in Africa: A Theoretical Statement" Comparative Studies in Society and History, 17, No. 1 (1975), pp. 91-112.

187. C. Taylor, "Interpretation...", p. 24.

188. Ibid., p. 27.

189. Austin T. Turk, "The Sociological Relevance of History: A Footnote to Research on Legal Control in South Africa" in Comparative Social Research: Methodological Problems and Strategies, ed. Michael Armer and Allen D. Grimshaw (New York: Wiley-Interscience, 1973), p. 290.

190. G.W.F. Hegel, Reason in History translated by R.S. Hartman (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1976), p. 75.

191. Jean Marie Goulemot, Discours, Histoire et Révolution (Paris: Union Générale d'Éditions, 1975), p. 14.

192. R. Aron, "Relativism in History" in The Philosophy of History in our Time, ed. Hans Meyerhoff (New York: Doubleday, 1959), p. 154.
193. R.G. Collingwood, The Idea of History (London: Oxford University Press, 1956), p. 248. Collingwood writes that every new historian "must rewrite history...since historical thought is a river into which none can stop twice".
194. R. Barthes, "Historical Discourse" in Structuralism, ed. Michael Lane (London: Cape, 1970), p. 153.
195. Cyril Welch, The Sense of Language (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1973), p. 41.
196. Ibid, pp. 100-125.
197. B. Croce, "History and Chronicle" in Hans Meyerhoff, op.cit. p. 55.
198. See below Chapter VII on the systematic distortion of history in comparative political discourse.
199. Paulo Freire, Pedagogy of the Oppressed (New York: Herder and Herder, 1972), pp. 27-57.
200. On the political and moral preconditions of comparison, see Epilogue.

CHAPTER IV

POLITICAL PRACTICES AND HOLOPHRASTIC CONCEPTS

Introduction

The discussion in the previous chapter suggests that a political practice is an experience of a political subject. The question then is: what does a political scientist understand by experience? The mainstream comparativist limits experience to that which is observable and replicable. The Humboldtian approach recuses this limited conceptualization of experience as a patently false one. The experience of the subject is not first experience and then denoted as this or that political act. As Gadamer indicates,

The experience is not wordless to begin with and then an object of reflexion by being named, by being subsumed under the universality of the word. Rather, it is part of our experience itself that it seeks and finds words that express it. We seek for the right word, i.e. the word that really belongs to the object, so that in it the object comes into language. Even if we hold to the view that this does not imply any simple copying, the word is still part of the object in that it is not simply allotted to the object as a sign.¹

The political experience of the subject is then an already meaningful experience, which, as a political experience, engages the subject in certain practices and relations. This does not mean that the meanings, significances and implications of this experience are immediately and totally given to the subject or the observer. The experience may be understood in a distorted manner; it may even be denied. But this does not make the experience absent and voiceless. Rather, it raises the question of the nature of this experience and its articulation within the social world in which it is manifested. The point then is that there is no political experience, including silence,² which is not inscribed in the linguistic practices and the world of the subjects concerned. Politics can be thus seen as an experiential meaning inscribed in a historically produced experiential universe. If then language and experience are inseparable, the experiential universe of politics is essentially a linguistic universe.

The Experiential Universe and Politics.

The experiential universe is the field within which experiential meanings are created, encountered, shared, debated, hidden or rejected. An experiential meaning is not a discrete, isolated meaning-in-itself. It is "for a subject, of something, in a field".³ An experiential meaning is not a response to a clue, a signal, or a cue, unless these are understood metaphorically. An experiential meaning exists only for a being endowed with language, for the experience belongs to the expression that makes it an effective meaning. The expression that constitutes the experience is also the one that establishes the difference of each experience as a different experience. To describe a group participating in a political protest as "a gang" rather than as "demonstrators", to describe an event "x" as a "riot" rather than as "an uprising", is more than describing. It is constituting them as experiential meanings implicating certain actions, values and notions of legitimacy and illegitimacy. The experiential meaning implicates an understanding of what a social order is and should be. In this sense, each experiential meaning presupposes an experiential universe which is its condition of validity and interpretation. The experiential universe is the epistemological as well as the political framework of narration of the experiential meaning of the subject. Each experiential meaning, although of a subject, engages more than the experience of the subject.

The experiential universe is not a private universe of meanings. It is public, inherited and linguistic. It articulates the possibilities, even if they do not yet exist, and limits of social existence, for social existence does not consist of infinite possible social practices. All social practices and social relations are not equally significant; they do not have equal values; they are not equally available. This is not because the subject is naturally limited to this or that experiential meaning or social practice. It is rather due to the fact that the subject, through his actions which engage his experiential universe, is

constituted as that subject which is possible in that experiential universe. In other words, the subject himself is an experiential meaning to himself. But this does not mean that he is transparent to himself. The meanings carried by his social practices have value, significance, availability, plausibility as synthesized and mediated by the meanings that are permitted and prohibited in the experiential universe.

This experiential universe informs linguistic practices. The linguistic practice of the subject presupposes the language-world, its institutions and the ranges of possible legitimate discourse. The experiential universe is this language-world embodied in its institutions, social practices and history. The experiential universe is not a universe of pure linguistic meanings. Nor is it an individual or imaginary universe. It is a universe wherein the experiential meaning of the subject discovers its force and its limits. The force and the import of the experiential meaning are not the utterances themselves of the speaker but in the experiential universe which informs them and out of which they arise. As Bourdieu points out,

...la force d'illocution des expressions (illocutionary force) ne saurait être trouvée dans les mots mêmes, indiquée ou mieux représentée - au double sens. Ce n'est que par exception - c'est à dire dans les situations abstraites et artificielles de l'expérimentation - que les échanges symboliques se réduisent à des rapports de pure communication. Le pouvoir des paroles n'est autre chose que le pouvoir délégué du porte-parole, dont les paroles - c'est à dire, indissociablement la matière du discours et la manière de parler - sont tout au plus un témoignage et un témoignage par d'autres de la garantie de délégation dont le locuteur est investi.⁴

Thus one can say that the force of the experiential meaning is not within "language" itself, if "language" is understood as an instrument or in a non-Humboldtian manner. From the Humboldtian point of view, the force of the experiential meaning is in the language-world, the experiential universe, which is articulated, reinvented and extended by the social practices and speech of the subjects, thus expressing a certain hierarchy of needs and evaluations, i.e., a social order. When this experiential

universe disintegrates, the discourses that express it lose their force.

As the experiential universe is thus a linguistically articulated universe, the situation which is meaningful to the agent engages other experiential meanings in that universe as contrasting and similar, as contiguous and non-contiguous meanings. Each experiential meaning is thus in a field of meaning. This "field" is not only conceptual or lexical. From the Humboldtian point of view the distinction between conceptual and lexical is insufficient, for conceptual fields may not be defined independently of language. The "field" of meanings is a semantic field that characterizes concrete situations and social practices. To "see" presupposes the "eye", but to "vote" does not presuppose the "hand". To be a "candidate" presupposes the institutions of parliament, representation, the practices of competition, voting which in turn presuppose a certain social organization, a certain image of man. In other words:

The field of meanings in which a given situation can find its place is bound with the semantic field of the terms characterizing these meanings and the related feelings, desires and predicaments.⁵

I said earlier that the experiential universe is a public universe. This applies also to the experiential meaning of the individual. An experiential meaning is not a private meaning. Presupposing, as it does, an experiential universe, implicating as it does a semantic field of meanings, its availability to the subject is also the constitution of the subject as a designated participant in the experiential universe. His experiential meaning is inscribed in the experiential universe in such a way that it is the condition of the subject being recognized as a member of that universe, and understood in what he experiences. The point then is that the experiential meaning does not exist independently of language, topic and social practices. Understanding the experiential meaning of a subject is not "to get inside another person and relive his experiences".⁶ True, the experiential meanings of the subject are forged by the subject's practices and interpretations, but these cannot be conceptualized and

understood as private meanings and norms. The practices and interpretations of the subject presuppose a "set of ideas and norms" which are not subjective and yet are constitutive of his practices and interpretations. The ideas, norms, meanings that make possible his practices, interpretations are "intersubjective meanings, which are constitutive of the social matrix in which individuals find themselves and act".⁷

Thus, when a person uses concepts such as society, tribe, nation, state, trade-unions, bureaucracy, he is evoking in each case an experiential universe in which each concept is articulated with certain practices, feelings, desires, norms and possibilities, which are constituted by the distinctions and ranges of meaning available in the linguistic practices of the subject. For example, Philipson points out that there is no single term in Swahili that can serve as an "equivalent" of the French word "société",⁸ (or the English word, society). When Nyerere speaks of and writes about Tanzanian "society", he has to use Swahili terms connoting "state", "nation", "family", "community", "country", "people", "masses". The distinctions and ranges of meanings available here constitute a semantic field where the understanding of "society" implicates ideas, norms and practices that are in many respects different from the Western understanding of "society". What Philipson is saying is not that Tanzanians who listen to and read Nyerere's pronouncements are confused about what he is saying.⁹ What he is suggesting is that the understanding of what "society" is, and what counts as a "social relation" for Tanzanians requires that we attend to their experiential universe. The experiential meaning of "society" cannot be netted in as an objective datum in the mind of the Tanzanian, as the method of attitude survey suggests. We can speak of Tanzanian society, Chinese society. But it does not follow from this that society is a cross-cultural disembodied concept. This is not a mere question of lexical fields as Philipson's examples may perhaps falsely suggest. It is a matter of semantic fields within an experiential universe.

If we consider the experiential universe as a context, every experiential meaning is a textualization of the experiential universe. The act of textualization (the production of facts) carries not only the intention of the subject but also the "constitutive distinctions, constitutive ranges of language." These are not external to experiential meanings; they constitute them. What the notion of experiential universe suggests for the practice of comparing different polities is that such a comparison cannot escape the obligation of considering facts as expressions of different experiential universes, unless the comparativist shows that the facts call upon the same or similar experiential universes. But there is no shared experiential universe that spans time and space. As Lucien Febvre has indicated, even the "same" society can develop different experiential universes in the course of its history, more correctly perhaps, "histories". He suggests that the "French of the 13th Century" spoke their language as if they lived in an auditory-olfactory world wherein the visual experience of things seems to have been absent.¹⁰ The implication of this is that the "Frenchman" of the 20th Century and the 13th Century cannot be compared in terms of a stand that claims that expressions such as "maison", "rue", "honneur", "pouvoir", "société", refer to the same (objective) things, practices and institutions. Northrop also shows the existence of discontinuities between different experiential universes in his The Complexity of Legal and Ethical Experiences, by comparing the different experiential universes of Ancient Greece, Confucian China, Buddhist India and Empiricist England.¹¹ According to Northrop, the experiential universe of naive realism expressed itself in a system of status law; that of oriental empiricism, in which the subject of experience was identified with the principle of the cosmos, expressed itself in a system of mediational law; that of instrumental rationality expressed itself in a system of contractual law. If such is the case, no datum can be considered as the equivalent of another datum unless one shows that beyond their formal similarity they also engage comparable experiential universes.

A few brief illustrations can clarify the importance of elucidating the experiential universe of the subjects and practices to be compared.

If we take African political practices, they take place within an experiential universe which is primarily articulated through oral communication, as opposed to the written articulation that characterizes Western political practices.¹² According to Ong, the Western experience of the universe is essentially as something seen.¹³ He suggests that not only is the universe experienced as something seen, but also "understanding" itself is treated as visual knowledge. Now, such an understanding of the universe and knowledge does not mesh in with the understanding and knowledge available in a non-visual experiential universe, such as the African one.¹⁴

This view is supported by the research of ethnographers of communication.¹⁵ They suggest that the economy of hearing is different from the economy of vision. In oral cultures, the universe is experienced as something to which one responds as if to a voice. In such an experiential universe, the meanings of power, knowledge, politics are so intimately tied with the spoken word that to speak or not to speak is already expressive of a power relationship. To speak is already to possess power or be possessed by it. In a remarkable analysis of the discourse of initiation in the Ivory Coast, Augé elicits the relationship between speech and power as the tacit theory of politics that structures the linguistic practices of the Alladians. He writes:

La théorie des pouvoirs est une théorie faite pour parler aux cadets, non des cadets... La théorie enseigne avant tout à se taire, elle relève les dangers de la prise de parole, elle menace de condamner ceux qui auraient l'imprudence de recourir à elle pour élaborer un discours effectivement dit, une accusation effectivement formulée.¹⁶

In such an experiential universe, one cannot for example speak of "freedom of speech" in the same sense as one does in an experiential universe where the constitutive power of language is effected in terms of social practices that respond to a visualist conception of the universe. In the latter, writing, one can suggest, domesticate, the explosive and

subversive dimension that the spoken word has in oral cultures. This does not mean that the written word is less effective. It means rather that its effectiveness is inscribed in a different experiential universe and has different meanings and consequences. It suggests a different kind of social practices and transformations. In an oral experiential universe, writes Jean Jamin,

Toute parole, tout discours, qu'il soit tenu au retenant met en place et en scène des groupes ou des catégories sociales qui sont dans un rapport aux pouvoir-dire et aux savoir-dire, qui définissent selon une logique à découvrir des pouvoir-faire et des savoir-faire.¹⁷

A simple case from comparative politics can illustrate the difference between these two types of experiential universes. Prewitt and Hyden, discussing the 1965 Tanzanian elections write:

...half of the respondents in the Dar es Salaam constituency and nearly 70% in the North constituency could name their representative to the National Assembly. Almost as many could name the losing candidate. In Bukoba/Karagwa, an average of 80% could mention the name of the candidates they voted for.¹⁸

They then point out that in the United States "less than 15% of the American voters would know that of the equivalent government representative".¹⁹ Now, there is no need to assume that these two phenomena are comparable as cases in the same category. One need not conclude that Tanzanians have more political consciousness or better memories. This may or may not be the case. But before we entertain such ideas, we have to see whether in fact, we are dealing with similar experiential universes.²⁰

Forgetting the constitutive role of the experiential universe leads to seeing the culture and history of a polity as an obstacle to its own self-understanding or development. This "scientific" naivety is best symbolized by D. Levine who writes that the subtlety of the Amharic language would be an obstacle to "modernity". He writes:

Insofar as Ethiopia is committed to the pursuit of modernity, she cannot fail to be embarrassed to some extent by the wax-and-gold complex. For nothing could be more at odds with the ethos of modernization, if

not with its actuality, than a cult of ambiguity... Yet there can be little doubt that the pace-setting spirit of modern Western culture rests on a commitment to unambiguous communication. It is predicated on the opposition that A must be A or not be A.²¹

In other words, Levine is in fact saying that there is an experiential universe called "modernity", that this experiential universe excludes "ambiguity" as an experiential meaning, but that the Ethiopian experiential universe is one which constitutes ambiguity as an experiential meaning, and that therefore the Ethiopian experiential universe is "at odds with the ethos of modernization". Certainly, such a deduction permits the comparativist to avoid the difficult task of reading how this specific experiential universe is transformed, through the activities of the subjects involved in the tasks of the present, to produce a new kind of modernization which, for all we know, may make ambiguity central to its manifestation. The point is that Levine, by freezing the experiential universe of modernity, as lived in the West, into a universal fact, is automatically prevented from attending to the Ethiopian experiential universe and its possibilities of transformation. This exclusion of the experiential universe from the experiential meanings of the studied takes, in comparative politics, the form of examples. Examples are given as if they were free of historically given experiential universes, and as if they were free-floating experiential meanings independent from history and culture.

Western bureaucracies, armies, political parties, schools and other institutions crop up continuously as examples.²² Examples seem to be understood as cases of a general cross-cultural law, although comparativists do not demonstrate this before they use their examples. In the above text, Levine uses the West as an "example" of modernization in all possible experiential universes. True, an example can sharpen one's judgement. But it does this only when it is comprehended, not as a case generated by a cross-cultural law, but as an exemplary expression of a certain experiential universe. For instance, if we consider Weber's conceptualization of bureaucracy as the rationalization of the modern world based on increased explicitness and precision, understanding it requires elucidating the experiential universe it articulates and expresses - that of capitalism

with its image of a "disenchanted world" and its instrumental rationality and individuality.²³ The exemplary bureaucracy in such an experiential universe is more that of the industrial corporation rather than that of the family enterprise. The former lets us into the image of man and society that is inscribed in the capitalist experiential universe, and lets us see why the family enterprise is a disappearing social organization. But using this "bureaucracy" as an example to study what may look like a bureaucratic organization in another polity will lead to great distortions, if one starts with the assumption that "bureaucracy" is a phenomenon independent of its experiential universe. Examples, even exemplary, are not given immediately to the subject or to the observer. They are mediated by the experiential universe. A political practice, an institution in one experiential universe, cannot be the example of a political practice or a political institution in another experiential universe. Even within the same society, the appropriation and textualization of the experiential universe are affected differently by age, class and other differences. A case in point here is Labov's demonstration that, even within the same experiential universe, class-differences are articulated linguistically in such a way that the experiential universe of a given society can have profoundly different and conflicting interpretations and experiential meanings.²⁴

If such is the nature of the experiential universe, politics as part of this universe is rooted in both speech and actions that presuppose this universe. This universe is present in the political language as its constitutive distinctions and ranges of meanings. This political language is not a reflection of the experiential universe. It is its application. It is not contiguous to nor a discourse on political actions. It is internal to these. The concept of experiential universe suggests then that a study of political practices necessarily involves interpretations in order to discover the political subject, the meanings, values and norms of social practices as political experiences. None of these are available as non-interpretable data or as subjective psychological data.

This requires that we consider political concepts and political practices, as being related to each other, through the experiential universe of the political subject.

Although the experiential universe is public and linguistically available, it is not equally and similarly available to every member of society. This differentiated sharing of the experiential universe is also constitutive of what is the political domain, of what is a political practice, and who is the political subject. The subject of political practice is not given directly but rather defined by the constitutive distinctions and ranges of meanings that inform the experiential universe. The political subject is not, as cross-cultural surveyors seem to believe, constituted by the fact that he answers (political) questions, but by non-subjective meanings of which he is not totally aware, and whose constitutive effects appear as the political in his discourse and practice, and constitute him as the political subject of a certain type and at a certain level. In a sense then, the political subject is never an "I" for the "elocutionary" force of his political speech is the effect of the institutions, as present in the experiential universe, which legitimate his speech as having the experiential meaning of politics. This does not mean that politics is rooted in something pre-political. Politics is the institutionalization of interlocution as a polity of power relationships. It is the transformation of sociality into polity through the power of speech that engages others and nature, or material conditions, into a common world.²⁵ But this speech, which is mediated by the experiential universe, is one whose political import cannot be understood and recognized independently of the social practice in which it is present as the realization of a purpose. In other words political speech is a holophrastic speech.²⁶ The mediation of the experiential universe is a mediation that is active from within the practices and institutions of that polity. The language of politics cannot thus claim a semantic autonomy from political practices. Nor can the language of political science claim such an autonomy from the language of politics with which it shares an experiential universe. What this suggests is that in the study of politics, it is not

the language of political science that has an epistemological primacy but the political world itself.

If the political world has such a primacy, knowing it cannot but start from that world as lived by men. Men do not experience politics as mere isolated individuals but as members of a polity. Neither two nor a million men do as individuals constitute a political world. They do so as commonly organized individuals. This suggests two points. First, the political world cannot be reduced to an apolitical or non-political level. The political cannot be explained in either behavioural terms or empathy, although knowledge of the behaviours involved and an empathetic approach to the subject of study can help. Our knowledge of the political involves more than data and logical operations. It involves facts and concepts that are "societal"; to borrow Mandelbaum's term.²⁷ And as those which are "societal" are linguistically expressed and articulated, synthesized and mediated, they are interpretations of sense-forming relations of language and the world, of words and things, of meanings and acts. These are not dichotomies even if the immediacy of writing presents them as such. These are unities mediated by the practice of the (social) individual.²⁸ The knowledge of social facts then requires that our conceptualization of these facts not be limited to observable acts and not be separated from the conceptualizations they carry and make them part of the human world. The act of voting, participating in a tribal activity, paying membership dues carry not only the intention of the subject, but the intention of the subject as mediated by the experiential universe, and makes it thus expressive of a certain organization of society and the subject's place in it. The concepts employed in the understanding of the observable acts are thus internally related to social practices in a double and yet inseparable and asymmetrical manner. On the one hand, they are related to social practices through the subject's intentions they carry; on the other, they are related to social practices through the experiential universe which is mediated by the activity of the subject. The observable acts must thus be conceptualized in such a way that they are understood as expressions of social practices. This does not mean

that observable acts are not social practices. It means that observable acts are not identical with the social practices they express. Facts, as facts, express a claim of being final interpretations of social practices. But the claim itself is an interpretation. The concepts of political science must engage the observable acts not as completed facts but as facts - the acceptable interpretation at a given level, at a given time and place - that are expressive of the subject's intention and of the experiential universe that mediates it. As the latter is expressed as an effect only, the concept, to disclose the society and history inscribed in the fact and to describe the social reality which produces it as a social fact, must engage the fact as an already given interpretation of social practices.

I used the imperative "must" to develop the idea that facts are made accessible to our understanding through concepts that engage them as expressions/interpretations of social practices. But from the Humboldtian point of view, it is more than a question of "must". Rather, it is in the very nature of the linguisticness of the experiential universe. All concepts, all descriptions go beyond the social facts they constitute or describe. They are transitive and implicate the social organization and history of the experiential universe in which the facts are given. In this sense all concepts are holophrastic for their transitivity is an expression of the practical conditions of the unity of meanings and objects, words and things.

Holophrastic Concepts

The term "holophrase", has been used in anthropology, psychology and psychoanalysis with varying connotations. Its first use seems to be in the anthropology of the 19th Century. Payne used it to express what he believed to be the characteristic of the languages of "primitives".²⁹ He considered such languages to be "holophrastic" because they do not, according to him, analyse and structure-experiences but express them as impressions that are non-discriminatory and undifferentiated. He wrote that such languages are concrete and their words are "portmanteau

word[s]", and asserted that "in the holophrase" are "embodied" the "circumstance, time, the mental disposition of the persons concerned".³⁰

Indeed, Payne is victim to the bias of Western social science which tacitly assumes that there is only one kind of abstraction, understood in the Platonic sense, without considering, as Humboldt suggests, that speech activity, in whatever language, produces its own type of abstraction.³¹ But Payne's bias holds an important truth, that the word is not a sound isolated from the world. As a holophrase, it is, to use Humboldt's language, the synthesis of its "differing conditions and the designation of these conditions" made possible by "the activity of sensibility and intellect".³² The interesting kernel of the 19th Century anthropological hypothesis of "holophrastic" language is the implicit idea that language is inseparable from its social reality. The hidden suggestion here is that every language is indeed holophrastic - whatever the type of abstraction involved, for every language is effectively manifested only through social practices and the way we talk about them. Boas who, according to Hymes, was acquainted with Humboldt's writing on language,³³ in fact considers all languages to be holophrastic in a certain sense. He writes:

The tendency of a language to express a complex idea by a single term has been styled "holophrastic" and it appears therefore that every language may be holophrastic from the point of view of another language. Holophrasis can hardly be taken as a fundamental characteristic of primitive languages.³⁴

Boas's view points to the idea that each language, as the language of a given society, embodies practices, values and concepts that pertain to that society. The holophrastic nature of language is not only a matter of differing informations that are made available by different languages; it is more a matter of differing constitutions of social practices and of differing social orders. To describe events, for example, as revolutions, uprisings, riots, insurrections, rebellions does not convey only different informations but also, being constitutive of practices, their own justifications, ideals and interpretations of a social order. To consider an event "x" as an election instead of a plebiscite contains already

justifications or non-justifications of the event and the actions taken in support or against it. To say then a concept is holophrastic is to say that it both describes and constitutes social practices; it is to say that the split between fact and value is a reading of social practices that forgets the holophrastic nature of the concepts that pertain to these.

The second field where one meets the term holophrastic is child psychology. According to McNeil, the words possessed by young children are called "holophrastic" in the sense that such words are supposed to stand for "sentences".³⁵ But what is meant by "sentences" when one speaks of such children is quite problematic. The "sentences" referred to are in fact the experiences that are expressed and articulated by the child's words. One can suggest that Piaget's research indicates that practices such as sensori-motor activities, concrete separation in classification, seriation, performing reversible operations, i.e. activities, are central to holophrastic words.³⁶ But the activities of the child are activities inscribed in the social domain, whence their expressibility. If the child's language is holophrastic, it can be suggested that it is not because his words stand for sentences, it is rather because his words express activities and experiences that are interpretable from within the social reality. This permits the observer to recognize the experience of the child. The point then is that the child's language is holophrastic not because it is "simple" or "underdeveloped". A child's language is not made up of clues, signals and cues. These cannot be holophrastic because they exclude both the experience - constituting activity and the determination of the content of that activity by the experience. Piaget's research seems to support Herder's insight that "parents never teach their children language without the latter, by themselves, inventing language along with them".³⁷ The child's language is holophrastic because it is, like all languages, expressive of the child's experience as one that is constituted in a social world by the child's activity.

This example from child psychology points to some interesting consequences. To say that the language of the child and that of the adult are holophrastic suggests that there are different ways of constituting,

expressing and articulating the world, ways whose integrity and reality would be lost if one were to translate the child's language into the adult's or the adult's into the child's without respecting the language-world of each. In other words, translation between the two language-worlds cannot take place adequately if we were to assume that the child is an adult in miniature or the adult a grown-up child. This, of course, suggests that the instrumentalist conception of translation, known in comparative politics as back-translation, presupposing, as it does, an a-linguistic world and considering translation as a technique of calibrating words to referents, misses the very aim of translation, which is to make the other's experiential universe available in its novelty and originality.³⁸

The third field where we meet the expression of holophrastic is psychoanalysis. Lacan, drawing on the writings of ethnographers such as Leenhardt writes that "il y a des phrases, des expressions qui ne sont pas décomposables, et qui se rapportent à une situation prise dans son ensemble - ce sont les holophrases".³⁹ He underlines the intersubjective nature of holophrases by indicating that "toute holophrase se rattache à des situations limites, où le sujet est suspendu dans un rapport spéculaire à l'autre."⁴⁰

From this point of view, the holophrastic nature of language is rooted in the intersubjectivity of the "we" it expresses. A linguistic expression is not only indexical but also transitive; it expresses an act, a situation, an event in such a way that not only should we take the context but also the counter-context, that which is absent (the "we", "other", "experiential universe", "practice") if we are not to distort it in our effort to understand and explain it. To decompose a linguistic expression is to treat it as if it were a discourse of pure meaning; it is to consider experiential meanings as self-transparent acts of consciousness. Such pre-Marxian and pre-Freudian conceptions of meaning and practice, conceptions that inform attitude and cross-cultural surveys, decompose, distort and occlude the social practices they study by making the categories of social science rather than the language (which being

holophrastic is rooted in the pre-reflexive) of the subjects the starting point of analysis.

If we take this Lacanian understanding of the holophrase, the fact that comparativists claim to possess a universal language of political science from which they start their study of different polities would be like starting analysis from the standpoint of therapy (the speech of the therapist) and not from the standpoint of neurosis (the speech of the neurotic). Comparativists start the study of other polities with the concepts of political development, modernization, institutionalization, ... etc. which are pre-given as the "cures" that supply the concepts of analysis for the study of "developing, modernizing..." societies. They start with the speech of "the therapist", as it were, because the concepts of "political development, modernization" and others that one finds in comparative politics are a priori conceptualizations which are made to direct the speech of the subjects of the "developing and modernizing" polities. But this is denying (repressing) the experience of the subjects we claim to study, a danger all social scientists run, according to Evans Pritchard, when the other is denied as a being who experiences the world.⁴¹

Now, what can we get from these different conceptions of the holophrase? First, these different schools of thought bring a support to the Humboldtian thesis that language and social practices cannot be separated from each other without destroying the intelligibility of the human world which is the effect of language's mediational power between men and their world.⁴² From this point of view concepts are neither subjective nor objective; they are neither representations nor abstractions. Concepts are holophrastic and confront us as the productions of an active subjectivity that tries to render intelligibility to the unconscious level of social practices which are indeed the counter-texts of all concepts. One can suggest that the consideration of concepts as holophrastic underlines the fact that the language-world is open twice: in speech, language is open to the subjectivity of the speaker; in practice language is open

to new experiences. The extension of one (speech or practice) alters the other. In other words, from this point of view culture is never totally and completely closed or interpreted. Moreover the holophrastic nature of concepts suggests that understanding cannot be reduced to either empathy or intrapsychic phenomenon as if the intention and the actions of men were transparent. The holophrastic nature of concepts obliges the student to understand them interpretatively in order to discover the intentions and purposes of the acting subject and the experiential universe which mediates the subject's activities.⁴³ In other words, in the practice and consequently in the study of politics, concepts are not empirical in the sense of the natural sciences.

Second, these different schools suggest that a concept in the study of human affairs is, being holophrastic, a mode of production of a cluster of practices and meanings as well as the mode of understanding these practices and meanings. As an example, we can take the concept of voting. The concept of voting is an empty concept unless we understand it in a holophrastic manner. Voting to Americans is such that they can practice it in politics, in a business meeting, in church affairs, in classrooms, or even at home to decide on certain issues. The different practices of voting in all these domains are however articulated according to certain intersubjectively available meanings which are in the practices themselves, and in the way Americans talk about these practices. To understand voting in America and to compare it to voting, say, in South Africa, one must consider voting as a holophrastic concept that articulates different intersubjective meanings, situations, conditions, practices, values and experiences.

We can thus discover that voting in one country describes and constitutes the social practice of oppression whereas in another country it describes and constitutes the social practice of freedom even when the practice falls short of its own conceptualization. In other words the two concepts ("voting" in the first country, "voting" in the second

country) are so different that they cannot be translated by each other so as to have a comparative study of "voting behaviour" of the two countries. The two social practices share only a homonym. A comparison of such politics must at first break the illusion of the homogeneity of political practices suggested by the application of the same word to such two different practices. The comparativist's ambition to "discover the conditions in which systems of truths become naturally convertible and therefore simultaneously acceptable to several different subjects"⁴⁴ assumes autonomous political practices, objectified, and independent of any subject. This completely occludes the very question of politics by preventing us to understand and explain why "voting" in the first country is a fundamentally different practice from "voting" in the second country. Forgetting the holophrastic nature of concepts leads to the fetishization of concepts. The holophrastic nature of political concepts then would suggest that the uses of political concepts imply practices and meanings that pre-suppose a historically and collectively created world. In other words, to describe "X" as a "bureaucracy" is not only to constitute it according to certain rules and ranges of meaning; it is also to live, understand, interact with it according to these rules and ranges of meaning. To transform "X" into "Y" is to change its constitutive rules and to interact with it differently. In other words, the holophrastic nature of political concepts suggests that we cannot split political practices from the expressions which articulate them.⁴⁵ Ideally, the comparativist is engaged in making the subjects of his study narrate their political practices. The question then is that in as much as he imposes "a method" of gathering and coding "facts" on what they say, he is in fact contesting their political language, censoring and occluding their political practices. For the concepts of politics and political science being holophrastic, to dissociate the language of politics from the practices it constitutes, to dissociate these two from the language we use to study them, becomes an exercise in censorship and occlusion of the experiential universe and meanings of the subjects under study. It is to consider these subjects as being blind to what they are and what they are doing.

This idea of censorship is the third suggestion that one can find in the different ways the holophrastic concept is given in the disciplines mentioned above. To explain this, let me turn towards 19th Century anthropology. Towards the close of the 19th Century, anthropologists were acutely aware that their ethnographic data were not easily translatable and reducible to their own cultural categories. They were obliged to use native terms such as "mana", "totem", "taboo" to better express the meanings of the practices involved.⁴⁶ In spite of the evolutionary connotations given to these terms, there is an important step taken here, although the writers themselves were not aware of it. This important idea is that to call these alien practices "magic", "religion", "animism", in fact imposed a censorship in our understanding of these alien practices by unconsciously forcing us to read them through the constitutive rules and ranges of meaning available in our experiential universe. It is indeed this censorship whose effect appeared in anthropology as an evolutionary theory of culture. But what this idea of censorship suggests is that a concept, being a holophrase, imposes a certain reading of social practices.

This censorship is a result of the conflict between the holophrastic dimensions of the speech of the subject and of the speech of the social scientist. If it were a lexical or syntactical difference - in the instrumentalist sense - it would have been resolvable by the technique of meaning equivalence. But it is not, for speech, even when it appears empty, is filled with a certain social reality of which the speaker may not be aware. What the recognition of the holophrastic nature of language brings out is that the meeting of the comparativist and the studied is a confrontation that brings into play their histories (both individual and social) and their socialities. This conflict can permit a double reading, viz., of the self and the other. But when this conflict is not recognized, the holophrastic nature of the languages does not disappear. Rather the comparativist integrates the speech of his subject into his own holophrastic dimension and makes it a product of the comparativist's linguistic practices and consequently experiential universe, thus censoring the

experiential meanings and universe that inform the practices of the studied.

Such a science, by making the subject's speech attendant on the holophrastic dimensions of the comparativist discourse leads inevitably to the reading of the other's past and an anticipation of his future in a way which censures the other's past and occludes his possible futures. The other's claim of being a historical, i.e. free, subject is denied. The concepts of comparative politics which are assumed to be free from the problematic of meaning, in fact, being holophrastic, anticipate certain social practices in specific ways while excluding others. When such concepts are applied to alien practices, the sense and direction that inform comparative concepts displace the sense and direction that are carried by the alien social practices and their conceptualization of these. For example, when K. Janda compares 150 political parties from 50 countries, he writes that "there are many social organizations that call themselves political parties", but that he is "not concerned with accounting for the behaviour of every organization that has labelled itself a party", and asserts that in studying political parties, his interest is "in the set of organizations that pursue a goal of placing their avowed representatives in government position".⁴⁷ Thus he studies political parties from Africa, Asia, Latin America, Europe both Western and Eastern, North America and Oceania. But what Janda excludes by saying that he is "not concerned with accounting for the behaviour of every organization that has labelled itself a party", and what he includes by saying that his interest is "in the set of organizations that pursue a goal of placing their avowed representatives in government position" are the effects of his concept, "political party" which, being holophrastic, and thus expressive of certain political practices, censors the social ("behaviour") that constitutes a political party in the different countries.⁴⁸ This does not in any way illuminate us on the nature of politics in countries outside the North-Atlantic community where Janda's "political party" seems to have its holophrastic foundation.

Fourth, if concepts are holophrastic, they are present as motives in social practices and in the explanations of these. To call "Z" a political party is not to refer to a thing independently of the language used to describe it. To call "Z" a political party is to already commit oneself to uncover certain types of membership, agency, motivations, organization and rationality. It is already justifying "Z" as a political party according to a certain experiential universe, its attendant political theory and political analysis. When we forget this and make Z a cross-cultural category and when the alien practice resists to be articulated through this category (Z), the practice of the alien polity that Z is supposed to denote appears in comparative discourse as deficient, underdeveloped or a bad imitation. The intentions and motives that go into its formation, the purposes that it embodies, the social practices that animate it are evacuated from it. We forget that we have made "Z" the bearer of intentions, purposes, motives and practices that it was never intended to express.⁴⁹

Comparativists may side-step this issue by suggesting that there are universal political practices whose constitutive concepts are universally used to talk about these practices. Do not the Chinese, Americans, South Africans, Russians, Tanzanians describe their political practices in terms such as: politics, votes, elections, parties, unions... etc.? Lucien Pye asserts that

The distinctive character of social change in the new countries of today is that it is occurring largely in response to the diffusion of what we may call a world culture.⁵⁰

Verba and Almond make similar claims for the existence of a world political culture. They write:

The central question of public policy in the next decades is what is the content this emerging world culture will have: We already have a partial answer to this question and could have predicted it from our knowledge of the processes of cultural diffusion.⁵¹

Comparativists would thus like to claim that the universality of their concepts are rooted in the universality of the political practices

designated by these concepts. This of course is an ad hoc, unjustified borrowing of an argument which by implicitly recognizing a constitutive relationship between concepts and practices rejects the very concept of language which is supposed to make possible cross-cultural law-like generalizations. Moreover, their assumption of a world-culture, resulting apparently from "diffusion", raises the historical question of what exactly this diffusion is. This is not tackled at all.

From the Humboldtian point of view what is important is not the diffusion of terms such as "political party", "parliament". What is important is how the practices so-named are lived, described, understood, conceptualized as expressions of certain images of man and polity. What is important is to find out the experiential universe that constitutes these through the mediation of the subject, a mediation which also constitutes the subject's action and his claim to membership in his polity. Comparativists then cannot avoid the problem of the holophrastic nature of political language and concepts.

In conclusion then, we can say that recognizing the holophrastic nature of language permits the subject as well as the political scientist to discover that which fills, unknown to them, their speech. It is letting the subject appropriate a speech aware of its genesis, the "we" and the social practices that inform it; it is to let him discover a new vocabulary to talk about his social practices and problems. The point is: if we recognize the holophrastic nature of political language in the above sense, then the study of politics cannot but be the hermeneutics of political experiences. For, studying politics will be disclosing the experiential universe that informs the social practices that are appropriated or misappropriated, accepted or repressed, understood or distorted, as experiential meanings. The speech of the subject will be filled with history and actions snatched from the unconscious stream of social practices. The recognition of facts as social practices will lead, in fact, to an elaboration of a new vocabulary, which rediscovered in their holophrastic unity, will engage new social practices, meanings and values. The lesson is that the study of social practices can be a non-distorting study only

if the social practices of the studied are rediscovered in the facts, even if the subjects are not aware of them, through their presence and absence which are given as effects in the language the subjects use to describe, talk about and conceptualize them. For the alien comparativist this entails a confrontation between two, his and theirs, experiential universes, and requires a double interpretation, i.e. a concurrent interpretation of two different polities, which avoids the transformation of the alien polity into a voiceless object in the comparativist's explanation. Conversely, the recognition of the holophrastic nature of political language and concepts suggests that political languages and concepts are always open to different practices as well as to different interpretations thus opening the door to new practices, interpretations and concepts. In other words, conflicts of practices and interpretations cannot be evacuated, although they can be denied, repressed, occluded, from political life and the knowledge we claim to have of it. Political concepts and practices can thus be seen as "essentially contested", to borrow Gallie's expression,⁵² concepts and practices.

Holophrastic Concepts, Contestability and Censored Practices

If we recuse the instrumentalist theory of language and consider language as a constitutive moment of social practices, it is difficult to understand either political language or political practices independently of each other. If political language is holophrastic, then political language and political practices cannot be separated from each other without a loss of what they mean to the subjects, and what they mean in the experiential universe which mediates the subject's practice and his description of it. This, I suggest, makes political concepts, descriptions and practices, essentially contested concepts, descriptions and practices. I use Gallie's expression of "essentially contested concepts" to develop my view on the inevitability of interpretation as an essential part of the study of politics. However, as the discussion up to now and the discussion in this section make clear, the notion of "essentially contested concepts" as I use it, is in many respects different from Gallie's. My

analysis suggests that contestedness is rooted in the holophrastic nature of political language and not only in conceptual differences as Gallie seems to suggest. I will first outline Gallie's conception to make my discussion clear.

Gallie gives seven conditions which together define what an essentially contested concept is. First, such a concept is "appraisive",⁵³ Second, the "achievement" signified by it "must be of an internally complex character".⁵⁴ Third, the explanation of the achievement's worth must "include reference to the respective contributions of its various parts", and, according to Gallie, this achievement can be described differently and even in a contradictory manner for each description can involve a different ranking of the various features of the achievement. Fourth, such a concept is "open" in as much as the achievement signified by it "admits of considerable modification in the light of changing circumstances"⁵⁵ and yet the modification cannot be "prescribed or predicted in advance".⁵⁶ To these "four most important necessary conditions"⁵⁷ he adds, fifth, that using such a concept is using it "against other uses and to recognize that one's own use of it has to be maintained against other uses".⁵⁸ Sixth, such a concept must be derived "from an original exemplar whose authority is acknowledged by all the contestant users of the concept"⁵⁹ and, seventh, that the competing performance of that which is signified by the concept must enable the "original exemplar's achievement to be sustained and/or developed in optimum fashion".⁶⁰

Now, manifestly Gallie's essentially contested concept is so because of the type of performance or social practice it involves. A concept is not an essentially contested concept if it is only a verbal dispute. For example, in the debate of whether the "bourgeoisie" in Africa is the "bureaucracy" itself, a discussion of the "bourgeoisie" that revolves around definitional questions is no more than a verbal dispute or an expression of the different biases of the disputants. Within the framework I have adopted here the first four conditions given by Gallie are important to bring out why political concepts are essentially contested. However, his fifth, sixth and seventh conditions seem to raise the possibility, perhaps remote but nevertheless there, that essentially contested concepts

may lead to scholastic type discussions which are essentially verbal disputes and, endless. His fifth condition which is based on the idea of using a concept against other uses is open to the criticism made against Winch's concept of use unless "use" is understood as performance also. But such an extension of his concept "use" seems to be very limited for Gallie ties up, in his sixth condition, the concept to an "original exemplar" which pre-forms the performance and reduces the latter to no more than following the rules, in different ways perhaps, which constitute the "original exemplar". Here we are not really far from the Winchian concept of "use". In fact the last three conditions seem to tilt the understanding of essentially contested concepts in favor of endless disputes, and open the door for an irrational ending of disputes.

For if the conflicts of interpretation that are created by differing uses of a political concept are "endless" then we cannot escape the implication that any intersubjective consensus, in the mainstream comparativist sense, can successfully bring the contestedness to an end. In other words, the door for rooting the end of the dispute in the consensus of disputing egos is, however inadvertently, opened. Such an end is possible precisely because the holophrastic nature of essentially contested concepts is not fully recognized. If we recognize the holophrastic nature of such concepts, especially in the language of politics and political science, then we discover that divergent interpretations meet their limits in the practices that sustain each interpretation. As such, each interpretation brings itself to an end by transforming that which it interprets. Gallie does not seem to recognize this possibility for he does not root the contestedness of concepts in their holophrastic nature. The dispute is not endless because it is not the same dispute. The interpretation is broken, because it is now a social practice that extends that which it clarified, and engages the interpretation in certain actions. Social practice "solves" or changes the dispute. The solving of the dispute creates a new situation which cannot be excluded from the interpretation, which in turn cannot be excluded from the new understanding of the concept. Both the subject and object of interpretation are now in a different relationship. If we consider "contestedness" as an "endless dispute" we exclude the

practical and intersubjective social reality that permit and limit the contestedness. But if we consider concepts as holophrastic, thus as rooted in social practices and their experiential universe, the contestedness engages the actions of the contestants. Otherwise, the contestedness, the interpretation, becomes an "empty speech".

What seems to be needed here then is to introduce into the very understanding of essentially contested concepts the idea, as suggested by John Kekes,⁶¹ of a "goal-directed activity" coping with the problems that arise from and are created by social practices and relations. This permits us to recognize two important points. On the one hand, in the cross-cultural application of political concepts "we seem to have no grasp of what would count as normal circumstances or standard conditions in the corresponding areas of social life".⁶² But on the other hand it is this very condition which requires that the behaviour captured by a concept be acknowledged in a way which permits the concept to get its determinations in the social practice it is made to read. Rival descriptions and conceptualizations of this practice cannot neglect the determinations the concept is given as a social practice. A debate regarding this practice is not independent of the practice itself. According to MacIntyre, if we consider such categories of social practice as politics,

Debate within such a practice is inseparable from debate about the practice, and both form parts of each practice...what is the correct perspective in which to view party government is a question on the answer to which the question of whether party government in any genuine sense has ever existed in Ghana can turn, and consequently the question of whether hypotheses about party government must be vindicated equally in Ghana as in Great Britain.⁶³

The point then is that essentially contested concepts are so precisely because they inform and engage social practices and relations in ways that give conflicting senses (meaning and orientation) to our relations with others, society, nature and ourselves. But what must not be forgotten here is that what makes concepts essentially contested are the complexity of the social practices themselves. When the social practices disappear,

like those of chivalry, then the concepts of these social practices tend to lose their contestedness for they can no more initiate new social practices.

Here two objections may arise. According to Gray "not all societies possess essentially contested concepts"⁶⁴—and second, "it cannot be the criterion of a concept's essential contestability that its users are culturally and historically variant"⁶⁵.

The first objection unnecessarily limits the concept of "essentially contested concepts" to the liberal idea, inherited from Mill, that the contesting of concepts is only a matter of debate. This objection is one that neglects, although Gray relates such concepts to "forms of social life",⁶⁶ that the contestedness of concepts arises from the articulation of experiential meanings and the experiential universe through the social practices of the subject. As I have already shown in my discussion of history, no human life is sheer repetition. No human life is without conflicts of interpretations for it is rooted in conflicts of practices. If we then take this holophrastic nature of language and speech, this objection falls down, unless one can show the possibility of a society without conflicts of social practices and interpretations.

The second objection is more serious. If in country A, "political party" means in its very practices something totally different from country B, it is true that we cannot speak of an essentially contested concept for the inhabitants of A and B are in fact speaking of two totally different practices when they speak of "political party".

But the question here is the stand taken by the mainstream comparativist. As we have already seen, the comparativist assumes in fact that there are universal political objects which are ontologically given, which are independent of languages, and can be netted in terms of empirical concepts. Comparativists, by assuming that their linguistic practices are the realization of their empiricist epistemology, deny the cultural and historical specificities, by treating them as disposable contingencies, in the generation of cross-cultural law-like generalizations. As such,

mainstream comparativists in fact "endorse a definite philosophical position" with respect to the concepts of comparative politics and politics: that there are correct applications of these concepts and that these correct applications embody normative standards which permit us to generate cross-cultural discourses on modernization, development and institutionalization. In other words, they postulate an ideal of a political order which serves as a grid for reading different polities in ways that contest the uses of what comparativists claim to be the same concepts in the practices of alien polities. Certainly the history of the last six hundred years, the "Europeanization" of the planet through conquest and business, seems to justify the belief that all people speak of their political practices in "European ways" or that there is a "world culture". But although there may be some truth in this, one cannot reduce this historical process to the uniformization of histories and cultures. It is then the claim by comparativists, that there is "au fond" only one real form of social life, that each political concept has one referent, and that the referential relationship is the same in all cultures which, from the place where the comparativist stands, makes these concepts contested concepts, in view of the fact that these concepts are realized in a different manner, in different polities, and that the comparativist ends up using his concepts against theirs. This aggressive and defensive use of concepts on the part of the comparativist is directed at the social practices of the compared. Are the Chinese Communist Party, the Conservative Progressive Party, the Mouvement Populaire Révolutionnaire of Zaire applications of the same concept - the political party? Comparativists think so.⁶⁷ Those concerned readily disagree. Therefore if these concepts are contested, it is because mainstream comparativists assume that there are universal concepts applicable to all polities and as such put themselves in a relationship of struggles for the correct political meaning, consequently practices, with those they study, with regards to the application of political concepts.⁶⁸ It must be remembered that it is not the compared who claim that the concepts of politics and political science are universal and objective. It is the comparativists. As such, the discussion here contests the denial by comparativists that

they are in fact denying the practices and conceptualizations of alien practices. This can be shown by considering the comparative discourse on African politics. To do so, I will use Hyden's study of political development in Buhaya, a rural area in Tanzania.⁶⁹

Hyden uses attitude survey research to generate his data. He considers his study to have a cross-cultural comparative import. He explicitly frames his case-study as an application of the method pioneered by Almond and Verba in their work *The Civic Culture* and considers his results as "findings" that confirm or disconfirm cross-cultural generalizations.⁷⁰ His work is thus based on the ideal of comparative politics, to wit, that political practices can, as Deutsch claims: "be defined in terms of some operation that can be separated and tested by different people regardless of their preferences."⁷¹

Thus for Hyden the "political" is not problematic. It can be operationalized. He does not consider the fact that the practice of operationalizing is in fact a participation in the debate regarding the nature of the political, and the experiential meaning of the practices of the subjects. He sees it as a mode of escaping the debate. He thus does not consider the necessity of discovering what the political is for the Haya, whether their constitution of the political is similar or different from the one that structures his discourse on their politics. He assumes a tacit consensus between himself, the Haya and the reader as to what the political is. From Hyden's point of view the political is non-contested because it is apparently assumed to be a universal "object" out there to be referred to. Thus for Hyden there are only methodological problems related to sampling such as "writing question which would make sense" to the interviewees, having "good interview assistants" and coding.⁷² But Hyden's questions, the answers he gets and the coding he effects create some puzzling and even confusing situations, as we can see below.

One of the questions Hyden raises concerns "nation-building". He writes that "the political-structures in pre-colonial Buhaya were diffuse".⁷³ He does not however follow up this suggestion as to a possibly

different practice and understanding of politics in Buhaya. Rather he assigns a place to it on the political spectrum constructed by Almond and Verba. He writes:

The material needs of the ordinary men in the traditional society remained more or less constant, and were usually satisfied by existing resources. Hence there were few, if any "input" demands on the political authorities. The members of the traditional society had limited expectations of their rulers and there is no evidence that they tried to convert these into political actions. By and large the political culture of pre-colonial Haya society was, what Almond and Verba call parochial.⁷⁴

It is within this framework that Hyden asks his respondents "For which institution do you think it is most important to teach a child to work?" He structures the answer as a choice between "family, clan, village, religious institutions, nation and no information".⁷⁵ The majority of the respondents "chose" the answer "nation". But "when asked to explain why they feel a strong identity with the Tanzanian nation", they gave answers such as the following:

"I identify with the nation because I know I belong to one big family with one leader, Mr. Nyerere."

"...I am a man with a national mind. If, for instance, war breaks out in Tanzania, I am going to fight."

"I feel I am a Tanzanian, because if something happens elsewhere in Tanzania, for instance a war, I will also be affected."

"I feel the tribe is most important. We have many different tribes. Our nation is made up of tribes, so in fact, I belong to a tribe, in a certain sense I belong to the nation as well."

"Since the nation starts with the family, or rather the nation is composed of several families, I feel I am primarily a member of my family."⁷⁶

Hyden collapses these differences into the "same" phenomenon. He writes that "all these opinions and attitudes are rather different shades

of the same phenomenon - the affect for and identity with the nation - than a reflection of a divided political culture."⁷⁷ But our question is: what does the term "nation" mean to the Haya if it can be described in terms as diverse as "big family", "Tanzania", "tribe", "family", "leader"? Indeed, given that the second most important "choice" of the respondents was "religion", Hyden writes that "religion and politics to many Haya are different modes of expression of the same fundamental personality".⁷⁸ If thus the nation can be described in terms and vocabularies that cover religion, family, tribe, leader, Tanzania, and if all these descriptions are different shades of the same phenomenon, we are confronted with something quite puzzling and new.

First given that the political concept "nation" expresses the Western historical heritage of a certain way of organizing membership in a polity, it is not an empty concept. It presupposes ideas such as the right of self-determination, rights of man, laicity. Moreover its understanding may require the understanding of the social, political practices of each specific people to understand what the "nation" meant to the English, the French, the Germans, the Americans.⁷⁹ The "nation-building" of each is not repeatable either in its contents or in its forms. Did England emerge as a nation because of its colonial empires? Did France become a nation because of the oppressive centralization of the Ancien Régime? Did America become a nation because of its anti-culturalism which dissolved cultural barriers between groups that could not co-exist in Europe?⁸⁰ These questions may be debatable. The point is that the vocabulary used to describe a nation is a holophrastic vocabulary expressive of practices in a given historical situation. From this point of view, the "nation" according to the Haya seems to be described in ways that an American or an Englishman, or a Frenchman would not consider as his description of his "affect for and identity with the nation". Does this mean, as Hyden suggests, that we have different descriptions of the same object: nation? that the Haya have identified the object by referring to it but they have not yet, being "parochial", learned the exact words by which a non-parochial person refers to this object "nation"?

But this puts the Haya in a rather contradictory situation. If the different descriptions given by the Haya respondents do not imply different evaluations, different modes of social practices, we are led to postulate that the respondents do not see distinctions between "institutions" such as tribes, family, Tanzania, nation and religion. But a different hypothesis is possible. It may be that these different institutions share a certain image of man and membership that makes it possible for a Haya to describe the nation in ways that an American cannot. It may be that the Haya's presupposed images of man and membership are not available in the American's experiential universe. Moreover, if the Haya don't see any distinctions between these institutions, then structuring the answers as a choice between these institutions is a vacuous exercise. If the Haya do see distinctions between these institutions and nevertheless describe the nations in the vocabularies of these institutions, then we cannot understand what they are saying without elucidating their experiential universe. Thus when Hyden uses the concept of "nation" in his discourse and concludes that

...there is very little to suggest that the conflict between loyalties to parochial institutions, such as the family, clan or village on the one hand and the nation on the other, is one that Bahaya experience as very real...⁸¹

what we are given is a conclusion that flows not from the elucidation of the social reality of the Haya but from the holophrastic dimension that the concept "nation" has in Hyden's discourse. Hyden does not only use his concept "nation" against theirs. He does more than this. He occludes their practice. Their description of what they do is considered as non-holophrastic. The difference of their conceptualization of the "nation" is censored by separating it from the experiential meaning it has to the respondents. What at the level of discourse is an essentially contested concept becomes, when seen in the framework of the holophrastic dimensions of the concept, an essentially occluded practice - the social practice of the Haya.

To the question of how proud they are to be "citizens" of Tanzania, 90% of the respondents replied "very proud". Asked why, 45% answered "peace" or "peaceful achievement of independence" as the most outstanding quality of their country. Hyden writes that "peace" means here absence of internal strife like the ones that took place in the Congo, Rwanda, Uganda. It may be so. But what is interesting to note is that after having used the term "leader", "family", "tribe" in their description of "nation", answers such as "diligent leaders", "obedience to leaders", "unity and cooperation" score low on the above question, although such answers can be expected in view of the Haya's description of "nation". In fact only 6% chose "diligent leaders", 8% "obedience to leaders", 5% "unity and cooperation". It is as if the results suggest a "nation" without leaders, unity and cooperation, results that do not square with the strong "system affect" which the respondents are presumed to have.⁸² Hyden asks:

Can you think of any event in the life of this country, not just something that has happened in the village or district, but some event that has affected the whole nation, which has also made a difference in your life?⁸³

More than 55% of the respondents could not mention any event at all, a result that seems to be paradoxical in view of Hyden's scientific result that the Haya are proud of their "nation" Tanzania, unless one assumes that they are proud of their nation without knowing why. This may be possible. But then it requires an explication. Hyden offers a "possible explanation" which would be "lack of interest in the affairs outside the local community, the persistence of parochial attitudes".⁸⁴ But this ad hoc explanation is not only vacuous but does not square with the strong "national" identity they are supposed to have shown in the previous answers.

Thus concepts like nation, independence, leader, citizen, one-party, government⁸⁵ seem to describe and characterize Haya situation in such a way that Hyden resorts to ad hoc explanations to unite what his discourse generates as the fragmented and contradictory Haya discourses and practices. There is an asymmetry between the coherence of Hyden's discourse on the

discourse of the Haya's, and the incoherence of the Haya discourse on their practices. This asymmetry is not due to lack of data or error of instrumentation. This asymmetry results from the imposition on their practices of a reading effected through Hyden's holophrastic concepts. He integrates the Haya's social practices into the holophrastic dimensions of his concepts. He, therefore, not only contests the ways the Haya understand these concepts in their social practices, but he also censors the conceptualizations that are tacitly carried by the Haya social practices. Consequently, their social practices are occluded in as much as they resist their integration into the holophrastic dimensions of Hyden's concepts. Thus the Haya's answers and practices appear to be contradictory and fragmented, as if they had no organizing principles of their own. They are thus made to have coherence through the discourse of Hyden.

To his question on "Where the respondents get their information about politics", to be answered as a choice between "family, friends, radios, newspapers, government circulars", the "greatest number respond that they obtain their political information mainly from other family members, fellow workers or friends". Although, as Hyden remarks, "listening to the radio may be a popular pastime for some respondents, and newspapers are carefully read by some", when asked "to whom they would turn in case they wished to know more about a certain political matter", a great majority chose the answer, "family, friends" as against radio, newspapers or government circulars.⁸⁶

It seems then that for the Haya the "political" and "politics" are transmitted, shared, through channels that in a different experiential universe, say the American, may not be considered as essentially, "political". The question then is to elicit whether this difference in communicating and sharing the "political" is or is not expressive of a different practice and understanding of the political. Hyden does not think so. For him, the difference is rather that of the instrument of information-transmission. Instead of word-of-radio we have word-of-mouth. He writes that "the majority of the persons interviewed prefer a system in which the message is "legitimized" by a person or an authority before it is accepted".⁸⁷

But what this legitimization is for the Hayas is, as Bachelard would say, censored by the inverted commas.⁸⁸ The word he puts in inverted commas is one which is, in the comparativist's understanding, derived from Weber and is not compatible with the idea of legitimation through family or friendly relationships unless these relationships are shown to be a function of force, which Hyden does not show.⁸⁹ In the face of a new and different practice, Hyden puts the unsaid in inverted commas. This permits him to consider the "political" as non-contested and as something that himself, the respondents, and his readers have an agreed-upon previous knowledge of. He thus considers the question as a technical problem of "penetration". Is it through the media or the word of mouth that the "political" penetrates? Having assumed that the political is external to its mode of being known, recognized and communicated, the word in the inverted commas is made to signify only a difference of channel of communication. But if we consider the information on attendance at "campaign meetings" in the 1965 general "elections", the universal consensus regarding the "political" that is assumed by Hyden becomes more and more problematic.

80% of the respondents said that they did not attend campaign meetings and did not have political information. Yet more than 50% answered that "voting" is the most effective technique to influence government. Hyden concludes that this shows that "the importance of voting is widely recognized and people consider the individual representative a more effective political instrument".⁹⁰ But then either the Haya's have an understanding of "voting", and of its "importance" which does not require political information, or they consider "politics" as not requiring information but necessitating "voting". Or of course they may not practice what they say. Perhaps they don't think "voting" is "political", or has anything to do with them. Perhaps what they discuss among themselves and consider as "political" is different from that which requires their "voting" which they may understand as a different practice. The last point for example seems to be quite plausible and appears as an anomaly in the

respondents' discourse as produced by Hyden's reading.

To the question "Who are the people discussing politics most frequently?" he gets answers which he summarizes as follows:

...certain trends are discernible. People with much education are discussing [politics] more often than others.... Several studies, as already indicated, confirm the same pattern.⁹¹

But this confirmation of other studies is vacuous for the distribution of answers shows that the uneducated discuss "politics" as much as the educated. In fact, his questions on media exposure and politics, education and politics, give widely different results. He writes that "people who are never exposed to this kind of stimulus (mass-media) tend to discuss even more often" than those who are exposed to it occasionally (not so often).⁹² He goes on and adds that, "Very unexpectedly, those most prepared to discuss the elections were the uneducated people and those who had not attended campaign meetings".⁹³ And yet earlier on he had claimed:

Again our data confirms two findings made in Western countries; that education and interest in politics... e.g. participation in political discussions...are correlated to knowledge about politics.⁹⁴

Perhaps then the "political" of their discussion is related to their practice of their "voting" in such a way that the frontiers of the political and non-political are different than the ones that apparently structure Hyden's discourse on the Haya's political discourse. Hyden concludes his research in a disingenuous manner by saying that his research confirms certain cross-cultural generalizations and disconfirms others. He writes:

A number of observations about voting behaviour made in Western countries have been confirmed by the survey data from Buhaya....

We also found, however, that...those most often engaged in political discussion in the campaign period were people with no education. This finding defies the observation made elsewhere that uneducated people shut out political stimuli.⁹⁵

And he closes his book by asserting that

...survey research, a method which has successfully

been employed for the study of political culture in America and Europe, can be used profitably in a rural African context.⁹⁶

This may be so. But it certainly does not follow from his discourse on the Haya's discourse about their social practices. The concepts such as politics, voting, elections, campaign, informations, education appear in Hyden's discourse as necessarily interlocking concepts that read the practices of the Hayas as random, arbitrary, contingent practices. The point does not seem to be lost on Hyden for, at least on the question of "voting behaviour", he recognizes that the finding "defies" his cross-cultural observations. But the nature of this defiance, whether it is symptomatic of a conflict of practices and interpretations produced by the confrontation of different political universes is simply censored from knowledge by the assumption that the "political" is objective and independent of the language-world. Such a conceptualization of politics is more than an expression of the essential contestedness. It is, being the result of a confrontation between two holophrastic languages, a censoring of the other's political practice that results from imposing one's concept of politics.

The consequence of this is not only as Gallie writes a use of a concept against another use. The consequence is the occlusion of the other's practice; the other social reality is censored. Now, what this suggests is that the linguistic practices of comparativists, the central aspect of which is known as method, have holophrastic dimensions which structure and articulate the discourse of comparative politics in ways that may distort our knowledge of the other. ^b

FOOTNOTES

1. H.G. Gadamer, Truth and Method, p. 377.
2. Louis-Jean Calvet, Linguistique et Colonialisme (Paris: Payot, 1974), chapters I and II.
3. Charles Taylor, "Interpretation and the Sciences of Man" The Review of Metaphysics XXV, No. 1 (1971), p. 12.
4. Pierre Bourdieu, "le langage autorisé: note sur les conditions sociales de l'efficacité du discours rituel", Actes de la Recherche en Sciences sociales, 5/6 (November 1975), p. 183.
5. Charles Taylor, op.cit., p. 15.
6. H.G. Gadamer, op.cit., p. 345.
7. Charles Taylor, op.cit., p. 27.
8. Gerard Philipson, "Etudes de Quelques Concepts Politiques Swahili dans les Oeuvres de J.K. Nyerere", Cahiers d'Etudes Africaines, X(MCMLXX), p. 531.
9. Ibid, pp. 531-537.
10. L. Febvre, Le Problème de l'Incroyance au XIII Siècle (Paris: Albin Michel, 1968).
11. F.S.C. Northrop, The Complexity of Legal and Ethical Experiences (Boston: Little, Brown, 1959).
12. See chapter V on the question of oral and written cultures.
13. Walter J. Ong, Ramus, Method and the Decay of Dialogue (Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 1958); Walter J. Ong, The Presence of the World (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1967).
14. N'Sougan F. Apblemnon, Sociologie des Sociétés Orales d'Afrique Noire (The Hague: Mouton, 1969).
15. John J. Gumperz and Dell Hymes, eds. Directions in Sociolinguistics: The Ethnography of Communication (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1972); G. Calame-Griaule, Ethnologie et Langage: La Parole chez la Dogons (Paris: Gallimard, 1965); C. Cazden, V. John and Dell Hymes, eds. The Functions of Language: An Anthropological and Psychological Approach (New York: Teachers College Press, 1971), Melford Spiro, ed. Context and Meaning in Cultural Anthropology (New York: Free Press, 1965)
16. Marc Augé, Théorie des Pouvoirs et Idéologie (Paris: Hermann, 1975), p. 226.

17. Jean Jamin, Les Lois du Silence (Paris: Maspero, 1977), p. 10.
18. Quoted in Angela Molnos, "An Attempt at a Psychological Analysis of the Role of "symbols" in the Tanzanian Elections, 1965" in One Party Democracy, ed. L. Cliffe (Nairobi: East African Publishing House, 1967), p. 424.
19. Ibid.
20. The same discrepancy in political memory is also documented by David R. Smock and Audrey C. Smock, The Politics of Pluralism: A Comparative Study of Lebanon and Ghana (New York: Elsevier, 1975), p. 213.
21. Donald N. Levine, Wax and Gold: Tradition and Innovation in Ethiopian Culture (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1972), p. 10.
22. See for example the book used as a textbook in comparative political studies Jason L. Finkle and Richard W. Cable, ed., Political Development and Social Change (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1971).
23. Max Weber, The Theory of Social and Economic Organization, trans. by A.M. Henderson and Talcott Parsons (Glencoe: The Free Press, 1947), pp. 329-341.
24. W. Labov, "The Logic of Nonstandard English" in Language and Social Context, ed. Pier Paolo Giglioli (London: Penguin, 1973) pp. 119-215. See also B. Bernstein, Class, Codes and Control, 2 vols. (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul); Rosalie H. Wax, Doing Fieldwork (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1971) chapter 1.
25. Whereas animals may be said to have societies, they don't have politics.
26. See following section for discussion of holophrastic concepts.
27. Maurice Mandelbaum, "Societal Facts" in Modes of Individualism and Collectivism, ed. John O'Neil (London: Heinemann, 1973) p. 226. He writes:
 "a) in understanding or explaining an individual's actions we must often refer to facts concerning the organization of the society in which he lives, and
 b) ...our statements concerning these societal facts are not reducible to a conjunction of statements concerning the actions of individuals."
28. Buck and Raven, op.cit., p. 39.
29. Hilary Henson, British Social Anthropologists and Language (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1974), p. 15.

30. Quoted in Hilary Henson, op.cit., p. 15.
31. For an interesting discussion of this question see S. Diamond, In Search of the Primitive (New Brunswick: N.J. Transaction Books, 1974) pp. 176-203.
32. Buck and Raven, op.cit., p. 58.
33. Dell H. Hymes, "On Typology of Cognitive Styles in Language" Anthropological Linguistics, III, No. 1 (1961), pp. 25-54, especially p. 23.
34. F. Boas, Handbook of American Indian Languages, #40 (Washington: Smithsonian Institute, 1911), p. 24.
35. D. McNeil, "Development Psycholinguistics" in The Genesis of Language: A Psycholinguistic Approach, eds. F. Smith and G.A. Miller (Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 1966), p. 63.
36. J. Piaget et B. Inhelder, La Psychologie de l'Enfant (Paris: P.U.F. Que Sais-Je?, 1966); Jean Piaget, Epistemologie des Sciences de l'Homme (Paris: Gallimard-Idées, 1970).
37. F.M. Barnard, op.cit., p. 121; J. Piaget, La Formation du Symbole chez l'Enfant (Neuchâtel: Delachaux et Nestlé, 1968). See also N. Chomsky, "Review of Skinner's 'Verbal Behaviour' Language", 35, No. 1 (1959), pp. 26-58.
38. See next chapter for a discussion of the instrumentalist theory of translation or back-translation. Humboldt points out clearly this aim of translation. He writes that "...the highest useful purpose served by a translation is that it destroys itself", for the aim of translation is to make possible "the supreme valuing of the original". [M. Cowan, op.cit., p. 242].
39. J. Lacan, Le Séminaire, I (Paris: Seuil, 1975), p. 250.
40. Ibid, p. 251.
41. E.E. Evans Pritchard, Social Anthropology and Other Essays (Glencoe: Free Press, 1962), p. 82.
42. Buck and Raven, op.cit., p. 35, p. 60; P. Caussat, op.cit., p. 90.
43. For an excellent discussion of how the experiential universe of Edwardian England mediated the formulation and analysis of social science and especially certain aspects of the science of psychology see the fascinating article by Dr. Bernard Norton "A 'Fashionable Fallacy' Defended", The New Scientist, 78, No. 1100 (27 April 1978), pp. 233-255.

44. Claude Levi-Strauss, The Raw and the Cooked, translated by John and Doreen Weightman (New York: Harper & Row, 1970), p. 11. He also writes in a way that expresses lucidly the ambition of all comparativists:

"For if the final aim of anthropology is to contribute to a better knowledge of objectified thought and its mechanisms, it is in the last resort immaterial whether in this book the thought of the South American Indians take place through the medium of my thought or...theirs. What matters is the human mind, regardless of the identity of those who happen to be giving it expression, should display...[a] structure." [p. 13]

But the point is, do men express only their "human mind"?

45. That's why permitting the poor and the oppressed to narrate their life becomes a political act, for their speech discloses their world and, in the process, makes possible new political practices which simultaneously bring about new discursive practices or new ways of talking about their world. On this point, see Jean Pierre Faye, Théorie du Récit (Paris: Hermann, 1972), pp. 16 ff.

46. R.R. Marett, The Threshold of Religion (London: Methuen, 1919), pp. 101-120.

47. K. Janda, A Conceptual Framework for the Comparative Studies of Political Parties (Beverly Hills: Sage Publications - A Sage Professional Paper, 1970), p. 83. Emphasis in text.

48. See chapter VIII below for a discussion which indicates that discourses such as Janda's are highly misleading with regard to African political parties.

49. Henri Gobard, l'Aliénation Linguistique (Paris: Flammarion, 1976), p. 28. Political concepts, being holophrastic are part of a "discours communautaire". As such they express social motivations, that is, motivations whose meanings are available only within an understanding society. For the linguistic nature of motives see Kenneth Burke, A Grammar of Motives (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1969).

50. L. Pye, Politics, Personality and Nation-Building: Burma's Search for Identity (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1962), p. 10. Emphasis added.

51. G.A. Almond and S. Verba, op.cit., pp. 3-4. Emphasis added.

52. W.B. Gallie, "Essentially Contested Concepts"; Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society, New Series, 56 (1955-1956), pp. 167-198.

53. Ibid, p. 171.

54. Ibid, pp. 171-172.
55. Ibid, p. 172.
56. Ibid.
57. Ibid.
58. Ibid.
59. Ibid, p. 180.
60. Ibid.
61. John Kekes, "Essentially Contested Concepts: A Reconsideration" Philosophy and Rhetoric, 10, No. 2 (Spring 1977), pp. 71-81.
62. Alasdair MacIntyre, "The Essential Contestability of Some Concepts", Ethics, 84, No. 1 (October 1973), p. 3.
63. Ibid, pp. 6-7.
64. John N. Gray, "On the Contestability of Social and Political Concepts", Political Theory, 5, No. 3 (August 1977), p. 336.
65. Ibid, p. 338.
66. Ibid, p. 332.
67. K. Janda, op.cit.
68. See next chapter.
69. Goran Hyden, Political Development in Rural Tanzania (Lund: Uniskol, 1968).
70. Ibid, pp. 220-221.
71. Karl Deutsch, Politics and Government (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1970), p. IX.
72. Goran Hyden, op.cit., pp. 258-262.
73. Ibid, p. 88.
74. Ibid.
75. Ibid, p. 144.
76. Ibid, pp. 149-150.

77. Ibid, p. 150.

78. Ibid, p. 146.

79. Louis L. Snyder, ed., *The Dynamics of Nationalism* (London: D. van Nostrand, 1964); Anthony D. Smith, *Theories of Nationalism* (New York: Harper Torchbook, 1974)

80. Elise Marienstras, *Les Mythes Fondateurs de la Nation Américaine* (Paris: Maspero, 1976).

81. Goran Hyden, *op.cit.*, p. 145.

82. Ibid, p. 148.

83. Ibid, p. 162.

84. Ibid, p. 164.

85. With the statement "A good government cannot exist without a one-party system", 80% of the respondents "agreed". About 75% of the respondents "agreed" with the statement "Any person who opposes TANU policy or TANU leaders should be detailed". Hyden concludes:

"This reveals a strong preference for a system in which competitions for loyalties to the regime is minimal". [p.165]

And yet to the question on "Which type of leaders have the greatest impact on the local population" more than 80% chose parish and village leaders rather than Regional, District or National leaders. We are thus given, and Hyden notes it, a strong preference for local autonomy in spite of the fact that they have shown "a strong preference" for a regime with minimal competition for loyalties. Hyden forgets the anomaly. [pp. 196-197].

86. Goran Hyden, *op.cit.*, p. 192.

87. *Ibid*, p. 194. "Legitimized" is in inverted commas in the text.

88. G. Bachelard has indicated the use of inverted commas to be an exercise in censorship. G. Bachelard, *Le Matérialisme Rationnel* (Paris: P.N.F., 1953), pp. 216-217.

89. This is how Almond describes the exercise of legitimacy in a political system. He writes that a political system is a

"system of interactions to be found in all independent societies which perform the functions of integration and adaptation (both internally and vis-à-vis other societies) by means of the employment or threat of employment of more or less legitimate physical compulsion." *Emphasis added.*
[G. Almond and J. Coleman. *op.cit.*, p. 7.]

Of course, what Hyden does is psychologize the question of legitimacy. This is the result of the denial of the sociality of language.

90. G. Hyden, op.cit., p. 221.
91. Ibid, p. 223.
92. Ibid
93. Ibid, p. 230.
94. Ibid, p. 225.
95. Ibid, p. 233. Emphasis added.
96. Ibid, p. 237.

CHAPTER V

THE HOLOPHRASTIC DIMENSIONS OF COMPARATIVE PRACTICES

Introduction

In method, the comparativist conceives the human subject in a Cartesian manner. He conceives human subjects within the problematic of consciousness. What then the "methodist" says and does would not be dependent upon factors which are outside his conscious control. This assumption, that the world is totally given to consciousness, founds the "methodist's" claim that the knowledge of man and his polity must be totally explicit. Thus the linguistic practice of the methodist would know no temporal and spatial limits. Submission to method would then make the political scientist a Universal Subject.

But the submission to method is not, according to comparativists, for example, a matter of religious conversion but a question of doing science. In other words, method has a sense which distinguishes it from other senses. If so, its sense cannot be present only within method itself. That which gives sense to method is not immediately given to consciousness but lies, I suggest, in the paradigmatic and syntagmatic chains of social practices into which it enters. In this sense, method is part of a given social reality and may be seen, in practice, as a social relation.¹ Consequently, it can be argued that method expresses a certain image of man, an image of man which is, in comparative politics, unrecognized and unthematized.² In method - as a social practice - there is a philosophy of man which must be brought to light in order to see the nature of the holophrastic dimensions that sustain the different methodological linguistic practices of the comparativist. An entry into this discussion can be made by questioning that which is given to method as non-problematic, to wit: comparability. Comparability, which is a given in comparative politics, is the blindspot of method.

Method and Comparability as a Given

Pennock and Smith write that the "fundamental components" of the method of political science comprise of

(1) observation and collection of data; (2) classification of these data into significant categories; (3) formulation, and (4) verification of generalizations stated as laws, trends or tendencies....³

The comparative method is the application of this scientific method to more than one polity in order to generate cross-cultural law-like generalizations.⁴ This is assumed to make possible the discovery and formulation, in general terms, of the conditions under which various political events occur. True, there are differences among the scientists of politics regarding the status of the comparative method. According to Almond, comparison "is the very essence of the scientific method" and as such, it "makes no sense to speak of comparative politics in political science" for if the latter is a science, "it goes without saying that it is comparative in its approach"⁵. According to Smelser, the comparative method is "a substitute for experimentation".⁶ Lijphart writes that it is only one of the basic methods of the political scientific method, the other two being the experimental and statistical.⁷

Between Almond's identification of the comparative method with the scientific method, and Lijphart's contention that it is only one of the three basic tools of the scientific method, we meet different variations in the literature.⁸ However they all share the assumption that comparability is a given. The classificational approach of Almond and Powell, the quantitative works of Holt and Richardson, the new orientation towards concept formation and measurement in comparative research that one finds in Przeworski; all presuppose comparability as a given which is independent of socio-historical conditions.⁹ True, the problematic nature of considering comparability as a given is recognized by some comparativists. Benjamin writes that

...the defense for comparative research rests in the assumption that there is a regular and at least potentially identifiable process (traditionally called developmental) of political (as well as social and economic) change through which systems move. It is the acceptance of this assumption that binds comparativists together.¹⁰

Benjamin recognizes that such an assumption can in fact justify certain arguments against comparative research.¹¹ However, he sidesteps the matter by splitting the question of comparability into one of "strategy of comparative inquiry" which according to him "belongs to the context of discovery", and that of "methodological applications" which are considered to belong to the "context of justification where falsification procedures via a number of methods or research programs may be developed."¹² Thus even when the question of the theoretical status of comparability as a given is raised, comparativists divest themselves of it by transporting it into the realm of the context of discovery. What makes comparability of presumably different practices a given is not considered as a theoretical problem in need of clarification.

In the cross-cultural survey the problem of comparability is considered in terms of the control of the intervening variables that link the independent and dependent variables.¹³ Such a control is deemed necessary to ensure the "comparability of meaningful stimuli."¹⁴ The cluster of obstacles associated with developing comparable meaningful stimuli are considered to be problems of instrumentation. These are seen as technical problems related to sampling, conceptual equivalence, linguistic equivalence and equivalence of measurement and, in each case, writes Triandis, "the central problem is...how to develop cross-culturally equivalent variables".¹⁵ To solve these, the most ingenious and sophisticated techniques have been developed.¹⁶ But what is forgotten is that neither the comparativists nor the compared are the product of these techniques. Therefore, the central problem is not "how to develop cross-culturally equivalent variables". Rather it is to produce the encounter as a "cross-culturally equivalent variable" as a pre-condition for the production of cross-culturally equivalent data. In other words, there are two asymmetrically related problems to be solved. First, at the level of the cross-cultural encounter, the encounter itself must be generated as a neutral ground, as a locus of non-social or asocial speech, i.e., it must be generated as a replicable datum.¹⁷ Second, the data produced in the

encounter must be replicable in such a way as to fall readily¹⁸, i.e. to be coded, into the categories of comparative politics. The generation of the latter data presupposes the generation of the encounter as a replicable datum that is free from interpretations. This asymmetrical relationship is a point that is shunned by comparativists in their discussion of the scientific method. They reduce the two questions to a common denominator: that of control of intra-psychic phenomena.¹⁹ It is the non-recognition of this asymmetrical relationship between the question of the generation of the encounter as a datum and the generation of data within the encounter that permits a practice which takes comparability as a given. In other words the givenness of comparability rests on what Pêcheux calls an "oubli"²⁰, viz., a forgetting of the source of determination of meanings that gives the comparativist the illusion of being external to his linguistic practices and thus be free to compare all.

Shifting the analysis to the encounter itself, instead of limiting our study to the data produced in the encounter, thus leads us to the occluded text of method - method as a text of social practices - or to the social practices that are narrated by method. In the context of cross-cultural studies where different speech communities are involved, a return to the occluded text of method leads us to the examination of (a) the transcultural speech or translation practiced by comparativists, (b) the interview as an expression of common speech, and (c) method as the production of common facts calling upon a common understanding. I will deal with each question separately.

The Mono-Linguistic Method of Comparative Politics

Social scientists have a tendency to consider the critique of their translation practices as a claim of the impossibility of translation or as a claim of linguistic relativity. We have already seen in a previous chapter how the question of linguistic relativity is a product of a certain conceptualization of language that is alien to the Humboldtian

theory of language. Translation is possible and there are translations of various qualities. My intention in this section is to point out that the type of translation required for the generation of data, necessary for the production of cross-cultural law-like generalizations, is not possible. As I will show in this section, comparativists seem to be aware of the question without however recognizing its consequences on their scientific project. What must be remembered is that comparative research is based on an instrumentalist theory of language. If comparativists are then to be consistent in their practice they cannot, in their translation practices, introduce subreptiously, ad hoc theories of language that do not confirm to the instrumentalist theory.

As we have already seen, for Locke and the instrumentalists that follow him, the discourse of ideas precedes and is independent of the discourse of language. The association between ideas and words is based on the consensus of self-possessed egos. In this scheme, to translate means to see an agreement among ideas held by A and B independently of their language. In other words, as the idea "X" is supposed to pre-exist its linguistic descriptions in different languages, a successful translation would be one where the linguistic descriptions made by "A" and "B" would refer to the same idea "X". Comparativists replace "idea" by publicly verifiable things and beef up this instrumentalist theory of translation, as Warner and Campbell do, by an ad hoc adjunct borrowed from transformational generative theory of language. They write:

Language universals are crucial for translation. At some future date, there may exist a general theory of human language. It will contain all features that are universal to all languages. Grammars of individual languages will then contain only information idiosyncratic to specific languages.²¹

The appeal to transformational generative theory is however not a sufficient justification for an instrumentalist theory of translation. "The existence of deep-seated universals", writes Chomsky, "does not... imply that there must be some reasonable procedure for translating between languages".²² Indeed, Cicourel goes further and suggests that linguistic

universals

...are cultural products of normative chunking or re-coding activities... [E]ach linguistic universal [is] a particular kind of gloss imposed by the ingenious constructions of the researcher. Each glossing practice... represents the researcher's native ability to begin with any level of indexicality designated as "correct" speech or any language display in conformity with some general rule or practice.²³

This view is, in fact, what is also advocated by the ethnographers of speaking who have shown that it is false to jump from the idea of "linguistic universals" to that of a common linguistic practice, as Warner and Campbell suggest, for the "linguistic universals" are present only as effects in the expressions of the speaking person.²⁴

However, Warner and Campbell's appeal to linguistic theory points out a very important matter; that the practice of translation requires not only a theory of translation but also a theory of language. Indeed, a theory of translation is, or at least presupposes, a theory of language.²⁵ Now, comparativists have already a theory of language. It is, as we have already seen, an instrumentalist theory of language. As we shall see in this section, this theory of language does not permit comparativists to fulfill their comparative project which requires working in different language worlds.

According to comparativists, the question of translation is a question of the method of translation. And the method they suggest most of the time is what Inkeles and Smith have used: the method of back-translation. Warner and Campbell write:

The back-translation concept considered as a multi-stage iterative process provides an ideal conceptualization of decentered translating. In addition to a large supply of competent bilingual translators... [t]here would be monolingual translation-judges. These judges would have the power to say when any double translation was adequate by comparing the two versions...²⁶

The back-translation technique is assumed to make possible the production of texts that are free from the intersubjective and common

meanings embedded in the different language-worlds. According to Bruce Anderson, "in essence the problem of translation is one of equivalence and variance".²⁷ Indeed, according to Anderson,

...translation is involved whenever research requires asking the "same" question of people with different backgrounds. This is true whether the comparison involves societies using unwritten, tribal languages, nation states using the "same language" (such as England or the United States) or subcultural groupings within a single society. Many of the differences involved at these various levels of linguistic "exoticism" are matters of degree, not of kind.²⁸

Consequently then, "translation equivalence is a special case of instrumental validation".²⁹ The idea here is of course that "equivalence" is uniquely an observational problem, for at the level of comparative concepts the problem of "translational equivalence" is supposed to be non-existent.

Thus while the question of meaning is assumed not to arise at the conceptual level, its presence is recognized at the observational level but abolished by positing, a priori, "meaning equivalence" which, in the instrumentalist framework, means the denotation of a-linguistic practices.³⁰ This a priori positing of equivalence thus creates its solution, before it tackles the problem of translation between two different language-worlds, by structuring its domain as one where languages are related to the world denotatively, and where each language-speaker is presented as a total user of his language.³¹ In the practice of back-translation, translation is thus an activity which produces a mono-linguistic world. The universal language of comparative politics is assumed to refer to a single, universal "reality level", to borrow Mannheim's expression.³² In comparative politics, back-translation is then a concept which assumes the existence of translation-in-itself. This translation-in-itself, which back-translation is assumed to make possible is, I suggest, based on two fallacies: those of asocial and ahistorical

translations. These fallacies are of course rooted in the instrumentalist theory of language. But they get their plausibility by precisely operating in terms of a conception of language which falsifies the instrumentalist concept of language on which they are supposed to stand.

The Fallacy of Asocial Translation

Discussions of back-translation in comparative politics are carried out as if translation can be separated from the socio-historical nature of language and its speakers. Therefore when T is translated into t, back-translated into T_1 , retranslated into t_1 and back-translated into T_2 and retranslated into t_2 and an agreement reached at translations $T_n - t_n$ as the "equivalent" translations, $T_n - t_n$ are considered to be equivalent in a sense which excludes the process from T to T_n , from t to t_n . It could be that $T_n - t_n$ express precisely the process that produced them, and are as such an artifact of that process, unless the comparativist shows that the process from T to T_n , from t to t_n is a repeatable, replicable process. Strange as it may seem, given the importance of "exact" translation for a science that claims to produce cross-cultural law-like generalizations, this question has been shunned by comparativists. Indeed a comparative researcher comments that

It is easy to wonder why specific studies of translation methods have not been undertaken, since translation is so necessary in the formation of the questionnaires for cross-cultural research.³³

True, Brislin tries to fill the gap. After noting that there is little indication of "how a researcher can determine whether or not his source, target and back-translated forms are equivalent" and that "little investigation" has been done on how "different factors" (content, difficulty of language) affect translation, he suggests five criteria of equivalence, the first three of which are similar to what we have seen in Werner and Campbell's definition of back-translation. The last two however introduce what he calls the "ultimate" criteria for translation". These are the "performance criterion" and the "randomization technique."³⁴

Without questioning the value of the techniques suggested by Brislin, one can point out however that neither the performance criteria nor the randomization technique produce translations valid for those who did not participate in the translation process. In other words, given the assumption of asocial (instrumental) language on which comparative politics is based, every translated activity of comparative politics must be an activity limited only to those who participated in the translation of the text given to them. One cannot first prepare a translated text and then use it on those who were not involved in the translation of the text, for there is no theoretical justification within the instrumentalist theory of language to do so. That is, when the translation is the result of the consensus of A, B, C, the translated text cannot be used on X, Y, Z, without they also being a part of the translation process, for the instrumentalist theory of language excludes the existence of an inter-subjective, linguistically articulated social reality that is shared by A-B-C-X-Y-Z. Using the translated text on X-Y-Z without they being part of the translation process is to presuppose the existence of common speech. This is an impossible presupposition within the instrumentalist framework.

This means that if comparativists take seriously the conception of language that is assumed to be characteristic of "science", they cannot avoid joining Quine and falling into the dead-end which arises from the denial of the sociality of language. Quine writes:

Unless pretty firmly and directly conditional to sensory stimulation, a sentence S is meaningless except relative to its own theory, meaningless inter-theoretically.³⁵

And yet comparisons and translations between different speech-communities are made. This suggests that comparativists go beyond "stimulus meaning". This they do without however justifying how one can go beyond "stimulus meaning" without introducing that which has been evicted as an obstacle to "science" - the sociality of language.

In fact, that translation is an interpretation of social practices and not a mere activity of denotation and instrumentation can be shown by examining certain socio-political terms. Here I will use as an illustration Whiteley's discussion of the translation of the Swahili term wafayi kazi ("trade union") and chama ("guild"). He writes that wafayi kazi

...was contrasted in union terminology only with the word for employer(s), since in union thought at the time (1963) only two classes of people existed, the workers and employers. By extension each tended to be defined contrastively to the other: the workers had to put up with minimal education, low standards of living and wages, and were generally exploited; the employer employed the fruits of his wealth which had been gained at the expense of his labour force. Outside the union field however, the term could be contrasted with WASIOFANYA KAZI, 'those who don't work, or even with WAKULIMA cultivators, or WAVUVI, fisherman...³⁶

If one asks a Tanzanian trade-union member and an American union-member the question: "Are you a union-member?" the answer "Yes" may be given in each case. But have the two "Yes"es the same experiential meanings? Immanent in each "Yes" are intersubjective and common meanings, or to paraphrase Gadamer, the reverberations of the whole language-world of each respondent, accessible only through interpretations, and unreachable as subjective data. The historicity of each "Yes" evokes the subject and his history. For example the Swahili "equivalent" of the English word party is CHAMA.³⁷ Under colonialism the use of the word CHAMA to designate trade-unions and political associations was found convenient for the word carries the meaning of "specific aims and objectives". The nearest English expression that expresses the meaning of CHAMA seems to be "guild". In fact, all organizations with "specific aims" use the word CHAMA. Thus:

CHAMA CHA SIASA "political party"
 CHAMA CHA WAFANYIA for "trade union"
 CHAMA CHA JAZZBOYS for "Jazz Boys' Club"

Now, this seems to suggest that for "politics", understood as

embodying "specific aims and objectives", there cannot but be one CHAMA. This, of course, raises a question as to what would be the meaning of an "opposition" party in such an experiential universe? Would it mean having opposition as its "specific aims and objectives"? If so, would this mean that the "opposition" party is not perceived as an alternative party of government but only as an impediment to government?

And Whitely comments:

It is worth noting that in the political field the association of a party with quite specific and circumscribed objectives has led to difficulties when the question of an opposition party has been raised. Thus we find in January 1963 Mr. O. Odinga arguing in support of Mr. Nyerere's adoption of a one-party system that, "at this time in Africa there are no politics/policies of opposition, rather politics/policies consist in opposing the colonialists and building an African nation" and he was supported by another Kenyan, Mr. MacAnyengo with: "it is necessary that everything done in Africa be done without (an) opposition".³⁸

It may be of interest to note that the first speaker Mr. O. Odinga was one of the most tenacious opponents of Kenyetta. Would it follow that when he condemns opposition that he is in fact condemning his own acts? Of course not, although it may be possible. The most plausible answer is that we may be missing something in Odinga's understanding of the term "opposition" if we understand this word to be only the equivalent of the term "opposition" in Western political practices. The point is, that if we try to understand "opposition" in terms of the practices involved we may find out that Odinga is opposing a certain type of opposition while advocating another type of opposition. The holophrastic dimension of "opposition" in Africa in fact seems to be very different from that it has in the West.³⁹ The most plausible answer is then that the people quoted above hear, see and put in the understanding of "opposition" meanings and practices that differ from the ones a Canadian or an American or an Englishman is used to. But these differences are available in translation only if we consider translation as an activity of interpretation of social practices.

For example, in many studies on modernization and development, we see that the word "school" plays an important role in questionnaires and conceptualizations of modernization. The word "school", for example, is rendered by the word "Amsakulu" in Zambia.⁴⁰ Given that the word "school" refers to that institution introduced into Zambia in a given historical period, and given that Zambians have coined the term "Amsakulu" to refer to that institution, it is possible and in fact easy to have an "equivalent" translation to a question such as "do you go to school?" But this easiness is deceptive for it may be the case that the translation reflects merely what the original states.

But such words like "Amsakulu" are not univocal terms. On the one hand they serve as exact translations of the English term from the point of view of denoting that which is understood in English, and on the other, they express the constitution of new historical experiences, recuperated in the experiential universe of the speakers in ways that engage practices, meanings, and experiences that are foreign to the experiential field that is implicated by the word "school" in the English language.

Now, can the question "do you go to school?" be translated into the language of the Zambian? The answer is yes, for there is a word that is the exact "equivalent" of the word school. But this translation in fact hides important dimensions of the experiential universe of the translated culture if the socio-historical reasons of the equivalence are forgotten. For the "school" - "Amsakulu" equivalence is in fact an articulation of historically produced social practices. The equivalence involves in fact practices, institutions and actions for whom the target-language has created specific words as responses to new historical experiences of the colonial and post-colonial period. But such words and phrases of the target language, have multiple meanings, expressing exactly what the colonial language expresses and, at the same time, expressing qualitatively different experiences in their own social reality.

This is a point that back-translators ignore. The back-translation which presupposes an instrumentalist theory of language cannot deal with this situation. It fails to see that every text, being a socio-historical sedimentation of meaning, is engaged in a field of social practices, and that every translation involves the "unsaid" of the word and the text.

Translation between different language-worlds is thus mediated by the history of the relationship of these worlds. In the context of the history of unequal relationships, translation is mediated by this history. In such contexts, the unequal relationship expresses itself in the language of the unequal as creations of new words and expressions that refer exactly to those practices, institutions and actions imposed on the dominated language-world by the dominating language-world. Although these words and expressions appear to be borrowings and calques, they also express and articulate experiences quite different from the ones articulated by these words and expressions in the original (colonizer's) language. That such multiplicity of meanings, articulated by calques and borrowed expressions, are phenomena present essentially in the language of the dominated, especially in Africa, has been documented by linguists, even if they tend to neglect its socio-historical reasons.⁴¹ What this suggests is that there is no translation-in-itself. Each translation must engage the social practices that are articulated by the translated terms and texts. Where this is lacking, what we have is not translation but a transmission of the meanings of one language into the language of the other. As such, a political party, a trade-union, a school in Africa would be understood in terms of the holophrastic dimensions they have in the language of comparative politics and not according to the social practices that sustain them in the social reality of the studied. In other words, there is no asocial translation. The choice is between transmitting the meanings of one's language-world into the world of the other under the guise of asocial translation or accept the sociality of all languages and thus practice translation in a way which recognizes the conflicts of meanings and practices involved when we practice translations.

The Fallacy of Ahistorical Translation

In the African historical context, translation is an activity that expresses a certain type of social relationship. In the confrontation of colonialism, translation was expressive of a power relationship. Translation as a social practice of the colonized meant being translated into a language of power in terms of the understanding established by the permissible ranges and kinds of the African's presence in the intersubjective meanings of the colonial language.⁴² In this sense, translation was a manifestation of both political, linguistic, and epistemological oppression. Indeed this manifested itself as a deeply embedded self-interpretation of the African, as G6r6g-Karady shows in her historical study of the self-images of Africans as they developed in oral literature since colonialism. The qualities and faults attributed to Europeans and Africans in the African literature of the colonial period seem to be very close to the colonial European image of himself and Africans.⁴³ Translating African linguistic practices was then an act of constituting the African as a dominated subject whose presence was contingent on the presence of the dominator. Translation as a manifestation of power and domination is so intensely inscribed, as historically meaningful, in the understanding of the colonized that it still serves in some African countries as an instrument of domination and exclusion. Towa, commenting on the divorce between the language of power and the language of the ruled in Africa, writes:

C'est peut-être au niveau de la communication la plus élémentaire, la plus essentielle, celui du langage, que ce divorce est le plus patent.... Le paria de l'Inde comprenait au moins la langue du maître. En Afrique... la situation est à peine croyable: de nombreux politiciens se font un devoir de ne s'adresser aux populations qu'en français. Et c'est ainsi qu'on peut assister à des scènes d'une inconcevable absurdité: un politicien ou un administrateur harranguant en français, avec le secours d'un interprète, un public parlant la même langue maternelle que l'orateur.⁴⁴

This in fact raises an additional question, that of the use of the

English language as an ahistorical language in comparative research. For example, the favorite target of comparative studies in Africa are students and English-speaking Africans. One of the assumptions that underlies this scientific favoritism is the belief that Africans who speak the English language speak it in ways that are immediately accessible to the English speaking comparativist. The problem of meaning-equivalence is thus assumed to be easily solved. Even if certain errors arise, they are assumed to be ironed out by excluding the error as a mistake in the use of the English language. This ahistorical understanding of the English language is however open to serious reservations.

Pierre van Den Bergue writes that in contemporary Africa the inherited colonial language accentuates the distance between those who rule and the ruled, between the cities and the countryside, and that speaking the inherited colonial language is one of the sources of power.⁴⁵ Fanon indicates the profound political nature of the inherited colonial language and writes:

To speak means to be in a position to use a certain syntax to grasp the morphology of this or that language, but it means above all to assume a culture, to support the weight of a civilization...the Negro...will be proportionately whiter - that is, he will come closer to being a real human being - in direct proportion to his mastery of the French language.⁴⁶

Sartre points out the historical nature of colonial language when he writes:

Let (the colonial) open his mouth and he condemns himself, except in so much as he sets himself to destroy the hierarchy. And if he destroys it in French, he poeticizes already.⁴⁷

Memmi suggests a similar idea. He writes that the bilingualism of the colonial situation is of a particular kind, destructive of the colonized. He writes:

the colonized's mother tongue, that which is sustained by his feelings, emotions and dreams, that which in his tenderness and wonder are expressed, thus that which holds the greatest emotional impact, is precisely the one which is the least valued.... In the linguistic conflict

within the colonized, his mother-tongue is that which is crushed.⁴⁸

Indeed, in many African countries not knowing the colonial language is being excluded from politics. In Malawi, for example, a certificate of proficiency in the English language is compulsory to be a member of the National Assembly. Indeed, seven "parliamentary" seats had to be declared vacant because the candidates could not pass the English proficiency test conducted by a "resident British university don" appointed for the purpose by President Banda.⁴⁹ What this curious situation points to is the profoundly political nature of colonial languages in many African polities. In many African states, the knowledge of the colonial language is a prerequisite to participate in certain political activities.

The question then is what is the meaning and practice of translation, of communication, in this historical context of linguistic inequality and domination? Is translation a depoliticized communicative situation in the context of a comparative study of political practices? Comparativists do not consider these questions as valid questions because their theory of language does not allow for the possibility of the historical existence of a "systematically distorted communication".⁵⁰ They do not allow for this because they consider translation as well as the translators to be ahistorical. But the consequence of this is to grant tacitly an anthropological, political and epistemological primacy to the language of the comparativist vis-à-vis the language of the respondent. The ahistorical conception of language that makes plausible the possibility of ahistorical translation does not free the comparativist from the distortion of inequality and domination of the context of translation. It makes him an accomplice of the forces that sustain the context of domination in as much as the comparativist assumes that the dominated man can speak freely without questioning his domination. Such an assumption hides the history that mediates the encounter of the comparativist and the African and occludes the linguistic politics of comparative practice. The negation

of this historical context of inequality and the distorted communication it imposes between the comparativist and the African assimilates what is historically different to what is familiar. In other words, the comparativist denies the history that mediates his translation and assumes that the speech of the African can be translated without explicating the existential and social limitations or the linguistic politics of his speech.

When the comparativist interviews Africans in English he is in a very important sense engaged in the confirmation of a certain power-structure. This does not mean that he should not interview them at all, or that he should not interview them in English. It means that his and their speech require an interpretational approach that can elucidate the historically sedimented imports of the two linguistic practices. When the comparativist uses an interpreter, the linguistic practices involved cannot be, as Weiner seems to believe, reduced to the instrumentalist problem of training.⁵¹ The interpreter and his interpreting have historical meanings whose significance must be explicated. These meanings are in the linguistic practices themselves and not external to them.⁵² When the comparativist uses translations, to use the example of "school" again, an understanding of the word "school" in the African context that does not explicate the historically sedimented meanings and practices of schooling becomes a translation that narrates the absence of the experiential universe of the African. As Danto has written,

It is impossible to overestimate the extent to which our common ways of thinking about the world are historical. This is exhibited if by nothing else, by the immense number of terms in our language, the correct application of which, even to contemporary objects, pre-supposes the historical mode of thought.⁵³

This I think is especially true of concepts that describe social practices and institutions. Danto calls such concepts "past referring terms".⁵⁴ To start with, translation and the concepts that describe the institutions associated with it, institutions such as the interpreter, the foreigner, are, in Africa, past referring terms and tap certain

historically sedimented meanings. Second, the translation of terms such as voting, nation, political party into the indigenous language, and the use of these terms in English in the interviews of the African elite, implicate the history of the social practices constituted by these terms in both Africa and the social world of the comparativist. For both comparativists and the interviewed the narrative units and the categories of comparative politics are past-referring terms in the sense that their understanding, and whence their translation and communication, implicate some past practices without which comparativists and the interviewed cannot use and describe present practices the way they do. If we conceive, as Croce suggests, "the relation of history to life as that of unity", i.e. "synthetic unity" and not "abstract identity",⁵⁵ the problematic of equivalence that structures the practice of translation in comparative politics appears to be a distorting mechanism which results from postulating the possibility of the equivalence of social practices where there is no equivalence of history. The comparativist refuses to recognize in his practice that his place and the place of the compared in history are not the same, that their present and past interrelate (and separate) in ways that differ from his standpoint. Such a refusal is a structural (i.e. in his discourse) negation of the compared-as-the-other whose absence is filled by the equivalent-other, thus putting the other in anon-mediated relationship with the comparativist and making him an object of his instruments. The exclusion of histories from the activities of translation is in fact the exclusion of only the history of the translated. For the translational activities of the comparativist make the history of the language-world of comparative politics a universal history by excluding the history of the other. It is this "exclusion" of the other - his history and sociality - which permits the consideration of comparability as a given. Back-translation presupposes comparability as a given, before it even tackles the problem of comparing, by adopting an instrumentalist theory of language. But this, as we have seen, is false.

Translation cannot then be considered to be an asocial and ahistorical activity. As a linguistic activity which aims at producing a transcultural speech, it involves more than what is being translated. As Gadamer notes, "every translation is at the same time an interpretation."⁵⁶ If then comparativists succeed in producing translations it is precisely because they call upon the sociality and historicity of their own language as a source of interpretational frameworks. When they claim that their translation is above socio-historical specificities, what they exclude is the sociality and historicity of the target-language. In other words, back-translation seems to be an exercise in linguistic narcissism and not the realization of common speech.

And yet, in the practice of the interview, comparativists claim that their interviews produce data, that is to say, they claim to be understood by the interviewed. But an examination of the nature of the interview shows that this claim is not one which is based on the achievement of common speech. Rather, as in back-translation, the interview is a transmission of certain understanding of the social into the language-world of the interviewed.

The Social and Political Nature of the Interview

From the Humboldtian point of view, there is no abstract universal called speech. Speech has, in different societies, different values. According to Wolfson, "every society has a variety of types of speech-event... set off from each other by different rules of speaking".⁵⁷ The question that can be raised then is, whether the interview as practiced in comparative politics is a "speech event" specific to a given language-world. Wolfson's study of "the interview as a speech event" in American society offers interesting suggestions. To her questions as to what an interview is her American respondents explicitly define it as a question/answer intercourse. She received answers such as:

...an interview is a question and response conversation between two or even more than two people....

...an interview is a meeting in which one is questioned and one answers....

...an interview is when someone comes and asks you a lot of questions and you answer them....

...a meeting for the purpose of finding out information.⁵⁸

What is important to note in these answers is that the persons questioned participate in and understand the interview as a practice which involves the interlocutors in a certain type of distribution of speech which legitimates a certain way of expressing themselves and articulating the world. Wolfson interprets the answers:

...native speakers of English are quite aware of the rule which gives one of the participants in the interview event the unilateral right to ask questions and the other(s) the obligation to answer them. The distribution of power between the participants is thus clearly delimited and accepted as part of the speech-event...the fact that the interview is a speech-event in our society makes it legitimate to ask questions of a personal nature of total strangers.⁵⁹

The interesting point here is that if such is the case it may not be possible to study the interview through the interview, for what the interview is can be understood only by eliciting the field of practices and meanings which constitute the interview as a specific expression of a shared social reality, and as a meaningful, legitimate event, in the respondents' experiential universe, which is different from, say, a "free conversation". If we consider the interview and the conversation as types of narration, what Wolfson suggests is that the interview is a way of narrating the world and the self, recognized and practiced as legitimate, and yet different from the conversational type of narrating the world and the self. Wolfson writes that "narratives that are found in interviews have distinguishing characteristics of their own,"⁶⁰ and "people know the rules of speaking for the interview situation and conform to them".⁶¹ But these "rules of

speaking for the interview" are not, as the comparative method suggests, rules that are artificial or conventional like the rules of a "game".

For example, Hyden writes:

Before we went out in the field we had briefing sessions with the assistants in order to make them familiar with interviewing techniques. They were told about the difficulties they should anticipate. They were asked to behave impartially, casually and friendly. The questions should be put in a conversational manner.⁶²

Hyden considers his instructions to be "interviewing techniques". He does not consider the possibility that these technical instructions presuppose a certain experiential universe which implies certain types of social practices one of which is the interview. That the interview is not an artificially contrived practice whose rules can be learned and imposed like those of a game is side-stepped by translating the question of the nature of the social reality which constitutes the interview as a specific speech-event into a question of instrumentation. Hyden thus considers the question of a non-successful interview as resulting from a non-application of the interviewing technique. He writes:

For some of the assistants it was difficult to follow these instructions in every detail. For instance, I was often told that they found it difficult to press for an answer if the respondent said "don't know". They might have been able to obtain a meaningful answer, but sometimes they felt that they lacked the authority to ask an old man for his opinion, if he has already indicated he did not know or did not want to answer the question.⁶³

What this emphasis on technique occludes is the question of the constitution of the encounter itself as the realization of common speech by presenting it as the meeting of two self-enclosed egos in a relationship of radical externality. The social reality in which the encounter takes place is presumed to be neutralized by the correct application of method. In this social neutralization of the encounter a double conformism is postulated - that of the methodist and that of the interviewed -

presumably making the encounter an asocial, ahistorical and apolitical relationship by presenting the participants as carriers of referential terms.

It is not that comparativists do not recognize the social reality in which the encounter takes place. But they believe that it can be disposed of by precisely taking account of it. Method is precisely this positive force that presumably takes account of social reality by raising it into a presumably self-enclosed domain of asocial abstraction. One technique of doing this in the social neutralization of the encounter is the "linguistic pretest" which

...would undertake an assessment of the local situation as to choice of speech code - the repertoire of local codes, their scope, and symbolic connotations; and patterns of the use of the codes and of communication generally-who can communicate what to whom, in what way, and so on, and to what extent, and with what degree of acceptability and appropriateness.⁶⁴

Through this linguistic pretest communication biases are supposed to be discovered so that they can be eliminated.⁶⁵ The linguistic pretest is a step that is assumed to permit, on the one hand, the splitting of speech from communication, and, on the other, the instrumentalization of the language of the interview. The linguistic pretest does not, though it could have, thus lead to the historicization and socialization of the encounter. Nor does it lead to the acceptance of the concepts and images which define what the "human constants"⁶⁶ are in the social reality wherein takes place the encounter. If these are elucidated in the linguistic pretest, they are so as obstacles to be resolved by method, and if unresolvable, to be evacuated from the interview as communication biases. The method of the production of the encounter as a cross-cultural datum is the construction of social relations as a self-enclosed domain of totally conscious activities.⁶⁷ But this construction of social relations as a self-enclosed domain of totally conscious activities, known as the interview, can be shown to be an expression of a certain political order and its images of man and political life. It is the acceptance of this

political order as a natural order which permits comparability (of interviews here) to be considered as a given.

The Interview as a Political Practice

Many students of American politics and its science of politics have pointed out that there are historical, theoretical and practical relationships between American politics and American political science. Bernard Crick has argued that the sources of the idea of a science of politics are to be found in the unanimity of American political thinking and in the uniformity of American political practices.⁶⁸ Sheldon Wolin points out that there is a certain compatibility between American political practices and the American science of politics, and suggests that if there is a paradigm of this science of politics it is situated in the American social practices themselves and not at the level of the American science of politics.⁶⁹ Similar views are expressed by Lindsay, Reid, Connolly and others.⁷⁰ If we consider American political practices from the point of view of the writings of these students of American politics, one of the salient points that stands out is the question of the demarcation between the public and private spheres of life. The participation of the American individual in public life is, as De Tocqueville has already pointed out, based on individual decisions to associate voluntarily and for definite interests. The individual is, in American social practices, conceived as the primary socio-political unit and as the mover of social reality. As Wolin suggests, however, there seems to be a disjunction between this image of man mediating freely and voluntarily between his private and public life, and the new social practices in contemporary America where the frontier between the private and public realms are radically changing. This seems to raise new problems regarding the legitimacy and the legitimation process of the political regime, by reducing the "value" of the inherited practices and institutions, such as political parties and voting, as effective mediations between the private and the public realm.⁷¹ In this new situation, one can suggest

following Merelman, that the "interview" is in a certain sense an elaboration of a new form of mediation between, and a new form of articulation of, the public and the private realms. The sense in which it is so lies in the historical institutionalization of the "interview". As Merelman points out:

...behavioural political science is not just a science, nor is it just a body of concepts and empirical data construed as "findings". Behavioural political science is also a massive organizational effort directed toward the production and generation of knowledge.⁷²

In this context, the "interview" has a specific status. Contrary to the traditional way of studying politics, the interview is a mode of producing data that intervenes directly as an organized activity in the social practices and lives of those that are studied. Wolfson shows that this direct intervention into the life of a person and engaging him in a question/answer pattern produces a narrative structure which expresses the recognition and acceptance of a certain narrative order.⁷³ But this narrative order is given, one can suggest, as an expression of an ideal of social order, for as a historically produced and socially organized intervention that elicits the political attitudes of the respondent, it becomes the new affirmation of the American concept of the individual as the fundamental socio-political unit, as the mover of social reality, and thus serves as a novel form of mediation and articulation of the public and private realms. What is important to point out here is that this new structuring and articulating of the political universe is shared and accepted as legitimate by both the political scientist and the political agent. Thus, we can see the political meaning of the interview in Merelman's description. He writes:

We see the investigator willingly forsaking the privileged sanctuary of the university, seeking out ordinary members of the public, and asking them to inform him of their political preferences and values. The model is one of political consultation and popular sovereignty, involving the deliberate leveling of status distinctions. Put differently, the methods of intervention recreate conditions that once enabled the

citizen to believe himself to be in real control over his political fate. In a sense, therefore, intervention provides retrospective rehearsals of popular control. The individual citizen is consulted by the political scientist with the understanding that the citizen's ideas will form the basis of political analysis.⁷⁴

And indeed of political policy and political forecasting also. In this context the "interview" is a holophrastic concept that is informed by certain intersubjective meanings and sustained by practices that express a certain understanding of politics and its relationships to other social practices. This suggests that the interview in comparative political research cannot be understood as a unique problem of instrumentation, for it, in fact, expresses certain intersubjective meanings, and a certain narrative order without which it cannot be an interview. The interview and the method that constructs it cannot be then reduced to mere techniques. They primarily embody certain images of man, of social and political relations, and indeed an ideal of the "good" man and the "good" society. The method that produces the interview "encounter" does not depoliticize either the encounter or the questions and answers produced in it. It rather makes them forms of political intervention expressive of an ideal political order.

What this suggests is that in a comparative study of politics, forgetting the ideal of political order the interview articulates, can in fact occlude the political in the social realm of the interviewees if it is the case that the interview is, as a "speech-event", alien to the interviewees. LeVine's attitude survey on political leadership in Africa can serve here as an illustration.⁷⁵ LeVine considers that the answers of his respondents are inconsistent. LeVine's dilemma is that his respondents do not seem to manifest in the interview his understanding of "political efficacy" and "political competence", themes that structure his questioning and coding. He writes:

...if one of the factors in developing and keeping a positive sense of efficacy is continued satisfactory payoffs, real or symbolic, then most of the respondents, having reached highly valued positions, should have displayed generally positive perception of their political competence. This was not the case for most of the respondents who answered the efficacy questions.⁷⁶

LeVine found out this inconsistency among both "first-generation" leaders and "second-generation" leaders.

And yet, within the answers of his respondents, there are indications that there may be a different political practice with different conceptions of efficacy and competence. This is how LeVine deals with this indication:

The formal political arena -- the dominant political party -- was not the place where meaningful political changes can be brought. The "generally negative" group appeared to feel that if change could be brought about, it would be through informal channels, or better still through personal contact with those wielding power. The seven "generally positive" respondents reflected the choices of the "generally negative" group.⁷⁷

Here, the "political" of the respondents was not being articulated by the interview. The interview was articulating their "political" in a way which made it incongruent to the articulation of the "political" among Americans. As far as LeVine was concerned, their "political" was incoherent for it was not being articulated by and expressed through his "interview". LeVine cannot see this, for in the framework of comparative political science, method is assumed to be a social no-man's-land, and the survey encounter a free-fire zone of questions. Thus LeVine is left to certain remarkable conclusions. He writes:

There is, of course, no way of knowing what the respondents' "true" feelings were; it is impossible that they willfully or unconsciously dissimulated their responses. They would do so, presumably, to seem more respectable, to rationalize a demand...

The only reply is that it did not appear to the author that the respondents were doing so...⁷⁸

Thus we are led into a situation where the interviewer becomes the source of the truth of what they say. This is not because he has succeeded

in realizing a common speech with the interviewed. It is precisely because he has failed to do so. The only way of making sense of what the respondents are saying is by falling back on the ideal of social order that is articulated by the "interview" as a historically produced social practice. Which in fact LeVine does. And the respondents' answers make sense, in this social order articulated by the interview, as inconsistent meanings. This may be true. But LeVine mis-cognizes the source of his conclusions. The best that can be said is that the "interview" is not a social practice which has, as in America, the meaning of political articulation for his respondents. LeVine, however, does not look at it this way. Consistent with the comparativists' methodical myth of non-linguistic political practices that are available as psychological data, he falls back on a psychological explanation. He writes:

One thing is plain, however, and that is the apparent ability of the respondents to compartmentalize what would seem to be mutually conflicting images. They could define the elite to include themselves, then deny that it had any necessary connection with actual influence. They could assess themselves as generally politically incompetent on the national political scene but still demonstrate that they knew how political influence could be made more effective.⁷⁹

Thus LeVine's method presents the "politics" of the interviewed as incoherent in itself. Its principle of coherence is supplied by the holophrastic dimension of LeVine's method which, by displacing the respondents practices of political mediation and replacing them by the "interview", makes the latter the "developed" form of political mediation vis-à-vis which the "politics" of the interviewed appears as underdeveloped or developing. What LeVine's example then suggests is that the method of comparative political science is, like all holophrastic concepts, a narration of social practices that express an ideal of a social order. And when this ideal is taken for granted, as comparativists do, as the ideal of all social orders, the comparability of different politics is taken for granted. When the compared produce meanings which challenge the assumption of comparability as a given, this assumption is not questioned by comparativists. Rather, the compared are presented as not yet developed,

and thus fit for a theory of development which is external to the history of the compared. At the level of the interview, this articulates itself as the negation of the subject-in-questioning.

The Subject-in-Questioning

As we have seen earlier, Wolfson suggests that the interview is a social practice whose, to use a different formulation, constitutive rules and ranges of application are part of the intersubjective meanings available to Americans as expressions of a legitimate narrative order. The legitimacy of this is one which apparently requires every American to have an answer on all matters formulated as questions in the interview situation. This includes having opinions even on matters that do not exist. Brislin et al. write:

Unfortunately, they also have opinions (as one study has shown) on such non-existent issues as the "metallic act"...where American citizens gave firm opinions about a completely fictitious "news" item... Pedestrians were stopped and asked what they thought of the new television series, "Space Doctor". People had an opinion even though no such show existed. The respondents even had opinions to follow-up questions, such as "What do you think of the nurse's wild hair-do?" People responded with answers that made some sense, for example, "Well, it fits in with the clothes they wear on the space ship".⁸⁰

Surely then, the social practice of questioning cannot a priori be assumed to have the same intersubjective meaning among Africans and Americans. The comparativist will agree with this.

But he will reduce the difference to communication bias. The comparativist will implicitly argue to split the use of questioning from the meaning of questioning, deal with the latter as a bias, control it and use questioning as an instrument that digs out the objective variables. This leads however to a cul de sac. To see this, let us turn to Korten's study of Ethiopia.⁸¹

David Korten, following in the footsteps of D. Levine and D.C. McClelland writes in his study of Ethiopia that "the need for planned change in psychological orientations is great and that such change could result in significant contributions to both economic and social well-being."⁸² He comes to this conclusion after an attitude survey of Ethiopian university students and a psychological analysis of Ethiopian tales. Before he does this he makes, in his "context of discovery" a brief excursion into the Ethiopian (Amhara) culture and writes:

A respect for the privacy of both person and property is expressed in a number of ways, ranging from great moral condemnation of the thief to norms against the asking of questions.... The asking of questions other than those that form a ritualized part of the greeting and which, in turn, have appropriate ritualized answers, is considered very impolite.⁸³

Further on he adds that the Amharic language is ambiguous and writes:

Since the Amhara is disposed to give direct answers to questions only when it is to his clear advantage, the pattern of ambiguity and indirection provides a means of evading all other questions that cannot be honestly answered to his personal advantage without breaching etiquette or directly defying a superior. As Messing observes: "Hence the expression 'he is speaking in esoteric ways' with double meanings, hidden meanings, to becloud his real purpose so that he cannot be accused of lying, and can say later that he meant something else."⁸⁴

Let us assume that this interpretation of the social practice of questioning in Amhara culture is true. Korten compares the findings of his attitude survey to those made on an American student population as if the Amharas and Americans can shade off their particular ways of articulating their linguistic world as subjects-in-questioning.

What is interesting to note is that Korten's discussion of the meaning of questioning as a social practice in the Amhara culture seems to have no effect whatsoever in his practice of questioning Ethiopian students. Although his discussion of "questioning" in Amhara culture suggests that

one should not take their answers as indicators of what they think, believe or do, he does take their answers as indicators of their "dogmatism". Why? He does not explain. Korten does not show how the respondents have been liberated from the intersubjective meanings which articulate their behaviours as subjects-in-questioning, and how the Amhara social practice of questioning is neutralized to become, in the context of validation, an encounter free from the intersubjective meanings he claims inform the Amhara practices of questioning and answering. The paradoxical situation produced here is that of the comparativist who claims to know his respondents but relates himself to them as if he does not know them.

Korten claims to know what Ethiopians are as subjects-in-questioning. But to know an Ethiopian as a subject-in-questioning cannot but mean that one understands what kind of relations can exist between oneself and the Ethiopian respondents. As the very difference of questioning as a social practice in Ethiopia and America suggests, to know a respondent as a subject-in-questioning is not the same as knowing that "x" is a tree in Ethiopia and in America. Knowing an Ethiopian or an American respondent must necessarily mean to be engaged in a social relation with the respondent for we know other people through relations with them; our knowledge of them is personal. True, personal knowledge includes factual knowledge about other people. But no amount of factual knowledge can give us personal knowledge. In other words a knowledge of the type claimed by Korten, a knowledge which permits questioning, presupposes a knowledge through social practice of "what it is to stand in appropriate relations" to the kind of subject-in-questioning the respondent is.⁸⁵ This knowledge through social practice is in fact unavoidable because to question or to answer is not only a role, nor a role-requirement; nor can the context of validation transform the subject-in-questioning into a total role of a transparent respondent, as in a play. Comparativists of course consider questioning as part of science and not theater. The question then is how did the Ethiopian subjects-in-questioning, described as they are, come to behave, in the "context of validation", in a way so radically different that what Korten suggests is not possible (having direct answers...) becomes possible?

Now, Korten's scientific amnesia of his own interpretation of the Ethiopian subject-in-questioning that prefaces his work is made possible by assuming that the interview is an artificially and arbitrarily contrived game whose rules are explicitly set down, and where the roles of the participants are totally defined. The interview would be a "game" which is totally explicit and thus replicable everywhere. But this Hobbesian conception of the interview⁸⁶ does not tally with his suggestion that the Ethiopian subject-in-questioning is not conditioned by his role requirements. This indeed is not surprising. From the Humboldtian point of view the individual is not only a dependent variable; society is not only an independent variable. The individual interprets and responds to his world. He is both an agent (speech), and constituted by his world. In Korten, the Ethiopians who start their scientific careers as subject-in-questioning end by becoming transparent respondents. He thus writes:

The Ethiopians scored significantly higher on Rokeach Dogmatism Scale Items.... This indicates that the Ethiopian students were higher in general authoritarianism.... All the differences tended to indicate that the Ethiopians were less willing to tolerate divergent opinions than were the Americans.... The Americans more often reject the view that the possession of truth is exclusive to a select view.⁸⁷

However, his method presents the respondents in contradictory lights and Korten plugs the ruptures in his discourse by ad hoc explanations. For example, when the Ethiopian respondents appear to be more willing than the American respondents to compromise on religion, he gives the ad hoc explanation that "religion plays" a "limited role" in their lives.⁸⁸ Nor are his findings of importance. For example, the importance of a finding such as "Ethiopians had a much stronger belief that the faster their country developed, the better off it would be" is not striking.⁸⁹ Nor does the fact that Korten supports his attitude survey findings by an analysis of Ethiopian folktales, in the style of McClelland, add any

strength to his findings. To discover that "life is portrayed as being much harsher in the Ethiopian than in the US stories"⁹⁰ is not surprising. Korten in fact plugs the breaks in his analysis of the folktales by ad hoc explanations as he does in his survey findings.⁹¹

Some of his findings are even strange, such as the suggestions that esthetic pleasures are absent among Ethiopians for they are absent in the folktales; that some Ethiopian folktales involve "specific satisfaction of sexual needs" whereas "no such cases (are) reported from the US samples", a finding which suggests an absence of sexual needs in America; that Ethiopian students "cheat on examinations" and that this is "the product of a tradition in which the culture hero is not George Washington, who 'could not tell a lie', but Alakua Gabre-Hanna, master of deceit."⁹² In other words, in Korten's discourse there is in fact only one subject-in-questioning - the American - who is given as the ideal subject to whom all other subjects-in-questioning are referred to. The comparability of all subjects-in-questioning is thus no more problematic, for all the others are pre-given as variations of the real, as it were, subject-in-questioning - the American subject. Comparability as a given then is but an expression of a "social solipsisism" which leads to "cross-cultural comparisons (which) actually serve to confirm stereotypes...about one's own society."⁹³

Now, many comparativists think that some of the questions raised here can be resolved through "participant observation". But I think participant observation in fact emphasizes the contradictions of the instrumentalist conceptualization of language in comparative politics while at the same time showing the error of considering comparability as a given.

Participant Observation

The discussion of the nature of the subject-in-questioning in different speech-communities brings out, in addition, the limitation of "participant observation" as a technique of resolving the problem of diversity of cultural meanings.

The concept of participant observation is one which arises from the social practices of Americans. It expresses an experiential universe where social relationships are conceptualized, understood and practiced as relationships between autonomous egos. Moreover, in the concept of participant observation is also present an understanding of participation which characterizes it as a conscious act. Participant observation expresses then, both as a concept and practice, an understanding of interpersonal relations as being consciously chosen relations decided upon by self-willing individuals. In such an experiential universe, participation in social relations becomes then a problem - an individual problem - to be solved. In other words, the concept of participant observation is an expression of a social reality where interindividual relationships have become problematic.

Moreover, the concept of participant observation, presupposing, as it does, social relations as relations that are outcomes of the decisions of self-willing egos, secretes a conception of man and polity that is part of the empiricist tradition, especially in its Hobbesian form.

Within such a historical, social and political context - context that is presupposed by the concept and practice of participant observation - the technique of participant observation can have a meaning, and can work. Its very understanding of interindividual relations legitimizes both interindividual distance (i.e. observation) and opting in and out of interindividual relations (i.e. participation as a conscious act) without creating a chasm in the social context in which it takes place, in as

much as the social context itself is informed by the images of man and interindividual relations that are carried by the practice of participant observation.

Now, if such is the nature of participant observation, it is far from clear how it can help us become "participant observers" and acquire knowledge in a society where social relations are not articulated as relations resting on the decisions of autonomous egos. Using then "participant observation" in a polity that does not articulate itself in terms of such an anthropology cannot but be reading the polity as what it is not.

Ross, for example, writes in his study of Nairobi, that

...intensive participant observation data are necessary for learning cultural categories and asking good questions which is crucial to the development of a good interview schedule. The survey research data, in comparison, provide more superficial information about a large number of randomly selected individuals, a method that permits the development of more reliable generalizations. Used together, participant observation and survey research yield two very different but complimentary forms of data.⁹⁴

In other words, the comparativist is assumed to learn the "custom and habit"⁹⁵ of the studied through participant observation in order to formulate good questions for the context of validation wherein "randomly selected" respondents are tested. What must be remembered here is that conceptualizing one's insertion into the social life of Nairobi as "participant observation" presupposes that the people of Nairobi conceptualize, or express in their practice, "participation" in the sense understood by Ross. He sees his relationship to the respondents in terms of "randomly selected" respondents. Do they see their relationships to him as a "random" relationship? If it is the case that the practices of Nairobians do not express social relations as consciously and individually decided upon relations, then his relations to Nairobians, either as a participant observer or as a tester, cannot have the same meanings to them as they have to him.

Now, the comparativist's learning of the habits and customs of the people, through participant observation, is assumed to permit him to formulate good questions. Granted. But such questions can be good only in terms of the reciprocal relationships he has worked out in the so-called participant observation, which, as I have suggested above cannot have the same meaning to Ross and his respondents. If so, the context of validation, which is a context of disengagement from "participation", is so different that the questions which were supposed to be good in the so-called participant observation cannot but be good only to the questioner - Ross - for whom both the context of validation and participant observation are informed with the same image of man as a self-willed ego. The same situation does not obtain for the compared. For in the context of validation, expressing a different image of man and being outside the realm where reciprocal relationships can be worked out, the compared become dependent on the speech of the comparativist. They are derived from it. Therefore how participant observation makes possible - in a society which does not share its image of man - the jump into a context of validation without changing the social relations that permitted the comparativists to "learn" the "customs and habits" of the studied is really paradoxical. Comparativists have not addressed themselves to this question. In fact, for the respondents, the transition to a context of validation splits them from their social reality. Their life is now treated as the sum of subjective elements dependent for its coherence on the codification scheme of the observer. For the comparativist, the transition to a context of validation makes him the source, as it were, of a transcendental discourse that unifies the discrete elements, produced by the respondents, into a coherent discourse. His non-involvement then is only a mask for he is the possessor of the language that codifies and textualizes the answers of the respondents. The split then between "participant observation" and "attitude survey" is a split between life and language imposed only on the respondents. The two are not split in the comparativist's practice.

We can see how this works by briefly studying Ross's study of "measuring ethnicity in Nairobi" where he uses a combination of participant observation and survey research. He writes:

First as a participant observer with survey data, I developed operational measures for social, psychological and behavioural aspects of ethnicity as it was relevant to politics.⁹⁶

Ross claims that participant observation helped him to find the ways in which ethnicity was important. He writes:

It was clear from participant observation that many people relied upon ethnically homogeneous social networks to cope with political and social problems. I sought to develop questions to examine this pattern at both the behavioural and the psychological levels.⁹⁷

The move here then is from a context wherein his understanding was interpretative to that where the social practices of the people concerned are going to be seen as non-intersubjective. Gathering the data at this level, Ross assumes, permits generalization, i.e. the data is reconstructed after purification of what gave it sense in the context of participant observation. Ross thus asks questions such as:

I would like you to tell me the person or group that you would go to for help if this problem happened... if you needed money to pay the school fee for your children...if the tax law was changed and you didn't understand it...if you want to start a business and needed a loan...⁹⁸

He receives answers such as "I would ask the Ministry of Finance", "I would see the Provincial Education Officer", "I would go to the treasury". In general, the answers are such that Ross has to consider his enterprise as a failure.⁹⁹ He writes:

It was hypothesized that the answers to these questions could be used to indicate the types of friendship networks an individual maintained and the ways in which he identified key individuals in his network. However... the questions were a failure...despite the fact that the questions were asked slowly and one at a time, most respondents did not understand what the questions were getting at, felt uncomfortable, and gave highly stereotyped answers which appeared to have little resemblances to the way I had observed people acting in similar situations.¹⁰⁰

Ross puts the blame, as it were, on the respondents. But a different explanation is possible, and I think, more plausible. Ross's operation is based on the unquestioned assumption that comparability is a given. But if one were to problematize this given, then one would be confronted with the question of the sources and nature of the comparative method and concepts involved. In Ross, what we see is an attempt to save the "scientific" approach by prefacing it with participant observation - as a source of good questions. But whether that which makes these questions good questions changes at the same time the criteria, method and concepts of comparison is occluded by relegating meaning to the level of observation and that of a preface to "science", while considering comparability independent of the question of meaning. But that this separation cannot be sustained should be clear by now. It can, in addition, be illustrated by examining the practice of coding.

Coding

Ross's understanding of his subjects, as a participant observer, was guided not only by what they uttered but also by what they did and their descriptions of these. What is given in their speech is not an attitude but an effect of their social practices expressed as what A or B says. But what A and B say are not, even if they are in disagreement, unrelated talks, each coming from the private depths of A and B. What A and B say are related, whatever the meaning of this relationship, by the fact that their descriptions of their social practices articulate a shared world. This shared world is present, in what they say, only as the unsaid. Moreover, each speaker is not necessarily aware of the unsaid of what he says. And yet, what he says, bearing the effect of the unsaid, articulates both the speaker (his social practices) and his world. One can say that each speaker's act expresses a double subject, viz. the person and his social world, speaking in the same speech, in ways which narrate the social relations lived in that society. These relations are present only as an effect in the speech of the person. As such they require a great deal of interpretation to be reached at. In other words, the

said itself cannot be taken as a datum for it says as much as it hides. Consequently, the answers Ross gets are not finished facts but indications of the unsaid that invite the work of interpretation.

If so, what Ross misses in his coding is what the respondents say in the unsaid of their answers. To make this clear, one can ask what would have happened if Ross had asked them to codify their own answers. Kammeyer and Roth's study of coding suggests an answer that is consistent with the Humboldtian conception of language.¹⁰¹

Kammeyer and Roth start by asking:

Is the meaning that the coders see in the response to open-ended questions the same as the respondent himself sees in his words?... How would the subject code his answer in a set of categories that are provided by the researcher? If the subject, who provides the answers, could also serve as a coder, would he code his answers differently than other coders, or would there be no difference between the subject-coder's coding and some other coder's coding of the same responses?¹⁰²

These are difficult questions. As they themselves recognize, asking the interviewed to code their answers is "difficult to imagine".¹⁰³ But such an experiment permits "the elucidation of the sociality of the answers" by forcing, as it were, the interviewed to throw light on some parts of the unsaid of his response.

In spite of the fact that Kammeyer and Roth's research is an intra-cultural research, in spite of the fact that the respondents involved in this research were "college students enrolled in a social-research methods", the results show that "respondents see more in their response than the average objective coder is able to see."¹⁰⁴ Kammeyer and Roth conclude:

The coding of a response pushes the measured data one more step away from the subject's actual attitude, belief, or opinion ... Perhaps the implications of these findings for the research processes may be shrugged off with the assertion that in social research the major

objective is almost always to make statements about relationships rather than absolute descriptive statements. The argument could then be made that the tendency of coders to misjudge in one direction or another the real meaning of the respondent's words would be unimportant. Since everyone would presumably be measured at a value somewhat off from the value of his true position the relationship between variables would still be roughly the same. This argument would be valid if the deviation from the meaning that the subject wished to convey was always uniformly in one direction or another, but that is clearly not always going to be the case.¹⁰⁵

Thus coding involves interpretation. This means, like the activities of translation, interviewing, participating, coding also is a linguistic activity. It engages the social practices, the shared meanings, the histories of the societies which are being articulated by the language which is articulated by coding as a linguistic activity.

What is suggested by this discussion of the linguistic practices of comparativists is that comparability cannot be a given. The comparative method and comparative concepts cannot precede the activity of comparing unless we give primacy to the language-world of the comparativist. It suggests that comparing and its constitutive activities are confrontations of social practices and experiential universes. It suggests therefore that comparability is an achievement made possible by the elaboration of common speech and common understanding. In other words, it suggests that the comparative method and comparative concepts do not precede comparison but rather are produced by the effort to elaborate common speech.

And yet comparativists continue to practice the "science" of comparative politics. Now, these various investigations of the linguistic practices of comparativists suggest that comparativists can operate the way they do, they can assume comparability to be a given, they can consider comparative concepts to be free from the question of meaning, precisely because their practices are sustained by a narrative infrastructure which articulates certain images of man and politics as universal images.

Comparativists do not and cannot have a method-in-itself free from language. The comparative method is capable of directing the activities of the comparativist precisely because it narrates a certain ideal of social order, as the universal ideal.

The Narrative Infrastructure of Method

The comparative method is neither anonymous nor innocent. It is a cultural form which is, in America, lived, as Rokkan suggests, as a historical heritage.¹⁰⁶ In its manifestation in public opinion polls, surveys of all kinds, it both describes and determines the existential forms of the American civilization. It is one of the important ways by which Americans direct themselves explicitly and discursively towards their social practices. In describing certain attitudes, beliefs and practices it also manifests what it describes, for method presupposes a tradition of interests, ideas, practices, a history of its use and development, which are part of the American intersubjective social reality. Thus method makes sense to Americans in the American context, not only in the interpretation of American social practices, but also in the interpretation of non-American practices. In method the comparativist relates himself to the alien political practices as practices where the issue of politics is not at stake. He assumes that the practices he studies belong to the same political universe as that wherein method itself is tacitly political. Method is thus made a pre-understanding, as it were, that closes to awareness, that which lies beyond method - the life of living, suffering, dying people.

Consequently, the comparative method turns the comparativist away from the experiential base of politics in non-American societies by reading the practice and conceptualization of American self-understanding, viz., method, as the basis of a universal method. Thus the concept of measurement, of coding, the concepts of comparative politics, pre-determine what is to be asked, coded, and understood. They create the contexts of reading and interpreting, and impose the limits of these. They presuppose

in advance the range of meanings the comparativist can encounter in his research. In other words, method and the practice of comparativists are made possible precisely because, method does not create a tabula rasa of meanings, understandings and experiences. Rather it imposes certain meanings, understandings and experiences as the real and universal ones.

Thus when Smelser asks questions such as,

How is it possible to compare different social units (or social systems) with one another?...
Are the events and situations we wish to explain - the dependent variables - comparable from one sociocultural context to another?¹⁰⁷

the answer is not hard to come by, given that among the other independent variables method is in fact the most important, and of course unrecognized as such, independent variable which structures the practice of comparing. Thus Smelser's answer that,

...if we choose comparative dimensions that are in principle universal and if we work out principles of operational definition in accord with the variety of social goals and meanings to which these dimensions are related, one society is comparable with another society.¹⁰⁸

makes sense because the "choose(ing) of comparative dimensions" is made possible by the narrative infrastructure of method. The method of comparative politics works because it is supported by an infrastructure which tacitly narrates a social order. The method of comparative politics works through the imposition, albeit unrecognized by comparativists, of its narrative infrastructure, as a universal theory of man and society. This implies that alien practices are blind to themselves. A thing without a concept is blind to itself. Such apparently is the case with non-human nature. Nature has not got its own concepts, its own traditions and history outside those produced by men. This is unavoidable since nature is, being deprived of language, non expressive. If one were to meet a people without a language and thereby without history, traditions and social practices, one may suggest that such a "society" - and the use of

the term society is merely derivative - is blind to itself. In such a situation, as we do in our dealings with nature, we will conceptualize it according to our understandings, interests and practices. Now, such a direct negation of the humanity of other polities is hard to sustain. And yet, as indicated up to now, what the method of comparative politics does is, through its claim of indifference to what it manipulates, precisely subject other polities to concepts and discourses that are other than those which are present in the practices that are being studied. In other words, the method of comparative politics narrates other polities as blind to themselves. It excises their meanings, thinkings, purposes, and intersubjectivity. It replaces these with the meanings, thinkings, purposes and intersubjectivity that are given as the narrative infrastructure of method. Thus it prevents and denies alien polities - the subjects of these polities - to have a subjective understanding of how to transform their societies into ones that are more just and free. Rather, it structures their understanding of their polity as being that of an objective order wherein their place is given and their future preplayed. Thus Ward can write that "the fact these developing societies find themselves at earlier and simpler stages of political development renders them usually attractive and promising cases for comparative study and analysis".¹⁰⁹ For Segall, Africa is a "research setting (that) provides a necessary extension to the empirical domain which is the basis for all advances in ...theory"; for H. Glicksman, Africa is a "laboratory" which "provides an intriguing set of problems for experimentation with techniques of gathering data".¹¹⁰ Method, which is expressive of a self-understanding produced by a specific society transforms other polities (those who have not produced it as a mode of self-understanding) into its products. They become its data.

Karl Deutsch et al write that to answer questions such as

What social changes are associated with the growth of political pluralism as against the use of a dominant single party or interest? What social and political changes accompany various stages in a

nation's economic development? What conditions are associated with trends toward political centralization or decentralization...? How likely are governments to fall?... Do certain changes in the social and economic structure of a country precede or accompany the mobilization of broader masses of its population to an active interest in rationalism and in politics?...¹¹¹

a "body of comparable data" is necessary.¹¹² According to Deutsch et al. such data include

...information on voting; membership in interest groups, parties, and other political organizations; survey data on political attitudes and opinions; literacy levels of education; urbanization; audiences for mass media; industrialization; changes in the composition of the working force; shifts from subsistence to market economics...¹¹³

But in this comparison of "data", method has not got the same meaning for all polities. For those to whom method is the self-understanding of their social existence, the data of their polity discover their social background in method. For those to whom method is not a product of their social existence their presence as data is an operation which produces them as the product of method - of method as an ideal expression of the ideal man and polity.

The anthropological infrastructure of method can be summarized as one that defines the self as a possession. The self appears in the language of data as indifferent and external to the social world. At the same time, social reality is sought in the actions of individuals. Action is seen as a behaviour to which the actor attaches a subjective meaning. This action would be social only when it is oriented towards a socially recognized phenomenon. In other words there would be an action which is not social action; there would be subjectivity which can exist outside society. Political life is then assumed to be given to the subject from the outside; the subject is placed in an instrumental relationship to the political. The political world is given then as a world of objective laws that is external to the subject. The subject's act is judged to be

rational only when it is consistent with the objective laws of the political world. In other words the basis of the rationality of the subject is seen to be the same as that which makes the "datum" the rational building block of comparative politics. The datum and rational action are thus based on the presumed existence of objective laws independent of and prior to the individual. The subject, like the datum, is seen as an element of social construction; he has, like the datum, an objective status; he is, like the datum causally related to the social world. The individual is not seen as a subject posited by and positing the polity. Thus dehistoricized and desocialized, the individual is considered the locus of undetermined political needs. The subject is related to the polity as a goal (the subject) to a means (the polity). Politics then is seen as, in Easton's terms, the "allocation of values", allocation of scarce resources among competing ends. Its function is essentially integrative. The individual originates outside the polity and his needs are allocated into it. In this confrontation between the individual and the polity, the politically rational action would be that, "action which is efficiently designed to achieve the consciously selected political or economic ends of the actor".¹¹⁴

In other words the anthropological and political theory that is narrated by method defines political rationality as essentially a utility-maximizing action. Thus when subjects see politics as a struggle between two concepts of polity; when subjects act in terms of principles that are not utility-maximizing; when subjects act to achieve a common interest which increases the cost to the individual members of a group trying to achieve such a common interest, then these subjects are acting, according to the political theory narrated by method, irrationally.

The social theory that is the narrative infrastructure of method traces political processes to the individual. Given the assumed externality of the individual to the polity which he would be using to maximize the satisfaction of his indeterminate needs, his acts would be separable

into discrete units in terms of their goals. The political would be divided into discrete acts, cognitions, affects and norms and rendered measurable. Understood as an external expression of isolated and independent individuals, the polity is thus given as an "artificial body-politic", in the same way that the comparativist sees the interview as an artificially contrived locus of speech. It is this conception of society as narrated by the infrastructure of method which informs the comparativists' understanding of development, modernization as well as the cross-cultural survey encounter.

I mentioned earlier that the interview is understood by comparativists in the Hobbesian manner. This understanding of the interview is in fact a manifestation of the Hobbesian conception of society that is narrated by method. For Hobbes, the polity is no more than a union of the wills of individuals in quest of self-preservation. The possession of the self on which method's certainty is founded is also then the anthropology on which the social theory narrated by method is founded. Not only does this exclude the idea of a common task, a common goal, an idea which is indispensable to countries whose people suffer from commonly shared poverty and oppressions, it excludes the very possibility of conceptualizing, understanding of and acting commonly upon these sufferings and oppressions. For in terms of the anthropology and social theory carried by the infrastructure of method, the connection between individuals cannot be deduced as necessary.

This social theory of method, rooted in a Hobbesian anthropology, sees social relation as essentially an operation of exchange between two non-connected individuals. The rules of exchange can be codified so that everybody can follow the rules of the "game". According to Hobbes "it is in the laws of a common-wealth, as in the laws of gaming: whatsoever the gamesters all agree on, it is injustice to none of them".¹¹⁵ Politics is then understood as an instrument of exchange which has only an integrative function of non-political selves into a system where politics has no specificity and is not even necessary, given that the integrative function

can be fulfilled by other instruments. Such is briefly then the anthropology and social theory that serves as the narrative infrastructure of method. If the suggestion made in this chapter, that method does not exist as method-in-itself, but as a social practice, is thus acceptable, and I believe it is, then it can also be suggested that method is also a mode of social consciousness which is expressive of a commitment to a certain (Hobbesian) social order as described above. There is no reason to believe, then, that method, as an ideal of social order, is shared by polities other than the ones who produced it as, to borrow Leff's term a "collective historical consciousness".¹¹⁶ In practice, when method narrates the individual as external to the polity, rationality as conformity to objective laws, sociality as an instrumental connection between self-possessed individuals, it creates the condition of its own validity by reading other polities as part of the narrative order of the West and its present. Method then narrates, prior to the study of alien polities, a history of development that is a retrospective recuperation of the Western past in terms of its concerns of the present.

Thus when method is universalized, its narrative infrastructure transforms the narration of non-Western peoples into an imaginary representation of their relations to their real conditions of existence. Their narrations which are alien to the narrative infrastructure of method become its residue. Method does not lead to the cognition of the politics of these polities but only to their recognition because politics is already a given in its narrative infrastructure. Development then is coming closer to the politics given in the narrative infrastructure of method. Pye thus offers the "development syndrome" as a mode of re-recognizing politics in "developing" countries, Organski establishes four stages of political development as another mode of recognizing politics, Rostow recognizes five stages, Kautsky recognizes "five types in pure form", and Apter recognizes politics as a permutation of four eternal variables.¹¹⁷ But they all presuppose, through their method, the narrative infrastructure of method as the narration by which the "developing" countries must make

themselves narratable. The more narratable in terms of method's narrative infrastructure, the more developed a country appears in the discourse of comparative politics. Where the political practices are not narratable, they appear as a "mass of disparate data", to borrow Young's characterization of Congolese political practices.¹¹⁸ Thus in the study of non-Western countries the narrative infrastructure of method, its anthropological and social theory, construct its object of study as "development", "institutionalization", "modernization" with the corollary that a theory of development, a theory of institutionalization, a theory of modernization can be constructed before (indeed ought to precede according to the project of comparative politics) "development", "institutionalization" and "modernization" have taken place in these countries.

Consequently method's language is neither empty, nor without a Narrus. It presupposes its anthropological and social narratives as at least provisional truths that have been established. That is why the different codings that comparativists adopt in their study of alien politics cannot be considered in terms of bias; the questions raised regarding the interview, data collection, organization cannot be considered in terms of bias. To do so suggests that method can be freed from its narrative infrastructure. This is to forget the holophrastic, and thereby, the socio-historical nature of method. To consider method in terms of its narrative infrastructure brings out a situation which carries its hidden question. What made possible the imposition of a narration (the anthropological and social narration of the West) as the universal narration? Barthes suggests that the "absent narration", the "natural narrative" are the artifices of power.¹¹⁹ The question is not only of conflict of narrations, but also as Faye suggests, of conflict of narrators.¹²⁰ In other words, it is power that makes possible the imposition of a narrative order as the universal narration. Thus political history shows the oppressed narrating their existence in an "ordinary language" that conceals their oppression. That the imposition of a narrative order as the universal narration is based on power is also what Marxism and Freudianism have tried to demonstrate. In comparative politics, this historical meaning of method can perhaps best be illustrated by the realistic claims

of an influential comparativist Myron Weiner. He writes:

The American social scientist in a developing area has access to types of people he does not normally meet in his own country. With little difficulty he can arrange to meet the mayor of the city, members of parliament, cabinet ministers and even prime ministers and presidents.¹²¹

With specific reference to Africa, Jean Copans suggests a periodization of African studies that shows the interconnection between the narrative orders imposed on African social practices and institutions and the power-relations between African and European polities.¹²² The pre-colonial period is characterized by the Enlightenment problematic of the "natural man"; the colonial period is characterized with the Darwinist problematic of "evolutionism" and the post-colonial period is characterized with the problematic of "development". It is not being suggested that there is a causal relationship between power and narration as if these were external to each other. Such a view is, as already seen, incompatible with the Humboldtian understanding of narration. Rather what is being suggested is that the narrative order is a manifestation of the conflicting political narrators themselves. The narration of the non-West is present in the narration of the West. But its presence is subjected to the narrative order of the latter thereby making the former a variation of the latter, and an undeveloped variation. Method imposes thus, through its narrative infrastructure a homogeneity between the understood, i.e. the social practices wherein it is a shared mode of self-understanding, and the understandable, i.e. alien social practices. The reproduction of this homogeneity is made possible by the historically given power that universalizes the narrative infrastructure of method.

Method in comparative politics is not then indifferent to what it manipulates. Being linguistic - in the Humboldtian sense - it is a socio-historical social practice that expresses a political relation. Method constitutes the alien Narrus as a dominated Narrus. The speech of the dominated Narrus is structured by the narrative infrastructure of method and his practices recognized, factualized, selected and integrated

into an order of coherence which is the cross-cultural generalization produced by the dominating Narrus. The comparativist who makes himself the Universal Subject by submitting himself to method imposes the narrative infrastructure of method as the universal narration of all polities and makes its anthropology and society the telos of all polities. And this has radically divergent consequences on the understanding we have of the practices of the political agent and the practices of the comparativist. Method presents the former as an "actor" blind to what he does while simultaneously presenting the comparativist as a self-understanding being. These divergent consequences are best brought out through the consideration of the category of "political culture" which, according to comparativists, can account for the experiential meanings of political agents.

FOOTNOTES

1. Method and society are not external to each other when we consider the meaning of method in the society that produces it. Splitting them is precisely what positivism does.

2. Georges Canguilhem, "Qu'est-ce que la psychologie", Les Cahiers pour l'Analyse, no. 2 (mars-avril 1966) pp. 77-91. In his study of psychology, he shows that method expresses an idea of man. That there is an ideal of man in every social theory is accepted by some. But what is not accepted is the suggestion that method itself expresses an ideal of man. See Peter Roche de Coppens, Ideal Man in Classical Sociology (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1976). See also Alvin Gaudner, Enter Plato (New York: Basic Books, 1965), p. 171.

3. J. Roland Pennock and David Smith, Political Science (New York: Macmillan, 1964), p. 10. For similar views see also Eugene J. Meehan, The Foundations of Political Analysis (Homewood: The Dorsey Press, 1971); Arnold Brecht, Political Theory (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1959), pp. 27-113; G. David Carson, Handbook of Political Science Methods (Boston: Holbrook Press, 1971).

4. H. Teune, "Comparative Research, Experiential Design, and the Comparative Method", Comparative Political Studies 8, No. 2 (July 1975), p. 197.

5. Gabriel A. Almond, Political Development (Boston: Little Brown, 1970), p. 254.

6. Neil J. Smelser, "The Methodology of Comparative Analysis" in Comparative Research Methods, eds. Donald P. Warwick and Samuel Osherson (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1973), p. 51.

7. Arend Lijphart, "Comparative Politics and Comparative Method", in Roy C. Macridis and Bernard E. Brown, op. cit., pp. 50-66; Arend Lijphart, "The Comparable-Cases Strategy in Comparative Research", Comparative Political Studies 8, No. 2 (July 1975), p. 164.

8. See James A. Bill and Robert L. Hardgrove, Jr., Comparative Politics, the Quest for a Theory (Columbus: Charles E. Merrill, 1973); Donald P. Warwick and Samuel Osherson, op. cit.; Stein Rokkan, ed., Comparative Research across Cultures and Nations (The Hague: Mouton, 1968); Richard L. Merrill and Stein Rokkan, eds., Comparing Nations (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1966); R.W. Brislin et al., Cross-Cultural Research Methods (New York: John Wiley, 1973); Michael Armer and Allen D. Grimshaw, eds., Comparative Social Research: Methodological Problems and Strategies (New York: John Wiley, 1973); Robert T. Holt and John E. Turner, op. cit.

9. A. Przeworski and H. Teune, The Logic of Comparative Social Inquiry, op. cit.; R.T. Holt and J.E. Richardson, ed., The Methodology of Comparative Research, op. cit.; G.A. Almond and G.B. Powell, Comparative Politics: A Developmental Approach, op. cit. Certainly the question is deflected by reducing it to a problem in the context of discovery. But this cannot do. See supra, Chapter I.

10. Roger W. Benjamin, "Strategy Versus Methodology in Comparative Research", Comparative Political Studies, 9, No. 4 (January 1977), pp. 480-481.
11. Ibid, p. 481.
12. Ibid, p. 482. On the implications of "context of discovery" see supra, Chapter I.
13. Richard W. Breslin, op.cit., pp. 3-31.
14. R. Bruce, W. Anderson, "On the Comparability of Meaningful Stimuli in Cross-Cultural Research" in Donald P. Warwick and Samuel Osherson, op.cit., pp. 149-163.
15. Harry C. Triandis et al, The Analysis of Subjective Culture (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1972), pp. 53-57.
16. Richard W. Brislin et al, op.cit., pp. 3-32.
17. See below for a discussion of this question.
18. Kenneth S. Carlton, Social Theory and African Tribal Organization (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1968) p. 29. He writes:
 "(The) principal categories for organizing tribal behaviour simply represented the theoretical concepts into which the data most readily fell in the light of social theory."
19. R. Rosenthal, Experimenter Effects in Behavioural Research (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1966).
20. M. Pecheux, Les Vérités de la Palice (Paris: Maspero, 1975), p.10.
21. Oswald Werner and Donald T. Campbell, "Translating, Working Through Interpreters, and the Problem of Decentering" in A Handbook of Method in Cultural Anthropology, eds. Raoul Naroll and Ronald Cohen (New York: Columbia University Press, 1973), pp. 400-401.
22. Noam Chomsky, Aspects of Theory of Syntax (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1965), p. 30.
23. Aaron V. Cicourel, Cognitive Sociology (London: Penguin, 1973), p. 114.
24. John J. Gumperz and Dell Hymes, eds. Directions in Sociolinguistics: The Ethnography of Communication (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1972).
25. George Steiner, After Babel (London: Oxford University Press, 1975); Georges Mounin, Les Problèmes Théoriques de la Traduction (Paris: Gallimard, 1963); Eugène A. Nida, Language Structure and Translation (Stanford: Stanford

University Press, 1975). The problems related to translations have been also dealt with by some comparativist researchers. However, they seem to move within the problematic of "meaning equivalence", for they do not bring out the link between a theory of translation and a theory of language. See: Irwin Deutscher, "Asking Questions Cross-Culturally: Some Problems of Linguistic Comparability" in Institutions and Persons eds. Howard S. Becker et al (Chicago: Aldine Publishing Co., 1968), pp. 318-341; Joseph B. Casagrande, "The Ends of Translation", International Journal of American Linguistics XX, No. 4 (1954), pp. 325-340; Hal Fisher, "Interviewing Cross-Culturally" in Intercommunication among Nations and People, ed. Michael H. Prosser (New York: Harper & Row, 1973), pp. 155-164; A. Circourel, "Language as a Variable in Social Research", Sociological Focus, 3, No. 2 (1970), pp. 43-52; Herbert P. Philips, "Problems of Translation and Meaning in Field Work" in Comparativist Perspectives, eds. Amitai Etzioni and Frederick L. Dubow (Boston: Little Brown, 1970) pp. 387-400.

26. Oswald Werner and Donald T. Campbell, op.cit., p. 415.
27. R. Brue and W. Anderson, "On the Comparability of Meaningful Stimuli in Cross-Cultural Research" in Donald Warwick and Samuel Osherson, op.cit., p. 150.
28. Ibid, emphasis added.
29. Ibid, p. 151
30. Joseph W. Elder, "Problems of Cross-Cultural Methodology: Instrumentation and Interviewing in India," in Michael Armer and Allen D. Grimshaw, op.cit., p. 137; see also C.G. Hempel, "The Empiricist Criteria of Meaning" in Logical Positivism, ed. A.J. Ayer (New York: Free Press, 1959), pp. 108-129. According to Hempel, a sentence of a language is meaningful only if it is translatable into a language whose descriptive terms are linked with experience, i.e. testable sentences. See especially p. 128.
31. Paulo Valesio, "The Virtues of Traducement, Sketch of a Theory of Translation" Semiotics, 18, No. 1 (1976), p. 37. The use of "monolingual translation-judges" and the assumption that such judges have a privileged access to their language is similar to what Valesio calls "nativism". According to Valesio, nativism is:

"essentially, the native speaker's conviction that he perfectly masters his own language - more precisely, that his language is transparent to him. The very term "native speaker" already contains, in nuce (an) ideology (of nativism) for it should be clear that, even in an Innatistic theory of language...there just is no such entity as a "native" speaker in the sense that he has a birthright to his own language, that he is "to the language born". [p.37].

It is this assumption which makes the "monolingual translation judges in each of the languages" so crucial to "back-translation". But what this

means is that comparativists introduce into their practice a conception of language other than the one they claim to be necessary for doing science.

32. K. Mannheim, Freedom, Power and Democratic Planning (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1950) p. 138. He writes:

"By "reality level" we mean that every society develops a mental climate in which certain facts and their interrelations are considered basic and called "real" whereas other ideas fall below the level of "reasonably acceptable" statements and are called fantastic, utopian or unrealistic. In every society, there is a generally accepted interpretation of reality."

33. Richard W. Brislin, "Back-Translation for Cross-Cultural Research" Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology 1, No. 3 (1970), pp. 186-187; see also p. 188, p. 193.

34. Ibid. He writes of the performance criterion:

"If the passage in English asks for a performance of some sort, the subject may be requested to perform a task with the target-language version as the instructions." If he can complete the task, then the original and foreign language versions are undoubtedly equivalent. Specifically, the original and foreign language versions are functionally (workably) equivalent." [p. 193].

The second one is the randomization technique wherein

"An actual original language questionnaire and its target language translation are given to four groups of bilingual subjects equated by randomization. One group sees the original language version of the questions; a second group sees the target language version; a third sees the first half original, second half target; the fourth sees the first half target; second half original. If the versions are equal, then item frequencies should be the same, as should the total score for the entire questionnaire, across groups." [p. 193].

35. W.V. Quine, Word and Object (Cambridge: MIT, 1960) p. 24.

36. Wilfred Whitely, Swahili, The Rise of a National Language (London: Methuen, 1969), p. 119. Emphasis added.

37. Ibid., p. 118.

38. Ibid., p. 119.

39. see infra chapter 8.

40. A.L. Epstein, "Linguistic Innovation and Culture in the Copperbelt, Northern Rhodesia" in Readings in the Sociology of Language, ed. J.A. Fishman (The Hague: Mouton, 1968), p. 320-340.
41. Uriel Weinreich, Language in Contact (The Hague: Mouton, 1968); A. Kashamura, Culture et Alienation en Afrique (Paris: Seuil, 1971); Louis Deroy, L'Emprunt Linguistique (Paris: 1956); Dany Bebel-Gisher, La Langue Créole Force Jugulée (Paris: Harmattan, N.D.).
42. For the meanings the African has in the languages of colonialism see D. Hammond and A. Jablow, The Africa That Never Was (New York: Twayne, 1970); D. B. Dubois, The Problem of Slavery in Western Culture (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1966); J. Kovel, White Racism, A Psychohistory (New York: Random House, 1970); R.D. Curtin, The Image of Africa (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1964); J. Raskin, The Mythology of Imperialism (New York: Delta Book, 1971); F. Fanon, Black Skin and White Masks transl. C.I. Markmann (New York, Grove Press, 1967); A. Memmi, The Colonizer and the Colonized (Boston: Beacon Press, 1965); K. Yacine, Le Polygone Etoilé (Paris: Seuil, 1969).
43. Veronika GÜRG-Karady, "Stéréotypes Ethniques et Domination Coloniale: l'Image du Blanc dans la littérature Orale Africaine" in Cahiers d'Etudes Africaines 60, No. XV (MCMXXV) pp. 635-647.
44. M. Towa, Essai sur la Problématique Philosophique dans l'Afrique Actuelle (Yaoundé: Editions Clé, 1971), p. 50.
45. Pierre van Den Berghe, "Les Langues Européennes et les Mandarins Noirs" Présence Africaine 68, No. 4 (1968), pp. 3-17.
46. F. Fanon, Black Skin White Masks, op.cit., pp. 17-18.
47. J.P. Sartre, Black Orpheus (Paris: Présence Africaine, 1964), p. 27.
48. A. Memmi, The Colonizer and the Colonized, p. 107.
49. Africa, 84 (August 1978) p. 50.
50. Claus Mueller, "Notes on the Repression of Communication Behaviour" in Recent Sociology No. 2 ed. Hans Peter Drietzal (London: MacMillan 1970), pp. 101-114; Jürgen Habermas, "Toward a Theory of Communicative Competence" Hans Peter Drietzal, op.cit., pp. 114-151.
51. Myron Weiner, "Political Interviewing" in Studying Politics Abroad, ed. E. Ward (Boston: Little, Brown, 1964), pp. 109-113. Weiner, after pointing out "how important the interpreter may be" remarks that "it is surprising that so little attention has been paid to his selection, his training and how to use him." According to Weiner, the interpreter is a problem of instrument validation.
52. H.G. Gadamer, Truth and Method, op.cit., pp. 357-358.

53. A.C. Danto, Analytical Philosophy of History (Cambridge: At the University Press, 1965), p. VII.
54. Ibid, p. 71
55. B.C. Croce, "History and Chronicle" in H. Meyerhoff, op.cit., p. 47.
56. H.G. Gadamer, Truth and Method, p. 346.
57. Nessa Wolfson, "Speech events and natural speech: some implications for sociolinguistic methodology" in Language and Society 5, No. 2 (August 1976), p. 190.
58. Ibid
59. Ibid
60. Ibid, p. 192
61. Ibid, p. 195. Emphasis added.
62. Goran Hyden, op.cit., pp. 261-262.
63. Ibid, p. 262.
64. D. Hymes, "Linguistic Aspects of Comparative Political Research" in R. Holt and J. Turner, eds., op.cit., p. 340.
65. Richard W. Brislin, et al, op.cit., pp. 67-72.
66. Charles Taylor, "Force et Sens, les deux Dimensions Irréductibles d'une Science de l'Homme" in Sens et Existence, eds. G.B. Madison et al. (Paris: Seuil, 1975) pp. 124-137, especially p. 129.
67. This of course is the Cartesian aspect of comparative practice.
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CHAPTER VI
METHOD, POLITICAL CULTURE AND POLITICAL EPISTEMOLOGY

Introduction

Comparativists seem to claim that they can deal with the "holophrastic" dimensions of their linguistic practices and those they are studying by splitting political language from the language of political science. This splitting, they claim, does not in any way distort what is studied as the political, for the political of a given polity would be accessible as a mosaic of behaviours known as "political culture". According to Pye, political culture is

...the set of attitudes, beliefs and sentiments which give order and meaning to a political process and which provide the underlying assumptions and rules that govern behaviour in the political system. It encompasses both the political ideas and the operating norms of a polity. Political culture is thus the manifestation in aggregate form of the psychological and subjective dimension of politics.¹

Similarly, S. Verba defines political culture as follows:

The political culture of a society consists of, the system of empirical beliefs, expressive symbols and values which defines the situation in which political actions take place.²

Thus the experiential meanings the subjects have and produce in their experiential universes would be netted in as cognitive, affective and normative data. The sum total of these is assumed to constitute the political culture of that experiential universe. These meanings (political culture) are treated as motivational inputs external to political practices; the latter are seen as logically independent of the former. Political culture is thus seen as independent of political language. This has some interesting, paradoxical and radically contradicting consequences.

Such an approach inserts a cognitive abyss into the very person whose social practice is being studied. The concept of political culture in comparative politics serves the principles of replicability (verification or falsification)³ by equating the understanding of culture with the quantitative manipulation of "objectively observable data". That which is not "objectively observable" is considered to be "open to interpretation", therefore unverifiable. This disjunction between that which is "open to interpretation" and that which is "objectively observable" presents the political actor as having, on the one hand, meaningful and significant experiences (context of discovery, participant observation), and on the other, meaningless, in the sense of not having a meaning for a subject, but epistemologically available experiences. Vis-à-vis the political scientist, the subject is thus present as if his "objectively observable behaviour" were independent of his supposedly "subjective" (open to interpretation) experiences which are treated as "private" experiences. The realm of meaningful experiences, i.e. the linguistic domain, is treated as a "private" realm which is non-verifiable, and the "movement" realm (objectively observable behaviour) is treated as the "public" realm which is verifiable, because replicable. The "gestural meaning" of human behaviour is occluded and political science is made to stand on the assumption that there is a continuity between the social and the natural, i.e. biological, whence replicability.⁴

The upshot of this is that the agent is paradoxically assumed to see in his "objectively observable behaviour" a non-expressive, discrete, elementary movement which is extra-linguistic. The comparativist uses this "non-linguistic" experience as the building-block of a cumulative, cross-cultural science of politics. The paradox is that the agent's behaviour is his only effective presence in a shared world which is present to him, as Sartre suggests, as a "perspective of the future".⁵ This effective presence in the world is excluded by the comparativists' concept of "political culture". The agent is thus perceived as a duplex composed of a cultural being accepted only in the context of discovery, and an acultural being fit for the context of validation. As a cultural being

he is treated as if he were outside the public realm. As an acultural being he is treated as if he were a part, a discrete one, of the public realm. What makes the latter "public" to the political actor is not explained. Thus man is presented in his political practice as an asocial being; his political practice is presented as non-discursive, immediately and irresistably readable; his public realm is unavoidably considered as a "fictitious body".

Thus when the comparativist splits political language from political culture, he cannot avoid splitting the political agent into political and non-political components and bringing these back together by postulating an external causative relationship where the political is given as an output of non-political inputs. The political practices are made opaque, indeed incomprehensible, to the political agent.

The Political Culture of Method

The rejection of the agent's linguistic practice as a constitutive moment that gives political identity to social practices is systematically constructed by the comparativist into a radical discontinuity between his own political culture and the political science he practices. This is the other side of the split between political culture and language. The discontinuity is given as a scientific method that excludes the political culture of the comparativist from his comparative practice.

The concepts that are present in the linguistic practices of comparativists purport to identify political practices, aspects of these practices, their limits and their articulation with non-political practices. But the claim that one can identify an act, an event, an institution is not an empirical claim. I may identify an object as a table. But to identify an act as political requires a different operation. The identification of an empirical object can be based on clues. The identification of an act as political, on the other hand, cannot be based on clues. It requires an interpretation which leads to a recognition

of the act as political. A table in Kenya and a table in Canada can be identified by a man on the basis of clues. But noticing similarities between the Liberal Party of Canada and the Kenyan African National Union is not to recognize them as being of the same kind, i.e. political. As Urmson suggests, the possibility of recognition depends on language; a view consistent with what has been developed up to now.⁶ Thus, for humans "to recognize something as an "x" requires an understanding of the word "x". Sure, animals may be trained to recognize certain objects and signals. But recognition in animals is recognition in a derivative sense. For humans, recognizing is not a matter of clues; it is not pre-verbal but interpretative. When a political scientist writes that an act "x" in Kenya, an act "y" in China and an act "z" in Canada are "votes", he does not do so by considering the similarities of these acts as certain types of bodily movements. He does so by implicitly interpreting these acts as political of a certain kind. Now, the question here is how he came to this interpretation.

When the comparativist studies alien polities in terms of concepts that do not pertain to the social practices of the studied polity, such concepts have two opposed but united effects. As these concepts, say bureaucracy or political party, constitute epistemological objects which are also social practices, their use for the study of a polity whose social practices are different implies reading the alien social practices according to a pre-given "political epistemology"⁷ that sets in advance the parameters of the political and non-political. Thus concepts such as "interest aggregation", "interest articulation", "political participation", "modernization", "political party", "vote", "political culture" and others that one meets in structural, functional, system and behavioural analyses of alien political practices read these alien practices in terms of:

...categories of political cognition...categories like space, time, rationality, intentionality, causality, responsibility and consciousness in terms of which political events are perceived and interpreted.⁸

What this suggests is that the concepts of politics and comparative politics are both political and epistemological categories. The concept of political party, for example, is a political concept. But it is also an epistemological category implicating specific conceptualizations of intentionality (being a member of a party?) rationality (is it a means? a means to? is it an end? what kind?) causality (why two instead of one political parties or vice versa) responsibility (to whom?), consciousness (militant? voter?). The point is that political epistemology is not independent of the political concept which constitutes the political practice (institution) under consideration. For example, the Communist Party of China is a political party. So is KANU. But the concepts of political party which we meet in both cases are however only homonyms unless one shows that the practices involved in both cases express the same political epistemology. If it is the case that the practices involve different political epistemologies, then a comparison which eschews these differences and treats both as practices to be covered by a general cross-cultural law not only distorts our understanding of the politics concerned but distorts it from a specific point of view. It distorts it in terms of the political epistemology which is made to supply the universal categories of political cognition and recognition.

Now, contrary to what we have seen earlier in the splitting of the political culture of the studied from their political language, the language of comparative political science and American political culture are internally related. This unity is in effect realized in the comparative discourse in the very process that splits the alien's political culture from his political language. In other words, the comparative practice which, as we saw previously, splits language from political culture in the treatment of alien practices, does exactly the opposite in its treatment of American politics. The consequence of this is that when the comparativist studies alien politics with the categories of mainstream comparative politics he is involved in two opposed and yet united enterprises. His activity of splitting the language from the culture of the

alien polity is at the same time an activity that affirms their unity in his own culture. What is an instrumentalization of language in the study of the alien polity is at the same time a regeneration of his language in a Humboldtian fashion.

The comparativist in his practice which is, by necessity, linguistic, tacitly assumes, in a Humboldtian fashion, that his language is an aptitude for all possible performances (cultures) whose force lies in its capacity to animate and go beyond them.⁹ His linguistic practice constitutes him as a free being over and against their languages. He is engaged in the recognition, interpretation and elaboration of intersubjective meanings in terms of his shared common world in the very process of studying the alien polity as an aggregate of discrete, voiceless data. This field of intersubjective meanings which is so enriched, is the socio-historical world of the West, one of whose constitutive moment is its own self-understanding known as the social sciences, as Rousseau has indeed already pointed out.¹⁰

That the social sciences are inextricably enmeshed with the history and social practices of the West can be seen, as Arlotto suggests, from the semantic shifts of concepts such as politics, private, public, labour, right, law, elections, and other political terms; these are shifts "related to the life and culture of a speech community".¹¹ Every political concept has its own history which it shares with the history of the social practice whose conceptualization it is. One has to consider concepts such as interest, class, capital, labour, culture, group, role to see that their construction as epistemological objects is not an act of divorce with the shared, common and intersubjective meanings of the societies in which they appeared. They are rather interpretative efforts required by the social practices themselves as clarifications of their opacity. They are rather struggles against the objectivity (opacity) of society in view of constructing an objective (critical) knowledge of society by elucidating the subjectivity responsible for its constitution.

In spite of the claim to universality, the conceptual categories of comparative politics are such interpretative concepts expressive of American political practices. As such, in the understanding of American political practices, the concepts of comparative politics are not "thematic in understanding" but rather, "their nature is to disappear behind what they bring, in interpretation, into speech."¹²

But these same categories become, when applied to non-Western societies, "thematic in understanding", for being separated from the political language and practices of the alien societies, they produce objects of knowledge that hide the political language and practices of these societies. But this process of hiding the political of the other which makes the political concepts of comparative politics "thematic in understanding" cannot but lead to new clarifications of the political in the West. From this point of view, one can say that the comparativist is in fact deepening the understanding of his society's political practices, by discovering the hidden, the non-intended, the repressed aspects of his polity's political culture through the resistance of alien practices to his analysis.

For example, in Prewitt's study of political identity in Uganda, his questionnaire deals with concepts such as political party and citizen. The answers of the Ugandans seem to show a resistance, as it were, to the understanding of the political which is given in Prewitt's language of political science. Prewitt writes that in answering his questionnaire on political identity,

Very few made note of the political party or their political ideology. That is, fewer than one percent reported as one reported: "I am a supporter of U.P.C.". Almost as infrequent were references to an ideology.¹³

Prewitt reads this as the existence of "a fragile political culture"⁴ implying tacitly a conceptualization of a strong political culture in terms of certain practices. This tacitly implied conceptualization of a strong political culture does not however pertain to the political practices of

the Ugandans. Prewitt indeed puts the "political" in inverted commas and concludes that "for the East African, citizenship is less explicitly "political" than it appears to be in nations such as the United States".¹⁵ The inverted commas that adorn the "political" are indications of both opacity and clarity. Prewitt's concepts are conceptualizations of practices in "nations such as the United States". In his study of Uganda these concepts operate a double reading - manipulative (the split between the Ugandan political culture and political language) and interpretative (the affirmation of the unity between political culture and political language). In the first, Ugandan practices appear as non-interpretable and the concepts appear as more thematic than the practices themselves. But this very process is an act of clarification of American political practices (what it means to be a citizen, what it means to have a political identity) realized through the resistance of Ugandan political practices. Thus in Prewitt's study of Ugandan politics the concepts he uses become thematic in his reading of Ugandan political practices which appear as "fragile", sending us to the concepts themselves in search of what "a strong political culture" is. And yet, at the same time these concepts become interpretative and disappear behind the clarification they bring to Prewitt and readers acquainted with American political life, regarding the range of meanings and practices that citizenship has in "nations such as the United States".

From the latter point of view, there is no doubt that comparative politics has made an important contribution to human knowledge of that (American) "portion of humanity". In this sense, G. Sartori's critique of comparative politics as suffering from "concept misinformation" due to "conceptual stretching" is one-sided and misses the point, for the use of American political concepts to study other polities does not only, as he claims, lead to "vague, amorphous conceptualizations".¹⁶ It also permits an increasingly more and accurate conceptualization of American political practices through a more and more precise objectifying reading of alien practices in terms of the political epistemology of American political life.

Now we can go one step further and suggest that whereas the split between political culture and political language has distortive effects in the study of alien politics, the split between political culture and political language is, in the American context, in fact the mode of practicing and understanding politics. In other words, the splitting of the two is the specific mode of uniting them that is peculiar to American political practices, whence its radically opposed consequences in comparative politics. Let us see how this operates.

Merelman suggests that "Americans have been taught to look upon the government as a mechanism that is responsive to their wants", to see demands and attitudes as "inputs of political system", to consider respondents' answers as "hard data which have a clear, ... and systematic meaning".¹⁷ If this is true then concepts such as inputs, outputs, interest-aggregation, the concept of the individual as a political "unit" are conceptualizations of political practices; they are interpretative concepts which make possible an understanding of American social practices.¹⁸

If the splitting of political language and political culture is the mode of synthesis of these two in American political practices, political science cannot but be part of American political practice. It cannot but be, to use Merelman's expression, "interventionist".¹⁹ The political scientist, in his use of these concepts, is in fact not merely producing a discourse (political science) upon discourse (political discourse), he is in fact mediating between political actions and the political world in a way that affirms the shared American political culture. Merelman comments that:

such methods as the questionnaire and the depth interview appear eminently democratic and liberal ... The individual citizen is consulted by the political scientist with the understanding that the citizen's ideas will form the basis of political analysis... the method of pluralist study, which treats decision as compositions of discrete uncoerced actions, adheres to the voluntarism of liberal ideology.²⁰

In other words, the explicit consideration of political culture as separate from political language and as an aggregate of subjective data

is precisely its very mode of expressing a shared political language, a shared reality wherein each individual, including the comparativist, is spoken, as it were, in speaking the language of political science. The method of the American comparativist is, in its very splitting of political language and political culture, the affirmation and elaboration of the intersubjective social reality wherein its "method-ness" is both political and cognitive. When it is applied to non-American polities it thus produces epistemological objects that are readable not only by the American political scientist but also by the American people. Not because all Americans are political scientists but because the method of the comparativist and his categories are categories of political cognition, i.e. interpretative categories rooted in the linguistic world of all Americans. Thus a comparativist can study alien polities in terms of concepts such as input, output, vote, political party, political development and be understood by an American public without being understood by the members of the polity he studies. Sure the latter can understand him if they consciously adopt the understanding of politics imposed by the discourse of the comparativist. But the understanding of the alien polity that is structured by these concepts is an understanding of the effect of these concepts on the reading of the alien practices.

The comparativists' concepts, being thus holophrastic, have radically different effects according to whether they are applied to the study of American or non-American polity. In their relationship to American political practices they are interpretative concepts because they are applications of the political epistemology which informs these practices. In their relationship to non-American practices they become thematic in the understanding thus objectifying and distorting the political practices under study.

This idea that these concepts are interpretative concepts and not thematic in the understanding when they are used to read American practices, and that this is so because they are extensions and clarifications of the political epistemology which tacitly informs American practices, indicates

the way to a new type of political science - that which is oriented towards the discovery of the political epistemology in political practices in order to understand and explain these without subjecting them to the operations of an alien political epistemology which can read them only by objectifying them. That is, the practice of comparative politics itself bears the idea of a non-distorting knowledge of politics, but an idea which is distorted by the non-recognition of this principle as one which is valid not only for the American polity but also for all other polities. In other words, as there is no one universal political history, as there are no similar political practices which are universal both materially and in their expressions, at this moment of history, there cannot be one political epistemology. Each political culture bears its own distinctive political epistemology.

Political Culture and Political Epistemology

In this historical period described as that of "development" or "neo-colonialism", depending on the political language which produces the "acceptable" facts, both time and space have profound political meanings. But these political meanings are not superimposed on "space" and "time". Nor do time and space contain political meanings as contents of envelopes. Rather, time and space are in a certain sense constituted as political in the very social practices themselves and the way the people talk about them. I will use the ideas of political space and political time to show that every political culture is informed by its own political epistemology and that elucidating this is of capital importance in any practice of comparison.

Political Space

The empiricist conception of space is that of a container that holds social practices. It is conceptualized as homogeneous, discrete, neutral and as an object of consumption. Space is not recognized as a social relation but rather as an aggregate of surfaces. The problem of

the creation of a social and political space is thus considered in an Euclidean manner and not as a creation of social and political institutions which articulate the spatial dimensions of social and political relations.²¹

Jakle and al. in their study of Human Spatial Behaviour, indicate that space is a human concept and not an entity with intrinsic natures.²² They do not consider space as a Kantian a priori but rather see it as created through "symbolic interaction" which involves language. They indicate that there are different conceptualizations of space in different linguistic practices.²³ One can suggest then that space is a social relation in the collective existence of men.

The recognition of space as a social relation is absent in comparative politics in spite of the fact that the discipline claims to deal with "nation-building", "development", "modernization", "participation", "penetration", "communication" and other socio-political relations which implicate certain conceptualizations of space. The question is whether the political understanding and constitution of space can be considered independently of historical and cultural contexts. For example, in his comparison of American and Russian conceptualization of space, Tuan points out that Americans:

...accept the open plains of the West as a symbol of opportunity and freedom, but to the Russian peasants boundless space used to have the opposite meaning. It connoted despair rather than opportunity; it inhibited rather than encouraged action.²⁴

These different experiences and conceptualizations of space are of course also expressions of the history of the creation and articulation of each society's socio-political space. In one, as in America for example, space may become a symbol for openness and freedom and make movement a key theme in its history.²⁵ In another, as in Africa for example, space may be given a socio-political meaning only when it is

constructed as a closed space, viz. when it is made a "place". Space in Africa is indeed understood as the social relation of contacts, viz., as "place", with different places connected by "paths" whereas space is understood in America as the social relation of distance or "privacy".²⁶

The point then is that the study of the political practices of a given polity must, to explain the political events in such a polity, elucidate the political epistemology of space that is tacitly present as an effect in the political relations of that polity. To follow my example of "space", one cannot simply take for granted that space is a natural framework or a constant variable. As this neglected concept of "political space" is extremely important in the study of the so-called "developing" countries it requires some more elucidation.

Hilda Kuper, in her study of the "Language of Sites in the Politics of Space" describes an event that I will use as a starting point.²⁷ In November 1966, at the close of the colonial era, the Swazi were called to a political meeting to be informed on the contents of the new constitution, i.e. on a question affecting their collective future. The meeting was called on behalf of the Ngwenyama, the hereditary ruler. The "people anticipated that the meeting would be held in the sibaya, a large open-air arena".²⁸ In English, the sibaya was known as "cattlebyre", a name that completely misses the significance the place had for the Swazi. Before the meeting started, it was announced that the "Queen's Commissioner" will attend the meeting. The crowd then moved to the "Office of the Swazi National Council, a "Western public work Style Building". Once the Commissioner left, "the Ngwenyama announced in siswati to the crowd:

Everyone speaks of matters of importance in the place of his ancestral spirits (emadloti). We shall move from the site of foreign spirits (emandzawe) to the sibaya. This was greeted with great applause, and we all went back again to the village and into the sibaya.²⁹

In examining the political significance of the movement from the sibaya to the "Office" and from the "Office" to the sibaya, Kuper brings

out an understanding of political power as radiating from a given space - umphakatski, the royal village - or the "place" of power. The surrounding "space", i.e. the country is organized in a way which reconstructs "the hierarchical scheme of Swazi kingship". Each village reflected this in its spatial organization.

The point here is that the understanding of the political practices of the Swazi will be distorted if our study of their practices does not elucidate these in a way which shows their novel construction of political space and the understanding of politics this construction expresses. Even if we take into consideration the fact that space has a political significance for the Swazi, this consideration cannot help us explicate Swazi political practices unless we construct the epistemological object of political space from within the social practices of the Swazi. This involves attending to their conceptualizations of politics and political space. This is necessary because space has neither the same universal political significance nor is it politically construed everywhere in the same way.

If we consider American political practices and their history, we can suggest following the studies made by Moore, Billington, Nash, that the political significance of space in American political culture is radically different from the one examined above.³⁰ It seems that the American conception of political space has historically developed in terms of a "frontier myth" which nourished the self-image of a self-sufficient individual and the understanding of space as a condition of political regeneration of the individual. This political understanding of space in terms of the individual's political regeneration may indicate one of the possible reasons why Americans put so much emphasis on the politics of privacy. A non-shared space seems to be seen as a realm of personal development.

In Africa, there seems to be a conceptualization of space as "place", in the sense indicated earlier. In Africa the social articulation

of space, settlement patterns, the explicit articulation of land as history³¹ or "tradition", as comparativists would call it, all seem to indicate a novel understanding of political space. To make this clear I will take the question of "nation" in Africa.

From the geographic point of view, African "nations" are creations of colonial history. When compared to European "nations" African "nations" are rooted in a radically different political space, both internally and externally. This difference is expressed in the nationalism of each. Whereas European nationalism considered political space as the identity of the nation and the state, African nationalism envisages the nation as a space, in the sense of a territory, that is an object of the state identified as the political place. In other words, whereas the political space covered the whole nation in the European case, the political space is, in Africa, identified with the site of the state. The latter is identified as the political place. The consequence of this is that in many African polities, the identification of political space as political place, equated with the state and its site, seems to have led to a political constitution of space as being closed and monovocal. This political place is conceived as a homogeneous political space qualitatively different from the space that surrounds it, which is the "nation" perceived as a non-structured space. This leads to a practice of politics which articulates the diversity of human groups (such as tribes) in the "nation" (understood as non-structured space) as pre-political entities and as obstacles to politics (identified as "tribalism", "regionalism"). The political act thus articulates the people outside the political place as objects of "nation-building", as raw materials for the construction of political space understood as the construction of a political place - or a homogeneous, closed and monovocal political space. The conceptualization of political space in contemporary Africa is, to put it figuratively, "imperialistic". The creation of a political space is understood and practiced as a conquest, and if necessary destruction, by the political place, or the state, of the peoples that occupy the

presumably un-structured space. This political epistemology of space in Africa cannot be seen or understood if we adopt the empiricist concept of space. We can, to highlight this understanding of political space in contemporary Africa, look at it from a different angle.

The American political perception of space seems to imply that political space is discrete and heterogeneous. This seems to express itself in the spatial distribution of political powers: the practice of representation as a spatial distribution of politics being one of its features. Americans do not seem to experience such a spatial distribution of political power as political disintegration. In African polities, the perception of the "nation" as a space to be conquered, as it were, by the political place, i.e. the state, constitutes the heterogeneity present in the "nation" as a mortal danger to the homogeneity of the political space. The consequence is that any constitution of political space in the other parts of the "nation" is immediately reduced to "tribalism". Tribalism is seen as externally affecting politics instead of considering the tribe, where it exists, as a political institution. Any distribution of power in terms of representations of the different areas of the "nation" is seen as leading to a disintegration. In such a situation, voting when it exists is neither the expression of individual interest, nor of group interest. It is a tribute paid to the conquering state.³²

And yet, out of this conceptualization of political space seems also to be emerging a new political culture rooted in an anthropology that is in a sense expressive of this political space. Modernization theories claim that "development" is a transformation from Gemeinschaft type of society to a Gesellschaft type.³³ What I want to indicate here is that the questions of modernization and political development implicate the question of the organization of political space.³⁴ The novel ways political space has come to be organized in and by the West, such as the nation-state, confederation, federation, the colonial state, the

protectorate, the mandate, tariff unions...and others, express both the national and international political practices of Western countries. Africa has been, and in part still is, a dependent continent, part of the political space created by Western polities. The creation of political space in Africa thus involves both African and non-African political practices. In this complex situation, it is not certain at all that the questions raised by "modernization" and "development" theories which are questions made possible by the history of the West, and raised post eventum, are the appropriate questions which lead to the understanding of the constitution of political space in contemporary Africa. Nevertheless, one finds certain interesting indications in practices involving "modern" institutions such as political parties, bureaucracies, armies, cities, practices which indicate that the future political history of Africa may not be the political history of the West, distilled as modernization theory. The African understanding of politics as a homogeneous space seems to be operative in these "modern" institutions in ways which suggest that "modernization" in Africa may be in fact a transformation from one type of Gemeinschaft to another type of Gemeinschaft.³⁵ Pauline Baker in her study of African urbanization and political life comes to a conclusion which goes in the direction suggested here. She writes that

(the) patterns of political change indicate that the structure of power in Lagos shifted, not from oligarchy to pluralism, as in New Haven, but from oligarchy to communalism. Pluralism posits a type of power structure in which several leadership hierarchies are identified in different issue areas. As used here, the term "communalism" refers to a form of political domination which is not vested in competing sets of interest-group leaders or, as the stratification school asserts, in a dominant socio-economic class, but rather in a particular communal group, a cultural aggregate whose members share a common identity and a common sense of corporate solidarity.³⁶

If then contemporary African polities are creating political spaces in a way which seems to differ from the conclusions of the history of the Western elaboration of political space, we are confronted with political practices which require, to be understood, an interpretative activity. An

interpretative approach permits us to see how African political actors cognize and recognize their political actions even when these actions are described in the language of comparative politics. To show this point, let me consider the ubiquitous concept of "political participation".

We saw above that the understanding of politics as a homogeneous space leads to a practice very different from the one implied by the understanding of politics as a heterogeneous space. In the latter understanding, participation can be individual, associative, and aggregative. In the former, where political space is understood as homogeneous and radiating from the site it occupies, participation is an act of allegiance, an act which transforms those who are outside the political space into objects of politics, into at best spectators of their political participation by proxy, a state of affairs which saves the homogeneity of the political space.³⁷ Participation here does not imply individuality and responsibility. Nor does it imply the possibility of bringing about political change. In Guinée, political participation is high but political change is almost nil.³⁸ As the heterogeneity of the political audience is denied by the conceptualization and practice of politics as a political "place", participation is lived as either letting oneself be the raw-material of "nation-building" or handing oneself over to the nation-builders. The upshot is that political participation in many African polities creates political communication whose aim is to process the people as objects of nation-building and development by and for the benefit of the actors of the political place. Thus the concept of "political participation" has different meanings when we take into consideration the political epistemology that informs it as a social practice in different polities. Different types (American and Kenyan for example) of political participation articulate and are articulated by different political spaces. Each polity has a different epistemology of political space.

Political Time

The second point which can be used to illustrate the presence

of a specific epistemology in the way agents conceptualize their social practices is the question of political time. Surprising as it may seem, theories of political development do not consider at all the question of political time, in spite of the fact that they claim to deal with "political development", "political change", "political transformation", "political decay". Most of the dichotomous schemes associated with tradition and modernity, Parson's pattern variables and their various permutations developed by comparativists, notions such as "sequences", "growth" and "stages of political development", "phases of modernization", involve a conception of political time which is never explicated by comparativists. That they don't explicate this central question of the whole project of comparative politics on "developing" countries is of course understandable given their instrumental conception of language. In the instrumentalist conception of language time is given as if it were external to human consciousness. Time is seen as something physical, objective and identified with its measure.³⁹ True, such an "objective" conception of time permits equations such as the ones given by Huntington regarding "social frustration", "political participation" and "political instability", or Apter's table of permutations of norms and authority, by considering political practices, events and institutions as if they were in time but atemporal.⁴⁰ Simultaneously time is reified. The upshot of this is that whatever ingenuity comparativists bring to their discipline, whatever terminological change they introduce, as in the suggestion by Huntington to replace the term "political development" by what he believed to be a non-normative expression; viz., "political change", they are always obliged to assume, even when they deny it, an evolutionary conception of society.⁴¹ If time is understood as independent of human consciousness, man becomes a spectator engaged in an involuntary movement which is unidirectional, objective, mechanistic and taking place in homogeneous time. To simply claim that theories of development or modernization are not evolutionary is not sufficient unless these theories discard the tacit conception of "objective" time which structures their understanding of political time.⁴² Now the point here is not that

such an "objective" time does not exist. Rather that if it exists, it does so as time understood and constituted, as quantitative time, by men. This is one possible understanding of what Bergson called "real time, perceived and lived."⁴³ As Merleau Ponty has pointed out, this perceived, lived time is not a wordless experience, external to language.⁴⁴ The Humboldtian conception of language suggests that time is rooted in the temporality of human speech (expression). It is, according to A. Jacob, "language that explains time".⁴⁵ Given the social and historical nature of linguistic practices, the constitution of time is the constitution of social historical time. According to Sorokin, socio-historical time, or "socio-cultural" time, cannot be studied as if it were time independent of social practices, without distorting our understanding of these.⁴⁶ It is perhaps Gurvitch who has best shown that time is always "social time". According to him, social time has a dialectical nature in as much as it is constituted by men and constitutes their practices; it is heterogeneous in as much as different spheres of the human world have different social times.⁴⁷

From this point of view, it can be suggested that comparative political scientists and Americans share a certain conception of social time, perceived and lived as quantitative time. This informs American political practices and American political science. For example, the American president holds his political office for so many years and for so many terms. At the end of the quantity of time he is in political office, he has either to step down or go through the process known as elections to acquire a fixed amount of political time. The different phases of the process of elections are timed quantitatively. Now, the writers mentioned above remind us that this "objective" time is time constituted socially. In the Humboldtian sense, it is the effective manifestation of a constitutive subjectivity.

What then this suggests is that there is no reason why the comparativist should not, when he studies different polities, try to discover the social time that is inscribed in their social practices and conceptualized in their linguistic descriptions of these, instead of

imposing a conception of political time that he has not at all shown to be that which is effectively constituted by the social practices he is studying. To assume that there is a universal, objective political time entails, whatever be the extent of quantification and mathematization, an evolutionary (in the Darwinian sense) theory of society.

If we take cases from Africa, many of the polities seem to show in their social practices a conception of social time radically different from the one we meet in American society. M'biti suggests that in many African societies social time is understood in a way which gives it, when compared to American social time, a different significance. He writes:

The question of time is of little or no academic concern to African peoples in their traditional life. For them, time is simply a composition of events which have occurred, those which are to occur... The most significant consequences of this is that, according to traditional concepts, time is a two-dimensional phenomenon, with a long past, a present and virtually no future.⁴⁸

To answer his critiques, M'biti uses evidence from his language, Kikamba, to show how events and practices are described and how these make possible conceptualizations of a distant past whereas the conceptualization of the future limits it to "two years from now".⁴⁹ Kagame also points out in his study of Kinyawanda that social time is constituted in a way which makes the past a matter of more concern than the future.⁵⁰ Beckett in his study of the Kiluba makes a similar analysis and writes that the Kiluba pays "careful attention to the past and present" but is only "vaguely interested in the future".⁵¹ Zahan goes as far as suggesting that in many African languages the future is, linguistically speaking, by far "less conceptualized than the past".⁵² This does not mean that Africans do not have a conception of the future or do not recognize its existence and its meaning. What it means is that among Africans the future as social time is conceptualized and constituted in a manner which makes the question of coming to terms with what is inherited its central question. The future is not seen as empty time to be furnished by non-existent practices.

Ziegler, one of the very few contemporary students of African societies who has tried to disclose African "social time" by studying the very practices of Africans, writes that

Time is, for the African peasant, one of the fundamental categories of his thought. It is through this category (and also through other categories) that he understands the world. In other words, the group creates through its practical conditions of existence its own categories of mediation (one of which is "social time"). It is with these categories that the African perceives his relations with nature, with the group and himself. Thus social time, a structuring element of the African universe, is at one and the same time a powerful source of motivations for a multitude of individual and collective behaviour.⁵³

In African social practices then, social time is understood not as abstract, objective and mechanical time. "Sans le calendrier et la montre des Blancs, nous ne serions pas mortels" runs a saying from Abidjan.⁵⁴ It is not that death is not recognized but rather it changes its social meaning when inserted in a different social time. The event becomes a different social event. In the two social times, death is not the same "fact". In the quantitative understanding, death is an end of a given quantity of time which it is not in the African social time, for social time is constituted as an already filled time and as a matter of concern and memory. This does not mean that there is a cult of the past in Africa as the use of the term "immemorial" by Apter to characterize traditions may suggest. On the contrary, there is no social practice in Africa equivalent to that which makes the past an object of contemplation in museums. The point here is that the conception of social time in certain African social practices implies what M'biti suggests to be a reversed teleology. He writes:

People look to the "past" for the orientation of their being than to anything that might yet come into human History. For them History does not move towards any goal yet in the future: rather, it points to the roots of their existence, such as the origin of the world, the creation of man, the formation of their customs and traditions, and their coming into being of their whole structures of society.⁵⁵

It may be necessary to immediately point out that this does not

imply that the future is absent, or that there is no change possible, or that history is rejected. This implies a different understanding of social time, an understanding which identifies social time with an effective event. This understanding of social time in terms of events which have been fulfilled, or are taking place, constitutes the future in terms, and not independently, of these fulfilled events. In this sense M'biti speaks of a reversed teleology because the present and the future imply a return to the past as a source of the ideal of fulfilled events or time. It may be that this is a debatable interpretation of African social time. It may be that this interpretation applies only to specific African cases. But the point is that there is reason to doubt that the abstract, universal and objective time tacitly assumed by comparative politics is in fact the social time which informs the social practices of many African polities. Given the importance of this question, I will try to clarify it from a different angle.

We have already seen that the Humboldtian approach to language obliges us to see communication as the effect of language and not the other way around. We have seen that communication is in fact constituted as a social practice expressive of the subjectivity, history and sociality involved. If we consider contemporary African societies they are, in the majority, societies of "oral culture". Even the written texts tend to follow "oral" patterns of communication.⁵⁶ Modernization does not necessarily mean following the same route of transition from the oral to the written as that travelled by the West. Technology in Africa seems to reinforce the oral nature of African cultures which are different from the "modern" culture associated with writing. In his study of Idoma's political life Magid writes that "For most councillors, the radio was not the liberating (sic) bridge to the external world, but a useful device for traditional, parochial ways."⁵⁷

Comparative political science is completely oblivious to the epistemological problem involved here. Magid, for example, in spite of what he writes above, conducts his attitude survey as if "writing" is

merely re-transcribing what is said orally. That there may be important differences between the social times of oral cultures and written cultures, that each may have its own principle of transcription, that each then transcribes its events and social practices in ways which produce qualitatively different social worlds is repressed by a homogeneous conception of time where the oral and written forms are seen as simply different instruments of communication. Magid thus writes that "widespread illiteracy among the seventy-one district councillors precluded my using a self-administered instrument" and that the district councillors were "asked to indicate (their answers) verbally".⁵⁸ Magid simply ignores the question of social time involved here and reads the social practices of his respondents by transcribing it in the social time articulated by the questionnaire which is itself an expression of American social time. This is indeed the general practice in cross-cultural surveys in Africa. Writing is seen as a mere re-transcription of a content given orally. But as Derrida has shown, the concept of writing which informs the social sciences expresses an epistemology different from the one which informs speech which is also, like writing, "a transcription".⁵⁹ From this point of view an oral culture and a written culture are two different linguistic worlds with their own techniques of transcriptions which are not only instruments but also acts which express and articulate their world in certain specific ways. Writing is not a simple retranscription of speech; to think so is an empiricist illusion. An oral culture constitutes the world in a way which suggests that its social time cannot be understood in terms of the social time constituted by the "writing" of comparative politics which considers the difference between the "said" of the respondent and the "coded" of the comparatist as only a difference of containers.

In oral cultures, as Jack Goody, Ruth Finnegan and others have indicated, speech is a visibly continuous application of shared meanings, continually subjected to the "semantic ratification" of interlocuting speakers that the community is.⁶⁰ Finnegan, in her study of African "oral literatures" suggests that speech in such cultures is an activity of transcription, as it were, which involves the play of differences in terms

of tone, pitch and variations of sound in ways which constitute an experiential universe unknown in written contemporary cultures.⁶¹ This cannot but suggest a different way of experiencing "time" and "history". Hountondji makes a suggestion similar to this.⁶² Taking issues with Levi-Strauss's claim that Western societies produce "cumulative" history because they write, and that "societies without writing" produce "non-cumulative history", he suggests that this distinction leads to a distorted knowledge of "societies without writing".⁶³ Hountondji suggests that an oral culture is structured by the possibility of forgetting (whence perhaps "reversed teleology") and by the possible betrayal of memory. As such its linguistic practice constitutes social time as sociomorphic time whose goal is the preservation, cumulation and the recall of memorable events. Such a social time then is cumulative time in the sense that it adds the present to the past, although it may not be cumulative in the sense of going into the indefinite, linear future which is characteristic of the social time constituted by the society of "writing". In the latter type of society, the possibility of forgetting is not a mortal danger and social time is constituted, not as a cumulation of the past, but as a linguistic practice which constitutes the past as an object to be dissected into and manipulated quantitatively as a composition of discrete elements.⁶⁴ The difference between the two experiential universes is not that of cumulation and non-cumulation as if the two belonged to the same, objective, homogeneous social time. The differences between the two linguistic worlds is not simply an aesthetic difference, or a difference of form where the oral can be transcribed or the transcribed oralized without changing the expressive and intelligible experiences involved. This assumption, on which is also founded the cross-cultural survey, forgets that such differences entail different criteria of recognition, different structures of reasoning, i.e. different epistemologies.⁶⁵ African social time (history) cannot then be read like American social time (history).

One may argue that the linguistic world evoked here as "oral" is true for people who are still leading "traditional" life and not for

those who have become modern. This of course is an objection which seems to forget that contemporary African polities are still polities whose populations are in the majority non-writing.⁶⁶ Moreover, the social scientific distinction between tradition and modern is constituted by the American conception of social time as "objective" time which, as we have seen, is a conception very unlikely to be the one which informs African social practices. Indeed such a distinction tacitly makes an illegitimate identification between the oral and the traditional in spite of the fact that there is reason to believe that the oral can also be modern, as Finnegan suggests.⁶⁷ She writes:

There is a tendency to think of two distinct and incompatible types of society - "traditional" and "modern" - and to assume that the individual must pass from one to the other by some sort of revolutionary leap.... There is, indeed nothing to be surprised at in a continuing reliance on oral forms. Similarly, there is nothing incongruous in a story being orally narrated about, say, struggling for political office...or using songs to stir up and inform mass audience.⁶⁸

The question now then is how this African social time is expressed in African politics. Let me take one of the most widespread political phenomenon in Africa, the so-called "African Socialism", as an example. Socialism in its Western understanding is a politics of the future, whether the socialists are of Marxist or democratic persuasion. The socialist society is assumed to be not only a qualitatively better society than the ones which have preceded it but is also a critique of their shortcomings, whether it be from a moral point of view as in social democracy, or a rationalist point of view as in Marxism. "African Socialism" on the other hand can be said to have a politics of the ideal past. "African Socialists" as diverse in their ideologies and political practices as N'krumah, Senghor, Mboya, Touré, Nyerere seem to share an understanding of the realization of socialism which seems to justify M'biti's suggestion that social time in Africa expresses a reversed teleology. For S. Touré, Africa is essentially "communaucratic" and the

aim of Guinean socialism is to realize this "communaucratie".⁶⁹ According to N'krumah, the class-less society has already existed in Africa for in the "traditional African society, no sectional interest could be regarded as supreme"; it is then, he suggests, this characteristic which is expressed in the "African Personality" and which must be revitalized by the development of Ghanaian socialism.⁷⁰ Tom Mboya claims that "African socialism" is but the "proved codes of conduct" inherited by Africans from the past and whose implementations must be facilitated by the development of African societies.⁷¹ Senghor asserts that "we had already achieved socialism before the coming of the Europeans", and Senegalese socialism is seen by him as a replay of this "socialism".⁷² Nyerere declares that African Socialism is "rooted in our past - in the traditional society which produced us."⁷³ We can of course add to this Kaunda's "Humanism"⁷⁴ and Mobutu's "authenticité".⁷⁵ All consider contemporary political life in Africa as a reconstruction of the ideals of already fulfilled events. This is supposed to lead to "development" and "socialism". In spite of doctrinal, ideological, political differences, they all seem to share a perception of political time which elaborates the idea of "development" out of a reading of the past.⁷⁶ What must be emphasized here is that such a phenomenon cannot be glossed over as a psychological reaction of an alienated elite and reduced to an intrapsychic phenomenon.⁷⁷ These political discourses and the practices they implicate, avoid, or suppress, are aimed at those who are in power, outside power, or simply powerless. It is a discourse which seems to search for a common political denominator shared by all.⁷⁸ But this does not at all mean that those in power have a concern for those out of power and for the powerless. This does not mean either that those in power cheat those who are not in power and the powerless. And yet the African people are the poorest, the most diseased and the most subjected to violence and oppression.⁷⁹ Nevertheless these ideologies which promise the ideals of the past as the future of the people seem to have a hold on both the elite and the people. It may be that in contemporary Africa the only thing the elite and the people share is their common past. Whatever the

case is, this conception of political time is incompatible with that which informs the theories of political development and modernization.

This conception of political time can be read in certain political practices which are widespread in Africa. If it is true that time is, in African practices, constituted as concrete and sociomorphic, and identified with the events which embody it, then in political practices, this means that it is being in power which is the political event and counts as politics. Being in opposition cannot but appear as an anti-event, as anti-political. Moreover, the reversed teleology inscribed in the understanding of social time seems to suggest a practice of politics in terms of cumulation and preservation. This seems to exclude the possibility of alternating accession to power of competing persons and parties. Political competition, political criticism, political opposition are understood and lived as mortal time, as anti-politics, as anti-events.

The main characteristics associated with this social time are the following. First, political leaders tend to see their political power as perpetual. Perpetual is not perhaps the right term for it engages the distant future. As political time is understood as the event of being in power itself, there seems to be no room for a quantitative delimitation of the exercise of power. We have thus, in spite of all differences between them, political figures such as Senghor, Banda, Touré, Mobutu, Bokassa, Nyerere, Houphet-Boigny, N'krumah, Kenyatta who are (or were) in power as long as they can preserve it and cumulate it backward, as it were. Second, political activities that are not the expressions of the power-holders are understood as anti-events; they are seen as objects of total repression.⁸⁰ As there cannot be two identical events occurring at the same time and the same place, there cannot be more than one politics at the same time and place. Political time is seen as the time of the political acts of only those who are in power. The "time" of opposition is understood as the destruction of political time. Such an understanding of social time excludes competition for power by different groups holding different political ideals. Thus the very idea of an alternating exercise

of power by such groups appears in the context of such a social time as dangerous if not impossible. For this presupposes a linear, quantitative and physical conception of time which is incompatible with social time as constituted by African social practices. In many African polities, a new government is created by the destruction of the previous one as an event, and the installment of the new one, not only as a new government, but as a new event, qualitatively different from the previous one. Discontinuity, such as the coup d'état, is the most widespread political form of succession in Africa. Each new regime is seen as the beginning of a "new" beginning. Political change, political development is not understood in the linear, future-oriented cumulative sense that one finds in the theories of development. Rather political development seems to be conceptualized in African practices as a repetition of "new" beginnings of political time. Pregnant in this seems to be an understanding of development in terms of "discontinuous" social times.

It can thus be argued that the understanding of "political time" as conceptualized from within African political practices is different from the one we find in American political practices. This suggests then that comparativists cannot assume the existence of a universal political epistemology with regards to the constitution of political time in different polities. To assume so is to impose a conception of political time that is alien to those polities which do not live in terms of American social time.

Conclusion

The point then is that the secret quasi-Kantism of comparative politics, that there is only one (political) epistemology with one set of categories, and that therefore there is only one possible conception of the (political) world cannot be sustained. The social practices of different polities carry their own political epistemology articulated in the language which describes and constitutes their social practices.

But as I have shown, the discourse of comparative politics, when it speaks of other polities, excludes their intersubjective meanings and political epistemologies as sources of comparative concepts. And yet, comparative political science, as a meaningful discourse in the field of knowledge, is unquestionably rooted in the intersubjective meanings and political epistemology which inform the social practices that have produced comparative politics as a moment of its political culture. There are then conflicts of practices, meanings and political epistemologies in the very center of the project of comparative politics. Its instrumentalist conception of language is an expression of the denial of these conflicts of practices, meanings and political epistemologies which are inevitable when different polities belonging to different civilizational and cultural horizons are compared. Comparative political discourse excludes both these conflicts and the awareness of these conflicts. That is to say, it is a discourse which systematically denies the sociality and historicity of the other, and excludes this systematic denial from its memory, as it were. This systematic distortion of the knowledge comparativists produce about other polities has a specific discursive form. It is a metonymic discourse.

FOOTNOTES

1. L. Pye, "Political Culture", in International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences, 12 (New York: The Free Press, 1961), p. 218.
2. S. Verba, "Comparative Political Culture" in Political Culture and Political Development, eds. L.W. Pye and S. Verba (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1965), p. 513.
3. For the different renditions of this doctrine see: Robert T. Holt and John M. Richardson, "Competing Paradigms in Comparative Politics" in Robert T. Holt and John E. Turner, op.cit., pp. 21-73. For Popper also, science is a matter of methods and not results and testability is the center of this method. K. Popper, The Logic of Scientific Discovery (New York: Harper and Row, 1965), p. 40, pp. 78-92.
4. M. Merleau Ponty, Phenomenology of Perception, translated Collin Smith (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1974), p. 187, 213, 235, 236. A similar view is expressed by Ricoeur, P. Ricoeur, De l'Interprétation (Paris: Seuil 1965) p. 372. He writes:

"Un sens qui existe, c'est un sens pris dans un corps, c'est un comportement signifiant. (p.372)
 Tout sens agi est un sens pris dans un corps; toute praxis vouée au sens est une signification, une intention faite chair, s'il est vrai que le corps est "ce qui nous fait être comme étant en dehors de nous-même."
 (p.373)

Marcel Mauss has also argued that the assumption of a continuity between the social and biological is utterly mistaken. See Marcel Mauss, "Techniques of the Body" Economy and Society, 2, No. 1 (February 1973), pp. 70-87. For discussion of matters related to this, see also Derek L. Phillips, Knowledge From What? Theories and Methods in Social Research (Chicago: Rand McNally, 1971); R.L. Birdwhistel, Kinesics and Context: Essay on Body Motion Communication (Philadelphia: University of Philadelphia Press, 1970), pp. 157-158; N. Friedman, The Social Nature of Psychological Nature (New York: Basic Books, 1967), p. 150.
5. Jean Paul Sartre, Search For A Method (New York: Knopf, 1963), p. 96.
6. J.O. Urmson, "Recognition" in Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society, New Series, 56 (1955-1956), p. 169.
7. B.C. Parekh, "The Nature of Political Philosophy" in Knowledge and Belief in Politics, eds. Robert Benewick et al (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1973), p. 189.
8. Ibid.
9. P. Caussat, op.cit. pp. 160-166.

10. J.J. Rousseau, The First and Second Discourses, ed. Roger D. Masters (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1964). He writes:

"For the three hundred or four hundred years since the inhabitants of Europe have inundated the other parts of the world, and continuously published new collections of voyages and reports, I am convinced that we know no other men except the Europeans... Under the pompous name of the study of man, everyone does hardly anything except study the men of his country." (p.114)

11. Anthony Arlotto, Introduction to Historical Linguistics (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1972), p. 182.
12. H.G. Gadamer, op.cit., p. 359.
13. K. Prewitt, "Perplexities of the Political Question" in Education and Political Values, ed. K. Prewitt (Nairobi: East African Publishing House, 1971), p. 237.
14. Ibid, p. 242.
15. Ibid, p. 244. Emphasis added.
16. Giovanni Sartori, "Concept Misformation in Comparative Politics", The American Political Science Review, LXIV, No. 4 (December 197), pp. 1033-1053.
17. Murray Edelman, Politics as Symbolic Action: Mass Arousal and Quiescence (Chicago: Markham Publishing Co., 1971), p. 2-5.
18. The almost total failure of Marxist analysis and politics in America can be partly explained by the fact that Marxists pay no attention whatsoever to the self-understanding Americans have of their political practices.
19. Richard M. Merelman, "On Interventionist Behaviouralism: An Essay in the Sociology of Knowledge", Politics and Society, 6, No. 1 (1976), pp. 57-77.
20. Ibid, pp. 63-67.
21. For an interesting discussion of the empiricist concept of space in contemporary social science see Alain Lipietz, Le Capital et Son Espace (Paris: François Maspero, 1977), On the epistemology of space see: J. Piaget et al, L'Epistémologie de l'Espace (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1964). For a phenomenological discussion of space see the fascinating book of Yi-Fu Tuan, Space and Place (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1977).

22. John A. Jakle et al, Human Spatial Behaviour: A Social Geography (North Scituate, Mass: Duxbury Press, 1976).
23. Ibid, pp. 2-9.
24. Yi-Fu Tuan, op.cit., p. 56.
25. Ibid, p. 99.
26. N'Sougan F. Agblemgnon, Sociologie des Sociétés Orales d'Afrique Noire (The Hague: Mouton, 1969); J. Jahn, "Value Conceptions in Sub-Saharan Africa" in Cross-Cultural Understanding, eds. F.S.C. Northrop and Helen Livingston (New York: Harper and Row, 1964), pp. 55-69. M. Cole et al: The Cultural Context of Learning and Thinking: An Exploration of Experimental Anthropology (London: Methuen, 1977). Yi-Fu Tuan, op.cit., pp. 62-79.
27. Hilda Kuper, "The Language of Site in the Politics of Space", American Anthropologist, 74 (1972), pp. 411-425.
28. Ibid, p. 416.
29. Ibid
30. K. Moore, The Frontier Mind (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1957); Ray Allen Billington, ed., The Frontier Thesis (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1966); R.B. Nash, ed., The Call of the Wild (New York: Braziller, 1970).
31. See supra footnote 26. John S. Mbiti, African Religions and Philosophy (London: Heinemann, 1969) writes:

"The land provides them with the roots of existence, as well as binding them mystically to their departed. People walk on the graves of their forefathers, and it is feared that anything separating them from these ties will bring disaster to family and community life. To remove Africans by force from their land is an act of such great injustice that no foreigner can fathom it. Even when people voluntarily leave their homes in the countryside and go to live or work in the cities, there is a fundamental severing of ties which cannot be repaired and which often creates psychological problems with which urban life cannot as yet cope." (p.27)

32. I will deal with the question of voting in Chapter VIII.

33. For the origin of these terms, see Ferdinand Tonnies, Community and Society (New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1963).
34. On the origin of these questions see John J. Poggie and Robert N. Lynch, ed., Rethinking Modernization (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1974).
35. I will specifically study this question in Chapter VIII by taking the "political party" as an example of a "modern institution" which is expressive of an anthropology that is not shared by the "political party" of the West.
36. Pauline Baker, Urbanization and Political Change (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1974); p. 276. For an exhaustive consideration of this question see infra. Chapter VIII.
37. Gibbons uses the concept of "spectator political culture". But he uses it in the Newtonian sense of atoms in movement (participation) and at rest (spectators). I suggest that this differs radically from my stand for Gibbon's distinction is internal to the American political science problematic of "participation" as the movement or lack of movement of the individual. Indeed this suggests that the comparative political concept of "participation" is constitutive of American social practices and not African Social practices. See David S. Gibbons, The Spectator Political Culture: A Refinement of the Almond and Verba Model, Journal of Commonwealth Political Studies, 9, No. 1 (1971), p. 133.
38. Lansine Kaba, "Guinean Politics: A Critical Historical Overview" The Journal of Modern African Studies 15, No. 1 (1977), pp. 25-45.
39. W.E. Moore, Man, Time and Society (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1963) Raija Vulkunen, "A Contribution to the Categories of Social Time and the Economy of Time" in Acta Sociologica, 20, No. 1 (1977), p. 5-24.
40. Samuel P. Huntington, Political Order in Changing Societies (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1972), p. 55. David Apter's table of political systems permutes two types of norms "consummatory" and "instrumental" with two types of authority, "hierarchical", "pyramidal" to give four types of political systems, i.e. mobilization, theocratic, bureaucratic and reconciliation. David E. Apter, Some Conceptual Approaches to the Study of Modernization (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1968), p. 306.
41. Samuel P. Huntington, "The Change to Change: Modernization, Development and Politics", Comparative Politics, 3, No. 3 (1971), pp. 283-322.
42. Gabriel A. Almond, Political Development (Boston: Little Brown, 1970), pp. 273-303; S. Verba, "Sequences and Development in Crises and Sequences in Political Development" eds. L. Binder et al (Boston: Little Brown, 1971), pp. 283-317.

43. H. Bergson, Duration and Simultaneity, transl. L. Jacobson (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1965), p. 49.
44. M. Merleau Ponty, Phenomenology of Perception, trans. by Colin Smith (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1974), p. 421.
45. André Jacob, Temps et Language (Paris: Armond Collin, 1967), p.21.
46. Pitrim A. Sorokin, Sociocultural Causality Space, Time: A Study of Referential Principals of Sociology and Social Science (New York: Russel Publishing House, 1964), p. 182.
47. Georges Gurvitch, The Spectrum of Social Time (Dordrecht: D. Reidel, 1964), pp. 18-21, pp. 31-33.
48. John S. M'biti, op.cit., p. 17. Emphasis in text.
49. Ibid, pp. 15-28; John S. M'biti, New Testament, Eschatology in an African Background (London: Oxford University Press, 1971), p. 27.
50. Alexis Kagame, La Philosophie Bantu-Rwandaise de l'Etre (Bruxelles: Marais, 1956).
51. H.W. Beckett, Handbook of Kiluba, quoted in Newell S. Booth Jr., "Time and Change in African Traditional Thought" Journal of Religion in Africa, VII (1971), p. 8.
52. Dominique Zahan, Religion, Spiritualité et Pensée Africaine (Paris: Payot, 1971), p. 141.
53. Jean Ziegler, Le Pouvoir Africain (Paris: Seuil, 1971), p. 150: My translation.
54. Ibid, p. 135.
55. J.S. M'biti, New Testament Eschatology in An African Background, p.28.
56. Maurice Houis, Anthropologie Linguistique de l'Afrique Noire (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1971); Jean Lohisse, La Communication Tribale (Paris: Editions Universitaires, 1974); Charles R. Larson, The Emergence of African Fiction (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1971) especially chapter 1:
57. Alvin Magid, Men in the Middle (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1976), p. 72.
58. Ibid, p. 136.
59. Jacques Derrida, De la Grammatologie (Paris: Editions de Minuit, 1967), pp. 149-202.

60. Jack Goody and Ian Watt, "The Consequences of Literacy" in Comparative Studies in Society and History, 5 (1962-1963), pp. 305-345; Ruth Finnegan, Oral Literature in Africa (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1970), pp. 13-25.
61. Ruth Finnegan, op.cit. One of these is what she calls "ideophones", i.e. a word
 "which conveys a kind of idea-in-sound and is commonly used in Bantu languages to add emotion or vividness to a description or recitation. Ideophones are sometimes onomatopoeic, but the acoustic impression often conveys aspects which, in English culture at least, are not normally associated with sound at all...such as manner, colour, gait, posture or intensity." (p.84)
62. Paulin J. Hountondji, Sur "la Philosophie Africaine" (Paris: Maspero, 1977).
63. Ibid, p. 131.
64. Ibid, pp. 131-132.
65. As to the possible varieties of these structures of reasoning see Magorah Maruyama, "Paradigmatology and its Application to Cross-disciplinary, Cross-Professional and Cross-Cultural Communication", Dialectic, 28 (1974), pp. 135-196.
66. Zadi Zaourou Bernard, "Expérience Africaine de la Parole: Problèmes Théoriques de l'Application de la Linguistique à la Littérature", Canadian Journal of African Studies, IX, No. 3 (1975), pp. 449-478.
67. John Pepper Clark, The Example of Shakespeare (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1970). Clark, a Nigerian literary critic, rejects the distinction between oral and written expression that some make.
68. Ruth Finnegan, op.cit., pp. 53-54.
69. S. Touré, La Planification Economique (Conakry: Imprimerie Nationale, 1960) p. 87; S. Touré, Message au II Congrès des Ecrivains et artistes noirs (Rome, mai 1959); S. Touré, "Le Leader Politique Considéré comme le représentant d'une culture", Présence Africaine, 24-25 (fév.-mai 1959) p. 109.
70. K. N'Krumah, Consciencism: Philosophy and Ideology for Decolonization and Development with Particular Reference to the African Revolution (London: Heinemann, 1964), pp. 69-74.
71. Tom Mboya, "African Socialism" in African Socialism, eds. H. Friedland and Carl G. Roseberg (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1964) pp. 250-258.

72. S. Senghor, Report on the Doctrine and Program of the Party of African Federation (New York: Praeger, 1959), p. 49.

73. J. Nyerere, "Ujamaa: The Basis of African Socialism" in Readings in African Political Thought, eds. Cyrus M. Mubiso and S.W. Rohio (London: Heineman, 1975), p. 515.

74. K. Kaunda, Humanism: A Guide to the Nation (Lusaka: Government Printer, 1967).

75. N. Tutashinda, "Les Mystifications de l'Authenticité" La Pensée 175 (1974) pp. 68-82.

76. It may be of interest to note that the interpretation of African socialism by social scientists is wildly divergent going from some who see it as fascism to others who consider it as democratic or Marxist or neo-colonialist. I will deal with this question in a subsequent chapter. But this unbounded divergence in interpretations may be in fact a symptom of the distortive consequences of trying to read social practices without elucidating the conceptualizations that these practices carry.

77. Mary Matossian, "Ideologies of Delayed Industrialization: Some Tensions and Ambiguities", Economic Development, vol. 6, No. 2, (1958) pp. 217-228.

78. Ali Mazrui, Cultural Engineering and Nation Building in East Africa (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1972), p. 147. The "... social distance between leaders and followers is much narrower in Africa than in most developed regions."

79. I think that R. Dumont, L'Afrique Noire Est Mal Partie (Paris: Seuil, 1962) is still valid fifteen years after its publication. Indeed things seem to have gone worse, see Pierre Bonté et al, op cit. Comité Information Sahel, Qui se Nourrit de la Famine en Afrique (Paris: Maspero, 1975).

80. Even in a country like Tanzania, a political point of view that differs from that of Nyerere is not permitted. Hank Chase, "The Zanzibar Treason Trial" Review of African Political Economy 6 (1976), pp. 15-34.

CHAPTER VII

SYSTEMATIC DISTORTION IN COMPARATIVE POLITICS

The Metonymic Discourse

As Dilthey has written, the understanding of other people presupposes our activities.¹ But one must add to this a very important point. The understanding of other people presupposes their activities also. Thus the question as to where our knowledge of the studied comes cannot avoid in its answer the question of the confrontation between the knower (his activities of knowing) and the known (the activities of the subject), a confrontation which involves conflicts of practices, meanings and interpretations. But as we have seen up to now, comparative politics excludes this question of the confrontation of the knower and the known. In this chapter, I will try to show that the abolition of both the question of this confrontation and the confrontation itself is effected through a metonymic operation expressed in a discourse i.e. the comparative discourse, whose coherence is made possible by this operation.

What is a metonymic discourse? The answer requires that a brief introduction be given to the cluster of meanings that characterize metonymy.² According to De Saussure, a linguistic sign involves two modes of arrangement, combination and selection. The axis of selection refers to the code; the axis of combination refers to the message. The former represents language, the second speech.³ Jakobson shows that these two modes of arrangement of linguistic signs can be seen from another angle in the linguistic practices of aphasics.⁴ He writes that in language, there are two poles that structure the arrangement of linguistic signs. He calls them the metaphoric and metonymic. Although clearly seen in aphasia as similarity disorder and contiguity disorder, these two poles would in fact characterize more or less all linguistic discourses. The metaphoric pole involves arrangement of the linguistic sign in terms of the relation of similarity. The metonymic pole involves arrangement of the linguistic sign in terms of the relation of contiguity. Wilden widens the scope and writes that metaphor and metonym are primarily communicational

processes and not only linguistic processes.⁵ According to him they occur in systems as diverse as the genetic code and the social system, as selection from the code (metaphor) and combination in the message (metonymy). In rhetoric, a discipline older than the ones mentioned here, one meets a similar distinction between the relation of correlation (metonymy) and the relation of similarity (metaphor) with the additional trope of the relation of connection (synecdoche).⁶ The latter is considered within the framework of metonymy by the modern writers mentioned above. These arrangements of linguistic signs are considered by the above writers as expressions of meanings and not as representations of objects. But when the constitutive nature of language is denied, these arrangements of linguistic signs are reduced to the function of denotation, eliminating their polysemic, expressive, connotative, impassioned and mediational dimensions. In such a situation, Lacan, in a Jacobsonian interpretation of Freud's concepts of condensation and displacement, suggests that metaphor (condensation) and metonymy (displacement) express forces of repression that structure the signifying chain in a way which deprives the subject of the capacity to understand what his speech expresses.⁷

In this elimination of the polysemic, expressive, connotative, impassioned and mediational nature of language the metonymic operation holds a central place. In the metonymic operation, the link between the signifier and the signified is broken. The signified (the social practice) is elided. The signifier thus becomes a free-floating sign. It becomes its own signified and thus freed of its holophrastic dimensions it is ready to be freely exchanged for another signifier. The metonymic operation is therefore the consummation of the total split between language and social practice for it divorces linguistic activities from their holophrastic basis and isolates them from their semantic fields. It disintegrates the intersubjectivity of meanings. In this operation, social practices are rendered mute and deprived of their own inner principles of narration and thereby of their own ideal of social order.

Consequently, they are made ready to enter into any combination in terms of a principle of narration and an ideal of social order that is totally alien to them.

In this restructuring of social practices, rendered mute, the metonymic operation permits the designation of one object by the name of another entirely distinct object: a part is made to stand for the whole, a container for the contained, a cause for its effect, an effect for its cause, a sign for an object, and a thing for another associated with it.⁸ The metonymic operation thus disintegrates meanings. It unhooks them from their genesis and context, and displaces them as discrete units according to the interests and needs of the forces of repression who have the power over the articulation and expression of the experiential meanings of the subject. This fragmentation of experience into discrete units that can be displaced and made to stand for entirely distinct and different objects transforms social practices into data available to be assembled in terms of principles that are alien and external to what they would have expressed prior to their disintegration. It is for this reason that psychoanalytically oriented semioticians claim that metonymy lends itself, indeed it is the very stuff, of all discourses of power. For its mode of arranging linguistic signs, through inclusion and exclusion, as discrete units, makes possible the construction of universalistic discourses which exclude the other in his difference, novelty and originality by presenting him as a contiguous other who owes its existence to the designation given to it in the universalistic discourse.⁹ For example, the other as an oppressed being, and as such, as a manifestation of the experience of oppression and all what this entails is, in the metonymic operation, disintegrated as an experiential meaning, unhooked from its holophrastic and semantic fields, and recuperated as a non-threatening, familiar and non-disturbing datum of "extractive capability", in the universalistic discourse of comparative politics. The experience of the other, as expressed in his social practices, is displaced, and its place occupied by a datum which is derived from a principle of narration and an ideal of social order that is totally alien to the experiential meaning of the subject. It is in this sense that Kenneth Burke, the literary critic, argues that behaviorism's universalistic discourse, where all meanings are disintegrated and assembled

as stimulus and response, is a metonymic discourse.¹⁰

A simple example, drawing on rhetoric and semiotics, can briefly illustrate the metonymic operation. When one sees ten ships and says "ten sails have come over the horizon", one displaces the meaning of the whole to that of the part. When one practices total comparison based only on these ten sails, the displacement censors the presence of the whole in the parts. The sails, from being signifiers are transformed into signifieds, and the term "sails" is made to stand in a referential relationship to the signified thus excluding the differences the "sails" may represent. That the "sails" may be related to differing ships - a warship, a merchant ship, an explorer's ship, a pirate ship, a slave ship, a fishing ship, a pleasure ship - is censored by making the "sail" its own signified. It is this type of reduction and this type of exclusion of difference, it is this double operation of synecdoche and of repression of the totality that supports the synecdoche which constitutes the metonymic operation.

It can be shown that the "data" produced in comparative politics are precisely the result of such an operation. Data are produced in comparative political research by an operation which first reduces political practices to their synecdoches, puts these synecdoches in relationships of contiguity which occludes their differences, and represses the whole out of which each synecdoche arises. It thus produces unanchored, free-floating, equivalent and mute data available for statistical and mathematical manipulations.

Data or the Metonyms of Social Practices

Comparativists collect data from different polities and process them into statements of empirical generalizations. For example, Almond and Verba claim to have comparable data on items such as "government", "day-to-day life", "public affairs", "religion", "ideals", "goals", "politics"...etc. from countries as diverse as the U.S., U.K., Germany, Italy and Mexico.¹¹ Such a comparison is made through a metonymic reduction of the practices in these countries.

Practices from different polities are identified in terms of their proximity to practices that are identified as the practice of "governing", "worshipping", "voting" in the life-world of the comparativists. These are extracted from the life-world of the comparativist as synecdoches and then given as universal signifieds. Transformed as signifieds, their semantic-holophrastic fields are censured. As such they appear as things that do not require interpretation. The second step is then to identify those practices in other polities that are synecdochically equivalent to these signifieds. The synecdochic equivalence produces a discursive association founded on referential proximities, and makes possible a "montage" of data through the displacement of synecdoches. Thus practices from Mexico, Italy are displaced from their social reality after having been identified as empirically equivalent to the signifieds the comparativist has produced from his life-world. The identification of empirical equivalence is made possible by the empiricity of contiguity that the metonymic operation imposes by excluding all differences as external to the practices under study. These practices are then ready to be quantified, manipulated, correlated, even by those who do not know them, for they stand, as displaced synecdoches, only in relation to themselves. Thus inserted into a syntagmatic order by virtue of referential contiguity that excludes their differences (their social realities) they appear in the comparative discourse as data having relationships to each other which are prior to the discourse of the comparativist. Thus the metonymic operation produces the comparativist as a pure act of perception, identical to himself, reading the pre-existing relationships among the data that confront him.

The key in this operation can be seen as a process of (failed) translation that excludes the meaning of alien practices by displacing these into the semantic-holophrastic field of the comparativist life-world. Therein they are translated only at the level of the synecdoches (voter, political party, bureaucracy, army) of the comparativist's life-world. In other words, the metonymic operation makes possible the production of

"meaning equivalence" and data for cross-cultural comparison by fragmenting experiential meanings, and occluding the whole that sustains them as well as the new and different meanings they may be carrying.¹² Thus the vote is made to stand for certain movements, and all similar movements are referred to as votes. Such an operation reduces the "whole" or the social reality in which the vote is constituted to the movements of the vote. Metonymy creates this referential illusion where all votes become contiguous to each other by becoming equivalent to each other denotatively. The metonymic link is a link of contiguity. This in fact fits in with the mainstream dyadic conception of causality,¹³ of cause as contiguous to effect. The metonymic link is a linkage that forces out the semantic-holophrastic field of signifiers. Here also it fits in with the depth meaning of causality in social science, the understanding of causality as a force.¹⁴ The Ramism of comparative political science meshes in with the spatial reduction of meaning that is operated by the metonymic process and produces the foundational element of comparative politics, the datum, which is the product of this metonymic process. The metonymic reduction also involves the double process of reducing history to data and the displacement of these data into the known and reassuring history of the polity which has produced comparative politics as one of its ways of historical self-understanding. It is this double operation that is articulated as development or modernization theories.

The Metonymic Reduction of Histories

The discourse of data in comparative politics is always assertive.¹⁵ It does not relate a datum as a comparative datum if it breaks the coherence of comparative discourse by appearing as a contradiction to what the latter narrates. Rather the contradictions of social practices are displaced and their place occupied by data that confirm or do not confirm the hypotheses and generalizations of the comparativist. There is, in this practice, an authoritarian disjunction between social practice and meaning that is imposed through the exclusion of the narration, tradition

and history that inform the datum. The narration is reduced to a part of itself which is made to exclude its own narrative condition. This exclusion and repression of the narrative infrastructure of practices and institutions permits the production of discrete, quantifiable and interpretation-free data. In comparative politics this operation produces an understanding of history which presents it as a natural process where data appear in a natural contiguity.

Thus, according to Meehan, history is a storehouse of data, i.e. cases, that can be used as a "laboratory of the social sciences", as a "conceptual suggestion box, a source of analogies, patterns and structured relations."¹⁶ According to Lasswell, history must be excluded from political analysis; history is "a map of the succession of human cultures" which to the political scientist is only a source of raw materials.¹⁷ The modernization theorist Black considers history as a source of data with which the comparativist constructs causal theories and generalizations about the whole of mankind in modern times.¹⁸ Huntington follows such a course. By using African, Asian, European, American histories as mere sources of cases, he constructs a universal theory of political institutionalization which produces a coherent discourse based on a dyadic order of exclusion and inclusion in terms of the monocular concept of "political order" that structures its other as "political decay".¹⁹ It is perhaps Turk who spells out clearly the metonymic reduction of history by comparativists. He writes that the "work of the historians will, for the time being, prove useful to sociologists as a source of data than as a source of explanation".²⁰ He justifies this as follows:

"History" is simply the available data on the socialization, learning experiences, social background, reinforcement schedules, and such, of larger collectivities, whose defining regularities are the cumulative results of the socialization of many past and contemporary individuals. Regardless of the focus of analysis - individual, group, or larger collectivity - one must know what has been learned in order to explain current, and to predict future, patterns of behaviour.²¹

This destructuring of history into a raw material is what produces universal data, data without semantic-holophrastic fields, data that are non-articulated, non-expressive, non-enunciated and naturally contiguous

to each other. What the metonymic operation thus censors is the "common inner principle"²² that unites events and the narration of these events. That events are events in terms of a theory of narration (historiography) is occluded.²³ This metonymic exclusion of histories can be clearly seen if we examine the comparativists' historical characterization of modernization.

To the question of what is modernization, variations of a single narration are produced by comparativists. I.B. Berger defines it in the following way:

America represents the most advanced type of modern industrial society - not to be sure, in the sense of moral superiority, but in the sense of that the forces of modernization have gone furthest here.²⁴

Note that modernization is already given as an empirical reality identified as America. This permits the empiricity of contiguity and a (distorted) translation of non-American contemporary process of social change into a language that narrates modernization in terms of inclusion/exclusion. The historical hindsight which permits such a translation is given by Eisenstadt. He writes:

Modernization is the process of change towards those types of social, economic and political systems that have developed in Western Europe and North America from the XVIII century to the XIX century and have then spread to other European countries and in the XIX century and XX century to the South American, Asian, African continents.²⁵

It is important to note that Eisenstadt's "process of change towards" carries a double narration where the West's historical hindsight displaces the untold histories of others to occupy its place and to narrate it in a discourse uniformized by a referential contiguity that permits to forget what has been evicted. For if one asks whose "towards", one gets a very interesting answer.

The "towards" of Europe and America is, by the very narration itself, a "towards" which is non-anticipatory, non-repeating and open.

It is a "towards" which one can say is historical because it obliges the peoples of Europe and America to be free, i.e. to posit the ends and means of that "towards".

The "towards" of what he names "the South American, Asian, African continents" is a pre-given "towards". It is the "towards" of a future contiguous to the present of the West. It is a predictable future. Modernization is a process only the second group can experience, as a pre-determined "towards". For them it is a concluded tale to be retold and not a history to be created. Like in all metonymic operations, the principle of freedom is evacuated from their actions to be replaced by a determined ordering of means.

Lerner considers this as an empirical observation. He writes:

What America is - to condense a rule more powerful than its numerous exceptions - the modernizing Middle East wants to become. The meaning of public power and wealth for private comfort and fun is being learned. Those who regard this as ethnocentrism should try an exercise in self-analysis: Compare your own life with that of any Middle Easterner you ever knew.

What the West is --- the Middle East wants to become.

American society presented the world with its most developed model of modernity.²⁶

The censorship of the different is expressed as the desire of the other to repress itself, to deconstruct itself. Thus Mitchell writes:

Thus an underdeveloped nation that wishes to industrialize will have to give up its particularistic, diffuse, ascriptive, affective orientations at least at the levels of value and social structure if not personality; if it is to imitate and operate an industrial order. In their places will have to come greater degrees of universalism, functional specificity, achievement or performance and affective-neutrality. Industrialism and perhaps to a lesser extent democracy require these new and opposing values and norms.²⁷

Thus the other is not identified by his discourse, by his narrations and by his practices, but by a referential relationship that couples it with the synecdoches of the West's history and narrations.

The most important synecdoche of the West's history that is metonymically identified in the reading of the alien's "history" is what is called in comparative politics "tradition".

Tradition as the Metonym of Histories

In his presentation of the "criteria of comparison" of modernization, Black discusses four points. Two of these are:

- (1) Whether the transfer of political power from traditional to modernization leaders in a society occurred early or late relative to other societies;
- (2) whether the immediate political challenge of modernity to traditional leaders in a society was internal or external.²⁸

He thus suggests a universal, objective, homogeneous time-context wherein the transfer from "traditional" to "modernization" leaders could be seen as taking place in society A as earlier or later than in B and C, in such a way that the events can be understood as signifying the same phenomenon. The possibility of such a comparison rests on the assumption that all traditions, say British, Indian, Chinese, Ethiopian, American traditions share something in common; that all modernizations also share something in common. In other words there is a double convergence of common speech implied here. All traditions converge into a tradition vis-à-vis modernization; and vis-à-vis traditions all modernizations converge into a modernization. The standard explanation for this singularization of historical multiplicities is that the comparativist deals with ideal types when he studies traditions and modernizations. Thus the relationship itself between tradition and modernization is assumed to be narratable as an ideal type, whence the homogeneous objective, universal time context. But this harmonization of social times and the convergence of histories into the history of modernization is effected from a ground into which are inducted other histories as narrations without a difference - as synecdoches, displaced into the history of the West's modernization, that are made contiguous to the non-displaced synecdoches of the West's self-narration of its social times.

Comparativists claim that tradition is "an ideal type not to be found empirically in pure form".²⁹ For Weber,

An ideal-type is formed by the one-sided accentuation of one or more points of view and by the synthesis of a great many diffuse, discreet, more or less present and occasionally absent concrete individual phenomena...³⁰

An ideal-type for Weber is not then an empirical classificatory scheme "under which a real situation or action is to be subsumed as one instance."³¹

Now, the most important question is then whether tradition as an ideal-type applies to all traditions, or if every tradition has its own ideal type. In the latter case, the ideal-type tradition of England may be so different from that of Ethiopia or Ghana or China that it may not be possible to characterize them as belonging to the same class. Another possibility may be that comparativists consider tradition as an "ideal type" in the sense that it is an ideal-type of the ideal-types of all different traditions, i.e. a meta ideal-type. But no comparativist has tried to develop such a meta-ideal-type of "tradition", and the feasibility of such an effort is questionable. Comparativists are not clear on this question. When they speak of tradition as an ideal-type they seem to consider it as a universal "limiting concept" applicable to all traditions. This is like saying that all traditions are in a certain way expressive of the same or similar understandings, purposes and meanings as are all capitalisms (English, French, Japanese, ... etc.). From Parsons' pattern variables to Apter's sacred-collectivity and Riggs' fused society, one is obliged to acknowledge that the use of an ideal-type of tradition is in the same sense as that of an ideal-type of capitalism - that there is only one ideal-type of tradition for all traditions as there is only one ideal-type of capitalism. Such an extrapolation from Weber's conception of ideal-type as related to capitalism to the study of traditions however forgets the historical contents of traditions and capitalism. The latter is an inherently global historical phenomenon, at least in its intention of establishing a universal market of money, labour, and commodities, whereas what comparativists study as traditions have radically different historical meanings and intentions. The claim that the ideal-type

mode of analysis can be extrapolated from the study of capitalism to that of traditions pre-supposes the unexamined assumption that all traditions share, like all capitalism, a unifying telos. To make this point clear, I will first raise the question of whether tradition, as a mode of speaking of Western traditions, has an equivalent narrative presence as when it is used in speaking of African traditions.

According to Benedix the revolutionary economic and political changes that took place in the eighteenth century Europe ushered the latter into modernity which he sees in a sharp discontinuity with what preceded, i.e. traditional Europe.³² This dichotomy between tradition and modernity is one which one can trace back to Maine (status vs. contract) Tonnies' (Gemeinschaft-Gesellschaft) and to Durkheim (mechanical versus organic). In an important sense then, the comparative political science concept of "tradition" is a concept which in Western discourse has a tradition or a history. Without this tradition, the concept of "tradition" will be an empty one. The tradition of such an analysis will be a blind one if it does not raise tradition to the level of the concept, which it does.³³

In other words, the Western tradition-modernity dichotomy is a dichotomy of filiation, a discontinuity which is continuous because the question of questioning tradition (modernity) is born from the tradition itself, as can also be seen in the Greek roots of the important critiques of modernity like Rousseau, Marx, Nietzsche and perhaps even Freud. The questioning of tradition or even its destruction takes the meaning and direction which is possible in that tradition. In this sense one can speak of a tradition of revolution, a tradition of questioning, a tradition of reason. As opposed to this historically informed understanding of Western traditions, what structures the comparativists' discourse on African traditions is the denial of the historicity and historical (narrative) nature of these traditions. The past, identified with these traditions, is frozen into an "ideal-type" whose vocabulary is alien to the common speeches of Africans. Its expressivity denied, the past is

inducted into comparative discourse congealed as a "tradition" or a "background",³⁴ and narrated as a set of discrete elements that are identified as either obstacles to or tools for "modernization". The concept of "tradition" in comparative politics has thus a different meaning when it is used to articulate African social time. Being narratively structured in a discourse which articulates modernization as an already achieved historical phenomenon in the West, African social time is identified synecdochically as a datum bearing the West's social time as a potential it is destined to realize - whence the assumed convergence of all histories in the project of cross-cultural law-like generalizations. At the same time, however, comparative discourse tacitly opposes African traditions, not only to modernization, but also to the traditions of the West, in as much as African traditions did not engender what comparativists consider to be modern, viz., the thing engendered by the Western tradition. The confrontation between African traditions and Western traditions is denied nevertheless and occluded by de-historicizing African traditions and making them the object of a reading that subjects them to an ideal-type of tradition which expresses a specific (Western) historical narration and understanding of what a tradition is. But the occlusion of this confrontation, and the de-historicization of African traditions themselves constitute the silent social practices of the Western tradition of comparing itself. For the confrontation that is occluded is not the confrontation that is admitted by comparative discourse - viz. the confrontation between the modern and the traditional. Rather, it is a confrontation between different traditions, resulting from a historical confrontation of societies, articulated as conquest and discovery. The vocabulary of "tradition" has its historical roots in this encounter of the West and Africa, an encounter which denies the reciprocal recognition which makes it an event - a double event - to both parties. The negation of this reciprocal recognition and the imposition of the encounter as "discovery", "exploration", "colonization", "granting of independence", "foreign aid" - all vocabularies of non-reciprocal narration - produce the history-narration of the other as

"tradition" or time in suspended animation. In this non-reciprocal narration which makes the "tradition" of the other part of natural history, the acts of discovery and conquest are understood, by those who have appropriated the power to narrate them, as acts that expand the spatial and temporal horizons of their histories. Their acts are understood as making history, as enriching their own traditions. The discovered and conquered are, on the other hand, assumed to have been brought into the world by the acts of the discoverers and conquerors. The temporality of the discovered and conquered is made to emerge from the acts of the discoverer and the conqueror. What enriches the tradition of the discoverer is narrated as putting an end to the discovered tradition. The latter is made an object of understanding only as translated time, translated meanings and translated signs. That is, the discovered and the conquered's past, present and future are narrated from within the ranges and distinctions of meanings that are imposed by the conquering Narrus. This is the historical source of the comparative concept of "tradition", and it is this history of "tradition" which produces, not only "tradition", but also the concepts of "modernization", "development", as concepts of understanding the social practices of the "traditional" other.³⁵ The relationship of force is then the historical reason that permits the production of the social time of the other as a metonym - viz., "tradition" as given in comparative discourse.

In comparative discourse then, the occlusion of the history of the concepts of "tradition" and "modernity" make them distorting concepts that narrate this history of non-reciprocal recognition as "natural" history, thus repressing the nature of the encounter that produced "tradition" and "modernization" as concepts of understanding of the social practices of the other. This occlusion can be illustrated by Marion Levy's assertion that the nature of this encounter is in fact peripheral to what he characterizes as "modernization" in these conquered polities. He writes:

The invasion of the structures of the relatively non-modernized societies by the structures of the relatively modernized via contact between members of these societies would have taken place with or without the excesses of imperialism...³⁶

But the latter is precisely a non-event, for the "excesses of imperialism" having taken place, as Levy recognizes, their absence can never be supported by the evidence of history. But Levy, like all mainstream comparativists, occludes the concrete history of this encounter, which is a history of forced encounters and narrates the social practices and self-narrations of the other as alinguistic objects. They are thus narrated in terms of the admissable ranges provided by the West's history narration. But this scientific exclusion of histories is the metonymization of all histories but one, viz. the history that permits the reading of the narrations of the past and present social time of others as a narration that is purely contingent, disposable and replaceable by a non-history ("without the excesses of imperialism"). This historical "permission" is one whose possibility is rooted, not in a scientific hypothesis, but in the relationship of force that is denied by the scientific hypothesis. In the face of this other-negating discourse, articulated as the history of modernization, all narrations of the past external to this history appear as mere objects without necessity. "Tradition" is thus articulated in comparative politics as a non-historical concept. As this objectification of "tradition" is the result of the history of the domination of one people by another, a domination which denies the subjectivity of the other, we can say that the concepts of "tradition" and "modernity", in comparative politics, narrate the histories of domination and non-reciprocal recognition. Consequently, it can be said that in the discourse of comparative politics, "tradition" designates conquered and colonized time made discontinuous with time designated as "modern" - i.e. time given to the non-West as historical-time. The "modern" of the other is thus also a time produced externally. The discontinuity created by time as "tradition" and time as "modern" is a chasm filled by the force, occluded in comparative discourse, which has broken the historical time of the non-West. It is not then surprising to see that the discourse of comparativists on non-Western countries indicates the denial of the self of "traditional" man as the price to be paid to enter into history dubbed "political development" or "modernization". Thus E. Shils writes that "The development of a modern polity calls for a redefinition of the image of the self, a redirection of the cognitive

categories, new capacities in relation to time and task."³⁷

This "redefinition", "redirection" of the "self" is presented by Shils, not as the "development" of the self in the Herderian-Humboldtian manner, but as the metonymical identification of the self in the image of the already modern. The "traditional" self, utterly dehistoricized, the comparative discourse on his future does not involve freedom (a historical self) but "modernization". As Lucien Pye argues, modernization

...involves the learning of new skills and the acceptance of new ideas about the nature of the world and human relations. Another part of the process entails the acceptance of new values and the changing of preferences. A still deeper dimension of the process calls for a fundamental change in motivations and in the direction in which it is felt that human energies can properly be directed.³⁸

Given the American understanding of the "self" as the "real me", or as the "substantial self",³⁹ and given that "motivations" are not only "inputs" but also as Mills has argued, "terms by which interpretation of conduct by social actors proceeds",⁴⁰ the call for change in the "image of the self" and "motivations" is a call for a radical denial of the "self" of "traditional" man. That is to say, traditional man is invited to make himself a tabula rasa on which modernization-in-itself would be written. The corollary of this is that in the study of "modernization" of the so-called "traditional" societies, the subject is already treated as if, in fact, to be modern he has to slough off the past. Such, for example, is the idea which informs the learning theory adopted by Inkeles and Smith's research on modernization. The past is treated as an accident that is disposable in the acquisition of modernity.

The result of this is that, in comparative discourse, African societies appear, not as historical polities, but as the raw material of polities to become. They are thus articulated, being narrated metonymically, as pre-political entities in need of "political development" whose forms and content are pre-given in the very discourse of comparative politics as a discourse claimed to be produced by a universal (i.e. modern) method. For method is, in the structure of comparative discourse, given as

the synecdoche of the modern. Whether this pre-political identification of African polities is seen à la Hobbes or à la Locke depends on the terms of narration that is permitted by the coherence of the comparativist's discourse. Comparativists like Pye and Huntington can be said to entertain a Hobbesian understanding of non-West polities, given their emphasis on the primacy of creating a political order, whereas Apter may be considered as entertaining a Lockean notion of the state of nature as, for example, in his study of the Buganda tradition which he sees as already a modernizing tradition.⁴¹ What both varieties share in common is the fact that they displace the other's past from its narrative body to point it out as an objectified tradition.⁴²

In this metonymization of the other's narration of his past, what are denied and repressed are the social practices of the people - identified as "traditional": social practices that try to come to terms with their heritage according to the exigencies of the present, resulting in the reconstruction and reinvention of a new heritage. It is this activity that comparativists fail to deal with. Considering this activity would have forced the comparativist to bring in the "traditional" man as a time-constituting man, as having his own social-time. Such a recognition not only introduces historicity and the paradigm of historical narration present in that polity, but it also imposes on the comparativist the obligation to disclose the nature and frontiers of social practices, for these are performed as practices which engage the inherited world. The question of the historicity of meaning and social practices thus becomes a question as important in the study of "traditional" societies as it is in the study of "modern" societies.

In a remarkable commentary on the historicity of meaning, Welch suggests that history is a reconstruction of heritage and that it is directed "not to what man once experienced, but to what we are already experiencing, albeit in a presumptuous and oblivious manner, as that which molds our experience".⁴³ Such an understanding raises the question of how the so-called traditional or non-historical societies are made to differ by comparativists from so-called historical societies. Welch makes an interesting comment. He writes that "the so-called primitives absorbed in myth, magic and ritual and showing no inclination to reconstruct their own

heritage in the form familiar to us as history" is the "curious look" of those for whom, "it seems impossible as outsiders to formulate a history of such peoples".⁴⁴ This "curious look", which, in the linguistic practice of the comparativist, articulates non-Western "traditions" as ahistorical lies in the fact that the past of the studied is disjointed from the narration, or the common speech, which gives it a contemporary life. If one were to understand traditions as social practices, one discovers that the people concerned are, like the "moderns", absorbed "in coming to terms with their heritage" and in making sense of the present as it emerges from the past and goes into the future. In other words, the narration of "tradition" is a history-narration for, it engages a consciousness which distantiates the past and thus questions it in the speech of the present precisely because it is already engaged in a structured, meaningful and inherited social world. But this cannot be seen within the context of the practice of the comparativist where history-action is split from history-narration.⁴⁵

The metonymization of histories and the ensuing transformation of "tradition" into metonyms that are treated as psychological inputs (political culture in comparative politics) makes tradition a private possession, as if our predecessors dwelt in and passed on their world privately.⁴⁶ Such a metonymization makes it impossible, or at least cannot at all explain, how we come to relate ourselves to collective creations and our heritage, such as institutions, ideas, values -- to wit: our shared world. It also makes it impossible, or at least cannot at all explain, how we come to have common projects, how we come to envisage a common future, how we come to hope, work, suffer and change things, collectively.

This paradoxical consequence is the result of the split produced by the unmooring of facts from their language. Such a split produces a "subject" -- and this only in a derivative sense -- that is closed and finished. It denies that the historical subject is both an enduring subject and an open subject, is both structure, and life.⁴⁷

Comparativists neglect this question. By metonymizing the other's narration of his past, they freeze "tradition" and create a "subject" of "modernization" who is, as it were, pre-given; thus closed and pre-finished. He is as such deprived of the fact that he is a moral subject, a free subject, i.e. a subject who, as a participant of common speech, can express his life, not as the realization of something determined before-hand, but as the activity of giving form to his purposes even, where necessary, by going against adversity. The split between facts and language, history-action and history-narration, thus makes the "traditional" at least theoretically, a non-subject. He cannot thus make history. He can only be acculturated, developed, modernized, secularized and institutionalized in terms of forms and purposes that are alien to him and are already determined. This exclusion of the other from his history cannot but lead to the understanding of the other, in his capacity as an agent, as a synecdoche of the political agent (of the West) which is given as the "ideal" agent in the narrative infrastructure of method. This can be illustrated by considering how African "agents" are identified in comparative discourse.

The Metonymic (African) Subject

The comparativist search for the synecdoches of the West in African practices can be illustrated by the fact that the subjects that are mainly studied by comparativists are those who are made to owe their existence to the West and can therefore be metonymically named, that is, designated by the name of another entirely distinct object. These African subjects are the so-called "elites", viz., students, bureaucrats, army-men and those who can communicate in the colonial language, although about 90% of the African population does not live in this language. The linguist P. Alexandre writes:

I do not believe that the number of Africans able to express themselves effectively in these two languages (French and English) surpasses 10% of the total population...the number of their speakers... are probably fewer in number than Swahili-speakers. 48

The upshot of this is that in African studies, it is, as Price points out, a minority of foreign-language speakers who are the most studied. 49

The comparativist project to produce cross-cultural generalization in a language(s) whose history and practice has excluded the great majority of Africans is manifested as the comparativist's effort to reduce African political life and practices to those who, through the exclusion of the majority of the people, were produced by the history of domination as the "interlocuteurs valables". What the language of power identified and isolated as the "évolués", "assimilados", "Christians", the "civilized" reappear in comparative research as the "elites". In both cases we have an operation of inclusion of the African reduced to a synecdoche of the West. In the colonial case the inclusion of the "civilized" was at the same time the exclusion of the "natives", "indigènes" who were unnarratable and disruptive of the coherence of the colonial discourse conjugated by the relationship of domination. They are made invisible. In the comparative case, the inclusion of the elite is precisely the exclusion of the "masses" who are unnarratable and disruptive of the coherence conjugated by the discourse of comparative politics. The "masses" are made amorphous. In this metonymic operation, there is a double operation.

On the one hand the reduction of African elites to synecdoches that can be named à la West wrenches African elites from the socio-historical processes that formed them, and displaces them into a semantic-holophrastic field where they become reassuring phenomena. On the other hand, this same process is an implicit (unconscious) recognition, but denied, of the otherness of the elites and the "masses". While the former are recuperated, the latter are, through the exclusion from power, in the colonial case, and discourse, in the comparative case, conceptualized as an amorphous entity, as the "masses", as matter to be processed. This permits the inclusion of African elites in the discourses of power and comparison, cleansed from their otherness, in a synagmatic connection with the West. Halsey thus writes:

Western educational institutions are the most important single vehicle on which Africa and Asia are travelling from colonial rule to self-government and from poverty to industrial standards of life... (the elites) are deeply imbued with Western ideas, particularly the ideas of democracy, political organization on a national scale...

the burden of political and economic advance is borne almost exclusively by the educated in underdeveloped countries...⁵⁰

The elites are connected to the West as "Bordeaux" (the wine) is to Bordeaux (the region). As to the "masses" they are to be developed or to be given form (a Western form to be sure) by these synecdoches of the West. Thus Ake writes on these invisible masses:

The masses (African) are often confused by the language of secularism and rationality in which their leaders talk, while their leaders are constantly frustrated by the masses' persistence in those attitudes of mind which are clearly detrimental.⁵¹

He adds:

The masses of the new states exist on a level of consciousness that does not fully comprehend the idea of the nation-state. Being predominantly illiterate and unused to political organization more complex than the tribe, the masses of the new states are at a loss to understand the idiom of modern politics. Hence they invariably find themselves reduced to passive subjects of authority.⁵²

Thus we see Abbé Condillac being resuscitated by virtue of a metonymic operation that censors that which breaks the coherence of the comparativists' discourse and translates it (them, the masses) into matter whose senses are to be awakened by the elites. Thus the identification of and the discourse on African elites is a discourse that excludes the historical other by recuperating him as either a synecdoche of the West's historical man or as matter, as it were, to be given the historical form of Western man.

Thus we see that the metonymic operation reduces social practices to data, history to cases and subjects to anarthric bodies. This metonymic operation is not simply the result of a misuse of words or linguistic carelessness. It is an operation that is a systematic manifestation of distortion. As such it requires a detailed examination to bring out its presence in comparative politics.

The Metonymic Operation

In the metonymic reduction of social practices, histories and human agencies, the other is produced as a pre-text to be read in terms of the syntagmatically imposed direction, limit and order of comparative discourse. That which in the pre-text resists such a reading becomes a proof, as it were, of the necessity of such a reading and is rejected as irrational, "uncouth", "exotic", "amorphous", "institutionless", "deviant" to use the terms of Coleman, Almond, Zolberg and D. Thomas.⁵³ Into this reservoir of rejected reason, as Berque characterized such processes, the metonymic operation rejects the other's history, tradition, language, that is, the experiential universe which is constitutive of the other's practices.⁵⁴ The metonymic operation deconstructs the other's experiential meanings and assembles them according to an order that represses their purposes and intersubjective realities. It is the occlusion of these that permits comparativists to claim that theirs is a non-teleological activity.⁵⁵ An examination of the discourse of comparative politics can show that it is however thoroughly teleological. And this can be shown by bringing out how the other is present as a pre-text other in comparative discourse.

Metonymy, the Pre-Text Other and Teleology

To show how the metonymic operation deconstructs the other and produces a teleological discourse, I will study Mackintosh's study of Nigerian politics. Mackintosh writes:

A basic problem in any political system is to discover the main reason underlying electoral behaviour; to find out how voters view the parties, the candidates and the electoral process and why they cast their votes in a certain way. In Nigeria this is particularly important because voting is a relatively new and alien practice.⁵⁶

Mackintosh works with the assumption that terms like political system, electoral behaviour, votes, parties, possess primitive meanings. He uses them as referential terms to signal the presence of practices which are however "new and alien". He recognizes these practices as not of

Nigerians but in Nigeria. They are new and alien to Nigerians but not to him. "What are the meanings that form and inform the political speeches and actions of Nigerians?" is a question that is evicted by Mackintosh's discourse. The place of this question is occupied by his universal proposition which constitutes an imaginary scene where the synecdoches of Western political practices enter into a referential contiguity with Nigerian political practices. The scene produces its own questions as universal questions to which Nigerian political practices appear to be the answers, to be sure, deficient answers, as we shall see. The questioning however is not one that unravels the meanings of the Nigerian practices, Rather, the nature of the questioning involved here is that of testing the repeatability, comparability and equivalence of Nigerians' practices in terms of the synecdoches of Western practices which, in the testing, are fixed as signifieds. The testing excludes those Nigerian practices and meanings that are accessible only through their own narrative orders and questions. Mackintosh writes:

...there were no suitable indigenous forms of government available...whatever pattern was introduced would have to be copied from a foreign example.⁵⁷

Thus Nigerian practices are displaced from their experiential universe, translated through the foreign experiential universe and connected to Nigerian agents in an external and dyadic relationship. In this connection of contiguity, the other (the Nigerian) is reduced to a part whose whole is promised but is not yet realized. Accordingly, Mackintosh reads in the semantic field where he has placed Nigerian practices an "uncommon gap between the theory on which an electoral system operates and the actual practices of winning votes".⁵⁸ He asks himself: "Have institutions imported from Britain worked as intended or have they been adapted to Nigerian conditions?"⁵⁹ The Nigerians fail the test, as it were, and Mackintosh writes:

The parties are well-organized agencies for winning power, but having taken hold of power at any level, they are reluctant to defend their position merely by argument and the creation of an electoral machine.⁶⁰

Why do Nigerians fail to do so? According to Mackintosh, it is because "an assumption" is lacking. This "assumption" is

a belief that the well-being of a society depends not just on the policies pursued but on confidence that there will be no abuses and that accepted methods of operating will be observed. In Nigeria there is no such assumption...⁶¹

What is the nature of this "assumption"? Is there perhaps a different "assumption" in the Nigerian practices? Are his questions free from the "assumption" he claims Nigerians lack?

It is suggested here that what Mackintosh legislates as an "assumption" is precisely that which transforms Nigerian practices into pre-texts and permits him to construct them into a text he can read in terms of meanings alien to Nigerians. In this strategy of reading, although they talk, Nigerians are mute, for in their speech to his questions, Mackintosh does not discover a conflict of "assumptions" but the lack of the assumption or its betrayal. He writes:

The conventions or rules on which the operation of Western democratic forms depend have no roots in Nigerian experience or social conditions. But these rules have been learned and thus there is a curious double-talk by which men acknowledge certain practices as being correct but in fact operate on others.⁶²

In this exercise at political analysis, there is a double discourse -- one constitutive and the other instrumental, the second being discourse unconscious of its proper discourse and its sources. Several questions come to mind. What is the nature of the "assumption" Nigerians don't share with Mackintosh? What is this "theory" which permits him to identify political practices in Nigeria as "votes, parties, elections" and yet allows him to say they are deficient votes, parties, elections? What is the understanding he discovers as "double-talk"? Is it only a sign of the Western seed that has been sown and will one day develop to be the West or its replica, one of the double-talk being discarded? Mackintosh, in an unexpected manner, illustrates what we have discussed in a previous chapter that "institutions and practices by which we live are constituted by certain distinctions and

by a certain language which is essential to them",⁶³ and that actions have "to bear intentional descriptions which fall within a certain range before we agree" to identify them as those particular actions.⁶⁴ The metonymic operation, which is a flight from meanings that break the coherence of comparative discourse, precisely excludes the other's "certain distinctions", "certain language", "intentional descriptions". But this very process of exclusion gives them a meaning, a double meaning indeed; the practices are understood as both lacking what they exclude, therefore not requiring interpretation and yet bearing in nuce what they exclude, therefore enjoying comparability. When Mackintosh refuses to name the Nigerians actions "voting" what he is saying is that Nigerian actions do not "bear the intentional descriptions" which characterize, in the Western social reality, such actions but that these actions are, as synecdoches, "voting" by virtue of the "assumption" into which they are displaced but is not yet manifested in these actions. The "double talk" of Nigerians is Mackintosh's metonymic articulation of Nigerian practices.

Mackintosh's identification of Nigerian political practices as deficient practices is thus the result of his constitutive use of his categories which he imposes on the Nigerians as referential terms, denying Nigerians of the constitutive power of their practices, a power which he nevertheless attributes tacitly to his own practices. It is in this sense that Nigerian practices are, in his research, pre-texts. This is the foundation of his study of voting behaviour in Enugu, Zaria and Ibadan, where he asks questions on party membership, candidates, knowledge of parties, and questions such as:

Were you interested in the recent election?... Do you talk about politics to other people?... Why do you vote?... Have you ever changed your support from one party to another?... What is your opinion of the leaders of the party you support?... Do you want to see any changes in the way things are run?... What do you want the government to do for you in the next year?... How do you learn about politics?... Does tribe matter?⁶⁵

These questions are not considered by Mackintosh as ways of eliciting the Nigerians' questions of politics. They are not therefore asked in order

to discover their "assumptions" of political life. They are questions which, in Mackintosh's discourse constitute the political as an always-already-there and invite Nigerians to identify it in their answers. In other words, given Mackintosh's approach, these questions are invitations to Nigerians to identify their practices as Western synecdoches. The questioning is given, within Mackintosh's framework, as a process of self-repression.

But a metonymic reading of the other is already a manifestation of the difference and the resistance of the other. Reading the other as a pre-text does not abolish the contradictions and conflicts of interpretations, narrations and practices generated by the occluded confrontation between the intersubjective meanings carried by the practices of Mackintosh and his respondents. The metonymic reading only makes possible the refraction, distortion and modification of such conflicts and contradictions through ad hoc and vacuous explanations which transform the contradictions into phenomena without a vocabulary.

Mackintosh conducts his research in Nigeria by tacitly identifying Nigerians and their practices as belonging to a referential chain wherein they are contiguous to Americans and their social practices. This metonymic integration of Nigerians into the American world-view surreptitiously makes them bear intentional descriptions and articulates them according to distinctions that he has not shown to be those of Nigerians. A different articulation and interpretation of their practices can in fact be suggested.⁶⁶ Indeed in Mackintosh's attitude survey, one finds hints of an experiential universe different from the one articulated by Mackintosh's categories. But in the metonymic operation effected by Mackintosh's discourse these expressions of a different experiential universe are neutralized by being netted in as synecdoches contiguous to those that are signified by his categories.⁶⁷ A respondent criticizes the members of the NEPU because "the members of the party do not love each other".⁶⁸ Another answers that he was "a NEPU member once, but as my being an NEPU member was contrary to the wishes of my seniors, parents and the like, I had to change to the NPC".⁶⁹

The ranges of meanings involved in these answers suggest a social reality whose political domain involves experiential and semantic fields that seem to be incongruent with the political of Mackintosh's "assumption". What is suggested by such a social reality is the existence of a different common world in which Nigerians live. Mackintosh asks as an individual. In what sense is he understood as "asking"? Is he understood as asking as "an individual"? Is he understood as asking "for an individual answer"? Is the discourse of the respondent a discourse of the "I" as understood by Mackintosh? Is he in fact asking questions that are of the political domain to his respondents? We cannot answer these questions from within the instrumentalist practice that associates synecdochetically the Nigerian to the "individual" American.

The consequence of this is the harmonizing of different experiential universes through a metonymic ordering of the alien social practices. In this metonymic ordering of the social practices of the other, the conflict of constitutive meanings is transformed into a situation of contiguity and thereby evicted as a conflict, the consequences being the eviction of the Nigerian's mode of agency and his political practice as a practice constituted by him within his own experiential universe. The survey which in this condition is but a testing, is not seen as belying the ostensive definitions imposed by Mackintosh. Rather it is seen as indicating the "uncommon gap" between "an assumption" that is given in Mackintosh's constitutive discourse, and the synecdoches of the Nigerian practices as produced by Mackintosh's discourse. At the same time, the synecdoches of the Nigerian social practices are displaced and made contiguous to American practices and thus seen as bearing, in nuce, the "assumption" they do not manifest, making therefore possible a universalistic comparative discourse structured according to a single narrative order - the one which is given as the infrastructure of the comparative method. It is at this level of the metonymic operation of comparative discourse that one discovers its teleological nature. For the deconstruction of the other into a pre-text or data, and the textualization of these in the universalistic discourse of comparative politics, are operated through a synecdochic identification of the other's social practices which, to be identified, are made to carry the

potentiality of being the synecdoches of the West. What is made central in the political practice of the other is that which makes it identifiable as the seed that carries the West as its future. This permits a metonymic unity of the world which makes plausible the project of law-like cross-cultural generalizations. This is the effect of the secret teleology, visible only at the level of the metonymic operation of comparative discourse which, when its metonymic operation is not disclosed, appears to be non-teleological. This textualizing process of the pre-text other is accomplished in different modes. Here we can explore the important modes of the metonymic operation, to wit the fictional discourse and the mimetic discourse. They are the modes of narrating the asemantic other through the metonymic operation that makes the meaning of the other owe its existence to a synecdochic contiguity with Western practices.

The Fictional Discourse of Comparative Politics

The fictional character of the discourse of comparative politics, which is the effect of its metonymic operation, can best be seen from the angle of the excluded question-answer dialectic of the cross-cultural survey.

If we consider questioning as a speech activity, a question articulates a social grammar in a way which expresses a desire to know and the lack of the knowledge that evokes the question. A question always opens up an experiential universe in a certain way. According to Gadamer,

...the sense of the question is the direction in which alone the answer can be given if it is to be meaningful. A question places that which is questioned within a particular perspective. The emergence of the question opens up, as it were, the being of the object. Hence the logos that sets out this opened-up being is already an answer. Its sense lies in the sense of the question.⁷⁰

In other words, it is difficult, if not impossible, to imagine a question which does not limit its possible answers by imposing a certain direction. And when the question is considered in the speech-context of the cross-cultural survey there are, in the one question, two questions as it were.

The interviewer's question "Will you vote for the Action group?" has a horizon which may neither coincide nor be coterminous with the way it is a question to the interviewee. Gadamer suggests the term "distorted question" in a situation where the real direction of a question is not yet known. He writes:

We call it distorted rather than false because there is a question behind it. i.e. there is an openness intended, but does not lie in the direction in which the distorted question is pointing.⁷¹

I suggest that in the intercultural survey, all questions are, to start with, "distorted questions", in the above sense. The direction of a question is not yet settled because every question is constituted as a question by both the speaker and the listener. Unless it is assumed that they share collectively the same common and intersubjective meanings and share them similarly, every question is at least a double question. The multiplicity of direction that ensues entails a multiplicity of senses. To have a "fusion of horizons" of the senses we have thus to engage in a dialectic of question and answer. Where this dialectic is aborted or curtailed we have parallel discourses. Neither discourse is true. Neither is false. Both constitute misunderstandings. And yet both permit a limited understanding without however answering each other's question. This tangential understanding produces a distorted knowledge for it is the result of a fictitious dialogue. I propose to call it fictitious discourse, being neither totally false, nor totally true.

Questioning carries the intention to know. This implies that the comparativist is faced not only with the problem of whether the question is a right one or a wrong one. He is also faced with a more fundamental problem of what he does when he questions. What is it to be a questioner?

Malcolm Clark suggests that "the structures of questioning are those of the subject responsibly inquiring".⁷² Consequently, the agency of the questioner is the condition of his knowing. The intention to know, carried by the question, involves also the knowledge that one does not know certain things in relation to things that one knows. Questioning implies an

organization of the world according to certain intentions in such a way that the questioner recovers himself from the immediacy of the world "by opposing himself to the world, recognizing it as a world of a certain sort."⁷³ It is in this sense that Merleau Ponty suggests that "questions can indeed be total".⁷⁴ The intention to know, carried by the question does not determine the particular facts I discover in the world, but rather more importantly, directs me towards the sort of facts I can expect to find. On the other hand, the respondent does not give an immediate answer to the comparativist's question. The respondent first makes it his question by inscribing it in his field of experiences. This activity ~~is~~ a reformulation of "the whole speech situation until a factual context stands out (which the respondent) can affirm or deny in that context".⁷⁵ That is, the respondent's answer is in the form "I answer that..." In this sense, the analysis of the answer cannot be reduced to decoding according to a pre-given external code. Rather, it is an activity which requires the approximation or the understanding and analysis of "a full human situation in which the answer appears in performance as ~~much~~ as in content".⁷⁶ Answering is the activity which makes the respondent an interlocutor and constitutes, as an answer to the presence of the questioner, a "we" intersubjectivity. Answering is not only "using" a language. It is speaking. I will try to bring out these points by discussing Hopkins' scientific study of political roles in a new state.⁷⁷

Hopkins studies political roles in Tanzania by conducting an attitude survey of Tanzanian elites. To do so, he develops a conceptual framework based on theories of political institutionalization in the United States. His aim is to "provide a test of this combination of analytical approaches as well as some understanding of the dynamics of Tanzanian politics."⁷⁸

Within this framework, he develops questions on authoritarianism, anomie, faith in people and democratic practices. He notes that his "twenty-one forced-choice attitude items (were) selected from scales developed in the United States...because they seemed to have prima facie

validity and were not obviously culture-bound".⁷⁹ The items, unhooked from their history ("not obviously culture-bound" writes Hopkins) are given as universal synecdoches. Thus starts the metonymic operation which assembles Tanzanian practices as contiguous to American practices. He makes, based on American practices, distinctions regarding what roles are important and what are trivial and excludes the latter. The American practices are introduced as examples and transmuted into synecdoches which have the status of universal signifieds. He writes:

With respect to the role of the legislators, for instance, attending social events may be unimportant, writing articles for magazines peripheral and travelling among constituents optional.⁸⁰

Hopkins writes further on:

A second area of role analysis excluded from investigation is personal roles. In contrast to cultural roles, personal role behaviour is unique to an individual or group and is often a differentiated subject of a major cultural role.⁸¹

Hopkins draws this conclusion from an analysis of American legislators' role behaviour. Hopkins thus introduces American social practices, both theoretically and practically, as the scene of a montage wherein the relationship of contiguity, effected by Hopkins through the use of American practices as synecdoches (examples), constructs a social world where the sort of facts that call for questions, and those that are self-evident and do not require questioning, are given prior to his questioning activity. The questions that arise in such a framework appear then as "natural" questions that are not contaminated by either the agency of the questioner or by his social reality. Having thus established the questions of these practices as questions that are free of these practices, Hopkins tries to elicit answers of "Agree", or "Disagree" from his Tanzanian respondents.

For example, the statement on authoritarianism, to which the answers "Agree" or "Disagree" are to be given, states that "Obedience and respect for authority are the most important virtues for children to learn."⁸²

Now, if we consider Hopkins' statement on authoritarianism, choosing

"agree" or "disagree" as an answer whose "direction" leads to the "sense" Hopkins sees in his question, presupposes that he and the Tanzanians share the experiential universe evoked by the social practices and relationships called "obedience, respect, authority, virtue, children". In other words although Hopkins does not show that he and his respondents belong to the same understanding society, although he does not try to construct a common speech with his respondents, he claims, nevertheless, that his questions imply to his respondents an organization of the world according to intentions which are similar to his own. But given the metonymic operation he executes, the claim of such a sharing cannot even be made. And yet the Tanzanians answer his questions. But do they answer Hopkins' questions? The answer I suggest is that they answer the questions according to the way they can be questions in their experiential-semantic field. The answer of the respondent appropriated instrumentally by Hopkins may appear as an answer in the sense of Hopkins. But if it is the case, as suggested above, that a question always posits a world, Hopkins' "sense" cannot but be, at best, one of the possible senses and perhaps the least significant in the world evoked by the answer of the respondent. There is no way of settling this complex situation within the instrumentalist practice of language. For what we are confronted with is not "language-object" but speech as a holophrastic activity. To discover the sense of the respondent's answer requires a reading of the questions carried by his answers. This can be illustrated by taking one of Hopkins' interviews.

Comparativist: One of the things we're interested in is your ideas of leadership. I wonder if you could tell me if there are any leaders, either in this country, in Africa, or anywhere in the world, whom you particularly like or admire?

Tanzanian Member of Parliament, henceforth MP:

There are two leaders in Africa: Mwalimu (Nyerere), here, and N'Krumah, then there's the late President Kennedy.

Comparativist: What qualities or characteristics of these leaders do you admire the most?

MP: Nyerere -- a man whom everybody should follow; both theoretical and a man of action in his policies and in his own deeds. Personally, I like him the most. Kennedy -- I met him in the States in 1962. He respected all men irrespective of color. Also I saw him in Germany in 1963, in Berlin. He had a spirit of non-racialism and he loved and worked for under-developed countries. N'Krumah -- I respect him for his work in areas outside Africa to get people to understand Africa. Not for his policies of force, but for the African freedom which he was so successful in bringing.

Comparativist: Everyone I have spoken with has been concerned with problems of nation building. If we could turn to this topic for a minute...83

One of the attitudes this interview is assumed to elicit is the authoritarianism or non-authoritarianism of the respondent.

But if we attend to the MP's responses we discover that his answers direct us to new questions. He speaks of the qualities of a leader and yet the leaders he names do not share the qualities he describes. He admires Nyerere because he does what he says. He admires Kennedy, not because he is not authoritarian, but because he "respected all men irrespective of color". In fact, he repeats this point again. Moreover, Kennedy's relationship to under-developed countries is described by him in terms of "love" and "work". He admires N'Krumah for reasons that may even be contradictory. His answer suggests that he is concerned about the way Africa is understood by other people. He thinks African freedom is important and that N'Krumah has contributed to it. But he says that he does not agree with "his policies of force", whatever this means. He never mentions Ghana although it is to Ghana that N'Krumah brought what the MP calls freedom, or is the MP saying something else? Different and perhaps conflicting skeins of meanings are produced by this interview. The MP's answers point to meanings, practices, concerns and experiences other than those Hopkins is looking for. They carry questions that, although provoked by Hopkins' questions, point in different directions. These directions indicate a conflict of "senses" arising from the fact that Hopkins' questions do not respond to the questions produced by the Tanzanian answers. There is

no working out of a common speech by Hopkins and the MP, but rather the production of alternate monologues. Hopkins himself comes dangerously close to discovering this situation, a danger he avoids by displacing the discovery to a footnote and thus saving the coherence of his discourse. He writes:

A high percentage of students agreed with the statement about economic equality ... This was quite unexpected since, in replies to questions about their support for Marxian economic views or in reaction to government action to limit their future incomes, students were noticeably disenchanted.⁸⁴

But then, in a "conversation with a few students", he "discovered" something else.

In a conversation with a few students I discovered that they had interpreted economic equality to imply that privileges of politicians should be ended and that equal economic rewards for equal ability (evidenced by education) should be established, that is, equality among elite.⁸⁵

We can now understand why Hopkins' discourse is neither false nor true. It cannot be false for there is a sense in the question rooted in Hopkins' language-world and the agency of the questioner. Nor is his discourse true in the sense of being expressive and thereby explanatory of the practices of his interviewees. For, as we have seen his discourse is rooted in an aborted dialectic of question and answer and represents mainly his part of the parallel discourses.⁸⁶ The comparativist may object that a parallel discourse is not possible on the ground that lack of communication among participants will bring an end to it. Such an objection presupposes what I have shown to be false, that both are engaged in the same question. Parallel discourse is possible precisely because the propositions involved in the comparativist's and the respondent's linguistic practices are not answers to the same question, and-as such cannot contradict each other. As Collingwood has pointed out,

No two propositions can contradict one another unless they are answers to the same question... The same principle applies to the idea of truth. If the meaning of a proposition is relative to the question it answers, its truth is relative to the same thing. Meaning, agreement, contradiction, truth

and falsehood, none of these belonged to propositions in their own right, propositions by themselves; they belonged to propositions as answers to questions: each proposition answering a question strictly correlative to itself.⁸⁷

From within the comparativist epistemological framework, it is impossible to see this parallel discourse and the metonymic operation that produces it because the instrumentalist theory of language that sustains it abolishes questioning to replace it with testing. Testing not only prevents the comparativist from seeing the monological nature of his practice, but also legitimates the metonymic mode of speech production as scientific discourse. The reason for this is given by Palmer. He writes:

Analysis and methodical questioning...tend not to call into question their own guiding presuppositions but rather to operate within a system, so that the answer is always potentially present and expected within the system. Thus they are not so much forms of true questioning as of testing.⁸⁸

Testing assumes questions to be transparent for it presupposes its own answer as a fixed condition of its being a testing. It makes its own answer its own unique presupposition, and as such makes possible a montage of facts as discrete entities that can be assembled in terms of the world that is given in the presupposed answer. In the metonymic operation, questioning is reduced to testing. Testing reduces the answer to a pre-given referent that is discrete, fixed and repeatable. It frames the answer, before it is given, as a synecdoche - as the raw material of comparative discourse. As the answers are made to precede the comparativist's test, the questions (of the test) are given as instruments that carve into social practices to extract data. The testing produces these data as discrete objects that are ready to be ordered into the meaning structure that sustains the comparative discourse. The metonymic operation thus presents the answer-question relationship as an instrumental relationship of tools to objects. Questions and answers are structured in a monovocal, homogeneous, linear and contiguous relationship. This certainly permits the development of a "science" based on replication and verification, but it does not and cannot account for the intentions carried by the acts of questioning and answering - intentions which, as we have seen

in our study of Inkeles and Smith, are admitted by comparativists by the very methods they use to produce language-instruments. In other words, in the practice of the comparativist, it is recognized that there is no one-to-one relationship between a question and an answer. But at the same time, the answer-question (the respondent's) relationship is seen as being a one-to-one relationship. We have already seen the reasons of this asymmetrical relationship that informs the comparativist's understanding of his linguistic practices and the linguistic practices of the studied. What must be emphasized here is that there is no one-to-one relationship between questions-answers-questions.⁸⁹ Indeed, the question-answer-question relationships engage on the one hand a certain vision of the world and, on the other, a certain sharing of this world, evoked by the questions and answers.

Comparativists question as if their questions can be free from what Collingwood calls the "indirect" presuppositions.⁹⁰ The comparativists desire to ask cross-cultural questions presupposes that existence of cross-cultural intersubjective meanings and realities at different levels of their comparative activities. And yet, comparativists have avoided to tackle the nature and value of these cross-cultural presuppositions which they tacitly use as the ground of questioning. The fact is that this problem is skirted by the metonymic operation which makes the West's intersubjective meanings the screen on which are projected the answers of the respondents to tests that presuppose these answers as having a place on the pre-given screen. They derive their meaning from their connection with this presupposed answer which operates as the force that makes possible the montage of these answers as data. This can be illustrated by citing some of Hopkins' findings. Hopkins writes:

The greater anomie among students is thus matched by a relatively greater distrust of human nature. In contrast the elite seems to have confidence in their fellow man... the political elite in Tanzania are more optimistic about their fellow man than the average citizen of the United States or the United Kingdom.⁹¹

There were no great differences between elite and students on these items although students seemed less committed to democratic procedures. Comparing elite responses with responses on similar questions asked in the United States, it appears that the Tanzanian elite more fully supports democratic practices.⁹²

What the import of this comparative finding is, is very hard to grasp unless one locates it as an element of a montage where Tanzanian and American "students", Tanzanian and American "citizens", Tanzanian and American "democratic practices" are connected through a relationship of contiguity whose sense is produced by the organizing principle of the montage - i.e. American intersubjective meanings. If one questions this montage of data, these findings appear to constitute a fictitious discourse. The upshot is that the discourse of comparative politics is true in as much as it articulates the American social reality that has become the scene where metonymically produced data are connected to each other through the intersubjective meanings which constitute the comparative discourse. To the extent that this discourse narrates the other, as experienced through the American intersubjective meanings, it is a true discourse for it narrates the experience Americans have of the other in the present historical moment. But this discourse is simultaneously a false discourse about the other, in as much as the other is narrated as if it were a being without its own history and sociality, for the other is present in comparative discourse only metonymically. Comparative discourse is then a fictitious discourse, neither true nor false. It is a discourse which contributes to the experiential wealth of the comparativist's life-world while at the same time distorting and impoverishing the life-world of the studied.

Metonymy, Mimos and Comparative Discourse

As it has already been mentioned, comparative politics functions on the assumption that all the problems regarding the nature, the knowledge, the structure and the practice of politics have been expressed and articulated in the language-world of the comparativist in ways that are valid for all times and places. This assumption is made to support a practice of comparison that excludes interpretation. Political practices of all

polities are connected to that unique, real and universal world which is given as the referential world of the signifiers of comparative politics. This unique and the only real and universal world is related to its other, in the discourse of modernization and political development, as the Form to the non-formed. The latter is present in this discourse as a "gaping-reality" which finds its fulfillment and maturity in, to use Apter's expression, the "institutional transfer". Thus, comparative politics produces an infinite monological discourse on the West, but a discourse that feeds on the gaping reality that is the other, who, in the discourse of comparison, finds itself reduced to "mimos". I will illustrate this aspect of the discourse of comparative politics by considering Price's study of Ghana.

Price first censors non-scientific criticisms by presenting them in a curious light, as criticisms that cannot answer the preoccupations and worries of the social scientist. He writes:

How does one know the respondent's answer is a truthful reflection of his attitudes and perceptions? Is the interpretation one gives to the responses to survey items a truly valid one?

He answers:

I feel that, when it comes to assessing role perceptions and orientations, survey methods are an improvement over impressionistic statements of observers and knowledgeable informants. At least in the former case the basis for making one's judgements -- the survey items -- is explicit not subjective, and therefore the basis for accepting or rejecting validity is open to discussion.⁹³

Price locks the reader between what he calls "impressionistic", "subjective" on the one hand and "explicit", "open to discussion" on the other. For the sensible and rational person, and of course for the social scientist, the choice is clear. One must be "explicit" and "open to discussion". For Price, this means being an empiricist working within the verificationist epistemology. But if we consider the discourse of this rational and open-to-discussion science we find certain interesting situations. First, the categories used by the comparativist are not open-to-discussion, although ready for use. Price studies bureaucracy in Ghana. It is

certainly made "explicit" that there is only one "phenomenon" called bureaucracy which is characterized according to the once more "explicit" Parsonian concept of "universal" and its attendant variables. But the explicitness itself excludes the openness-to-discussion of the concept of bureaucracy. Ghanians will be tested on it and Price comes, as we shall see, to rather surprising conclusions.

His preoccupation as to whether "the respondent's answer is a truthful reflection of his attitudes and perceptions" deprives the respondent of his criteria of "explicitness" and "discussion", and makes it incumbent on the comparativist to generate the respondent's answer as "explicit" and "open-to-discussion". This changes the "rapport de forces", as it were, between the comparativist and the subject of study, for what this preoccupation expresses are the hidden questions "Will he answer my question?", "Will he contaminate ('drift') the answer?" To make (to force) him answer the question, to prevent him from contaminating his answers is of course the purpose of method. This fear of the other reduces the practices of the other to the level-synecdochic-where they are already given as familiar meanings in the language of the comparativist. This avoids the destructuring and rupturing of his scientific discourse. The only "explicit"ness and openness to "discussion" that is given is that which can be characterized as such within the experiential-semantic field of the comparativist's language-world. This operates in Price in the following manner. Price writes:

In one such series the respondents were asked: "suppose a civil servant arrives at his office one morning and finds several people waiting to see him about routine business. One of these people is a relative of his." The civil servant respondent was then asked, "Would it be proper to keep this relative waiting because others have come before him?" Obviously, the purpose of this question was to determine which of his roles - civil service or family - the respondent should determine his behaviour...⁹⁴

Price categorizes the answers as "universalistic" or "particularistic" according to whether the respondents say that he will not or will see his relative first.⁹⁵ Further on he claims that "the educational background of the respondent's parents has the strongest influence on the direction of

family role expectations" as to whether these affect universalistic or particularistic orientations. He cites Almond and Verba, Alex Inkeles, as researchers who have confirmed this in other polities.⁹⁶ He writes, however:

Although there is a clear and statistically significant relationship between social mobilization variables and perceptions of universalistic role expectations, equally striking, and just as important, theoretically, is the fact that this relationship is extremely weak... Thus, for example, 64% of the families that rank high on father's education, and 57% of the families that rank high on mother's education, have particularistic role expectations, according to the members of these families that were interviewed.⁹⁷

He then surveys "University students", using comparison/clientele sample and semi/nonliterate subsets to find out what kind of orientation they have to bureaucratic services. He categorizes the answers as "Service orientation, Dispensary orientation and Instrumental orientation". He discovers that

...only a small minority of all three groupings of respondents manifest a service orientation... the proportion of persons having a service orientation is smaller among the university sample than among the sample of respondents less highly exposed to institutions of Western education.⁹⁸

He characterizes the latter findings as "highly incongruous."⁹⁹ Surely there is room for hesitation, in the light of his "weak" confirmation and his "highly incongruous" results, and for wondering as to whether Price's understanding of "bureaucracy" is the adequate guide to the study of the Ghanaian social practice he identifies as "bureaucracy" - an identification which is synecdochic. However, Price, as we have seen earlier, has disposed of questions of this nature. He thus draws some remarkable conclusions from his study. He writes:

...it is not likely that the socialization mechanisms in these societies will prepare individuals to be "citizens" of the new political units....

...those perceptions, orientations, rights and duties

that constitute the "citizen role-set" have probably not been transmitted to most people in the new state.¹⁰⁰

From this he draws the following conclusion:

In short, when the basic problems of organizations stem from the existing socio-cultural environment, a relevant program and conscious solution to these problems can be undertaken only by groups who are in one way or another insulated from that environment. It is possible that the economic and political stresses now being expressed by Ghana and other African countries will create large groups sufficiently alienated from existing social arrangements to sponsor and support such programs. But at least in the immediate future, those political leaders who are highly committed to development goals will find themselves constrained by a socio-cultural system that offers them little support in the building of organizations equal to the tasks they wish to pursue.¹⁰¹

Price thus treats "bureaucracy" as a non-holophrastic concept. By reducing it to its synecdoches, its presence in Ghana appears as a failed "mimesis". Price excludes the historical meanings of bureaucracy in the West: that, on the one hand, it is an expression of the breakdown of certain social relations based on a historically specific form of personal dependence known as "Feudalism" with its own specific practices and structures of political, religious, economic and kinship relations, and that, on the other hand, it is constitutive of new social practices and structures expressive of the principle of impersonal exchange in the disenchanted world, to paraphrase Weber, created by capitalist productions and relations. Deprived of these meanings, bureaucracy is presented by Price as a set of mechanical movements, at their synecdochic level, and assumed to be real and universal at that level. But if we take into account the meanings excluded by Price, we discover that Ghana has never known that system of personal dependence whose break-down ushered the bureaucratic social practice, nor that system of social exchange whose logic is the organizing principle of capitalist societies in the West. Indeed, even for the West, certain critics of Weber's theory of bureaucracy, a theory that is the framework of Price's study of bureaucracy in Ghana, have pointed out that Weber's concept of bureaucracy is, to use the term I have adopted, holophrastic and expresses

the values of the Prussian state to which Weber subscribed.¹⁰² Others have pointed out that the Weberian concept of bureaucracy cannot help us understand the phenomenon commonly known as the "bureaucracy" in the socialist states.¹⁰³ The point then is that if we take the history and intersubjective meanings that articulate Ghanaian society, then Ghanaian bureaucracy may not be only a copy, and a deficient one at that, of Western bureaucracy. There is perhaps something more and different. It may be expressive of a new social logic which is neither traditional nor modern, in the sense these terms are understood in comparative politics. Now, it is not being denied that "bureaucracy" was borrowed from the West. This is all too evident. The question is how is this borrowing effected? And what is the outcome of the activity of borrowing itself? The question is: can we afford not to take into account the historical circumstances of the borrowing, the agencies, and the intersubjective meanings and realities that are involved in such a borrowing?

Interestingly and in a very brief passage, Price suggests the possibility of different "borrowings" expressing and articulating different intersubjective meanings. He speaks of the "Japanese approach" to bureaucracy.¹⁰⁴ Price does not however follow through the implication of this momentary insight. For if there is a Japanese approach to bureaucracy, presumably then a constitution of "bureaucracy" that expresses meanings and values that are not "universal" (in the abstract at least) is possible. Price does not follow this route. He juxtaposes Ghanaian society to the society that has historically produced bureaucracy. The Ghanaian society thus appears as a distorting mirror. He describes Ghanaian society in terms of its presumably "traditional" culture and social system which tend to be "oriented toward persons not toward rules" and concludes that "the bureaucratic form of behaviour... is in direct opposition to the central ethos of African socio-cultural systems".¹⁰⁵

Thus the scene is set. There is bureaucracy as a thing-in-itself. It exists in Western societies. These are juxtaposed to Ghanaian society. This juxtaposition permits the understanding of "bureaucracy" as something

that is reflected - as in a mirror - in Ghanaian society. But the reflexion is distorted because the mirror, as it were, is deficient. The conclusion being that the mirror must be corrected so that "bureaucracy" will be faithfully reflected. Surprising as it may seem this is the conclusion reached by Price. Thus he writes, as quoted above, that groups "insulated", "alienated" from the Ghanaian intersubjective meanings and realities must be created so that they will become good bureaucrats!

Price's research raises a fundamental question. He speaks of bureaucracy and yet the bureaucracy he finds in Ghana appears in his study as a deprived object. He speaks of the rationality of the Ghanaian and yet this rationality appears as a deprived rationality, incapable of forming the bureaucracy as understood by Price. What is then the relationship between the expression of Price's universal categories and the practices characterized by these terms in the social world of Ghanians? The confrontation of the discourse of Price and the discourse of Ghanians within his "explicit" and "open to discussion" framework appears as a confrontation between expressive practice and mimetic practice. Bureaucracy, as an expressive practice, is the one which is given in the concepts of Price. Bureaucracy, as a mimetic practice, is the one given in the Ghanaian discourse.

Such a mimetic conception of African political practices is indeed what underlies theories of modernization and development. These theories narrate African political practices and institutions by identifying them metonymically as synecdochic reflections of the objects-in-themselves, that is, Western practices and institutions, which are transferred ("institutional transfer", "foreign aid") from the West to Africa. This transfer is posited by comparative discourse as "modernization", and the state of this modernization as well as its nature is described and explained in terms of the comparability of the mimetic practices and the expressive practices. The comparability of the African practices is derived from their being identified as mimetic practices, for the criteria, categories and theories of comparison are derived from the expressive, that is, Western, practices only. Thus when the comparativist speaks of the "modernization" of a given African polity, this polity is made to appear

as a collage, as a composition of objects, borrowed from the already-modern, mingled with those African objects which, vis-à-vis the borrowed, are articulated as the "residual".¹⁰⁶ At the same time however, the borrowing is narrated as a mimesis of the object-in-itself, for it is all too evident that American bureaucracy cannot be transferred as it is. African "political development" then appears essentially as a process of mimesis of the object-in-itself. In this mimetic theory of politics, politics, voting, party, elections, bureaucracy are given as the objects of imitation, and the comparativist looks for their presence in the collage. The comparativist's real and in fact only question bears on the sense of the "object" in the "object-imitation", the sense of bureaucracy in bureaucracy-imitation. The latter are yet to be discovered as new, original and different practices. These hyphenated entities, which are also described as gerundial entities (developing, nation-building, etc.) thus appear as suffering from incapacity and deficiency. Consequently, the comparativist's discourse on the other is essentially a discourse on the adventures of Western institutions in the Non-West. It thereby articulates the West and its institutions as unique and universal. Comparative discourse, by articulating the West as the only unique entity, produces comparison as the malpresence of this uniqueness in the life of the other, identified in terms of what it reflects as the "meaning equivalents" of the synecdoches of the unique and universal West. The comparative discourse is thus given as a discourse of mirrors expressive of the different reflections of the unique West in the mimes of the other. This dialogue between expression and mimesis does not produce comparison but "mono-parison", an endless metonymic discourse on the uniqueness, universality and reality of the West. Through the discourse of mimesis, what Herskovits described as a process of "reinterpretation" within the "frame of their (Africans) own cultures" is elided.¹⁰⁷ But as I will show in the next chapter, "every society", to quote S. Langer, "meets a new idea with its own concepts, its own tacit, fundamental way of seeing things; that is to say, with its own questions, its peculiar curiosity".¹⁰⁸ It is this that is censored in comparative discourse.

Now these different modes of the metonymic operation show that the other is objectified, fragmented, displaced and made totally dependent for its meaning on the narrative infrastructure of comparative method. But such an operation, being imposed on social practices, cannot but have profound political implications. At this juncture one discovers that the metonymic operation carried out by comparative discourse is one which is also carried out by all practices of domination and repression.

Metonymy, Repression and Comparative Discourse

When words are absorbed by their referants they tend to become the instruments of power.¹⁰⁹ The metonymic operation reduces words to referants. By depriving them of their semantic and experiential fields, it makes them atemporal and non-indexical, and makes them autonomous entities ready to be manipulated as equivalences and correlations, even by those who do not understand them. The metonymic operation, by censoring history and context, produces brute data - political, economic, cultural - that have neither a past nor a future. As syntagmatic units in the discourse of comparative politics, all brute data are made to start at a zero degree of meaning. Their objectivity is thus the effect of the exclusion of social meanings from their presentation. This social science of brute data however is but the silence of those whose speech has been denied the power to name the world.

The metonymic operation, by isolating the signifier from social practices, excludes the mediation of language. It eliminates the connotative, the polysemic and the impassioned. It excludes the plurivocal, the hidden and the unstable. It creates a distance between the comparativist and the compared, a distance that affirms the humanity of the comparativist while at the same time making the compared an instrument, but not an end, in the production of knowledge. The compared is reduced, in a typical metonymic operation, to a datum of knowledge produced by comparative politics. This operation makes possible the denial of oppression and makes comparative politics, perhaps unwittingly, a discourse of human impotence. Let me take Potholm's study to illustrate this point. Potholm writes:

...in any attempt to compare African political systems with each other and with non-African political systems, a meaningful conceptual framework is necessary. Such a framework ought to enable one to compare such diverse entities as Chile and Malaysia, Chad and Belgium, Great Britain and Mauritius and to examine political systems far removed in time and space.¹¹⁰

Potholm thus removes away "time and space" differences and constructs a framework, a scene, where political practices are purified of their contents and contexts of inequality and oppression, to be collated as variations of a single theme reduced to its lowest common denominator - the synecdoche of the political party. Thus he describes Africa as offering

...interesting variations on traditional party politics, ranging from a non-party state (Ethiopia) to a single-party state (Liberia), a multiparty arrangement (Kenya) to a multiparty historically regime-alternating system (South Africa).¹¹¹

All political practices are thus suggested to be permutations of a finite number of components. These permutations would permit the description of all polities in terms of regulative, extractive, distributive rejuvenative and symbolic capacities. As his definitions are exemplary instances of the metonymic reduction that excludes all that which has something to do with repression, oppression, suffering, they will be quoted at length.

Political system...(it) is essentially a demand-processing, image-protecting, goal-seeking entity, embedded within an international environment...it may be regarded as a group of mutually influencing variables of a social, economic, and political character that interact over time.

Regulative capacity...ability to control the actions of its populace and to influence its membership to behave in certain ways.

Extractive capability...ability to tap its human and natural resources in terms of production, collection, and utilization of these resources.

Distributive capability...ability of the system to reward its members by the allocation of goods, services, and status.

Rejuvenative capability...ability of the political system to reinforce itself, to maintain and alter its institutions, structures and processes and to replenish its personnel...

Symbolic capability...credibility...believability
and acceptance of the decision-maker's authority
to issue and enforce commands.¹¹²

But these are but the synecdoches of power. They reduce political life to its lowest, non-disturbing denominators. This operation excludes the practices and questions of oppression, terror, exploitation, manipulation and imperialism by semiotizing the phenomena they point to at their functional level, thus depriving them of their existential basis. These categories are expressive of a reductive connection where one signifier, say for example, demonstration, is displaced and its place occupied by another: demand-processing. This reductive connection reduces demonstration to demand-processing, which at best is an insignificant synecdoche of demonstration. It transforms the latter into the signified of demand-processing, thus effectively operating an elision by which the datum banishes the first, "demonstration", which now exists as the unwilled, the unremembered, the unwanted, the unnamed. Thus exploitation can be elided over as "extractive capability", a coup d'état can be elided over as a "rejuvenative capacity"; manipulation can be elided over as "symbolic capability"; repression can be elided over as "regulative capability". This metonymic and, in the last analysis, wilfull harmonizing of all "political systems" is made possible by the verbal autarchy of comparative discourse which is based on the censorship of social practices - the level where men live, suffer and enjoy their lives.

This operation permits the exclusion from comparative political discourse the questions of domestic as well as foreign oppression as central questions of political practices. The supremely relevant questions to men regarding the possibilities of a decent life, justice, and the freedoms from poverty, oppression, disease and ignorance, and the right to understand one's life become impossible and unsayable questions.¹¹³ This silence is filled with the project of generating law-like cross-cultural generalizations. But the silence of comparative discourse cannot silence history even if it abolishes history from the discourse of the comparativist. The upshot is that comparative politics becomes a struggle against the struggles of suffering men who precisely are trying to change the economic, social and

political "laws" which are given in the metonymic discourse as the immutable laws of nature. Consequently, comparativists cannot but confront the historical conflicts between the interests that inform their project and the interests that inform the project of suffering humanity. The former's is claimed to be science; the latter's is justice. This opposition between science and justice is not the work of the latter. It is the result of the comparativists' work which, confronted by the conflicts produced by a project that tries to discover the natural laws of unnatural societies, resolves the contradiction by separating society from the nature that men has made it into. This split between knowledge and justice is not seen by comparativists as a wound inflicted on human life. It is rather seen as a mark of objectivity, neutrality and science. But this very separation of the science of man from the life of man presupposes that the two are irreconcilable. And yet, at the same time, the science of man, as we have seen in comparative politics, is in its metonymic operation totally reconciled to the existing order of power. Power's principle of discourse - the negation of the other as an interlocutor and his subjection to power as a synecdoche that derives its right to be expressive from the discourse of power - is also the principle of comparative discourse. Thus after explicitly splitting science from justice, comparativists produce their linguistic practices in terms of the principle of the discourse of power. Science is thus made surreptitiously a discourse of power.

The scientific study of politics, thus governed by the metonymic principle, becomes the domain of the repetitive where each repetition (replication, verification) stands for the unnamed and unnameable different other. The future itself of the different other is banished to become the comforting repetition, even if this repetition is colonialism, neo-colonialism or imperialism, of the same. The fear of the unnamed future of the unnamed different other is positively theorized as "political development". The eruption of the unnamed resuscitates all that has been rejected in the reservoir of the irrational and identified as a return to matter, viz.: "political decay", "tribalism", "primordialism".

In other words, comparative political discourse is a discourse of those who have appropriated the power to make, name and narrate the world. As such the speech of the compared cannot enter into the discourse of comparative politics without challenging not only the coherence of comparative discourse, but more importantly, the power that sustains comparative discourse as a science that incorporates the other as a datum.

The Dilemma of Being a Comparativist

Comparative politics as a science becomes a metonymic discourse when science is understood as an escape from language and history. But this escape is, as we have seen, only an escape from the language and history of the other. The escape thus effected makes the language and history of the other its prisons from which the other is extracted by displacing him into the intersubjective field that is expressed by method. The other is thus recuperated as a non-linguistic and non-historical datum. The vacuum created by the exclusion of its intersubjective meanings is filled by metonyms that translate the unnamed meanings and intentions as variations of the known, as given in the categories of comparative politics. These categories function both as signifiers and signifieds. As signifiers they are considered to be instruments. As signifieds they are assumed to be fixed and objective. In both these capacities they are made to exclude the mediation of language. As instruments, they purify facts of their presumably contingent properties to produce replicable and verifiable data. As signifieds they are pre-given contents that establish relationships of contiguity between different political practices before one even knows the nature of these political practices. These signifiers-signifieds of comparative discourse play on the double absence - the unnamed West and the unnamed other - to claim universality and objectivity. But this claim is rooted in the very chasm established between the unnamed, but expressive, West, and the unnamed, but mute, other. It is a claim that confirms the linguistic and historical nature of the practice of the Western comparativist while simultaneously rendering the non-Western comparativist who adopts this "science" linguistically and historically, existentially and politically,

superfluous to the practice in which he is engaged.

For the western comparativist, the categories of comparative politics are realized as his speech-acts. They articulate his intentional behaviour as well as the successes and failures of his comparative actions. They are part of his social practice grounded in his history. The comparativist himself does not and cannot understand his categories only by the way he uses them but rather by the way they point to his society. That is, the comparativist can claim that the meaning of his categories lie in the way they are used precisely because his use of these categories makes him an active participant in the tradition and history which is particular to his society. For the non-Western comparativist, however, a different experiential universe is engaged by this comparative practice. For the non-Western comparativist cannot aspire to be more than a user of these categories. He can use the categories of comparative politics not as words (Humboldt), rules (Wittgenstein), speech acts (Searle), intentional behaviour (Merleau-Ponty), expressive of social practices, but only as instruments, techniques, executions, directed use, asocial practices (as practices which are not part of his social identity). His practice is given as that of an anarthric body.

There are here two types of linguistic practices: (a) that of the Western comparativist which is an autonomous linguistic practice where the bearer and the user of the linguistic practice are united in the "body-subject" of the comparativist and (b) a dependent linguistic practice where the non-Western comparativist is a user without being the bearer of the linguistic practice of comparative politics.

These two types of linguistic practices express two histories and a certain relationship between the two histories.

In the case of the autonomous practice, we see and recognize within this linguistic practice its own genealogy which stretches back to antiquity. Its development from the pre-Socratics to the latest Western comparativist is a unique, definite and unrepeatable historical practice.

But this unique, definite and unrepeatable development of linguistic practice is unique not only in its genealogy but also in its outcome: social science. It is unique in its outcome, because the social sciences claim to have put an end to this process of creative linguistic practice by having fulfilled its telos, i.e., making the world transparent. The process then is contained between its origin and its end, between the pre-Socratics and the American social scientist. The social sciences would be the expression of a transparent and completed linguistic practice, i.e., the language of a finished history, fulfilling, in the words of Lipset, "the shift from ideology to sociology".¹¹⁴ We are thus given a unique language which has evolved through a unique history and which has come to a unique end. It is this uniqueness which permits the comparativist to make the quantum jump from understanding to causal explanations. It is a uniqueness which cannot suffer other uniquenesses, and it operates thus a mode of semiotizing non-Western linguistic practices within the Western semantic field. The former can exist only as "translated" linguistic practices, i.e., as practices that are comparable only within the uniqueness of comparative political discourse. What is made possible then is an infinite range of comparisons with the non-uniques which are but infinite variations of this unique world, the West. We are thus confronted with an autonomous linguistic practice that is engaged in an infinite discourse on itself, and on its own uniqueness. What then is the place of the comparativist who does not belong to this unique history, or who belongs to this unique history not as the speaker but as the said, not as a bearer but only as a user?

The foreign comparativist who is outside this unique history and uses the language of comparative politics does so from a different ground - a ground which does not lead and has not led him to this language of comparative politics. The genealogy of the linguistic practice of the foreign comparativist who uses the language of comparative politics is present only as an absence. But it is an absence filled by the repressed common and intersubjective meanings of his own (native) linguistic practices, i.e. his own history, which reappears metonymically in the comparative discourse by which he is spoken as a non-free being. Whereas, then, the categories of comparative politics are, for the Western comparativist, historical, i.e. inscribed in the

history of his linguistic practice, for the non-Western they are neither historical nor ahistorical. They simply are. In reverse, the foreigner's history as a comparativist, in comparative politics, is the history of his use of these closed alien categories. He cannot but compare his polity only from their interior, that is, by displacing himself from the truth of his history. But by comparing from their interior without sharing their history, he puts himself in a different horizon as compared with the Western comparativist for whom the history of these categories is part of his history. For the non-Western comparativist, the genealogy of the West, the constitution of the West is given as the content of the language of comparative politics. This is also the case for the Western comparativist! The difference, however, is that for the non-Western comparativist, the adoption of the ideal of comparative politics makes the uniqueness of the West a unique end which transforms his method into a manifestation of a desire: to be a bearer of the history that is expressed in the linguistic practice of comparative politics. He thus reduces himself to a metonymic "subject" and his polity to matter without form, to a passive substance, to be directed (modernized, developed) to that unique end. For him, method becomes a metonymic mode of participating in the "civilization of the Universal". The Western comparativist is not faced with the dilemma of assuming or rejecting history, for his history is already expressed in his comparative method. The non-Western comparative is faced with this monumental choice. The facile argument that the alien can choose the method of comparative politics without repressing his history forgets that, as opposed to the natural sciences where "past and future can be described in the same range of concepts, as values, say, of the same variables",¹¹⁵ in the historical sciences, we deal with what Vico characterized as the works of men, i.e. the common and intersubjective meanings that make each community a possibility. To choose a method is then to interpret these in a certain way, which means that it is to understand oneself, one's own society, one's history in a certain way, thereby committing oneself to certain visions, ways of life and actions. The foreign comparativist has therefore the choice between being a metonymic "subject" (that is, deny that he is a historical, therefore a free and moral being) or a historical subject (that is, recuperate the history that comparative discourse occludes).

Being a comparativist is thus more than using "method". If the non-Western comparativist accepts the ontologization of the West, he is forced to bypass himself and his history, and treat his polity as a montage of data selected, tailored and organized in terms of categories that produce them as fictional and mimetic. When a knowledge produced through this elision of the meanings and history that are carried by the so-called data is taken as a basis for policy and political action, either in the domestic or foreign arena, it can lead, as the history of contemporary African, Asian and Latin American countries show, to political tragedies and inhuman horrors.

Consequently, the non-Western comparativist faces an essential choice. The question of politics is still a central question which cannot be articulated as economic, demographic, technological or organizational variables only. The choice of the non-Western comparativist is then guided by an interest, an interest in what he, i.e. his society may become, with non-survival as one of the real options. This interest cannot be separated from the method that allows him to understand and act in order to foreclose the possibility of terror, injustice and non-survival. For the non-Western comparativist, then, autochtony, is a necessity. This principle of autochtony is tacitly accepted by comparativists as the principle that guides the understanding of their own polities, an understanding expressed as method. But they deny it to the other. ¹¹⁶

In the next chapter, I will try to sketch an interpretative approach to the study of African politics in a way that I think permits to overcome the serious distortions produced by mainstream comparative politics.

FOOTNOTES

1. Wilhelm Dilthey, Pattern and Meaning in History, edited by H.P. Rickman (New York: Harper Torchbook, 1962).
2. The standard reference work for modern rhetorics is Pierre Fontanier, Les Figures du Discours (Paris: Flammarion, 1968); See also Albert Henry, Métonymie et Métaphore (Paris: Klincksieck, 1971); and the excellent book on this question by Michel Le Guern, Sémantique de la Métaphore et de la Métonymie (Paris: Seuil, 1975).
3. Ferdinand de Saussure, Cours de Linguistique Générale (Paris: Payot, 1965).
4. Roman Jakobson, "Two Aspects of Language and two types of Aphasic Disturbances" in Fundamentals of Language ed. Roman Jakobson and Morris Halle (The Hague: Mouton, 1956), pp. 54-82.
5. Anthony Wilden, System and Structure (London: Tavistock Publications, 1972), pp. 351-352.
6. Paul Ricoeur, La Métaphore Vive (Paris: Seuil, 1975), pp. 76-81.
7. J. Lacan, Ecrits (Paris: Seuil, 1966), pp. 495 ff.
8. Pierre Fontanier, op.cit., p. 79.
9. Armando Verdiglione, Psychoanalyse et Sémiotique (Paris: Union Générale d'Éditions, 1975).
10. K. Burke, A Grammar of Motives (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1969), pp. 505-511.
11. G. Almond and S. Verba, Civic Culture (Boston: Little, Brown, 1965).
12. Robert Georin, Le Temps Freudien du Verbe (Lausanne: L'Age d'Homme, 1973), p. 119.
13. Alasdair MacIntyre, "Causality and History", in Essays on Explanation and Understanding, eds. J. Manninen and R. Tuomela (Dordrecht-Holland: D. Reidel, pp. 137-158.
14. David and Judith Willer, Systematic Empiricism, pp. 16-32.
15. In this sense comparative discourse is a historical discourse and shares the characteristics of the latter. See Roland Barthes, "Historical Discourse" in Structuralism: A Reader ed. Michael Lane (London: Cpa, 1970), pp. 145-156.
16. Eugene T. Meehan, The Foundations of Political Analysis, Empirical and Normative, pp. 122-123.

17. Harold L. Lasswell, The Future of Political Science (New York: Atherton Press, 1963), pp. 231-233.
18. C.E. Black, The Dynamics of Modernization (New York: Harper and Row, 1967), p. 45.
19. Samuel P. Huntington, Political Order in Changing Societies (Princeton: Yale University Press, 1968), especially pp. 334-344.
20. Austin T. Turk, "The Sociological Relevance of History: A Footnote to Research on Legal Control in South Africa" in Michael Armer and Allen D. Grimshaw, eds. (New York: Wiley-Interscience, 1973), p. 290.
21. Ibid, pp. 292-293.
22. Hegel, Reason in History, translated by R.S. Hartman (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1953), p. 75.
23. Jean Pierre Faye, Théorie du Récit (Paris: Herman, 1972), p. 30.
24. B. Berger, Societies in Change (New York: Basic Books, 1971), p. 286.
25. S.N. Eisenstadt, Modernization and Protest (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1966), p. 1.
26. Daniel Lerner, The Passing of a Traditional Society (Glencoe: Free Press, 1958), p. 79, p. 47.
27. W. Mitchell, Sociological Analysis and Politics (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1967), p. 161.
28. C.E. Black, The Dynamics of Modernization (New York: Harper and Row, 1967), p. 96.
29. D. Apter, The Politics of Modernization (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1965), p. 57.
30. Max Weber, The Methodology of the Social Sciences, translated by Edward A. Shils and Henry A. Finch (New York: The Free Press, 1949), p. 90.
31. Ibid, p. 93.
32. Reinhard Bendix, "Tradition and Modernity Reconsidered" in Comparative Studies in Society and History, 9, No. 3 (1967), pp. 292-346.
33. In the relationship between Western traditions and modernities one finds different interpretations. Thomas Paine saw his age as breaking radically with the past while Burke rejected such a judgement. De Tocqueville saw the French Revolution as fulfilling the centralization started by the Ancien Régime while the Jacobins considered it as a new start. Wittfogel considers the communist revolution in Russia as completing the totalization of power which was already present in the Czarist régime while Leninists see it as the

foundation of a new society. These confrontations are however conflicting interpretations, implying conflicting practices, of traditions and practices that are nevertheless shared by the conflicting interpreters. See Alexis de Tocqueville, L'Ancien Régime et la Révolution (Paris: Gallimard, 1964); K.A. Wittfogel, Le Despotisme Oriental (Paris: Les Editions de Minuit, 1962); Thomas Paine, The Age of Reason: Being An Investigation of True Fabulous Theology, ed. M.D. Conway (London: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1870); E. Burke, Reflections on the French Revolution (London: J.M. Dent and Sons Ltd., 1935).

34. For example in Gwendolen M. Carter, ed. African Party States (Ithaca: Cornell University Press). Each study is preceded by a "historical background" where the past is presented independently of its present meanings and interpretations which are present in the contemporary practices. The consequence is that the past is narrated as if it were part of natural history.

35. This can be clearly seen in the descriptions given of these encounters by "explorers", "missionaries" and "colonial administrators". For compilations of these see: Dorothy Hammond and Alta Jablow, The Africa that Never Was (New York: Twayne Publishers, 1970). Also, Philip D. Curtin, The Image of Africa (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1964); Katherine George, "The Civilized West Looks at Primitive Africa" ISIS, 49 (1958), pp. 62-72.

36. Marion J. Levy, Modernization and the Structure of Societies, 2 vols. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1963), 2: 745 (emphasis added).

37. E. Shils, "Demagogues and Cadres in Political Development" in Communications and Political Development, ed. L. Pye (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1963), p. 65.

38. L. Pye, ed., Communications and Political Development, p. 149.

39. For the understanding of the "self" in American social practices and social sciences as the "substantial self", an understanding rooted in the Protestant conception of the "soul" see: Sacvan Bercovitch, The Puritan Origins of the American Self (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1975); Jack D. Douglas, The Social Meanings of Suicide (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1970). The term "substantial self" is that of J.D. Douglas. See pp. 281-282. Quentin Anderson, The Imperial Self: An Essay in American Literary and Cultural History (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1971).

40. C. Wright Mills, "Situated Actions and Vocabularies of Motive" in C. Wright Mills, Power, Politics and People, edited with an Introduction by Irving Louis Horowitz, (New York: Balantine Books, 1963), pp. 439-440.

41. Lucien Pye, Aspects of Political Development (Boston: Little, Brown, 1966); Samuel P. Huntington, Political Order in Changing Societies (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1972); David Apter, Some Conceptual Approaches to the Study of Modernization (Englewood Cliffs, Ill.: Prentice-Hall, 1968) pp. 113-136.

42. Thus for Almond and Coleman "political development" is a concept that narrates the "traditional" as external to history; for Lerner the concept of "rationalization" narrates the "traditional" as pre-rational; and for Hoselitz the concept of the "economic", identified with capitalist development, narrates the "traditional" as "pre-economic". G.A. Almond and J.S. Coleman, op.cit.; D. Lerner, The Passing of Traditional Society (Glencoe: The Free Press, 1958); B.F. Hoselitz and W.E. Moore, ed. Industrialization and Society (The Hague: Mouton, 1966).

43. C. Welch, op.cit., p. 104.

44. Ibid, p. 105.

45. This can be illustrated by briefly examining Apter's analysis of Uganda's and Ghana's "traditions". Apter writes that tradition is "an ideal type not to be found empirically in pure form" when it is used as an explanatory concept. (D. Apter, The Politics of Modernization, op.cit., p. 57) But as we have seen, in the discourse of comparative politics tradition is used not only as an ideal type but also as a "belief-system" accessible according to the categorical principles of political culture. The political scientist uses tradition both as a context of explanation and a means to explain the behaviour of the members of the "traditional society". For example, Apter in his study of "The Role of Traditionalism in the Political Modernization of Ghana and Uganda" (op.cit.) uses tradition as a means to explain their traditional conduct. He asks the question of why some "traditional systems can innovate more easily than others". To answer the question he first makes a distinction between "instrumental" and "consummatory" traditionalism. He defines traditionalism as signifying "validations of current behaviour stemming from immemorial prescriptive norms" (p.115). The "instrumental system", Apter writes, "innovate easily by spreading the blanket of tradition upon change itself" (p.115). The "consummatory systems" says Apter were first described by Fustel de Coulanges in his study of "Greece and Rome". "Such systems have been hostile to innovation" and Apter continues, "not only were Ancient Greece and Rome examples of such systems, but so was Ashanti" (p.116). Seeing tradition as a means permits Apter to dehistoricize both tradition and its conceptualization. This puts the Ashanti in a rather curious situation. Their living tradition, living because he studies their tradition as that of a contemporary society, is temporarily homogenized with the dead (or still living?) tradition (?) of Greece and Rome. The Ashanti are thus unhooked from their narration and given a double time-identity. They become Apter's contemporaries and predecessors. What holds together this disjointed time identity and the presence of the Ashanti in the discourse of Apter is the coherence supplied by his language's "connivance" with the history-action of the West. This connivance or narrative infrastructure articulates the tradition of the Ashanti as its prehistory, a stage it has overcome, to which it can give a meaningful place in the order of its history-narration by speaking it, in the present, as its past moment. The tradition of the Ashanti is thus articulated retrospectively in the history-narration of the West and yet used in Apter's discourse as the present explanation of the contemporary practices of the Ashanti. This objectification of tradition permits Apter to classify tradition as either "instrumental" or "consummatory". He uses each type as discrete variables. Both are used as motivational inputs

to explain a world which, to Apter, is their world, given as a belief system. Their world is the past of the world which is the world given in Apter's history-narration and which narrates the Ashanti as its pre-world. This is how Apter's discourse unfolds itself. "Within the context of the term "traditional" both Ashanti and Baganda were traditional systems. Both required validation of current behaviour by appeal to immemoriality". (p.119). But although both societies are traditional, and "appeal to immemoriality" to validate current behaviour they have different traditions. The Ashanti state is "religious and theocratic"; the Baganda, "secular and military". (p.119) In the process of modernization the Ashanti values which are "consummatory values" conflict with modernization whereas the Baganda values which are "instrumental values" support innovation and modernization. In Ghana then "political modernization attacks head-on traditional ways of believing and acting" whereas in Baganda there is "no incompatibility between modernism and traditionalism". As such, predicts Apter: "Uganda represents a potential alternative to the Ghana pattern. Out of regard for instrumental traditionalism, Uganda may find a political compromise proximate to the needs of the public, achieving modernity with both prudence and freedom". (p.135) Indeed subsequent developments in both Ghana and Uganda seem to render Apter's analysis quite vacuous. Both are presently under military dictatorships and to use Apter's expressions, the Ghanaian rulers seem to behave as if they were living in a society whose "traditions" are "instrumental" whereas the Uganda ruler seems to behave as if he were living in a society whose "tradition" is "consummatory". (See Africa, number 59, 1976 and number 61, 1976). As these changes have taken place within a time span too short for "values" appealing to "immemoriality" to change, one is obliged to consider the possibility that Apter's discourse is right not in what it says about the Ashanti and the Baganda "traditions", but about "tradition", as articulated in his tacit history-narration. In this sense, Apter discovers that the understanding of tradition is ambiguous, but he dichotomizes this ambiguity into instrumental and consummatory. But the reductive dichotomization itself, Apter fails to note, abolishes the ambiguity of tradition and makes it a natural object. Tradition is assimilated to nature. (As to the positivistic basis of this see: L.O. Mink "Colingwood's Dialectic of History", *History and Society*, vol. VII, 1, (1966) p. 23, where he discusses Colingwood's claim that contemporary historiography assimilates history to nature and suggests that such an assimilation abolishes not the past but our present capacity to reflect on our present). The ambiguity of tradition lies in the fact that in one sense it is a human condition, something general and universal. But it is also a specific and active manifestation of a world made by men and out of which they continuously elaborate their present and future. The coming to terms with traditions out of which a new world is elaborated is caught up in this ambiguity and its clarification is precisely that which is elaborated in social practices which are specific to each language-world. It is the denial of this clarification and of the ambiguity of tradition which, in the African case, not being narratable in a way consonant with Western history-narration, is fragmented into distinct non-ambiguous elements; the Ashanti have a "consummatory" tradition, the Baganda have an "instrumentalist" tradition. But the denial of tradition as being, to use Humboldt's terms, both "ergon" and "energeia", both

inherited and active, both universal and specific, both consummatory and instrumental, leads to a representation of the African world as an instantaneous world given to the sight of the comparativist, as a letter in the alphabet of history, supplied by the history-narration of the West. Thus African traditions are made to be either consummatory or instrumental, either detrimental or conducive to modernization. Being without ambiguity, in the sense described above, they are made to be mere survivals and at best instruments of survival, but they could not "world out of themselves" modernization which may be a specific and different manifestation of what they can make possible as a new world. Thus they would not be meaningful as modern African political practices. They would be meaningful only in terms of the history-narration that narrates the events of "modernization" in the West. Thus Western history is used to furnish a record of what the African is not, and should be in the future, by displacing African traditions to the realm of "immemoriality", that is, the realm of repetitive events or nature. And yet it is precisely these "traditional" societies which have undergone the most intense transformations since the beginning of this century. Unless one considers these transformations as totally imposed and caused by external agents, its very possibility becomes a total mystery, and the relationship between African traditions and African modernizations become totally fortuitous. They are supposed to either "coexist" or mutually exclude each other or be either detrimental (consummatory) or conducive (instrumental) in the process of modernization. The consequence of such a discourse is the denial of the African as a historical (i.e. free) subject who is, whatever the modality, active in the realization of his polity as one in which he lives.

46. M. Murry, Modern Philosophy of History, Its Origins and Destination (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1970), p. 19.

47. P. Ricoeur, "The Model of the Text: Meaningful Action Considered as a Text" in Understanding and Social Inquiry, ed. Fred R. Dallmayr and Thomas A. McCarthy (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1977), pp. 322-324.

48. Pierre Alexandre, An Introduction to Languages and Language in Africa transl. F.A. Leary (London: Heinemann, 1967), pp. 81-82.

49. Robert M. Price, Society and Bureaucracy in Contemporary Ghana (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1975), p. 51.

50. A.H. Halsey, "The Education of Leaders and Political Development in New Nations" in R.L. Merritt and S. Rokkan, ed., op.cit., pp. 206-210. In a sense, these elites, are seen as the peripheral elites of the West.

51. Claude Ake, A Theory of Political Integration (Homewood: The Dorsey Press, 1967), p. 12.

52. Ibid, pp. 76-77.

53. James Coleman, "Sub-Saharan Africa" in Gabriel A. Almond and James S. Coleman, op.cit., p. 333. He writes:

"In much of Africa, however, many aspects of the political systems are indeterminate - boundaries are in flux, existing

structures are being abolished or radically transformed, new institutions are being introduced, and roles are undefined, or defined by their incumbents, who are fleeting - or fleeing. Indeed, given the amorphous character of some of the emergent polities, it is difficult even to conceptualize a "political system..."

Earlier, Almond and Coleman had characterized non-American polities as "uncouth" and "exotic", (Gabriel A. Almond and James S. Coleman, op.cit., p.10) In the same vein, Zolberg characterizes African political life as "institutionless"; (A. Zolberg, "The structure of Political Conflict in the New States of Tropical Africa," in American Political Science Review, 62: 1 (September 1968), pp. 70-87.) Dani B. Thomas characterizes African practices that resist their transformations into data as "deviant". (Dani B. Thomas, "Political Development Theory and Africa: Toward a Conceptual Clarification and Comparative Analysis" in The Journal of Developing Areas, 8: 3 (April 1974), p. 377).

54. J. Berque, La Dépossession du Monde (Paris: Seuil, 1964)
55. Gabriel Almond, Political Development (Boston: Little, Brown, 1970), p. 287
56. John P. Mackintosh, Nigerian Government and Politics (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1966), p. 289.
57. Ibid, p. 624. This of course is the standard assumption of modernization and development theories first formulated by M. Levy. Marion Levy, "Patterns (Structures) of Modernization and Political Development" Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, 358, No. 1 (March 1965), p. 30.
58. J.P. Mackintosh, op.cit., p. 289.
59. Ibid, p. 613.
60. Ibid, p. 614.
61. Ibid, p. 615.
62. Ibid, p. 617.
63. C. Taylor, "Interpretation and the Sciences of Man", p. 25..
64. Ibid, p. 26.
65. J.P. Mackintosh, op.cit., pp. 290-357
66. See below chapter VII. For example, Sklar writes, in his study of Nigerian political parties, that

"Adhesion to the party is virtually automatic for the members of the communal group, so that anyone rejecting the party in spirit may be regarded as having already

"contracted out" psychologically. Mere technical or financial membership is relatively unimportant as a token of affiliation." (R.L. Sklar, Nigerian Political Parties (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1963), p. 475)

Dudley, writing on Northern Nigeria also comments that "it is almost impossible to say what the term "member" of a political party means in Nigeria. (B.J. Dudley, Parties and Politics in Northern Nigeria (London: Frank Cass, 1968), p. 82). Such discoveries call for an interpretative approach and not a metonymic recuperation of the different.

67. In the metonymic discourse the other's experience never directs the questions asked by the comparativist, for the other is present only as a metonymic subject.

68. J.P. Mackintosh, op.cit., p. 330.

69. Ibid

70. H.G. Gadamer, Truth and Method, p. 326.

71. Ibid, p. 327

72. Malcolm Clark, Perplexity and Knowledge: An Inquiry into the Structures of Questioning (The Hague: Mouton Nijhoff, 1972), p. 7.

73. Ibid, p. 36.

74. Maurice Merleau Ponty, Signs (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1964), pp. 3-4.

75. Malcolm Clark, op.cit., p. 39.

76. Ibid

77. Raymond F. Hopkins, Political Roles in the New State: Tanzania's First Decade (London: Yale University Press, 1971)

78. Ibid, p. 48. Emphasis added.

79. Ibid, p. 80. Also p. 80, fn. 18.

80. Ibid, p. 53.

81. Ibid, p. 54.

82. Ibid, p. 265.

83. Raymond F. Hopkins, op.cit., p. 257.

84. Ibid, p. 96.

85. Ibid, p. 97 fn. 42.

86. Are parallel discourses possible? Comparativists may deny it. But we do, quite often, engage in daily life in exchanges which are at cross-purposes. Literature gives us a multitude of such experiences. Desdemona and Othello talk of the handkerchief, an insignificant question to her, a deadly serious matter of chastity to him, each unaware of the significance the other is saying. Closer to us, Henry Green shows masterfully the parallel discourses and the alternate monologues that pass for questions and answers and conversation. What is decay for Miss Burch is growth for Miss Edith. The Guinean novelist Laye has eloquently painted the transformation Clarence had to undergo to overcome the fictitious world of parallel discourses in order to discover the identity the African experiential universe has given him. This notion of transformation which is the working out of the dialectic of question and answer in the cross-cultural context is suggestively brought out by Firth who indicates the similarities between psychoanalysis and fieldwork. He writes that in cross-cultural research the "individual has to go through some kind of regression. He has to reorientate all his predilections, learn even to speak all over again". Henry Green, Loving (New York: Viking Press, 1949); Camara Laye, Le Regard du Roi (Paris: Plon, 1954); R. Firth is quoted in Michael Clarke, "Survival in the Field: Implications of Personal Experience in Field Work" Theory and Society, 2, No. 1 (Spring 1975), p. 113.

87. R.G. Collingwood, An Autobiography (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1939), p. 33. See also pp. 37-39. Emphasis added.

88. R.E. Palmer, Hermeneutics (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1969), p. 233.

89. R.G. Collingwood, An Essay on Metaphysics (Chicago: Henry Regnery, 1972), p. 26.

90. Ibid, p. 25.

91. R.F. Hopkins, op.cit., p. 89.

92. Ibid, p. 91.

93. M. Price, Society and Bureaucracy in Contemporary Ghana (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1975), pp. 54-55.

94. Ibid, p. 63.

95. Ibid, p. 64.

96. Ibid, p. 90.

97. Ibid, p. 91.

98. Ibid, p. 134, p. 135.

99. Ibid, p. 135.

100. Ibid, p. 131.
101. Ibid, p. 219. Emphasis added.
102. Carl J. Friedrich, "Some Observations on Weber's Analysis of Bureaucracy"; Reader in Bureaucracy, eds. Robert K. Merton et al (New York, Free Press, 1952); Isaac Deutscher, "Roots of Bureaucracy", The Socialist Register, eds. Ralph Hilband and John Saville (London, Merlin Press, 1969)
103. Claude Lefort, Eléments d'une Critique de la Bureaucratie (Paris: Droz, 1971)
104. M. Price, op.cit., p. 210.
105. Ibid, pp. 62-63.
106. Aristide R. Zolberg, "The Structure of Political Conflict in the New States of Tropical Africa", in Jason L. Finkle and Richard W. Gable, op.cit., pp. 622-623. He writes:
- "Since the new African states in reality do provide territorial containers for two sets of values, norms and structures, the "new" and the "residual" with the latter itself usually subdivided into distinct sub-sets, it is useful to think of these as forming a particular type of unintegrated society which can be called "syncretic"."
107. Melville J. Herskovits, The Human Factor in Changing Africa (New York: Random House, 1962), pp. 292 and p. 428.
108. Suzanne Langer, Philosophy in a New Key (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1957), p. 6.
109. Jean Franklin, Le Discours du Pouvoir, p. 162; also G. Orwell, Inside the Whale and Other Essays (London: Penguin, 1967), p. 143-145.
110. C.P. Potholm, Four African Political Systems (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1970), p. 1.
111. Ibid
112. Ibid, pp. 2-24.
113. Ernst Becker, The Lost Science of Man (New York: George Braziller, 1971), p. 120.
114. Seymour Martin Lipset, Political Man (New York: Doubleday, 1963), p. 453.
115. C. Taylor, "Interpretation..." op.cit., p. 49.

116. Fred R. von der Mehden, Politics of the Developing Areas (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1915), p: 5. Von der Mehden writes approvingly that the hypotheses of comparative politics draw upon the values of the Western Industrial Revolution. He then adds, disapprovingly, that this is not "acceptable to adherents of relativism, including some Afro-Asian politicians"...but, continues Von der Mehden, "it is a rare political scientist who would define political development in terms of locally established goals". Von der Mehden of course loads his discussion by categorizing those who criticize the hypotheses of comparative politics as being "adherents of relativism".

CHAPTER VIII

TOWARDS AN INTERPRETATIVE COMPARATIVE POLITICS

For An Interpretative Approach in African Studies

The political history of contemporary Africa is filled with accelerated events, convulsions, shiftings and changes that seem to defy the explanations and predictions of comparative politics. Indeed, the intractable nature of African political events to the schemes of comparative politics is interpreted by some as being an indication of the "deviant" or "pathological" nature of African politics.¹ Such judgments are the result of the denial of the historicity of African political practices. Indeed, such a denial is not the monopoly of comparativists. Many African leaders and scholars accept the language of "social science" as a universal language, and confront African political practices as objects of manipulation. Criticizing this state of affairs, Chango Machyo writes that "African social scientists are incapable of making socially correct decisions", for they have not as yet recognized the historicity of African social practices.² Pathé Diagne criticizes "la profonde ignorance dont font parfois preuve nombre d'intellectuels Africains en ce qui concerne leur histoire sociale et politique".³

Chenweizu opines:

Of course, the fact is that these basic issues about the nature and processes of our politics have not been raised, much less confronted, discussed and agreed upon. The tacit and unexamined assumption that the fundamentals of Anglo-saxon or Gallic liberal-capitalist democracy are inherently good for every people, and that perhaps by virtue of our imperialized experience we have already agreed upon them as good for us, no matter what contrary evidence turns up, is part of the core of the problem.⁴

These judgements seem to be justified in as much as they point to that practice which treats African social practices as if they were free of the historical meanings they articulate. To understand the nature of the political in Africa, what is needed is a recognition of the fact that

Africa is not a political tabula rasa on which the political, as it informs the method of mainstream political science, is to be written.

True, many of the institutions in contemporary Africa are "inherited" from the colonial period or "borrowed" from the Euro-American polities. But terms such as "inheriting" and "borrowing" are profoundly misleading, for they can hide the historical processes that transform alien institutions into "acceptable" institutions.⁵ They gloss over the civilizational conflicts which are present at both the individual and institutional levels, and out of which emerge novel ways of individual and institutional practices. In this chapter, I will show that what is historically given is not a mere borrowing of alien institutions, nor a mutual opposition between the modern and the traditional, but a work of cultural and civilizational synergyses of contradictory images of man and the polity, involving the past and present histories of Africa. The conflicts and explosions of contemporary Africa are, I will argue, expressions of these historical synergyses. These conflicts and the new social practices they produce are present at all levels of the experiential universe.

For example, Adegoke Adelabu, the chief spokesman for the Egbe Omo Ible, born into a Muslim family, self-described as a "radical socialist", and "a conscientious", "convinced and incurable democrat", a Nigerian nationalist who used to heatedly condemn "tribalism", had a political practice that Sklar characterizes as "a paradox"⁶ and Amoda characterizes as "political schizophrenia",⁷ for Adelabu was a "radical" in his federal politics and a "traditionalist" in his regional politics. Both Sklar's and Amoda's characterizations are however misleading, for they tend to reduce to personal idiosyncracies what are precisely individual embodiments of processes of cultural synergyses. Sklar's description of Adelabu can give us a hint of this. Sklar writes:

Adelabu was progressive, as his writings indicate: in national politics he was a radical. But in local politics he was too astute and ambitious not to appear as a conservative and a traditionalist...he publicly opposed court reform and was discreet in his criticism of the inefficient tax system. On local issues he deferred to public opinion and rarely crossed the narrow

views of the petty chiefs.... In the pursuit of power he cavalierly abandoned the most elementary rules of good administration and frequently resorted to political jobbery. Throughout Nigeria he was admired for his militant nationalism. His colleagues in the nationalist movement respected him for his ideals; but the people of Ibadan loved him because he was the idiosyncratic personification of their traditional values...⁸

Is Adelabu simply a "paradoxical" figure, a "schizophrenic" personality, an "idiosyncratic" politician? Tempting as it may be to answer yes, such an answer cannot explain his popularity with the people, the respect he used to get from his colleagues, his tremendous impact on Nigerian politics until his accidental death, or his own self-definition as a "radical socialist", an "incurable democrat" as an opponent of "provincialism" and "shabby parochialism".⁹ He seems to be neither traditional nor modern. One may be tempted to say that he is both traditional and modern, but then this can be both a misrepresentation and a misreading of what Adelabu was to his Nigerian contemporaries and what he signified as the embodiment of Nigerian political practices.

The same situation prevails at the institutional level. If we take the example of two institutions from Nigeria, the Northern Peoples' Congress (NPC) and the Northern Elements Progressive Union (NEPU), it is unsatisfactory to consider them in an instrumentalist manner, as tools external to their objects, or as borrowed "forms" stuffed with Nigerian content, as some seem to consider them.¹⁰ The questions raised above regarding Adelabu's political style can also apply to these institutions. For example, some make a distinction between the "conservative" NPC and the "radical" NEPU. But such a distinction may not make more sense than the distinction Adoma makes between the "conservative" and the "radical" Adelabu. It can be suggested indeed that both shared, in practice, the same common assumptions, as the Sardauna of Sokoto has suggested, regarding the type of polity and political agency to be realized.¹¹ Both parties, being embedded in the daily lives of the people of the North espoused a communal anthropology which drew on Islamic and the Islamized traditions of the North. Thus, Y.M. Sule, the

chief whip of the NPC delved into Islamic tradition to interpret and justify the aristocratic "democracy" espoused by the NPC whereas Aminu Kanu of NEPU criticized the NPC interpretation and practice of "democracy" precisely in the name of Islamic traditions.¹²

In this sense the NPC and NEPU were not fundamentally different from each other. True, NEPU's Declaration of Principles analysed the political life of the North as a "class struggle" between the Native administration and the emirs on the one hand, and the commoners or "Talakawa", on the other. Yet many of the prominent members of NEPU were until 1950 members of the NPC, which at the time was officially a cultural organization. That NEPU's class-analysis was more an effort at clarifying the new meanings produced in that historical period of conflicting civilizations than a Marxist political analysis can be ascertained from the social practices it, and the NPC embodied. More than 85% of the leaders in both parties were Muslims, both accepted the historical validity and ideal of the Jihad which in fact is the source of the emirate system the NEPU claimed to fight; both used communal appeals in their political activities, and despite its radical rhetoric, the NEPU was not against either foreign or indigenous private investments. Both had a "cultural" and "social welfare" understanding of politics. On the other hand, workers unions such as the "Northern Mine Workers' Union" and the "Lokoja Workers' Union" were not supporters of NEPU, as one would expect, but were affiliated to the NPC, whereas the "life-president general" of NEPU was no other than Aminu Kano, member of an eminent Fulani family; NEPU's secretary general was a member of the Bid Emirate and its patron a member of the royal family of Sokoto.¹³

These examples at the individual and institutional levels suggest that the understanding, identification and explanation of African political practices require that we elucidate what Kluckhohn calls the "philosophy" that informs the social practices of individuals and groups. According to Kluckhohn,

There is a "philosophy" behind the way of life of each individual and of every relatively homogeneous group at any given point in their histories. This gives, with varying degrees of explicitness or implicitness, some sense of coherence or unity to living both in cognitive and affective dimensions. Each personality gives to this "philosophy" an idiosyncratic coloring, and creative individuals will markedly re-shape it.¹⁴

What Kluckhohn calls "philosophy" cannot be reduced to either "tradition", "political culture", "attitude" or "opinion" as these terms are understood in comparative politics. It is a historically elaborated and commonly shared tacit structures of meanings that are informal and non-empirical. They enable the members of that polity to describe their choices and acts, to produce reasons and explanations to account for their choices and acts. They enable the members not only to talk and look at their political world in a certain way, but to also act upon the world in a certain way. Being historical, they are not fixed data. They can be seen as constituting the "tacit knowledge" required for participating in the political universe of the people. Participating is not however decoding this "tacit knowledge" but reconstructing it by the participant.¹⁵ Reconstructing is not, as the theory of political socialization would have us believe,¹⁶ replication or assimilation but a process that is also non-replicable, evaluative and therefore historical. It is engaging in social practices which, in the process of articulating one's experiential meanings, make possible the constitution of one's political identity. As Sheldon Wolin has pointed out,

Political identity concerns who and what we are together; how we define ourselves as a collectivity. Historically, some societies have defined themselves as "monarchies", others as "aristocracies", and, more recently, as "people's republic". These names do not stand for "mere" legal forms or outer shells. They indicate what a particular society conceives itself to be and to be about. A political form is expressive of collective identity and how a particular collectivity defines its being in a world of other distinctive collectivities and, by that definition, announces to the world how it wishes to be perceived.¹⁷

What this means, for our study of African political practices, is that we have to overcome the cleavage created by the discourse of comparativists between African political practices and their narrative articulations in order to elicit the political experiences, meanings and identities expressed in African social practices.

Historically, African political universes have been involved in multiple transformations. Historically, they have evolved communal anthropologies which inform their social practices.¹⁸ These historically evolved communal images of man were, in the historical period of colonialism, confronted to another type of communal anthropology, viz: the colonial communal anthropology. That is to say, as colonially dominated non-capitalist polities, they were incorporated into a capitalist world whose political expression took the form of a communal confrontation between the colonizer, on the one hand, and the colonized on the other.¹⁹

In other words, colonialism as a historical phenomenon created two human spectres - the colonizer and the colonized. It imposed a communal self-definition on both parties which makes the communal anthropology a political expression of both political domination and a possible political liberation, for the struggle against political domination can be legitimately perceived as a collective struggle. This historical confrontation between two communal anthropologies is enmeshed moreover in another confrontation of a momentous import. For Africans were simultaneously being incorporated through colonialism into a political system dominated by political values and practices expressive of capitalism. This introduced in the already contradictory situation a mode of administering men as objects and instruments of colonial power, and as producers, taxpayers and consumers related directly or indirectly to the capitalist system. This situation developed, in a perverted manner, to be sure, new modes of human agency, sociality and rationality based on the idea of the self-willed individual. These conflicting and contradictory self-definitions and definitions of man embedded in the relations of colonial domination appeared to be not only in conflict with each other, but also, each, in its own way, seemed to offer modes of political practices that could permit the overthrow of colonial domination. Thus, Africans were confronted with multiple and

conflicting possibilities. In fact, it can be suggested here that African independence movements, as "mass" movements, seem to express an effort to synergise these conflicting political anthropologies. But the synergises did not take place in a vacuum. Rather they were produced through the daily social practices which articulated the indigenous images of man as well as the conflicts created by the dislocations of experiential meanings brought about by colonialism. What we have then is neither a conflict between modernization and tradition, nor coexistence and mixing of the two,²⁰ but social practices that carry the intention of resolving historical conflicts.

In other words the political conflicts between the colonizer and the colonized as well as the ensuing political life in Africa are caught, as it were, not only in borrowing but also in resolving contradictory and conflicting political problems that involve conflicting images of politics, political agency and political life. Some African political practices appear to synergize the "communal anthropology" that informed European politics in its colonial expression with the indigenous communal anthropology and articulate it as a politics of acceptable and legitimate inequality: a politics which is neither traditional nor modern, as these terms are understood in comparative politics. Other African political practices seem to represent a different effort at resolving the contradictory and conflicting understandings and practices of politics imposed by colonialism through the synergises of the individualistic anthropology, precipitated by Africa's incorporation into the capitalist world, with the indigenous communal anthropology.²¹ These cannot be conceptualized only as conflicts between tradition and modernity, or as "borrowing", or as "institutional convergence". They are also struggles to resolve political conflicts and contradictions at the deepest level: that of a historical crisis which affects the very understanding of what is going to be shared as a common political universe.

In this sense, one can say that contemporary African political practices result from and bear the intention of resolving conflicts of constitutive meanings, and indeed of civilizations. In the resolution of these conflicts, Africans interrogate their past in terms of new concerns, tasks and possibilities. The contemporary historical situation is then one

of struggles for the constitution of new experiential meanings and the transformations of the "tacit" political knowledge of Africans. This in part explains the culturalism of African political practices, for they are involved in total historical synergies of conflicting images of man and society. This also explains in part the incredible intensity and violence in the political lives of Africans. When this historical nature of African politics is not taken into account and when politics is understood, as it is in comparative politics, as an already formed and given practice or as a tool, then the originality of African politics is distorted. African politics appears as "deviant", "pathological", or as a manifestation of the irrational, dubbed conveniently as "tribalism" or "primordial sentiments".

It is then of the utmost importance to study African political practices in a way that permits the discovery of how and why they articulate and express the political lives of individuals, institutions and the society as a whole, the way they do. Only an interpretative approach seems to make such a study possible. For such an approach takes into consideration the common and intersubjective meanings that tacitly inform African political practices.²² For the sake of brevity, and because also the African "political party" is an institution which seems to have resisted the empiricist explanations of comparativists, I will limit myself to the study of this one political institution in my effort to explicate briefly the political as it informs African practices.

The Anthropology of the Political Party

The approach adopted in this study has already indicated that social practices carry intersubjective meanings that describe certain visions of man, agency, sociality and rationality. To speak of a political party is not to speak of an object in-itself. It is to speak of a historically constituted institution that embodies certain intentions regarding political life. To speak of a political party is on the one hand to evoke certain visions of man and political relation, and, on the other, to construe a

conceptual framework. These two are not independent of each other. Given that the term "political party" is used to designate institutions as diverse as the NPC, the Chinese Communist Party, the Liberal Party of Canada, the Awami League Party or TANU, the above view suggests that the term political party evokes different visions of man and polity as well as different conceptual frameworks if our study takes into account the intentions and practices of those who are involved in these institutions.

To put it differently, we can say that a political party is, borrowing Fales' expression, an "intentional entity".²³ That is, it cannot be considered to be totally "independent of the nature of the intentions" that characterize its constitution. This does not mean that a political party can be reduced to the intentions of individuals. Whether it is deliberately created or is the unplanned result of social interactions, it is a culturally emergent entity which expresses the specific social understanding that informs the intentions of those who are involved in it as either founders or participants. As a culturally emergent entity it articulates certain intersubjective meanings that must be elucidated if we are to understand what the given political party is and how it actively affects the behaviour of individuals. It is an entity that has, through the "wills, intentions and ability to act" of its members "qua socially organized in the requisite ways," its own "wills, intentions and the ability to perform actions".²⁴ As a concept it is "holistic" and "holophrastic".²⁵

If we then consider an African "political party" and a Western "political party" as both culturally emergent entities and as holophrastic concepts carrying the intentions, at least partially, of their members, we will be comparing these two "political parties" in ways that permit a more profound understanding and explanation than by considering the two as instances of a universal category blind to the intentions and social understandings that inform them. To show the correctness of this assertion I will sketch below the anthropology that informs the Western political party as a prelude to my discussion of the African political party.

The Western Political Party

As a Western institution the political party is a heritage made up of the history of its emergence, which is also the history of the emergence of a certain type of society, a certain image of man and a certain image of human intercourse in matters of collective existence. Being a member of a political party in the West is to evoke, consciously or unconsciously, a commonly shared heritage; it is both applying, evaluating and interpreting it. It is to commit oneself to the concept of man and polity that informs it. Some have argued that the political "party" is an offspring of the emergence of "parliament" and parliamentary "factions" between 1660 (The Restoration) and 1880 (The Reform Act) in Great Britain.²⁶ More important than the debate of whether these parliamentary groups, the Whigs and Tories, were "parties" or "factions" is what lies behind the debate - the assumption of an autonomous, self-defining man. The 18th century parliamentarian E. Burke defined the political party as "a body of men united, for promoting by their joint endeavors the national interest, upon some particular principle in which they are all agreed".²⁷

Indeed, Burke's emphasis may be on "national interests" and "principle". But perhaps what is as important, if not more, is the understanding of man that lies behind the word "agreed". It is the emergence of a man that can decide freely for himself. But this vision of man did not emerge overnight. It is the historical outcome of a process that engages the history of European Christianity as well as the history of its legal, political and economic systems and practices. The Renaissance freed European man from the political and economic dependence of the Medieval period by recognizing the principles of individual enterprise and self-made fame.²⁸ It made European man see himself as an individual separate from other individuals and nature.²⁹ This understanding of man was given a religious and metaphysical dimension by the Reformation, by driving God into the individual and making him a subjective individual experience.³⁰ The kinship between this development and the spirit of capitalism has of course been shown in Weber's masterly work on The Protestant Ethic and The

Spirit of Capitalism.³¹ This gave birth to what Weber describes as "the specific and peculiar rationalism of Western Culture",³² which is characterized by "the rational capitalistic organization of (formally) free labour, ... calculable legal system and... administration".³³ In brief the constitution of the individualistic anthropology was part of the rise of a secular, instrumentalist and quantitative rationality in social and political practices.

In the field of law also the same historical constitution of the individual as an autonomous being is discernable. According to Bozeman:

The course of Western thought and history, and the evolution and establishment of Western forms of political organization would be incomprehensible were one to ignore either the existence of law, or the consistent effort of successive generations, beginning with those guided by the Roman jurists, to abstract law from other categories of thought and from such normative controls as custom and religion. But this has not been the case in either Africa or Asia where human groupings have been held together effectively in comprehensive orders dominated by respect for religion, etiquette, the stabilizing function of war and conflict, or the superior wisdom regularly imparted to selected men".³⁴

In other words, the history of European law is the constitution, as opposed to that of African "laws", of man as an "individual" in order "to isolate and protect" him, as well as "to define the responsibilities of citizenship" in such a way as to simultaneously constitute "government" as "a compact or contract between men".³⁵ Politically this conceptualization of Western man as an isolated, self-defining, contracting being was given its secular, rational and explicit formulation in the eighteenth century which, according to Carl Becker,

...was the moment in history when men experienced the first flush and freshness of the idea that man is master of his own fate: the moment in history, also, when this emancipating idea, not yet brought to the harsh text of experience, could be accepted with unclouded optimism. Never had the universe seemed less mysterious, more simply constructed, more open and visible and eager to yield its secrets to common-sense questions... The first task of political science was to discover the natural rights of man, the second to devise the form of government best suited to secure them.³⁶

Thus, when the 18th century parliamentarian defined the political party as "a body of men united... upon some particular principle in which they are all agreed" one should not forget that the "political party" as a culturally emergent entity was drawing upon what Weber has characterized as "the specific and peculiar rationalism of Western culture". Indeed the history of the Western political party since Burke can be seen as the history of the rationalization of the political party in the sense discussed above. Within a century of Burke's definition of the political party as "a body of men united... upon some particular principle", the understanding of a political party evolved in a way that supplanted the Burkean idea of agreeing on "principles" and "national interests" by the idea of agreeing on private interests and opinions in order to defend and propagate them. Friese thus defined the party as:

...a union of citizens agreed in opinion and design concerning government, and organized for the double purpose of propagating those opinions and designs by discussion, and of personifying them by the election and appointment of persons strongly entertaining them to fill the leading positions of the state.³⁷

And Holcombe opines that,

A political party is a collection of individuals clustering around an interest whose furtherance they make an issue and whose value they generalize into an ideal.³⁸

Thus the political party developed as a political articulation of autonomous, rational, calculating and individualistic men who think of and decide on how to further their interests by aggregating them in terms of certain specific issues, and "reckoning" the payoff of their agreements and actions. It is this vision of man that informs the commonly shared world of Western man and manifests itself in institutions and practices such as the free market, free labour, voting, the trade union, bureaucracy and the social sciences, including psychoanalysis which makes the self-clarification of the individual the central question of its concern.

In terms of this anthropology the polity appears as a contractual entity. Political speech takes the form of a debate and political conflicts are understood as objects of negotiations. This anthropology thus structures a certain understanding of what is the public and what is the private realm as De Tocqueville has shown in his study of American Democracy. In terms of this anthropology, a government is not the constitution of a community.³⁹ A government is a referee between competing interests or a political space where competing, aggregated forces find the expression of their "rapport de forces", or it is an object of competition for organized and competing interests, or it is the negotiating team par excellence, or all or some of these. All these are different applications of the same anthropology. It is this anthropology which also structures the discourse of mainstream political science and makes it acceptable and scientific to claim that "public" interest "makes no operational sense",⁴⁰ and that, as Mancur Olson asserts, "rational, self-interested individuals will not act to achieve their common or group interests" without coercion if "common or group" interests are understood as different from self-interest.⁴¹ Contrary to what African politicians claim, as we shall see below, the function of a party is not, in the West, to govern but, as Epstein shows, to structure "the vote, regularly and systematically,"⁴² a function which is of least importance if not meaningless for the African one-party polity.⁴³

When we examine the discourse of comparative politics on political parties, we see this specific anthropology at work. Almond and Powell define it as "the specialized aggregation structure of modern societies" used to associate and articulate interests.⁴⁴ For Lipset and Rokkan political parties are "alliances in conflict over policies and value commitments within the larger body-politic".⁴⁵ MacDonald considers parties to be instruments that make possible "calculated control" in a society.⁴⁶ For V.O. Key, to "compete by electoral means for control of government apparatus" is the purpose of the party.⁴⁷

Within this framework, to be a leader, to be a member, to join or to leave a party, to vote or not to vote, express and articulate the image of a certain type of humanity and a certain type of polity. These images and

the practices they inform constitute meaning* and norms without which political life is assumed to break down. The anthropology articulated in this framework is that of the "liberal" man whose interpretation and application covers a range going from Hobbesian man to Lockean man, from Burkean man to Painean man. But the conflicts of interpretation produced by these differing applications of the same anthropology are not total. They are conflicts rooted in the commonly shared image of man as an autonomous self-defining being. The different sides involved in the conflicts fully understood each other, even when they disagree as to what is the correct practice that expresses the anthropology they share. For all of them, being a leader is not being above the party. Being a member is not to belong to a total community, to join or to leave a party is not changing one's whole social world of interests, obligations and allegiances.

Certainly, one may argue that there is an important, albeit a minority, current of a republican - political tradition in the West represented by political theorists like Montesquieu, Rousseau, de Tocqueville. It is indeed true that for this minority tradition the individual is not conceptualized in the atomist-calculative way of the majority tradition as represented by Hobbes and Locke. True, the rule of law, the "volonté générale", the public realm, that is, the body-politic is not seen simply as an instrument. But the point is that both traditions found their principles of politics in the image of the autonomous individual and his rights. If Rousseau went as far as suggesting that men can be compelled to be free, it is precisely because he believed individual freedom to be the only authentic condition of man. Thus, although we have two different conceptualizations of the individual and his relationship to his polity, both conceptualizations presuppose the individual and his freedom, even if they disagree on the conditions of realization of this freedom.

Now it is very probable that many will agree with the above analysis. Agreeing to this interpretation however entails some questions, two of which I will raise here. Doesn't such an approach oblige us to

reject studies which eschew the intersubjective nature of political reality and claim to produce a politics-free (and thus culture and history free) universalistic discourse? Second, in the specific context of this study, do and indeed can Africans recognize the anthropology tacitly narrated by Western political parties as the anthropology that informs and structures their political practices and speeches?

Conflicts of Interpretation Regarding
the African Political Party

Mainstream comparativists take it for granted that an African "political party" is just one case of the universal category: "political party".⁴⁸ Those who recuse the mainstream comparativist nominalism have still the tendency to look at African political parties as some kind of a hybrid entity, a syncretic institution, hijacked to serve other purposes. Indeed, the African political party, which is almost invariably a party of a "one-party system" has been given by students of African politics a bewildering variety of characterizations.⁴⁹ Wallerstein writes that the "one-party system in the African context is often a significant step toward the liberal state".⁵⁰ Nwabueze sees the one-party state as the consequence of "centralism in the organisation of politics" and of the rise of "presidential regimes" in Africa.⁵¹ According to A. James Gregor, the African political party, especially the "African Socialist" variety is "totalitarian", and an instrument of "fascism".⁵² Others like Morgenthau and Miller consider it more as a social welfare organisation, in view of the fact that the party is involved in such things as "family and marital mediation...arranging self-help schemes...aiding in specific problems such as sanitation and health."⁵³ Levine sees the African political party as a hindrance to politics,⁵⁴ Gendzier characterizes it as "an obstacle to communication between the government and the masses",⁵⁵ whereas Bienen questions the importance given to the African political party by both its supporters and opponents by asserting that "there is little evidence to support" the view

that the African political party is effectively present in the political life of African politics.⁵⁶ Likewise, Zolberg argues that the "very use by observers of the word "party" to characterize such structures involves a dangerous reification for their organizational coherence and capabilities are very limited."⁵⁷ According to Coleman and Rosberg, the contemporary African political party is a quasi-moribund institution "kept alive by the governing elite for purely symbolic, ceremonial, legitimating, and community development purposes".⁵⁸ Schumacher contests that at least in one case, that of Senegal, the political party is an institutionalization of "machine style politics".⁵⁹ For Potholm the formation of a political party in Africa "represents a step towards modernity".⁶⁰ Rupert Emerson sees "evident virtues" in the African political party in as much as the African single-party system exists in a situation where, according to him, "the people are sharply divided among themselves and unity is the first requisite", and "the hardships and disciplines of development must take priority over private preferences".⁶¹ Ki-Zerbo claims that the African political party is a "transcendental structure" that makes possible "the integration of all the living forces of the country".⁶² Kenneth Adelman suggests that the African political party, as in the case of Zaire's Mouvement Populaire de la Révolution, may be a "religious surrogate".⁶³

What is interesting about most of these characterizations of the African political party is that they do not, in any way, try to bring out what this institution means within the African experiential universe. Comparativists and indeed many other Africanists write as if African political parties were variations or imitations of something which, in the instrumentalist discourse, is given as an object-in-itself: the "political party". A closer look at some of the important interpretations of the African political party indicates the problematic nature of such an approach.

The influential Africanist T. Hodgkin makes a distinction between "congresses" and "parties" and claims that congresses represent "all the people" whereas the "party...though it may still claim to represent "the mass"...recognizes that there are other parties and groupings."⁶⁴ But

this seems to put the emphasis on the anecdotal aspect of the history of the "political party" in Africa. The distinction is no more than an ad hoc one. The same party, for example the Convention People's Party of Ghana can be at one time a "Congress" and at another time "a political party".⁶⁵ As to the distinction that Hodgkin seems to suggest between "all the people" in the case of the "congress" and the "mass" in the case of the "political party", it is hard to see its relevance in the African context where the meaning of the term "mass" is open to controversy.⁶⁶ The distinction between "mass" and "people" seems to express an intention, a history and practices alien to those that one intimates in the description of African political parties by those who found them. A representative description is the one given by N'Krumah when he asserts that "The Conventionist People's Party is Ghana and Ghana is the Convention People's Party".⁶⁷

Hodgkin also makes a distinction between African "mass" parties and "patron" parties or "parties of personalities", a distinction he represents as "mass" and "elite" parties in a later study.⁶⁸ The essential difference between the two, according to him, is that "mass" parties seek the adherence of individuals whereas "elite" parties recruit notables. But this is, in the African context, a tricky language for the "notable" as well as the "individual" do not become members as single persons but bring into the membership a network of relations which permits the identification of a person as a "notable" or an "individual". The "individual" as a political category is, in the African context, neither the "individual" in the classical liberal sense nor the "individual" in the sense given to it by theories of mass society. In fact, it is certain that Hodgkin does not mean to use these terms in the sense attributed to them by either the classical liberal conception or the "mass society" theory. But then, nor does he indicate what these words mean in practice and politically in the African context, although he himself describes African political parties in ways that strongly suggest the necessity of an interpretative approach. He writes for example:

The Northern Elements Progressive Union (NEPU)...is a mass party in intention and structure. The Action Group in Western Nigeria is something of a hybrid. It possesses some of the characteristics of a "mass" party...yet has tended in practice to function as a "party of personalities".⁶⁹

Thus Hodgkins, recognizing the ambiguity of what is called the "political party", makes distinctions between "intentions", "structures", "practice". But he, unfortunately, does not go further than the empiricist identification of these parties as "hybrid" or in terms of "functions", and does not show the relationships that exist between what he calls the "intentions", "structures" and "practices" of these parties. Such an examination would have brought into center-stage the political agents themselves and their intentions and practices. Hodgkin, after raising such a crucial and important question relapses, in a subsequent study, into nominalism and suggests that "it is probably most convenient to consider as "parties" all political organizations which regard themselves as parties and which are generally so regarded".⁷⁰

Sklar, an attentive student of African and specifically of Nigerian political parties, adopts Neumann's distinction between "parties of social integration" and "parties of individual representation", each reflecting the Tonnian distinction between Gemeinschaft and Gessellschaft.⁷¹ But Sklar's distinction is not only open to the objections raised above, but it is also a distinction based on a conscious evacuation of the historicity, of the modes of thought and the concepts of self-understanding, that inform Nigerian political practices. He does this by making a distinction between "official structure" of parties and the "unofficial dimension of party structure", despite the fact that his very study shows that this distinction is spurious.⁷² The observational bias, as it were, that informs his radical approach to Nigerian politics leads him into making the distinction between form, (i.e. "official"), and content (i.e. "unofficial"). This results in a double discourse - one on the official and the other on the unofficial - whose unity as a coherent discourse on Nigerian political practices appears miraculous unless one accepts Sklar's metonymic operation which identifies

the "official" forms of Nigerian political parties as synecdoches of the West stuffed with "unofficial", that is to say, Nigerian content. In this discourse, the political party is the absent object-in-itself metonymically narrated as the unifier of Sklar's double discourses on Nigerian political parties.

Whitaker, in a path-breaking study of political parties in Northern Nigeria, writes that the "formal structures and rules of the parties corresponded to Western prototypes"⁷³. He adds, with specific reference to the NPC and the traditional system of choosing political leaders known as the NEMAN SARAUTA, that,

...the two institutions interacted dynamically...and the course of political action within the one institution was frequently inseparable from the political exigencies of the other...(and that) the susceptibility to re-interpretation of modern democratic elections in terms of NEMAN SARAUTA facilitated the acceptance of the former institution by the Northern Nigerian society.⁷⁴

From this he infers that there is a functional compatibility between "modern" and "traditional" institutions and that there is an "institutional convergence" between the two.⁷⁵ This, he writes, creates a situation which "may be characterised as the creation of a stable mixture or perhaps more precisely, a stable symbiosis of modern and traditional elements."⁷⁶ But once more, despite its superior analysis, Whitaker's identification of Nigerian political practices as disparate elements in a "stable mixture" or a "stable symbiosis" is but a different permutation of the basic comparativist thesis that there are such discrete entities as "modern" and "traditional" in contemporary African polities, and that they can be adequately narrated only from the ground of the "modern", identified with the synecdoches of the West. Thus Whitaker concludes:

It is that democratic institutions would appear to be sufficiently elastic in form to accommodate a remarkable range of social and political behaviour and norms, apparently including (under the right conditions) behaviour and norms alien to the societies in which the institution originally developed.⁷⁷

Thus we are brought back to Mimos and the object-in-itself ("democratic institutions") in the object-imitation (Nigerian institutions). The latter are identified in terms of what they are not.

Dudley, in his interesting study of the political parties of Northern Nigeria, suggests the distinction "mass" and "status" parties. He writes that parties should be distinguished in terms of:

the mode of ascription of rights and obligations, within say, the NPC and NCNC, of the allocation of offices and the recruitment of leadership, of the types of politics characteristics of those two parties in their decision-making process...⁷⁸

And he adds:

The NPC, as this study shows, exhibits features diametrically opposed to that being predicated of the NCNC. It is therefore suggested that if parties like the NCNC, NEPU... can be conceptualized as "mass parties" (in the sense advocated), parties such as the NPC, are best described as "status parties" following here in the tradition of Max Weber.⁷⁹

While this makes a lot of Weberian sense, it does not help us understand African practices. The distinction between "mass" and "status" is open to the questions raised above. What he considers as observables, to wit, "allocation of offices" and "recruitment of leadership" in fact require to be shown what they mean to North Nigerians politically before we make the classification of "mass" and "status" - a classification which may neither be valid nor necessary for identifying the "types of politics characteristics of those two parties". In other words, in Dudley's study, the above classification has a tendency to lead the way in his explanation of Northern Nigerian political parties despite the fact that the classification is brought from an external source, the Weberian tradition. But surely, the "tradition of Max Weber" is rooted in an image of man and polity that no social scientist has shown to be inscribed in the practices and speeches of Africans.⁸⁰

In short, the nature of African politics has been so baffling to comparativists that one member of the discipline has called upon the imagination of political scientists to conceive how a "human computer" might see "the social African landscape".⁸¹ This very question testifies to the existence and intensity of "conflicts of interpretations" among comparativists regarding the meaning of African political practices.

There are two main reactions in the discipline to this resistance of the African political party to the discourse of political science. The first is to simply forget the practices embodied by African political parties and treat them in a nominalist manner. What is called a political party is assumed to be a political party. Such is the solution accepted by the hard nosed scientists.⁸² The second solution to this resistance of the African political party to the solicitations of political science is to consider it as a political deadhorse that should not hold the attention of serious scientists.⁸³ However these two solutions are characterized by a refusal to examine the nature of the political in the practices embodied in the African political party. Indeed, what most of the above characterizations of the African political party share in common is the narration of this African institution as a metonym whose holophrastic basis is that of the Western political party given as a universal synecdoche. True, the political party is a product of Western political history. It is also true that those who introduced it into African countries did so with the European model in mind. But these do not warrant the study of the African political party as a mimesis whose true existence is articulated only in terms of the anthropological and political assumptions it has in the West. Nor is it enough to say that the African political party is a blending of European and African ideas and that Africans:

...have borrowed techniques of organization and propaganda, as well as ideas, from Europe, America, and Asia, they have modified these to suit African purposes, just as they have adapted "traditional" institutions and rituals to "modern", party-political needs.⁸⁴

In such an approach, we risk to concentrate more on what is "borrowed", for it is easier to identify and to see how it is "modified" because the original is already present in the mind as a universal standard and tags the

African institution as "modern" by virtue of its Western origin. Interesting and illuminating as such an approach is, especially in comparing the European institution to its variations in other polities that have "borrowed" it, it seems, as it has been the case in comparative politics, to prevent us from taking the African variation, as it were, in its own right and consider it as an original sui generis political institution expressive of a political anthropology that differs, perhaps radically, from the European concept of political man. It is then necessary to elicit the political in Africa by going to the African political practices themselves identified as practices that articulate socio-historical (non-subjective) structures of meanings.

The Anthropology of African Social Practices

In the context of the political history of Africa, the "political party" is not only an object of "institutional transfer". It is primarily an institution triggered by and embedded in colonial political domination. Given the history of political independence in Africa, the political party in Africa seems to have been, and in certain cases still is, a political expression of both submission to and revolt against the order of political domination. The African political party is a specific historical phenomenon. It is not, as apologists of the African one-party try to claim, a mere abstract expression of the African "mentality". It is rather an expression of practices and sentiments, beliefs and understandings that have specific intersubjective meanings rooted in specific social and historical conditions. Therefore, one should not forget that my disagreement regarding the instrumentalist use of the concept of political party by comparativists is not merely verbal. We are dealing here with an "essentially contested concept" which obliges us to consider it as a holophrastic concept. Comparativists have not given us, at least up to now, "a finite and determinate set of necessary and sufficient conditions" which determine the application of the concept" of "political party" or of the other concepts of comparative politics.⁸⁵ And yet, they write of political parties "as if there were such a finite and determinate set" of necessary and sufficient

Conditions.⁸⁶ They thereby suggest that any questioning of this concept, or indeed any concept in comparative politics, is essentially a definitional question which can be settled by mere convention among political scientists. This I think is wrong. Words are "endorsement(s)...of definite forms of social life".⁸⁷ They are, as I have tried to show up to now, actors, participants, as it were, in the realization of political practices. Disagreements about political words are disagreements about political practices. To call an institution a "political party" is not simply to point out a logical regularity of a terminological experience. It is rather to bring into play the mutual intentionality of interlocutors that is materialized in terms of the historically available and possible practices.

Yet, the political scientist, African or otherwise, is, by the very historical conditions of the contemporary world, compelled to study political practices in Africa in a language that is, for the majority of Africans, divorced from their political language. This historical condition whose political expression takes the form of linguistic dependency on outside powers makes this external political language a source of political power in the internal life of African politics. Consequently the language of political analysis is already enmeshed in a historically defined political relationship. It needs to be interpreted. In other words, in the study of the African "political party", the use of this term to characterize certain African institutions must be considered as bearing meanings that need clarification. Consequently the question "what is this African institution called political party?" becomes both a political and a theoretical question, oriented towards elucidating the nature of this institution.

The study of an African political institution in terms of a language that is external to it requires then a careful regard to the African practices that risk to be glossed over by the self-evident meanings supplied by such a language. Not everyone has the power of Humpty Dumpty to make words say exactly what one wants them to say. Whatever meanings one wants to understand by the term political party, one cannot but succumb often to its historical weight and confuse it with what it is not. It is perhaps then advisable to use the term in the African context as a simile until we

find a term more expressive of the actual political experiences that constitute African "political parties". To elucidate these practical experiences and their meanings without which one cannot understand African political parties, I will, in a brief discussion, try to bring out the images of man and society which inform African social practices. To do so, I will consider first the historical self-understanding of Africans through a discussion of the historicity of African traditions. I will then examine the understanding of the social, the economic, the spiritual and of social organizations which inform African practices in terms of historically identifiable shared meanings and common understandings. The purpose of this discussion is uniquely and only to show that there are, inscribed in African social practices, conceptualizations of man and society that are new and original, and that they have arisen as a result of contemporary demands. The purpose is not to discuss the topics in themselves but to use them as a springboard for a further exploration of the political in African social practices.

The Historical Self-Understanding of Africans

It must be remembered that Africans have not as their historical source of social practices and meanings Medieval Christianity, the Renaissance, the Reformation, the Enlightenment or the socio-political upheavals of nineteenth century Europe. And yet, the language of comparative politics owes its meanings to these historical phenomena. In the African context the meanings and practices that are derived from the past are considered by comparativists as "traditions", i.e. as being ahistorical self-understandings of contemporary Africans. But tradition cannot be considered for the contemporary African as something residual or ahistorical.

That tradition is not ahistorical can be seen if one raises the question of what is a tradition in relation to a given practice. That is, if one considers tradition in terms of the holophrastic dimensions engaged in a given situation, one discovers that tradition involves conflicts of

interpretations and practices. Writing on the Ahafo, Dunn and Robertson comment:

What constitutes tradition can clearly be as vexed a question for the Ahafo chief or elder as it is for the sociologist. Chiefs and stool councils interpret and make traditions.⁸⁸

For as a giver of meanings, tradition must be open to interpretations and new applications. In this sense it is historical. If comparativists do not see it as historical, as we have seen in the previous chapter, it is because African traditions are, as Diamond suggests, a type of history that cannot be interpreted and lived in terms of the understanding of history that informs Western political practices.⁸⁹

Traditions in Africa articulate specific modes of self and social understandings. They infuse both personal and political narrations. Indeed, African political discourses and practices are characterized by a unique historical narration of tradition which seems to be the contemporary African tradition of historical self-understanding. This is a narration shared by African political actors of conflicting political ideologies and practices. They present the past of Africa or its political history as being that of a more or less egalitarian, class-less and communal polities. It is true that in this narration of the African past there is a lot of myth-making. But this process itself, taking place in contemporary Africa, must be examined as a form of questioning the past in terms of the concerns of the present African polities. Whether mythical or not, the political narration of the African past is the concrete and dynamic presence of a specific historical self-understanding in contemporary Africa. Thus Senghor writes, comparing the West and Africa, that European society:

...inevitably places the emphasis on the individual, on his original activity and his needs. In this respect, the debate between 'to each according to his labour' and 'to each according to his needs' is significant. Negro-African society puts more stress on the group than on the individual, more on the communion of persons than on their autonomy.⁹⁰

N'Krumah, qualified as a Marxist by some, writes that there is such a thing as "African communalism" and that it is embodied in:

...institutions such as the clan, underlining the initial equality of all and the responsibility of many for one. In this social situation, it was impossible for classes of a Marxian kind to arise... In the traditional African society, no sectional interest could be regarded as supreme...⁹¹

Similar views are expressed by Kaunda for whom the political history of Africans narrates the history of a "classless society" in which people worked "co-operatively and collectively".⁹² Touré who considers himself as the ideological opposite of Senghor, nevertheless espouses an identical narration of the African past. According to him, Africa is communaucratic. He writes that, "La vie collective, la solidarité sociale donnent à ses habitudes un fond d'humanisme que beaucoup de peuples peuvent envier".⁹³ Nyerere argues that both "democracy" and "socialism" are "rooted in our traditional past - in the traditional society which produced us."⁹⁴ Similar claims have been made by Kenyetta, Mboya, Ahidjo, Busia, Keita and Mobutu.⁹⁵ But what many of these African leaders and ideologists call democracy and socialism involve familial relationships that the West has considered to be sub-political since Aristotle. This means that in Africa we meet an experiential universe wherein the political cannot but have configurations different from the ones found in the Western experiential universe.

Moreover, among all these African political leaders of differing ideological persuasions, there is a clearcut tendency to give supremacy to, and read the African political past in cultural terms. Touré writes that the African "political, economic and social revolution must be preceded and prepared by a cultural revolution".⁹⁶ Likewise Senghor understands the historical consciousness of Africa as primarily a cultural consciousness and draws the conclusion that "la culture est supérieure à la politique".⁹⁷ Kaunda and Mobutu, Busia and Ahidjo, Oboté and Sithole, Nyerere and N'Krumah all express views similar to the above.⁹⁸ What is interesting

to point out here is that this questioning of the African past by African political leaders is not different from that carried by so-called traditional chiefs, "syncretist" movements, nativistic churches, witchcrafts and anti-witchcraft movements.⁹⁹ In other words, the problems raised by the present are such that at all levels of African political lives, contemporary questions are also questions addressed to the past. In this questioning of the past, the local level of African political life is also engaged in the resolutions of the conflicts of meanings and practices which constitute the present.

To start with, as Weiss has shown for the Congo, Miller for Tanzania, Callaway for Ghana and Nigeria, the so-called tradition is still active in African polities on the local level.¹⁰⁰ But what is dubbed the local level is precisely where the majority of Africans live. As Callaway writes:

...the chiefs in Ho and the various Igbo town and clan unions in Aba (and not the local government councils) were viewed as being the legitimate institutions to which residents of the two cities owed their loyalty.¹⁰¹

The government or party structures tend, at the local level, to be either assumed or, controlled directly or indirectly by the so-called local traditional authorities. Glickman writes:

Signs exist in elections to local councils that just as in the 1965 election, TANU support alone or appeals to secular authority - such as opposition to undemocratic caste domination - are not sufficient in areas of strong communal partisanship.¹⁰²

According to Miller, "rural traditional authorities survive in modern times as local political leaders" and in certain cases, the "Modern support for the institutions of chieftancy is so ingrained in the behaviour of most rural cultivators that, in spite of legal changes, a chief's influence continues".¹⁰³ One may of course raise here the oft-cited example of Guinea where S. Touré has abolished all traditional titles, structures and authorities. But this example in no way shows that S. Touré has abolished

the mode of social understanding prevalent in Guinea, which, according to his own interpretation, is "communaucratique", together with the "traditional" social structures. On the contrary, as I will bring out in my discussion later on, it is possible to argue that the image of man and polity that informs the PDG is one that has profound affinities with that which informed the abolished structures.

To come back to our point, the link between the African political leaders' discourse on the African past, a discourse conducted in a language inaccessible to the majority of Africa's and the discourse of traditional authorities, is the tradition that is being interpreted by both types of political authorities. Both call upon this past, interpret it and conceptualize it in terms of the concerns of the present. As Richards has written, traditional authorities inquire the past not as a set of finished tales but as a source of guiding meanings, for "They are more often politicians of authority and personality fighting for a historic version against rival claims."¹⁰⁴ Not only the national and local political elites interrogate the past, but the common Africans of contemporary Africa interrogate the past also in terms of their contemporary conditions. This can be seen by referring to the multitude of separatist, "syncretic", nativist and messianic movements. The anti-colonial initiative was, in many cases in Africa, launched as a counter-religious movement,¹⁰⁵ inspired by Christianity and yet going against Christianity as understood by Western Christians. As Dozon has written:

...le détournement du message colonial chrétien s'est effectué dans la révélation, dans le "retour" des systèmes de pensée traditionnels. Le télescopage de ces deux ensembles idéologiques a provoqué l'émergence d'une constellation idéologique tierce dont l'appellation "synchrétisme" ne rend compte que de façon insuffisante...¹⁰⁶

Herskovits also argues that such movements were in fact the creations of Africans as "free agents" - their freedom in the colonial period being limited to the "religious" field.¹⁰⁷ Therefore these creations were also political responses to lived questions. Commenting on these movements Hodgkin writes:

The language of politics was at the same time the language of religion.... Even in the Gold Coast, with its much higher level of economic and educational development, the effort of the Convention People's Party to build up a mass political movement involved the use of religious rituals...108

What we see in this appropriation of the past through the "modern", "local" and "religious" discourses is in fact a struggle of interpretations of the novel present by questioning the past out of which it emerges - a past which due to the experience of colonialism embodies within itself conflicting images of man and ideals of social order.

If then the so-called "tradition" is precisely what is being evoked, questioned, interpreted in terms of contemporary interests of Africans, it is then neither residual nor ahistorical. If it permeates African practices and discourses at all levels it is then the orienting framework of the modes of thoughts and concepts of self-understanding which indicate the possible options in answering the questions of the present. As such, it is an object of political struggles among African politicians and leads to conflicting political practices. For an appropriation of this "tradition" by a group precisely permits its control of the development of the historicity of that polity. It is then not surprising to see all African leaders at all levels, trying to become the only interpreters of the African past in order to guarantee the legitimacy of their present political practices. But this raises a fundamental question. If the historicity of African traditions is recognized, one cannot assume that in contemporary Africa one finds the image of man and polity that informs the Western political party. One must then ask what are the images of man, society and polity that are inscribed in contemporary African political practices.

The Understanding of the Social in African Practices

We can start our discussion of the understanding of the social in African practices by examining that immediate embodiment of social

consciousness in Africa - the family.

In the West the tone of the political meaning of the family is set by Aristotle. According to him there is a difference between political rule and the rule of the household. The household is not part of the public realm.¹⁰⁹ This exclusion of the family from the public realm is one of the fundamental characteristics of the liberal-capitalist political culture. The American family is not considered to be part of the public realm; it is considered to be a private realm and overloaded with emotions that have no legitimacy outside that realm.¹¹⁰ The African family is not a "private" realm in the Aristotelian sense. It intervenes into the public realm due to the understanding of the family as primarily a social network and not a biological unit. This understanding of the family, as being part of the public realm, cannot but constitute the idea of human agency in a corporate manner. According to Akintunde:

The sense of groupness deriving from the extended family system also contributes to the Nigerian attitude. Surrounded from early childhood by an array of siblings, cousins, aunts, uncles, etc. there is little opportunity to be alone and to withdraw into oneself. The child has to learn to relate to others and to fit into the group.¹¹¹

This is fundamentally different from the image of man postulated by the Protestant ethic (according to Max Weber) or from the image of man characterized as "inner-directed man" by David Reisman. Political man, in Africa, is not in practice conceptualized as the "individual" in the sense of each individual appearing in the public realm as a self-defining unit. The individual appears in the public realm as a personage, as an already organized social body. There is, it seems, an ontological perception of the individual as personifying certain social relations, ideas and values. The latter are not considered sui generis.¹¹²

Moreover, the African family is conceptualized in practice as a

minutely organized institution of domination, inequality and exploitation within a kinship or lineage system. The nuclear family, which is read in the West as a husband and wife dyad, is read in Africa as an articulation of intra-kinship and extra-kinship patterns of interaction wedded with unequal legal, ethical, economic and political relationships.¹¹³ This reading of the nuclear family in terms of kinship or lineage articulations cannot but lead to a reading of the socio-political in a way that is different from the Hobbesian "self". Contrary to the atomic and contracting "self" that characterizes the discourse of contemporary political science, the "self" that is engaged by African practices is an articulation of social locations identified by relationships of domination and dependence. In here, we see a principle - the principle of inequality - which is given as the organizing idea of African social practices and relations. The public realm is lived as a world of inequalities, and at the same time all belong to the public realm. According to Augé the kinship as well as the lineage system are characterized by inequality understood as a public relationship of domination. He writes:

Rien n'indique que les théories lignagères de la consubstantialité partielle des personnes, de la solidarité économique, cérémonielle et culturelle des individus ou de la circularité de l'alliance et de l'héritage se rapportent à une humanité...soucieuse d'égalité...ou...proche de quelque spontanéité fondamentale. C'est au contraire avec une rare minutie et une sophistication remarquable qu'elles composent des systèmes de contraintes inégalitaires...¹¹⁴

This principle of inequality informs African social organizations of all levels - from that of the family to that of tribes, kingdoms and empires. It informs the different stages of social existence, such as age-groups, initiation rites, understood as passing from a lower stage of humanity to a higher one. It informs the practice of gerontocracy and the African caste and slave systems. Indeed some of these practices are still active at the "local" level, as comparativists would say, in many parts of Africa.

Now, this principle of inequality must not be understood according to the meaning one may find in the history of the West. For Aristotle, the public realm is a realm of equals. Inequality was for those - women,

children, non-citizens - who cannot appear in the public realm. Nor is the African principle of inequality similar to the Feudal inequality which is the background of the contemporary West. In the European feudal case inequality was, as it were, transitional and accidental, for all were supposed to be the sons of God. Temporal inequality was thus rooted in an eternal equality. In a sense then "inequality" was destined to disappear for the true and natural (or eternal) condition of man was seen to be equality. The realization of equality, although brought about through force in many cases, does not in principle then require force as its necessary and indispensable condition.

The African principle of inequality founds the polity on the very conceptualization of man as a being whose identity can exist only in a structure of inequality. Without this principle, expressed in the kinship, lineage, tribal and transtribal organizations, socio-political life is visualized to be a chaotic life. The social world is understood as being held together by force which appears as the inevitable effect of the working out of a principle of inequality which is not legitimated by any natural or divine order. In such a social universe, conflict is lived as a primary threat to the whole social order, at whatever level. Inequality is given as the ideal form of conflict resolution and the ideal means of social cohesion. Moreover, this principle of inequality seems to constitute conflict as a horizontal phenomenon - as a struggle for a better social location vis-à-vis the unequal others. This can also be illustrated by taking the social process of psycho-social maturity which, taking place in the African family structure, is ipso facto a public process. Indeed, this process gives us a hint as to the understanding of power also.

According to Herskovits the theme of the son who revolts against his father or kills himself is not a dominant cultural thematic of African cultures, an observation supported by contemporary African psychiatry.¹¹⁵ On the contrary, it is the father, fearful of being replaced by his descendants, who, as it were, revolts against his descendants and tries to suppress them.

The ideal and practice of maturity are not realized through a conflictual process that opposes the son to the father. In Africa, the revolt of the son is replaced by the revolt of the father. The revolt against the father is displaced to become a revolt against the brother. Thus a new principle of psychosociological maturity comes into play. As the Oritgues show in their seminal work, *L'Oedipe Africain*, what this means is a novel working out of psychosociological conflicts. They write:

...la rivalité oedipienne se joue selon des voies sensiblement différentes de celles qui sont habituelles en Europe.... La rivalité... paraît d'abord être systématiquement déplacée sur les "frères" qui polarisent les pulsions agressives.¹¹⁶

It is of interest to note that the social process of psycho-social maturity is not commonly lived and understood as a process of individuation, as understood generally in the West, or as a process of conflictual struggle against authority as understood in the Freudian variant of the Western concept of individuation.

What we have is a horizontal conflictual relationship which is radically different from the vertical Oedipian relationship that psycho-social maturity assumes in the West. The social resolutions of this conflict are radically different in Africa and the West. In Africa the very constitution of sociality and maturity presupposes rivalry and conflict as social phenomena unresolvable outside a structure of inequality and the application of force. In this context the minutely organized systems of domination and inequality of the kinship and lineage system presuppose the understanding of the social universe as one of chaos that legitimates force, domination and inequality as the conditions that make order possible. Indeed if one considers the understanding of the environment that is expressed in the African experiential universe, one finds the notions of inequality, conflicts and force as the fundamental organizing principles of such pan-African practices as witchcraft, sorcery, anti-witchcraft, and magic. In all these practices, conflict is assumed to be inevitable, power

is seen as an indivisible force, and the resolution of conflicts is understood as the application of this force from above or from the outside.

The import of this can be seen by considering conflict as a social relation with divergent social effects. For example, the telos of conflict may be seen, in the liberal, marxian and Freudian traditions, as the realization of freedom and autonomy. In such a framework, political, social and economic conflicts may be seen as leading to "liberation". In this interpretation, privacy is seen as a conflict-free zone and is recognized as an aspect of liberation. Such an understanding of conflict is not inscribed in African social practices. In the African case, the telos of conflict is not the realization of autonomy and liberation in general and of privacy in particular. Rather, the telos of conflict seems to be inequality-equality. Conflict is present as an expression of the conjugation of unequal social locations among unequals. It has not, in Africa, historically been expressed as a practice oriented towards the establishment of individual freedom. Rather, it seems to be oriented towards the permutation of inequalities. The interesting consequence of this is that, contrary to the anti-power notion that one finds in the idea of privacy, in Africa, power has not and is not rejected or held in suspicion. The need to create a private space sheltered from the intrusions of power has no historical roots in African social practices.

The principle of inequality and its manifestations at the different levels of social existence express an understanding of power as an act of domination and violence. Those who hold power experience it as power that is inherently threatened by those who do not possess it. Those in power as well as those who have no power understand that it is a relationship which must be based on inequality in order to preempt the questioning of this power by those who do not hold it. The defence of power rather than the liberation from the oppression of power seems to be what informs African social practices including social and political conflicts.

And yet, the intense ritualization of inequality, conflicts and power through different social practices, the intense visibility of power,

the continuous invocation of the external, be it the spirits or foreign aid, as an expression and means of force and social control, suggest a recognition of the fact that the structure of inequality is a fragile structure. In other words, political instability is structured into the very understanding of power that one finds inscribed in African social practices. The recognition of the fragility of this social order and thereby the implicit acknowledgement that men cannot hold together willingly a polity of inequality, seems to make the principle of inequality which informs African social practices a source of conflicts as well as a source of legitimation of the use of force to solve these conflicts and, in general, to articulate the social and political realm. In a sense, this seems to be one of the reasons for the "stability" of political instability and political violence in Africa.

Now, when we consider the African experiential universe in terms of the understandings of the social and social relations elucidated above, we discover that each individual is posited in this experiential universe as an explicit ensemble of social relations articulated through the social locations he occupies. He is posited as a totally public being, always open to conflicts and the use of force. In other words, in African social practices every man is present as an always and already political being. One does not enter and leave politics in the sense understood in the West. In Africa, the individual is already a political being caught in relationships of dependance and domination. The intensity, violence of African politics as well as its sheer unpredictableness is related to this all embracing conception of politics that is characteristic of the interlocking nature of what in the West are divided as "private" and "public" realms. In African political practices, the individual seems to be already a focus of relationships of power and domination by the fact that his individuality is already an articulation of power relationships. Because of this total image of man, life in Africa tends to be practiced by Africans as if it were, to use Balandier's expression, a "total political enterprise".¹¹⁷ In practice

then the "public" and the "private" interpenetrate, and institutionally, politics cannot be considered as separate from administration or private life. This may in fact explain the great difficulty in making the distinction between politicians and bureaucrats in Africa, for such a distinction presupposes a non-comprehensive conceptualization of politics and the non-political recognition of individuals. Such conceptualizations are not part of the possible meanings inscribed in contemporary African practices.

Contrary then to the myth produced by some Africans regarding the classlessness of "traditional" societies, the social consciousness expressed in African social practices seems to consider inequality, domination and force as fundamental social relations.¹¹⁸ Traditions did not and do not eliminate inequality and social conflicts. Rather, traditions, understood as supports to the accepted political and social values of the given polity, were and are modes of limiting and solving social conflicts which arise between individuals that embody social relations in ways that define conflicts as corporate enterprises.¹¹⁹ It is this unequal distribution of humanity (inequality) that is read as "classlessness" by African ideologists, precisely because the question - the principal political question - that is evoked by both the present and the past of Africa is not freedom, but the question of equality. In the West liberalism, socialism and marxism have political discourses which postulate the individual as an autonomous being. The fundamental political problematic is seen as being essentially that of "freedom" conceptualized currently by some as the problem of "alienation". It is not this problematic of freedom that animates African politics. The problematic that animates African politics is that of inequality-equality. This principle of inequality, conjugated with the self-political conception of the self, articulates conflicts as inherent to social relations. It constitutes force as the primary model of conflict resolution. As the individual is ipso facto public, conflicts and conflict resolutions are not task oriented. Rather, they are oriented towards the selves embodying the conflicts. The primacy given to the subjects in conflict over the

objects of conflicts seems to relegate to a minor place the process of negotiation as a mode of conflict resolution. This is of course related to the understanding of the individual. The practice of negotiation as an alternative to force-based conflict resolutions presupposes, in part, an understanding of the self as a private property, separate from the objects of negotiation whence the high value given to the idea of privacy in "liberal" societies. But in African social practices, privacy and the creation of a personal space are not experienced as values. On the contrary, they are understood to be pathological and arbitrary conduct.¹²⁰ Rather, the individual's conduct is understood as a public articulation of unequal relationships in the social network which gives him his identity. In this sense, no individual act, no individual speech can escape being interpreted as an act or speech involving the power relationships of individuals. Contrary to Western speech, in Africa, "Toute parole comporte un risque"¹²¹ for each individual is understood as speaking for more than himself.

That the principle of inequality informs the understanding and organization of polities in Africa can be observed by referring to the myths of political legitimation that one finds all over Africa. Group solidarity, social cohesion, political unity and empires are legitimated through mythologies of founding fathers that are politically alive, as it were, as "ancestors" that sanction contemporary acts. What is important to note here is the conceptualization of the foundation of the polity given in this myth and not the substantive correctness of the myth. These myths, such as the ones we find legitimating the power of the rulers and the powerlessness of the ruled in terms of unquestioned inequality in Rwanda,¹²² Uganda,¹²³ Nigeria,¹²⁴ Kenya,¹²⁵ conceptualize the foundation of the polity in a way which is totally alien to the understanding conveyed by the "social contract" theories of Locke, Hobbes and Rousseau. Here is for example how the distribution of inequality is legitimated in Bunyoro. The distribution of inequality is identified with the naming of the person, thus making the individuation (the naming) itself the constitution of a person as a process of social location in a given hierarchy. The naming is the identification of the person as the embodiment of unequal powers of social relations. Beatie describes a naming ceremony involving the three sons of the King of

Bunyoro and its outcome as follows:

The eldest, and his descendants after him, is always to be a servant and a cultivator, and to carry loads for his younger brothers, and their descendants. For he chose the millet and potatoes, peasant's food, and he lost all the milk entrusted to him, so showing himself unfit to have anything to do with cattle. Thus he was named 'kairu' which means little Iru or peasant. The second son and his descendants would have the respected status of cattlemen. For he had chosen the leather thong for tying cattle, and he had spilt none of his milk, only providing some for his younger brother. So he was called 'Kahuma', little cowherd or Huma, and ever since the cattle herding people of this part of the interlacustrine region have been called Huma or Hima. But the third or youngest son would be his father's heir, for he had taken the ox's head, a sign that he would be the head of all men, and he alone had a full bowl of milk when morning came, because of the help given him by his brothers. So he was named 'KaKama', little Mukama or ruler. He and his descendants became the King of Bunyoro....¹²⁶

This conceptualization of the foundation of a polity cannot be considered as being only "traditional". In contemporary Africa, the theory of the polity inscribed in the practice of African politicians is, in its meanings, related to this more than to the "social contract" theory that informs the political commerce of liberalism. Thus, one sees Awolowo writing that in Nigeria "The educated minority...are the people who are qualified by natural rights to lead their fellow nationals into higher political development".¹²⁷ Senghor introduces a tripartite system by distributing from above the political location that each party must hold in the political scheme. Thus he decrees the Parti Démocratique Sénégalais to be a liberal party, the Parti Socialiste, his own party, to be the socialist party and the Parti Africain d'Indépendance to be a Marxist-Leninist party, with the parties obliged to accept this naming and distribution of a order under pain of being banned.¹²⁸ J.B. Bokassa of the Central African Republic names himself Emperor; L. Mba of Gabon, Ahidjo of The Cameroun call themselves "Father" of Independence, Banda of Malawi is proclaimed the "Little Messiah", Nyerere is the Mwalimu (he who teaches), Mobutu is the authentic Saviour of

Zaire, Kenyatta is the Mzee, the wise old father of his country. N'Krumah is the Osagyefo (the victorious). None of these African political leaders conceive, either in theory or in practice, the polity they rule as based on a contractual understanding. This is true not only of the rulers but also of their opponents who, caught as they are in a conflict of inequality, up to now have done nothing more than participate in a permutation of inequalities, i.e. changing their place in the system of social locations.

This principle of inequality expresses itself in a certain conception of leadership. In contemporary Western political theories and practices those who govern are seen as representatives of the governed. A different conceptualization seems to inform African practices of leadership. Those who govern, whether elected or not, are seen not as representatives but as intermediaries. The root of this social consciousness seems to be the reappropriation of commonly inherited meanings regarding leadership.

There is a false belief that in Africa, because of the oral nature of its civilization, communication is "face to face". But this is far from the truth. It is a view that flows from the empiricist conception of observation. Certainly, one sees people talking "face to face". The question is however, do they constitute each other in their speech as "direct" interlocutors? An affirmative answer to this must show in fact that the interlocutors speak to each other as autonomous individuals responsible for what they say in a way which affirms their self-image as private and autonomous beings. But the conception of man inscribed in African practices, as we have seen up to now, does not confirm to this image of man. In fact every "face to face" communication is mediated, in the case of Africa, by the social relations that collectively give identity to each speaker. This is manifested in the institution of the intermediary in Africa. As the Senegalese scholar Ba has written, the African tends

...to posit an intermediary between himself and his interlocutor, whoever the latter may be. The polygamous husband will thus address himself to his first wife so that she may convey the orders he wants to give the other wives, to his first-born son if the occasion calls for orders to the other children. Likewise, he who is charged with a commission, will turn to the third person whom he finds in the company of the one for whom the message is intended, rather than

transmit it directly.¹²⁹

Indeed, the expressions and ways of social control take the form of intermediaries such as ancestors, masks, fetishes and spirits. Those who govern are not recognized as representing the governed but as the intermediaries in possession of the forces that hold together the social organization.

This social consciousness of leaders and leadership is indeed active in contemporary Africa. Once more, the interrogation of the past in terms of the concerns of the present seems to have made possible an understanding of leadership where "representation" is translated, as it were, in a novel manner to be experienced as a presentation and self-presentation of leaders as intermediaries. Thus African politicians - civilian, military or bureaucrats - present themselves as intermediaries between the people they rule, but do not represent, and outside forces, in a way that affirms the principle of inequality between the powerful and the powerless. When we consider the African rhetoric and practices of "development", what stands out as the fundamental fact is the self-representation of the African "elite" as an intermediary that brings development to the underdeveloped people rather than as a group engaged in a collective self-development with the people. The principle of inequality, whose embodiment is the "African elite" as the intermediary, constitutes the "elite" as indispensable - as a group without whom the people would be lost.

This suggests that the distinction made by Africanists and comparativists between "modern" and "traditional" elites is a very superficial one. For what matters in the contemporary African experiential universe is not whether the elite are modern or traditional but whether they have a self-understanding that permits them to act as either intermediaries or as part of the people. In the conflicts and synergies of the different images of man and polity that are historically created in Africa, those who conceive of themselves, be they "modern" or "traditional", as intermediaries

are trying to resolve the historical conflicts of the images of man and polity by excluding the people from the resolution of the conflicts. This excludes the people from their own future, affirms the principle of inequality and consequently creates a politics of violence and a rhetoric of development. Those who, on the other hand, accept, be they modern or traditional, the historical conflicts of the images of man and polity as conflicts rooted in the practices of the people, cannot but see themselves as being engaged in the resolution of these conflicts together with those who, in their daily practice, sketch in nuce the possible synergies of the contemporary conflicts of meanings and practices.

Thus, whereas it is highly pertinent to make the distinction between modern African elites and traditional elites from within the historicity of the West, (that is to say, narratable in terms of the West's intersubjective understanding of what elites are), it is of less pertinence from within the historicity of African social practices. What is pertinent from within the latter context is the distinction between intermediary elites - elites who articulate and affirm the principle of inequality by separating themselves from the people and making themselves at the same time the indispensable instruments of external forces - be they political, economic or military - and non-intermediary elites, i.e. elites who are engaged with the people in the historical tasks Africans face. In many African countries, the elites are "intermediary elites", in the sense given here. They are more interested in the acquisition of force in the form of political, economic, military, technical aids, which are presented as miraculous solutions to "develop" their "underdeveloped" people. But this very conceptualization of development owes its meaningfulness to the principle of inequality that organizes the African social universe.¹³⁰

Now, this understanding of the social that one reads in African practices is not a mere survival of traditional ways of life. Nor is it an expression of some kind of an African "soul". This understanding of the social is a working out of inherited meanings in terms of the new concerns

and questions raised by colonialism, christianity, capitalism and socialism.

The dislocations brought by these new images of man, society and ideals of social order cannot but raise new historical tasks and new forms of social practices. They intensify the contradictions of the inequalities which permeate African polities. But contemporary inequalities in Africa are not rooted in the corporate image of man only. They are also rooted in the new social practices called capitalism and socialism which, presented by African leaders as the cures to the inherited unequal relationships, in fact exasperate the inequalities of the corporate anthropology by articulating it through the very social processes promised as the cures for inequality. These capitalist and socialist recreations of contemporary inequalities are moreover articulated not only as the accentuation of the inequalities inherent in the corporate anthropology but also as the disintegration of the latter, thus presenting the new inequalities as social relations that are not stabilized by a structure of duties and obligations similar to those which made "acceptable" the inequalities of the corporate anthropology. The contemporary consequence of this seems to be one of a recuperation of the corporate anthropology as a source of a new possible polity which can overcome the inequalities rooted in the social disintegration brought about by the transformations introduced by capitalistic or socialistic organizations. But the corporate anthropology thus recuperated seems to be of a radically different kind for it is now rooted in the choice individuals make to join organizations such as urban ethnic associations, trade unions, political parties which nevertheless are understood otherwise than as organizations that aggregate individual interests. As I will indicate later on, we have thus a novel intention: that of articulating the communal image of man with that of the choosing or "reckoning" man. It is indeed the same intention that one finds in the rhetoric of African socialisms and development, in the various messianic, prophetic and the so-called "syncretic" movements.

Thus we see that the conflicts of practices and meanings which permeate contemporary African lives lead to struggles - expressed by and articulated through social, political, economic, religious organizations and movements - regarding the resolution of the contradictory images of man and society which inform the social practices of Africans in almost all realms of their existence.

The Understanding of the Economic in African Practices

That Western political theories are penetrated by economic ideas and assumptions is now widely recognized.¹³¹ The very language of contemporary political science is permeated by economic metaphors. As Ashcroft points out, contemporary political science uses terms such as "individual choice behaviour" and "opportunity costs". It considers voters as "buyers", governments and political parties as "suppliers", and the political is basically conceptualized as the "political market". Money is used as the model for "power" and thus political relations are conceptualized in terms of exchange, political goods, internal resources, political "capital" and political "credit".¹³²

Ashcroft adds:

Thus, through the metaphorical application of the language of political economy, one of the basic assumptions of the latter is assimilated into the terminology of political science, with the result that the stability of the market place - political and economic - is thereby assured as a presupposition for any analysis of the workings of democratic politics.¹³³

That the language of Western political theory and the language of Western economic life interpenetrate is not surprising. That they articulate a commonly shared image of man and polity - that of the autonomous being and that of an aggregate entity - is something that one can see since Locke and in the liberal and marxian traditions as a whole.

Africa does not of course share the West's economic history, and nor are the economic and its meanings available in African historicity in the same manner. And yet theories of development have essentially been the reading of African economic life in terms of the "economic" as produced by Western history. Thus, developmentalists discuss whether homo Africanus is oeconomicus. The African is alleged to lack "consumer goals", to be indifferent to "price and profits", to have "a preference for leisure over work", to give priority to "religious constraints", and social constraints rather than to economic requirements and to ignore in general "the market principle".¹³⁴ In this scheme, development and modernization are understood as a transformation of the existing African social practices in a way which destroys these as obstacles to development. Development is seen as a break with the past.¹³⁵

The upshot of this is that the African himself is seen as being the obstacle to development. He is said "to resist change", to be "familistic", to "lack innovativeness" and "social aspirations", to be "fatalistic", to "lack deferred gratifications", and "to believe in the notion of limited good".¹³⁶

But if we look at African social practices, it is far from convincing that Africans resist change, that African traditions are "barriers" or "obstacles" to economic development. Such views are possible because the African's own understanding of what he does, the intention his practices carry, and the experiential universe that his practices evoke are not taken into consideration.

If we take these into account, we have a different story. To start with, what is striking about contemporary Africa is the failure of both capitalism and socialism, as these are understood in the West. Africa is integrated in the world economic systems of capitalism and socialism without being either capitalist or socialist in its modes of production. As Uchendu has pointed out for West Africa "about 70-80 percent of the Gross National

Product" is produced in the tribal environment.¹³⁷ African urban centers are not the creation of a history of industrialization or capitalist development. As such the contemporary wage labour system in Africa is in no way accompanied by the freeing of the individual from his land, kinship or lineage system, and from his own labour. The urban culture is indeed in Africa a "transient culture". As Leys writes in his study of Kenya,

...even highly-placed civil servants commonly looked on some rural plot as "home"; four out of five wage-workers wanted to retire to the countryside, and indeed the towns made virtually no provision for any except the comparatively rich to live there when they were old.¹³⁸

The point then is that Africa's integration in the world economic system is not one where Africans discard, as it were, their history, dubbed "tradition" by comparativists. Rather it is a historical process wherein the modern economic order is reinvented through a different intersubjective reality. This is no more striking than in the Africanization of the capitalist notion of the "entrepreneur".

Many social scientists claim that the "extended family" system is an "obstacle" to development.¹³⁹ And yet one can suggest that Africans use their social practices and social institutions such as kinship, lineage, tribe... as "codes" by which capitalism is translated in ways that give it a sense it does not always have in its original context. But the word "code" is too static. What we have is an active confrontation between different conceptualizations of humanity and sociality where the new conceptualizations are subjected to a work of interpretation that transforms both the new and the old. If we consider here the concept of the "entrepreneur" he is, from the Schumpeterian point of view, "the centre of an integrated model of economic development".¹⁴⁰ The entrepreneur expresses not only "a theory of profit and interest, a theory of the business cycle" but also an implicit theory of man and society where the former is identified as a single active subject confronting society identified as a market. From this point of view, it is irrational to have the entrepreneur respond to the demands of the extended family for such demands curtail "the use of profits for the expansion

of small firms".¹⁴¹ And yet in Africa, the entrepreneur responds to the demands of the extended family. That is "as the income of the entrepreneur increase(s), the number of dependents he (is) required to support also increases..."¹⁴² And yet, as Hill has shown in her study of Ghanaian cocoa-farmers, the extended family is not necessarily an obstacle to economic development. It has in fact been in practice reinterpreted in a way that makes it an advantage rather than an obstacle in the development of African capitalism. She writes that the kinship system in fact:

...grew from strength to strength because it accorded the individual enterprising farmer sufficient scope to operate as a commercially viable entity, while at the same time enabling him to benefit from the continued general support of his matrilineage. The less fortunate or less enterprising members of the matrilineage appreciated the need to allow their leaders to go on investing money, which might not strictly be regarded as their individual property, in the purchase of a succession of land over which, at the outset at any rate, they had complete individual control, because they trusted in the strength of the matrilineal principle and knew that their own security would thus in the long run be enhanced.¹⁴³

Thus we see a synergesis of conflicting meanings, articulated in the practices of Ghanaian entrepreneurs, that defies the "rationality" of entrepreneurship as understood in Western capitalism. Indeed, as Nafziger suggests in his interesting study of African Capitalism,

It seems reasonable to believe, ... that the prestige and power afforded the successful entrepreneur by the extended family may provide an important incentive for entrepreneurial activity which may at least partially affect the disincentive effects of sharing income and wealth.¹⁴⁴

Moreover,

The extended family can affect the acquisition of labour and apprentice supply and assist in obtaining useful contacts with businessmen and persons with economic power.¹⁴⁵

Not only is the appropriation of capitalism taking different expressions from the ones developmentalists assume to be the "correct" model - the

Western one - but also, the social consciousness precipitated by African capitalism seems to have novel aspects which cannot be fully grasped in terms of class-analysis. Some Africanists write of class, class-consciousness and class-struggles in African polities. At the same time, however, they lament the lack of class-consciousness and class-struggles in African social practices. And when their class-analyses fail to explain African political practices, they put the blame, as it were, on the African themselves, that is, on the fact that they do not have what the Marxist assumes to be the correct class-consciousness. But such analyses result from a metonymic operation which tries to identify the "object-in-itself" in the "object-imitation", and having failed to do so, reads the African political practices as deficient ones.¹⁴⁶ In fact as Davies points out, African workers seem to understand class-consciousness in terms that a Westerner can see only as ethnic loyalty or regionalism.¹⁴⁷ According to Tuden and Plotnicov, a social class analysis of the Marxian type cannot be implemented in Africa because of "the problem of inconsistency between the social statuses of family members".¹⁴⁸ But what they call "the problem of inconsistency" is in fact a fundamental question related to a conceptualization which is non-individualistic and as such appears, from the individualistic anthropology's point of view, as inconsistent, for the principle of inter-individual relationship is not located in the autonomy of the individual. What is given in this Africanization of the capitalist practices of entrepreneurship and wage labour is the corporate conceptualization of man and polity as synergized with the new demands of the contemporary world. Thus the economic theory inscribed in African economic practices shares the problematic of man and polity we have discovered in the self-understanding of contemporary Africans as inscribed in their social practices. Indeed, in the same way that the language of political and economic theory interpenetrate in the West, the language of politics and economics interpenetrate in the social practices and common speech of Africans. This working out of the conflicting images of man and polity - i.e. of the corporate and the individualist - can also be rediscovered by examining the Africanization of Christianity, a religion where the individual holds center stage, and the experience of the spiritual in Africa.

The Understanding of the Spiritual in African Practices

In a previous section, I indicated how the conceptualization of man in the Renaissance and Reformation contributed to the rise of "reckoning" man. To show the difference between this and the anthropology that informs African practices, it is of interest to note the consequences of the introduction of Christianity in Africa. It is also of interest to note that in the period preceding the historical intervention of Christianity, Africa has not known the phenomenon of an organized, established church separate from social, legal, political and economic institutions. Indeed the very term "religion" is problematic, if understood in the Christian sense, to characterize what in appearance may be described in Africa, as "religion". African religions including Islam are intimately related to the daily lives of those who practice them in a way that makes them essential moments in the regulation of economic activities, political relationships, sanitary activities, in the identification of criminals and executions of punishment.¹⁴⁹ "In order to understand traditional politics," writes Davidson on Africa, "one must...first understand traditional religion".¹⁵⁰ In fact, the language of social and political narration among Africans has precisely been a language partly, but importantly, constitutive of practices commonly known as witchcraft, sorcery, political magic and ancestor worship.¹⁵¹ The introduction of an individualistic religion in such a context cannot be without its consequences. Indeed, Lloyd writes:

To the spread of Christianity (in Africa) is attributed a general increase in moral laxity. Traditional deities were believed to punish swiftly and sternly. But the Protestant is taught that salvation can be gained through faith alone; the Roman Catholic confesses, and is forgiven his sins.¹⁵²

And one of the main reasons for this is that Christianity being individual oriented seems to be, in its contemporary form, very limited in its capacity to be an expression of a group solidarity in terms of a corporate anthropology. It splits, as it were, the individual from the social structures and relations that give him his identity and social

location in the polity, and thus makes him irresponsible (from the corporate point of view) for he has now nothing to fear but himself. Thus, Lloyd writes:

Traditional methods of detecting witches are falling into abeyance --- Many oaths, once greatly feared, are no longer employed; some of these were used in customary courts in the early decades of this century, but were subsequently banned by the colonial government. Parties to a case who made incompatible statements were required to swear the veracity of their own version before the local diety; the liar would, it was believed, die within a short period. Little fear attaches to oaths made on the Bible....¹⁵³

However, the individualism inherent in Christianity seems to have been transformed progressively into an African "individualism" expressive of the historically inherited intersubjective understanding of the individual as a personage. This transformation is in part manifested in the explosion of separatist churches and denominationalism in contemporary Africa. Bingle's statement on this matter is enlightening. He writes:

African tribal life, while providing a strong if narrow local cohesion, has proved very divisive over wide areas of life. The Missions and Churches have had their share in disintegrating tribal life, but it is sometimes complained that they have only replaced it by tribalism in another form - denominationalism. The two have in places, joined together in tribal denominations.¹⁵⁴

The way Bingle raises the question - as the tribalization of Christianity - is misleading and can be looked at differently. It can be understood to mean the reinterpretation of Christianity in a way which, through the confrontation of two images of man - the African and the Christian, permits the elaboration of an emergent cultural thematic regarding man in Africa. Indeed, this appropriation of Christianity, although rooted in the corporate anthropology - what Bingle calls tribalization - is in fact transtribal. Such is the case with the Harris church, the Jamaa movement, the Kitwala and Kimbanguism,¹⁵⁵ to name a few.

The Harris church, founded in 1913, by a Liberian of Gerbo origin, is a transtribal "religious" movement which on the one hand advocates the worship of the Christian God and yet at the same time permits polygamy and other African institutions such as gerontocracy and age-groups. Indeed, the church itself is organized in terms of these historically inherited institutions. This cannot be reduced to the fallacious idea of ~~Sy~~cretism, for what we have here is an activity that responds to the demands of a historical situation in a way that interprets the past by confronting the new and resolving the ensuing crisis in a novel way. That in here is involved a work of synergesis that involves the people themselves and their daily lives can be seen by comparing Harris' missionary activities with those of the French missionaries whose Christianity was not in contact with the daily lives of the people. Where "French Catholic Missionaries (in the Ivory Coast), present in the colony for twenty years, had succeeded in converting only a few hundred people...Harris converted more than 100,000 in less than one year."¹⁵⁶

In fact, the Christianity that Harris preached was itself re-worked more profoundly by his followers, the Harrists. What is interesting to remember here is that the Harrists consider themselves as much Christians as mission Christians and as modern as the latter. And yet they, in their practice, express a Christianity and modernization that is radically different in its conceptualization of man and polity than the ones expressed by mission Christianity and Western modernization. As Walker has written:

Thus they (the Harrists) have been Christian and have participated in the modernization process on their own terms, in a way as consistent as possible with their traditional values and life-style. Having done so, they have arrived at the same stage of modernization as members of the same villages who chose to cast their lot with the European missionary institutions predicated upon changing certain structures and values of African life in order to make it possible for the Africans to make progress toward a more modern way of life along European lines. It is thus evident that many of the kinds of changes made by the missionaries and colonial powers were not really necessary to the modernization process.¹⁵⁷

The question however is not whether the introductions made by Christianity were necessary or not. Historically, what is important is that Christianity is indeed, even now, being subjected in practice to a reinterpretation that results in modes of actions and values that are neither Western nor "traditional", in the comparative political science sense, and yet owe their existence to the confrontation of the two.

This work of synergesis is also strikingly illustrated by the Jamma movement which arose in the mining centers of Shaba province in Zaire. The Jamma doctrine arose out of a situation which was novel to the workers. This was a situation of wage-labour which produced practices and experiences that were radically different from the inherited experiences of work. Moreover, the presence of Catholic Christianity offered possible new interpretations of these new experiences.¹⁵⁸ It is in this situation that the Jamma movement offered a "universalistic doctrine of unity and love beyond racial, tribal and social boundaries."¹⁵⁹ In this novel situation where "labour" was experienced in a radically different way, "labour" becomes the principal source of metaphors for the articulation and understanding of the new experiential meanings. Thus it is present in almost all aspects of the doctrine. Fabian writes on this as follows:

Jamma doctrine is pervaded in practically all of its domain and forms of expression by conceptions of labour, by images and metaphors derived from the experience and life-style of an industrial worker. The essence and purpose of the actions of God, the angels, and man are consistently referred to as KAZI, and so is the propagation of the movement. Certain crucial values, such as responsibility and obligation, unity transcending sexual, social and cultural boundaries, are expressed in metaphors derived from the world of labour...¹⁶⁰

As Fabian points out, such a description is "flat" and "equivocal", because the lexical approach to experiential meanings assumes a non-mediated identity or a referential relation between words and objects (situations). It therefore abolishes the distinctions, the ranges of meanings, the order, the evaluations and the structures that are given as the narrative order of social realities. Taking these into account gives the experiential

universe its socio-historical configuration. For the understanding of the Jamaa movement, this means taking into account the situation which is that of a mining settlement wherein one finds miners in a context alien to their inherited conceptualization of "labour".

Fabian suggests such a reading. He writes:

Jamaa doctrine is addressed to those who experience life in a nuclear family and to whom the demand for a deep, sentimental love between spouses is a possible and a real problem. Therefore it is highly significant to find stated in Jamaa doctrine, an essential connection between labour relationships and the demands of marital union... (the) statement of the paternalist stereotype of African workers might have to be interpreted in exactly the opposite way. The African worker values personal and emotional gratification not because this is a regression into a presumed traditional psychological make-up, but because he reacts to and attempts to master effectively, a completely new and completely different situation.¹⁶¹

The question then is to find the "issue" that makes labour the source of a way of reading of their experiences, the source of their labour-metaphors. The "issue" cannot be discovered on the lexical level but on the holophrastic level of their discourses. At this level, one discovers this "issue" of labour as an issue raised only in the context "of the body, i.e. of corporal life and love".¹⁶²

In other words, the new experience of labour is lived primarily as a new experience of the body-subject, to borrow Merleau Ponty's expression. It is the realization of a new experiential meaning of the self transforming at the same time the inherited experiential universe. It is this transformation, triggered by the new experience of labour and labouring, which makes labour the source of new metaphors of understanding. And yet, this new elaboration of an experiential universe is not a replay of the West's historical experience of the transformation of labour. The Jamaa movement seems to have, as Craemer suggests, produced an understanding of labour, the worker, and individuality in general, that is neither Western nor traditional.¹⁶³ On the one hand, it breaks the experiential meaning of tribal membership by professing a universal doctrine, thus creating a transtribal movement. But on the other, the breaking of the experiential meaning of tribal membership

did not lead to individualism. In the Jamaa movement, the individualism brought about by Christianity and industrial labour is transformed into a "cult of personality" where everyone is open to reciprocal scrutiny. Every individual becomes a public individual in a way which makes the Aristotelian distinction between the private and the public space of the individual irrelevant.

What this interpretative reading suggests is that there is at the level of their social practices, conceptualized by so many metaphors derived from the experiences of being industrial workers, a tacit elaboration of a new sociality, a new image of man. Contrary to the assumptions of modernization theories, the elaboration of this new sociality mediated through a "religious" movement suggests a non-linear, a non-instrumentalist rationality, a constitution of a "modern" world, which is not "modern" and "rational" in either the Weberian or Marxian sense. One finds a new understanding of labour that is neither traditional nor Western.

The working out of the conflicts of practices and constitutive meanings by contemporary Africans can also be seen if we examine the pan-African practices of witchcraft, sorcery and magic. Indeed these practices are more widespread than Christianity and more fundamentally shared by the "educated" and the "uneducated" in Africa.

As D.E. Idonboye points out, the "ontology of any distinctively African world-view is replete with "spirits".¹⁶⁴ This is true not only for the "illiterates" but also, as Idow indicates, for the so-called Westernized Africans. He writes:

In Africa today it is 'real' that the majority of people believe that there are witches and there is witchcraft. Witches and witchcraft are sufficiently real as to cause untold suffering and innumerable deaths. When I speak of witchcraft, I am referring to that which is very disturbingly real as to affect the lives of Africans in every walk of life. And by Africans I mean, not only the illiterates who carry on with their traditional customs intact, almost as they were received from their forbears; I mean also 'educated' men and women in the civil service, in the

mercantile houses, well-known politicians, university professors, university graduates and undergraduates, medical doctors, Imams, Alhadjis, Archbishops, or bishops and a host of Christian Ministers, muslims and christians. To most of the persons in these categories, witchcraft is an urgent and very harrassing reality; it is a diabolical, soul-enslaving presence. I will assert categorically that there are witches in Africa; that they are as real as are murderers, prisoners, and other categories of evil workers, overt and surreptitious. This, and not only imagination, is the basis of the strong belief in witchcraft.¹⁶⁵

However, one must not reduce "witchcraft" to its empirical referents and consider it, as many have done, as an error in perception or logic, or as a manifestation of the irrational. What is more important to elucidate, especially in the contemporary context and its reinvention as "political magic",¹⁶⁶ is its practice as a social relation,¹⁶⁷ the nature of the experiential universe it presupposes, and the meanings it produces as a context of social practices, and as a social practice.

When considered from this angle, the insertion of the supernatural in daily life cannot be limited to inter-individual relationships or to the relationships of the self to the super-natural. As we have seen, the concepts of "self" and "individual" are not present in African social practices as meanings that identify human beings as private entities. As the "self" is, in African social practices, given primarily and fundamentally as a public entity, the insertion of the supernatural in the daily life of the individual is simultaneously the insertion of the supernatural in the public life.¹⁶⁸ In N'Krumah's socialist Ghana,

...socialist cadres, ministers and N'Krumah himself, a man who prided himself on his rationality and the scientific basis of his socialist beliefs, were also affected (by the belief in magic). Both N'Krumah and Adamafio put themselves under the protection of the Akonode fetish at Lareth -- N'Krumah also retained the services of Kankan Nyame of Guinea whom he maintained in splendour as a sort of resident oracle -- N'Krumah was very concerned that persons whom he disgraced might have recourse to the supernatural and it appears that his resolve to take corrective action was weakened on several occasions by such considerations.¹⁶⁹

Political conflicts are intertwined with supernatural intermediaries. In the Kikuyu uprising against colonialism oathing practices were part and parcel of the politics of the uprising. When, in the aftermath of Mboya's assassination in 1969, a Luo crowd demonstrated against Kenyetta,

The Kikuyu leadership responded by inaugurating a mass oathing programme among the Kikuyu, Embu and Meru and also part of the neighbouring Kamba. In the course of about twelve weeks virtually every adult Kikuyu took an oath "to keep the flag in the House of Mumbi".¹⁷⁰

In the Ivory Coast, the showpiece of capitalism in Africa, one finds a similar situation. In the early 1960s Ernest Boka, a former student leader, born a Catholic, a former member of the youth section of the French Communist Party in Grenoble, and "who had served as a minister of education, minister of public service and president of the Supreme Court", was involved in a conspiracy to overthrow the government on the advice of marabouts and through magical means such as working "on the president's photograph".¹⁷¹

Thus we see an African Catholic, later turned Communist, engage, in a political practice that cannot be conceptualized in terms of the political discourse of liberals, Catholics and communists otherwise than as a distortion of the political as they understand it. Such insertions of the supernatural in the political are part of the political history of Africa. The marabouts and the practice of political ju-ju in West Africa, the Mahdiya rebellion in the Sudan, the Chilembwe Revolt in Nyasaland, the uprising of the "Mad" Mullah of Somaliland, the Gusii Rebellion of Kenya, The Simbas of the Congo, the political-religious movements such as the Kitwala and the Kimbaugui,¹⁷² are not simply reactions to psychological stress or anachronistic movements,¹⁷³ but new constructions and conceptualizations of the political in a historical context that raises new tasks. But these political responses call forth on the historically available images of man and the polity as the inspiring principles of the new emergent political practices.

Thus we see a historically mediated recuperation of what used to be understood as part of the public realm - the spiritual - in terms of the concerns of the present. What ensues from this is not a simple replay of tradition. Nor is it syncretism. It is rather a new understanding of politics - an understanding which is expressed in conflicting interpretations and practices by those who are in power and those who have no power.

For those in power, it connotes an understanding of politics which partly locates it outside the people they rule. The "intermediaries" of African political lives, or the "elites", seem to have translated the "supernatural" into the idea and practice of an extra-political source of legitimation. In this extra-political legitimation of the existence and unity of the polity lies the paradox of contemporary African politics, which appears as an intervention aimed at making political and economic miracles. The consequence is that political, social and economic problems are partly seen as non-negotiable, for their solutions are assumed to originate from outside the realm which produced the problems. The solutions are given sources external to the practices that generated the problems. The problems and solutions, thus made external to each other, are linked to each other through force or external agents. Political relationships are thus visualized by African "intermediaries" or elites as if they were acts of "political magic". That is to say, political relationship is considered to be a relationship of force - force which originates from outside the practices and means of the ruled.

This consciousness of political power accords with the self-image of African "elites" as intermediaries procuring development to their underdeveloped people through externally procured political, financial and military aids. These aids are present in the discourses and practices of the elites as "political magic", as forces external to the people, capable of solving their social, political and economic problems for them.

The reinterpretation of the spiritual in contemporary Africa is not however the monopoly of those who are in power. It has also been reinterpreted by the powerless in terms of their concerns, giving rise to new practices, as can be seen in the different so-called "syncretic"

movements and "separatist" churches. In these movements, the supernatural is reinterpreted to create a shared public space expressing the equality of all. The supernatural is thus made a shared force, available to all the members. Thus, what in the interpretation of those in power is given as the legitimation of inequality is given, in the interpretation of the powerless, as the resolution of the problem of inequality. In both cases, we see the synergies of conflicting meanings and practices, leading to new understandings and practices - practices which do not fit the categories of traditional and modern.

The Understanding of Social Organization in
African Practices

The understanding of the social in African practices, guided as it is by the conflicting images of man, cannot but be radically different from the understanding of the social in Western politics. The individualistic conception of man seems to be interpreted in Africa in terms of the problematic of equality-inequality and not that of freedom. This, I suggested is the result of the conflicts and the consequent synergies of the historically interlocked individualistic and corporate images of man and society which inform contemporary African social practices. Historically, the synergies of these conflicting images seems to have led to the development of total conceptions of individuals and institutions.

The consequence of this complex situation on the practice and understanding of social organizations is quite unique. Social organizations tend to be conceived as total institutions, thus reproducing within themselves the principle of inequality - associated with the corporate understanding of man - as the principle of unity of individuals in search of equality - associated with the individualistic understanding of man inherent in the very act of choosing to be a member of an organization into which one is not born. The potency and actuality of this novel understanding of social organization can be illustrated by studying the formation of "new tribes" in Africa, as culturally emergent entities that express, in the

contemporary historical context, the new organizational intentions of Africans. These are generally misunderstood by students of African politics and identified as "tribalism", "ethnicity", "communalism" or "cultural pluralism".¹⁷⁴ If one is to demystify ethnicity and tribalism and overcome the sacralization they have received in the social science literature one must consider them as social practices that embody certain conceptualizations of man and his polity as being the "good" polity for the people concerned.¹⁷⁵ In this sense, one can point out the creation of "tribes" in contemporary Africa as being new responses to historically created questions. An examination of these "new tribes" can disclose the nature of the contemporary societal intentions in Africa.¹⁷⁶

There is no traditional society called the "Bangala". It is a creation - a culturally emergent entity - that is in fact a "supertribe" uniting many tribes as a response to the introduction of Belgian colonialism as the dominating force of the Congo Basin.¹⁷⁷ The Luyia people also came into existence "between approximately 1935 and 1945". According to Southall, before 1935,

...no such group existed either in its own or anyone else's estimation. It was clearly due to the reaction of younger and more educated men to the exigencies of the colonial situation. It arose out of previous attempts at intertribal or supratribal organizations such as the Abaluyia Union, which came to represent the Luyia away from home... This new supertribe was closely linked to the colonial administrative framework...¹⁷⁸

The same is true of the Mongo in Zaire, the Tongo in Rhodesia, the Ibo in Nigeria, the Kru in Liberia.¹⁷⁹ They are supertribes in the sense that they bring together many tribes on the model of the tribe itself thus, in a way, negating the meaning of the tribe in the very process of creating a supertribe. They are supertribes created in terms of the image of man and polity characteristic of the tribe and yet they transcend it. Second, they are responses that are historical and as such interpretations of the past in terms of the concerns of the present resulting in the creation of historically new entities out of this past.¹⁸⁰ What Forster has written for

Ghana is true for most African polities. He writes:

...a considerable body of evidence points to the persistence of elements of traditional structure even within the most "modern" sectors of Ghanaian society. Voluntary self-help associations, trade-unions, and political parties, all contain components based on traditional patterns of association and affiliation.¹⁸¹

Forster is however wrong to see these in terms of "the persistence of elements of traditional structure", for this perception of tradition as persisting "elements" deprives it of its historical character and at the same time, it deprives contemporary Africa of its historicity. In Africa, as Plotnicov indicates,

...the conditions of rapid change toward modernization, imposed on traditional societies, have not brought with them a corresponding decline in traditional social institutions such as has occurred in Western industrialized nations...there can be "an apparent contradiction" in the participation of people in a modern urban setting on the one hand and in their adherence to traditional norms, values and practices on the other.¹⁸²

And Plotnicov adds:

One of the interesting observations that emerges ... is that so many of the activities within the traditional framework are expressive in nature. Just as twentieth-century transportation and communications facilities have in the first place been responsible for the large-scale movement of peoples away from the native areas, so too have these facilities been actively exploited to make possible the communications and interactions of the new urban immigrants with kinsmen and tribesmen in their rural areas of origin and in other cities.¹⁸³

The question then is why are the "supertribes", the neo-traditional institutions such as voluntary associations, religious movements structured on the model of tribal social relations? Most social scientists beg the question by suggesting that Africans, in a modern context, tend to create tribes and tribalism because they are tribalists.¹⁸⁴ This of course does not explain much unless one believes in some kind of an African "tribalist" essence. Nor is the radical explanation that reduces these new organizations

to a struggle for scarce economic resources fully satisfactory, for it cannot show why this struggle borrows its principle of organization from the historical tribe and why it does not articulate itself as a class-struggle. 185

What I would like to suggest here is that if we consider African tribes as historically produced institutions, that is, as outcomes of social practices produced by men in their specific relationships with themselves, others and nature, then these institutions can be legitimately considered as being applications of intersubjective meanings that make possible the comprehension of new realities, thus permitting Africans to operate as subjects of history, as operators upon themselves, their polity and nature. Such an approach suggests that what is known as "tribalism" is but a partial expression of historically emergent themes in contemporary Africa. These historically emergent themes, as shown above, inform modern African social practices. One finds them as themes that organize the discourses and practices of African "socialisms", politics, social movements, development, political magic and new institutions such as the "supertribes", ethnic associations, voluntary associations, trade unions, and contemporary political practices and institutions. These historically emergent themes are hard to define for we are witnessing them as contemporary historical elaborations. Their outlines can be described as expressions of synergies of the individualistic anthropology with the African communal anthropology through a reading of the former that subjects it to both the cultural grammar of the latter and the demands of contemporary questions. The difficulty of identifying these emergent conceptualizations of man and polity and the practices and meanings that bear them can be understood by pointing at an example of an effort where an African scholar tries to identify for his own country what he calls the "Nigerian National Character". He writes:

I have identified five elements of Nigerian national character which are significant because of the effect they may have on nation-building, national unity, stability and economic development. They are: tribalism or ethnic particularism, materialistic individualism, traditionalism, colonial mentality, optimism. Some of these may be divided into sub-categories which are implicated in them. Thus, following in the train of materialistic individualism are such characteristics as

corruption, extravagance and other forms of immoderation and a lack of the sense of social responsibility. Let it be emphasized that these characteristics are not racial traits, they are historically determined according to the historical concept of character. They derive from the traditions, experiences and common life of the people. They are not permanent, they are changing but not ephemeral. The change, usually, is gradual.¹⁸⁶

Telling as it is, this empiricist enumeration of traits does not however do justice to the historical work of the synergies of new inter-subjective meanings, for it does only enumerate certain traits without trying to bring out the themes that organize them and actualize them as social practices.

Contrary to the mainstream conception of "tribalism" what is expressed in the social intentions of organizations in contemporary Africa is the creation of trans-tribal social units. But this creation does not seem to require, as a prerequisite, the development of an individualistic conception of man and an aggregate conception of social units. Rather there seems to be a development of social units that transcend "tribalism" but through the corporate anthropology supplied by the inherited image of man which characterizes the historical tribe. The contradiction between the individualism that seems to be required by the creation of contemporary social units as aggregate units, and the personalism that the inherited image of man brings into daily practices seems to be resolved from within the corporate image of man. However this resolution from within cannot but exasperate the principle of inequality that structures the corporate image of man. The important point here is that contemporary tribalism bears the intention of creating supertribal and intratribal units by transcending and yet recuperating the inherited corporate anthropology. Thus a new principle of nation-building seems to inform African political practices, a principle that differs from the one that can be read out from the history of nation-building in Europe. In Europe, the formation of "nations-states" and "multi-national" states is accompanied by the emergence of the individual. In

Africa the historical phenomenon of the creation of transtribal units does not seem to require the emergence of the "individual" in the European sense.

The question then is: can political life in contemporary Africa be totally independent of these historically emergent thematic regarding man and his polity? I do not think so. To show then how these emergent themes work in African politics, I will below take the African political party as an illustration and bring out the intersubjective meanings that articulate it.

The African Thematics of the Political Party

The discussion above suggests that there are a cluster of social practices and meanings that can be identified as, to use Hazoumé's expression, "an African way of social life".¹⁸⁷ This does not mean that African political practices are homogeneous or identical. It simply underlines the fact that Africans share certain material and historical conditions and experiences that differentiate their experiential universes from those whose history articulates and expresses different conditions and practices.¹⁸⁸ This African way of social life constitutes the individual in a way that is not fully commensurate with the Hobbesian conception of the individual. And yet in comparative politics the latter conception informs both method and substance, and is narrated as the universal mode and standard of individuation. It is the tacit theory of man in mainstream comparative discourse. Indeed, "individualism", as understood in comparative politics, appears as both the pre-requisite and goal of "development". But this does not seem to stand up to African historical experiences. To conceptualize development then as, in Deutsch's words, as "becoming somewhat less like Ethiopia and somewhat more like the United States"¹⁸⁹ is not very helpful in the study of African politics. Nor can we espouse the theory, defended by Geertz, that there is an African social life an opposition between "primordial ties" and "civil ties" and that the former "flow from a sense of natural - some would say spiritual - affinity" in social interaction and as such are obstacles to political integration.¹⁹⁰ Nor is it possible to agree with Emerson that

"the instincts of Africa are to fissiparity"¹⁹¹ with the implication that one finds in the writings of the tenants of "African Cultural Pluralism";¹⁹² that social cleavages are givens, that they cannot be overcome before Africans become the embodiments of Parsons' modernity variables. The arguments by these writers are based on an ahistorical understanding of African social practices. They consider African social practices and institutions as given totally in the observations of the social scientist. Thus the extended family, the kinship and lineage system, the tribe, the so-called primordial ties are not examined as historically worked out responses to the exigencies of existence, articulating specific conceptualizations of man and society that are, in the very process of being implemented in practice, interpreted and thus evaluated and transformed in terms of the problems, demands and intentions of the present. I have shown in the previous sections that, in fact, Africans are engaged in historical works of synergies, and contrary to the assertions of mainstream social scientists, politics in Africa is extremely complex and volatile - more so than in the West - for, as a TANU official put it, Africans are at war with themselves, caught as they are in a conflict of what is to be shared as a shared understanding of political man, political agency and the polity.¹⁹³ How this "war" is a modern, historical elaboration of certain concepts of man, social organization and social practices is what I have indicated in the previous sections.

All these indicate the presence of novel conceptualizations of politics and political institutions. These do not take place in an atomized society. Thus elections, parties, voting, political candidacies, political participation, political membership and leadership cannot have the same meaning as in the West. And yet, all these do not take place in a traditional society. For the capitalist world has in one way or the other penetrated every corner of Africa. Its presence may be massive as in the urban centers. Or it may be indirect, as economic and technological effects. But this penetration is not a process that changes Africans into a tabula rasa on which are, as the learning theory that informs Inkele's study of modernization suggests, written the concepts of modernity. In contemporary Africa, neither the

language of Western politics nor the language of "traditionalism" describe adequately contemporary political practices.¹⁹⁴

The African Narrations of the Political Party

We saw in our discussion of Mackintosh's study of Nigerian politics that certain respondents described political parties in terms which evoked the sentiments of love, mystery, parental obligations, and, in certain cases, the understanding that the party should be a bearer of the "truth". We have also seen that in Prewitt's study of political identity in Uganda, almost all his respondents "forgot" to mention political parties. A Tanzanian government report indicates that "by a paradox the more support the people have given to the party the more they have reduced their participation in the process of government."¹⁹⁵

Ruth Schachter Morgenthau writes on West African political parties in a vein similar to what we have seen up to now. She states:

They and their affiliates were interested in everything from the cradle to the grave --- in birth, initiation, religion, marriage, divorce, dancing, song, plays, feuds, debts, lands, migration, death, public order -- not only in electoral success.¹⁹⁶

Compare this to J.S. Mbiti's description of the understanding of social life at the grass-roots level of contemporary Africa. He writes:

...the individual does not and cannot exist alone except corporately. He owes his existence to other people, including those of past generations and his contemporaries. He is simply part of the whole. The community must therefore make, create or produce the individual; for the individual depends on the corporate group. Physical birth is not enough: the child must go through rites of incorporation so that it becomes fully integrated into the entire society. These rites continue throughout the physical life of the person, during which the individual passes from one stage of corporate existence to another. The final stage is reached when he dies and even then he is ritually incorporated into the wider family of both the dead and the living.¹⁹⁷

What this suggests is that the understanding and constitution of the political party at the local level brings into play a conceptualization

of social organization, social relation and purposes that are incongruent with those that inform the Western political party.

If we pay attention to the descriptions of political parties by African politicians, we find some interesting characterizations. According to Touré, the Parti Démocratique De Guinée is co-existent with Guinea; the party is "responsible for elaborating the collective thought, for drawing up the common programme...concerning political, economic, social and cultural policy".¹⁹⁸ Touré describes this as the "functional oneness" of the Party and Guinea.¹⁹⁹

Ahidjo describes the "Parti Politique de l'Union Camerounaise" as "the avant-garde of the Nation".²⁰⁰ According to a UNIP manifesto, the United National Independence Party of Zambia "stands less for a political party than for a nation".²⁰¹ In Tanzania, according to Kawawa, an MP is less a representative of the people than a representative of the party; "the Party is supreme all the way".²⁰² According to N'Krumah "the CPP is Ghana. Ghana is the CPP".²⁰³

One thing is clear then in the above descriptions. The party is not conceived by African politicians as an instrument of aggregation of political interests. Its function is not identified as that of getting votes, winning elections or governing. On the other hand, the party is described in a way which suggests that it is the nation in embryo. The party seems to be considered as the incarnation of the true people, the true nation. It can be seen, in the descriptions given of it by African politicians, as embodying the intention to create a people, a nation which is assumed to exist in the present in its untrue form. At this juncture, I will not deal with the question of the difference between the party as an intentional entity and its concrete existence. Not because this is not important. It is, on the contrary, this very difference which is the only way of understanding the vicissitudes of African politics. But to understand this difference we must first bring out the meanings and intentions that in practice make the political party acceptable to both the politicians and the people in Africa.

If we turn our attention to the "local" level and see how the political party, in practice, exists among the people we discover that the understanding of the political party by the common people offers new experiential dimensions, without however being different from the intention ascribed to parties by the politicians.

Social scientists consider "local" Africa as "traditional" and assert that "In most instances it has played an obstructive role".²⁰⁴ And yet, the very meaning of what is a "political party" in Africa is elaborated at the "local" level, and what social scientists read as the "obstructive role" of the "traditional" is in fact a manifestation of the conflict of interpretations, as I have indicated in the previous sections. In one of the rare studies of non-urban Africa, Weiss shows that in the Congo the so-called "traditional" leaders and chiefs as well as the so-called antagonistic tribes were not opposed to the formation of "political parties".²⁰⁵ The question is what did they understand and work out what we call "political parties?" Weiss writes that the "PSA (Parti Solidaire Africain) and other parties, developed many parallel organizations which in the end constituted an almost self-contained public service structure".²⁰⁶ He remarks that the Party organizers "came upon amazingly fertile ground and found themselves involved in a sort of exchange"; chiefs were not antagonistic to the party; traditional leaders were even militant.²⁰⁷ On the other hand, "ethnic associations and especially ethnic federations in the bigger cities...in fact performed all the functions which parties did at the time".²⁰⁸ And these were not simply "tribal" organizations, but organizations which were pan-tribal and expressing what Young characterizes as "super-tribalism".²⁰⁹

Students of African politics have pointed out the existence of links between political parties and tribes, between political parties and "religious organizations". In the Ivory Coast, for example, "tribal associations" are the "nuclei" for the organization of party committees.²¹⁰ In Uganda the UNC (Uganda National Congress) was a translation of "tribes" into a political party, whereas the UPC (Uganda People's Congress) was, in appearance, a "Parliamentary Party" but in reality a "federation of regional parties"

with regional supporters whose conception of politics was rooted in the communal understandings of association that informs their daily lives.²¹¹ LaFontaine points out that,

Political parties have often grown out of the tribal or regional association. In fact it is hard to distinguish the association with cultural, social, and welfare activities from the political pressure group.²¹²

Indeed, we can, at least in certain cases, point out that political parties arose also from "religious organizations". As we have seen in the previous section, such organizations also share the image of man which is being worked out in contemporary Africa. Thus Hindmarsh points out:

When political parties were founded in the 1950's groupings tended to follow a religious pattern, in that the Uganda People's Congress were mainly Church of Uganda (Protestant) while the Democratic Party were principally Catholic.²¹³

That political parties follow "kinship lines", that they are associated with certain "tribes" and that political activities throw into prominence "kinship" associations and "tribal" affiliations are quite well known facts.²¹⁴ But what they represent as contemporary "intentional entities" has not been clarified by social scientists. If we take into account the experiential meanings contemporary social organizations have for Africans, then we see that political parties, ethnic federations or "super-tribes" are lived by their members as, to use Weiss' term, "public service structures". These organizations, including the "political party" are not understood and lived as partial associations; they are not experienced as articulations of a limited set of specific and transient interests aggregated for a specific goal. They carry social intentions which constitute these institutions as total institutions dealing with all aspects of life. Moreover, they are not closed institutions. They express a transtribal schedule of societal organization. In this context, the "political party" is understood and lived as an institutional response to the historical task of the present: a task understood as the creation of a new total framework of life. That the propensity to create and live social

organizations as total institutions leads to an inherently conflictual situation is what contemporary African political history shows, and what Africanists misinterpret as "tribalism". What is forgotten is that contemporary "tribalism" is an expression - partial and distorted as we shall see - of a historically novel social intention. The political party seems to be but an expression of this novel social intention.

The African "political party" bears the intention of being a "supertribe" in the sense that it is, in the intention it carries, transtribal. It bears the intention of being a total social institution in the sense that it is also understood and lived as a "public service structure". It expresses a political identity elaborated in terms of an intention that constitutes the "tribe", as a universal class where its images of man and polity, contrary to the "traditional" understanding of "tribe", will become universal expressions of sociality, humanity and rationality supporting the whole society.

This is not "tribalism" as understood in the social science literature. What we have here is a transformation of the communal conception of man into a transcommunal conception of man where the "political party" becomes both a universal tribe, thus transcending the particularistic attributes of the tribe and constituting it into a new mode of social consciousness which is universal, and a manifestation of a new type of individuality where the person is identified not only by the social location attributed to him by birth, as is the case in the non-universalistic tribe, but also by a conscious act of being a member of a party, even if he conceives, as it is in fact the case, his membership in terms of "belonging" to the party. We have here a radical transformation, lived as the experience of the "political party", of the inherited past. This transformation is partly the result of Africa's integration into the capitalist-socialist world where, however, universality is attributed to the individual and class respectively. Contemporary "tribalism", from this point of view, is a distortion of this new and modern conception of man in the same way that "ouvrierisme" is a distortion of working class consciousness, and "anomie" is a distortion of

individualism. Bearing in mind the social intention that the African political party expresses, and to show its distinctiveness, I would like to call the African "political party" the Political Universal Tribe. For such a name discloses the historically emergent images of man and polity that are being articulated and expressed by the African "political party". True, the term "tribe" has all kinds of connotations, most of which are pejorative. But the expression Political Universal Tribe, contradictory in appearance, may, by its very contradictory appearance, permit us, perhaps even oblige us, to take into account its historical nature and thus its novelty.

If we consider then the African political party as an entity that bears the intention of realizing a Political Universal Tribe, we see the conflictual working out that results from the struggle to resolve the contradictions between the corporate and the individualistic images of man that are simultaneously present as ways of fulfilling the historical tasks of the present. The principle of inequality and the principle of equality are conflictually present, and the former appears as a mode of realizing the second.

This can be illustrated by the very mode of the constitution of the political party which introduces the notion of choice (for one is not born into a political party as one is into a historical tribe) and therefore the ideas of individuality and equal membership, and yet introduces, through its intention of being a Political Universal Tribe, the corporate anthropology and its mode of social unity based on inequality.

In some African countries, political parties are created after the political leader comes to power. In such cases, the leader is not only a founder of the "party" but also considers himself above it. He, in fact, appears as an "ancestor" of the party. Such is the case with Mobuto's Mouvement Populaire Révolutionnaire. But then, the idea of the party leader being above and outside the party is a widespread African phenomenon. Sekou Touré, Kenyatta, Senghor, Nyerere, N'Krumah, Banda, Houphët Boigny, in short,

all African leaders who head political parties entertain a conception of leadership which is expressive of inequality between the leader, who is above and outside the party, and its members. There is no reciprocity between the leaders of the party and the members of the party in their relationship to the party. There is a double operation involved here. In as much as the leader is the external master of an organization which bears the intention of universality and triggers the consciousness of choice with regards to membership, the leader can be seen as replacing the many-graded hierarchy of inequalities of the traditional pattern and as realizing the promise of equality carried by the Political Universal Tribe, by subjugating all members to a single leader and thus making everyone equal subjects. But this very process of creating equality is rooted in the inequality that is made the very principle of leadership in the Political Universal Tribe. This reproduces as its unavoidable result the principle of inequality as a mode of political relationship within the Political Universal Tribe by presenting every act of leadership, at every level of the organization of the Political Universal Tribe, as an act legitimated by the inequality between the leader and the led. This conceptualization of political leadership excludes radically the practice of politics as a practice between equals. Conversely a practice of politics that presupposes the equality between the leader and the led appears as totally subversive and thus is dealt with through force. Paradoxically, the African "political party" carries within itself both the promise of equality (present as the consciousness of choice with regards to membership) and a negation of this promise which makes force the political practice par excellence.

The party is not then a political party in the Western sense. Given that the "tribal" conception of man is, in the "political party", transcended by a universal conception of man which constitutes the individual as a corporate being, the "political party", cannot but be an all-embracing party, i.e. the universalization of the tribe.

It is this intention that is expressed in the claims made by leaders such as Touré, N'Krumah, Nyerere, Mobutu that every citizen, of the country

concerned, can become a member of the political party of that country.²¹⁵

Now, this should not be seen as opening the door to an apologist interpretation of the African one-party phenomenon. This is rather an effort at understanding the novel African phenomenon which is that both leaders and their opponents, both leaders and led, conceptualize the "political party" as being an all-embracing organization. When an Abidjan paper writes that the Ivory Coast is "united as a single tribe and a single family",²¹⁶ what we have is not only a metaphor but also an evocation of a shared understanding as to what the ideal political society is among the populace. When dockworkers in Mombasa conceptualize their relationship to the government in a language of the family and argue that, "If the government is our father we are also their children. We are working children. But our government despises us. We are working people and know that government cannot do without us,"²¹⁷ they are not labouring under a "false consciousness", as some would say. They are also constituting their political reality in terms of practices and understandings available in the new historical experiential universe of contemporary industrialized Africa, a universe elaborated by the questioning and formulation of inherited self-understandings through the concerns of contemporary life. When the "Marxist" N'Krumah diagnoses the problem of "party solidarity" as "lack of brotherly feeling and oneness arising from mistrust due to lack of contact..."²¹⁸, he is not only misreading the situation, which may in fact be the case, but also, in his very misreading, if indeed it is a misreading, expressing a way of talking about political reality that is meaningful to his interlocutors precisely because such a conceptualization of political relations is intersubjectively shared. Even those who are opposed to the "political party" express their opposition in a language that evokes this type of experiential universe. The elders of Idoma were opposed to the "party" and "party activity" because it is "inimical to the ideal of unity".²¹⁹

Students of African politics are generally misled by the "observational" bias they bring to their analysis. But if we bear in mind the limitations and the misreadings involved in this observational language of social science, then the social science literature itself offers implicit and unrecognized descriptions of the synergies of meanings and practices in contemporary Africa.

Thus Apter writes that in the development of contemporary political life in "The Gold Coast the impact of primary group associations is more significant than in Westernized systems".²²⁰ He adds that "the action-results, insofar as the secular role performances by Africans are concerned, often appear to Western observers as dilatory and inconsistent".²²¹ But Apter tries to give sense to these actions that "appear to Western observers as dilatory and inconsistent" by interpreting them through the categories of "functionalism". That is, Ghanaian practices are in the final analysis obliged to make sense to "Western observers" by being forced to have a meaning in terms of a conceptual framework - functionalism - that has arisen from Western practices. The consequence is that Apter is led to assert that "the party itself has chosen to use the structure of parliamentary democracy" and that "the public is increasingly sharing in political democracy and provision for a truly secular non-charismatic pattern has been made".²²² More important than the fact that history has shown the vacuity of such an analysis is the fact that Apter succeeds, despite the structural-functional straitjacket in which he puts himself and Ghanaian political practices, in going beyond the limit of his scientific framework. He thus writes that for Ghanians "To belong to the party was to identify with a new society in which all virtue could be realized" thus making the party "the crucible for forging new patterns of social behaviour, association and attitudes".²²³ And he adds that "the social functions of a party like the C.P.P. go beyond their more normal functions as in Great Britain".²²⁴ These interpretations however are not in any way related to his scientific framework. Indeed they have, within his science, the status of ad hoc interpretations, incommensurate with the anthropology and sociality that inform his science of

politics. As asides that do not fit his scientific framework, Apter cannot show the link between these interpretations and Ghanaian political practices as in anyway being non-contingent. Yet, without raising the questions of the nature of the stocks of knowledge, the modes and styles of perceiving, cognizing, validating and implementing social practices that are involved in the above descriptions which, within the framework of the structural-functional analysis, are obiter dictas, Apter makes a contribution to our knowledge of Ghanaian politics, a contribution which he cannot legitimate by his explicit theoretical framework.

Indeed then, at the level of local politics the African "political party" is rooted in the practical attitudes of the people's everyday life and forces this practical attitude to confront the question of being consciously organized for specific goals. Not that being organized is alien to Africans. On the contrary, as I have suggested in a previous section, interpersonal relationships are minutely organized by Africans. But in the contemporary situation however, being organized, as in the political party, forces those who join it to confront the question of the intention - consciously raised - of being organized. Can this intention be "political" only in the Western sense? That the mainstream comparative practice cannot answer this question is I think evident by now. However, there are two variations of the mainstream comparative discourse which in a way try to fill this gap by conceding, to a certain extent, to the historicity of African practices. They are the theories of "cultural pluralism" and "communalism". But both suffer from the observational bias, a characteristic of comparative political discourse, for they do not totally break away from the comparativists' assumption of a-linguistic political objects.

For the cultural pluralists, the political party is a politicization of premordial ties. Each tribe is seen as an institutional and cultural monad. As such the political party in Africa cannot but become, at least by implication, an expression of "tribalism" in the separatist sense of the term.²²⁵ As Legassick has pointed out, cultural pluralists transform social cleavages into natural cleavages.²²⁶ Cultural pluralists consider therefore the images of man and polity that are historically inherited as ahistorical

images that are impervious to the social practices of contemporary Africans. But this cannot at all explain the very creation of new "tribes" and "supertribes" otherwise than by the tautological reason that these are tribes because there can only be tribes in Africa. If one were to accede to the thesis of cultural pluralists one has to believe, like some of the 19th Century philosophers, that Africa is outside history, that is to say, that there are no conflicts of practices, interpretations and narrations in Africa. But this, as we have already seen, is false.

The other thesis, the thesis of "communalism" defended by social scientists such as Robert Melson and Howard Wolpe is in a sense a thesis that puts "cultural pluralism" in movement.²²⁷ They write:

Communalism...refers to the political assertiveness of groups which have three distinguishing characteristics: first, their membership is comprised of persons who share in a common culture and identity...second, they encompass the full range of demographic (age and sex) divisions, within the wider society and provide for a network of groups and institutions extending, through the individual's entire life cycle; and third, like the wider society in which they exist, they tend to be differentiated by wealth, status, and power. Communal demands are politically distinctive in that they may reflect a desire for separation and may threaten to alter the political boundaries of the wider society.²²⁸

Thus far "communalism" is a variant of the "cultural pluralism" thesis. However they set it in movement by rejecting the view that "communalism" is an "historical anachronism". It is, they contend, reinforced by "modernization" and that the latter in fact "creates the conditions for the formation of entirely new communal groups".²²⁹ This is indeed a great improvement on the "cultural pluralism's thesis" and opens a new perspective in the understanding of contemporary Africa. However, it shares with the "cultural pluralism" thesis the conceptualization of politics as an instrument of communal groups. Now, it is true that in Africa certain communal groups monopolize political power and use it to serve communal interests. It is also true that there are secessionist movements whose legitimacy is based on communal identity alone. It is a fact that in many African countries

governmental institutions that are identified with particular communal groups or with the interests of such groups lose their legitimacy in the eyes of other groups. But the question here is whether we should reduce "communalism" to its empirical referent, as Melson and Wolpe do, and therefore reduce African politics to a mere struggle of communal groups and interests. This is like reducing American politics to struggles between pressure groups, with political parties appearing as the parties of these groups. This may throw an interesting light on American political mechanics as the "communalism" thesis does on African political mechanics. But it renders mysterious or renders "natural" the "acceptability" of such political mechanics for it does not at all explicate the underlying conceptualization of the "good polity" of which these political mechanics may be appropriate or distorted expressions and articulations. That is, Melson and Wolpe put into motion the static elements of cultural pluralism without in any way taking note of the fact that the very movement itself is a transformation of the understanding and practice of what "communalism" is in the contemporary situation. Tribalism, separatism, communal conflicts then may express the destruction of "communalism", as Melson and Wolpe understand it, and signal the birth of a new communal anthropology with a universalistic intention that, in its realization, may produce tribalism, separatism and communal conflicts as distortions of the universalistic intention or as necessary steps in its realization. In Melson and Wolpe's scheme, the political party in Africa is by necessity a carrier of communal interests whereas in fact, whatever its vagaries, the historically available intention of African "political parties" is to be the universal community. That there is a difference between the intention and the reality is granted. But it is this very difference that will permit us to explain the present turmoil in African political life.

Moreover, that some Africans see their practices in terms of "tribalism", "cultural pluralism" and "communalism", and therefore, that they do not grasp, if such is the case, fully the implications of and desires carried by their social practices and common speech does not undermine the validity of the interpretation. On the contrary, it can be argued that

it is precisely this lack of self-understanding, that contributes to the blind political furies that have brought and still bring so much suffering to almost all the inhabitants of Africa.

Politics and the Political Universal Tribe

It is interesting to note that African narrations of political parties do not suggest a conflict between "tribes", as social scientists suggest so often, but rather a conflict between the tribe(s) and the "political party". To this can be added the interesting situation of the African "political party" vis-à-vis the bureaucracy, the army and African churches which, understood and lived as "total" institutions tend to be in conflict with the "political party", with the consequence, especially in the first two cases, that the "political party" is rendered moribund. In all cases, it is as if the experiential universe has no space for more than one total institution.

The dominant assumption in the social sciences, inherited from Tonnies, is that African societies would be evolving inevitably from Gemeinschaft to Gessellschaft type of societies, or, in Weberian terminology, from "communal action" to "societal action".²³⁰ This, as we have already seen, is a theory that arises from the historical practices of the West. In such a theory the understanding of what Gemeinschaft and Gessellschaft societies are, and of the difference between the two, is based on a historical hindsight which reconstructs history as the transformation from communal action to societal action, and as such gives sense to the present and the past by reading the present as an outcome of the past. But this historical hindsight which is an artifact of the present cannot be seen as shared by Africans, for, as we have seen earlier, neither Africans nor Westerners can read their past in a common language. In Africa, "political parties" are characterized as mass-parties. But the meaning of the term "mass" cannot, in the African case, be in the sense of Kornhauser or Marxists or liberals. For the existence of individuals as either atomized or proletarianized, or inner-directed or self-defining is yet to be shown for Africa. Now this implies that the African "political party" is neither a

mass-party nor expressive of societal action or of a Gesellschaft type society either in practice or intention.

But does this mean that it is expressive of a Gemeinschaft type society and of communal actions? The problem with this question is that whereas answering it in the affirmative seems appropriate, the question itself, by the history it evokes, loads our understanding of communal with the Western understanding of "communal" - as that which is opposed to "societal" and to the "universal" conceptualization of man. This is an understanding of "communal" which informs the theories of "cultural pluralism" and "communalism", and which in fact is a reading of contemporary African "communalism" through the history of Western "communalism" and the meanings precipitated by this history.

My suggestion is, a suggestion whose *raison d'être* I have explained all along in this chapter, that the history of African political practices suggest a transformation from a particularistic Gemeinschaft to a Universalistic Gemeinschaft, from particularistic communal actions to universalistic communal actions. From the point of view of Western history such expressions appear to be contradictions in terms. But what I have pointed out up to now with regards to the contemporary transformation regarding the communal anthropology, sociality and rationality in Africa should, I think, be enough to show the meanings I am trying to grasp and convey.

Thus, one can suggest that the African "political party" is, in its intention, an expression of a universalistic Gemeinschaft. As such, the important political conflicts are not between tribes, but between the Universal Gemeinschaft, the "political party" as the Political Universal Tribe, and the already existing, historical, particularistic Gemeinschafts such as ethnic, tribal, linguistic or cultural groups. Here, primacy should be given not to the "political party" per se but the intention of creating a Universalistic Gemeinschaft it is made to bear, for such an intention is also made to be carried, when the "political party" fails, by other social organizations, such as the bureaucracy and the army. The result of this is that the "political party" is confronted with the particularistic Gemeinschafts

which it tries to transcend (by recuperating them in a higher social organization and thus giving a new meaning to the inherited conceptions of man and society), while being confronted at the same time by contemporary social organizations such as the bureaucracy and the army which are seen as capable of bearing the same intention.

The conflict between the "political party" as a Political Universal Tribe and the historically inherited tribes has been tackled by Africans either by trying to dismantle the "tribal" political organization as in Guinea²³¹, or by trying to break down provincial and tribal differences as in N'Krumah's Ghana,²³² or by legislating against "tribalism" as in Tanzania²³³ or by integrating them structurally into the political party organization as in the Ivory Coast.²³⁴

This universalistic interpretation of the corporate anthropology is perhaps the deep meaning which has made the term "socialism" so pervasive in African political discourses. It seems, in all the variations of "African socialisms", to claim that a Universal Tribe to replace all tribes and yet fulfill the needs the latter respond to, is a social, political possibility. "Socialism", writes Okwudiba Nnoli, "is the answer to the problem of tribalism",²³⁵ although he does not himself see the deep social intention of his assertion. Whence also the all inclusive nature of the African "political party". The CPP for example integrated into itself, and in this it is typical of African political parties,

...voluntary organizations - The Trade Union Congress, the United Ghana Farmers' Council, the National Council of Ghana Women, the Ghana Young Pioneers and the cooperative movement...²³⁶

In Tanzania, TANU "encompasses everything"; women and youth organizations are its branches,²³⁷ and NUTA, the National Union of Tanzanian Workers, has as its principal task to promote TANU.²³⁸ Indeed, the "political party" is, at least in its intention, so all-embracing that many consider the African "one-party" system as being in fact a "no-party system".²³⁹ But this is, as it is clear by now, missing the historical meaning of the "political party" in Africa.²⁴⁰ The political party in Africa then, like

the "tribes" it tries to substitute itself for, bears the intention of being a complete "public service", and a "supertribe". Such a phenomenon cannot be read as a "politicization"²⁴¹ of primordial ties, for we are dealing with the intention to create civil ties understood as universal primordial ties. True, in terms of the meanings comparativists attribute to "primordial ties" such an expression appears self-contradictory. But it is so only in an understanding of "primordial ties" that limits itself to external history and ignores the social practices of Africans.

This unique characteristic of the African political party can also be seen in its historical development as either a single-party or as a party so dominant that it is the only political organization that counts. The African one-party is in no way comparable to the Leninist or Fascist party, despite some rhetorical and even organizational similarities. Many African "political parties" have evolved into one party, in a de facto manner, as if there were a tacit consensus in the image of man and polity it promises.²⁴² This consensus articulates itself in elections, referendums and plebiscites.²⁴³ It seems that these events have political meanings as activities in themselves rather than as activities used to articulate specific issues. This, and not only manipulation and coercion, can explain the "success" of referendums, plebiscites and a high percentage of votes the "party in power" receives. For participating in these activities or events seem to be meaningful as incarnations of the ideal polity conceived as a shared polity of equal membership. The de facto evolution of African regimes to a one-total-institution (be it the leader or the one-party or army) expresses a certain self-understanding and a certain evaluation of this self-understanding. For example, Zambia evolved into a virtual de facto one-party state before U.N.I.P. was made the only legal party in 1972.²⁴⁴ This is how Kaunda explains this action of government:

Since Independence there has been a constant demand for the establishment of a one-party state in Zambia. The demands have increasingly become more and more widespread in all corners of Zambia. In recent months I have received hundreds of messages and letters from organizations and individuals appealing to me to take concrete steps to

bring about a one-party system of Government. In the resolutions passed by almost every conference, whether political or non-political, unequivocal demands have been made for government to introduce a one-party system of government. Chiefs last year joined the chorus of the overwhelming majority of the people...²⁴⁵

This may or may not be true. But Kaunda apparently expected such statements to be "acceptable" and "plausible" to the people of Zambia. That there was indeed a de facto evolution towards one-party is what also Rasmussen shows in his study of Zambia but he explains it as the result of a "band-wagon effect (that) tends to reinforce one-party dominance and reduces the effectiveness of small-party competition."²⁴⁶ One sees the same process of de facto transformation of African "political parties" into one-party in Kenya, Uganda, Tanganyika (now Tanzania), Malawi, Liberia and Botswana, the latter two being officially multi-party states.²⁴⁷

We are thus confronted with a situation where the "political party", being an embodiment of a political anthropology that gives a universal interpretation to the communal anthropology, bears the intention of organizing the polity in terms that exclude the historical tribes while recuperating their members in terms of a conceptualization that they understand. This may explain the lack of serious resistance to the establishment of one-party regimes. But on the other hand, the very intention that is born by the "political party" as a Political Universal Tribe necessarily puts it in a position where it has to deal, in practice, with two contradictory situations. First it has to meet the needs fulfilled by the historical tribes in its effort to supplant them in terms of an anthropology that is derived from them. Second it has, in spite of the anthropology it derives from the historical tribes, a conceptualization of man which recognizes every member as a universal being. (All can be members, but as read through this communal anthropology). In other words, the African political party embodies a contradiction in its realization as a resolution of contemporary conflicts of meanings. It is caught in the principle of inequality that is inherent

in the anthropology of the historical tribes but is incommensurate with the universalization of this anthropology - a universalization which means that one can, irrespective of his social location in his historical tribe, be an equal member of the new "supertribe", the Political Universal Tribe. This inherent contradiction makes the problematic of equality-inequality the central concern of politics. Indeed, this may explain the obsession of African leaders with the "classlessness" of "traditional" Africa which they claim can be the basis of African "democracy" and "socialism". The outcome of this is that in Africa, as opposed to Europe and America, the question of politics is not raised and answered in terms of the problematic of freedom and power. It is raised in terms of the question of equality and inequality. Indeed African political discourse is silent on the question of freedom.

Equality and African Politics

"It is almost impossible" writes Dudley, "what the term" member of a 'political party' means in Nigeria.²⁴⁸ This impossibility arises from the fact that membership in a political party is not conceived by Dudley otherwise than on the model of the self-defining and reckoning man. What can membership mean when such a conceptualization of man is absent? To answer this question and to show its pertinence to our problem here, one must remember the fact that membership, in a Western political party, is understood in the individualistic sense - a sense that one finds in mainstream political science. This sense is rooted in the conception of the individual as a "free" being. One becomes a member in a political party not because out of coercion or family obligation, but because the individual freely chooses to be a member in order to articulate his interests. In this scheme the problem of equality is understood through the conceptualization of man as a disengaged being. All are equal in being "free". Concretely, this freedom is realized as equality of opportunity which indeed may not lead to equal conclusions. But the unequal outcomes are freely accepted because the access to equality of opportunities is considered to

have made possible the fulfillment of the individual's freedom to choose and decide on how to use that equality of opportunity. In the Western understanding of the political, freedom is primary and equality secondary, not because the latter is seen as less important, but rather because it is seen as being a result of the actions of free men. This is consistent with the anthropology that sustains it.

In Africa, we have a different situation. Historically African social practices have produced institutions and ideas that are essentially geared to the problems of equality and inequality rather than to the problems of freedom. The kinship, lineage, clan and tribal systems are essentially geared towards the question of unequal distribution of power; the power to rule, to consume, to order, and to talk.²⁴⁹ Slaves and their situation were not conceived in terms of being free and not being free, but in terms of equality and inequality, and therefore in terms of the powers that are not available to the social locations they hold.²⁵⁰ The practices of magic, sorcery, witchcraft essentially deal with a conception of a world where freedom is absent, where accidents are impossible, where every event is necessarily caused.²⁵¹ In the practices of these sciences of power the main question is that of the equality and inequality in the use of these powers and not a question of choosing to be free or not be free from these powers. In many interpretations of African Christianity what is given prominence is not the freedom that man has to choose or not to choose his salvation but rather the fact that Christianity offers equality or a higher social location.²⁵² Nor is the humanity of man recognized by the mere fact that he is born human, as it is understood in the concept of the "rights of man". The humanity of man is recognized in terms of his membership in a given group or community. His exclusion from such a group amounts to his exclusion from Humanity.²⁵³

Does contemporary Africa escape this problematic of equality-inequality that its past has precipitated into the present? I do not think so. Indeed the "politics" of Africans is a politics that struggles with this problematic and the "political party" is an organizational manifestation of this. The Political Universal Tribe, and all this implies as I have

already shown, is not an institution of a political market. Its members are participants, not as free producers or free consumers of political goods, but as social institutions confronting other social institutions and competing for an integration that gives a social location that justifies the breaking away from the social location one holds already in his communal group. In other words, the intention to make the "political party" into a Political Universal Tribe, shared by all, is concretely translated into the organization of the Political Universal Tribe as a structure of unequal definitions of the humanity of its different members who, as social institutions, have a claim to equality. Thus when a Kikuyu and a Luo become members of KANU, they are members not as individuals but as social institutions having already social locations in their groups. They are joining KANU because, in the intention of universality it carries, it promises (not freedom but) equality of social locations to both the LUO and the KIKUYU. But given the communal, albeit universalist, anthropology it is assumed to express, the promise of equality cannot but be lived by the LUO and the KIKUYU as a competition for inequality. Thus the "political party" becomes the embodiment of political conflicts of inequality. The conflicts come from within - from its members trying to make themselves the highest embodiment of the universality it represents - and from without, from the historical tribes that question its claim to universality in as much as this universality is not shared equally.

In other words the Political Universal Tribe promises equality in its universalist intention, but in its practice it borrows from the historic tribes their mode of integration which is that of inequality. If we take the Nigerian case, one can say that the Ibo in the East, the Yoruba in the West and Hausa-Fulani in the North form distinct major historical groups. The Action Group of Nigeria used to control the Western Region, the National Convention of Nigerian Citizens used to control the Eastern Region and the Northern People's Congress used to control the Northern Region. To the extent that each represented the major historical units of each region one may be tempted to see them as the political arm of the dominant tribes (Ibo in the East, Yoruba in the West and the Hausi-Fulani in the North). But each also aspired to be a political institution to which are welcome the

members of all the other "tribes". That is to say each aspired to be a transtribal "national political party". Each claimed to be the authentic total institution, thus representing the other parties, not as competitors, but as negations of what is understood as the ideal or good polity. Each claimed to be the only universal party. In this intention of universality, carried by each of these "political parties", lies the promise that any person can choose to become a member (in the strong sense of belonging) of any of these parties. In fact the history of the formation of these parties does indicate that people from other than the main groups, that constitute the NPC, the NCNC, and AG, did in fact become members in a way which seemed to realize the intention of universality carried by each of these "political parties". However, the working out of this intention did not take place in a historical vacuum. All these "political parties" originated as cultural societies. In all of these "political parties" traditional rulers in the North and the Yoruba region, title chiefs in the Ibo regions were actively engaged. Even among the Ibos, presented in the anthropological literature as "individualists" and "rule-oriented", the corporate structure was the principle of organization of the cultural and subsequently political organizations.²⁵⁴ The working out of the universalistic intention of each of these parties, taking place within the corporate anthropology which informs the everyday life of the people concerned, cannot but create a conflict between its members as universal beings and therefore equal members, and as corporate beings trying to work out their identity and claims in that organization. It is not surprising that these "political parties" cannot but have relationships which present each to the other as a total opponent. Nor is it surprising that each "political party", in working its claim of being a Political Universal Tribe, is perverted into being a partial expression of its universalist intention. For the effort to achieve the universality of the Political Universal Tribe and to recognize the universality of each member is translated through a corporate understanding of the individual, opening the door to unequal relations which distort the ideals of the Political Universal Tribe.

This is the historical problem confronted by all African "political parties" and indeed by all African political institutions. This is not

because of tribalism or ethnicity, for there is, inscribed in the practices of Africans, a historical consensus to create trans-tribal units, even if the consensus expresses itself, as in so many cases, as "tribalism".

It is then understandable that the African "political party" is not "political" in the Western sense. This historical specificity of African politics also explains the inadequacies and failures, without exception, of all ideologies which have been imported into Africa. Indeed, there seems to be an "unconscious" recognition of the inadequacy of contemporary Western ideologies for the tasks of the present in Africa. And yet, there is no effort among the majority of Africanists - African or non-African - to bring to light the reasons of these failures in a way which permits Africans to recognize themselves as the subjects of these failures so that they can recover themselves as subjects capable of resolving the historical tasks which confront them.

Freedom and African Politics

The Political Universal Tribe is not intended to be an association of self-possessing and private individuals. Nor is it seen as a framework that articulates freedom of speech. Nor is its primary aim to win elections, which is to say, persuade individuals on certain issues. Rather, it is an organization of self-ratification of the intention to define the "self" in terms of the image of man carried by the "political party" as a total institution. Voting, when it occurs, is not an activity of free choosing but rather a confirmation of an intended equality. The issue is thus far less important than the act of voting. Rather, the issue is the act of voting itself which, equated with equality, is always perceived as one of the acts, through which contemporary inequality is created.²⁵⁵ Nor is the "political party" intended to be an expression of a political difference. Rather the "political party" is seen as an institution of "unanimity". Those who break this unanimity are expelled not only from the "political party" but also from the body-politic.²⁵⁶ They are killed, imprisoned, exiled, or, one way or the other, silenced.

The question of freedom is virtually absent from African political discourse. And when it is raised, it is within and subordinated to the question of equality. Political discourse from Senghor's Négritude to Mobutu's authenticity, from N'Krumah's "marxism" to Nyerere's African "Socialism" is present in Africa as the discourse of the political leader and as the political language of the "new community", the Political Universal Tribe. In this political language primacy is given to obedience and not freedom. "If it is discovered", says the Arusha Declaration of 1967, "that a man does not accept the faith, the objects, and the rules and regulations of the Party, then he should not be accepted as a member".²⁵⁷ True, all African political leaders of the independence years struggled for independence or autonomy. But nowhere in the political language of Négritude, African Socialism, communaucracy, African personality, ujamma, African Humanism, or in the political language of the so-called pragmatists such as Houphet Boigny, Tubman, can one find an interpretation of this struggle for independence in the Western classical sense of freedom as the guarantee of the natural rights of the individual. Independence was primarily understood as a collective separation from the colonial power in order to join the circle of sovereign nations on a footing of equality. It was not primarily understood as a process of the liberation of the individual from the fetters that deprived him of his freedom of speech, association, initiative and political actions. Indeed the struggle for independence in Africa is an anti-colonialist and anti-racist struggle and not a "nationalist" movement as both African and non-African commentators claim, unless one wants to use "nation" and "nationalism" as far-fetched metaphors to grasp a completely novel situation. The concepts of nationalism and right to self-determination do not in African political discourse refer to "freedom" in the above sense.²⁵⁸ Politics came to be understood, and is still mainly understood as a struggle against inequality and not as a struggle for individual freedom. As Mazroui has written, "the language of politics in Africa is still tied to the idiom of anti-colonialism and the quest for self-government, almost as if the latter had yet to be achieved".²⁵⁹

The implication of this is that African political language is not a language that articulates as its main concern the freedom of the individual. And yet as Hödgin has shown, African nationalists borrow ideas freely from liberal and Marxian writers in their analysis of African political problems, 260 Nevertheless their basic ideas are limited to:

the conception of an undifferentiated African people as the legitimate source of power; the emphasis upon the moral purposes which government should seek to realize (the restoration of African "dignity", for example); the strongly egalitarian, levelling outlook ... the insistence on equality of rights for Africans, Asians, and Europeans, Commoners and Chiefs; the notion of the nationalist party, and thus the state - once the party has taken hold of it and remolded it according to party principles - as the expression of the popular will; the idealization of the pre-colonial, pre-capitalist, collectivist African past;... 261

One may be misled by the oft-repeated word "Uhuru" that one hears in East Africa and consider that because its English translation is "freedom", it is understood in the sense of individual rights. But as the linguist W.H. Whitley has shown "Uhuru" is merely the throwing off of alien rule, and indeed, even where it is more positively defined, there is little more that can be added to this."²⁶² At the present historical moment, African political languages articulate political life in terms of the questions of equality and inequality while occluding the problems of oppression and freedom. In practice, African political speech is a speech of unanimity. It is a speech whose main political themes are suspicion and accusation as one can hear in the continuous discourses on fomented or crushed plots and coup d'Etats. Its semantic field considers power as non-divisible. Power is seen to permeate not only actions but the very act of political speech. The majority of African leaders consider themselves to be founders of a political language capable of expressing all the political experiences of their people. From Senghor to Nyerere, from Cabral to Mobutu, we find the claim of a new, total political language. Thus we have Négritude, African Personality, communaucratie, Ujamaa, authenticité, consciencism, African Humanism, as new, total and non-questionable political languages. In this

total political language, speech itself is seen as action. It is made the monopoly and the prerogative of power. Political speech is thus present as indivisible speech. There is thus only one political speech which in its ritual repetition by the members of the Political Universal Tribe is seen as realizing equality. The breaking of this political speech is not considered as an expression of freedom of speech but as a betrayal of the unanimity which is considered to be a manifestation of equality and the indivisibility of power. Political speech is given both malefic and benefic powers to an extent that is inconceivable in a context which recognizes a different problematic of politics (freedom) and considers "personal opinion" as a resolution of such a problematic.

African political speech, carrying, as it does, the intention to constitute a Political Universal Tribe, does not permit a parallel political speech. Such a parallel political speech is given an apocalyptic significance. It is seen as the sign of a complete possible breakdown of the ideal of unity that is pursued as the best political expression of the universalistic communal anthropology. African political speech abhors temporal plurality, for it is experienced politically as an expression of possible oppositions, representing alternative time. This is seen by the "leader" and his "political party" as a challenge to the "political time" and the "political space" they occupy. In other words, the problematic of "freedom" appears in the political practices of Africans as a disintegration of "political space" and "political time". That is to say, the problematic of "freedom" which is the historical result of the universalization of the mode of political membership inherited from the past, a universalization which at the same time negates the inherited particularisms, is understood as a political threat to the idea of the specific type of unity precipitated by the synergies of the corporate and individualistic images of man and the polity. In here lie the contradictions of contemporary African politics.²⁶³

The Contradictions of African Politics
and the Political Universal Tribe

In an African country, to have more than one "political party" is then to suggest that there are two ways of being a "corporate being". Such a suggestion is self-contradictory for it implies precisely the breaking up of the "corporate society" by implying that two Political Universal Tribes can exist side by side. Their coexistence is possible only on the basis of an individualistic anthropology which is denied by the very *raison d'être* of the Political Universal Tribe. And yet, it is the very acceptance of the individualistic image of man, as historically experienced by Africans, which has made possible the transformation of the particularistic communal concept of man into a universalistic communal concept of man. The recent political history of Africa shows the presence of conflicts of practices, meanings and interpretations involving these two political anthropologies. It is precisely those African countries, like Ethiopia, which have not experienced the full weight of colonialism who are the late-comers in this conflict. These conflicts involving two radically different constitutive meanings introduce irreconcilable oppositions within African social practices because the task is precisely synergizing the two anthropologies. Each solution, each political solution, becomes a total solution involving every aspect of human life. Each solution offers a total image of man, of his agency, sociality and rationality. The political history of contemporary Africa suggests that diverging political practices are not structured and lived as competing and reciprocally replacing-opposing practices, but rather as mutually exclusive practices. The "opposition" in the latter case cannot but be the total destruction of the opponent --- and this cannot be negotiated. The mutually exclusive practices therefore structure themselves in a plot-counter-plot relationship. Change is understood as total change and solutions comprehended as total solutions. Neither are seen as objects of negotiation and compromise in principle. It is in these conflicts of total solutions that the Political Universal

Tribe is caught in its relationship to other institutions such as the leader, the bureaucracy and the army, each of which are present, at least in the intentions that inform their practices as total institutions.

In this respect Kaunda's statement is very suggestive. He asserts:

Often the army is able to achieve a unity across tribal and regional divisions amongst its ranks much quicker than the politicians, who, if they are to build a healthy nation, must reconcile differences rather than repress them. For this reason, an army may see itself as the ideal instrument for the creation of a uniform administration throughout the country.²⁶⁴

Where the "party" fails in the constitution of a political primordial public that overcomes the numerous primordial publics, the army or the bureaucracy in fact steps in.

In fact, the historical experience of Africa indicates that the "political party" has failed to realize the intention it bears - to create a Political Universal Tribe that can transcend the conflicting historical tribes and at the same time respond to the historical needs of both the historical tribes and of the new entity, the Political Universal Tribe. But this failure of the Political Universal Tribe has not been interpreted, as far as Africans and African practices are concerned, as resulting from the consequences of the intention of creating a Political Universal Tribe. Rather this failure seems to be understood as resulting from the contamination of the universalist intention by "politics", understood, in a prejudicial manner, to mean the "autonomous individual" and "freedom". But, the very intention of a Political Universal Tribe entails in its realization the individual practice of choosing and becoming a member in an organization which is not yet a Political Universal Tribe but whose goal is to become one. Believed or not then, the very act of membership is necessarily based on a calculation of the benefits of breaking rank with the historical tribe to which one belongs and in which one functions, and joining a Political Universal Tribe that promises the fulfilment of historical needs at a higher level of political existence. That is, the "political party" in

its reinterpretation as the Political Universal Tribe produces the "individual" and a consciousness of "choosing" that go counter to the very principle of its realization. It is this historical consequence which is, in Africa, identified, in a pejorative manner, with politics. The emergence of this new type of individual, the choices he makes and refuses, the differing opinions he holds, the calculations he makes are seen as "doing politics" and condemned.

An illustration of this is the expulsion of nine TANU members including seven sitting MPs. The sitting members are expelled not only from the Party but also from Parliament, in spite of the fact that they were "elected" to Parliament. Explaining this, the party newspaper wrote,

They were not expelled from the party and leadership because they were vocal and outspoken. They were expelled because they were and are opposed to TANU... while professing a fundamental faith in the principles, aims, and objects which the party has set out and which the government is implementing. We believe in the concepts of criticism... But we have nothing to do with the concept of opposition.²⁶⁵

This shows that the practices created by the very realization of the Political Universal Tribe in fact undermine it. The intention to create a total institution is not however abandoned. It is taken over by the Leader, the army, the bureaucracy with the same consequences and additional tasks - the additional tasks now being the abolition of "politics" which means the abolition of the new phenomenon of political individuality that resulted from the very transformation of the "political party" into a Political Universal Tribe. Thus the failure of the Political Universal Tribe is also the rise of new political practices and identities. But these new political practices and identities seem to be denied legitimacy by those who are in power and those who aspire to hold power. This denial of legitimacy to these new political phenomena has been the crucible for violent political conflicts. This has led to a politics of oppression in virtually all African politics irrespective of the ideological banners they wave.

The failure of the African "political party" is not then due to tribal or cultural pluralism, but to its own internal contradictions and contradictory outcomes. However, the understanding of institutions and solutions as total institutions and solutions does not seem to have collapsed together with the Political Universal Tribe. It seems to be recovered by those who replace it - the leader, the army and the bureaucracy. That the African leader is present in African politics as a total institution has already been indicated in my discussion of the concept of leadership. Likewise, the army and bureaucracy seem to bear the same intention of being total institutions. That is why these two terms can be misleading if they are understood the way they are in comparative politics.

In comparative politics there is a tendency to believe that African bureaucrats and armies, being formed by Westerners and having Western bureaucracies and armies as their reference groups, are imbued with the spirit of rationalism and universality, in the Weberian sense. Thus writing on bureaucracy in "transitional societies" Dube says:

In many countries they were the only organized body of natives with considerable training and experience in administration; they naturally found themselves called upon to assume major responsibilities in the formulation and implementation of national plans for economic development and social change. 266

Lofchie comparing "political parties" and "national bureaucracies" in Africa attributes to the latter values normally associated with Western bureaucracies:

Certain aspects of bureaucracy contribute to the weakness of representative institutions. The greater attractiveness of administrative careers siphons some of the most able and talented political leaders. The result is a visible discrepancy in intellectual competence between political parties and national bureaucracies, which critically impairs the viability of both parties and national assemblies. The political parties' ability to control and manipulate administration is also reduced by the universal practice of achievement recruitment to civil service positions. The basic concept of merit recruitment is that civil servants hold their positions by virtue of personal skill and training, not political loyalty. 267

Thus the distinction between the "modern" and the "traditional" is brought in by representing the bureaucrats as having "intellectual competence", i.e. trained in the ways of the West, as following "the universal practice of achievement recruitment" by virtue of "personal skill and training". I have, in my discussion of Price's study of bureaucracy in Ghana, shown the serious limitations of such assumptions. But what must be born in mind here is that such analyses do not explain why African administrations are the focus of political struggles,²⁶⁸ why there is in fact a conflict, and the nature of this conflict, between the "bureaucracy" and the "political party" leading either to the merger of the bureaucracy and the 'political party' as in Guinea²⁶⁹ or the laying to rest for all political intents and purposes of the "political party" and the monopolization of politics by the bureaucracy as in Kenya.²⁷⁰

Similar assumptions are made regarding the African army. According to Lefebvre,

African armies tend to be the most detribalized, westernized, modernized, integrated, and cohesive institutions in their respective states. The army is usually the most disciplined agency in the state. It often enjoys a greater sense of national identity than other institutions. In technical skills, including the capacity to coerce and to communicate, the army is the most effective agency in the country...²⁷¹

African politicians, according to Lefebvre, are placed at the opposite end. They have "little experience in the art of state politics"; they cannot cope with "centrifugal forces"; they suffer from "something like the identity crisis of an adolescent"; they are not sufficiently detribalized, westernized and modernized.²⁷² Indeed according to Pye, military leaders of underdeveloped countries are more rational than the politicians, for the

military leaders are often far less suspicious of the West than civilian leaders because they themselves are more emotionally secure. This sense of security makes it possible for army leaders to look more realistically at their countries.... (They) accept the fact that their countries are weak and the West is strong without becoming emotionally disturbed or hostile toward the West...

(They) are in fact easier people with whom to deal and to carry on straight-forward relations.²⁷³

Once more we are confronted with assertions that beg the question. It is claimed that African armies are modernizers because they are modern. But as we have seen what is meant by "modern" is not as clear as that. Moreover in many African countries, army coup d'Etats take place against military governments also and not only against civilian governments, as can be seen in the military coups d'Etat of Ghana and Nigeria. The fact is that the bureaucracy and the military are made to carry the universalist (communal) intentions that the political party has failed to fulfill. As such, in Africa, these tend to be total institutions.

True, the African military give reasons such as "corruption", "tribalism", "nepotism" as reasons that motivate their actions.²⁷⁴ And yet, the military leaders adopt the same political language as the political leaders they have overthrown and project the same ideal of a "unanimous" polity, this time, they claim, cleansed of "corruption", "tribalism" and other political evils.²⁷⁵

The point however is that "corruption", "nepotism", "tribalism" are precisely the manifestation, partial and distorted, of the novel constitution of the individual as a choosing individual within a communal anthropology. They are the form that the rise of the new individuality takes in contemporary Africa. For the acts taxed as such cannot be so within the anthropology of the historically inherited tribes, for such acts are precisely legitimated as the right social relations. But the same acts, within the intentional framework of a universalistic communal anthropology, constitute meanings that are opposed to the intention carried by the political practices. The army and bureaucracy, as total institutions, then share this "corruption", "tribalism" and "nepotism" despite their claims. Thus, they are not more "modern" than the society in which they exist. Nor are their reference groups external to their societies. Rather being part of a polity that has given itself political goals that in practice produce acts that deny this political goal, they intervene, not to question the political goal, but to suppress its inevitable consequences.

The result of this is political oppression. It leads, without resolving the issues, to the abolition of the "political practices" born from the pursuit of the universalistic communal polity, instead of confronting these political practices, and questioning the conditions of their birth and their meaningfulness. This effort of building a political society without political practices, i.e. through universal oppression which in turn produces inequalities that awaken the individual in the communal person (recognized now as a universal being), is justified in a language which is totally oblivious to the new political identities and practices that have resulted from the working out, in practice, of the political intentions of independence and nation-building, quintessentially expressed in the rise and fall of the Political Universal Tribe.

A Comment on the Leninist Discourse on
The African Political Party

Although it is not in any sense a part of comparative political science, it is however of interest to briefly consider the Leninist discourse on African political parties, for the Leninist discourse claims, like the comparative political science discourse, to be a scientific one. Moreover, some terms of the Leninist discourse such as the "vanguard party" and "democratic centralism" appear in the self-descriptions of some African political parties.²⁷⁶ Ideas such as "party discipline" and "organization of the masses" are expressed by African party officials.²⁷⁷ Cabral writes that "Pour diriger un peuple vers sa liberté, vers son développement, il faut une avant-garde".²⁷⁸ To the question "Quelle distinction faites-vous entre un parti populaire et un parti d'avant-garde?", S. Touré answers:

La nature populaire d'un parti le conduit nécessairement à devenir un parti d'avant-garde qu'il perfectionne sans cesse ses structures, ces principes et ses pratiques. Le peuple, très divers, renferme mille contradictions.... C'est l'élimination progressive de ces contradictions, externes comme internes, qui fait du parti populaire un parti d'avant-garde.²⁷⁹

The question then arises as to whether such terms, used in Africa, constitute and describe social practices that are similar to those that are historically given in the Leninist practice of politics. In other words, can the African "political party" be seen as a member of the class of "vanguard" parties, or as a "political party" on the way to become or destined to become a vanguard party. Now, this is precisely the question raised by Soviet Africanists.²⁸⁰

The Soviet Africanists, V.G. Solodovnikov et al. classify African political parties as "Revolutionary Democratic", "Marxist-Leninist" and "Bourgeois and Pro-Bourgeois" parties.²⁸¹ This classification is based on the assumption that the Archimedean point of classification is the "vanguard party" in relation to which the true nature of other political parties is assumed to be disclosed. They assume that African politics can develop only and only if they develop "vanguard" parties which are seen by Solodovnikov et al. as the correct instruments for applying the "laws" of historical development and constructing a "socialist" society.²⁸²

Now, surprising as it may seem, such a view is partially shared by some comparativists. For example, Huntington considers "Leninism" and its theory of organization "relevant to the modernising countries of Asia, Africa, and Latin America".²⁸³ As we have seen above, similar claims are made by African ideologists. The question then is: have we got here an interpretation that throws light on African political parties?

Now, the "vanguard party" of the Leninist type stands between the Western political party as described above and the African political party as explicated in this chapter. The Leninist vanguard party is in a way a development of a strand of Enlightenment thought which saw society, or the "masses" as Leninists say, as matter to be worked upon from the outside by those who are assumed to know its laws of historical development. The members of the "vanguard party" are seen not as the members of the new society in practice but as active agents, working on society from outside and constructing out of it a new society. Contrary to the intention carried by the African Political Universal Tribe which is, at least in its

intention, constituted as an incarnation of a possible idea of social order or of a new community, even when it calls itself a vanguard party, the Leninist party considers itself as an instrument composed of the technicians of the Revolution. And yet like African "political parties", the Leninist vanguard party is based on the presupposition that there can be only one will and one political language. In this respect, the two are similar for they do not allow plurality and opposition. Nevertheless the African "political party", being understood and lived both in its inception and failure as the incarnation of a new community, differs radically from the Leninist vanguard party in as much as it does not posit the reconstruction of society towards one perfect goal.

However, the superficial similarities between the African "political party" and the "vanguard party" seem to attract interpretations, African, European and Soviet, that tend to miscognize African "political parties" as belonging to the species of the Leninist party at least in certain respects. The result of this being a mirror image - on the Leninist side - of the distortion produced by the comparative discourse, as discussed in this study. Thus Leninists produce political analyses which take to task African "radical" regimes like N'Krumah's or S. Touré's for not correctly applying the Leninist principles of organization.

V.G. Solodovnikov et al thus characterize African "political parties" as "structurally amorphous".²⁸⁴ But they do not consider the possibility that what they read through the grid of the "vanguard" party as "amorphous" may in fact be the effect of the narrative infrastructure of the "vanguard" party and not a reading of African political practices themselves. Their classification of African political parties as "Revolutionary Democratic", "Marxist-Leninists" and "Bourgeois and Pro-Bourgeois" is meaningful in terms of the history of the social, economic and political developments of Europe. But how this classification is rooted in African history and social practices is not shown. The effect of this metonymic montage of African "political parties" on the scene of Western history as read through the categories of Marxism-Leninism is to make the "vanguard" party the

telos of the so-called "Revolutionary Democratic" parties like the PDG, CPP, MPLA, PAIGC, and FRELIMO.²⁸⁵ Thus they write that "the revolutionary democratic parties are not true Marxist parties"²⁸⁶ but that "the facts confirm that transformation of the present mass and nationwide parties into parties of the avant-garde type is being placed on the agenda."²⁸⁷ And they add:

...the revolutionary democratic parties of Guinea, Angola, Guinea-Bissau, Mozambique and other countries can also in time become reliable detachments in the African and world communist and workers movement.²⁸⁸

We have here a discourse which shares all the characteristics of distortion we have elucidated above in the discussion of comparative political discourse. Political language is manipulated independently of its holprastic basis and used as an instrument of communication and analysis. The Leninist political language is assumed to be the universal language by which all other political practices can be made to expose their truth. Thus when Cabral asserts that by "vanguard" party he means to say: "ce sont les meilleurs enfants de notre pays qui doivent diriger notre Parti et notre peuple"²⁸⁹ and these are not limited to the working class; when Touré claims that "un parti populaire conséquent est inévitablement un parti d'avant-garde" and wonders "on peut se demander...ce qui distingue le parti populaire du parti d'avant-garde" and concludes that "il n'y a ni transition, ni distinction"²⁹⁰ the Marxist-Leninists do not consider these political speeches in terms of the social practices they constitute. Rather they read them through the Leninist political language and see that the object-in-itself (the vanguard party as Leninists define it) is malpresent in the object-imitation (the African political party which is a priori identified to be a vanguard party or having such a vocation and then is found lacking what it is assumed it should have). Thus the African practices and self-descriptions are metonymically identified and distorted. They thus appear as reified objects of analysis to be assembled according to the order of discourse of Leninist political theory.

The effect of this is to make political goals and practices external to the social means by which they are achieved. Thus what Solodovnikov

et al identify as the "Revolutionary democratic" political parties of Africa are given as mere instruments used to achieve a goal - "socialism" which is external to them. Politics and political practices are seen as applications of the "rational" laws of construction of an ideal society called "socialism". But confronted by the political practices of Africans which bear the intention of living the "political party" as the incarnation of the "Political Universal Tribe" the Leninist sees a distortion of the Leninist truth. Thus the influential Soviet Africanist I.I. Potekhin writes:

But, of course, there cannot be different kinds of socialism; socialism is one definite kind of system of organisation of social production and social life... Advocates of "African Socialism" often confuse two different issues: that of the ultimate goal and that of the way to its achievement. The ultimate goal is one: the construction of a new system of social production based on socialisation of the means of production.... The ways to the achievement of the great goal may vary widely.²⁹¹

This radical distinction between method and substance, between means and ends, leads, as I have already shown, to the exclusion of political practices from the history and experiential universe of the studied and presents them as distorted or unfinished practices in terms of a presumably undistorted, already fulfilled and realized goal - the "socialism" of the Soviet Union.

But such a Leninist reading of African "political parties" produces a myth of the "vanguard party" which cannot stand up in light of the political history of contemporary Africa. Marxist-Leninist parties are of no significance in African politics, for by offering an image of man and polity totally alien to the experiential universe and meanings and the historical experiences of Africans, they have found themselves speaking to a non-existent social reality. A case in point is Dr. Chike Obi's Dynamic Party, a self-styled "vanguard" party which participated in many Nigerian elections. It "consistently lost all the elections it contested (and) seems to have been rejected by both the elites and by the masses".²⁹² Moreover, the contemporary political history of Africa shows that even the so-called "revolutionary democratic" parties have not followed this "correct"

route of evolution.²⁹³ Some like the CPP have not even managed to stay in power.

Soviet Africanists explain the breakdown of their scientific analysis by putting the blame, as it were, on African political practices. They explain them by such phenomena as "bourgeois elements" rushing "into the ranks of the ruling revolutionary-democratic parties"²⁹⁴ and apparently subverting them. But this is begging the question for the so-called "bourgeois elements" are Africans. One must show then how the historical concept "bourgeois" applies to these Africans. Given the historical specificity of African politics the so-called "bourgeois" may have political characteristics articulated by a principle different from the one that articulated the political life of the European "bourgeois elements". Soviet Africanists in their effort to produce a coherent discourse on African politics occlude the originality and difference of African political practices by calling upon the terms of political discourse that are produced by the history of the Marxist-Leninist parties of Europe. But whenever their analyses and Leninist narrations of African political practices fail, they attribute these failures, not to the political language they impose on African practices as the universal language of politics, but to ad hoc causes such as "left-wing extremism", ideological "diffuseness", organizational and theoretical weakness, as seen from the Leninist point of view of what politics is and should be.²⁹⁵ But such explanations cannot but present African political practices without their historicity and history. I need not repeat here the systematically distorting consequences of such an analysis. This explains, it seems to me, the failure of Soviet policies in the so-called "revolutionary-democratic" regimes of Africa. Their analyses are based on a distorted understanding of what a ruling "political party" is in Africa.

FOOTNOTES

1. Dani B. Thomas, "Political Development Theory and Africa: Toward a Conceptual Clarification and Comparative Analysis" The Journal of Developing Areas, 8, No. 3 (April 1974), p. 377; R.L. Sklar, Nigerian Political Parties (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1963), p. 181.
2. Chango Machyo, "African Social Scientists are Incapable of Making Correct Decisions", The African Review, 5, No. 3 (1975), pp. 269-291.
3. Pathé Diagne, Pouvoir Politique Traditionnel en Afrique Orientale (Paris: Présence Africaine, 1967), p. 289.
4. Chinwezu, The West and the Rest of Us (New York: Vintage Books, 1975), p. 240.
5. On this important concept of "acceptability" see Jean Pierre Faye, La Critique du Langage et son Economie (Paris: Aalilée, 1973), pp. 45-62. An institution or a practice becomes acceptable when the subject is related to it as, at least, a potential subject of that institution or practice. That is, he recognizes himself as a competent subject, at least potentially, vis-à-vis that institution or practice.
6. Richard L. Sklar, Nigerian Political Parties (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1963), p. 294. On the life of Adelabu see pp. 289-318. On Nigerian politics see Obafemi Awolow, Path to Nigerian Freedom (London: Faber and Faber Ltd., 1947); Obafemi Awolowo, Thoughts on Nigerian Constitution (Ibadan: Oxford University Press, 1966); Okoi Arikpo, The Development of Modern Nigeria (Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1967); James S. Coleman, Nigeria: Background to Nationalism, 3rd ed. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1963); Arthur Hazlewood, ed. African Integration and Disintegration (London: Oxford University Press, 1967); M. Crowder, A Short History of Nigeria (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1962); Obi B. Egbuna, The Murder of Nigeria (London: Panaf Publications, 1968); Eskor Toyo, The Working Class and the Nigerian Crisis (Ibadan: Oxford University Press, 1967).
7. Moyibi Amoda, "Background to the Conflict: A Summary of Nigeria's Political History from 1914 to 1964" in Nigeria: Dilemma of Nationhood, ed. Joseph Okpaku (New York: The Third Press, 1972), p. 48.
8. Richard L. Sklar, op. cit. p. 94.
9. Ibid. p. 290, fn. 15.
10. For an interesting discussion of the relationship between tradition and modernity in these Nigerian political parties see C.S. Whitaker, Jr. The Politics of Tradition: Continuity and Change in Northern Nigeria (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1970). See also Sklar, op.cit.

11. Quoted in Basil Davidson, Which Way Africa? (London: Penguin, 1971), p. 159.
12. C.S. Whitaker, op.cit. p. 61; see also pp. 330-334.
13. Richard L. Sklar and C.S. Whitaker, Jr. "Nigeria" in Political Parties and National Integration in Tropical Africa, eds. James S. Coleman and Carl G. Rosberg, Jr. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1964), pp. 597-651; Richard L. Sklar, op.cit., pp. 337-338.
14. Clyde Kluckhohn, "Values and Value Orientations in the Theory of Action", in Toward a General Theory of Action, Talcott Parson et al. (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1951), pp. 409-410.
15. For a critique of the semiological conception of "tacit knowledge", a conception which is the limit of sophisticated comparative research see Dan Sperber, Rethinking Symbolism, translated by Alice L. Morton (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975).
16. Richard E. Dawson and Kenneth Prewitt, Political Socialization (Boston: Little Brown, 1969) p. 27. See also Herbert Hyman, Political Socialization: A Study in the Psychology of Political Behavior (New York: Free Press, 1959). This is the pioneering work of the field and it is squarely founded on the behaviorist theory of learning.
17. Sheldon Wolin, "The State of the Union", The New York Review of Books, XXX, No. 8 (May 18, 1978), p. 28. Emphasis added.
18. John S. Mbiti, African Religions and Philosophy (London: Heinemann, 1969). The reader may ask: "Can one speak of Africa as a whole?" Yes and no. One cannot speak of Africa as a whole if one is interested in only what divides Africans. Indeed, if one accepts the methodological principle that one sees only individuals and observes only discrete events and actions, one cannot even speak of a group, a society or a polity otherwise than as an aggregate of discrete units. (For a discussion of "methodological individualism" see Ernest Gellner, "Holism versus Individualism"; J.W.N. Watkins, "Methodological Individualism and Social Tendencies"; May Brodbeck, "Methodological Individualisms: Definition and Reduction", in Readings in the Philosophy of the Social Sciences, ed. May Brodbeck (New York: Macmillan, 1968), pp. 254-269, 269-280, 280-304). But such a methodological principle occludes the historical realities of common heritage, of common tasks, of shared sufferings and political struggles. But the existence of common tasks and common heritage does not however in itself permit speaking of Africa as a whole unless one shows the nature of this sharing. To start with, if one speaks of Africa as a whole, it is because certain social practices are concretely shared among Africans. Certain modes of social organizations (age-groups, kinship, tribal) are present in all African societies with of course diverse and varied manifestations. This is what Maquet calls "Africity". [Jacques Maquet, Africity: The Cultural Unity of Black Africa, Translated by Joan R. Rayfield (New York: Oxford University Press, 1972). See also:

John Middleton, ed. Black Africa: Its Peoples and Their Cultures Today (London: Collier-Macmillan, 1970); Mary Douglas and Phyllis M. Kaberry, eds. Man in Africa (New York: Doubleday, 1971); John N. Paden and Edward W. Soja, eds. The African Experience, 2 vols. (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1970)]. In addition, Africans share the common historical heritage of Islamization, Christianization, colonialism and the experiences of neo-colonialism, each taking of course diverse and varied forms in concrete situations. The answer to the above question then is that one can speak of Africa as a whole only when one intends to bring out and when one succeeds in bringing out that the various forms of social practices in Africa are articulated and articulate certain shared experiences, meanings, adversities, purposes and aspirations. Such is precisely the purpose of this thesis. As a final point, one should not forget that the very idea of Africa as a unit is a historically produced idea which has had and still has political significance in Africa. This idea has been embodied in "pan-African" organizations, the Organization of African unity and in struggles against colonialism, apartheid and similar political experiences which are felt by all Africans as "African" questions. The latest demonstration of this is the Angolan conflict where many African states had to back the Neto regime, not because they approved the Soviet-Cuban intervention but because they had to oppose the South-African intervention. [See Africa, No. 51 (November 1975), pp. 10-14; Jeune Afrique, No. 780 (Decembre 1975), pp. 14-17; Afrique-Asie, No. 98 (Du 15 au 28 Decembre 1975), pp. 24-33; Afrique-Asie, No. 99 (Du 29 Decembre au 11 Janvier 1976), pp. 23-33; Jeune Afrique, No. 785 (23 Janvier 1976), pp. 16-28; Jeune Afrique, No. 788 (13 Fevrier 1976), pp. 14-18; Jeune Afrique, No. 790 (27 Fevrier 1976), pp. 14-16; Africa, No. 71 (July 1977), pp. 13-16; Afrique-Asie, No. 140 (Du 25 Juillet au 7 Août) pp. 31-33]

19. For the discussion on these questions see K.O. Dike, Trade and Politics in the Niger Delta (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1956); Francis Agbodeka, African Politics and British Policy in the Gold Coast, 1868-1900 (London: Longmans, 1971); B. Schnapper, La Politique et le Commerce Français dans le Golfe de Guinée de 1838 à 1871 (Paris: Mouton, 1961); Reginland Coupland, The Exploitation of East Africa (London: Faber and Faber, 1939); Michael Crowder, West Africa Under Colonial Rule (London: Hutchinson, 1968); Thomas Hodgkin, Nationalism in Colonial Africa (New York: New York University Press, 1957); R. Robinson and J. Gallagher, Africa and the Victorians (London: Macmillan, 1961); E.H. Roberts, A History of French Colonial Policy, 1870-1925 (London: Frank Cass, 1963).

20. Such is Whitaker's opinion on the NPC and NEPU. He speaks of "institutional convergence" between traditional and modern elements. [C.S. Whitaker, op.cit., p. 454].

21. It is the corruption of this political intention which appears as mere verbal rhetoric among African "radicals", without considering the question of the meaning of "class" in a society where individuals are not yet free from all attachments.

22. Although the theoretical underpinnings for such an approach have already been discussed in the previous seven chapters, it may be necessary to remind the reader of certain points. First, does teasing out the concepts that articulate African practices make one a "nationalist" thinker? This is a suggestion some comparativists make when an African tries to elucidate the categories of political cognition that inform African practices. This criticism is intriguing. If one takes the great political philosophers of the West, Plato, Aristotle, Aquinas, Machiavelli, Hobbes, Locke, Rousseau, Hegel, Marx, Oakeshott, Arendt, to name a few, one sees that they have teased out the concepts of politics by reading the political practices available in their societies and civilizational spheres. In the process of teasing out these concepts they have tried to show that specific political practices have historical or universal significance. But nobody has accused them of being "nationalist" thinkers. The student of African politics can legitimately claim that teasing out the concepts of politics from the practices and experiential universe of Africans and showing their universal or historical significance does not necessarily make him a "nationalist", but rather a student who elucidates the human conditions of political life in Africa. Second, this does not mean that the student rejects Western or Eastern political concepts. To do so is indeed to deny the material and political unity of the world. Rather, what must be rejected is the instrumentalist understanding and use of concepts, for such a use transforms these concepts into discourses of occlusion and power by presenting them independently of the social practices they articulate. Therefore, the thesis does not reject the concepts of comparative politics or Marxism. It invites the political scientist to understand them as holophrastic concepts. Third, this does not mean that African political practices are going to be insulated from external criticism. To start with mainstream comparative political science is not a critical or a practical science. It reduces the questions of practical and critical interests, the questions of political action and emancipation, to that of technical interest, whence the search for causal explanations (thus prediction and control). The approach suggested here invites the student, African or non-African, to study African politics in terms of the questions of emancipation, of the moral and political obligations that arise from the choice of political actions and the evaluations of these choices and consequently the type of agency to which one is committed. It invites the student to consider Africans as the subjects of history. Such an approach goes beyond the flippant presence of the participant observer and ensues in the realization of solidarity between the student and those he studies. Fourth, such an approach is aware of its limitations, for being rooted in the holophrastic dimension of discourse, it recognizes that each historical period gives rise to new self-understandings. Finally, I would like to repeat what I have pointed out in the first chapter. I do not criticize comparative politics for being ethnocentric. As I have indicated, no one has clarified what "ethnocentric" means. And this is not without reason. For ethnocentrism is in fact the foundation of all dialogues between different language-worlds. The problematic of ethnocentrism is the problematic of the instrumentalist conception of language. In the Humboldtian conception of language, there is no place for ethnocentrism as a problem. From the Humboldtian point of view, mainstream comparative discourse is not ethnocentric. Rather, it is a discourse of power and this is the root of its distortions.

23. Evan Fales, "The Ontology of Social Roles", Philosophy of the Social Sciences, 7, No. 2 (June 1977), pp. 139-163.
24. Ibid, p. 147.
25. For the concept of "holistic concept" see P.G. Ingram "Social Holism: A Linguistic Approach" Philosophy of the Social Sciences, 6, No. 2 (June 1976), pp. 127-143. For the concept of "holophrastic" see above chapter 4.
26. G. Sartori, Parties and Party Systems, (London: Cambridge University Press, 1976), pp. 3-29. Also see Duverger's attempt to trace the development of political parties to the emergence of parliaments. Maurice Duverger, Political Parties (New York: John Wiley, 1954). See also J. Palombara and M. Weiner, "The Origin of Development of Political Parties" in J. Palombara and M. Weiner, ed. Political Parties and Political Development (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1966), pp. 3-43. I would like to point out that the term "West" is used here to refer to those polities of the Atlantic community where the enlightenment project of utilitarian politics has been embodied in social, political and economic organizations. The polity where this project is best embodied is the United States of America. [Louis Hartz, The Liberal Tradition in America (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, 1955)]. As I have pointed out in Chapter 1, mainstream comparative politics is an "American monopoly". As such, when I refer to the West, I am referring to American political practices, for, first, because these practices are the clearest expression of the ideal of social order of the polities of the West, and second, because comparative political discourse is rooted, as I have already shown, in these practices. [See also C.B. Macpherson, The Political Theory of Possessive Individualism (New York: Oxford University Press, 1962) on the image of man in the political theory of the "liberal" polities of the West].
27. Ross J.S. Hoffman and Paul Levack, eds., Burke's Politics: Selected Writings and Speeches of Edmund Burke on Reform, Revolution and War (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1967), p. 41.
28. Jacob Burckhardt, The Civilization of the Renaissance in Italy (New York: MacMillan Co. 1921).
29. Ibid, p. 129.
30. Erich Fromm, Escape from Freedom (New York: Avon Books, 1969), pp. 81-122; see also R.H. Tawney, Religion and the Rise of Capitalism (New York: Mentor Books, 1954), p. 61.
31. Max Weber, The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1958).
32. Ibid, p. 26.
33. Ibid, pp. 21-26.

34. Adda B. Bozeman, The Future of Law in a Multicultural World, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1971), p. XI.
35. Ibid, p. XIII.
36. Carl Becker, Freedom and Responsibility in the American Way of Life (New York: Knopf, 1951), p. 31.
37. Philip Fries, An Essay on Party (New York: Fowler and Wells, 1856), p. 7.
38. A.N. Holcombe, The More Perfect Union (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1950), p. 428.
39. There seems to be a consensus among American political theorists that the "liberal" states of contemporary societies are not conducive to the creation of a "community". As Wolff has written, "the conservative locates community in a cherished past and the radical in the longed for future" [R.P. Wolff, The Poverty of Liberalism (Boston: Beacon Press, 1968), p. 184]. But they never see it in the present. Both conservatives and radicals seem to agree, perhaps inadvertently, with Marx's characterization of their (capitalist) society as a context where man is "separated from the community, withdrawn into himself, wholly preoccupied with his private interest and acting in accordance with his private caprice...[In this society] The only bond between men is natural necessity, need and private interest, the preservation of their property and their egotistic persons" [T.B. Bottomore, ed. Karl Marx Early Writings (Hammondsworth: Penguin, 1963), p. 26]. As we shall see, neither Wolff's nor Marx's characterization of the state of affairs of the "community" in Western polities are applicable to African polities, at least, not in the same sense.
40. Glendon Schubert, The Public Interest (Glencoe, Ill.: The Free Press, 1960), p. 224.
41. Mancur Olson, The Logic of Collective Action (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1965), p. 2.
42. Leon D. Epstein, Political Parties in Western Democracies (London: Pall Mall Press, 1967), p. 77.
43. W.J.M. Mackenzie and Kenneth Robinson, Five Elections in Africa, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1960). They indicate that issues which in Western political parties as used as means of defining interests and obtaining votes are of minor importance in African elections.
44. G. Almond and G.P. Powell, Comparative Politics: A Developmental Approach (Boston: Little and Brown, 1966).

45. S.M. Lipset and S. Rokkan, eds. Party Systems and Voter Alignments: Cross-National Perspectives (New York: Free Press, 1967).

46. N.A. Macdonald, The Study of Political Science (New York: Random House, 1955), pp. 84-88.

47. V.O. Key, Politics, Parties and Pressure Groups (New York: Crowell, 1952), p. 216; see also Olivier Carceau, ed. Political Party and Political Theory, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1968). One may point out that European history is rich in political parties, such as the ones inspired by Nazism or Fascism, oriented towards the creation of a sense of belonging and affective bonds on the basis of race, religion, language or ethnicity. And that indeed great political violence has resulted from them. Granted. But the comparativist's understanding of such parties is nevertheless in terms of the synecdoches of the "liberal" party, as one can see in Almond and Verba's Civic Culture (*op.cit.*). Thus, one can say that mainstream comparative discourse distorts also our understanding of many political practices in those areas of the West where the utilitarian conception of politics is not as strongly institutionalized as in the mother-country of comparative politics.

48. Kenneth Janda studies "150 political parties in 50 countries" from America, Europe, Asia, Africa and Latin America. Now if the above analysis is correct, how can one compare so many social practices if it can be shown that there are different intersubjective social realities involved? K. Janda operates his cross-cultural study by precisely evacuating the intersubjective social reality and by stretching the category of political party to a point of vacuity. He defines political parties as "the set of organizations that pursue a goal of placing their avowed representatives in government positions". This definition, he says, applies to organizations "that are legal and those that are illegal", as long as they operate in "national politics". "Placing", he writes, "should be interpreted broadly to mean through the electoral process... or by a direct act of designation (when the party has no electoral competition)." Thus contradictory social practices as "designating" and "electing", opposition (as in loyal opposition) and plotting are tucked under the same categories. But this is vacuous. [Kenneth Janda, A Conceptual Framework for the Comparative Analysis of Political Parties (Beverly Hills, California: Sage Publications, 1970), pp. 83-84].

49. With of course the dubious exception of The Gambia and Botswana. However in both countries the dominant parties are so strong that they have not relinquished power since independence. As such they have no reason to eliminate the other parties for their challenge is almost nil. See for example John A. Wizeman, "Multi-Partism in Africa: The Case of Botswana", African Affairs, 76, No. 302 (January 1977), pp. 70-79.

50. Immanuel Wallerstein, Africa: The Politics of Independence (New York: Vintage Books, 1961), p. 163. In the 1971 edition he adds an epilogue wherein he characterizes his statement as made in "a moment of great optimism and renewal, both in Africa and the United States". (p. 169)

51. B.O. Nwabueze, Presidentialism in Commonwealth Africa (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1974), pp. 215-254.
52. A. James Gregor, "African Socialism, Socialism and Fascism: An Appraisal", The Review of Politics, 29, No. 3 (July 1967), pp. 324-353.
53. Norman N. Miller, "The Rural African Party: Political Participation in Tanzania" American Political Science Review, 64, No. 2 (June 1970) pp. 548-572; see also R.S. Morgenthau, Political Parties in French-Speaking West Africa (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1970), p. 341.
54. Victor Levine, Political Leadership in Africa (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1967), p. 24.
55. Irene L. Gendzier, Frantz Fanon (New York: Vintage Books, 1973), p. 222.
56. H. Bienen, Tanzania: Party Transformation and Economic Development (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1970), p. 66.
57. Aristide R. Zolberg, "The Structure of Political Conflict in the New States of Tropical Africa" American Political Science Review, 62, No. 1 (March 1968), p. 72. It may be of interest to note that Zolberg considered African political parties as "creating political order." [Aristide R. Zolberg, Creating Political Order: The Party-States of West Africa (Chicago: Rand McNally, 1966)]. But two years later, he wrote that "the most salient characteristic of political life in Africa is that it constitutes an almost institutionless arena with conflict and disorder as its most prominent features" [Aristide R. Zolberg, "The Structure of Political Conflict...", p. 70]. He explains this by simply falling back on explanations such as "The politicization of Primordial Ties" [p.73], "The Inflation of Demands...by civilian employees of government, men in uniform, and youths." [p. 74]. In other words, he makes an empiricist reading of African social practices which in its discourse structures "primordial ties" as non-political and "demands" as aggregates thereby explaining African political events as mimetic practices, i.e. as "politicization" of primordial ties and "inflation" of demands. [See above chapter VII]. No wonder then he sees Africa as an "institutionless arena". Thus when he criticizes the use of the term "party" as involving reification, it is not because he tries to tease out the African practices, meanings and purposes carried by the "party" but it is because he considers it as a mimetic practice, as a practice in a "political system of an un-integrated country" which has, according to Zolberg, "one modern, the other residual" sectors. [Creating Political Order, p. 131]. Thus we end up with the reification of the "modern" and the "residual". Zolberg practices what he chastises.
58. James S. Coleman and Carl G. Rosberg, Jr., eds. Political Parties and National Integration in Tropical Africa (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1964), p. 676.
59. Edward V. Schumacher, Politics, Bureaucracy and Rural Development in Senegal (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1975), p. XIX.

60. Christian P. Potholm, Four African Political Systems (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1970), p. 52.
61. Rupert Emerson, Political Modernization: The Single Party System (Denver: University of Denver Press, 1964), p. 30.
62. Joseph Ki-Zerbo, "African Personality and the New African Society", in Independent Africa, ed. William J. Hanna (Chicago: Rand McNally, 1964), p. 57.
63. Kenneth L. Adelman, "The Zaïrian Political Party as Religious Surrogate", Africa Today, 23, No. 4 (October-December 19), pp. 47-58.
64. Thomas Hodgkin, Nationalism in Colonial Africa, (London: Oxford University Press, 1957), p. 144.
65. Dennis Austin, Politics in Ghana (London: Oxford University Press, 1964); David E. Apter, Ghana in Transition
66. It must be remembered that "mass" is a term that applies to the aggregate of isolated individuals created by politics dominated by capitalist market moralities. See W. Kornhauser, The Politics of Mass Society (New York: Free Press, 1959).
67. K. N'Krumah, I Speak of Freedom (New York: Praeger, 1961), p. 161.
68. T. Hodgkin, op.cit., p. 160; see also Thomas Hodgkin, African Political Parties, pp. 50 ff.
69. T. Hodgkin, Nationalism in Colonial Africa, p. 160.
70. T. Hodgkin, African Political Parties, pp. 15-16.
71. Sigmund Neumann, Modern Political Parties (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1956), p. 404; R.L. Sklar, op.cit., pp. 474 ff.
72. R.L. Sklar, op.cit., pp. 379-442, pp. 442-474.
73. C.S. Whitaker, op.cit., p. 408.
74. Ibid, p. 421, p. 455.
75. Ibid, p. 455.
76. Ibid, p. 467.
77. Ibid, p. 414.
78. B.V. Dudley, Parties and Politics in Northern Nigeria (London: Frank Cass, 1968), p. 303.

79. Ibid.

80. True, Dudley sticks a reservation to his claim. He writes that "while it is not suggested that the terminology here advocated may not be open to objections, it is contended that as defined they are the least objectionable." [p. 303]. Of course, from the point of view of the Weberian tradition they are least objectionable. But this is a stand rooted in the questionable claim that political practices in Nigeria are amenable to discourses external (Weberian) to them.

81. H.L. Bretton, Power and Politics in Africa (Chicago: Aldine Publishing Co. 1973), p. 4. For more conflicts of interpretation, see N. Kasfir, The Shrinking Political Arena: Participation and Ethnicity in African Politics (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1976); Selwyn Ryan: "The Theory and Practice of African One-Partyism: The CPP Re-examined" Canadian Journal of African Studies, 4, No. 2 (Spring 1970), pp. 145-172; Goran Hyden and Colin Leys, "Elections and Politics in Single Party Systems: The Case of Kenya and Tanzania" British Journal of Political Science, 2, No. 4 (1972), pp. 389-420; C.J. Gertzel, The Politics of Independent Kenya (London: Heinemann, 1970); Ken Post, The Nigerian Federal Election of 1959 (London Oxford University Press, 1963); P.H. Gulliver, ed. Tradition and Transition in East Africa: Studies of the Tribal Element in the Modern Era (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1969); D. Borkensha, Social Change at Larenth Ghana (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1966); A. Gupta, "Political Theory and the One-Party States of Tropical Africa", Political Science Review, 15, No. 2-4 (April-December 1976), pp. 26-39.

82. K. Janda, op.cit. Janda studies 150 political parties in 50 countries. The political parties are identified as political parties in terms of formal and abstract organizational characteristics.

83. Roberta E. McCowan and Robert E. Kauffman, "Party System as a Comparative Analytic Concept in African Politics". Comparative Politics, 6, No. 1 (October 1973), pp. 47-72. They conclude that "the party system is not a relevant variable". This may be true. But they do not at all illuminate the reader on what the political party is and why it failed, if it has, in Africa.

84. Thomas Hodgkin, African Political Parties (Hammondsworth: Penguin, 1961), p. 169.

85. Alasdair MacIntyre, "The Essential Contestability of Some Social Concepts", Ethics, 84, No. 1 (October 1973), p. 2.

86. Ibid.

87. John N. Gray, "On the Contestability of Social and Political Concepts", Political Theory, 5, No. 3 (August 1977), p. 332.

88. John Dunn and A.F. Robertson, Dependence and Opportunity: Political Change in Ahafo (London: Cambridge University Press, 1973), p.187.
89. Stanley Diamond, In Search of the Primitive (New Brunswick, N.J.: Transaction Books, 1974), p. 3.
90. L.S. Senghor, On African Socialism (New York: Praeger, 1964), pp. 93-94.
91. K. N'Krumah, Consciencism (London: Heinemann, 1964), p. 69.
92. M. Minogue and T. Molloy, eds. African Aims and Attitudes: Selected Documents (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1974), pp. 101-102.
93. S. Touré, Le Leader Politique Considéré Comme le Représentant d'une Culture, no. 24-25 (février-mai 1959), pp. 104-116.
94. J.K. Nyerere, "Ujama" in African Socialism, eds. W.H. Friedland and C.R. Roseberg (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1964), p. 246.
95. M. Minogue and T. Molloy, op.cit., pp. 63-190; G.C. Mutiso and S.W. Rohio, eds. Readings in African Political Thought (London: Heinemann, 1975) pp. 3-87, pp. 453-649; see also N. Tutashinda, "Les Mystifications de l'Authenticité" La Pensée, 175 (juin 1974), pp. 68-81.
96. Touré writes that "La Révolution culturelle doit devancer et préparer la Révolution politique, économique et sociale". In Indépendances Africaines: Idéologies et Réalités, Yves Benot (Paris: Maspero, 1975) quoted on page 43. Translation is mine.
97. L.S. Senghor, "Problématique de la Négritude", in Présence Africaine, No. 78, 2^e trimestre (1971), pp. 3-27.
98. M. Minogue and T. Molloy, op.cit.; G.C. Mutiso and S.W. Rohio, op.cit.
99. G.G. Baeta, ed. Christianity in Tropical Africa (New York: Oxford University Press, 1968); G. Balandier, Sociologie Actuelle de l'Afrique Noire (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1963); J.R. Crawford, Witchcraft and Sorcery in Rhodesia (New York: Oxford University Press, 1967); D. Forde, ed. African Worlds: Studies in the Cosmological Ideas and Social Values of African Peoples (London: Oxford University Press, 1954); I.M. Lewis, ed. Islam in Tropical Africa (London: Oxford University Press); J. Middleton and M.A. Murry, ed. Witchcraft and Sorcery in East Africa (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1963); Marc Augé et al, La Construction du Monde (Paris: François Maspero, 1974); J.F. Barré, Pouvoir des Vivants Langue des Morts (Paris: François Maspero, 1977); Les Fleurs du Congo, suivi de commentaires par Gérard Althabe (Paris: François Maspero, 1972).

100. Herbert F. Weiss, Political Protest in the Congo (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1967); Norman R. Miller, "The Rural African Party: Political Participation in Tanzania" American Political Science Review, 64: 2 (June 1970), pp. 548-572; B. Callaway, "Local Politics in Ho and Aba" Canadian Journal of African Studies, 4: 1 (Winter 1970), pp. 121-144.
101. B. Callaway, op.cit., p. 121.
102. Harvey Glickman, "Traditional Pluralism and Democratic Processes in Mainland Tanzania", in Socialism in Tanzania, 2 vols. eds. Lionel Cliffe and John S. Saul (Nairobi: East African Publishing House, 1972), 1: 139-140.
103. N.N. Miller, "The Political Survival of Political Leadership" in L. Cliffe and T.S. Saul, ed., op.cit., pp. 145-153.
104. A.I. Richards, "Some Mechanisms for the Transfer of Political Rights in Some African Countries", Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland, LC (1960) pp. 178-179.
105. Robert I. Rotberg and Ali A. Mazrui, eds., Protest and Power in Black Africa (London: Oxford University Press, 1970).
106. Jean-Pierre Dozon, "Les Mouvements Politico-Religieux: Synnetismes, Messianismes, Neo-Traditionalismes" in La Construction du Monde, ed. Marc Augé (Paris: Maspero, 1974), p. 81.
107. Melville, J. Herskovits, The Human Factor in Changing Africa (New York: Vintage, 1962), p. 428.
108. Thomas Hodgkin, Nationalism in Colonial Africa (New York: New York University Press, 1957), p. 95.
109. Aristotle, The Politics, translated by T.A. Sinclair (London: Penguin Classics, 1962) Book 1.
110. For an excellent discussion of this point see James W. Fernandez, "Bantu Brotherhood: Symmetry Socialization and Ultimate Choice in Two Bantu Cultures" in Kinship and Culture, ed. Francis L.K. Hsu (Chicago: Aldine, 1971), p. 363.
111. J.O. Akintunde, "Nigerian National Character" in Odu, no. 9 (January 1974), p. 110.
112. Pierre Erny, L'Enfant et son Milieu en Afrique Noire: Essais sur l'Education Traditionnelle (Paris: Payot, 1972).
113. Marc Augé, ed., Les Domaines de la Parenté (Paris: Maspero, 1975); Jack Goody, ed. Kinship: Selected Readings (Hammondsworth: Penguin Books, 1971); Paul Bohannan and John Middleton, Kinship and Social Organization (New York: Natural History Press, 1968); J. Goody, Comparative Studies in Kinship (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1969).

114. Marc Augé, Pouvoirs de Vie, Pouvoirs de Mort (Paris: Flammarion, 1977), p. 17. On the principle of inequality which informs African social practices see: Jacques Maquet, The Premise of Inequality in Rwanda (London: Oxford University Press, 1961); Jacques Maquet, Power and Society in Africa (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1971); Cheikh Tidiane Sy, La Confrérie Sénégalaise des Mourides (Paris: Présence Africaine, 1969); Ladislav Holý, Social Stratification in Tribal Africa (Prague: Academia, 1968); Max Gluckman, Order and Rebellion in Tribal Africa (New York: Free Press, 1963); Max Gluckman, Politics, Law and Ritual in Tribal Society (New York: New American Library, 1965); Lloyd A. Fallers, Inequality: Social Stratification Reconsidered (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1973); Michael Crowder and Ikime Obaro, eds. West African Chiefs (New York: Africana Publishing, 1970).

115. M.J. Herskovits, "Freudian Mechanisms in Primitive Negro Psychology" in Essays Presented to C.G. Seligman, Evans Pritchard et al. (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1934), pp. 75-84. See also M. Ly, Introduction à une Psychoanalyse Africaine (Paris: Le François, 1948); O. Soce, Contes et Légendes d'Afrique (Bruxelles: Nouvelles Editions Latines, 1962); D. Paulme, ed. Classes et Associations d'Age en Afrique de l'Ouest (Paris: Plon, 1971); I. Sow, Psychiatrie Dynamique Africaine (Paris: Payot, 1976); I. Sow, Les Structures Anthropologiques de la Folie en Afrique (Paris: Payot, 1978). In the latter work, I. Sow writes:

"En aucun cas, le père ne saurait être un rival pratique. Ce qui n'empêchera pas qu'il y ait, au moins, virtuellement, conflit de générations (diachronie); mais ces conflits, manifestes ou latents, de type diachronique, ne sauraient avoir d'autre fondement que celui correspondant à la volonté de prendre le pouvoir politique total, afin d'assurer de nouveaux lieux culturels. Décidément, jeune Oedipe africain, ne saurait être l'Oedipe libidineux, incestueux par narcissisme et individualisme. Jeune Oedipe africain est politique ou il n'est point." [p. 135, emphasis added].

116. M.C. et Ed. Ortigues, Oedipe Africain (Paris: Union Générale d'Editions, 1973), pp. 109-110. It may be of interest to note that the historical nature of African traditions as well as the historical specificity of the African family and the original psycho-social processes of maturity it is part of is recognized fully in the field of African psychiatry. See I. Sow, Les Structures Anthropologiques de la Folie en Afrique Noire. He writes:

"...contrairement à tant de publications qui ont été faites sur le problème de l'acculturation, nous pensons que les sociétés africaines sont, depuis des siècles (plus d'un millénaire pour certaines d'entre elles...) des sociétés transitionnelles, proprement historiques." [p.22].

For the discussion regarding the African family and psycho-social maturity in African societies, see also: A.H. Ba, Aspects de la Civilisation Africaine (Paris: Présence Africaine, 1972); T.A. Lambo, ed. First Pan-African Psychiatric Conference: Abeokutu (Nigeria) (Lagos: Oxford University Press, 1961); R. Bastide, Sociologie des Maladies Mentales (Paris: Flammarion, 1965); 2e Colloque Africain de Psychiatrie, Dakar (Paris: Audecam, 1968); J.C. Carothers

The African Mind in Health and Disease: A Study in Ethnopsychiatry (Geneva: World Health Organization Geneva Monograph #7, 1954); M. Gluckman, Custom and Conflict in Africa (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1955); F. Laplantine, L'Ethnopsychiatrie (Paris: Ed. Universitaires, 1973).

117. Georges Balandier, Political Anthropology, translated by A.M. Sheridan Smith. (New York: Vintage Books, 1970), p. 69. See chapter 3, "Kinship and Power" for an interesting discussion of kinship relations as power relations.

118. F. O. Olisa Awogu, Political Institutions and Thought in Africa (New York: Vantage Press, 1975), pp. 62-67; D.A. Strickland "Kinship and Slavery in African Thought: A Conceptual Analysis" Comparative Studies in Society and History, Vol. 18, No. 3 (July 1976), pp. 371-394.

119. F. O. Olisa Awogu, op.cit., pp. 26-29. See also: Max Gluckman, Politics, Law and Ritual in Tribal Society (Chicago: Aldine, 1965), pp. 123-169, 216-268; Max Gluckman, ed. Essays on the Ritual of Social Relations (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1962)

120. Pierre Erny, op.cit., p. 107.

121. Marc Augé, Pouvoirs de Vie, Pouvoirs de Mort, p. 87.

122. J. Maquet, op.cit.

123. John Beattie, Bunyoro: An African Kingdom (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1960).

124. S.F. Nadel, "The Kede: A Riverine State in Northern Nigeria" in African Political Systems, eds. M. Fortes and E.E. Evans Pritchard (London: Oxford University Press, 1940).

125. J. Kenyetta, Facing Mount Kenya (London: Martin Secker and Warburg, 1933).

126. John Beattie, op.cit., p. 12.

127. Obafemi Awolowo, Path to Nigerian Freedom (London: Faber and Faber, 1947), p. 64.

128. Africa, no. 78 (February 1978) pp. 9-12.

129. Quoted in Adda B. Bozeman, Conflict in Africa (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1976), p. 264.

130. The comparative literature identifies African "elites" metonymically, as I have already shown in chapter VII. As such comparativists have not been able to conceptualize the nature of the political leadership in African political practices. And yet the crucial distinction between "intermediary" and "non-intermediary" elites in the political lives of Africans and the clarification it brings about regarding contemporary political leadership and policies in Africa has been forcefully painted by African novelists, playwrights and poets. George Awoonor-Williams writes:

"And our songs are dying on our lips.
 Standing at hell-gate you watch those who seek admission
 Still the familiar faces that watched and gave you up
 As the one who had let the side down.
 'Come on, old boy, you cannot dress like that'
 And tears well in my eyes for them
 Those who want to be seen in the best company
 Have abjured the magic of being themselves
 And in the new land we have found
 The water is drying from our towel."

[George Awoonor-Williams, "We have Found a New Land" in Rediscovery and Other Poems (London, Ibadan: Oxford University Press, 1964), p. 10]. Soyinka brings out this distinction in his play the Kongi's Harvest where the "organizing secretary" of Kongi's party (the "intermediary elite") is opposed to the Oba Danlola (the "non-intermediary elite"). The former is depicted as totalitarian (as bringing development to the people) while the latter, although a traditional leader, is depicted as experiencing the questions of the people. [Wole Soyinka, Kongi's Harvest, (Ibadan: Ibadan University Press, 1967)]. One finds the same distinction made by p'Bitek in his Song of Lawino (Nairobi: East African Publishing House, 1967), by Aubrey Kachigwe, No Easy Talk (London: Heinemann, 1965), in the beautiful and realistic novel by Oumane Sembene, God's Bits of Wood (New York: Doubleday, 1970). The distinction between "intermediary" and "non-intermediary" elites is more powerful and fruitful than the comparative political science distinction between "modern" and "traditional" elites or the radical distinction between "elites" and "masses". African "intermediary" elites show in theory and practice a belief in the miraculous nature of external intervention and foreign aid. The French, the Americans, the Russians, the Cubans and the Specialized Agencies of the United Nations are seen as the primary sources of solutions for the internal problems of African polities. To be in power is primarily lived by them not as being members of a government for and the people but as being intermediaries between the people and these external forces.

131. C.B. Macpherson, "The Economic Penetration of Political Theory: Some Hypotheses" Journal of the History of Ideas, xxxix, No. 1 (January - March 1978), p. 102; Richard Ashcraft, "Economic Metaphors, Behavioral and Political Theory: Some Observations on the Ideological Uses of Language" The Western Political Quarterly, xxx, No. 3 (September 1977), pp. 313-328.

132. Ibid, pp. 317-319.

133. Ibid, p. 318.

134. B. Marie Pernibam, "Homo Africanus: Antiquus or Oeconomicus? Some interpretations of African Economic History" Comparative Studies in Society and History, 19, No. 2, 1977), pp. 156-178. See also François Pouillon, ed. L'Anthropologie Economique (Paris: Maspero, 1978).
135. W. Mitchell, Sociological Analysis and Politics: The Theories of Talcott Parsons, (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1967), p. 161. He writes:
- "...an underdeveloped nation that wishes to industrialize will have to give up its particularistic, diffuse ascriptive, affective orientations at least at the levels of value and social structure if not personality, if it is to initiate and operate an industrial order. In their places will have to come greater degrees of universalism, functional specificity, achievement performance, and affective neutrality."
136. Caroline Hutton and Robin Cohen, "African Peasants and Resistance to Change: A Reconsideration of Sociological Approaches" in Beyond the Sociology of Development, ed. Ivar Oksdal. (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1975), pp. 105-139; see also Alexander Eckstein, "Individualism and the Role of the State in Economic Growth", Economic Development and Cultural Change, 6: 1 (January 1958), pp. 81-87; David C. McClelland, The Achieving Society (Princeton: Van Nostrand Co., 1961).
137. V.C. Uchendu, "The Passing of Tribal Man: A West African Experience", Journal of Asian and African Studies, 5, No. 1 (1970), p. 59.
138. Colin Leys, Underdevelopment in Kenya (London: Heinemann; 1977), p. 181.
139. A. Papelasis, L. Mear and I. Adelman, Economic Development: Analysis and Case Studies (New York: Harpers & Brothers, 1961), p. 170; Charles P. Kindleberger, Economic Development (New York: McGraw Hill, 1965), pp. 21-22; B. Higgins, Economic Development: Principles, Problems and Policies (New York: W.W. Norton Co., 1959), pp. 255-256.
140. E. Wayne Nafziger, African Capitalism (Stanford: Hoover Institute Press, 1977), p. 9.
141. Ibid, p. 192.
142. Ibid, p. 193.
143. P. Hill, Migrant Cocoa-Farmers of Southern Ghana (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1963), p. 82.
144. E. Wayne Nafziger, op.cit., p. 193.
145. Ibid

146. Issa G. Shivji, Class Struggles in Tanzania (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1976), pp. 1-29; Mahmood Mamdani, Politics and Class Formation in Uganda (London: Heinemann, 1977). See below my discussion of the Leninist discourse on African political parties. The difficulty of class analysis with regards to African polities seems to have given rise to an apologetic "marxism" of the existing socio-political-economic order of countries such as Guinea, Zambia, Tanzania. These countries are assumed to follow a "non-capitalist road to development." The surprising result is that a "marxist" theory which justifies and legitimates the "intermediary elite" is being elaborated. The interesting situation is that both the American discourse of "development" and the Soviet discourse of "development" address themselves to the intermediary elites of Africa. For the Soviet literature on this question, see V.L. Tyagunencko, ed. Industrialization of Developing Countries (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1973) and V.F. Stanis, ed. The Role of the State in Socio-Economic Reforms in Developing Countries (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1976).
147. I. Davies, African Trade Unions (London: Penguin, 1966), p. 132.
148. Arthur Tuden and Leonard Plotnicov, eds., Social Stratification in Africa (New York: Free Press, 1970), p. 21.
149. W.E. Smith, ed. African Ideas of God (London: Oxford University Press, 1950); W.H. Sangree, Age, Prayer and Politics in Tiriki, Kenya (London: Oxford University Press, 1966); A. Raponda-Walker, R. Sillans, Rites et Croyances des Peuples du Gabon (Paris: Présence Africaine, 1962); I.M. Lewis, ed. Islam in Tropical Africa (London: Oxford University Press, 1966); J.S. Mbiti, op.cit., T.O. Elias, The Nature of African Customary Law (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1956). Indeed, Ogot writes "that the traditional religions have histories which are closely interwoven with the social and political organizations of the different African societies [and that] as the latter changed, new religious ideas were either produced from within or borrowed from without to deal with the new situation" [Quoted in T.O. Ranger and I.N. Kimambo, eds. The Historical Study of African Religion (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1972), p. 9].
150. Basil Davidson, The Africans (London: Penguin, 1973), p. 115.
151. John S. Mbiti, op.cit. See also the interesting works, in this respect of V.W. Turner, Schism and Continuity in an African Society: A Study of Ndembu Village Life (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1957); Max Gluckman, "The Logic of African Science and Witchcraft" in Witchcraft and Sorcery, ed. M. Marwick (Hammondsworth: Penguin Books, 1975), pp. 321-332. For the concept of political magic see infra, footnote 166.
152. P.C. Lloyd, Africa in Social Change (Hammondsworth: Penguin, 1967), p. 254. See also T.O. Ranger and I.N. Kimambo, op.cit.
153. Ibid, pp. 254-255

154. E.J. Bingle, "The World Mission of the Church: A Survey" Quoted in The Human Factor in Changing Africa, Melville J. Herskovits (New York: Vintage Books, 1962), p. 186.

155. Gordon Mackay Haliburton, The Prophet Harris (London: Longman, 1971); Willy de Craemer, "A Sociologist's Encounter with the Tamas" in Journal of Religion in Africa, VIII, fasc. 3 (1976); G. Balandier, Sociologie Actuelle de l'Afrique Noire (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1971); Sinda Martial, Le Messianisme Congolais et ses Incidences Politiques (Paris: Payot, 1972).

156. Sheila S. Walker, "Religion and Modernization in an African Context: The Harrist Church of the Ivory Coast", Journal of African Studies, 4, No. 1 (Spring 1977), p. 78.

157. Ibid, p. 84.

158. Johannes Fabian, "Kazi: Conceptualization of Labour in a Charismatic Movement Among Swahili Speaking Workers" Cahiers d'Etudes Africaines, XIII (MCMLXXIII), pp. 293-326; Willy de Craemer, op.cit.

159. Ibid, p. 303

160. Ibid, p. 319

161. Ibid, p. 316

162. Ibid, p. 313

163. Willy de Craemer, op. cit. pp. 153-174.

164. D.E. Ideniboye, "The Idea of an African Philosophy - The Concept of 'Spirit' in African Metaphysics" in Second Order, 11, No. 1 (January 1973), p. 83.

165. Bolaji Idowu in an unpublished paper quoted by D.E. Ideniboye, Ibid, p. 88.

166. Adda Bozeman, Conflict in Africa, p. 31 uses the expression "political magic" in a very restricted sense as the use of magic in politics. Because she does not investigate the intersubjective meanings that support its manifestation she tends to simply present it as an ahistorical manifestation of the irrational. This of course does not in any way enlighten our understanding of African political practices. It simply tends to reinforce the old-age perception of things African as the dark side of Western rationality. Nor should the concept of "political magic" be confused with Apter's concept of "political religion". [David Apter, "Political Religion in the New Nations" in Some Conceptual Approaches to the Study of Modernization, pp. 193-232]. Apter associates political religion with the "mobilization system" which he sees as rooted in transcendental symbolism. What we have here is in fact a translation for the "new nations" of Weber's study of the relationship between

the Protestant Ethic and capitalism. But as L. Adele Jinadu has persuasively argued, "political religion" for Apter is but "a perverse form of ideology" which is seen as one of the identifying differences between mobilization and reconciliation regimes. [L. Adele Jinadu, "Ideology, Political Religion, and Modernization: Some Theoretical and Empirical Explorations" African Studies Review, Vol. XIX, No. 1 (April 1976), pp. 119-137] Jinadu points out that (a) the "distinction between mobilization and reconciliation regimes is untenable in the African context" [p.125] and (b) that "although it may be acceptable to draw an analogy between ideology and religion, that does not justify the equation of the one with the other" for the term "religion" will become conceptually vacuous if it is applied to anything that produces cohesion, confers identity, and provides an individual with purpose in life." [p. 126]. Which Apter does in his characterization of political religion. [D. Apter, pp. 214-232]. See also James L. Peacock, Consciousness and Change (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1975), pp. 89-91. The concept of "political magic" on the other hand articulates a practice of politics which considers this as a relationship of force between unequals where the force is seen as originating from a realm external to the context of the relationship.

167. E.E. Evans-Pritchard, Witchcraft, Oracles and Magic Among the Azande (London: Clarendon Press, 1937). It is important to remember that Evans-Pritchard considered magic, sorcery and witchcraft as social relations and not as signs of primitiveness.

168. Adda B. Bozeman, Conflict in Africa, pp. 214-227, pp. 259-275; P.C. Lloyd, Africa in Social Change (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1967), pp. 244-258; John Middleton and E.H. Winter, eds., Witchcraft and Sorcery in East Africa (New York: Praeger, 1964); C.W. Hobley, Bantu Beliefs and Magic (London: Longman, 1938); John S. Mbiti, African Religions and Philosophy.

169. Selwyn Ryan, "The Theory and Practice of African One Partyism: The CPP Re-examined" Canadian Journal of African Politics, 4, No. 21 (Spring 1970), pp. 163-164. One may be tempted to compare him to Mackenzie King. But they are not comparable. For N'Krumah, the practice of magic is a practice already present in the experiential universe of Ghanians and as such "acceptable" in Faye's sense, whereas for King, the practice was a private practice in the sense that it was not an accepted mode of articulating the Canadian public realm. The holophrastic dimensions of magic are totally different for N'Krumah and King.

170. Colin Leys, Underdevelopment in Kenya (London: Heinemann, 1977), p. 236. For oathing among the Mau Mau see Donald L. Barrett and Karari Njama, Mau Mau from Within (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1970), pp. 55-69, 125-132.

171. Aristide R. Zolberg, "Political Change, Conflict and Development" in Ghana and the Ivory Coast, eds. Philip Foster and Aristide R. Zolberg (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1971), pp. 33-74.

172. Gabriel Gosselin, "Ordres, Castes, et Etats en pays Serer (Sénégal): Essai d'interprétation d'une système politique en transition", Canadian Journal of African Studies, 8, No. 1 (1974), pp. 135-145; Selwyn Ryan, op. cit.; P.M. Holt, The Mahdist State in the Sudan (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1958); G. Shepperson and T. Price, Independent Africa (Edinburgh: The University Press, 1958); D. Jardine, The Mad Mullah of Somaliland (London: Herbert Jenkins, 1923); G. Bennett, Kenya: A Political History (London: Oxford University Press, 1963); C.M. Young, "The Congo Rebellion" Africa Report 10, 1 (April 1965), pp. 6-11; G. Balandier, Sociologie Actuelle de l'Afrique Noire (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1971); James W. Fernandez, "African Religious Movements - Types and Dynamics" The Journal of Modern African Studies, 2, 4 (1964), pp. 531-549; T.O. Ranger, "Connexions Between 'Primary Resistance' Movements and Modern Mass Nationalism in East and Central Africa, Part I" Journal of African History IX, 3 (1968), pp. 437-453; Part II, IX, 4 (1968), pp. 631-641; T.O. Ranger and I.N. Kimambo, op.cit.
173. For psychological type of explanations ~~of~~ such phenomena see Robert I. Rotberg, ed. Rebellion in Black Africa (London: Oxford University Press, 1971).

174. Social scientists write of "ethnicity" and "tribalism", "cultural pluralism", and "communalism" as determinants of African political practices. For example, Ross, in his study of politics in Nairobi, claims to have discovered an ethnic political culture which, according to him, permits the use of "ethnicity" as an independent variable that "explains" the "political beliefs and attitudes" of the inhabitants of Nairobi. [Marc Howard Ross, Grass Roots in an African City: Political Behavior in Nairobi (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1975), pp. 2-7]. He adds that "Political interests are often defined in terms of tribal or communal interests and do not extend beyond them." [ibid., pp. 134-135]. Now such an approach is ahistorical and asocial. It is analogous to the splitting practiced by linguistic relativists. The comparativist splits the social practices of the subjects he studies into political and non-political. The non-political is identified as "ethnicity". One is thus confronted with two sub-totalities, separated a priori from each other. One of them, ethnicity here, is invested with a causative power over the other sub-totality, the political. When the in-advance separated sub-totalities are brought together we have a causal pseudo-political explanation which in fact reduces politics to the non-political and makes the latter, ethnicity here, a mysterious entity endowed with a causative power. One should perhaps point out that this scientific explanation, which makes "ethnicity" an input, is one that the political actors of Africa share in the majority. Therefore the criticism here applies to them also. But there is a big difference. And that is, the political scientist is, by the very project of knowledge, required to uncover the hidden meanings in the practice of political actors. Thus, that the political scientist comes to a conclusion which in fact is the starting point of many African politicians' activities is already a state of affairs that calls for questioning. To consider the so-called tribe as something external to politics can in fact be seen as tantamount to claiming the political party in the West as something external to politics. A tribe is, like the political

party, a political institution, a different one to be sure. For like the political party, it embodies a certain image of political man and political life."

175. One of the crippling consequences of the metonymic discourse of comparative politics is the total exclusion of what Africans express as their ideal of the good polity in their political practices and struggles. The metonymic discourse posits as the ideal polity that which is the source of the synecdoches of comparative politics - the West.

176. That social intentions are not fully translated into observable phenomena, that they are not fully realized in the practices and institutions that embody them, that they exist, in many cases, embodied in distorted expressions, does not and cannot preclude the possibility of bringing them out to the level of our understanding in order to recognize the reasons of why they are realized the way they are.

177. John H. Weeks, Among Congo Cannibals (London: Seeley, Service & Co. 1913).

178. Aidan W. Southall, "The Illusion of a Tribe" in Journal of Asian and African Studies, 5, No. 1 (1970), p. 34.

179. C. Young, Politics in the Congo: Decolonization and Independence (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1965) chapter 11; R. Cohen and John Middleton, eds., From Tribe to Nation (Scranton: Chandler, 1970); M.M. Green, Ibo Village Affairs (London: Sidgwick and Jackson, 1947); M. Frankel, Tribe and Class in Monrovia (London: Oxford University Press, 1964).

180. P.L. Van den Berghe ed. Africa: Social Problems of Change and Conflict (San Francisco: Chandler, 1965); K. Little, West African Urbanization: A Study of Voluntary Associations in Social Change (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1965); A. Southall, ed. Social Change in Modern Africa (London: Oxford University Press, 1961); P. Mayer, Townsmen or Tribesmen (London: Oxford University Press, 1961).

181. P.J. Foster, Education and Social Change in Africa (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1965), p. 301.

182. Leonard Plotnicov, "Rural-Urban Communications in Contemporary Nigeria: The Persistence of Traditional Social Institutions" Journal of Asian and African Studies, 5, No. 1 (1970), p. 80.

183. Ibid, p. 81.

184. P.C. Lloyd, ed. The New Elites of Tropical Africa (London: Oxford University Press, 1966).

185. Colin Leys, Underdevelopment in Kenya (London: Heinemann, 1977), p. 199. He writes:

"The foundations of modern "tribalism" were laid when the various tribal modes and relations of production began to be displaced by capitalist ones, giving rise to new forms of insecurity, and obliging people to compete with each other on a national plane for work, land and ultimately for education and other services seen as necessary for security."

186. J.O. Akintunde, "Nigerian National Character: A Political Science Perspective", Odu, New Series, No. 9 (January 1974), p. 99.

187. G.L. Hazoumé, Idéologies Tribalistes et Nation en Afrique (Paris: Présence Africaine, 1972), p. 92. See for discussion pp. 69-112.

188. For a discussion of this view see J. Maquet, L'africanité Traditionnelle et Moderne (Paris: Présence Africaine, 1966); C. Wauthier, L'Afrique des Africains (Paris: Seuil, 1964); John S. Mbiti, African Philosophy and Religion; Basil Davidson, The Africans (Hammondsworth: Penguin, 1973); Colin M. Turnbull, Tradition and Change in African Tribal Life (New York: Avon, 1966); Cheikh Anta Diop, L'Unité Culturelle de l'Afrique Noire (Paris: Présence Africaine, 1959); F. Olisa Owogu, op.cit.

189. Karl W. Deutsch, "Social Mobilization and Political Development" in Political Modernization, ed. Claude E. Welch, Jr. (Belmont: Wadsworth Publishing Co., 1971), p. 157.

190. Clifford Geertz, "The Integrative Resolution" in Old Societies and New States, ed. Clifford Geertz (Glencoe, Ill.: The Free Press, 1963), pp. 109-110.

191. Rupert Emerson, "The Problem of Identity, Selfhood and Image of the New Nations" Comparative Politics, 1, No. 3 (April 1969), p. 304. He quotes J. Day.

192. Leo Kuper and M.G. Smith, ed., Pluralism in Africa (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1971)

193. Quoted in B. Davidson, Which Way Africa? (Hammondsworth: Penguin 1971) p. 182. It reads:

"'We are', a TANU official commented to me in December 1967, nine months after Arusha, "at war with ourselves" - a war," he explained "between personal and community interests."

194. R. Cohen, "Traditional System in Africa", in The African Experience, 2 vols. ed. John Paden and E. Soja. (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1970), 1: 37-61.

195. Report of the Presidential Commission and the Establishment of a One-Party State (Dar es Salaam: Government Printing, 1965), p. 14.

196. Ruth Schachter Morgenthau, Political Parties in French-Speaking West Africa (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1970), p. 341.
197. J.S. Mbiti, African Religions and Philosophy, p. 108.
198. G.C.M. Mutiso and S.W. Rohio, ed., Readings in African Political Thought (London: Heinemann, 1975), pp. 489-490.
199. For this symbiotic understanding of the Party and the country, see also S. Touré, Towards Full Re-Africanization (Paris: Présence Africaine, 1959), p. 35.
200. A. Ahidjo, "Policy Report of the Union Camerounaise" in The Political Awakening of Africa, eds. R. Emerson and M. Kilson (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1965), p. 137.
201. "Northern Rhodesia UNIP election Manifesto, 1962" in R. Emerson and M. Kilson, op.cit. p. 117.
202. Quoted in Helge Kjekshus, "Parliament in a One-Party State: The Binge of Tanzania 1965-70" Journal of Modern African Studies, 12, No. 1 (1974), p. 31.
203. K. N'Krumah, I Speak of Freedom (New York: Praeger, 1961), p. 161.
204. James S. Coleman and Carl G. Roseberg, Jr., "African One-Party States and Modernization" in C.E. Welch, Jr., op.cit., p. 331.
205. Herbert F. Weiss, Political Protest in the Congo, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, N.J. 1967).
206. Ibid, p. 201-2.
207. Ibid, p. 201, p. 219, p. 221.
208. Ibid, p. 12.
209. Crawford Young, Politics in the Congo (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1965), p. 240.
210. Aristide Zolberg, "Ivory Coast" in Coleman and Roseberg, op.cit., p. 79.
211. Akiiki B. Mujju, "The Role of the UPC as a Party of Government in Uganda" Canadian Journal of African Studies X, No. 3 (1976), pp. 443-467.
212. J.S. La Fontaine, City Politics: A Study of Leopoldville 1962-63 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970), p. 161.

213. Roland Hindmarsh, "Uganda" in Church, State and Education in Africa, ed. David G. Scanlon (New York: Teachers' College Press, 1966), p. 156.
214. F. Olisa Awogu, op.cit., p. 180.
215. A. Gupta, "Political Theory and the One Party States of Tropical Africa", Political Science Review, 15, No. 2 (April-December 1976), pp. 26-39.
216. Quoted in A. Zolberg, One Party Government in the Ivory Coast, p. 307.
217. Peter C.W. Gutkind, The Emergent African Urban Proletariat (Montreal: Occasional Paper Series, No. 8 Centre for Developing Area Studies, 1974), p.18.
218. Selwyn Ryan, op.cit., p. 157.
219. Alvin Magid, op.cit., pp. 93-99.
220. D. Apter, Ghana in Transition, p. 288.
221. Ibid, p. 289.
222. Ibid, p. 292, p. 305.
223. Ibid, pp. 339-340.
224. Ibid, p. 322.
225. Leo Kuper, and M.G. Smith, op.cit., see the essays by M.G. Smith i.e. chapters 2, 4 and 13, and the essays by Leo Kuper, chapters 1, 5 and 14.
226. Martin Legassick, "The Concept of Pluralism: a Critique" in African Social Studies, ed. P.C.W. Gutkind and P. Waterman (London: Heinemann, 1977), pp. 44-51.
227. Robert Melson and Howard Wolpe, "Modernization and the Politics of Communalism: A Theoretical Perspective" American Political Science Review, 64, No. 4 (December 1970), pp. 1112-1130; Robert Melson and Howard Wolpe, Nigeria: Modernization and the Politics of Communalism (Michigan: Michigan State University Press, 1971).
228. Robert Melson and Howard Wolpe, "Modernization and the Politics of Communalism: A Theoretical Perspective", p. 1112.
229. Ibid, p. 1113.
230. F. Tonnies, Community and Society (Gemeinschaft and Gessellschaft) Translated and edited by Charles P. Loomis (East Lansing: The Michigan State University Press, 1957); H.H. Gerth and C. Wright Mills, eds. Max Weber: Essays in Sociology (New York: Oxford University Press, 1946).

231. L. Kaba, "Guinean Politics: A Critical Historical Overview" The Journal of Modern African Studies, 15, No. 1 (1977), pp. 25-45.
232. K. N'Krumah, Towards Colonial Freedom (London: Heinemann, 1962), p. xv.
233. Goran Hyden and Colin Leys, "Elections and Politics in Single Party Systems: The case of Kenya and Tanzania", British Journal of Political Science, 2, No. 4 (1972), p. 409.
234. A. Zolberg, One Party Government
235. Okwudiba Nnoli, "The Nigeria-Biafra Conflict", Joseph Okpaku, op. cit., p. 127.
236. Selwyn Ryan, op. cit., p. 150. See also Douglas E. Ashford, The Elusiveness of Power: The African Single Party State (Ithaca: Center for International Studies, 1965).
237. Joe Samoff, Tanzania, Local Politics and the Structure of Power (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1974), p. 188.
238. William Tardoff, Government and Politics in Tanzania, (Nairobi: East Africa Publishing House, 1967), p. 148.
239. M. Bienen, Tanzania, op. cit., p. 235.
240. As I have mentioned many of these in the course of my study, I will not repeat them here.
241. A.R. Zolberg, "The Structural of Political Conflict in the New States of Tropical Africa", pp. 73-74.
242. Gwendolen M. Carter, ed. African One-Party States (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1962); Lionel Cliffe, ed. One-Party Democracy: The 1965 Tanzania General Election (Nairobi: East African Publishing, 1967); Jama S. Coleman, and Carl Rosberg, Jr. eds. Political Parties and National Integration in Africa (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1964).
243. Certainly, the evolution into one-party or one-man state in Africa has not taken place without a certain amount of repression, execution and persecution. But the interesting point is that, with a few exceptions, those who were opposed to such developments were opposed not to the principle but to the fact that they were not themselves the representatives of the "total institution" or the "total institution" itself. That is, in many cases, the opposition in Africa struggles for the permutation of inequalities, oppression and violence, and not for the eradication of these. See Dennis Austin's discussion of Politics in Ghana 1946-1980 (New York: Oxford University Press, 1966), and the hard-hitting books of Stanislaw Andreski, The African

Predicament (New York: Atherton Press, 1969) and Henry L. Bretton, Power and Politics in Africa (Chicago: Aldine Publishing, 1973).

244. Thomas Rasmussen "Political Competition and One-Party Dominance in Zambia" The Journal of Modern African Studies, 7, No. 3 (1969), pp. 407-424.

245. Quoted in B.O. Nwabueze, Presidentialism in Commonwealth Africa (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1974), pp. 224-225.

246. T. Rasmussen, op.cit., p. 418.

247. Even in the case of Multi-party states, there is a dominant one-party which for all intents and purposes is the one party. Such is the case in Senegal, Liberia, Malawi.

248. B.J. Dudley, op.cit., p. 82. See also, pp. 117, 161.

249. Jean Lohisse, La Communication Tribale (Paris: Editions Universitaires, 1974).

250. A. and M. Fisher, Slavery and Muslim Society in Africa (New York: Doubleday, 1970); D.A. Strickland, op.cit.

251. Robin Horton, "African Traditional Thought and Western Science" in Rationality, ed. Bryan R. Wilson (New York: Harper & Row, 1970), pp. 112-131.

252. Ogot writes:

"And hence the African converts tended to look upon Christianity as just another version of the Vision of Reality. It was probably superior... [for] It was certainly a ladder to social, political and economic advancement. For instance only Christians (and a few Muslims) could become chiefs, and the clerks and interpreters were recruited from among those who had been to mission schools and were therefore regarded as Christians. Hence, many Padhola became Christians because it paid to be one." [Bethwell A. Ogot, "On the Making of a Sanctuary: Being Some Thoughts on the History of Religion in Padhola" in T.O. Ranger and I.N. Kimambo, p. 133].

253. Marc Augé, Pouvoirs de Vie, Pouvoirs de Mort, p. 90.

254. M.M. Green, Ibo Village Affairs (New York: Praeger, 1964).

255. This it seems goes a long way to explaining the inevitability of violence in African elections as soon as there is more than one party on the scene.

256. That the expulsion from the official political party leads to political oppression of the expelled is one which is attested to by the political history of Guinea, Ghana, Kenya, Tanzania, Zaire, Zambia. For a

good discussion of the intolerant nature of African politics see Henry L. Bretton Power and Politics in Africa.

257. Nyerere, "The Arusha Declaration: 29 January 1977" in Freedom and Socialism, J. Nyerere (London: Oxford University Press, 1968), p. 248.

258. For an example see H.N. Nwosu, "The Concepts of Nationalism and Right to Self-determination: Cameroon as a Case Study" Africa Quarterly, XVI, No. 2 (1976), pp. 1-26.

259. Ali Z. Mazrui, "The English Language and Political Consciousness in British Colonial Africa" Journal of Modern African Studies, 4, No. 3 (1966), p. 310.

260. Thomas Hodgkin, "A Note on the Language of African Nationalism" in St. Anthony's Papers, No. 10, ed. Kenneth Kirkwood (London: Chatto and Windus, 1961), pp. 22-40.

261. Ibid, p. 39.

262. W.H. Whiteley, "Political Concepts and Connotations" in Kenneth Kirkwood, p. 18.

263. Peter P. Ekeh, "Colonialism and the Two Publics in Africa: A Theoretical Statement" Comparative Studies in Society and History, 17, No. 1 (1975), pp. 92-93.

264. K. Kaunda, A Humanist in Africa (London: Longman, 1966), p. 110.

265. Quoted in J.S. Saul, "The Politics of Socialism in Tanzania", Socialism and Participation: Tanzania's 1970 National Election, The Election Study Committee (Dar es Salaam, Tanzania Publishing House, 1974), p. 52.

266. S.C. Dube, "Bureaucracy and Nation-Building in Transitional Societies", J.L. Finkle and W. Gable, op.cit., p. 325.

267. M.F. Lofchie, "Representative Government, Bureaucracy, and Political Development: The African Case" Journal of Developing Areas, 2, No. 1 (October 1967), pp. 37-56.

268. D.J. Murray, "The Impact of Politics on Administration" in Nigerian Administration and its Political Setting, ed. Adebayo Adedeji (London: Hutchinson Educational Ltd. 1968) p. 14. "The administration is the focus of a great deal of political activity" and he adds, "a great deal of political activity in this society is directed to trying to induce one part or other of the Administration to act in a desired way".

269. Bernard Charles, "Un Parti Politique Africain: le Parti Démocratique de Guinée" Revue Française de Science Politique, 12, No. 2 (June 1962), pp. 312-359.

270. J. Waiguchu, "The Politics of Nation-Building in Kenya: A Study of Bureaucratic Elitism" in The Administration of Change in Africa, ed. E.P. Morgan (New York: Dunellen, 1974), pp. 196-202.
271. E.W. Lefever, Spear and Spectre: Army, Police and Parliament in Tropical Africa (Washington: The Brookings Institution, 1970), p. 21.
272. Ibid, pp. 10-20, pp. 67-72.
273. L.W. Pye, "Armies in the Process of Modernization", in The Role of the Military in Underdeveloped Countries, ed. J.J. Johnson (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1962), pp. 86-88.
274. W.F. Gutteridge, The Military in African Politics (London: Methuen, 1969); J.M. Lee, African Armies and Civil Order (London: Chatto and Windus, 1969); E.F. Lefever, op.cit.
275. Africa, no. 81 (May 1978), pp. 12-13. General Achaempong accuses the "party" regime as having fostered corruption and tribalism. He himself was ousted in July 1978 and replaced by Lt. Gen. Fred Akuffo who accused Achaempong of corruption [Africa, No. 84 (August 1978), pp. 13-16]; see also Jeune Afrique No. 918 (28 Juillet 1978), pp. 22-26; Claude Welch, Jr. Soldiers and State in Africa (Evanston, Ill.: Northwestern University Press, 1970); J.M. Lee, African Armies and Civil Order (New York: Praeger, 1969); Ruth First, Power in Africa (New York: Pantheon, 1970); Samuel Decalo, Coups and Army Rule in Africa: Studies in Military Style (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1976).
276. V.I. Lenin, What is to be Done? (New York: International Publishers, 1939); V.I. Lenin, "Left Wing" Communism, An Infantile Disorder (New York: International Publishers, 1939).
277. S. Touré, Toward a Full Re-Africanisation, op.cit., p. 91; Henry Bienen, "Political Parties and Political Machines in Africa", The State of the Nations, ed. Michael F. Lofchie (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1971), pp. 195-225; Africa #66 (February 1977) pp. 10-11; Africa #15 (November 1972) pp. 12-16, Afrique-Asie #120 (1er-14 novembre 1976) pp. 43-47; Afrique-Asie #130 (7-20 mars 1977) pp. 20-24.
278. Amílcar Cabral, L'Arme de la Théorie (Paris: Maspéro, 1975), p. 234.
279. A. Sékou Touré, L'Afrique et la Révolution (Paris: Présence Africaine, n.d.), p. 131.
280. V.G. Solodovnikov, A.B. Letnev and P.I. Manchika, Political Parties in Africa: A Soviet Study (Springfield, Va: National Technical Information Service, 1971).
281. Ibid, pp. 5-69.
282. Ibid, pp. 107-242.

283. S.P. Huntington, Political Order in Changing Societies p. 342. See pp. 334-343 on his discussion of the relevance of the "bolshevik concept of the political party" (p.340) for modernizing societies.

284. V.G. Solodovnikov et al, op.cit., p. 23.

285. Ibid p. 69. PAIGC is Partido Africano da Independenci da Guine e Cabo Verde. FRELIMO is Frente de Libertacao de Mozambique. MPLA is Movimento Popular de Libertacao de Angola.

286. Ibid, p. 170.

287. Ibid, p. 116.

288. Ibid, p. 177. Note the singular term "movement".

289. A. Cabral, op.cit., p. 215.

290. A.S. Touré, op.cit., p. 132.

291. I.I. Potekhin, African Problems (Moscow: Nauka Publishing House, 1968), p. 40, p. 41.

292. M. Amada, op.cit., p. 73. Emphasis added.

293. Diakitè Claude Abou, Guinée Enchainée (no date and no publishing house mentioned).

294. V.G. Solodovnikov et al, op.cit., p. 109.

295. Ibid, p. 110, p. 119, pp. 120-121.

EPILOGUE

THE MORAL AND POLITICAL PRECONDITIONS OF COMPARISON

This thesis has shown, I believe, that in mainstream comparative discourse an asymmetrical linguistic relationship is established between the knower and the known. This asymmetrical linguistic relationship is not only a matter of difference between the methodical talk of the comparativist and the unscientific speech of the profane. This unequal linguistic relationship expresses certain political and social relationships.

The comparativist is, in his linguistic practice, present as if he were in possession of a transcendental language which permits him to be above the practices being compared and indeed above the manifold activities of comparing. His linguistic practices are recognized as bearing and realizing certain intentions. Moreover, they are made to define the functions of the speech of the studied and set the boundaries of the said, and consequently, of the unsaid of the narrations of the subjects under study. The speech of the studied is deprived of its normative dimension. His validity claims are reduced to information or data; his political experiences are randomized and what he says and does are claimed to be visible through a language that excludes reciprocity and an active concern with his political life. This takes place through the comparativist's linguistic practice which, in the very process of making the language of the compared extrinsic to his political practice, constitutes itself, not only as a set of conventions and rules about the use of sounds and marks, but also as a foundation of a specific interpretation of the political world. In the work of the comparativist, the compared's social practices are derived from the discursive activities of the comparativist. In this process, the comparativist is simultaneously constituted as an autonomous being. The asymmetrical linguistic relationship is thus more than an epistemological asymmetry. It is also an expression of an anthropological and socio-political stratification in as much as the compared are not subjects of

recognition and reciprocity. Indeed, this asymmetry articulates the abolition of the other as a difference, not because his presence is accounted for, but rather because he is dealt with as if he were a bundle of overt behaviour. The studied appears as a natural object through a linguistic practice which presents the comparativist as a human subject.

The comparativist's linguistic practice thus denies recognition and reciprocity, and excludes the possibilities of interlocution, common speech and common understanding. This denial and this exclusion are constitutive of the linguistic practices of the comparativist. But such denials and exclusions are also constitutive of the language of power. They are the mark of what Barthes characterizes as "langage encratique".¹ According to Barthes, a "langage encratique" is a language that denies recognition, reciprocity and the dialogical nature of speech by transforming the other possible interlocutor into a silent partner who is derived uniquely from the discourse that articulates him as a mute object. Such a language excludes the illocutionary aspect of the speech of the studied (and of the oppressed) and makes the meaning of their speech lie in the force of the comparativist's (the dominator's) speech. The latter, by positing their discourse as the universal and objective discourse, and by founding its universality and objectivity on the denial and exclusion of the other's discourse, affirm the discursive (and political) hierarchy thus created as a natural state of affairs. The "langage encratique" thus naturalizes domination.

Being a "discours encratique", the instrumentalist language of comparative politics objectifies the discourses and the narrations of the people of the so-called modernizing polities and thus abolishes from its discourse the questions of justice and the nature or the ideal of society in which men would like to live. In this sense, comparative politics contributes to the existing distorted and distorting relationships of domination.

This thesis leads to the conclusion that comparative political discourse, if it is to be non-distorting, requires the recognition of the other as a historical subject. Such a recognition obliges us to consider the social practices of the compared as expressive practices whose scientific knowledge demands the achievement of common speech and common understanding. This implies that comparison is unavoidably rooted in the extension of speech in order to come to terms with the foreign experience of others. But this reaching out is guided by the telos of speech - understanding - and therefore, it is a reaching out which brings the comparativist into conflicts of meanings, understandings and practices. The extension of speech does not censor or occlude these conflicts. It recognizes them as historical tasks that require for their resolution alteration of practices. This means that the reaching out itself is a historical task. In other words, comparability is a historical question and not a natural phenomenon. Indeed, the contemporary search for cross-cultural comparative concepts and statements is rooted in the specific history of the type of world-unity achieved now - a world-unity articulated by certain economic, political and human denials and conflicts. The project of comparative politics is therefore a historical project which in its contemporary practice is a one-sided, other-denying interpretation of this historical project. We can then say that the scientificity of comparative discourse is a denial of the historical nature and meanings of the contemporary world-unity, that is, a denial of its interpretational context.

This interpretational context is not "a system of explanation derived from an extrinsic model."² It is not independent of the ways a person is constituted as a member, through his speech and practices, in a particular society. The interpretational context is rooted in the practices of subjects. This applies to both the compared and the comparativist. In the present historical period, an equal sharing and articulation of the social world, an equal exercise of self-expression, do not exist at either the national or international level. As such, the interpretational context

of comparative discourse cannot but have as its essential moment of its constitution the denial of self-expression, of freedom, justice and equality. This denial, which makes social practices opaque and destructive, is not external to common speech. Common speech itself is informed and articulated by it. It is no ~~secret~~ that the majority of the people of the ~~polities~~ studied by comparativists are in no position to manifest their "communicative competence" - the power to say the right thing at the right time and the power to be listened to. In the very language they speak they are present as dominated people while questioning, in their very act of speaking, the oppressions they are subjected to. As C. Mueller has pointed out:

In the process of acquiring words, concepts, symbols and syntactic structures, the individual confirms his knowledge and language by testing them against his environment. As a result he unintentionally assimilates the political and social values or reference dimensions of his group. Language, then, or more precisely the code a group shares, is context specific.³

This is not a matter of a "wrong" learning of language that would be rectified by simply learning it in a better way, or by simply learning the right "code". According to Mueller, "change from one code to another implies...not only a change of the language spoken but also a change of the social context".⁴ Given the contemporary international order and its structures of political, economic and cultural dominations and conflicts, this means that, however much the comparativist tries to instrumentalize and purify his language, the intercultural or the international "context of communication" will articulate comparative discourse as a manifestation of a distorted distribution of communicative competence.

Consequently, comparativists cannot extricate themselves from the existing relations of domination, because they and their interlocutors are engaged in the articulation and production of these relations of dominations, which are, we should not forget, social practices. That the interlocutors are not aware of this, that, in the words of Herder, they "even come to love the chains which fetter (them) and even adorn them with

flowers"⁵ does not change the distorted nature of the communicative context, but rather indicates the force of distortion of that communicative context. Men can speak of their own conditions without being aware that their speech articulates them as oppressed or oppressors. To point this out is however not sufficient for they cannot stop being oppressed or oppressors by simply changing their words and syntax. This is true for all linguistic practices including comparative politics. This is true for all men including political scientists. A change in speech which does not implicate a change in practice is not an extension of speech but repetition. The consequence of this is that comparison, as an extension of speech aimed at understanding the foreign experience of others, requires alterations of economic, political, cultural practices that pervert and distort such an aim. Given, however, the contemporary world order, both at the national and international level, comparativists cannot affirm the existence of intersubjective and institutional conditions that make possible the extension of speech and the realization of universality and objectivity. If such conditions are lacking, and they do in fact lack, then comparative discourse which claims to be objective and universal is a discourse that legitimates the existing distorted world order, at all levels, as the natural condition of men. That is, comparativists would be tacitly claiming and legitimating that "justice, truth and freedom" are not the necessary intersubjective conditions of knowledge and free communication. But this only leads to a systematically distorted knowledge which generates, in the words of Habermas, a "pseudo-communication" which "produces a system of reciprocal misunderstandings, which are not recognized as such due to the pretense of pseudo-consensus".⁶ The failures of three decades of "development" oriented by and even based on social scientific theories, scientific methods of community organization, economic restructuring, administration, forced urbanization, reeducation programs, foreign aid, technical aid, T-groups, "N-ach" boosting schools stand as a testimony to the reality of this "pseudo-communication".⁷ In Africa more people have died of famine and political violence in the seventies than in the previous decades, "development" oblige.⁸

We do not, at the present, have institutional frameworks, be they economic, political, cultural, that make possible "unimpaired self-representation", the "acknowledgement of the self-representation of the Other" and the exclusion of "one-sided obliging norms".⁹ And yet, without such institutional frameworks and the social relations they make possible, the ideas of "truth, freedom and justice" cannot be apprehended nor brought closer to their social realization. In the absence of such institutional frameworks and relations, the search for knowledge about men and their politics has then a fundamental task, which is to contribute to the realization of such frameworks and relations. This is of course a moral political task. But this does not mean that disengaging oneself from this task is to become an "empiricist" and to produce a politics-free political science. It is in fact participating in a moral-political task - but in a distorted manner. That is, if political scientists practice as if they can produce scientific, universal and objective cross-cultural law-like generalizations in the absence of such institutional frameworks and relations, necessary for the realization of "truth, freedom and justice", they are producing a discourse of power that legitimates as inevitable and necessary the suppression of "truth, freedom and justice".¹⁰ They are extending the politics and morals of domination.

This means then that the comparison of political practices in the contemporary world, if it is not to be the production of a systematically distorted knowledge and pseudo-communication, requires the fulfillment of certain political, moral and economic relations as necessary conditions. Where these conditions do not exist, the practice of the comparativist must be guided by an interest in the creation of a socio-historical context where the speech of the interlocutors is not fashioned, and then accepted as natural, by the relations of domination. Such a guiding interest is imperative because in a context of domination, comparative extensions of speech cannot but be discourses of systematically distorted knowledge of ourselves and the other, and, consequently, discourses that legitimate the conditions that make possible this systematically distorted knowledge.

For example, the cross-cultural survey is not, in the context of the contemporary world, an extension of speech, but an affirmation of the existing relations of domination as natural relations, in as much as the data produced by cross-cultural surveys are considered to be "brute-data" and are not related to their interpretational context, which is also a context of domination wherein these "brute data" are expressions of relations of domination articulating a distorted context of communication.

This does not mean that comparison is not possible. Rather, it means that in our historical period, comparison cannot bypass the requirement of disclosing the relations of domination and the forces that create and perpetuate them. It means that in this very process of disclosing the relations of domination, comparative politics is constructing an interpretational context that prepares the ground which can make possible an extension of speech and interlocution, thus permitting, in comparison, the "mutuality of unimpaired self-representation" of both the comparativists and the compared. In this sense, comparative politics, of all the social sciences, can become a truly emancipatory social science, for it is rooted, albeit unconsciously, in the recognition of the unity of the world.¹¹ Given the political, economic and social disparities, hierarchies and conflicts that constitute this unity, comparative politics that is conscious of its contemporary interpretational context, conditions and meanings can bring about, in the words H.P. Dreitzel uses to define an emancipatory social science,

...a methodological integration of theory and praxis, or, to be precise, an integration of the empirical research with practical political involvement...(for)... Only in this way can it be scientifically demonstrated that social research is not a methodologically directed focalization by the subject on a given object, but rather a symbolically mediated understanding - a methodologically directed communication between subjects, the goal of which is to bring about emancipatory change in all participants.¹²

It is in this context that one must consider the study of African politics in comparative politics. African political practices express profound and acute conflicts of meanings and practices. In the resolution of these conflicts, neither the international situation nor the student of

politics can be seen as external elements. The international situation is involved in as much as Africa is integrated into the capitalist-socialist world. This integration is a process that profoundly affects the nature, direction and intensity of the political synergies that are taking place within each country. The student of politics is not external to this world. For in the very act of studying African politics he inserts himself into the international situation where the power relationships between nations is also a struggle for the universalization of one's political language. It is a struggle for historicity. The political scientist is confronted thus with the political struggles and synergies taking place in each country. His objectivity then cannot but be a clarification of the issues at hand. But this clarification is not some kind of a source of light external to the object that is illuminated. It is rather a clarification which gives visibility to the already present ideas and practices by relating them to each other in a way that commits him to their veracity and to the actions they entail. In other words, his clarification is an intervention in the political sphere, an extension of this which entails political practices, responsibilities and obligations. He is thus one of the political actors engaged in the historical struggles for the realization of the "good" polity, a struggle in which all people are engaged.

Given this complex historical situation and the struggles for self-definitions that are involved, one cannot but confront the reality of Africa's political life as one which is full of uncertainties. What will come out of this volatile political situation cannot be predicted. Nor can political science offer "laws" that can explain and predict political phenomena without immediately engaging the political scientist regarding the right and just political self-definitions and practices. The political scientist is involved, even when he disguises himself as a scientist, in the struggle for self-definitions and meanings (narrations). What this implies for our discipline is that comparison of different polities is a moral-political act. As such a comparison which aims to be non-distorting,

that is to say, a comparison which is not a discourse expressive of a power relationship and oppression, requires, as we have already seen, the fulfillment of certain moral and political preconditions for its realization.

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C

FOOTNOTES

1. R. Barthes, Le Plaisir du Texte (Paris: Seuil, 1973), p. 14.
2. Donald M. Lowe, "Phenomenology and History" in Phenomenology and the Social Sciences, 2 vols. ed. M. Natanson (Evanston, Ill.: Northwestern University Press, 1973), 2: 129.
3. Claus Mueller, The Politics of Communication (London: Oxford University Press, 1973), p. 14.
4. Ibid, p. 15, emphasis added.
5. F.M. Barnard, op.cit., p. 226.
6. J. Habermas, "On Systematically Distorted Communication" in Recent Sociology, No. 2, ed. H.P. Dreitzel (London: Collier-MacMillan, 1970), p. 117.
7. A Shostak, op.cit., A.R. Holmberg, op.cit., A.R. Holmberg, "The Research and Development Approach to the Study of Change", Human Organization, 17, No. 1 (Spring 1958), pp. 12-16. Holmberg's articles deal with the Vicos project. See also the report on T-groups organized at Fermeda by L.W. Doob, ed., Resolving Conflict in Africa (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1970); D.C. McClelland, The Achieving Society (Princeton: D. Van Nostrand Company, 1961) for N-ach approach to development.
8. Yves Albony, et al, Sécheresses et Famines Du Sahel (Paris: Maspero, 1975); Pierre Bonte et al, Sécheresses et Famines Du Sahel, Vol. II (Paris: Maspero, 1975). L. Cliffe, "Capitalism or Feudalism? The Famine in Ethiopia", Review of African Political Economy, 1 (1974) pp. 33-40; A.P. Lentin, "De Quoi Meurent 6,000,000 d'Africains. Dossier", Politique-Hebdo, 14 juin 1973, pp. 15-19.
9. J. Habermas, "Towards a Theory of Communicative Competence" in H.P. Dreitzel, op.cit., p. 144.
10. Ibid.
11. See chapter I, supra.
12. Hans-Peter Dreitzel, "Social Science and the Problem of Rationality", Politics and Society 2, No. 2 (Winter 1972), pp. 165-182.

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