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Abstracts

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Theatre of Emotion: A Nepalese Dramatic Art Form

Gérard Toffin

Every year, traditional Balami woodcutters, living on the edge of the Katmandu valley, in Nepal, offer ritual dramatic performances to the people of the surrounding villages. Among these, the small town of Pharping. These performances stage traditional royal sequences. Over the years, changes took place in the plot. Comic dimension fits alongside the more dramatic aspects of these stories. Emotions expressed by the comedians play a critical role in the drama, particularly when it comes to the tears wept by the princesses who witness their husbands' death. The play is highly structured and codified; religious beliefs are embedded in it. These pieces end with animal sacrifices that took place on stage. Derived from the classical Newar theatre of the Malla era (17th-18th centuries), they are the product of a persistent combination of popular traditions with learned literature.

Lévi-Strauss: Modern, Ultramodern, Antimodern

Ugo E. M. Fabietti

This article develops the idea that Lévi-Strauss' thought was shaped all at once in the encounter with structural linguistics. Nevertheless, Lévi-Strauss's readers know that his writings show blunt passages from a level of discourse that refers to the project of scientific modernity (accretion of knowledge and pursuit of generality) to one announcing the dissolution of culture into physicochemical phenomena (here defined as ultramodern level), and from these two to a language usually defined as "literary". The latter corresponds to a language which articulates the themes of loss, memory, yearning for the primitive, the concerns about the demographic and environmental transformations of the planet, and an "exaggerated" contact of cultures: themes which all persist in Lévi-Strauss' thought since its shaping as a "structuralist" one, which have been highly controversial and that could be defined as "antimodern". Accordingly, this article tries to produce a reading of Lévi-Strauss' work as articulated on three levels, which persist in Lévi-Strauss's thought since its early structuralist formation: three "musical staffs" on which his modernity, ultra-modernity and anti-modernity seem all to flow at the same time.

The Nearby Frontier: Structural Analyses of Myths of Orientalism

Andre Gingrich

This paper examines, by means of some concepts and methodological tools offered in the great œuvre of Lévi-Strauss, the mytho-logical ideologemes of certain forms of orientalism, using the example of Austria. A so-called "frontier orientalism" is contrasted against classic colonial orientalism, in order to identify its particularities. The figure of the "nearby stranger" jeopardizes the

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boundaries of the own, ever uncertain national identity and serves right-wing populists and neo-nationalists as an indispensable ingredient of their own aspirations.

Departures

Wolfgang Kaltenbacher

It was in February 1935 that Lévi-Strauss went to Brazil to teach sociology at the newly founded University of São Paolo. In the stimulating atmosphere of the city soon he struck up a friendship with the founders of Brazilian modernism, in particular with Mário de Andrade, the central figure of the avant-garde movement, who helped the young researcher to finance his expeditions into the Mato Grosso and the Amazon Rainforest. Twenty years later Lévi-Strauss wrote about this period in Brazil, after having encountered other cultures and having made other experiences. The highly reflexive narrative of *Tristes Tropiques* contains most of the topics which return in his later works and about which the authors of this volume have pondered from different perspectives. This introductory text reconstructs the principal stages of Lévi-Strauss' enterprises in Brazil and illustrates how his departure for the New World became the start of a great career.

Lévi-Strauss and Marxism

Bruno Karsenti

This paper focuses on the political meaning of structuralism from the point of the view of the unusual link between Marxism and Buddhism established by Claude Lévi-Strauss in the final pages of *Sad Tropics*. Marxism appears here as a Western attempt to start a process of social transformation that is traditionally embedded in the core of Eastern cultures. Comparing these different worlds allows Lévi-Strauss to identify an internal yet unrecognized differentiation of Western culture, and provides a remarkable example of how the structural method applies to deep cultural analysis.

The Prophet of Anthropology

Marino Niola

No anthropologist has been as influential outside the own discipline as Lévi-Strauss. From philosophy to history, from politics to literary criticism, from linguistics to sociology, from psychoanalysis to poetry, from art to contemporary music, the œuvre of the author of *Tristes Tropiques* has fallen on these fields like a beneficial rain, giving them new life. Such a great influence has several reasons. The design of a wide-ranging anthropological project, its philosophical implications, an immense and precious erudition which allows to build connections between the most different fields of humanistic and scientific knowledge, and lastly a great writing, rich of literary vibrations. All the great questions of the present, from the world's overpopulation to cultural relativism, from the resurgence of the myth to the return of localisms, from the war of the veil to genetic manipulations, all subjects appear in the œuvre of Lévi-Strauss, always in a provocative and anticipatory formulation which represents the precious heritage of the last of the classics.

From Lévi-Strauss to Wittgenstein: The Idea of 'Imperfectionism' in Anthropology

Francesco Remotti

According to the author, the most important lesson of Claude Lévi-Strauss at the epistemological level is the interpretation of anthropology as a transversal knowledge: its innovative definition

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of structure goes in this direction. The failure of its structuralism is however due to a strong and intolerable reduction of the wealth of aspects and dimensions of the ethnographic experience and the purpose to predispose a frame of limited possibilities (closed system). The author proposes to rehabilitate the thesis of anthropology as a transversal (cross-cultural) knowledge resorting to Wittgenstein's idea of family resemblances: a flexible approach (open system) that fits the needs and characteristics of anthropological research.

Implicit and Explicit Linguistics

Domenico Silvestri

In this paper the affiliation of Lévi-Strauss with the functional structuralism of Trubetzkoy and Jakobson is defined as "explicit linguistics" and the consonance with the works of Franz Boas is also thrown into relief. As "implicit linguistics" is defined his accurate attention to lexical facts, in the case of questions of nomenclature and in particular of the terminology of kinship. As this regards, Lévi-Strauss perfectly captures not only the differences between linguistic systems and anthropological systems, but also their respective integration. In this way he comes to surmount the model itself of the functional structuralism of a certain linguistics which is too predictive. Finally, in homage to the great scholar, two examples are proposed of the integration of linguistics "without adjectives" and anthropology "without adjectives" in relation to the etymology of gr. *anthropos*, seen from the point of view of a specific sociolinguistic hierarchy and within the frame of the Indo-Mediterranea area, and of the Indo-European name of the woman of marriageable age (gr. *gyné*) seen in the perspective of the innovative conditions of exogamous marriage.

The 'Unconceivable Humankind' to Come: A Portrait of Lévi-Strauss as a Demographer

Wiktor Stoczkowski

For a half a century, Claude Lévi-Strauss multiplied statements about the demographic situation of humanity and its anthropological consequences. Those statements, often seen as shocking, were interpreted as a kind of aberration which defied rational understanding. Current opinion held was that the analysis of such idiosyncratic ideas overstepped the competence of anthropologists and historians. In fact, as shown in my text based on newly discovered archival materials, quite the opposite is true. Firstly, Lévi-Strauss became interested in demography very early in his career. Secondly, his conception of demographic trends and their effects was based on scholarly knowledge. Thirdly, far from being an idiosyncratic extravagance, his demography corresponded to widely shared concerns, central to the cultural policies of UNESCO, in which Lévi-Strauss was involved as Secretary general of the International Social Science Council (from 1952 to 1961). These facts are necessary if one is to grasp the cosmological outlook underlying the works of Claude Lévi-Strauss. The principles of Lévi-Straussian cosmology, in which demography plays an important role, are not reducible to the axioms of his structural theory. Without taking this cosmological infrastructure into account we are unable to correctly understand the moral message that Lévi-Strauss endeavoured to deliver, which concerned the extreme dangers humanity could face in the near future.

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