

Mediating Roles in Ritual and Symbolism: Northwest Mexico and the Pacific Northwest

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RÉSUMÉ

Les pouvoirs reliés à la personnification cérémonielle, aux pitreries rituelles, au fripon, et à d'autres rôles mythico-rituels sont présentés comme enracinés dans leur capacité de médiation. Les modes d'analyse développés par Levi-Strauss, Leach et Victor Turner sont utilisés pour étudier les rôles des protagonistes dans les cérémonies de Pâques des Mayo, du Nord-Ouest du Mexique, et d'autres rôles analogues au Sud-Est et au Nord-Ouest de l'Amérique du Nord. On y distingue les médiations et les médiateurs métaphoriques et métonymiques. On détermine le rôle principal du médiateur dans la transformation mythique et rituelle.

INTRODUCTION

Several years ago I (Crumrine 1968, 1969, and 1974) considered alternative explanations of ceremonial impersonation and ritual clowning, especially in regard to the Mayo Indian Easter ceremonial, Northwest Mexico. Although psychological and sociological explanations are valid and productive, culturological understandings seemed to be a potential and little developed area for research. Since that time a number of thought-provoking studies have been published or called to my attention. Among others, Alfonso Ortiz (1972) and Louis Hieb (1972) have generated additional insights into Pueblo Indian ritual drama and ritual clowning, Victoria Bricker (1973) has examined ritual humour in Chiapas, Mexico, and Fernando Benitez (1970) has published detailed information on the Cora Indian ritual of Northwest Mexico. Edmund Leach

(1961, 1964) and Mary Douglas (1966) have examined cultural categories and taboos associated with category mediators. Laura Makarius has summarized a great deal of data upon ritual clowns, tricksters and cultural heroes, and blacksmiths (Makarius 1968, 1970, 1973) and has published a rather sharp attack (Makarius 1972) on my *Note* discussing the use of the mask in Mayo ritual impersonation (Crumrine 1968/69). Although her reduction of these roles to an original violation of blood and incest taboos is questionable, her attempt to discover parallels unifying these ritual roles and mythical actors provides a very useful direction for future research. Rather, in my opinion (Crumrine 1974), the enduring power of such ritual roles and mythical characters is rooted in their liminal nature or ability to mediate oppositions and link and fuse conceptual categories and discrete classes. Thus they embody a means for the generation of transformations. This same theme runs through a number of articles which appear in the Symposium, "Forms of Symbolic Action" as organized by Victor Turner (Spencer 1969) and appears in his own publications (V. Turner 1967, 1969, 1974). In this paper we shall continue the discussion of the structure, meaning and function, of mediating figures. The dramatization of mediation exemplifies broadspread if not universal distribution among human groups. The problem, why this process often involves clown and trickster type figures and highly ritualized behaviour, provides the theme of this paper.

In order to suggest the importance of this ritual role, we turn to a transformational formulation as suggested by Lévi-Strauss (1963) and applied by the Marandas (1962 and 1971), Mary Foster (1973), Crumrine and Macklin (1974), among others. I refer to the "law" of mythology as suggested by Lévi-Strauss (1963:228).

...Although it is not possible at the present stage to come closer than an approximate formulation which will certainly need to be refined in the future, it seems that every myth (considered as the aggregate of all its variants) corresponds to a formula of the following type:

$$F_x(a) : F_y(b) : F_x(b) : Fa^{-1}(y)$$

Here, with two terms, a and b , being given as well as two functions, x and y , of these terms, it is assumed that a relation of equivalence exists between two situations defined respectively by an inversion of *terms* and *relations*, under two conditions: (1) that one term be replaced

by its opposite (in the above formula, a and a^{-1}); (2) that an inversion be made between the *function value* and the *term value* of two elements (above, y and a).

With repeated examination of the article, Lévi-Strauss' complex concern with the achievement of mediation and the role of the mediating process and the mediating figure, expressed as b in his "law", becomes clear. In achieving the mythic transformation, b plays the anomalous role which involves the incorporating power of a somewhat positive function, F_y , and a somewhat negative function, F_x . Throughout the article Lévi-Strauss discusses a range of mediating roles and mythic figures such as mist, scalp, corn smut, ashes, "Ash-Boy", Cinderella, and several series of mediating figures as well as deities or paired supernaturals which are capable of taking on both positive and negative attributes. Thus, like Ash-Boy and Cinderella, the trickster also is a mediator.

Since his mediating function occupies a position halfway between two polar terms, he must retain some of that duality — namely an ambiguous and equivocal character. (Lévi-Strauss 1963:226)

For the purpose of this paper, the "law" of mythology focuses our attention upon the unusual role played by the mediating figure. This focus embodies one of the major contributions of the transformation formulation of Lévi-Strauss.

The Marandas (1971:36-37) also have emphasized similar permutational and mediational aspects of this model or "law" of mythology.

...In this formula, (b) is the mediator; (a) is the first term, which expresses, in connection with the socio-historical context, a dynamic element (specifying functions f_x) under the impact of which the item unfolds. The other function, f_y , which is opposed to the first one, specifies (b) in its first occurrence. Thus, (b) is alternately specified by both functions, and thus can mediate opposites.

While analogy is specifically 'linear,' Lévi-Strauss' formula is 'non-linear,' i.e., it implies a permutation of roles of functions and of terms, since (a), which is given as a term, becomes, once inverted, a^{-1} , a sign of function, and y , which is given a sign of function, becomes, (y), i.e., a term which is the final outcome of the process. The permutation is necessary, according to our interpretation, to account for structural patterns in which the final result is not merely a cyclical return to the point of departure after the first force has been nullified but a helicoidal step, a new situation different from the initial one not only in that it

nullifies it but also because it consists of a state which is more than a nullification of the initial. In other words, if a given actor (a) is specified by a negative function f_x (and thus becomes a villain), (b) is capable of assuming in turn also the negative function, which process leads to a 'victory' so much more complete that it proceeds from the 'ruin' of the term (a) and thus definitely establishes the positive value (y) of the final outcome. This time as a term, (y) is specified by a function which is the inverse of the first term. To put it metaphorically, the inverse of, say, a loss which expressed the actual impact of a negative power is not only a loss nullified or recuperation, but a gain so that

$$fa^{-1}(y) > f_x(b).$$

However, the Manrandas utilize the formulation in a much more dynamic rather than static sense. Going somewhat beyond the original article by Lévi-Strauss they see the formulation as implying a permutation and a process which leads to a "victory", a "gain", or achievement which is greater than a simple negation of the original state. Very simply they emphasize that state one is transformed through a permutational mediating process into state two. In his original article Lévi-Strauss suggests that myth is both dynamically bounded by time and exists beyond time as an underlying structure as revealed in his permutational model or "law" of mythology. While utilizing the structural formulation, the Marandas have suggested a more satisfactory means of incorporating the dynamic aspect of mediation and the mediating role in achieving the resolution of opposed end states. Thus the mediating role and anomalous figure of folk narrative receives a great deal of emphasis in their formulation of the mythic transformational process. In this paper we shall apply these insights to the analysis of ritual and of ritual and mythic mediators.

THE DATA: THE RITUAL CLOWN AND TRICKSTER

In several other contexts, I have discussed the form, meaning, and role of the Mayo Indian masked impersonator, the Chapakoba (see Crumrine 1968, 1968/69, 1969, 1970, 1974). In many ways, the youth who wear the Chapakoba masks and take part in the Easter ceremonial in the lower Mayo River Valley, Sonora, Mexico, can be seen as participating in a rite of passage from youth to manhood. As the result of a cure from a serious illness, they

promise to serve for three years as Chapakobam. They act as the soldiers (soldados) in the Parisero sodality which consists of a set of ranked statuses; the Pilato (head), Capitan (captain), Kabo (corporal), Flautero and Tampalero (flute and drum players), and Chapakobam. Their role mediates a range of oppositions and condenses a number of opposed traits and behaviours into a single fascinating character, the Chapakoba. Their grotesque appearance as well as their behaviour adds to spectator interest and excitement. Besides impersonating and burlesquing very serious aspects of Mayo life, such as praying, curing, marriage, and sexual intercourse, they are responsible for maintaining traditional norms and ritual procedures. I have divided their behaviour into three major axes (see Crumrine 1969). First they are expected to protect the customs and are known as the *kostumbre ya' ura*, the chiefs of the customs. During processions they enforce the proper kneeling form, and drive horsemen and other non-participants off certain sacred procession paths. The second behavioural axis includes working on the ceremonial because the parisero sodality is responsible for its production. The Chapakobam must accomplish much of the physical labour associated with the making of the ceremonial. The most striking behavioural axis is that of ritual impersonation and burlesquing activities. First, in several complex ways the Chapakobam are associated with death and the dead. Any dead animal they may find interests them and will become a prop in their burlesquing games. Ultimately on Good Friday they are participants in the crucifixion of Christ and on Easter Saturday, they and the masks are burned up and quite literally become one type of dead. Just before the masks are burned, the impersonators are baptized, becoming men. Second, their behaviour is often backwards, which is probably symbolic of the world of the dead and is definitely symbolic of behaviour associated with witchcraft. When they shake hands or cross themselves, they use their left hands. Or they show extreme disrespect for sacred objects or occasions, for example pretending to defecate on crosses and sacred objects. Third, they often pantomime the eating of food and more often of "feces". They "gather" the "feces" by holding cans or bottles up to the anuses of other Chapakobam or participants in the procession. Fourth, sex and sexual behaviour fascinates them. Chapakobam can often be seen hugging, pressing their

masks together in kisses, dancing together, and pantomiming both human and animal sexual intercourse. Many also carry carved wooden male phalli or female nude pin-up pictures which they are happy to show to each other or to members of the processions. These burlesquing activities are definitely atypical and opposed to general mores as traditional Mayos are rather prudish about these types of behaviour. Without going into further detail about the Chapakoba role, I wish to select two of the behavioural axes or sub-axes for further discussion. In order to tie the Chapakoba figure together with other mediating roles, we shall concentrate upon the oppositions of live vs death and of sexuality vs non-sexuality (abstinence). And in fact, the latter may be a special case or a reduction of the former. Even though Makarius (1970, 1972) argues that such mediating roles originate in a violation of a blood taboo and especially the incest taboo, this seems to be a simplification of the Mayo Chapakoba figure (Crumrine 1974). Although recognizing the death of Christ and the destruction of the Chapakobam, Mayo emphasis is placed upon the cycle of crucifixion and resurrection, the funeral and return of Christ, the mediation of the life-death opposition. In spite of the Chapakobam sexual burlesques, complete sexual abstinence is expected and enforced during Easter week. Thus Christ and the Pariserom (Chapakobam) are mediating figures providing a solution to the life-death opposition and a context for two rites of passage; male initiation and the funeral ritual.

Although it is not generally possible to collect highly integrated mythical statements concerning the origin and meanings of the Mayo Easter ceremonial, the following quote represents a rather typical explanation of the Easter ritual. In this discussion which I have presented in previous contexts (see Crumrine 1973, n.d.), the material in brackets are questions which I asked and the remaining materials represent the explanations of one Mayo man.

(Where did the Chapakobam live? Aren't there stories about them?)

It is a custom, they imitate what happened with Itom Achai (Our Father God). They imitate the time when Jesus appeared and the Pilatos killed him.

(But what do the Chapakobam signify and why the masks? Why do they have this form?)

They require it because they have paint. They paint themselves on their body with red paint which symbolized the blood of Christ.

(But I still do not understand why they need the masks?)

A long time ago in that time they were like Kaifas. And Kaifas was truly very hairy. Kaifas, when Our Lord was taken prisoner, when they took him prisoner in order to kill him, Kaifas was truly very bearded, very hairy. The masks are like this, are an imitation of this beardedness.

(I do not know anything about Kaifas?)

Kaifas is God's opposite, contrary. He is God's enemy.

(He isn't the Devil?)

Exactly, he is the Devil. Kaifas is not baptized, not a Christian, he is the Devil, Lucifer.

(And does he have soldiers?)

Certainly he has soldiers.

(Are the Pariseros and the Chapakobam in his army?)

Certainly.

(Today where is Kaifas?)

Today Kaifas is ashamed because Our Lord arose from the dead at Gloria in such a manner giving life to sinners. Kaifas has retreated to the forest. His soldiers have been killed, are dead but Kaifas still lives.

(Is it possible to see Kaifas in the forest?)

Of course... Kaifas is the Devil, he is dangerous, bad. He does bad things. He tries to gain, to win, good men. It's diabolical... The Chapakobam (Pariseros) imitate the story of Itom Achai (God), of his death, burial and resurrection. In the end they ask pardon of Itom Achai. They make the ceremony of Itom Achai. They do the passion of Itom Achai.

(One year later) (When I was here last year you told me about an enemy of God. His name was Kaifas. But I still do not know who Kaifas was?)

There are two roads, a good one and a bad one. God takes the good road, and Kaifas takes the bad one.

(A long time ago, were Itom Achai and Kaifas friends?)

In that time when this world commenced, Itom Achai began to make hens and all the other things which exist. God made things correctly. The very close, very intimate friend of Itom Achai, Kaifas, began to imitate God. Kaifas began to imitate God. When El Señor

(God) made the hen, the hen saw the world and liked the world. The hen was happy, gay, because El Señor gave the hen breath. And Lucifer, this Kaifas, also began to make hen. This hen he made of clay (barro). In clay, Kaifas began to make a hen. Instead of a good hen coming out, a tecolote (owl) came out. Kaifas made an owl (mu'u Mayo). Kaifas imitated El Señor. But this was not yet the sin which Kaifas was going to commit against El Señor. This wasn't much. Nothing much because Kaifas had equal power with El Señor. He controlled equal power to that of God. Kaifas was able to use the power, but he used it for bad purposes, for evil. And El Señor made the light of day and saw everything was good. In the light of day everything was good. People, men, he made. Because he foresaw them, saw that they were going to live in the world. Kaifas also made men, people. But the people Kaifas created were just like similar to him. They were equal to Kaifas. That is to say they were the Chapakobam, the Pariserom. When Kaifas made men, they came out equal to him, that is bad. To turn to the understanding of the Good and the Bad. The Bad is to act in excess. Many, many of the men especially those of Kaifas wouldn't do because a man needs to have respect, value for all other people. One can sin with only a few words when they are about another. This danger converges in the tongue, the mouth, when a person talks of another. This is very bad, dangerous. Because to speak much about people who are not at fault, that is to say, to speak badly of a person is a sin which God will not pardon...

Following suggestions of Claude Lévi-Strauss (1963:223) that one means of mediating contradiction involves "a double set of dioscuric pairs" and of Mary Foster (n.d.) "I would wonder if they (Chapakobam) don't represent Christ", we can unravel one of the themes of this mythical statement. The divine pair of very close friends, God and the Devil (but in the Mayo case not twins) create two paired sets of natural and supernatural creatures; Christ (and man) and the Chapakobam on the supernatural level, and the hen (domesticated animals) and the owl (wild animals) on the natural level. Thus the Chapakobam represent Christ in the sense that they complete the opposition yet from the opposite direction. The members of the Parisero sodality are in the service of Christ, and their promise is to serve Him, and to make his ceremony. Some of the members of this sodality explain, "Christ became tired of this world and wished to return to the world of his father. Thus the Pariserom have permission to kill him so he may return. They have his permission to make the ceremony." The Chapakobam represent the resurrection or the means of transcending death, the

dead living. In the resurrection (Christ) and in the yearly return from the forest to political power (Pariserom), both Christ and the Chapakobam represent a "living" denial of the life/death categories.

In Leach's (1964:39) terms, the opposition between life and death is reduced to that between this world, with both life and death, and the other world with eternal life.

The gap between the two logically distinct categories, this world/other world, is filled in with tabooed ambiguity. The gap is bridged by supernatural beings of a highly ambiguous kind-incarnate deities, virgin mothers, supernatural monsters which are half man/half beast. These marginal, ambiguous creatures are specifically credited with the power of mediating between gods and men.

In the Mayo Easter ceremonial, both Christ and the Chapakobam play this mediating role (see also Leach 1961).

In referring to Lévi-Strauss' "law" of mythology, I (Crumrine n.d. and Crumrine and Macklin 1974) have tended to focus upon its transformational aspects and the transformation of the youth, who play the role of the Chapakobam, into adults. In this case the young men as Chapakobam act as the first term in the "law", Christ provides the mediating role, and the destruction of the Chapakobam and baptism of the participants as adult men produces the final resolution. However, linking the figures of Christ and the Chapakobam as mediators and focusing upon the mediational and anomalous nature of the Chapakoba role requires a basic shift in emphasis and an expansion of the formulation of the original "law" of mythology. In order to incorporate two different mediating roles, the following logical expansion is suggested. A second mediator or term is added (c), which can equally take on both relations (f_x and f_y). This produces $f_x(c)$ and $f_y(c)$. The second mediator is slightly less flexible and more elaborately modified by the transformational process. The second mediator (b) can take on both relations (f_x and f_y) but in the former case both relation and term are shifted modifying the mediator. (b) occurs as $f_y(b)$ and $f_b(x)$. The third term (a) is transformed not only from a term to a relation but also from a term to its inversion (a^{-1}). Thus the formula suggests three levels of transformation; a cyclical shift of relations, a cyclical

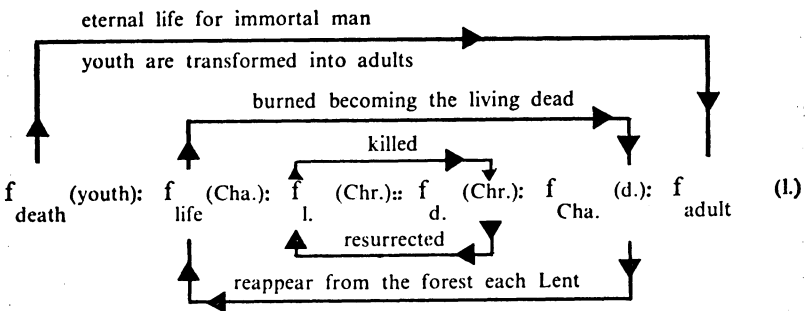
shift of relations and of term and relation, a shift of relations and a transformation in the term itself.

$$f_x(a) : f_y(b) : f_y(c) :: f_x(c) : f_b(x) : f_{a-1}(y).$$

This logically expanded formula proves useful in perceiving the structure of the Mayo Easter myth and the relations between men, Chapakobam, and Christ. Our data fit the expansion:

$$f_{\text{death}}^{(\text{mortal man, youth})} : f_{\text{life}}^{(\text{Chapakobam})} : f_{\text{life}}^{(\text{Christ})} :: f_{\text{death}}^{(\text{Christ})} : f_{\text{Chapakobam}}^{(\text{death})} : f_{\text{immortal, adult}}^{(\text{life})}$$

Mortal man faces death and youth lacks adulthood and must symbolically die and be reformed. The Chapakobam are formed and given life by the Devil and reflect him while Christ is created by God. Christ is killed by the Pariserom and returning from the dead he leaves man and goes to live with his father. Thus Christ equally represents the living and the dead. The Chapakobam are burned up by the fire, the punishment of God, and become the function of death, the living dead. Metaphorically Christ alternates between the death and life functions whereas metonymically the Chapakobam become or take on the function of death. Thus both metaphorical and metonymical mediation is involved in the anomalous roles of Christ and the Chapakobam. Through this mediation, mortal man and youth are transformed into immortals and adults, as illustrated in the following figure:



This analysis clarifies the mediational roles and rituals of the Mayo Easter ceremonial. In Leach's sense these two anomalous

figures open up the life/death binary antithesis by introducing the 'other world' which is opposed to 'this world.' The Chapakobam emerge from the mysterious world of the devil, of the woods, and of death and kill Christ, the Son of God. They have his permission to commit murder because he wishes to return to the "other world". In doing so he achieves the mediation and attains eternal life for mankind in the 'other world'. The Mayo concept, "the Easter ceremony is the funeral ritual for Christ", makes sense when the Mayo funeral ritual is compared to the Easter ritual. This comparison reveals that Christ's funeral is the archetype for all Mayo funeral ritual (see Crumrine 1964, 1974).

The "twin" deities, God and the Devil, create offspring, humans and Chapakobam. Human reproduction is fertile life producing and ultimately resulting in the birth of Jesus, due in part, to a second divine creative act. Chapakobam reproduction is unclear, however they would appear to be created by the Devil without fertile life-giving powers. Without a doubt, they act as the instrument of death and by killing Christ they mediate this world/other world opposition and make everlasting life a possibility in the other world. The "dual" sons of God and the Devil mediate the life/death opposition in two different ways which complement each other. Thus both are required and supplement each other's mediating powers. Jesus, characterized by a life-giving fertile birth, was a powerful curer during the time when he lived in the Mayo River valley. Jealous of his power, the Pariserom killed him and he went to the world of the dead. Yet early Easter Saturday morning he returned to life and went to live with his Father. Thus Christ's mediation of the life/death opposition takes the form of the cycle; life → death → life. The Chapakobam who are created from the dark dense forest areas by the Devil, become a kind of living dead and are burned up on Easter Saturday in the fire which represents the power of God, the Sun. The Chapakoba's mediation of the life/death opposition reveals the opposite form of the cycle; death → life → death. Thus both figures mediate the opposition, however in opposed cycles. Although both act as mediators of the life/death opposition, the role of the Chapakoba proves to be additionally anomalous. Returning to the suggestions of Leach (1961, 1964) the Chapakoba data reveal supporting

evidence. Leach's article (1961:132-136) "Time and False Noses" treating rites of passage, masquerade, and role reversal suggests an even more specific parallel between his argument and the Mayo data. Generally Mayos refer to the Chapakobam as Pariserom, however I tend to use the rather less common term Chapakoba to distinguish masked members from the officers of the Parisero sodality. Mayos and Yaquis, living directly north of the Mayo, also use the term Chapayeka. "Koba" in Chapakoba means head and "yeka" in Chapayeka means nose. Indeed many of the masks have long prominent noses or "false noses." The meaning of "chapa-" is unclear. Not only the term but also the masquerading and role reversal which Leach speaks of as elements of the liminal and post-liminal stages in rites of passage, exist within the Chapakoba role. According to Leach, these special rituals mediate or bridge the opposed closed categories, sacred/profane.

Mary Douglas (1966) and Leach (1964) conceive of cultural systems as composed of consistent and exclusive categories. Such categories organize the world and are learned early in life. Since categories never are perfect, the in between phenomenon is culturally denied either through strong taboos or highly sacred rituals. These taboos and rituals logically remove the anomalous from everyday life, firming up the reality of the cultural categories. Insofar as they act as anomalous figures, Christ, and especially the Chapakobam are powerful because they symbolize the mediating powers of the in between. Victor Turner develops a similar argument for "ritual symbols" (Turner 1967:19-47) and for liminal roles (Turner 1967:93-111), which I have applied to the role of Chapakoba (Crumrine 1968, 1969, and 1974). Ian Hamnett (1967) suggests that riddles involve a similar process. Riddles establish two opposed sets of classifications or categories which are mediated through the ambiguity of the answer (Hamnett 1967:381-383):

...riddles are one form of ambiguity or ambivalence, and... they can be understood in the light of the social and cognitive function of ambiguous or ambivalent utterances, concepts and actions. An ambivalent word, concept or item of behavior can be considered as belonging to any of two or more frames of references, according to the interpretation brought to bear upon it, or indeed to several or all such frames at once. It can therefore operate as a point of transition

between these different frames of reference or classificatory sets. It can, indeed, mediate between sets that are not only different, but in many aspects opposed, and in this way it can form the basis for a differing system of classification, or allow contrasting classifications and conceptual frameworks to co-exist at the same time... inconsistency, ambiguity or ambivalence may be thought of either as simply 'vague' or, what is not quite the same, as *indeterminate*. It is the second aspect that is important here. A reference is 'vague' if it points to an insufficiently specific area of discourse; and this is perhaps a kind of ambiguity. But it can be ambiguous not only because it is vague for lack of specification but also because it fails to indicate which of two (or more) references is intended, though each possible reference may be fairly specific in itself.

The Chapakoba ambiguity or ambivalence is both "vague" in some cases and "indeterminate" in others. Like riddle answers, they mediate opposed terms and frames of reference. On the other hand the figure of Christ tends towards perfect fit to specific categories and reveals indeterminacy or vacillation only between the life and death poles of that opposition. Showing a fascination for death and dead things, the Chapakobam are indeterminate, a kind of living dead. They also pantomime animal intercourse and human marriage and intercourse acting the parts of both male and female. The observer is never sure which Chapakobam represent males and which ones females until one places a rebozo (woman's shawl) over its head and portrays the female part in the "marriage ritual" and "intercourse" which follows. Appearing somewhat dull, the Chapakobam are unable to perceive the proper categories. Their clumsy attempts to take part in the sacred rituals turn the sacred occasions into profane burlesque. They are responsible for the production of the sacred Easter ceremonial, yet their clumsy impersonations turn their own ceremonial into a profane joke. Not perceiving the categories of sacred/profane and clean/dirty, they pantomime the defecation on the crosses of the Way of the Cross and pretend to eat trash or feces which they "collect" in cans from the anuses of other Chapakobam. In this sense, the role of Christ characterized by a nearly perfect fit to traditional categories, excepting the life/death one, contrasts rather sharply to the Chapakoba role which reveals indeterminacy in a number of categories: life/death, male/female, sexuality/non-sexuality, sacred/profane, clean/dirty, etc. Thus both in riddle and ritual, mediators' indeterminacy plays a crucial role.

Moving south of the Mayo along the Pacific coast of Mexico, the Cora of Nayarit also produce an elaborate Easter ceremonial with masked Judeos much like the Mayo Pariserom and Chapakobam (see Fernando Benitez 1970, Thomas Hinton 1964). As in the Mayo case, the life/death and especially the sexuality/non-sexuality oppositions are explicated in the role of the Cora Judeo.

Moving north of the Mayo area into the American Southwest, the Pueblo Indian ceremonialism also includes ritual clown figures. Alfonso Ortiz (1972), in one of the most recent articles published on the Pueblo ritual clowns, relates Pueblo world view and the ritual clown. He shows that the clown is active during lulls in the ceremony and also during solstice ceremonialism which symbolize the death and rebirth of the sun and of the ceremonial cycle. Thus the Pueblo clown seems to mediate at points of fragmentation in Pueblo world view and, in fact, at one point Ortiz (1972:160) suggests that the sacred clown almost mediates the sacred and the profane. "Perhaps one cannot go so far as to claim that the sacred clowns fuse the sacred and profane dimensions of existence, but they do at least serve to make the sacred relevant to the everyday." Also Ortiz discusses sex role reversal, erotic behaviour, gluttony, etc. in regard to Pueblo sacred clowns and their ability to mediate oppositions in the world view.

In summary, Cora, Mayo, and Pueblo sacred or ritual clowns have the power to mediate oppositions and aid in the achievements of transformation in (1) the lives of individuals and in (2) the maintenance and growth of religious and social systems. In these ways the ritual clowns show striking parallels to Oedipus and the tricksters mentioned by Lévi-Strauss.

BUKWUS, THE NORTHWEST COAST MEDIATING FIGURE

Bukwus, the wild man of the woods, proves to be an extremely interesting mediating figure among the Kwakiutl of the Northwest Coast. Diane Persson (1974) has collected and analysed the masks, rituals, and myths associated with Bukwus. Her (Persson 1974:ii) structural analysis of the myths reveals "a move from disequilibrium to equilibrium achieved by the mediating role of

Bukwus." Among other interesting hints, the most productive myth about Bukwus was collected and published by Boas (1902) and is reprinted in Persson. This myth is much too long to be presented here, however, it represents Bukwus as the head of the land of the drowned dead. He has the power of impersonating humans and of recreating Indian villages, servants, and animals. Impersonating her lover, he carries away an Indian maiden and binds her to the land of the dead by feeding her imitation salmon which, in reality, is rotten wood. An Indian man makes his way to the land of the dead and is aided by the maiden. He is warned not to eat Bukwus' food offerings and told how to escape from Bukwus' enchantments. The Bukwus has the power of driving people silly, wild, or mad. Ultimately he is rescued by his people and returns to humanity with Bukwus' secrets and songs, or, in other words, with his power. In other myths Bukwus is portrayed as a wild man eating shellfish and living in the woods. In some cases he makes bird-like sounds and gives songs and power to Indians.

Persson (1974) presents photos of many of the masks which she had available. She hoped to find a Bukwus transformation mask which would reveal the multiple personalities of Bukwus as a mediating figure. Thanks to her completed work, when I found a transformation mask in the Lipsett Collection of Vancouver, the significance of the mask was beautifully clear. This Bukwus mask transforms from a human face on the outside to a skeleton face on the inside. Thus both the mask and the figure of Bukwus mediate the life-death opposition. A Bella Coola myth presents the Wild Man of the Woods as sexually highly endowed and recounts a story almost identical to that told of the Pueblo hunch-backed flute player (McIlwraith 1948:60-61). Thus Bukwus appears to be involved as a mediator in both the life/death and the sexuality/non-sexuality oppositions. Without going into other examples of the trickster mediator, I wish simply to suggest parallels between Bukwus the trickster, the ritual clowns, and Oedipus.

Also, trickster mediating figures occur in other types of ritual narration or drama; for examples see James Peacock's work on the clown figures in the ludruck plays of Java (Peacock 1968, 1969). One of the Mayo saints, San Cayetano (see Crumrine and Crumrine

1974) is a mediating trickster figure to whom one makes a promise in reverse. He is spoken of as mestizo and very male and is said to carry a knife and enjoy the fights which sometimes occur at dances in his honour. Since dances are a part of both mestizo and Mayo life, San Cayetano bailes (dances) mediate the Mayo-mestizo opposition and provide social situations where Mayos and mestizos interact on an equal basis. Symbolically as a powerful curer, he mediates the life-death opposition, and as a mestizo male he is also involved in the sexuality-non-sexuality opposition. At San Cayetano bailes, young couples are said often to run away together so his influence is definitely not in the direction of abstinence in contrast to the Chapakobam who display sexuality but enforce abstinence.

To carry our argument one stage further, let us turn to the legendary hero, Oedipus. Although a number of the articles in *Forms of Symbolic Action* (Spencer 1969) focus upon mediating roles and related anomalous figures, Terence Turner's (1969:26-68) "Oedipus: Time and Structure in Narrative Form" deals with the specific question which we are considering. Turner objects to the position of Lévi-Strauss on the question of the time variable in myth and argues that in spite of his time-timeless concept of myth, Lévi-Strauss reduces myth to a timeless structure. According to Turner (1969:33-34) Lévi-Strauss has minimized the narrative or the story element of myth.

Traditional narrative genres such a myth, tale, and legend typically begin with an action or event that violates or mediates the structure of the prevailing order, giving rise to a situation in which actors and elements stand in ambiguous or contradictory relationships to each other. The "plot" or narrative sequence proceeds from this point through a series of permutations of the relations between these actors and elements toward a final state of equilibrium in which all elements again stand in unambiguous (synchronic) relations to each other. The beginning-middle-end phase structure of such traditional narrative genres thus manifests itself at the level of content as a dialectical alternation between synchronic order and diachronic disorder. The story is bounded at both ends by implicit or explicit assertions of synchronic order. The narrative itself, however, represents a complex temporal mediation of this framework of timeless order, necessitated by the eruption of conflict or confusion in the relations of actors or elements of the initial synchronic order. The sequence of events, in other words, takes the form of a dialectic between the antithetical forces of order

and disorder, the latter like the former taking on specific content through its concrete manifestation in the actions and events of the story. The temporal form of the narrative is thus a synthetic product of two antithetical tendencies: synchronic order and diachronic (disorderly) change.

Very generally, Turner is suggesting a mythic pattern not absolutely different from that of Lévi-Strauss. An initial situation which is then somehow negated ($F_x a$) is mediated producing a final synchronic order ($F_a^{-1}(y)$). Turner's main interest focuses upon the diachronic or mediating phases of the myth ($F_y b$ and $F_x b$). In much of Turner's analysis the mediating role (b) is taken by Oedipus who is seen as an initiate moving from boy to man and taking his adult role as husband and king. The tragedy in Oedipus' case involves oppositions which cannot be successfully incorporated in a single role ($F_y b$ and $F_x b$). Turner argues that the individual and his or her movement through transitional periods in the life cycle tends to negate the initial synchronic structure ($F_x a$). Through a series of negations the liminal or mediating figure breaks down the original structure thus producing a transformation or resynthesis into the final structure ($F_a^{-1}(y)$) or the "victory" of the Marandas. Denied his rightful inheritance, Oedipus, during his passage from youth to adult, seeks his appropriate adult status. In order to avoid conflict with his supposed "parents" he leaves on a pilgrimage seeking a "vision" in the form of the oracle. Unrecognized by Oedipus, he kills his father and marries his mother, all individual negations of the proper social structure ($F_x b$). On the other hand, Oedipus is also positively characterized ($F_y b$). In attempting to avoid conflict with the parental generation and ultimately patricide, Oedipus does not return to Polybus and to Corinth but he goes to Thebes where he successfully rids the city of the destructive Sphinx by providing the answer "man" to the Sphinx's riddle. According to Turner, Oedipus thus achieves the difficult transition to "man" or adult status and becomes for a time a successful king of Thebes. Ultimately the oppositions overpower the role, Oedipus discovers his true history and removes himself from a public role. Turner suggests that the narrative process as well as the role of Oedipus present, negate, disintegrate, and reintegrate two structural principles or oppositions: (1) transmission and opposition between generations and (2) kin as opposed to non-kin in terms of fertile sexual

relations. We may rephrase these oppositions in a slightly more general sense as (1) life and health vs. murder and death and (2) sexuality and fertility vs. non-sexuality and infertility. Myth and ritual especially rites of passage become crucial times for and means of symbolizing and dramatizing these structural principles and oppositions.

The points of transition between the three phases of the life cycle defined by the Sphinx's riddle are times at which the negation and reformulation of existing kin relations is necessary. The relationships in question must be polarized into one element which is affirmed as a principle of continuity and another which is rejected: in the passage of a youth into manhood, for example, his relationship as child to his parents must be repudiated, while the more generalized ties of descent and filiation must be reaffirmed in the new context. This polarization also involves a "reversal of subjective orientation," in that repudiated element of the relationship is essentially a passive orientation toward the parents, while the new orientation with which it is replaced is essentially active and away from the parents (toward the individual's new family of procreation). Because of the incest taboo, of course, the whole process must be mediated by the formation of a new relationship with a person of opposite sex (the spouse) from the category of non-kinsmen. (Turner 1969:64-65)

The existing structure must be pulled apart and reintegrated. Often the liminal initiate or the anomalous mediating role or mythical character incorporates contradictory elements drawn from the existing structure or fuses oppositions. Or these elements and oppositions may coalesce in pairs of opposed characters called by Turner (1969:62) *bifurcation of characters*. "According to this principle, the generation of complementary oppositions between a pair of general structural categories tends to be expressed in terms of the creation of *dramatis personæ* who represent opposite aspects of the same essential characteristic..." As mentioned earlier, Lévi-Strauss (1963) discusses the creation of mediating twin supernaturals, and we observe the same process in the creation of the Mayo Christ and Chapakobam. Like Christ and the Chapakobam, Oedipus provides an especially powerful example of a mediator, both at the individual and societal level.

...His destruction *as a member of society* represents a conservative assertion of the continuing moral and structural invulnerability of the traditional aristocratic order of society. Yet Oedipus transcends his own personal destruction by embodying in himself both of the anti-

thetical forces that were tearing Greek society apart. In encompassing both sides of the historical dialectic of Greek society, and thus catapulting himself to a liminal Archimedean point outside it, he achieves a sort of reconciliation of these forces by simultaneously embodying the negation of each by the other. The union of opposites Oedipus achieves thus transcends the level of family structure and extends to the highest level of the historical contradictions of the *polis*. It is the manner in which Oedipus combines this second, macrosocial level of *coincidentia oppositorum* with the juxtaposition of incompatible familial relationships that made him, I suggest, the object of such passionate interest for the Greeks, down to and beyond the time of the tragedians. (Turner 1969: 60)

CONCLUSIONS

In summary, although the work of Lévi-Strauss, the Marandas, Ortiz, Leach, T. Turner and Crumrine does diverge on numerous points, it also converges upon at least one crucial point, the major role of the mediator in mythical and ritual transformation. This common insight provides the basis for the present discussion of "Mediating Roles in Ritual and Symbolism." These ritual roles and mythical figures which have a broad if not near universal distribution among human groups, mediate the life-death opposition and relate to the sexuality/non-sexuality opposition. Through mediation they achieve transformation by dismantling elements, incorporating opposed elements within their anomalous and indeterminate structures or personalities, and resynthesizing elements into new forms. Thus ritual clowns and tricksters deal with cultural and world view syntheses and transformations.

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