Lévi-Strauss and Maori Social Structure

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RÉSUMÉ

L'analyse traditionnelle de la structure sociale maori ne rend pas compte de l'importance de la règle ambilinéaire ni de la régularité de la pratique de la migration des groupes. En plus, elle ne nous permet pas de postuler aucun lien entre l'organisation des groupes locaux et l'idéologie maori exprimée dans la mythologie ni dans les interprétations des sages. Les propositions sur le système maori éparpillées dans les œuvres de C. Lévi-Strauss (qui sont bien dans la tradition de l'ethnologie française) nous mettent dans la bonne voie pour trouver une méthode d'analyse plus efficace de cette structure sociale et de ses rapports avec l'idéologie.

L'analyse proposée ici veut savoir quelles idées les Maori avaient sur la notion de frontière et de distinction. Elle aborde dans ce but les notions de *tikanga*, de *mana* et surtout de *hapuu*. Au sujet des *hapuu*, l'article présentera des données sur leur genèse, sur l'organisation formelle de leurs généalogies ainsi que sur leurs animaux gardiens. La genèse d'une *hapuu* implique normalement qu'on redistribue le matériel généalogique au sein du groupe en question, c'est-à-dire qu'on restructure les généalogies en utilisant pleinement leur potentiel ambilinéaire. La *hapuu* représente donc un principe de distinction (dans le sens philosophique) ainsi qu'un principe d'organisation sociale. Cette analyse s'inspire de l'enseignement lévi-straussien en tant qu'elle propose un rapport d'homologie (mais non pas d'identité) entre l'idéologie et la structure sociale.

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This brief note* is written as part of a collective homage to Lévi-Strauss. It is offered as a mere instance of what I learned from Lévi-Strauss about the analysis of ideologies. On the topic chosen, Maori social structure, I must be rather fragmentary, due to lack of space. It is, however, apposite, even though Lévi-Strauss himself has expressed himself on the New Zealand Maori only in a few brief fragments of three of his works. I have found those fragments so masterly that whatever I have to say here, is perhaps no more than footnotes. They contain, furthermore, very good examples of what I take to be the four chief elements of Lévi-Strauss' contribution to the study of ideology. In keeping with the perspective of this volume of homage, I shall refer first to these four elements, and sketch subsequently my ideas on the direction we ought to take in the study of Maori social structure. The second section will be an elaboration, on an ethnographic level, of the first.

I

It appears to be inherent in the genius of Lévi-Strauss that he was often to contribute crucially to the study of cultures in which he never specialised, by interpreting them as part of a larger comparative model and thus revealing some dimensions that had remained hidden in far more detailed studies by previous scholars. Such contributions were often offered merely in passing, in works whose real objective was seemingly wholly theoretical. I find I had nonetheless to distinguish in Lévi-Strauss's writings his very real empathy for cultures he knows only slightly from his broader theoretical pursuits. Many think that he analyses ideologies to make theory. I like to imagine that he makes theory in order to analyse ideologies.

The first element, with regard to his analysis of the Maori ideology, is Lévi-Strauss' place in a distinctively French anthropological tradition. The first analyst of Maori ideology, we may recall, was Diderot (1774) in his postcript to Bougainville's *Voyages*. It might be said that nobody has been able ever since to think about Polynesia and totally forget Diderot's presentation of the debate about love between the Maori chief and the missionary. The first Frenchman who did a professional anthropological analysis of Maori culture was Hertz (1970), choosing for special attention the

collective representation of death and the preeminence of the right hand. In the first of these essays, he brought out brilliantly the Maori notion of community, in the second, the Maori notion of chieftainship. Hertz learned the Maori language and left behind him elaborate manuscripts on the Maori, with special reference to guilt and expiation.

It was when he wished to edit these manuscripts after Hertz' untimely death that Mauss began to study Maori language and culture, an interest we see reflected in his essay on the gift (Mauss 1950: 159: fns. 1, 2; 315: fn. 1). Additionally, he presented, during his lectures at the École des Hautes Études in 1932-35 and 1937-38, the first truly scientific study of the great Maori myth cycles, which he compared to the great cosmologies of antiquity (Mauss 1969: 154-61, 188-91). These lectures, never published, are important in anthropological history because of their influence on those, like Lévi-Strauss and Dumont, who followed them. Inspection of Mauss' surviving work suggests that when Lévi-Strauss refers to the Maori, it is most often in friendly polemic with his master to whom he nonetheless often acknowledged his debt. When Lévi-Strauss proposes, in later work, that the borrowing of cultural matter often involves opposition and transformation, this principle seems to apply well to the relationship between Mauss' work on the Maori and Lévi-Strauss' own.

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Lévi-Strauss' first excursion into Maori ethnographic analysis was in his study on split representation in art, in which the Maori were grouped together with the tribes of the Northwest Coast, the Caduveo, and the Chinese (1944-45). The general purpose of that essay was to introduce the concept of homology, in that he discovered, in all the four cultures above-mentioned, the same basic dichotomies (carving and drawing, face and decoration, person and impersonation, individual existence and social function, community and hierarchy), found equally on the level of art — in double representation — and on the level of social structure, — in man's rigidly marked position in the cosmic and social hierarchy. From this essay, we retain, first, the notion of homology between cultural levels which is one of the key concepts in Lévi-Strauss' analysis of ideologies and secondly, an interpretation of the split

representation motif in Maori art which links usefully to tattoo and to hierarchy.

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The introduction (1950) to Mauss, *Sociologie et anthropologie* became the occasion, first, of Lévi-Strauss' most sustained polemic with Mauss and secondly, of another brief incursion into Maori ideological analysis. It was here that he challenged Mauss' attempt to explain the principle of reciprocity by a somewhat mystical concept, the spirit of the gift, which Mauss (1950) borrowed from the Maori concept of *hau*. Drawing (for the first time in his writings, I think) a clear distinction between indigenous conscious models and scientific ethnological models, Lévi-Strauss said (1950: xxxix):

> "Ce n'est pas une raison parce que des sages maoris se sont posé les premiers certains problèmes, et les ont résolus de façon infiniment intéressante, mais fort peu satisfaisante, pour s'incliner devant leur interprétation."

In order to explain the principle of reciprocity, Lévi-Strauss clearly preferred to rely upon Wiener's cybernetics rather than the spirit of the gift. It was an important step, from traditional ideological systematics to mathematical models. But it was interesting that it had to be, of all cultures, the Maori that led to this polite rebellion. Lévi-Strauss has sometimes been criticized for a supposed contempt of indigenous models. It is significant that, as a target for condemnation, he chose one of the most subtle, most sophisticated, most persuasive of cosmologies and one that had been the object of special admiration among Parisian anthropologists, namely the Maori. If there is any contempt in the sentence I just quoted, it is not directed at the indigenous culture but rather at the obscurantism and mystification of some of his own contemporaries. In any case, Lévi-Strauss has since taken many opportunities to declare his admiration for stone-age philosophers and his lack of admiration for philosophers closer to home.

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In *Le Totémisme aujourd'hui* (1962), Maori sociology and religion are invoked to argue that totemism is no phenomenon

sui generis, but a specific instance in the general field of relations between man and the objects of his natural environment. Lévi-Strauss classes Maori culture as totemic on the ground that it links *individual* animals, plants and mineral objects with social *groups,* by relations of descent, respect, sacrifice, advice, support, etc. At the same time, however, the cosmic genealogies of the Maori present all natural categories and human groups as descended from the same primal parent or parents *(monogenesis)* and thus as kin to one another. It follows that no individual belonging to "the three great orders of nature" is "fit in itself to play the part of ancestor in relation to any particular human group" (Lévi-Strauss 1962: 42-3). Such would be possible only in a system where "clans are considered as originating from different species" (as among the Aborigines, the Ojibwa, the Tikopia) and which would thus be *polygenetic.* If I understand this argument correctly, it means that because the Maori regards himself as genealogically linked to the species of both shark and owl, he cannot set up two distinct social categories such that one of them is exclusively associated with an (individual) shark ancestor and the other with an (individual) owl ancestor.

When *Le Totémisme aujourd'hui* first appeared, I was working on an essay entitled "The Guardian Animals of the Maori" (Schwimmer 1963). I thought I had found precisely what Lévi-Strauss claimed to be impossible, namely a community where one subtribe *(hapuu)* claimed ancestral affinity with a shark and the other with an owl. They were individual animals with special markings, occasionally encountered by men and then acting as guardian animals to their groups; their names appeared also in genealogies as human ancestors, associates of the animals of the same name. There was no doubt of the exclusive attachment of these animals to their social groups because the shark, for instance, helped his own group but was as nasty as any other shark to those who were not his descendants.

Having discovered this difficulty, I did not exploit it as an argument against Lévi-Strauss' theory of totemism, but my attempts (in 1963) to resolve it in the framework of that theory were somewhat deplorable. I shall therefore try once more. A problem found in any "monogenetic" ideology is that it needs to account for the

existence, in empirical reality, of mutually exclusive categories, both in the natural order (species) and in the human order (bounded human groups). The Maori sages were, of course, aware of this problem, as evidenced by their use of a concept *tikanga* (the particular function or distinctive behaviour of each type of being) to which Lévi-Strauss makes clear and explicit reference. But the same sages were well aware that one does not resolve a difficulty by just giving it a name; how did they explain it?

Lévi-Strauss did pose this problem in his brief discussion and suggested an answer which is logically impeccable. He found in a work by Prytz Johansen (1954) a semantic discussion of a fairly obscure Maori concept called *tupu* glossed by that author as "the nature of things and human beings as unfolded from within". By an ingenious interpretation of Prytz Johansen's text, Lévi-Strauss opposed this concept to the concept of *mana* "which comes from without and thus constitutes by contrast a principle of indistinction and confusion" (Lévi-Strauss 1962: 44). If we accept this construction, it provides a logically consistent model reconciling monogenesis with the fact of mutually exclusive categories. It is to Lévi-Strauss' great credit that, in contrast to most other anthropologists, he saw the need to seek a solution to the boundary problem on the level of Maori ideology.

Yet, there are considerable problems with this supposed opposition of *tupu* and *mana*. First of all, as an opposition, it has no other authority than, precisely, Prytz Johansen. No Maori has ever suggested an opposition between these two terms, and the Danish author introduced it only as a device in semantic analysis. *Tupu* is normally the opposite of *mate:* growth and decay, the waxing and the waning of the moon. The gloss of *mana* as a principle of indistinction and confusion is derived directly from the theories of the *Année sociologique* school, but only partly confirmed by Prytz Johansen. It is not confirmed either by Firth's careful enquiries (1941) nor by Valeri's recent analysis of *mana* based on Hawaiian sources (1975). Moreover, in my own field data, the term *mana* was actually applied by informants to the guardian animals themselves — the shark and owl mentioned above were referred to as *mana*. As these *mana* helped to define the boundaries between social groups, it was hard to see here a principle of indistinction and confusion.

Fortunately, Lévi-Strauss' theory of totemism need not depend on his discussion of *tupu* and *mana*. The Maori did have a very clear explanation of the origin of *tikanga* and his explanation is easily accessible to any Polynesian specialist. The humble task of the present essay is to substitute the right ethnographic data which strongly support the general theory. The usefulness of such a modest service lies in the light it can cast on some rather fundamental issues of Maori social structure. These issues have proved intractable in the past; if I am able to make any progress with them, this is only because Lévi-Strauss, in the passage discussed above, has asked the right questions and offered the right context for resolving them.

II

There has not been to my knowledge a full analysis of Maori social structure, neither on the basis of a communication model (giving proper weight to exchanges of women and of gifts) nor even on the basis of any other model. Certainly, there has been little recognition by students of the Maori of the possibility of an homology that may exist between the level of social structure and of genealogy. The present paper cannot hope to fill these vast gaps in the anthropological record, but it is possible to outline the implications of the problem in Maori ideology, raised by Lévi-Strauss, namely how mutually exclusive categories were constituted at various levels of culture, including the level of social structure.

It is best to start with the cosmological level and with the way the world has evolved according to Maori mythology and genealogy. Here the first state is the separation of heaven and earth, the primal parents, by their six sons, to take the simplest version (Grey 1855). The second stage leads to a state of perpetual strife between the six sons who, thereafter, occupy separate domains such as lower sky, sea, forest and so on. In the third stage, each of the sons produces appropriate offspring, in the shape of animals, plants, fish, winds, and of course men. Now the distinctive nature of these creatures, their *tikanga,* is not determined by the genealogy alone but also by the strife as recorded in the mythology.

Primal strife, i.e. between the sons of the primal parents immediately following the primal separation, resulted in two kinds

of relationships: equality where neither brother could defeat the other (as Tumatauenga could not defeat Tawhirimatea) and hierarchy where one brother (Tumatauenga, ancestor of man) drove the others to particular bounded domains where they remained fixed, such as the sea, the forest, the sweet potato garden, the hideouts of the fernroot. In these bounded domains, each has a particular function in the service of man, as well as distinctive behaviour proper to each species. Maori mythology does therefore explain the origin of *tikanga* by the principle of strife.

While man thus asserted his superiority over other species from the beginning, this was not conceived as absolute, but exercisable only in as far as man knows the mythology and the appropriate rites for each species and respects its *tikanga* for it is only by showing this respect that man wins collaboration from the other species. Exploitation, or control, therefore depends on two conditions establishing primacy *and* obtaining collaboration. Each natural category and social group, confined by the categories and groups it was unable to defeat (and man himself could not defeat the winds of the lower sky; was defeated by death when Hinenuiotepo killed Maui), has within those limits inalienable powers that must be respected if collaboration is to be obtained from it.

Having thus proposed a meaning for the term *"tikanga"*, I wish to clarify the far more difficult concept *mana*. This term has ethnographic as well as theoretical value. It is useful to have a theoretical term to describe the magical operations whereby communication is presumed to occur between the natural and social orders. The Maori did presume that some men were endowed with extraordinary power which they drew from the world of spirits and they did apply the term *mana* to that power, communicated by the order of nature to the order of culture by the mediation of special people said to be endowed with *mana*. From this viewpoint, *mana* is indeed a principle of indistinction and confusion, in that it breaks through the boundaries of the different orders and communicates between them.

Yet, if we go from this theoretical aspect of *mana* to the ethnographic level, we do find quite definite boundaries outside which it could not be exercised. Here it may be useful to turn

briefly to Prytz Johansen's semantics. He glosses *mana* as (primarily) "fellowship" but this has a dynamic aspect also, in the sense that the fellowship "unfolds" or "has efficacy" over the area over which the *mana*-endowed individual's dominion extends; such fellowship likewise implies that it is given or shared among those included within it. Such an area could be extended, chiefly by war; above all, it must be maintained by keeping up relations with the people and by occupying the land contained within the *mana*. One may therefore say that "vertically" *mana* is a principle of indistinction and confusion, but "horizontally" it is bounded, its boundaries being defined by the existence of another *mana* on the other side of the boundary and as yet undefeated. Within the boundary, *mana* is by no means an absolute power but a somewhat hierarchised exchange relationship depending on the consent of all concerned. Specifically, *mana* implies the ability to obtain assent but not exactly obedience.

The above propositions apply equally to *mana* in social relations and to *mana* in relation to natural categories. We lack space to demonstrate the homology between these two types of relations, but evidence such as that of Prytz Johansen 1958, on the myths and rites concerning the sweet potato, shows that the beliefs and practices concerning the annual cycle of this vegetable correspond very closely to the history of the human race as told by the Maori. The sweet potato, thus, seems to live the whole of human history every year, though as one might say on a vegetable level.

With regard to the social boundaries of *mana,* there is vast untapped evidence, some of which we collected during fieldwork in the Whangaruru District. There is a type of myths or rather legends that have been ignored by investigators as, from the viewpoint of mythography or the anthropology of religion, they seem to have little to offer. I refer to tales that recount the history of tribes or subtribes and that contain little except a list of places visited by the hero, persons encountered by the hero, groups fought by the hero and his followers. Every tribe or subtribe has such stories, which tend to be very uniform in construction.

They do, however, teach us the Maori concept of boundary. Staying with the Whangaruru example, we find the following principles: (1) the tribal ancestor visits the principal places of tribal

settlement, more especially those at the boundary of the tribal territory; (2) he encounters at the boundary the principal ancestor of another tribe; (3) he meets an ancestor of the other tribe in battle, wins or is defeated; (4) his visits to various places along the boundary are marked by names he is supposed to have given them as well as to magical powers (of divination, etc.) he is supposed to have installed there (Piripi 1961-62).

The concept "the *mana* of the tribe", at least at Whangaruru, must be understood partly in a metonymic sense: they tend to be spirit beings, familiars of the tribal ancestors, in some way attached to the tribal territory, sometimes appearing in the bodies of particular birds, rocks, etc. The Whangaruru people called themselves Ngati Wai, a name they explained by saying that their *mana* all came from the sea. This statement did not refer to an indistinct spiritual essence, but to particular nameable manifestations such as individual sea birds, sharks and so on, rocks, caves and other landscape features, containing the specific *mana* (in the metonymic sense of "powers") that made up the total *mana* of the tribe. Just as the specific *mana* manifest themselves characteristically within the tribal territory and rarely beyond, so the tribal *mana,* in general, is solidly anchored only in the tribe's territory. Legends about tribal ancestors tend to mark the boundaries of that territory, especially where these are contested, because the phrase: "Manaia visited place X", in a Ngati Wai legend, is equivalent to saying: "place X is part of Ngati Wai territory".

In spite of all this, Lévi-Strauss is still correct when he says that *mana* "comes from without" in the sense that it is thought ultimately to enter the world of men from a spiritual realm, or rather from particular spirits often embodied in particular animals of particular species. We cannot, however, reject Durkheim's theory by which *mana,* in this sense, became associated with the totem, for as we have seen *mana,* in Whangaruru, is used metonymically to designate the totem.

On the other hand, we cannot agree at all with that part of Durkheim's theory which asserts that the totem, or *mana,* in this sense, is the ideal representation of the group itself. The Maori totem, if we must use that phrase, is always an associate. This associate may bear the *name* of an ancestor but this is a way of

commemorating the ancestor by the name of his familiar; the Maori never think of a relation of identity between ancestor and spirit associate. In other words, the notion of *mana* is not directly concerned with the genesis and constitution of human groups. Lévi-Strauss was entirely correct when he wished to find some quite different Maori concept to account for group genesis and constitution. It is only for specific ethnographic reasons that I do not think the term *tupu* can carry this heavy conceptual burden. As I already indicated, this term does not really refer to much more than to the waxing and waning characteristic of the individual biological life cycle. Certainly, Prytz Johansen quotes some interesting metaphoric uses of the term, but they do not go beyond life forces found within individuals. It is more useful to look for more community centred concepts to account for Maori group genesis and constitution.

The present paper is no more than a sketch; it presents no more than hypotheses. One hypothesis is that Maori thought takes the community as primary and the individual as defined by collective ancestral features. This is in any case the implication of Lévi-Strauss' paper on tattoos. Here he distinguished the biologically given face and the socially given markings of tattoo, masking the face, which define the social personality. The terms *tupu* and *mate* are specifically attached to individual biology; the genesis and constitution of the group cannot be thought in those terms. I propose that the most useful concept for thinking about them is that of *hapuu,* a term which in its primary meaning denotes "pregnant". It thus means, in the most literal sense, "genesis from within" and if we are looking for an opposite to "genesis from without" (= *mana*), perhaps this is the term we need.

The objections to this suggestion are daunting indeed. The term *hapuu* is familiar to Maori ethnography but solely in the context of social structure. It has been the subject of fierce debate, with respect to "limiting principles" supposedly required to explain the functioning of ambilineal descent systems. Drawing on evidence from many parts of Oceania, the discussion (carried on by Fortes (1969), Leach (1962), Firth (1963), and Scheffler (1964), among others) posed the question that in an ambilineal system, the descent principle by itself does not specify without ambiguity who is and

who is not a member of any particular local group. Every individual can claim descent from a multitude of ancestors which thus would theoretically give him claim to land in many localities where others have rival claims. The key assumption in the debate was that in Oceania, like anywhere else, there must be purely local groups and that these must adjudicate between the claims of those who ask for land in the locality. Fortes, in particular, invoked the analogy of a limited liability company whose stock is owned by a number of registered holders. In his view, a "descent group' is a group where the principle of descent suffices to determine how the stock should be allocated. Therefore, one cannot talk of "descent groups" in non-unilineal systems. Leach agreed with this view, but Firth, Scheffler and many other Oceania specialists insisted that such local groups as one finds in Oceanic ambilineal systems are still essentially descent groups, in that descent is a necessary qualification. They introduced, in addition, certain principles of limitation, excluding certain classes of consanguines from ownership in local groups.

It is a long way from such discussions of limited liability to the more ideological questions raised by Lévi-Strauss. Yet, all these authors are talking about the same cultures. They seem to imply that there is a hard division between a level of "structure" (in the Lévi-Straussian sense) and of "organisation" and that the question regarding the local groups is related only to "organisation". The position taken in the present paper is, however, that the *hapuu* sets up distinctive social categories by a specific structural principle different from that of the tribe and intelligible as part of the Maori cognitive system. Throughout the debate, it was more or less assumed without question that the *hapuu* is in fact a local group, even though the ethnographic evidence for such an idea is by no means solid. It is good to see that this assumption was recently questioned by Webster (1975), but his evidence was not quite sufficient to demolish it altogether. Nor can the present paper do so, as full treatment of the issue would require a very detailed analysis of the available data on *hapuu* formation, splitting and fusion, as well as on migration patterns, an important but wholly neglected area of investigation.

Webster does make, however, one crucial point that will be hard to dispute. Firth's analysis of Maori society starts from an

assumption that the system, though nominally ambilineal, was in fact strongly biased towards patrilaterality: he noted that patrilinks had higher status than matrilinks and believed that matrilinks were of minor structural significance. Webster's inspection of genealogies, like my own, suggested that even if matrilinks were numerically in the minority, they were structurally crucial in that they enabled individuals to link themselves to those ancestors to whom they wanted, in a particular political context, to be linked. It was important for the Maori individual to trace genealogical links with particular individuals with whom, for one reason or another, he wished to be allied. To achieve this objective, an individual would not hesitate to use uterine links, and it is for that very reason that they were, in fact, remembered. With regard to *hapuu* formation, the crucial question to ask is therefore: how many individuals in the *hapuu* can trace themselves to the *hapuu* ancestor by purely agnatic links? In the *hapuu* I know, that number is very small indeed.

The genealogies I have and the many I have not recorded but heard chanted are composed of three kinds of "units":

1. Units of the form: A begot B, B begot C, where C is direct ancestor to ego;

2. units of the form: A married B, they begot C, C begot D, where D is direct ancestor to ego;

3. units of the form: A married B; they begot C, D and E; C, D or E begot F, where F is direct ancestor to ego.

Units of form (2) serve to establish a link between two lines, namely the ambilineage of A and the ambilineage of B. Thus, the ego who chants the genealogy is concerned to do two things simultaneously,

(a) to show his own descent from a *hapuu* ancestor who can be traced through A;

(b) to allow the person or persons who hear the genealogy to acknowledge kinship with himself by reciting their own genealogy, in such a form that B will be included in it. As B is obviously female, it would be impossible to establish any

link between ego and alter unless alter had females in his genealogy.

This necessitates that genealogies contain units of the form (3) as stated above. Such units will contain all the remembered children of a particular pair of ancestors, i.e. the daughters as well as the sons. Let us say that in the phrase "they begot C, D, and E", C and D are male and E female: if E can then be quoted as the wife of one of alter's ancestors, ego has established a link with alter. This establishes kinship, but not descent from the same ancestor.

On the other hand, if E, in the above example, is the *mother* of alter, or of alter's direct ancestors, the genealogy has established that ego and alter have the same *hapuu* ancestor, that they are part of the same line, in fact, both are descendants of couple A = B. Now, in such a case, alter will of course know other genealogies where he traces himself to another *hapuu* ancestor through E's husband, but in as far as he wishes to claim affiliation to ego's *hapuu*, he will quote the line that traces E rather than E's husband.

One may therefore regard units of type (2) and (3) as *knots* in a genealogy. The preference for male names Firth has rightly noted should not obscure the extreme importance of the female names in *hapuu* structure, for the female names constitute the knots that tie together the different lineages of the *hapuu*.

This brings us to the question of the formation of *hapuu*. It has often been said that families "become" *hapuu* through normal growth, i.e. that they represent a segmentation of single lineages. There may be cases of this but, as Webster (1975: 124) rightly says: "This neglects the more usual process as whereby membership gradually shifts between cognatic descent groups and some flourish while others wane, first described by Gifford (1929) for Tonga".

I refer here particularly to the example of one *hapuu* of Whangaruru for which I analysed the genesis in detail, that of the descendants of Tautahi (Schwimmer 1963: 402) who (as in other cases found by myself, Elsdon Best and others) was a visiting stranger. All *hapuu* members were in fact his descendants either by one of his two local wives, or by his other wives. I showed also that the *hapuu* was not constituted until seven generations

after this presumed visit, and that it took some generations after this until all those who could trace descent from Tautahi in fact chose to do so and call themselves Ngati Tautahi. What resulted was in fact a political formation which linked together the people of the whole of the Whangaruru peninsula, while excluding the people of the adjoining mainland. It joined together a number of older *hapuu,* four of whom were still resident of the peninsula at the time of investigation. Though these *hapuu* still existed as names, their members found it to be advantageous to emphasize for most purposes their affiliation to Ngati Tautahi, to use a common cemetery, respect a common *mana* — a shark in the harbour, etc. They used uterine links to get into the genealogy.

This example shows that the term "local group" describes the formation rather inadequately. If we have to describe it by a western analogy, the term "political federation" would be more adequate than "joint stock company", because the "purpose" of the combination was political rather than economic. The *hapuu* across the harbour, Uri o Hikihiki, was numerous, unified and dangerous, at the time when *hapuu* formation took place. Even when peace was firmly established in New Zealand, the two *hapuu* engaged in political rivalry in which unity was highly expedient for the peninsula. With regard to economics, or more precisely land, the unity of the different constituents of the *hapuu* was less complete, as each lineage was still very much identified with their own block of lineage land. The "principles of limitation" proposed by Firth (1963) do not really apply to such a case, as (a) the various lineages could not have joined the *hapuu* by such criteria; (b) as the lineages had their own land, limitation would have served no purpose. I believe that close study of the history of other *hapuu* would reveal such cases to be anything but unique, but I cannot go further here than propose the hypothesis.

In order to understand the *hapuu,* several notions thus need to be revised. While it was often a local economic, political, ritual and military unit, the vicissitudes of war often split up and dispersed the *hapuu,* so that it became fragmented and reunited by the expediencies of the moment, as Best's *Tuhoe* illustrates many times. There seems to have been much migration by *hapuu,* parts of *hapuu* and between the constituent parts of dispersed *hapuu.* It

may well be that such migrants were not always well received by those from whom they asked asylum, but there were other cases where strong-armed kinsmen were gratefully received by groups eager for allies. I do not know of any study which establishes the relative weight that was given to land shortage as against the attractions of hospitality and alliance. All I know is that the orientation of Maori culture is towards inclusion rather than exclusion. Furthermore, the emphasis on occupation as necessary to justify a claim to land ownership has been magnified by the use of this criterion by Maori land courts at a time when the conditions were vastly different from pre-contact times. My only suggestion is that we should give more emphasis to the political question of alliance than to the economic question of limitation. It is clear that when, for instance, a Ngati Tautahi marries an Uri o Hikihiki, his choice of residence (virilocal or uxorilocal) is at the same time a choice of political allegiance and that, after the third generation of residence among, say, Uri o Hikihiki, it might not be easily possible to cross the harbour and settle on the other side.

Yet, it is important to know just what happened in those three generations: with whom did the family in question ally itself politically during that period? Did they do anything, in that period, to help the Ngati Tautahi, their kinsmen across the harbour? Did they attend the funerals? And, as Firth rightly emphasizes, did they light fires on their peninsula land? If they did none of these things, it is not only the "third generation rule", but a long-standing political fact that would separate that family from the peninsula.

Furthermore, it needs emphasizing that *hapuu* are not, as is often supposed, segments of tribes. Of twelve *hapuu* surveyed in the Whangaruru district in 1960-61, there were only five all of whose members were members of the tribe Ngati Wai of which the twelve *hapuu* were supposedly segments. For the other seven, it was established that a large part of the *hapuu* membership did not have tribal affiliation with Ngati Wai, even though the *hapuu* as a whole, were classified as belonging to Ngati Wai. The discrepancy was explained variously, but it was always related to migration histories coupled with intertribal marriage. It is not only possible but it is a fact that *hapuu* founders are not always

members of the tribe to which the *hapuu* itself becomes later affiliated (e.g. Tautahi was a Ngapuhi but the Ngati Tautahi were Ngati Wai; see also Best 1925: 210-34) so that some descendants of the *hapuu* ancestor may well be unable to trace descent to the tribe of which the *hapuu* is supposed to be a segment.

Let us now return to the broader perspective. There is a sad lack of documents in which Maori theorize about this concept of *hapuu*. When I worked in Whangaruru, there was a good deal of discourse about the *hapuu*, but practical rather than philosophical. There was talk of an argument between the chiefs of Ngati Tautahi and Uri o Hikihiki that was supposed to have occurred in the 1890's. The former claimed to have had a dream of crossing the harbour so that henceforth, the two *hapuu* would be one. The answer of the chief of Uri o Hikihiki was to the effect that he has also had a dream, namely that the mat of the Ngati Tautahi chief would be pulled from under him on his arrival. These two dreams were quoted to me to show that the two *hapuu* had remained separate and would not unite.

I also enquired from the members of the smaller *hapuu* who had fused with Ngati Tautahi as to why they had done so. Shorn of symbolic flourishes, the answers amounted to their "looking to Tautahi" as a means of establishing their political unity. All these, of course, are testimonies too late to give more than a hint of pre-contact ideology. I ought to add that the term *hapuu* was sometimes applied to what in fact was the whole of the Ngati Wai (i.e. technically an *iwi* or tribe) whereas the term *iwi* or *whaanau* was also applied to what was in fact a *hapuu*. We should therefore be careful not to put too heavy a philosophical load on such a term.

However, we have made some novel hypotheses. *Hapuu* are not segments of tribes: some are multi-tribal. *Hapuu* are descent groups: they recruit their members exclusively from descendants of one ancestor, so chosen that all the people it is politically expedient to unite can in fact be united under the name of that ancestor. At the same time, *hapuu* are political creations within the context of local alliances and oppositions: in that sense they are local groups. Further, they are well adapted to a system where migrations are frequently unavoidable, in that they are often dispersed, and

in that their segments fuse easily with other *hapuu*. Their mode of constitution requires that they be fairly strongly ambilineal, but political factors limit the possibilities of plural membership that might be open by pure descent criteria. This is because *hapuu* are constituted in opposition to other *hapuu;* great political effort of unification is required in setting them up, so that they are normally generated under condition of political stress. The tribal affiliation of *hapuu* is determined by the location of the *hapuu* members at the time the *hapuu* is constituted: if it lies within the boundaries traced by Manaia, the ancestor of Ngati Wai, the *hapuu* will classify itself as Ngati Wai even if the founder happens to be a Ngapuhi. Unfortunately, it was impossible to gather significant data at Whangaruru about the tribe *(iwi)* as this unit of structure was defunct at the time of my study. General ethnographic data suggest that it was the paramount chief of the tribe who received and transmitted to his people the *mana* of the tribe. A distinction was made between this tribal *mana,* inhering in the tribal chief and his direct lineage, and the chiefs of the *hapuu* to whom that kind of *mana* was not necessarily attributed. The individuals whose *mana* (in the ancient tribal sense) was said to be highest belonged to neither of the two dominant *hapuu* of Whangaruru, i.e. neither to Uri o Hikihiki nor to Ngati Tautahi, but to a small *hapuu* named Ngati Awa whose members were always treated with special honour and were the only Whangaruru people to whom the term *mana* in the traditional sense was ever applied. I conclude, very tentatively, that high *mana* was attached to the senior lines of a tribe, but not necessarily to those of a *hapuu.*

If my analysis is correct, we may contrast *iwi* and *hapuu* in that the former unit would reproduce from generation to generation the *mana* of the society, in its sacral as well as political aspect whereas the *hapuu* was essentially a dynamic and generative unit, formed anew every few generations, often with a new name, and each time with an eponymous ancestor selected to bring together the people who happen at the time to have settled in the area that is being restructured. It is very possible that the men with the highest tribal *mana* would hesitate to become involved in the re-orientations needed to join new *hapuu,* except if such *hapuu* were centred of an ancestor who was a direct agnatic ancestor of the highly ranked persons in question. For this reason, Ngati Awa

refused to join the larger *hapuu,* which they could have done by citing uterine links. Their status was high enough for them to be able to stand aloof as a separate *hapuu,* small though it was. For military purposes, such *hapuu* would be allied to one of the larger ones.

The anthropological interest of *hapuu* formation lies in the restructuring process itself. Two requirements seem to be minimal: the new *hapuu* ancestor must be a direct ancestor of the chief who sets up the *hapuu,* and preferably the chief must be related to the ancestor through a senior agnatic line. Secondly, the ancestor must be so chosen that all the people whose political support is being sought will qualify, genealogically speaking, for membership in the new *hapuu.* On the other hand, it is not required that the new *hapuu* chief be born in the area. In fact, he is not infrequently a newcomer who has married into the district, but who has ancestral connections there. Thus, the man who set up Ngati Tautahi, Te Kauwhata, was a Ngapuhi immigrant. He was a direct descendant, in a senior agnatic line, to Tautahi by Tautahi's senior (Ngapuhi) wife. This made him senior, in Ngati Tautahi, to the Ngatiwai members of the *hapuu* all of whom were of course descendants by Tautahi's junior (Ngatiwai) wives. While such a formation would have no attraction for the high aristocracy of the district, it provided a good opportunity for those a little lower down, to engage in successful status rivalry in a useful new organization.

In this connection, it is suggested that tribal chiefs, though invested with the greatest *mana,* the most superior *mana,* were not the sole mediators between the human and the spiritual world. There were, in addition, the various classes of magicians and diviners; there were, moreover, the guardian animals, already discussed above, who might show themselves to any individual descended from the ancestor associated with them. It was precisely this class of beings that tended to become specifically associated with the *hapuu.* We can now answer the question with which I opened the present essay. When the *hapuu* is generated as a distinctive category of men, a *mana* in the sense of guardian animal is simultaneously generated, as for instance the shark Tautahi, as guardian animal in the harbour, was supposed to be generated as dead-born child of Te Kauwhata, thrown into the harbour.

The very fact that this dead-born child was thrown into the harbour is highly significant, for such was totally forbidden by the rules of Maori religion. It was foreseeable that the spirit of this dead-born child would enter some kind of animal. But this is how *hapuu* are constituted: they do have spirit familiars. There is thus no generic difference between tribe and *hapuu;* the former is what the latter may well become in the fullness of time. From the beginning, Maori social units have distinctive *mana,* but their importance increases with time. It seems clear that the two basic principles of Maori social structure are essentially what Lévi-Strauss guessed they were: monogenesis; and the genesis from within of distinctive bounded categories formed by the *restructuring* of the original genetic materials.

The advantage of the model of Maori social structure I propose is that it accounts for the innovation of structures whereas the traditional model is very static and underestimates both migration and ambilineality. Maori social structure therefore does have, as Lévi-Strauss already guessed, a principle of "genesis from within". The term *hapuu,* in which that principle is embodied, would then be cogent indeed, at is would not refer only to the pregnancy of an individual mother who gives birth to a descent group, but also to a community which gives birth to a new arrangement of the available genealogical stock.

I am aware that this theory needs testing with far more empirical materials. There is however one indication, admittedly without demonstrative force, that some theory like the one I propose here must be correct. This is that the classical theories of Maori social structure have totally left out of account the *capacity for genealogical restructuring* inherent in a system like the Maori one. The brief summary I gave of the construction of genealogies shows that these genealogies have convenient "knots" that seem to be ideally suited to the restructuring of genealogies. The classical theories of Maori social structure seem to assume that these knots were little more than decoration. The model I have proposed here would make full use of these knots. It seems to me that, as a general rule, cultures do not create such features except if they have some use for them. But I know that this argument is no substitute for the detailed research that is needed.

To conclude, I would suggest that I have given an example of what can be achieved with Lévi-Straussian methods of analysing ideologies: I have attempted to link the cosmological and social levels of Maori culture; I have deliberately overstepped the Maoris' own sophisticated accounts of their social structure so as to get to deeper realities; I have also, though only implicitly, introduced a comparative perspective, for the reader will notice affinities between my proposed model and the models recently developed to account for the mobile social systems of Melanesia.

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