

J. SYMBOLIC COMMUNICATION

46. COMMUNICATION BY COLOURS

Colours are central in communicating ethnic identity in Parakuyo society. It seems as if the use of uniform clothing and decorations are exaggerated in a situation where they as a minority group are threatened by destructive influences from outside. Two colours, as expected according to the evolvement process of colour terms (Berlin and Kay 1969), emerge as basic means of communication. In fact the number of symbolic colours is three, black, red, and white, but the two first ones are clearly the dominant colours particularly in secular symbolism, and white has an intermediary role. Therefore, I see it justified to treat black and red as a dyad and take white separately as a kind of indeterminate factor (Jacobson-Widding 1979 a, b).

Unlike in many societies (Swantz 1970:241,253), the use of colours in symbolism does not emerge in Parakuyo society from the basic substances of the human organism. In this respect it is closer to Gogo colour symbolism, where colours stand for social categories (Rigby 1966:10).

In secular life, warriors are seen to dress in red garments, and the red appearance is emphasized by smearing red *olkaria* in neck, shoulders and on the long plaited hair. Red is the colour of warriors, and while it is hard to find red-dyed materials from shops, they colour white materials with red dyes available from trees.¹ Male elders use red and black in clothing, but black is more preferred. The sub-clan of *iloibonok* is particularly known to wear a black cloak on the shoulders signifying their particular status.



Picture 27. The ritual head-shaving marks the transition of a person from the normal to a marginal state, and from marginal back to the normal state. Pastoral values are communicated by the symbolism involved, viz. the separation of the initiate from the polluting soil, and a four-legged stool (*olorika*) where the liquid for softening hair is poured. Two types of grass are placed in the liquid. The hair tufts are collected on the stool to form a cattle 'kraal' with two 'gates'. Picture from the border area of the Arusha and Pastoral Maasai, southeast of Arusha.



Picture 28. The initiate is shaved prior to circumcision after his mother and father have been shaved.

Mature women wear uniformly blue garments but they call them 'black'. Blue as a colour has no place in symbolism. Women are distinguished from males in that they do not wear red clothing at all. The skin garment which earlier was commonly used and is presently found to be worn in rituals, is coloured with dyes producing a brown-red appearance, particularly when decorated with red beads, but the Parakuyo do not classify it red (*ado*, to be red), but call it *enanga muki*.² Uninitiated girls wear blue (i.e. black) garments as do the mature women, and they are not sharply distinguished from the mature women by appearance.

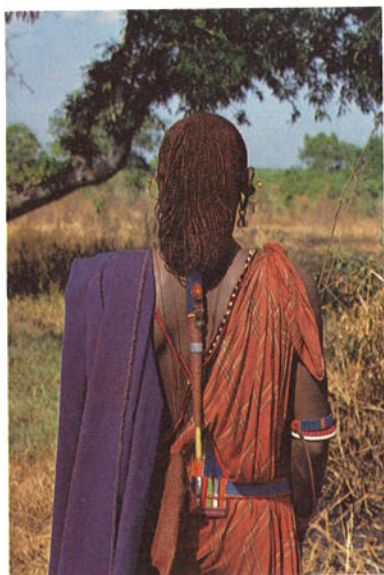
Black and red are the basic colours which signify social groups in secular symbolism. Why is it that these two colours and not white are adopted to symbolize social groupings? One reason is obvious and very practical: white in clothing would inevitably turn brown, as do the garments of uncircumcised boys, which are supposed to be 'white'. Another reason is surely aesthetic. Black and red match exceptionally well and produce a harmonious general appearance. But more reasons could be found from the sensations the pastoralists are likely to experience in face of natural phenomena. Unlike in cultivating societies where black clouds and rain are ambiguous concepts, in pastoral societies they never predict disaster but solely the growth of grass and prosperity. Hence the positive connotations with black. Fertility, secured continuity, blessing, peace, seniority and wisdom are associated with black. Red is inevitable in symbolization, and connotations linked to it derive, at least partly, from the hazy red sky in the dry season. Violence, arrogance, strength, readiness to spill blood, and looming destruction are attributes linked to red. These are qualities of warriors and therefore red is their symbolic colour.

What is said above of the symbolic colours of different social groups does not prevent women from wearing bead decorations with predominantly red colours and from smearing heads red with *olkaria* in rituals. Also warriors apply black colour (*enguk*) obtained from charcoal around the eyes in *olpul* rituals and generally on the head where the plaited hair is divided into back and front sections (*enkoitoi o'lpapit*, lit 'the path of hair'). The latter is purely for aesthetic reasons as well as the blue colour which is occasionally used sparingly on faces to emphasize beauty.



Picture 29. A long twined hair is a characteristic symbol of a warrior. Bark of the *oreteti*-tree (*Ficus natalensis*), red soil, and animal fat are used for twining.

Pictures 30-32. Styles of hairdo may vary to some extent. The long ropes are tied together as one or more 'pig-tails'. Patterns of painting are more or less individual designs.





Picture 33. Leading sheep is a woman's maturity ritual. There are two sheep, a male and a female, guided by two women each. They go around the *oltim*-branch counter-clock-wise four times, and then enter the house of the woman who is the subject of the celebrations.

Picture 34. Ritual killing involves a wealth of symbolism. The symbols themselves, without their referents here, are: the male sex of the animal, its black colour, its separation from the soil by a fleckless cow hide, it is lying right flank down and head northwards, the number of women is two, the place of the killing is the entrance of the house, it is killed by strangling so that no blood will be spilled.



Picture 35. The subject of the ritual is led in a procession to the husband's kraal. Led by an elderly woman, she is supposed to stop every now and then to demand cattle from her husband.



Picture 36. Cattle are the basis of the Parakuyo economy. They are also means of communicating ethnic identity. Exchange of cattle between families and individuals facilitates social exchange.

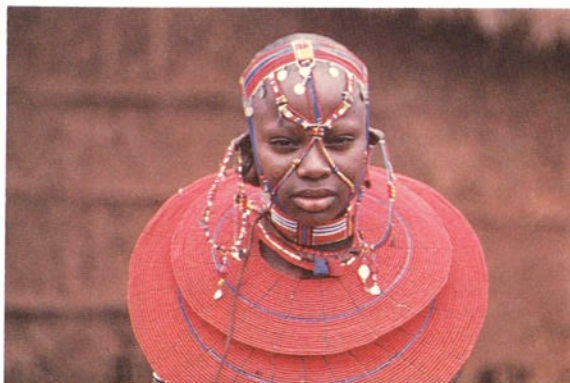
Pictures 37-39. Cattle bleeding is an important ritual act in male and female initiation. Blood is extracted from the right jugular vein of a fleckless bull or cow, depending on the sex of the initiate. In times of milk shortage it was also customary to subsidize the ordinary diet with blood. The cut, made by a special arrow, will soon heal, and the same animal may be bled again after a sufficiently long period.



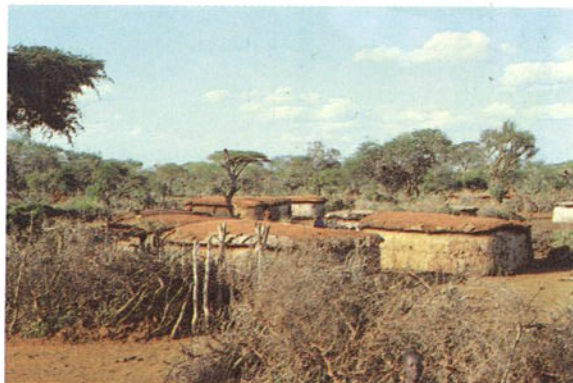


Picture 40. Women communicate their identity by uniform clothing. In initiation rituals they dance and sing prayers to **Enkai**, thus ensuring his blessing on the initiate and the community.

Picture 41. A girl ready for initiation. She has to abandon all decorations for months, until she is incorporated into adult status.



Picture 42. A kraal of the Kisongo Maasai area. The cattle gate (**enkishomi**) in the foreground is the entrance into the kraal and subject to ritualization. The houses of the wives are placed alternately on each side of the gate.



Colour symbolism is also linked with the colours of cattle, which have predominantly three colours: black, white, and 'red' (brown). The moieties are characterized, not surprisingly, as *Iloorokiteng* ('those of a black bull') and *Iloodomong'i* ('those of red bulls'), and white has been omitted. Red and black are the colours used to demonstrate the divisions of society. White cattle are used for special ritual purposes, for example in eunoto by the Pastoral Maasai (Ole Sankan 1973:29); hence white is associated with the ritual state.

In ritual symbolism, black and red are applied with connotations similar to secular symbolism. In initiation rituals, for example, the participants, except the initiate, are dressed in garments and decorations with colours similar to everyday apparel. The general appearance of warriors is red, that of elders red and black, that of mature women 'black' (= blue), that of uninitiated girls 'black', and that of uncircumcised boys 'white' (= gray-brown).

Special ritual applications of red are the anointment of the red *olkaria* on the head of the initiate and his female sponsor in the *enkitupukunoto* rite before circumcision, the *oilanga*-drink of the initiate after operation, blood drunk by the initiate, and the red appearance after seclusion.

Black is used symbolically in several instances. A piece of black cloth is suspended above the *enkishomi* of the kraal where initiation rituals are celebrated. Stripes of the same cloth are fixed also above the entrances of houses, particularly of the initiation house. Warriors of the senior stage are allowed to use spears with black handles, and the leader wears in initiation rituals a spear with a tuft of black feathers on its tip to symbolize peaceful intentions. During the seclusion period male initiates wear skin garments of cloth of black colour. Warriors apply charcoal soot around the eyes in *olpul* rituals. In the *erikoto o'lkerra* ritual the ritually killed sheep is black.³ Black in rituals has a connotation of peace, seniority, maturity, fertility, protection, and secured continuity. Its significations are positive throughout.

In rituals, white is primarily associated with the marginal state. In circumcision, white clay (*enduroto*) is applied on the forehead and chest of

the initiate. During the seclusion period, he is not allowed to come out of the circumcision house without having applied *enduroto* around the eyes. Because *enduroto* is not readily available⁴ in the Lugoba area, wood ashes (*enguruo*) could be used instead to produce the white appearance.⁵ White stripes of *enduroto* are drawn on the bags of women in rituals of ensuring fertility (*esajakinoto*).⁶

Milk is the commonly used agent to symbolize whiteness. Liquids used for softening hair before ritual head-shaving contain milk as an agent. It is used also in consecrating the *enkoilalei*-tree erected in front of the initiation house. A mixture of milk and honey-beer is used in blessing the elders at the end of initiation rituals. Milk is poured over the corpse in burial rituals.

White is thus commonly applied to signify ritual state, particularly the liminal or marginal phase in the tripartite ritual process. Marginality can be seen to form a dichotomy with the normal or secular states. Correspondingly, the colours used to symbolize these states form a dichotomy. Thus we get the following correspondences: secular state : ritual (esp. marginal) state :: colours (black and red) : non-colours (white, and sometimes gray). 'White', itself not actually a colour, is thus in a dichotomical relation to all colours. These actual colours are two, black and red, and white has an indeterminate, ambiguous position between these. It is strongly associated with transition from one social status to another. Passage from one communally recognized status to another goes through a non-status, a liminal phase, which estranges and detaches the subject from the previous status both physically and mentally, before he will be reincorporated into the community and given the new status. The 'colours' form, therefore, two separate dyads: black:red, and black/red : white.⁷

In addition to the connotations mentioned above, white is the colour symbolizing death. This was not particularly emphasized, which is in tune with underemphasis of matters connected with death. A belief has been recorded among the Pastoral Maasai, that when one sees a snake, particularly white, it should by no means be killed, since it may be an embodiment of an ancestor (Hollis 1905:307-08). Reference to death is also in the relation of white and marginality, since entering into a marginal state signifies a symbolic death.

When the Parakuyo colour scheme is viewed in a cross-cultural perspective, it can be seen to conform to the general pattern as far as the number and kinds of colours is concerned. But there are significant differences on the cross-cultural level regarding their use and content of meaning. As Sahlins has pointed out (1976a:3), colours are primarily semiotic codes to communicate distinctions of culture. Because of the cultural significance the symbolic colour spectrum is limited only to those which are meaningful in transmitting information.⁸ However, at the same time, cultural variations are linked to variations in the significata of each colour. These differences become clear even in a superficial cross-cultural comparison.

If the three colours were associated with the products of the human body in Ndembu society (Turner 1965a), and their symbolic use was derived from the organic body substances in Zaramo society (Swantz 1970:241,253), no explicit statements of the correspondence between colours and body substances was found in Lower Congo societies (Jacobson-Widding 1979a). The extensive cross-cultural study of colour symbolism in the Lower Congo shows a complex variety of significata attached to these colours depending on the situation where they are used. Some of the meanings seem to have a wide distribution in that area, for example, white signifying right and good and black wrong and bad, while red stands for ambiguity or neutrality (Jacobson-Widding 1979b:5-6).

The main differences in colour symbolism between the above-mentioned societies and the Parakuyo are rooted in different cultural and economic bases. While black in the Lower Congo is a symbol of wrong, bad intentions and disorder,⁹ in Parakuyo society it has almost opposite connotations. It has been shown above that the significata of colours are based on the pastoral economy, where black is 'naturally' endowed with such meanings as fertility, maturity, seniority, blessing, peace, harmony, health, and curing capacity. In their experience of life in dry savannahs, dark rain clouds are a recurring visual image of imminent rains which are inevitably a sign of relief and prosperity. This economic and ecological determinant has also given form and content to an essentially pastoral culture.

The rather different applications of colour symbolism in various cultures is not, therefore, an indication of its non-systematic application. On the contrary, basic colours are used to form integrated colour schemes, to stand

as dominant symbols (Jacobson-Widding 1979b:7-10) of the society. This is done, however, in congruence with the internal cultural and economic structure of each society, rather than with other societies. This explains the very different uses of the basic colour terms cross-culturally.

The Parakuyo have names for many more colours than analysed above, but they are not used commonly as symbols. In bead decorations, in addition to the basic three, also epeuti (blue), enyorri (green) and emanjano (orange) are used.

In cattle, three pure cattle colours are distinguished: enkiteng sirua (white), enkiteng narok (black), and enkiteng nanyokie or naado (red). In addition, at least the following cattle colours are identified:

Enkiteng gwarukoi	- white and red colouring
Enkiteng ng'iro	- grey
Enkiteng engwes nanyokie	- white and red colouring
Enkiteng engwes narok	- white and black colouring
Enkiteng 'nkima	- grey-brown
Enkiteng 'nkima piripiri	- grey with red spots
Enkiteng naado lukunya	- white body with red head
Enkiteng narok lukunya	- white body with black head
Enkiteng ongereri	- red body with white stripes
Enkiteng kerii	- body black on sides and white in back and belly
Enkiteng kerii nanyokiani	- body black on sides and belly, and white on back
Enkiteng kerii narok	- body black on sides with white back and belly
Enkiteng sambu	- varied, or many colours

The cattle with one of the basic colours are liked most. Enkiteng ng'iro is associated with bewitching, and its blood is given to quarrelsome wives with the expectation that anyone of them wishing to bewitch a co-wife would die. A cow with this colour is also used in a ritual where a girl with pre-marital pregnancy is separated from the family through making a separate cattle gate for her. A grey cow is led through this gate first in order to curse her. Also quarrelling brothers may drink the blood of a grey cow as a kind of ordeal to reveal guilty.¹⁰

Symbolically significant colours are, however, black, red and white, and each of them is loaded with a set of associations. The symbolic content of each colour depends on the particular ritual situation, i.e. on the need to symbolize. Consequently, understanding the coded information communicated through colours requires the emic knowledge of the culture.

47. COMMUNICATION BY NUMBERS

"Aikuek! Aainyoo pee ilang'aki isiet
eng'or ong'uan?"

(Oh! Why do you jump to an eight
before a four? A Maasai proverb)

Anthropologists have repeatedly encountered phenomena, where certain numbers seem to play a part, but which have been difficult to classify and give sense to. This way of symbolization, often called numerical symbolism (Southall 1972:89-93), is certainly more than a construct of an analyst, although some features of it could be difficult to deal with systematically. For myself, the observation of several rituals in various phases first woke my interest in the most often recurring number, four, and later to its derivatives, eight and sixteen. In line with earlier analysts, I was tempted to seek sex symbolism in numbers, but I was not satisfied with my findings. Following the findings of some other ethnographers, I tried to find out, whether the Parakuyo numerical symbolism is of the pattern M^4F^3 or M^3F^4 , both said to be common in Eastern Africa. It could be easily established that four is a dominant number, and that it can be linked with the male sex. But establishing the connection between three and female was almost impossible. Therefore, for the time being, I have been forced to abandon this kind of argumentation and seek another explanation.

Although I could have been able to identify the symbolism M^4F^3 , which is the most plausible alternative, I would still have been left with the uneasy question of why these numbers emerged instead of others. Also the other numbers would have remained unintelligible. Hence, I have decided to classify numerical symbolism merely as a form of dual symbolism. This would be in congruence with the general dual structure of Parakuyo society. In order to substantiate this interpretation I shall present some of the im-

portant contexts where numerical symbolism occurs. For comparative purposes, I shall also present examples from among the Pastoral Maasai, because numerical symbolism among these two people is almost identical.

1. When people are selected, particularly for ritual purposes, to represent a larger population, normally four or eight people are selected. This is obvious in delegations (olamal, pl. ilamali) sent to the oloiboni kitok for any purpose. In delegations of greater importance, such as those connected with age-set rituals (eunoto, or opening an initiation period), the number is larger than in delegations sent for minor reasons. The number of people carrying out various tasks in rituals is often four. The number of warriors (ilmurran) and uninitiated girls (intoiyie) who cut the symbolic initiation tree *Zizyphus mucronata* (enkoilalei) is four (2+2). The warriors are first-born ones and the girls last-born ones. The number of women who receive the tree at the gate (enkishomi) is four.¹¹ There are also four men assisting the male initiate in circumcision, and four warriors assisting the initiate back to the house. In the erikoto o'lkerra ritual there are four women, who lead the male and female sheep through the kraal to the house of the 'bride'.¹²

2. The numerical symbolism is realized in movements and acts; the same movement or act is repeated four times. There are rites, for example the 'coming out' (enkitupukunoto) of the male initiate and erikoto o'lkerra, where the subjects are brought around the 'cattle gate branch' (oltim) anti-clockwise four times. The Kisongo Maasai and Arusha repeat the movement four times when they bring or take away implements needed in rituals.¹³ Four ululations were heard from the initiation house after the successful clitoridectomy.¹⁴ In the men's maturity ritual (olkiteng lo l'baak) a man whips his wife first four times before others, men and women, join the whipping and continue so for four days.¹⁵ Hollis reports that a ritual verbal act was repeated four times in a man's maturity ritual (Hollis 1905: 295).

3. The number of animals, particularly cattle, needed in rituals or other occasions is often two, four, eight or sixteen. According to one myth of origin (enkiterunoto) Enkai gave to the first man and woman four head of cattle, a cow and a bull to each (Beidelman 1968:86). The ideal amount

of bridewealth among the Pastoral Maasai and Parakuyo is four cattle (and two goats among the former), although in practice this is far higher among the latter. The number of cattle given by the bridegroom to his new bride immediately after her arrival at her new home is eight. She is supposed to receive eight head of cattle also when she has passed through the *erikoto o'lkerra* ritual. In both of these instances, however, the woman normally acquires more cattle through manipulating her husband by refusing to carry out various tasks. Still the ideal number remains eight. In the *erikoto o'lkerra* ritual itself two sheep, a male and female, are needed.

4. Time is also counted in units of four and its derivatives. Among the Pastoral Maasai, the second name out of the total of four is given four days after birth (Ole Kipusi 1973:46). After circumcision the boys (*osipoli*, pl. *isipolio*) stay inside four days (Hollis 1905:298). The total marginal period of the initiates is supposed to last about four months. The *eunoto* ritual is rich in numerical symbolism. The Parakuyo warriors of each area (*oloho*) will go to the place of ritual with eight cattle, so that the total amount will be 80. If these are not enough, another 80 cattle will be gathered, not less.¹⁶ The kraal constructed for the ritual has eight gates. The *eunoto* ritual among the Pastoral Maasai lasts four days, each represented by a specific 'colour' (Beckwith & Ole Saitoti 1980:122). Before the maturity ritual, a man is supposed to sleep alone for four days and nights in a hut built outside the homestead (Hollis 1905:294).

Merker reports that among the commandments given to the Maasai there is one which orders the Maasai to celebrate each year the *olokor lo'lkeretii* offering on the eighth day of the ninth month (*Kujorok*),¹⁷ in order to avoid plagues and diseases (Merker 1910:281). Also the moon is said to remain disappeared for four days and to reappear on the fifth.

5. There are many more possibilities of applying the number two and its derivatives. The calabashes used in rituals are not closed with the ordinary cap but stuffed with two species of grass (*emurua* and *enkaiteteyai*), through which the liquid is sprinkled over the subjects. These are also the grasses used to medicate the milky liquid needed in softening hair in ritual head shaving. The number of medicines needed in ritual bath water prior to circumcision or clitoridectomy is four¹⁸ and the same num-

ber of medicines are needed in a ritual fire, *olokor*. The medicated liquid used to soften the hair in male head shaving is poured on a stool with four legs. However, the elected age-set leader *olaunoni* sits in the *eunoto* ritual on a stool with three legs (probably a female symbol). In male circumcision the operation is expected to be carried out with four cuts, two on each side.¹⁹

In the women's fertility ritual (*esajakinoto*) there are interesting details reflecting dual symbolism. Two holes are dug into the soil and certain parts of stomach contents are poured in each of them. When the women are treated with white clay (*enturoto*), two, four, or eight women are treated first, as a symbol of completeness, and thereafter the rest in a more routine manner.²⁰ The Parakuyo have raised the ideal number of bridewealth cattle in even numbers. It used to be four until the end of 1960s, when it was raised to eight.²¹

The above ethnographic data suffice to show that dualism is the basic principle of ordering also in ritual symbolism. It is realized in simple dyads or in its multiplications. In simple dyads, distinctions are made only in one dimension, e.g. male/female, senior/junior. Double dyads may have two dimensions operating simultaneously, as e.g. in bringing the *enkoilalei-tree* to the *kraal* (male/female and senior/junior) and in the *erikoto o'l-kerra* ritual. Or they may be duplicated or triplicated to give more emphasis to the subject. In fact, there are numerous contexts where the symbolic numbers larger than two seem to have only an emphasizing significance.

There are some fixed symbolic numbers which are not dualistic in nature. The number 49, one short of 50, was previously the amount of homicide compensation in cattle, although the Parakuyo have recently raised it. In the *eunoto* ritual the Pastoral Maasai construct 49 'houses' (*enkaji*, pl. *inkajijik*) in addition to the ritual house with one central pole (*osingira*) (Beckwith & Ole Saitoti 1980:122). The 49 warriors represent the rest of the same age-set, and they precede the others in rituals. They will also be shaved first, and after these 'pure ones' are shaved the rest will follow (Hamilton 1963:107-09).

The Parakuyo have also the number 22 as a kind of symbol of perfection.

In a ritual medicated drink (*oltogom*), used e.g. in *olpul*, the number of medicines mixed with fat soup is 22. It may also be noted that when bridewealth was officially reduced, it was decided to be 22 head of cattle.²²

Finding a structural basis for these numbers is not easy. The number 22 is 11 doubled, which in turn is 10 added with one extra to make it 'perfect'.²³ The number 49 is said to be the number of perfection or good luck. That is all what I can say. These odd numbers are nevertheless quite uncommon compared with numbers based on dualism. The motto (see p. 229) of this chapter on the primacy of simple dyads over their multiplications indeed reflects the order of structuring. Dyads are reflections of the paradigmatic ordering. This simple principle is found also in more complicated numerical settings, where it still bears clearly the marks of dualism, but has also other significations.

48. COMMUNICATION BY THE RIGHT/LEFT DICHOTOMY

Dual categorization in terms of right and left has been brought again into discussion not long ago,²⁴ after having been occasionally discussed by some anthropologists. Right and left form a system of categories which has a universal distribution across otherwise very different societies. Its universality was anticipated and demonstrated already by Hertz (1909), Werner (1904), Wile (1934), and Wieschoff (1938),²⁵ and many detailed local analyses have subsequently increased our knowledge of it greatly.

It must be pointed out that right and left as a system of categorization is not separate from what was described above of dualism. In fact it is merely one realization of duality, where colours, numbers etc. are other realizations. In systems such as those of the Pastoral Maasai and Parakuyo, where dualism is pervasive, the right/left dichotomy lends itself readily to symbolic use.

The article of Hertz (1909) which I consider the most stimulating of what I have read on the subject, suffers from its excessive emphasis on dichotomizing on the lines of right:left::pure:impure::sacred:profane::superior:inferior. It is not necessarily so that categories of value are distinguished in

them, as Hertz understands. The right-hand moiety (Iloorokiteng) is not in itself sacred and the left-hand moiety (Iloodomongi) profane in Parakuyo society, although the leading ritual experts are members of the former.

It is neither so that sacred things are always done with the right hand and the impure things with the left. There is evidence of the opposite practice in some societies,²⁶ and also the Maasai tradition knows the use of the left hand for ritual purposes.²⁷ It has to be pointed out that there is no single set of dualistically arranged categories, so that e.g. the right hand would include always the connotation of seniority, masculinity, sacredness, blackness, big size, etc. and the left hand their opposites.

Sometimes the right/left dichotomy is linked with more than one of the opposite pairs, in other contexts with only one pair. For example, the dual arrangement of houses on each side of the cattle gate (enkishomi) is linked with the seniority/juniority distinction, but it has nothing to do with sexual dichotomy or with superiority/inferiority. Similarly the naming of successive initiation groups as right and left hand groups indicates their mutual relation on a time scale, but one is not superior to the other more than what the order of seniority presupposes in a gerontocratically controlled society.

However, it can be anticipated that when the right/left dichotomy is used to symbolize the pure/impure distinction, right stands for pure and sacred. Therefore, ritual animals are felled on the right side in killing. The 'right side' meat of an animal is considered more valued and pure than the opposite. Blood of cattle is extracted from the right side jugular vein. The dead are buried the right side down. The ritual acts where hands are used are performed with the right hand.

Head shaving is carried out with the right hand. The man in showing the cattle which he promised to his wife en route to his kraal has a sapling in his right hand. Charms protecting one against dangers and diseases are worn on the right wrist. Pieces of the hide (olkeretii, pl. ilkeretin) of the ritual animal are worn in the right middle finger by men and women. The circumcision operation is started from the right side, and the place of operation is on the right gate post. Piercing earlobes of boys and girls is started from the right side. Ritual head shaving is started from the right

side and continued to the left. The list could be continued almost endlessly.

It is also likely, that when the right/left distinction is used to symbolize the difference between sexes, the right side is taken as masculine.²⁸ Hence, the right side of animals is normally given to men and the left to women (but in some rituals the order is reversed to give honour to women). There are certain charms which men wear on the right and women on the left side. This is done, however, only when the sexual distinction has to be made. In very many cases women use their right side exactly as men do. The e-monyorit chain signifying married status is worn from the right earlobe. The olkeretii charm is put on the right middle finger. Women carry out ritual acts with the right hand.

The Parakuyo do not, like many Bantu societies (Rigby 1973:265; Beidelman 1961c:252; 1973:132-35), linguistically associate right with male and left with female.²⁹ The association of male with right and female with left derives rather from the fact that the former (males and right hand) are stronger than the latter (females and left hand). As the ethnographic evidence indicates, the right/left dichotomy reflects only occasionally the sexual difference.

To summarize, the Parakuyo apply the right/left distinction in ritual and also prophane contexts to symbolize dual categories. In appropriate contexts right stands for purity, sacredness, masculinity, seniority, strength etc. and left for their opposites. It depends entirely on the situation which qualities are symbolized in each context, and seldom, if ever, the whole set of pairs can be linked in one context. Furthermore, the right/left dichotomy is only one means among others of expressing dual symbolism.

NOTES to Chapter J

- 1 The Parakuyo use e.g. *olbugoi* (*Terminalia* sp.) and red clay, *olkaria*, for dyeing materials red. The Pastoral Maasai know also *olng'eriandus* (*Rubia cordifolia*) and *olsagarami* (*Piliostigma thonningii*) as a red dye.
- 2 UTA 1982/17.1./A1.
- 3 Animals killed in rain rituals are often black, because black is associated with black rain clouds. In the *osiombe* rain ritual which I observed in the border area of the Kisongo Maasai and Arusha, southeast of Arusha town, the sheep killed was black; UTA 1976/59/1-3. Lotegeluaki reports of the Kisongo Maasai that they used a black bull in burning sacrifice, a black bull in praise sacrifice after a good rainy season, and a black he-goat in a ritual where people's bad deeds were transmitted to this animal before forcing it to go through *enkishomi*; Lotegeluaki 1970:81-85.
- 4 Enduroto clay was brought to the Lugoba area generally from a place close to Tanga; UTA 1982/17.1./A2.
- 5 White colour around the eyes is thought to protect from bad influences. It is not advisable, for example, to go to see recently born puppies without white colour around the eyes, lest the eyes go bad. A warrior who has killed a lion has to apply white colour around his eyes to avoid bad influences.
- 6 UTA 1976/97/1.
- 7 Structurally the colour symbolism of the Ndembu described by Turner has some interesting features common with the Parakuyo. The needs to symbolize are apparently not very different. Therefore, we find among the Ndembu red and white as the basic polar concepts, and black as a third term, in a way rather similar to white in the Parakuyo conceptualization; Turner 1967:57-61.
- 8 On the other hand, the question of which ones of the numerous perceptible colours are chosen is apparently linked with their properties, such as brightness, hue, and saturation; Conclin 1973:933; Sahlins 1976a:12. When these properties are constant everywhere, the same triadic scheme of colours has 'offered itself' to symbolic use everywhere.
- 9 Black is associated entirely with terms carrying negative connotations, such as 'wrong, guilt, envy, intention to kill, grief, social disorder, withdrawal, end, obscurity, rebellion, and disobedience; Needham 1979:262.
- 10 Turton (1980b) has shown, how the Mursi of Northern Kenya have derived their colour terminology from the various cattle colours and patterns, as well as from contrasts between them. The categories thus formed are applied to classify the rest of the physical environment. It would seem, to use Jacobson-Widding's nomenclature, that distinctions of colours, and specifically cattle colours, are the dominant categories of Mursi society. Turton does not, however, conform to Berlin & Kay's model, that the evolutionary stage of the society could be determined of the number of colours which it recognizes as separate categories.

- 11 UTAF 1976/06/85.
- 12 UTAF 1976/08/16 ff.; Hurskainen 1982:175.
- 13 UTAF 1976/04/1-18.
- 14 UTAF 1976/06/79.
- 15 UTAF 1976/07/53 ff.
- 16 I was told that four cattle are slaughtered daily for food. This ideal number seems too low if at least 80 cattle are consumed in the ritual; UTA 1982/15.1./A1-2.
- 17 According to Ole Sankan, there is no agreement as to the starting point of counting months, nor the order of named months. For example, in his list Kujorok is the sixth month. On the other hand, there is an agreement that each month is divided into two halves, one 'bright' and another 'dark'. The eighth day of each half signifies a changing point and it cuts these half months further into dyads; Ole Sankan 1973:64-66.
- 18 Olkiloriti, olamolog, olmangilgiliani, and an iron object to make it 'cold'; UTA 1976/113/1.
- 19 In practice, the operation requires often more than ten cuts, due to the bluntness of the knife or the carelessness of the officiant. Still the ideal is always said to be four cuts, and by the fifth the operation is completed; UTAF 1976/06/68; UTAF 1976/06/93.
- 20 UTA 1976/97/1.
- 21 UTA 1982/13.1./B9.
- 22 UTA 1982/13.1./B10.
- 23 For example, the number of bride cattle is eight plus one goat. The number of movements and acts in bringing and taking away ritual implements is four plus the fifth finalizing the act. The number of actual cuts in circumcision is four, and the fifth finalizes the operation. When a sufficient amount of bridewealth is paid, olkiteng le'ntomono is killed to finalize and seal the transaction.
- 24 One of the best works on this issue is "Right & Left: Essays on Dual Symbolic Classification" (edited and with an introduction by Rodney Needham), The University of Chicago Press: Chicago, 1973. It contains 18 articles on this subject from different parts of the world. Most of them have been written by contemporary writers, but also some classic articles, such as those of Hertz, Wieschoff, and Evans-Pritchard, have been included.
- 25 The articles of Robert Hertz, "The Pre-eminence of the Right Hand: A Study in Religious Polarity", and Heinz A. Wieschoff, "Concepts of Right and Left in African Cultures" have been reprinted in Needham (1973). See bibliography.
- 26 The article of Needham on the left hand of Mugwe is an illuminating analysis of a structure, where the left hand is attributed the qualities of sacredness and mystical power. Mugwe himself is consequently associated with left and female sex. This is a conceptual categorization, which includes the possibility that also his left

hand is physically the sacred hand, although in many cases he uses his right hand in performing ritual acts; Needham 1960:20-22.

- 27 The new moon arouses joy, and when a Maasai sees it, he is supposed to throw a twig or stone towards it with his left hand and recite prayers to Enkai; Hollis 1905:274.
- 28 The analysis of Evans-Pritchard on the spear symbolism of the Nuer indicates that the right hand (and the spear as its extension) may be strongly associated with masculinity and strength; Evans-Pritchard 1974:233 ff.
- 29 The terms for 'right' (etatene) and 'left' (ekedyenye) are provided with a feminine prefix e- in Parakuyo language. In some Bantu languages these terms are associated with masculinity and femininity; for example, muwoko wokulume ('right hand', or 'male hand') and muwoko wokucekulu ('left hand', or 'female hand') in Gogo language (Rigby 1973:265).