

*The Structural Dialectics of Claude Levi-Strauss' Mythology
as Revealed in the Culture of Perpetual Internal Migrants*

BODY: Mythical Bricolar Opposition

I. Mythical bricolar opposition exists.

II. Mythical bricolar opposition reveals a struggle for access to God.

“Trust the Lord: witches won’t come near. They tempt if you lack prayer and good deeds and if you do not fulfill what is asked. If you trust the Lord, your spirit will be strong and you will not be given up to the evil ones. The witches will not come near you if you are near the Lord and have a crucifix blessed by a priest. They will be afraid. They are also afraid of the words of God.” [23]

This relationship of supernatural mediators (priests) with a fear of the “dark side” of supernatural beings presents a bricolar opposition of good/bad. Redeeming aspects mentioned above provide antidotes vs. evil witches: prayer, good deeds, obedience, and a talisman- a crucifix. The crucifix is powerless until gaining potency through priestly incantations. Tokenism of this talisman requires outside intervention. It is powerless without a priest. Another talisman of protection is the Bible. Whether it is memorized and spoken by the intended victim, or just a book carried in the hand is not clear, which also reveals the attitude of the mythologist- he places higher authority on the priest than on the Bible. The Word of God and Cross of Christ are less important than intervention of the Church. In essence, mortal (man) has superseded immortal (God) in importance under guise of requiring human intervention to activate supernatural talismans.

God is more powerful than man. He is man’s Creator, and does not need man, for He is sovereign. “Cheap grace is grace we bestow on ourselves.” [24] Grace is God’s sovereign work. In no stage of the process is grace thwarted by human failure, dependent on human merit, or subjugated to human effort. [25] “By grace you are saved, through faith- not from yourselves, it is the gift of God- not by works, so no one can boast.” [26]

You don’t like where you live? Then move! The styles of squatter homes they build or move to are often of lesser quality than the ones they left behind. In Exhibits C.1, 2 [APPENDIX] only 14% of the poor live in houses of more than cardboard, bamboo and discarded coco boards, and often even those residences lack adequate living quarters.

A. Constructing a myth by its internal oppositions characterizes the text.

“All righteous acts are filthy rags.” [27] We can’t do good. Results of our search to pay for damnation is more damnation. In Exhibit D.1 this mythical fallacy has actually

given squatters hope. Though either unemployed or jeepney drivers, with parents as poor farmers, they hope for their children to become doctors, engineers or teachers.

1. A murderer lowering his victim on a rope into the subterranean world to get feathers furnishes rules of transformation in our structural analysis, to shift from one variant to another.

Infatuated with supernatural, to survive a “subterranean world” isn’t scriptural. None return from Hell. Diffusion exchanges concepts from culture to culture. Cultural “borrowing” mustn’t forget “raising the question of evil without God fails to justify the question.” [28] Include, don’t negate, God. EXHIBIT D 3 shows unsubstantiated hope is false. High aspirations/low education are in the middle-to-lower quadrant of our chart.

2. The pregnant boy broke the rule (and therefore revealed its existence) of shamans only being replaced post-mortem.

Levi-Strauss clarifies: the pregnant boy broke rules. He was not supposed to be a shaman with supernatural powers until his predecessor died. A bricolage opposition, the boy challenged the rules, yet succeeded. He also transposed nature by being a pregnant male. It is a paradox where the rule-breaker is the hero. In EXHIBIT F2 we see squatters feel they can break the rules by not paying rent and get away with it as heroes.

B. Sometimes bricolage presence is understood better through comparison and contrast with myths of other geographical/social contexts.

Anthropology investigates how variation in groups’ beliefs/behaviors is shaped. In EXHIBIT C.3 the poor own TVs/radios. They mimic wealthier nations, hoping for possessions. Avoiding Biological determinism, scientific racism ranking is unfair.

1. The Pawnee have the most complex myths, as well as age-grade transitions achieved by purchase.

Pawnee purchase of societal transitions provides a shortcut to achieving status in society. Money talks. Society gives avenues for shortcuts, no matter how minimal the price, and the stakeholders feel rich. Their poor society sets the price, thus are not judged by outsiders’ standards. By psychological association, they feel rich as foreign societies.

In EXHIBITS F.3, D.4, D.2, E.1, 3 & E.4, we see such shortcuts. In F.3 they pay utilities, but a fraction of what homeowners pay. In D.2,4 Mindanao squatters came from Mindanao. Although they have not gotten off the island, they hope to visit places they have seen on television: USA. E.1-4 shows the “Rule of 3-5”: Most families have 3-5

children averaged 3-5 years old, 3-5 years apart, with siblings who can babysit them while their 35 yr old married parents look for money.

2. Yet the Pawnee's concept of sex identity is confused, as seen in their myths, as well as access into the middle world.

Social Determinists reject a society or culture that would locate its origins either in some unseen, immaterial force like God or in the minds of individuals. Positivism goes a step further with confidence that the combined results of anthropological efforts and studies will produce a genuine "Science of Man". Perhaps mankind, like the Pawnee, will view God as unessential for access into the next world. God has defined our genders.

C. The Hidatsa and Haku rituals parallel birth control (via abortion) with access to God.

Murder by homicide, abortion or suicide is playing God's role. Man constantly tries to diminish the importance and existence of God, so as to annul the penalty of sin.

1. The Hidatsa myth views magical animals as abortionists and magical fathers as the source of life.

Anthropologists study human nature, society and its past, Primatologists like Darwin try to find yet another "god", albeit biological, as the origin of our species. Biological anthropologists look at human beings as biological organisms, comparing them with other biological organisms. Evolutionists, evaluating fossilized findings from Paleoanthropologists, claim biological and cultural progression over time. In actuality they are, through their efforts, killing the spiritual foundation of understanding for humans and becoming Forensic anthropologists of a spiritually dead human race- suicide.

2. The Haku kinship system is similar to that of Crow-Omaha, where the descendents, through a perverse act, are identified with the Tirawa, the Supreme Diety.

Seeing ourselves as animals, we start to act like animals. Hence the perversion of the Haku system. Replacing kinship filial love with incest and parental motherly affection with child molestation, the next step is to rob their offspring of a God to turn to in this wretched scenario. EXHIBIT F 6 shows that the squatters have not gone to this extent of despondency, as their moves are mostly either right near home (to strengthen kinship identity for the children) or far from it (to build a unique family identity).