

Theories of Culture.

CSS 2009/2010

Zygmunt Bauman

- *Mortality, Immortality and Other Life Strategies*

Clifford Geertz on culture.

- "Believing, with Max Weber, that man [sic!] is an animal suspended in webs of significance he himself has spun, I take culture to be those webs, and the analysis of it to be therefore not an experimental science in search of law but an interpretative one in search of meaning." (The Interpretation of Culture, 1973: 5)

Culture according to Geertz.

- "[H]istorically transmitted pattern of meanings embodied in symbols, a system of inherited conceptions expressed in symbolic forms by means of which men communicate, perpetuate and develop their knowledge about and attitudes toward life."

Culture: differences and similarities.

- Geertz: an anthropology of difference: people do not have a single culture; the universal functions of culture are performed by particular cultures, different from one another.
- Main function: to unite. Culture as *συμβολον*: culture unites and homogenizes through shared symbols.

Maurice Bloch and anthropology of similarity.

- Very similar images, symbolic associations and ritual practices occur in societies of different time and space. „Partial recurrences“, „incomplete regularities.“
(*Essays on Cultural Transmission*, Oxford 2005)
Culture as *διάβολον*: culture separates through exclusions, silences and erasures.

William H. Sewell Jr.

"Culture... should be understood as a dialectic of system and practice, as a dimension of social life autonomous from other such dimensions..., and as a system of symbols possessing a real but thin coherence that is continually put at risk in practice and therefore subject to transformation."

Logics of History. Social Theory and Social Transformation
(2005)

Thin coherence (Sewell)

To share symbols does not necessarily mean integration and solidarity of people who share them

Sites of concentrated cultural practice (Sewell)

External mechanisms of coherence: institutions of power, around which cultural practice is centered (states, business corporations, media, religions). The main function of the "sites" (and thus of culture): to induce coherence (through the ordering of meanings) and to organize difference: "They [the sites] are constantly engaged in efforts not only to normalize or homogenize but also to hierarchize, encapsulate, exclude, criminalize, hegemonize, or marginalize practices and populations that diverge from the sanctioned ideal."

Essay topics.

- How do you understand Zygmunt Bauman's thesis that modern culture is based on 'deconstruction of mortality'?
- What are the main differences between traditional and modern cultures regarding sexuality?
- Do you agree that studies on religion can be useful in understanding contemporary politics?

Essay topics.

- In what way modern constructs of gender can be related to the repression of sexuality in the Western culture?
- In what way modern nationalism can be understood as a part of the strategy of collective immortality?
- Compare modern and postmodern approaches to identity: are they

similar or different?

Culture and the management of difference.

- If culture is about managing difference, we shall study it first of all in the situations in which the difference is blurred, which are ambiguous and contain an element of transgression. Culture as a factory of meanings through which we either learn to live with ambiguity or to “domesticate” it through separating the “familiar” from the “alien.”

Zafimaniry anthropology.

When culture matters? When do we ask fundamental questions that culture helps to answer or pretends to do so?

R. Astuti, J. Parry, C. Stafford (eds.). 2007. *Questions of Anthropology*.

Liminality.

- Arnold van Gennep: ‘rites de passage’ as ‘rites which accompany every change of place, state, social position and age.’
- ‘Every change involves an interaction between the sacred and the profane that has to be regulated and guarded so that society as a whole will suffer no discomfort or injury.’
- Victor Turner: separation, liminality, and aggregation. Liminality as ambiguity. Liminality as the experience of Otherness: “communitas” vs. structure. “Liminal” vs. “liminoid.”

Liminal situations (Van Gennep/Turner)

- Passage and transgression
- Betwixt and between
- Ambiguity
- Outside of categorization

- Otherworldly chaos
- Anxiety
- Danger

Transgressions.

- „An act, process or instance of transgressing: as **a**: infringement or violation of a law, command or duty **b**: the spread of the sea over land areas and the consequent uncomfortable deposit of sediments on older rocks.“ (*Merriam-Webster's Online Dictionary*)
- “According to linguistic or analytical philosophy, a transition from one type of proposition or ‘language-game’ to another.” (*Theological and Philosophical Biography and Dictionary*. <http://dictionary.babylon.com>)

Culture is...

A way of managing the ambiguities of liminal situations, which transforms anxieties that emerge out of liminal chaos into concrete fears, thus making them bearable.

(Special thanks to Jean Delumeau and Clifford Geertz)

What culture is about?

New Year ritual of Merina.

- Maurice Bloch, „The Ritual of the Royal Bath in Madagascar: The Dissolution of Death, Birth and Fertility into Authority.“ (1987)

Culture against death (Bauman)

- - spatial segregation
- - from bodily to social death
- - social stratification, distribution and administration of immortality
- - fight for the future: on the territory of the past. Differential deprivation of history
- - wealth, possession, accumulation
- - immortal ideas
- - memory of group
- - genetic continuation
- - bodily pleasures, intensification of life
- - aggression and conflict: to kill others = to kill death
- - life after death, immortal soul and other religious beliefs

Cultural attitudes towards death

- Death-denial: social paranoia and witch-hunt.
- Death-acceptance: Judaism and Hellenic religions.
- Death-defiance: Ancient Egypt: socially stratified defiance of death; Christianity: "democratized" death-defiance or transcendence of death.
- Death-embracing attitudes: religious and political.

(Franz Borkeu, The Concept of Death. In: R. Fulton (ed.) *Death and Identity*, New York 1965.

Death as liminal experience.

- "We know only THAT [it will happen], we do not know WHEN and WHAT, while that WHEN can be anytime and that WHAT is in principle incomprehensible. For a human being death is between the known and the unknown."

H. Plessner, *Über die Beziehung der Zeit zum Tode*. (1951: 377)

The meaning of the "dead-line."

- "In the encounter with death, we have not merely realized the extension of our present within the birth-death horizon but postulated an existence beyond death. We have constructed our being eternally and surrounded ourselves with symbols of permanence. The awareness of finitude, the conscious search for transcendence, and the construction of immutability have therefore to be conceptualized as coeval." (Barbara Adam 1990 *Time and Social Theory*. Cambridge: Polity Press, 127-8)

Geertz on religion

- Sacred symbols synthesize **ethos** and **worldview**.
- Ethos: through religious belief/practice rendered reasonable as a "way of life ideally adapted to the actual state of affairs the world view describes."
- World view: through religious belief/practice, rendered reasonable as an "image of an actual state of affairs peculiarly well-arranged to accommodate such a way of life."
- Thus, "religion tunes human actions to an envisaged cosmic order and projects images of cosmic order onto the plane of human experience..." (90)

Geertz on religion

- Religion: "(1) a system of symbols which act to (2) establish powerful, pervasive, and long-lasting moods and motivations in men by (3) formulating conceptions of a general order of existence and (4) clothing these conceptions with such an aura

of authenticity that (5) the moods and motivations seem uniquely realistic." 90

Geertz on religion

- Against chaos and ambiguity. (Susan Langer) Chaos is cognitive, physical (pain) and moral.
- "There are at least three points where chaos—a tumult of events which lack not just interpretations but *interpretability*—threatens to break in upon man: at the limits of his analytic capacities, at the limits of his powers of endurance, and at the limits of his moral insight. Bafflement, suffering, and a sense of intractable ethical paradox are all...radical challenges to the proposition that life is comprehensible and that we can, by taking thought, orient ourselves effectively within it..." 100

Geertz on religion

- Symbols as models that teach us not how to avoid suffering but how to suffer properly, how to make suffering sufferable. 104
- "Religious symbols provide a cosmic guarantee not only for their [people's] ability to comprehend the world, but also, comprehending it, to give a precision to their feeling, a definition to their emotions which enables them, morosely or joyfully, grimly or cavalierly, to endure it." 104

Geertz on religion

- The problem of Meaning, the problem of Suffering, and the problem of Evil – "raise the uncomfortable suspicion that perhaps the world, and hence man's life in the world, has no genuine order at all—no empirical regularity, no emotional form, no moral coherence. And the religious response to this suspicion is in each case the same: the formulation, by means of symbols, of an image of such a genuine order of the world which will account for, and even celebrate, the perceived ambiguities, puzzles, and paradoxes in human experience." 108

Criticism of Geertz

- Religion (culture) is not "seamless."
- Religion: not only "implicit culture" but also "explicit cultural objects" consciously used in public debate.
- Religion as legitimization and de-legitimization. A part of the power game.
- Religion as a factor of change.
- [Existential dimension missing]

R.W. Williams, 'Religion as a Cultural System.' Theoretical and Empirical Developments Since Geertz. (2005)

Mary Douglas: religion and liminality

- Generalized "dirt": something "out of place" which violates an order. "Dirt is a general category to describe everything which blurs or erases the accepted classifications, opposes them or disturbs them in any way." (*Implicit Meanings*)

- The main function of the existing divides, differences, punishments of transgression, and purifications is an imposition of a systemic character on our necessarily chaotic experience. An orderly character of experience can be achieved only thanks to an exaggerated accentuation of the difference between what is inside and outside, up and down, with us and against us. (*Purity and Danger*)

Myth

- “[M]yth is an account of events which took place... ‘in the beginning’, in a primordial and non-temporal instant, a moment of *sacred time*...[M]yth takes man out of his own time—his individual, chronological, ‘historic’ time—and projects him, symbolically at least, into the Great Time, into a paradoxical instant which cannot be measured because it does not consist of duration. This is as much as to say that the myth implies a break-away from Time and the surrounding world; it opens up a way into the sacred Great Time.” (Mircea Eliade)

Ritual

- Ritual as an intersection of profane, secular time and sacred, mythological time: “In the traditional societies men endeavoured, consciously and voluntarily, to abolish Time – periodically to efface the past and to regenerate Time – by a series of rituals which...reenacted the cosmogony.” (Eliade)

Ritual

- “For it is in ritual—that is, consecrated behavior—that this conviction that religious conceptions are veridical and that religious directives are sound is somehow generated. It is in some sort of ceremonial form...that the moods and motivations which sacred symbols induce in men and the general conception of the order of existence which they formulate for men meet and reinforce one another. In a ritual, the world as lived and the world as imagined...turn out to be the same world...” (Geertz, 112)

Ritual.

- “In ritual, change is interpreted by being linked with the past and incorporated into a larger framework, where its variations are equated with grander...totalities. By inserting traditional elements into the present, the past is read as prefiguring what is happening in the here and now, and...the future is seen as foreshadowed in all that has gone before.” (Barbara G. Myerhoff, 1984, *A Death in Due Time: Construction of Self and Culture in Ritual Drama*, 173.)

Ritual.

- “The religious rites of wake and burial, all the assistance given

to the departed soul are acts expressing the dogma of continuity after death and of community between dead and living." (Malinowski, Culture)

Ritual.

"To apprehend

The point of intersection of the timeless
With time is an occupation for the saint."

T. S. Eliot

Social time.

- Social time as a symbolic construction that on the one hand accounts for change and, on the other, gives a promise of eternity.
- From invariance through relative invariance to sequential dimension: "oscillating time" (Edmund Leach), "cyclical time", "linear time."
- "The more linear time consciousness dominates human community, the more the latter becomes individualized and the more its individual parts perceive death as danger." (Helmuth Plessner)
- Anthony Giddens: ontological security as comfort of normatively routinized practices that integrate three levels of temporality in social life: interaction, individual life and long-term duration of social institutions.

Religion.

- "Everything that sustains the operations of systematic, and not so systematic faith – from New Age occultism to the Vatican – was established in humanity's Paleolithic infancy as a result of the inescapable sway of primal fear." (4)

Stuart Walton, 2004, *Humanity. An Emotional History*

Fear and the art of imagining potentiality.

- "In all fears lies a sense of ambush, of what might happen. Fears instruct us that our habitat is mined with disastrous potentialities, but precisely because fears represent the bad things that might happen but equally well might not, they also achieve victory over us by making us fear the non-existent and the unexplained." (Walton, 3)

Transcendental social.

- "What the transcendental social requires is the ability to live very largely in imagination. We often act towards elders, kings, mothers, etc., not in

terms of how they appear to the senses at any particular moment but as if they were something else: essential transcendental beings. Once we realize this omnipresence of the imaginary in the everyday, nothing special is left to explain concerning religion." Maurice Bloch, "Why religion is nothing special but is central." 2008.

Terry M. S. Evens, *Anthropology as Ethics. Nondualism and the Conduct of Sacrifice.* 2008.

- Nondualism as life with ambiguity.
Ontological dualism is "no less perilous for humankind than it is instrumentally powerful...[D]ualism promotes performative contradictions, which in turn foster a felt need to reduce one of the poles of whatever particular dualisms is at stake...to the other, thus eradicating one of the poles altogether." xx
- Nondualism: the term denotes "basic ambiguity or between-ness, an ontologically dynamic state in which boundaries connect as they separate and a thing is always also other than what it is." xx

Towards society.

- "...our very organization into co-operative groups, and thus the beginnings of what may be recognized as societies, is attributable to the same pervasive fear, and there is one fear that above all others, exercises something like the same corrosive influence in our souls as it did when we knew next to nothing of the world. We tread warily in the presence of death." (Walton, 4)

Death and society.

- *Society was not constructed, as Aristotle says, for the sake of life and more life, but from defect, from death and the flight from death, from fear of separation and fear of individuality. Thus Freud derives fear of 'separation and expulsion from the horde' from castration anxiety, and castration anxiety from the fear of separation from the mother and the fear of death. Hence there are no social groups without a religion of their own immortality, and history-making is always the quest for group-immortality.*

Norman O. Brown 1985 (1959) *Life Against Death. The Psychoanalytical Meaning of History.* 106

Death in Modernity.

- Death-denial (Franz Borkenau): there is no death; social paranoia and witch-hunt;
- Pornography of death (Geoffrey Gorer): death as repressed obscenity;
- Reversed death (Philippe Aries): death as shame, privatization and medicalization to expel death out of social relations;

- Silenced death (Jean Baudrillard): death outside the symbolic circulation of the group;
- Deconstruction of mortality (Zygmunt Bauman)

Elements of Rene Girard's theory of the sacred.

- Myth as a symbolic record of chaos ("crisis of degree") and of the act of collective violence = a way out of the crisis situation.
- Consequences of chaos: spread of uncontrolled and undirected violence, search for "those, who are guilty." From socio-cultural crisis to a possibility of biological extinction (community's suicide).
- Sacrifice of the scapegoat = transformation of an "evil" (uncontrolled and undirected) violence into a "beneficial violence."

Girard: "Victimage."

- Sacrifice of scapegoat as the "foundational murder" that becomes the source of *Sacrum*.
- Community becomes "scapegoat addict": it is the scapegoat who "caused" the crisis and it was his sacrifice that put an end to it; the scapegoat is powerful and has all the initiative. Scapegoat effect totally reverses the relation between persecutors and their victim. It is precisely that reversal that produces *Sacrum*: "ancestors," founders" and "gods."
- Religion as a system that maintains the mechanism of victimage in a symbolic-ritual form, in order to keep violence away from the community.

Scapegoat – God – Ruler.

- "The King" as a personification of violence under control, removed from the community (monopoly of coercion). "The King" as a representation of "deified scapegoat." "The King" as a machine for transforming evil violence into positive cultural values. The ambiguity of *Sacrum* and the ambiguity of power.

Balandier: power, order, death.

- "[E]very society links its own order to an order beyond itself, and, in the case of traditional societies, to the cosmos. Power is sacrality because every society affirms its desire to be eternal and fears a return to chaos as the realization of its own death."
- In consequence: power links itself/is linked to those elements of the cultural constructions of time that represent permanence, eternity, and the sacred.

The concept of *mahano* (Nyoro, Uganda).

- “power that enables the sovereign to maintain the appropriate order”
- an external threat that can be present “in the irruption of strange or disturbing events and in the manifestation of violence”
- “dangers that society bears within itself” (a system of prohibitions that regulates relations between different social categories)
- “the other side of things”, the liminal powers and spirits that intervene in the passages from one status to another.

Geertz, Centers...

- “Active centers” of the social order: stories, ceremonies, insignia, formalities.
- Rulers as “stamping a territory with ritual signs of dominance.”
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- Charisma as a relation to the “center”: deep involvement in the “master fictions” which maintain the social order.

Cultural frame of power: Geertz.

- ‘[T]hough both the structure and the expressions of social life change, the inner necessities that animate it do not. Thrones may be out of fashion, and pageantry too; but political authority still requires a cultural frame in which to define itself and advance its claims, and so does opposition to it. A world wholly demystified is a world wholly depoliticized; and though Weber promised us both of these—specialists without spirit in a bureaucratic iron cage—the course of events since, with its Sukarnos, Churchills, Nkrumahs, Hitlers, Maos, Roosevelts, Stalins, Nassers, and de Gaulles, suggests that what died in 1793 (to the degree that it did) was a certain view of the affinity between the sort of power that moves men and the sort that moves mountains, not the sense that there is one.’

Geertz, Centers, Kings, and Charisma... p. 143.

Susan Buck-Morss.

- ‘Whereas myths in premodern culture enforced tradition by justifying the necessity of social constraints, the dreamworlds of modernity—political, cultural, and economic—are expressions of a utopian desire for social arrangements that transcend existing forms.’ (xi)

Christel Lane: Soviet rituals.

- Preaching to the converted?
- ‘Ritual...can only successfully gloss over conflicts...in societies..., which accept their social order uncritically...[O]nly when society aspires to a common value system does ritualization...gain wider

currency.' (*The Rites of Rulers*, 1981: 32)

Lane

- Almost religion.
- 'Soviet ritual is not completely secular because the social order that it represents is perceived in a fetishistic attitude: as something in principle beyond human influence, unchangeable.' (36)

'Almost' makes difference...

- Soviet ritual as 'model for' but not 'of' the social order.
- 'The system of Soviet rituals is seen as an instrument of cultural management enabling political elites...to gain acceptance for a general system of norms and values congruent with their interpretation of Marxism-Leninism... Ideological cadres are able to do this by consciously asserting, through ritual, definitions of significant social relations which...offer a "model for" those relations to shape or restructure participants' perceptions of them. Only secondarily, and to a much lesser extent, do these definitions contain a "model of" actual relations that permits ritual participants to express or clarify their feelings about these relations.' (25)

Lane

- Communism as the issue of life, not of death.
- '[B]ecause the Soviet value system offers only social explanations, which may give meaning to life but, unlike religion, not to death, it cannot and does not claim to offer a comprehensive answer to existential problems.' (41)

Ritual matters!

- Kertzer, D. I. 1988. Ritual, Politics, and Power. New Haven and London: Yale University Press.
- Civil/political religion and political symbolism. (Robert Bellah, Abner Cohen, David Apter)

Religion as a cultural frame of democracy?

- We may wonder "whether democracy can effectively measure up to the formidable challenges of the world of today without a system of beliefs, values, rituals, and symbols, or, in other words, a civil religion that not only confers legitimacy on political institutions, but also provides

individuals with an identity and a sense of belonging that is founded on the primacy of the common good and collective solidarity.”

Gentile, Emilio. 2006. *Politics as Religion*, 136-7.

Power and time.

*Take Hereford's rights away, and take from Time
His charters and his customary right;
Let not tomorrow then ensue to-day;
Be not thyself; for how art thou a king
But by fair sequence and succession?*

William Shakespeare, *Richard II*, Act I, scene II.

Strategies.

- Stopping the chariot of Chronos.
 - Plato's arrest of change;
 - Control of the intersections: time as Kairos.
- Jumping on the chariot.
 - naive interpretation: power in the service of progress;
 - less naive interpretation: progress in the service of power.

Calendars.

- Zerubavel, E. 1985a Hidden Rhythms. Schedules and Calendars in Social Life. Berkeley—Los Angeles—London: University of California Press.
- Zerubavel, E. 1985b The Seven Day Circle. The History and Meaning of the Week. New York: The Free Press.

From traditional to modern power: Foucault.

- Traditional forms:
 - Institutionalized power: develops in specialized institutions, “centers” (royalty, state),
 - Power as a violent spectacle to subordinate “people.”
 - Spectacular, violent, costly, and inefficient.
 - Focused on “death,” not on “life.”

Modernity: dissemination of power.

- The transfer of the practices of power from one “center” of authority into plethora of specialized institutions, repressive discourses, practices of mutual surveillance and self-appointed disciplines, which permeate social relations and constitute their very core.

- The demands of modern economy make traditional institutions of power inefficient and move power into the domain of already differentiated social subjects, who use the strategies of power embedded in social relations to perpetuate an impersonal system of domination.

Dissemination of power.

- Human interactions become saturated with power through legal decisions, police procedures, pedagogical influences, punishment, control, corporal and intellectual training, which bring power into a natural substratum of social life.

(Self-)disciplining society.

- Discipline as a technique 'for assuring the ordering of human multiplicities,' to exercise power at the lowest costs, to maximize its effects, to increase docility and utility of its objects.
- 'Fixing' through hierarchical surveillance ('panopticism').
- Training, examination, and documentation. Dialectics of homogenization and individualization. The 'investment of the subject.' The production of new social subjects with internalized 'new norms of dress, rationality, earnestness, competitiveness, punctuality and so on.' (Roy Boyne)

Modern identity.

- Standardization and normalization.
- Power-knowledge: the social function of science.
- Scientific standards of normality turned into rules of life: 'The normal child, the healthy body, the stable mind, the good citizen, the perfect wife and the proper man - such concepts haunt our ideas about ourselves, and are reproduced and legitimized through the practices of teachers, social workers, doctors, judges, policemen and administrators.' (Mark Philp)

Modernity as uncertainty.

- The more uncertain modern people are, the more solid identity they design. Bauman: modern pilgrims.
- Anthony Giddens: decoupling of time and space, emptying of time, disembedding of social institutions.
- Helmuth Plessner: 'the more linear time-consciousness dominates human community, the more the latter becomes individualized and the more its individual parts perceive death as danger.'
- Modernity: more anxiety or different fears?

Biopower, death, racism.

- Biopower: focused on the optimization of life processes within populations.
- Privatization of death and transformation of the technology of power. Traditional power ('focused on death'): death as a public matter, as a passage from one field of power (secular) to another (sacred). Modern power ('focused on life'): death as the end of any power, as the moment when an individual is 'left alone.'
- Racism as a solution for modern power that performs the functions of traditional power. Optimization of life through the death of the others (and, sometimes, of us).

Modernity and death.

- Modern repression of death: Jean Baudrillard.
 - Power as the power of separating death from life; as a border checkpoint and the control of exchange; death-management.
 - Modern Western culture as built upon the radical opposition between life and death where the second element of the opposition is removed and silenced.
 - "From savage societies to modern societies, the evolution is irreversible: little by little the dead cease to exist. They are thrown outside of the symbolic circulation of the group" (*Symbolic Exchange and Death*).

Baudrillard.

- Modern culture as the culture of death: from repression to obsession. A culture that repressed death is even more haunted by fear of death and obsessed with a desire for immortality.
 - Fear of death behind production and accumulation
 - Transformation of the unconscious into psychic sphere marked by the desires "to kill, to possess, to devour"
 - Fear of death behind submission to social authorities that promise immortality: control of death turned into control of living
 - Death as a paradigm for everything that is excluded and separated from "us": nature, women, mad, strangers etc. Power as "the administration of death"
 - Lack of independence of our identities that are defined by what has been excluded.

Reversed death: Philippe Aries.

Expulsion of death from the public sphere: invisibility, privatization.

Further privatization: death hidden in a hospital, "medicalization" (death=sickness), conspiracy of lying.

Reversal: in the past it is the dying person who has initiative and decisive voice in relations with other people; now it is the environment that decides.

Pornography of death: Geoffrey Gorer.

- Death as a successor of Victorian sex: forbidden and shameful, "dirty." Exclusion of children from ceremonies, death silenced.
- Mourning privatized, not expressed publicly. Those who express

mourning openly in public are excluded from society as insane.

Deconstruction of mortality: Zygmunt Bauman

- We, modern people, are of special make...

Modernity and sex.

- Norbert Elias: "civilizing process."
 - Removing sexuality "behind the scene."
 - Advancing the threshold of shame and embarrassment.
 - Increasing mutual identification between men and women.
 - Shifting the balance between external control and self-control.
 - Increasing psychological distance between childhood and adulthood.

Foucault: repressive hypothesis.

- Sexuality as an example of an interaction and overlapping of disciplinary power and regulative power (biopower).
 - Sexual behavior as a bodily behavior subjected to disciplinary control and supervision.
 - Sexual behavior as influencing biological processes of a population and thus subjected to the regulation of biopower.
 - Disciplinary control and biopower in medical discourse of sexuality.

Foucault: repressive hypothesis.

"Fake repression" of sexuality as a part of the disciplinary strategy of modern power. Visibility through repression: or how, through the repression of sexuality, we become permanently focused on sex.

(And treat it as something dirty, "sleazy.")

John Jervis: three sources of modern sexuality.

- 'civilizing process' (distinction of 'body' and 'self')
- 'panoptic gaze' ('construction of sexuality through regulation')
- 'interior world' (emotions and fantasies connected with transgression)

Modern dirty thoughts (Jervis).

- 'Dirt' as an object of erotic fascination. The social construction of 'dirt': 'dirt' as a function of social and cultural distance. Separation of 'love' from 'desire.'
- 'Dirt' as 'a threat to the "civilizing process," and a manifestation of it.' Ambiguity of

woman as one, who—in her role of housewife—deals with 'dirt.'

- Sexuality as violation ('of the boundaries of body, self and other') and transgression. 'Erotic power of dirt...as a feature of the modern construction of the transgressive.'

Mary Douglas: the sacred and dirt.

- Generalized "dirt": something "out of place" which violates an order. "Dirt is a general category to describe everything which blurs or erases the accepted classifications, opposes them or disturbs them in any way." (*Implicit Meanings*)

Emerging gender.

- Man vs. Woman = civilization vs. nature; reason vs. emotions; self-control vs. lack of control; public sphere vs. private sphere.
- Women excluded from modernizing process as the representation of uncontrollable, dangerous, natural sexuality.
- Gender roles as a product of repression of sexuality (but some have been more repressed than others...).

Ambiguity of woman.

- Woman as Liberty: female 'natural wilderness' as breaking conventions and representing the revolutionary element of progress. Woman as an agent of the society of equal, responsible subjects.

Forms of "resolving" the ambiguity.

- Resolving ambiguity through de-sexualization: 'good woman' as controlling her passion (=allowing her husband to control her). Repression of female sexuality: cultural ideals of purity and sacrifice. Dying virgins vs. witches, whores, and vampires. 'Provocative' victims of rape. An example: "red woman" and "white woman" (K. Theweleit, *Male Phantasies*)

Forms of "resolving" the ambiguity.

- Resolving ambiguity through moral idealization: women as carriers of morality that softens men corrupted by civilization/culture. An example: Comte and his moral elevation of a woman as a personification of a necessary part of any

society.

Forms of "resolving" the ambiguity.

- Resolving ambiguity through 'domestic empowerment': 'To her [woman] went authority over the household, leisure time, courtship procedures, and kinship relations, and under her jurisdiction the most basic qualities of human identity were supposed to develop.' (Nancy Armstrong)

Modernity and ambiguity.

- Bauman: a fundamental failure of modernity to deal with ambiguities. From frontiers to borders (Giddens). Homogenization through erasure, silencing, marginalization, expulsion and annihilation.

Annett & Collins: gender and sexual stratification.

- Gender roles as constructed in the structurally determined competition over available resources with the use of dominant ideology.

Annett & Collins

- Repression of sexuality as the result of competition/cooperation between men and women: 'In the period of transition from the situation of patriarchal dominance to that of private households in a peaceful market economy, men's interests in controlling their women and women's interests in improving their position through an idealization of sexuality are likely to coincide in producing a maximal degree of puritanism.'

Giddens and "democratic sex."

- Democratic norms 'sever sexuality from...power, above all from the power of phallus. The democratisation implied in the transformation of intimacy includes, but also transcends, "radical pluralism." No limits are set upon sexual activity save for those entailed by the generalising of the principle of the autonomy and by the negotiated norms of the pure relationship. Sexual emancipation consists in integrating...sexuality with the reflexive project of self. Thus, for example, no prohibition is necessarily placed on episodic sexuality so long as the principle of autonomy, and other associated democratic norms, are sustained on all sides. On the other hand, where such sexuality is used as a mode of exploitative domination,...or where it expresses a compulsiveness, it falls short of the emancipatory ideal.'

Postmodernity: from disseminated to dissolved power.

- Postmodern power disappears from social relations or rather the whole social reality disappears and is replaced by hyperreality of "models, codes, information, and media." The dead, abstract power resides in hyperreality as simulacrum, that is as a sign which lost any connection with anything signified, and is reproduced through "media, consumption, fashion, leisure, and semiotics," not by any "real" strategies of "real" people trying to subordinate each other or liberate from subordination. Power is not "merely impossible to locate because of dissemination, but dissolved...and...made hyperreal through simulations." (Baudrillard)

Postmodern identities.

- Postmodern culture as implosion of difference, entropy and collapse of boundaries.
- The end of identity as a "solid project": immortality dissolved into partial satisfactions and "life without project." Destruction of future and linearity. Identity as something "here and now," until further notice. Nothing is irreversible. Nothing disappears. Pilgrims vs. tourists (nomads). The return of the repressed or trivialization?

