

SOFTWARE FOR A SOFT PREHISTORY

Structural history and structural ergology
applied to a type of universally distributed
"soft industry": sacred territorial demarca-
tion signs made of non-durable organic materials

by Nold Egenter

The paper presented here is based on published ethno-historic surveys carried out by the author in Japan on the subject of generally widespread territorial cults (ujigami no reisai) in particular a type focussed on technologically primitive 'soft' symbols or cult-markers (jap. yorishiro, annually renewed sacred seats of particular deities). These cult-markers made of organic fibres like reeds, bamboo etc. approximately correspond to what earlier theories of religion universally termed as 'fetish', 'idol' and the like. Based on the universality of the phenomenon "territorial cults with 'soft' cult-markers" a new cultural-anthropological method is suggested. In regard to recent methodological developments of Hirschberg's ethno-historical school in Vienna which postulates "Structural History" for the reconstruction of ethno-historio-archaeological "continua" this formulates "Structural Ergology" as an attempt to combine systematic diachronic research into material culture with structural anthropology according to Claude Levy-Strauss.

Due to the particularly favorable cultural geography of Japan 'Structural Ergology' allows to outline the continuity of a cultic and political institution (ujigami, matsurigoto) basic in the proto- and early historic formation of the Japanese state. In particular the semantic function of its 'soft' material outfit (sanctuaries, 'fetishes') within a ritually preserved system of sacredly protected territorial rights becomes evident. The ethnohistoric approach implies that this perishable type of material culture without doubt de-

veloped during the roughly 1000 prehistoric years of peasant-village culture of Japan and thus must have eluded the archaeological method. This statement is important because 'Structural Ergology' further shows that this highly complex institution, primarily a pure tradition of the peasant-village substratum, plays a decisive role in understanding Japanese civilisation, because of the structurally genetic characteristics of this type of 'soft' material culture. In many respects it provides the basic local structures with which the historic elites were faced and had to cope with when they imported higher civilisation from China. Japanese culture in all historic periods must consequently be seen as a blend of structures rooted in the peasant-village substratum and elitarian concepts originated from China.

Such a structurally founded cultural history "from below" must necessarily lead to critical positions towards the established image of Japanese cultural history as for instance Japanology projects it. Facetted into its Euro-centric subdisciplines, it clearly shows its rigid methodological historicism modelled according to Euro-historically established studies of antiquity and advanced civilisations.

In conclusion programs will be suggested which apply 'Structural Ergology' to other cultural areas (Sino-Korean-Japanese continuum; Near-Eastern-Egyptian-European continuum, the latter being modified according to K.Marr). Obviously a great amount of sources hints to the prehistoric existence of soft industries and in particular of soft territorial cult markers. Thus the feasibility of the cultural anthropological method outlined in terms of 'Structural History' and 'Structural Ergology' is clearly demonstrated.

Structural history and structural ergology applied to a type of universally distributed "soft industry": sacred territorial demarcation signs made of non-durable materials.

by Nold Egenter

1. The horror of basket-making

"Somehow it gave me a feeling of being prehistoric". This paradoxical sentence comes from a mysterious short story entitled "The horror of basketmaking" by Patricia Highsmith (1981), a successful American writer. Diane, a completely normal New York woman, one day finds a basket washed up on the seashore and is immediately overcome by a sense of anxiety and a feeling of being threatened in her identity. Only after she has bravely burned the basket does she calm down again. How is it possible for a simple basket to provoke such a state of anxiety? The significant aspect of this psychodrama lies in its intuitive grasp of the technological age of basket-making. Reflections on the elementary handicraft involved in its production make the basket seem a fossil, as it were ("Millions of years old?"). Diane discovers that she is spontaneously capable of doing basketry and it is this discovery that unleashes her anxiety; she believes that a million year-old mental propensity has seized control of her. In burning the basket, she finally suppresses the sense of being possessed by a primitive spirit and recovers her normal state of mind. A closer analysis of Highsmith's story clearly reveals an echo of a method which will be referred to in the following pages as "structural history" and "structural ergology". In this method the basket serves firstly as an obvious model, secondly it represents a field of ergologically related phenomena, which I shall call "soft industries". But first of all I shall outline this field with a few explanatory points.

- a) "Technology is the science of making objects from raw materials" (Neuvermann 1971:34). Generally speaking, both in the history and ethnology of technology very little attention has been paid to the fact that in basket-making and related handicrafts there is a practically tool-less relationship between the hand (and its physical features) and a cultural object: the work that results from the process of weaving and plaiting (Egenter 1982b and 1983a on the use of the hand in the nest-building of the higher anthropoid apes. See Fig.1). This appreciation of the elementary relationship between the hand and its work is the basic reason for the "horror of basket-making". Employing materials that are to be found anywhere, this could be a very ancient technology. In this connection it is noteworthy that such words as the German "Werk" and "wirken", the English "work" and the Greek "ergon" are derived from a large group of indogermanic words meaning "turning, bending, winding, weaving". That man "works" is derived from weaving.
- b) The basket shows a certain order, expressed in its structural character. In its stretched, fixed texture, it records the movement of the hand that needed to make it. Thus its order has a didactic character, that can be read and reproduced. It is this readability of basket-making that allowed the heroine of our story to repair the basket, and not a genetically transmitted aptitude, as she thought. With the word "structura" we designate this object as the bearer of information in its original Latin sense "order, system, construction, building" (from the Latin "struere", fitting together, building up, erecting).
- c) If by "ergology" we mean the science of the tangible products of cultures" (Neuvermann 1971:34), then the story of the basket in New York stands in stark contrast to modern

products. It derives its horror from the fact that, in comparison with a modern plastic carrier-bag, the basket gets by with practically no "antecedents of an object-logical nature" (Mühlmann 1962:255f.). All over the world it can be produced by simple manipulations, on the spot, for immediate use, whereas the plastic bag represents the last stage in a chain of processes: procurement of materials, production and distribution. Thus in the context of the tangible products of New York the basket is an exceedingly primitive thing.

- d) For the art of storytelling it is perfectly legitimate to create suspense by the use of extreme contrasts. But, scientifically speaking, the basket belongs to ethnology. That is its ergological home, so to speak. There the technological concept of the hand - work relationship reveals many related instances, a multitude of bound, bundled, plaited and woven artefacts, which we regard as different classes of "soft industries".¹⁾
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- e) The class of basket-line objects includes not only baskets but a variety of teleologically different things: huts, granaries, cages, traps, hats, masks, etc., which, in a wide ergological field of comparison, demonstrate the spectrum of technological efficiency inherent in basketry.
- f) The teleological paradigm of our eurocentric approach to ethnological object-culture is very clearly demonstrated in the field of "soft industries". Nevermann (:347) points out that in practice ergology overlooks many things, simply because they are customarily handled by other disciplines. Thus artistically made sculptures are torn from their cult context and treated by art theoreticians only in terms of aesthetic criteria. On the other hand, ritual or magical implements are included with religion, although their ergo-

logical or aesthetic character is of primary importance. Inasmuch as a consistent ergological approach ensures a fundamental understanding of "tangible products", it precludes such ambiguities. Primitively made signs along paths, magical symbols of occupation, cult signs such as fetishes, spirit-houses, seats of the gods (see Egeater 1980) - i.e. the common appurtenances of religion - can be ergologically approached and analysed within the further context of soft industries. The advantage of this approach lies in the fact that, precisely with this type of soft industry, a large class of objects of decidedly idealistic nature makes its appearance. We can speak of structures in the structural-anthropological sense.

- g) Most important: In the perspective of such a wide field of soft industries decisive questions arise. Given a particular people without written language i.e. a concrete situation in which ethnographical and archaeological research lie side by side in the same cultural area: How is it that ethnologists' and archaeologists' concepts of object-culture are qualitatively and quantitatively so different? Is all the soft material merely new, or is the small amount of it that is old and durable a highly fragmentary remnant? Or, more generally: How is it that the basket is scarcely mentioned in connection with prehistory) (Cf. Vogt 1937). If we seek answers to such questions, the method of structural history, which I shall outline in the following pages, can offer a guideline, because it tries to combine the disciplines of ethnology, history and archaeology. In other words: structural history returns the basket to the diachronic discussion.

2. Structural history

Structural history is a new methodological development with a place somewhere between history and sociology. It is concerned with the synchronic and diachronic reconstruction of social structures. Wernhart (1981), following Hirschberg, has recently applied this method to ethnology. Here are a few points to indicate the scope of his important work, "Ethnohistorie und Kulturgeschichte als Strukturgeschichte":

Structural history

- is to be understood as an empirically exact historical branch of historically orientated ethnology, parallel to human and cultural history in the evolutionary sense.
- proceeds from the concept of "ethnos", which, always bound up with time and space, can be applied at different levels (tribes, peoples and cultures).
- is primarily concerned with recent 'ethno-historical' (Hirschberg) traditions, taking account of historical viewpoints (sources, source criticism, sequence of sources, the elaboration of phase concepts etc.).
- sets its results in the larger contexts of cultural history, namely the complex of fields covered by prehistory, archaeology studies of antiquity, history and ethnology or folklore.
- formulates its aim as a synthesis between ethno-history and cultural history which, as meta-history, is not concerned with historical events but with a more distant perception of socially important structures, which it seeks to reconstruct as a dynamic or phaseological continuum.

It immediately becomes clear that a non-writing culture cannot be the ideal working field for this method. It is much more suitable for highly developed cultures which, like those of India or China with its peripheral peoples etc., not only have a long history, but have also preserved their traditions intact. I do not wish to offer a detailed explanation of why

Japan is a paradise from the standpoint of structural history. For this I must refer you to my radio series, "Japan - the big village: notes on the history of Japan's historical awareness" (Kgenster 1983c). What matters for us here is the following: About 1000 years of agrarian prehistory, 1000 years of central urban control (imported from China) and history, the absence of foreign rule in historical times, a policy of seclusion for 200 years, very little Christian influence. Consequently, Japan was able to preserve a sense of its own unusual richness in prehistorical-agrarian and pre-Buddhistic traditions respectively. Reversed perspective is a crucial aspect of the structural historical method. It primarily depends, not on historical or archaeological evidence, but on ethnographically comprehensible, living social sources. It sifts through the uppermost layer. Accordingly, we can now formulate the idea of "structural ergology" inasmuch as the structure in vitro is questioned about its relationship to the "structure" of soft industries.

3. Structural ergology

The expression "structural ergology", derived as it is from the Greek word "ergon" (work), can be explained as the attempt to combine structural anthropology, as a method, with object-culture in such a way that a system can be diachronically interpreted by studying the development of its object-culture. The object-culture of a social and regional unit (ethnos) is not thereby teleologically classified on the basis of eurocentrically determined ideas of purpose, but in terms of a theory of technological development similar to that of a phase-concept. As with Ogburn's cultural-lag theory (1923:1950; see also Mühlmann 1962), the entire range of cultural objects can be ethnographically interpreted in the field as an accumulation classifiable into developmental stages according to

the material used and the constructional features. At the same time the description, from the primary level upwards, is based on significant, self-contained functional complexes. These arise from objective recording of the relevant systems of spatial and social order under which the production and handling of the objects occurs at different levels. The sequence of such functional complexes can be described as a transformation of the system.

Using this method, the Japanese politico-ritual institution of the ujigami (historically established meaning: clan deity), which is traceable to early historical times, was ethno-historically and structure-historically reconstructed (see Egenter 1980, 1981a, b, 1982a, 1983b, d; Ludwig 1983, Knecht 1982, 1984). In its more recent form of a cult of the village deity (ujigami), it is rooted in practically all of Japan's 40,000 settlement units. Following the principle of accumulation, primitive cult symbols made of readily available materials (reeds, bamboo, etc.; Jap. "yorishiro", seats of the gods) were selected as a representative of an object-tradition rooted in the peasant and village prehistory of Japan. These cult symbols were ergologically compared and, from their relationship to social, cultic and spatial orders, were assigned a central role in the annual cult-scene.

The results of this research, carried out in about 100 villages of central Japan, can be briefly summarized as follows (cf. note 2: "the 3 values of the investigated cult signs"):

- The cult signs have a polar structure in the sense of Chinese Yin-Yang symbols (Fig.2a).
- The territorially representative character of the cult signs (Fig.2b) and their transient nature imply specific relationships with the social, ritual and spatial structures of the settlement, which are recognisable as a system (Fig.3). Seats of the gods of polar structure (S) are models of the

polar structures S_{aa}, S_{ap}, org. and S_{rit}. "Structura" and structure are genetically related. In the final analysis, this is a matter of sacred territorial rights, the perishable legal deeds of which are preserved by village élites in form of a technically primitive object-tradition. The system was engendered during the founding of local settlements.

Archaeologically speaking, this brings us into the realm of agrarian prehistory, historically, into that of early history and, as far as structural history is concerned, into Japanese cultural history.

- Archaeologically, in respect of the sources (Fig. 4b v) still to be found in the uppermost layer, so to speak, it must be concluded that the perishable legal documents are survivals of a substrate of soft industries that are no longer accessible to archaeology. These "seats of the gods" are lost to the archaeologist at both the prehistorical and historical levels.
- Historically, we find in the first chapter of the history of 720/. (Nihongi) (patterned on the Chinese imperial annals), a reference to the "origin of the world" and to "the first seven generations of the gods", thus to two totally different strata. This creation myth concerns an accumulation. A Chinese cosmogony (theory of the origin of heaven and earth) is contrasted with an ancient, microcosmic, autochthonous stratum, in which there is reference to divinities that "stand on the spot", are "made of reeds" or are even directly identified as "landowners". Thus Japanese creation myths can be regarded as late and territorially-motivated records, whose godly genealogies are actually summary descriptions of ancient territorial lawsuits. Their purpose was to legitimize territorial claims and to anchor these claims chronologically as deeply as possible in accordance

with the founder principle (see Note 2, points 3-5). Topographical records of the 8th century (Fudoki) also point to sacred territorial rights in early historical and prehistorical times. Thus the Hitachi Fudoki exactly describes the founding of a settlement by the erection of a shrine at the entrance to the mountain forest (yamaguchi) whereby, in polarized order, the god receives the mountain as his property, while the founder claims the reed-covered (but cultivable) lowland for himself. As a priest (hafuri), the founder wants to maintain his family's hold upon the land for generations to come. The text provides a very clear description of the ethnologically accessible structure and its territorial provisions. On a larger scale, the introduction of Buddhism and its centralism can also be represented as a legal contest with the local, native, territorial system of prehistoric Shinto traditions (Hall 1968: 30ff.)

Structuro-historically reconstructed as a continuum, this sacred territorial law, so very important for peasant-village settlement, provides the following fruitful new insights:

- a) the territorial components of Japanese religious history become apparent,
- b) the social hierarchy of Japan is shown to be built upon the village hierarchy and its background of settlement genesis,
- c) the much-admired aesthetic orientation of Japanese culture is seen to draw its impulses, as ever, from the agrarian substrate. The stylistic metamorphosis of cultural imports proceeds from below, from the aesthetically metaphysical values of ritually perpetuated "soft industries".

4. The problem of multi-culturalism, as exemplified by Japan

With these structure-historical reconstructions one suddenly finds oneself criticizing the usual methods of describing cultures: it becomes clear how, as in our case, the "methodological historicism" of eurocentric disciplines have affected japanology. For instance, for a long time it merely interpreted the sources of the Shinto religion in terms of philologically and historically exact translations of the old texts. But this only dealt with that strand of the imperial chronicles which was ideologically and politically influenced by China. Apart from this, there was only a cataloguing of a few Shinto shrines and cults, again with special emphasis on imperial Shinto. Everything else was treated as a diffusion proceeding from the centres of higher culture, which were naturally under the influence of Chinese Buddhism. Otherwise, whatever was not accorded the status of higher culture was relegated to japanological folklore, and the relevant material then mishandled in European style. Similarly, japanology projected on to various epochs and levels of Japanese art the stylistic concept that had developed from the European Renaissance. Through its exclusive interest in élitist art, this "aesthetic historicism" of the japanological art theorists deprived them of any insight into the prehistoric agrarian foundation of Japanese art, and thus of its metaphysical and aesthetic essence. In every type of Japanese art, whatever the dimensional level, its function is to create a view of the world in terms of polar harmony.

If our cultural-anthropological methods: only lead to contradictory pluralism, to an "eternal oscillation of theories" (Muhlmann 1968: 242, referring to Sorokin), then, in my opinion, this is due to "methodological historicism", which is overdue for reassessment. Our methods were developed in the urban surroundings of Europe and are affected by this

milieu. As with the Japanological depiction of Japan, projection of this plexus of methodological historicism on to other cultures has created the mystification from which our emotions live, for good or ill. But that is not science! The most important aspect of all this is that, with this "methodological historicism", we deprive ourselves of possibilities of learning more about ourselves from foreign cultures.

5. Structural history and structural ergology as a method for use in cultural anthropology

a) The Sino-Korean-Japanese continuum

If, by our modified "horror of basket-making", we are to understand a cultural anthropological method, then structural history and structural ergology must be applicable to other cultures. Kùster (1958), with his excellent plea for the diachronic study of symbols in sinology, has used very similar methods. He emphasizes the many concrete symbolic systems and their meaning for the Chinese view of the world and for Chinese universalism and shows them as continua extending throughout Chinese history. Of these the most important are the "ming-tang" huts of the legendary period (:48f) and the signs, forms and structures associated with the early local god "she" (63f). With the latter, we are not just at the early stage of the great Sino-Korean-Japanese continuum of written characters (Fig.5, cf. Egenter 1984a), but also at the level of discussion of prehistorical and early historical territorial and clan organization in China. What did the earliest territorial signs of local gods look like? A recent Japanese work on sinology refers to the earliest form as a bundle of reeds (Moriya 1950: 278f.). In other words, what we have discovered of peasant and village territorial organization in the peripheral regions of Japan

could also serve as a useful hypothesis in sinology.

b) The Near Eastern-Egyptian-European continuum

Finally, I should like to test the method in the European sphere. I use the well-known "ethno-archaeological" model of E.Harr (Fig.6; 1973:47 and 1975:12), by which he demonstrates the diffusion of both village-peasant and urban-historical cultures from the Near East (and Egypt) to the Mediterranean and onward to west, central and northern Europe. The two main borderlines run roughly diagonally: ceramics appear between hunting-and-collecting and peasant-village cultures, towns-and-writing between peasants and town-dwellers. This model is extraordinarily valuable because at the same time it clearly reveals the ambiguity of the historical standpoint. Peasant-village culture does not simply die out with the rise of the towns. It lives on in the urban-historical sphere and to this day can still preserve its traditions intact in peripheral zones. Folklore lives on it. On the basis of this argument, Harr's model is stereometrically unwoven and each of its cultural types is followed through, right up to the present day (Fig.7)³⁾. His curves of finds of durable products (ceramics, copper, bronze, iron, artfully fashioned stone) of peasant and urban strata are of crucial importance for our own objects of interest (soft industries, especially cult signs of sacred territorial rights). In this field, where there is acculturation to new techniques employing durable materials, we find a preference for descriptions of soft industries or their elements which have been transubstantiated in the course of a "metabolic change"⁴⁾ (see Fig. 8 and Fig. 9_{I-VII}). Plant ornamentation now becomes a general indicator of least soft industries and offers pointers to the structural order of the "decorated" things. Particularly where soft cult-signs appear in great quantities and variations on hard sources, as in the Near East and Egypt, a parallellistic substrate is at hand.⁵⁾

Similar sources are to be found in the antique cultural region of the Mediterranean (capitals, statues of Greek gods, cult signs on Greek coins etc. Fig.9_q). There is analogous evidence of the pre- and early history of the Middle Ages to be found in such examples as the Saxon column (Irminsul), the Anglo-saxon stone crosses, stones with plaited ornamentation, e.g. the bound Loki, the high-seat columns of the Vikings in Iceland and, above all, in Mannhardt's (1905) so called "lower mythology" (Fig. 9/VI). Soft industries (often clearly recognisable as territorial cult signs) are to be found in large numbers as traditional survivals in the folklore of the corresponding cultural regions. Some of them are shown in Fig. 9/VII. Such popular traditions as maypoles, huts etc. could be re-examined, as church precincts and institutions are assumed to overlie originally prehistoric, traditional marking-systems (see Fig.10).

Finally, to give an optical summary of the potential of our theme, "Structural history and structural ergology - software for a soft prehistory", I would like to hint at a most instructive Italian Renaissance picture (Fig.11). The Christian-historical representation of the world, with its anthropomorphic interpretation of Heaven and Earth (God and Mankind), and the classically architectonic interpretation of space with arch and pillars are both in a polar relationship to the mysterious fetish in the centre of the world-axis. In miniature it expresses the polar order of the accumulated greater worlds.⁶⁾

NOTES

- 1) At the technical department of Chiba University, Japan, there is an investigation in progress, financed by the Toyota Foundation and directed by Prof. K. Sakamoto, which is devoted to the subject of Japanese "Straw culture" (wara no bunka) (see Sakamoto and Miyazaki 1981). This type of "soft industry" is practically ignored by present-day technology and ergology (cf. Hirschberg/Janata 1980).
- 2) The 5 values of the investigated cult-signs:
 1. Metaphysical-aesthetic value. The "metaphysical" meaning of the cult object lies in its structure and physical form and is finally of an aesthetic nature. "Transcendence can be understood as asymmetrical proportion in the sense of a "projecting part". In several categories the projecting part forms the counterpart to the main part, which is stable and permanent. Philosophically speaking, the cult signs represent a complex form of "coincidentia oppositorum", which can be termed "a polar bundle of categories". This metaphysical-aesthetic value can be genetically deduced from the "hand - work relationship" with rooted stalks.
 2. Value for the theory of cognition. The "polar bundle of categories" can be applied to any natural or artificial form-relationship. With harmonizing motifs, the categorical aspects of the model are reproduced in homologous relationships and thus integrated into the local "metaphysical" system (cf. Egenter 1981b, which deals with the question whether the phenomenon of the natural sacred tree can be understood as a derivative of the artificial sacred tree. In more general terms: Was the natural tree "discovered" through the medium of the artificial tree?) The sense and function of the transfer of polar categories from one object to another lie in the uniform orientation so envisaged. Accordingly, the cult signs are polar-cate-

gorical models of the social, ritual and spatial structure of the settlement. The plans of the village, the shrine precinct, the court district, ground-plans of the houses and also the vertical structure of buildings and cult objects, artificial and natural, are laid out in a polar sense. The categorical value of certain areas finds expression in ritual behaviour (e.g. dynamic behaviour in zones of dynamic significance).

3. Semantic value. This lies in the practical function of the cult signs. They are territorial signs. Their forms stand for hamlets, villages or urban boroughs. According to their position, they indicate definite points in the traditional demarcation system related to streets and pathways.
4. Documentary value. This follows from the time components of the scheme shown in Fig.3. The relatively stereotyped traditions of the cult signs indicates the pre- and early historical territorial organization. As traditional legal "documents" relating to the founding of the settlement, these legal signs must be renewed annually (since they are made of non-durable materials). Only in this way can they be preserved down the ages. Renewal of the sign is the central content of the ritual. With its phases of alternating "destruction of the order" (= chaos) and "renewal of the order" (= cyclic regeneration of the village order), the destruction and renewal of the cult signs characterizes the ritual structure of behaviour and the ideology of the village.
5. Territorial and power-political value. Inasmuch as the territorial legal document determines the territorial order of the settlement at its founding, its tradition has the effect of creating a social elite, because the

founder line possesses the legal title (documented in the cult) to the cultivable and non-cultivable land - in contrast to side-branches of the family and newcomers. This line can thus develop characteristics of dominance over descendants and tenants. Accordingly, the line of the founder family, if still existent, represents the peak of the local political hierarchy. They also dominate the cult of the village deity and their hereditary "prince" often has the standing of a sacred, local lord of the earth or, under the influence of imperial Shinto, a priestly function.

- 3) All sources (traditional (T), historical (H) and archaeological (A)), lie in the virtual level S (i.e. today in point of time), and at the corresponding levels G (gatherers-hunters), A (agrarian) and U (urban) are regarded as accumulation, and are dated or estimated. Structure-historically, i.e. based on the ethnohistoric-archaeologically densified source situation, it is possible to reconstruct certain continua in each cultural region and to study them for interference between the different levels.
- 4) W.Andrae (1930, 1933) worked with this method in the Near East, claiming, for instance, organic prototypes for Jordan's find, the so-called ring-bundle of reeds and the Ishtar sign of Sumerian writing. I myself have adopted this idea and developed it in a contribution to the archaeology of writing (see Egenter 1982: 10f.). The earliest Sumerian ideograms were interpreted as two-dimensional drawings of technologically primitive three-dimensional territorial signs. The two-dimensional copies may have served as a basis for the first system of urban taxation (Fig.8).

- 5) In a critical comment on Andrae 1933, I pointed out that a peasant-village stratum of soft industries (i.e. a parallel element) had to be held responsible for the rich formal variety of the sources which Andrae treats in an archaeological, diffusionistic manner.
- 6) Vittoria Carpaggio, *Apoteosi di S. Ursula*, dat. 1491; Venezia, Galleria dell'Accademia. The picture is a perfect example of the "centre of the world" structures characteristic of a religious view of the world, as Eliade tried to demonstrate in terms of universal history. What is surprising is that Carpaggio has transformed the palm-leaf of Jewish-Christian tradition into a bundled fetish and placed it in the centre of the world-axis, indeed at that significant point of the world where heaven and earth are in contact. The "bond between heaven and earth" is formed by a closed ring of red heads of angels, bodiless celestial beings, which also surround the similarly bodiless image of God the Father. That Carpaggio was aware of the polar structure of his fetish is proven by the fact that he places the figure of St. Ursula on the projecting part where, from an ergological standpoint, there is no possibility of standing. The sacred cloud of light forming the background to her figure also springs from the upper part of the fetish, which is thereby declared to be a holy pillar-bundle. In modern terms and having regard to the three orders (recent folk-tradition, Christian history and antique architecture), Carpaggio presents an ethno-historico-archaeological or structural-historical interpretation of a sacred Christian concept (Ascension). The saint literally stands above the holy shrine of the common people and ascends from it into the Christian cosmic heaven. It should be noted that Carpaggio places the image of God the Father within the sacred space

of the ancient Romans, i.e. just below the arch.
As a genial composition, the picture also provides
a structural-historical representation of a theory
of the development of sacred spatial organization
on the basis of polar categories (cf. J.Kerschens-
teiner 1962 on the meaning of the term "cosmos" in Greek).

Fig. 1

CONSTRUCTION AND WEAVING BY HAND ALONE: NESTBUILDING OF
THE HIGHER ANTHROPOID APES

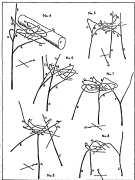
- a Adult female chimpanzee starts to build a nest in the crown of a palm-tree: without tools! (after Goodall 1962)
- b Diagram showing the "weaving" of the cross-pieces (after Goodall 1962)
- c The gorilla's methods of building a ground-nest (after Balwig 1959)
- d Diagrams of six different chimpanzee nests (after Izawa Itani 1966; see also Egenter 1983)



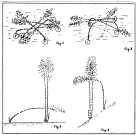
b



b



d



c

TERRITORIAL CULT SIGNS IN JAPAN

Table showing the forms of the most important types studied in 100 Japanese villages. The order of the depicted signs follows priorities set out in a former study (Egenter 1982a). The two principal variants of the hypothetical original form are shown in the insets. They are drawn from experimental signs (different scales!)

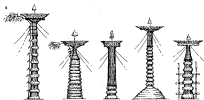













Fig. 2b

SYSTEM OF TERRITORIAL REPRESENTATION BY "SOFT SIGNS" IN A
MEDIEVAL JAPANESE TOWN

Neighbouring villages (partly resettled at the founding of the town) annually document their political relationships by bringing their "homemade" sacred symbols to the central medieval institution, the Hachiman Shrine of the town. The three lower lines represent territorial organisations at village level, the uppermost line shows the order of the villages and their symbols before the central shrine at the annual festival.

A B C D E F G H I K L M

I I





I I I




P P









Q R






S T






U V





X Y





Z A B





C D E





F G H

Fig. 3

STRUCTURE AND 'STRUCTURAL' METHOD OF SURVEY IN JAPANESE VILLAGES

SYM	<u>Synchronic survey</u>
S	Sign, Symbol, 'structura'
S _{ae/ap.org.}	aesthetic structures and space organisation of village
S _{rit}	ritual structures of village-god festival
S _{soc.}	social structure relevant at festival of village-god
DIA	<u>Diachronic interpretation</u>
t	time
S _n	renewal 'n'
S ₁	first renewal of S } by founder or 'house' (line) of founder
F	foundation of village, establishing territorial rights by setting up S by village founder(s)

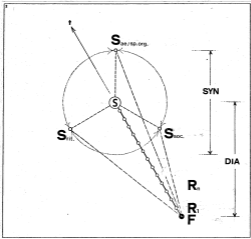


Fig. 4

TEMPORARY CULT SIGNS (YORISHIRO) OF TRADITIONAL JAPANESE SHINTO

a . b The drawings are mostly taken from illustrations in the Japanese literature and, as far as possible, drawn to scale. The rest (No.130) is taken from the author's own field records. At a rough estimate, based on un-illustrated cults mentioned in the literature, this table covers about 10% of the rites still performed in Japan. The extent and significance of these rites point to the agrarian pre- and early history of Japan.

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Fig. 5

SOFT INDUSTRIES AS PROTOTYPES OF EARLIEST CHINESE CHARACTERS

- a Earliest known Chinese characters, scratched on the bones of animals (after Unger 1969: 17). They are very similar to the stroke-signs of the Near Eastern and Mediterranean regions. Here too there is an extremely important character (*she*, Sino-Japanese "sha", meaning "society"), which has been historically studied and, in its earliest form, connected with structures made of reeds (Moriya 1950).
- b Chinese characters of the Shang period, scratched on bone (ca. 1500 - 1000 B.C.; after Shodō Zenshū).

Fig. 6

DIFFUSION SCHEME AFTER E.J.MARR (MARR DIAGONALS)

- PH-H approximative borderzone between prehistory and history
- I first appearance of iron
- B first appearance of bronze
- C_o first appearance of copper
- C_a first appearance of pottery
- U urban cultures
- A agrarian village cultures
- G gathering and hunting cultures

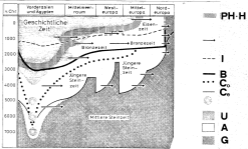


Fig. 7

STRUCTURAL-HISTORICAL SCHEME OF DIFFUSION ACCORDING TO TYPE
OF CULTURE (AFTER K.J.BARR)

NE+E	Near East and Egypt
ME	Mediterranean Sea
WE	Western Europe
CE	Central Europe
NE	Northern Europe
U ₀	Sources of urban-historic society
A ₀	Sources of agrarian village society
G ₀	Sources of gatherers and hunters
U	level of urban society
PH-H	approximate borderszone between prehistory and (written) history
I	first sources of iron
B	first sources of bronze
C ₀	first sources of copper
C ₀	first sources of ceramics
T ₀	traditional sources
H ₀	historical sources
A ₀	archaeological sources
INT	Interferences between levels
K	Continuum to be reconstructed with structural- historic method
t	time-scale

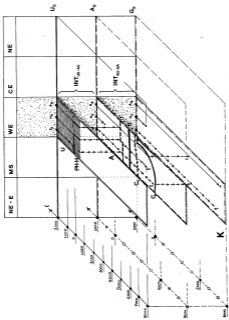


Fig. 8

THE ISHTAR SIGN AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE EARLY SUMERIAN TOWN

Simple phaseological model of settlement development according to territorial-historical criteria (change in the territorial and legal significance of the sacred sign (after Egenter 1984a)

- t_{1-3} Phases: t_1 clan hamlet; t_2 tribal settlement (village); t_3 "town" with newcomers from other places (dependent tenant farmers, traders, artisans etc.)
- S_{1-3} Social classes: S_1 one layer; S_2 two-layered; S_3 three-layered
- G Founder line, becomes an aristocracy in phase t_3 (royal and princely houses)
- A Descendants, without territorial rights, which must be bought at the price of dependence
- T "Territorium", i.e. zone of the sign's validity, as based on the claim to founder-rights
- W Dwelling area
- TR Sign of territorial rights: its significance increases with the growth of the settlement or with rising importance of the founder line

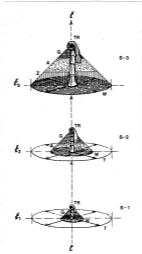
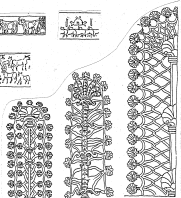


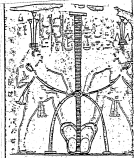
Fig. 9

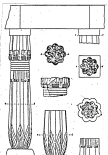
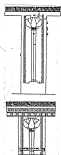
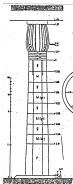
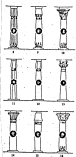
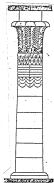
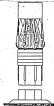
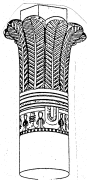
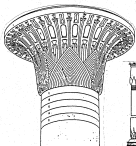
SOURCE COMPLEXES ALONG THE NARS DIAGONAL

- I Sumerian written characters (Egenter 1904a)
- II Cult huts, reed columns and other ancient Sumerian cult signs: Babylonian-Assyrian trees of life (Andrae 1930, 1933; Heinrich 1957)
- III Huts of the gods, primitive shrines, fetishes (Djed, Abydos) imperial unity pillars and other Ancient Egyptian cult signs
- IV Egyptian bundle-columns
- V Cult signs of Graeco-Roman antiquity
- VI Western, central and northern European Middle Ages
- VII Presentday: traditional substrate of peasant and village cultures









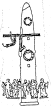






Fig. 10

THE METHOD OF "TOP-LAYER SIFTING" AS APPLIED TO AN EXAMPLE OF EUROPEAN FOLKLORE (for details see Egenter 1986)

Applied to a group of Austrian cult festivals with traditional cult signs (maypole A, whipping posts B (Lungau) and C (Pongau), St. Benedict's plague-candles D). Various analysis were undertaken to separate a traditional agrarian substrate from a superimposed Christian layer.

- I Morphological comparison of cult signs: the different forms reveal homologies and developmental connections
- II Positions of the cult signs: in the fixed phase the traditional cult poles appear in front of or in the chief Christian cult place (the church)
- III Morphology of the settlement, topology of the Christian cult-places and patterns of processions with traditional and Christian cult signs: the traditional elements of the processions point to pre-Christian systems of spatial order (paths, rivers and streams or mountain and valley)
- IV Social organizations and their functions with respect to the cult signs: the cult signs are interrelated in a socio-territorial sense. Case D in particular shows clear indications of a hierarchy among the houses of settlements which is determined by genesis of settlement.
- V Analysis of the procession with cult signs in village B: the accumulative character of the cult festival is very clear. The Christian layer E_2 can be regarded as overlying the traditionalist layer E_1 .

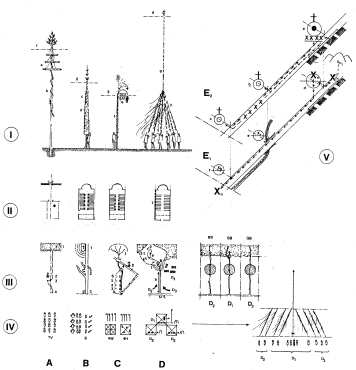
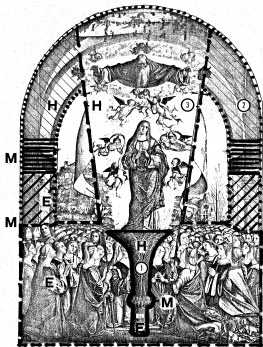


Fig. 11

ACCUMULATION OF POLAR SPATIAL ORDERS

- 1 Primitive order (—————)
- 2 Antique order (.....)
- 3 Christian-mediaeval order (-----)
- H Heavenly-dynamic-limitless sphere
- E Earthly-static-limited sphere
- M Connecting middle zone: "The bond between heaven and earth"



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