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SYNERGIST

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SYNERGISM

An Introduction to Volume One of an In-House Journal

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SYNERGIST

A Publication of The Office of Academic Affairs

This journal is an attempt to break away from administrative trivia which occupies the majority of our time and effort. It is a means of informing us of some of the productivity of our colleagues in the many disciplines represented on the campus. It is hoped that this will serve as a stimulus for the communication of ideas for the entire college community. To these ends we solicit manuscripts from all departments. Synergism is a cooperative action of discrete elements so that the total effect is greater than the sum of the individual effects taken independently. The creator of the title, Synergist, may be technically at fault, but it is reserved as a kind of "poetic license" by the editor in the hopes that many side effects may result from its publication. To that end we continue to solicit manuscripts from all departments.

NORTHEASTERN ILLINOIS STATE COLLEGE

WINTER 1969

Volume I

Number 2

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A college or university has traditionally been described as a community of scholars which, through its activities in teaching, research and writing, strives to achieve academic excellence. The role of Academic Dean often is envisioned as that of a catalytic agent who can initiate and inspire the reactive ferment to produce scholarly teaching, research and writing. The academic environment in today's world is so beset with turmoil and extra - as well as intramural problems involving students, faculty, administration, and the social and cultural revolution in our midst, that little or no time is available for serving what should be the real purpose and function of the Academic Dean.

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The Monastic Life in Ancient Babylonia*

By Rivkah Harris

Northeastern Illinois State College

Monasticism is found among Hindus, Buddhists, and Christians. But the earliest known form of monastic life appeared in the second millenium B. C. in the ancient Near East, in Mesopotamia, the land between the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers.

The Hammurapi Age, more technically termed the Old Babylonian period, a relatively short span of 300 years (1894 - 1594 B.C.), witnessed the establishment, flowering and sudden disappearance of a unique cenobitism. Because of the need of Babylonians to record all private and public transactions, along with their use of an almost imperishable material, clay, hundreds of documents remain which inform us, though in a limited way, of the lives of these celibates.

One point must be stressed at the very onset, the only group of monastics known to date from Mesopotamia were women. These women were called naditu's in Akkadian which means, "the ones who are left fallow." (The comparison of women to fields is common throughout the ancient Near East.) The girl who became a naditu was to remain "fallow" throughout her life, prohibited from all sexual relations. There were several kinds of naditu's dedicated to various gods and, therefore, living under different regulations. We will here discuss only the best known group which was probably the most numerous and most prestigious of all, the naditu's dedicated to the god Shamash. Shamash was the

*The writer has been responsible for rediscovering the significance of the cloister institution in the Hammurpi age and has dealt extensively with this subject in a monograph and a series of articles.

sun god, the judge of heaven and earth and the patron god of Sippar, a city some sixty five miles northeast of the capital Babylon.

Here in the midst of Sippar surrounded by a wall was the cloister (gagū in Akkadian) where some two hundred naditu women and the cloister officials lived. The young Babylonian girl would be brought by her father at an age when girls ordinarily married, in her early teens. Here she would live, behind its walls away from the "outside" (as the world was referred to by the naditu's) until her death when she would be buried in the gagū cemetery alongside her sister naditu's. Though there were times when a naditu might have the freedom to leave for short family visits or have her relatives visit her she had to live until death in the cloister, later thought of as a gloomy place, almost a prison.

But the life of the naditu was by no means a passive one. In some crucial and striking ways the cloister and its naditu's do not at all resemble the Christian nunnery and its nuns. Each naditu lived in her own private house within the cloister compound which she might own or rent from a sister naditu. She had her slaves and slavegirls to take care of the household tasks. A life of poverty was not demanded of the Babylonian nun. On the contrary, many, if not most of them, were born into the wealthiest and most respectable families of their society. Among them were to be found princesses, even a sister of King Hammurapi, the daughters of the temple, military, and cloister officials, members of the top echelon of the bureaucracy. Some were daughters of city administrators, of wealthy scribes, judges, physicians and diviners. Some were related to the affluent artisans such as the goldsmith. When these girls were brought to the cloister they did not come empty handed. Most were given fields, houses, plots of lands, slaves, jewelry, precious household furniture and utensils as their dowry. The Code of Hammurapi stipulates that the naditu of Shamash was to receive a full share of the inheritance,

equal to that of her brothers! This is an astonishing provision considering that theirs was a patriarchal, agricultural society.

Herein, we believe lies one of the major reasons for the establishment of the cloister in this particular period of Mesopotamian history. Celibacy was not unknown before the Hammurapi age. There was the Sumerian institution of the entu-priestess, a royal princess who remained unmarried for life who participated in the annual sacred marriage ritual upon which the fertility of the land depended. But this is the first and only period in which a group of women lived as celibates. This age is remarkable for being the first time in this country when business and wealth are in the hands of private individuals, when there exists what in a fully developed capitalistic society is termed a middle class. Ordinarily when the daughter of a "middle class" family married she received a substantial dowry which she took away from her family. But the dowry which the girl brought with her into the cloister though it was hers for her lifetime returned to her brothers on her death. That the economic consideration was a major motivation for the establishment of the cloister institution is clearly demonstrated by the fact that successive generations of women in certain families became naditu's. There are many examples of a great aunt, aunt and niece, as well as cousins, living in the cloister and in all cases the relationship is patrilineal. Undoubtedly the aim was to maintain the integrity of the patrimony.

But the naditu was not only to enjoy the usufruct of her share of the inheritance it was apparently her responsibility to invest her assets wisely in order to insure a high return. Thus we find that hundreds of the naditu texts are business documents: contracts of sale, lease and hire. With few exceptions it is the naditu who buy houses and fields, leases out fields, houses and plots, and hires out her slaves as farm hands to Sipparian farmers or as menials in their households. What emerges

is the amazing picture of a group of women celibates acting early in this period as a major economic power in their community. Though they did not leave the walls of their cloister, these various transactions were conducted on their behalf by business agents or relatives who communicated with them by letter, it was they who must have advised and considered the possibilities. Frequently we can trace the affairs of a naditu for some thirty years or more for many were long-lived avoiding as they did the hazards of child-bearing and exposure to the epidemics of those living "outside." Over and over again we find them reinvesting their capital derived from lending silver and barley, from the rents of their real estate and the hire of their slaves in more fields, houses and slaves. We even note the tendency of some naditu's to concentrate their investments in one special area, whether in land holdings or in slaves. That their interest lay in expanding the paternal estate is seen from the many examples in which the real estate purchased is adjacent to family-owned properties.

But though economic considerations must have loomed large, we realize, of course, that as significant if not more so was the religious dynamic which must underlie the unique institution of the gagu. But as is so often the case with Mesopotamian civilization religious factors are the most elusive and incomprehensible to discover and understand. In the case of the cloister and its naditu's we have two "key" documents and indirect evidence on this question. There are no records detailing the rites or rituals which the naditu's performed. And perhaps due to characteristic Babylonian reticence about such matters there exist no texts which could provide us with insight into the religious commitments and attitudes of the naditu's. We must perforce read between the lines of letters and search for cues to the religious background of a significant institution of an alien and polytheistic people.

Our two "key" texts are both administrative accounts of the expenditures incurred by the cloister administration in the course of a girl's initiation as a naditu and from these much is learned. The young girl accompanied by her father (the mother is not mentioned) would arrive at the beginning of a three day religious festival. Offerings of meat and jars of oil would be presented on her behalf. The cloister administration would present the father with a betrothal gift consisting of jewelry and comestibles. From this we infer that the girl dressed in bridal dress became the "bride" of the god Shamash. The second day of the festival called "the day of the dead" was the highlight of the festival for all naditu's. On this solemn day, once a year, the living naditu's remembered the dead ones by performing for their "spirits" the necessary funerary services ordinarily performed by the progeny of the deceased. But these celibates had no offspring to carry out these vital rituals and so the living naditu's did so. The young initiate was probably brought to the cloister cemetery on that day to witness her guarantee of eternal care in the afterlife. During this festival, too, she may have been brought into the awesome presence of the images of Shamash and his consort, the goddess Aya, a privilege few others were granted. In one letter a naditu describes her emotion at this sight as one of extreme joy.

From the second crucial text we learn that at the initiation the "rope of Shamash" was placed on the arm of the neophyte, an act which must have symbolized her new and intimate relationship to the god.

Another index of the religious dimension is found in the names of the naditu's. Most of them contain the name of either Shamash or Aya. The most commonly found name is that of Amat-Shamash, "Servant-girl of Shamash." Often names are composed of the verb meaning "the one who is demanded (by the deity)." It seems quite probable that many, though not all, of the novices assumed a new name at their induction, the usual practice of Christian monks and nuns.

Letters written by (more accurately dictated by) naditu's are easily detected. Their standard salutation is, "May my Lord (Shamash) and my Lady (Aya) keep you well." They abound in pious phrases, unlike the letters of ordinary persons. Some refer to ritual ablutions, offerings, and prayers which must have been a part of their daily lives.

We know that naditu's as well as cloister officials, were obligated to bring offerings of meat, beer and flour, the repast for the images and temple priests on the occasion of the festivals of Shamash, an obligation they often passed on to the lessees of their real estate as part of the rental.

In order to understand the religious significance of the cloister and its naditu inhabitants we would suggest the following. Just as the temple of Shamash in Sippar, maintained and provided for with lavishness and magnificence by the Sipparians, insured the city of prosperity and happiness so, too, did the cloister with its chaste women dedicated for life to this god further guarantee this god's continuing concern for its well being.

Before concluding an unusual practice of the naditu's should be mentioned. Often an older naditu adopted as her daughter another naditu either related to her or a friend, or else a slave, usually female, as her child. Strangely enough, the cloister administration though it kept records of the business transactions and lawsuits (a frequent occurrence) and concerned itself with the legal affairs of the naditu was not obligated to look after her in old age. Each naditu had in some way or another to provide for her old age security. Though it was the responsibility of the naditu's brothers to provide her with the basic necessities for life the long years of seclusion and separation from her family apparently made it advisable for the naditu to look to someone with whom she did have years of contact. The naditu who was adopted would receive a substantial bequest at the death of her adoptive mother; the slave his or her outright

freedom. In the rare case where a nadītu became seriously ill without having made arrangements beforehand, the cloister administration would step in and appoint a younger nadītu as nurse and heiress.

Even before the vigorous dynasty of the kings of Babylon came to a sudden end one can detect a gradual diminution of the economic importance of the nadītu women. Whether this change may be correlated with the greater centralization and control from the capital which made for a general decline in private ownership is difficult to say. But we do know that the end of this era brought an end, too, to the institution of the cloister and the nadītu's. Never again was this institution revitalized probably because it did not meet the needs of the future generations.

Nevertheless, the memory of the nadītu did live on though in a strange and distorted way. In a late text, a paean to the greatness of Babylon and its god Marduk, we read of "the nadītu who skilfully heals the fetus." Of the fine women of Babylon it is the nadītu who is praised for her skill, perhaps even her magical power, to save the fetus which would otherwise have died. The nadītu then who was prohibited from bearing children was later associated with the saving of infants! More ironic is the view found in the late Babylonian scholarly vocabulary lists where the nadītu is equated with the prostitute and the harlot. This view died hard, held as it was by modern Assyriologists until recently. But the data proves that the nadītu lived and died as the chaste "bride" of Shamash.

THE ROMANCE OF INDIAN AND PAKISTANI NAMES

By Rafi Z. Khan
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As they say, we speak with the whole of our body. Thus to take a few examples, our deportment, movements, dreams, slips of the tongue and the pen, and all those actions which we are wont to attribute to chance occurrence, are expressive of our inner thoughts and emotions. All spontaneous actions reveal personality. Our mental conflicts of which we do not know anything at all become evident through such trifles as personal mannerisms, jokes, etc. Thus the way one knocks at the door, or someone's shuffling walk or an unconscious tic may tell a story about a person. To these trivialities we may also add our names.

Writers like E. Zola¹ Oscar Wilde² and philologists like Professor Weekly,³ have suggested that a certain correlation exists between the man and the name he bears. The oriental writers had also felt the so-called romance of names. Maulana Mohammed Hussain Azad, among others, was particularly struck by the appropriateness of designations. He says:

"They hold truly that to know the status and the intellectual level of the parents of a person one has only to examine the name of that person. In other words, the name of a person indicates the level of the mental development of his parents."⁴

¹Introduction to Dr. Pascal.

²Oscar Wilde: The Importance of being Earnest.

³The Romance of Names.

⁴Ab-i-hayat Page 236-237.

Here the right note has been struck. What Maulana Azad endeavors to explain is that there are different names current in different strata of society. In Pakistan and India, names like Babu Lal, Rooldoo and Ghaseeta are to be found generally among lower classes. Highly romantic names with certain innovations are in vogue among the upper and middle classes. This gives ample indication of the fact that names do signify the status and education of the parents.

This general associative significance of names has unanimously been stressed by literary men, along with philologists and psychoanalysts. Generally a name indicates a person with all the associations, good or bad, woven round that person. Besides their philological significance, our names have also got a psychological aspect. This aspect of names has been emphasized by modern psychologists. The unconscious significance of names, however, was revealed for the first time by Wilhelm Stekel. He holds that our names determine our conduct and emotional attitude. After him other psychoanalytic writers like Abraham, Rank and Flugel¹ approached the subject from the same point of view and furnished further evidence to prove Stekel's contention.

These writers have shown the influence of names upon (1) character and behavior, (2) on profession and (3) on the choice of love object.

With regard to the first category, i.e., the influence of names upon character, we may quote an example furnished by the literary history of England. John Gay,² is a poet who wrote comedies and fables. His comedies manifest his Gilbertian humor. His attitude towards life can well be estimated by the following lines:

Life is a jest and all things show it:
I thought so once and now I know it.

¹On the Significance of Names: Men and Their Motives.

²The Outline of Literature by John Drinkwater.

It is the height of gaiety and light heartedness when one treats life itself as a jest and strives all his life to see its mirthful side only.

There is a girl who emphatically denounces marriage and avows to remain a virgin because her name is Ezra, i.e., virgin. Similarly, I know a certain Mr. Freeze who in spite of his high intelligence is very slow in reaction and extremely cold and unemotional in behavior.

Recently I had a patient who was afraid to go into the streets where, he thought, there were numerous chances to slip morally. He considered it a sin even to look at a beautiful girl in the street. He could avoid this sinful glance only by restraining himself from walking in the streets. He had laid down such high standards of morality for himself that it was simply impossible to live up to them. His name, Tayyab, had great influence on the development of this trait in him. Tayyab means clean and pure in the religious and moral sense.

To illustrate the influence of names upon profession, we may cite an example from an obituary published in a local paper. It was about Professor P.A. Hillhouse who was a famous naval architect. Professor Hillhouse built a number of vessels and lighthouses. Marghan (Bird) is the name of a Pathan who keeps birds and a pet shop. Jhanda (Banner) is an efficient guard in the railway who refused promotion because he liked his job very much. When interviewed in this connection, he said, "Don't you see the thrill in this job (guard in a railroad) where with one flourish of the flag you control the movements of the entire train." The influence of the name upon the occupation is evident here. Similarly, Austen Dobbs is the famous editor of the annotated edition of Jane Austen's novels.

In the choice of the love object, fixation is the primary consideration. Nevertheless, the meaning of the name also determines the choice in certain cases. The classical examples quoted in this connection are those of

Shelley, Schiller and Byron. Shelley married three Harriets, Schiller three Charlottes, and Byron has innumerable attachments to women having the name of Mary.

The influence of name depends on the association that the bearer of the name develops over a period of a lifetime. Trully is a suggestive name and this person developed the personality trait of being upright and truthful. It cost him his job but he insisted on telling an unsavory truth about his boss. He was not conscious of the influence of his name on his personality when he came seeking advice in career planning.

It is not always the family names which influence a person's identity. His first name could also affect his choice of profession or love object, if it is more meaningful to him. A person whose name was Homer, once came to consult me for an emotional problem. I complimented him on his name because it reminded me of the great Greek epic poet. To my surprise, he expressed complete ignorance about this and told me that he was very ashamed of his name because it means a home run in baseball. Its influence on his personality became evident when he told me that all his life he held two jobs and worked eighteen hours a day. He came home only to sleep. This was an unconscious compromise between his conscious efforts to accept responsibilities at home and unconscious wish to run away from marital obligations.

The names can be distorted on the basis of early associations. A girl who had become very vicious, vindictive and sexually pervert had Wicker as her family name. In the childhood, however, she often was called WICKED by her classmates. This nickname, so to say, gave her the distorted image of the self which stayed with her for a long time. Self-image could be improved only through psychotherapeutic insights.

The above mentioned Psychoanalytic writers, no doubt, have given us another peep into the storehouse of

the unconscious through the loopholes of names. Yet there is another slit and a wider one, too which has been overlooked by these writers. We know that there are some human wishes so far beyond realization that only magic can fulfill them. These unfulfilled wishes, repressed impulses, and unsatisfied longings continually strive for expression. These impulses seek newer sources of gratification. Dreams, poetry, paintings, music -- they are all vehicles for the expression of these unfulfilled wishes. Indian and Pakistani names also serve the same purpose. They reflect the unfulfilled wishes, prostrated ideals, and the ruined hopes of the parents which they now want to realize through their children. In other words, our names manifest the unattained wishes of our parents.

The wishes of the parents have several determinants. These determinants impart their color to the names of the children. They become romantic, invocative, superstitious, and poetic under their respective influence.

The foremost determinant of the names, among the lower classes in India and Pakistan at least, is superstition. A large number of the names among them are given under the influence of superstitions. The very high death rate of children along with the belief that the favorite children die young has given us several names. To save their children from the "icy cold hands" of death, the parents drag their children on a dunghill. This is done to outwit the Angel of Death by showing that the child is not a favorite one so that he would be spared. Through this practice the child comes to be called Ghaseeta (the Dragged One), Ruldoo (the Discarded One), Kharaiti (Got in Charity), Budhu (Idiot), Faqir (the Mendicant), Nathi (Girl-with-the-Pierced-Nose - a sign of a slave girl), etc., reflect the superstitions of this society. All these names are given to the children by the parents to indicate that they are unwanted so that the Angel of Death who is keen only to take away the favorite ones, may spare them.

Some names are given to avoid the influence of the Evil Eye. Thus people of the North Western Frontier Province on the border of Pakistan and Afghanistan give the name Narai (Thin) to a fat and bonny girl and Kattay (Mud) to a beautiful baby. In the two Punjab provinces of India and Pakistan the name 'Karoo' (The Dark One) is sometimes bestowed on a person who possesses a fair complexion to avoid the influence of the evil eye. Again the fulfillment of parents' unattained wishes through the children's names may well be illustrated by such names as Veeran Wali (Girl-With-Many-Brothers) Khizar Umar (having the life of Khizar, the Saint of Perpetual Life) and Umar Draz (Long Life). These are contra-suggestive names. Veeran Wali (Girl-With-Many-Brothers) is usually a girl who in reality does not possess even a single brother. This name has all the tradition of the society at its back. In the prevailing social order, a boy is preferred to a girl. Parents' wish to have male issue is reflected in this name. Umar Draz (Long Life) is usually given to a child who is born to parents whose children had failed to survive in the past. The Pathan women of the N.W.F.P., possess such names as Hamaish Gul (Ever Blooming) because usually they are the only survivals of many children. Budha (Old Man) and Jiyooni (Living One) remind us of the shortness of human life, and the perpetual fear of death.

Then there are invocative names. Such names express the undisguised wishes of the parents. The names Sukhan Ladhi (Girl-Loaded-With-Comforts) and Bhag Bhari (Very Fortunate Girl) fall in this category. Besides these there are romantic names. Such names are usually given under the influence of literature. Slama, Ezra, Laila, Shirin, Shukuntala are lovable characters from romance and poetry. It is no surprise if they become the ideals of our parents. Closely related to them are the names given by the parents to their children after their failures in love. Such names have many sweet memories for the

parents. They remind them of their first love. After their disappointment in love, young men generally begin to think of their would-be children on whom they can bestow the name of their lady-love. There was a constant argument after marriage between a couple because the husband wished the first child to be a girl so that he may call her Kishwar while the wife wanted it to be a boy in order to name him Akhter. Their wishes were quite evident to those who knew the names of their earlier loves. Similarly, Sabiha was a name given by a father to his daughter because it was the name of his first love.

Names also show the influence of Cinema Stars, singers, saints and great men. The year in which Princess Fauziya was married to the present King of Iran, was also the year that brought so many baby Fauziyas to the Eastern world. National leaders and religious reformers have great influence on the names. In many cases children are named after famous personages who presumably correspond to certain ideals of the parents. In short, such names reflect the aspirations of the parents.

We owe many distorted names to the influence of the English language and civilization. Under its influence the educated persons, especially those belonging to the upper strata of the society began to distort their names in a manner that their resultant forms resembled very closely the English family names. Thus, Sharma, a typical Indian name was changed to Sharman, Thakre put on the garb of Thackeray and Shah had become Shaw. These names are compromise formations, and they show that these individuals had definitely recognized the superiority of the Western Civilization against their own and had identified themselves with the ruling class. They could not be Englishmen themselves owing to physical, political and geographical limitations but they resolved the conflict by a compromise. They anglicized their names if not themselves. Thus they attained their ideal of identification with the ruling class in the face of so many barriers.

After the independence of India and Pakistan a large number of these names had started assuming their original form.

Now we come to the names of the poets. These are the names which have been assumed by the poets themselves and not bestowed on them by their parents. As they are determined by the inner impulses of the poets themselves they can well afford us a peep into the psyche of the poets. These names have no outer determinants except the personality make-up of the poets themselves.

In most of the oriental literature, the poets are required to assume poetical names beside the ones given to them by their parents. These names are normally used in the last verse of the poem, ballad, sonnet, and so forth. The reader is then able to identify the poet with his creation. Pakistani poets are no exception to the rule. These names have special psychological significance and they reflect the personality make-up of the poet. If we examine closely the names of Pakistani poets in the light of this, we find that they normally correspond to the central theme of their poems. Fani (The Mortal One) is a masochist poet who takes pleasure in pain. The theme of his poetry is death, darkness, and grave. Pessimism, which is the essential characteristic of the Sentimental School of Urdu poetry, is well reflected in his verses. His "non de plume", Fani or Mortal One, fully signifies this theme.

Another classical poet with masochistic tendencies is Mir (To Die). The essential characteristic of Mir's poetry is the depiction of consuming love in a very simple language. He writes about the pleasures of love pangs and revels in depicting death, decay, and despair in love. Masochism, as is known, is always an inverted sadism, that is, aggression which has turned against oneself. His name, Mir (To Die), indicates that sadistic impulses in him were directed against his own personality. His mode of life also gives ample indication of this. Mir was a

misanthrope and he shunned society. He was fond of wearing soldier's dress with sword, revealing his basic sadistic impulses, but his general attitude towards life remained masochistic. Thus the ballads that he had been singing and his name both reflected his unconscious impulses.

The names of the sadistic poets also fully correspond to the theme of their poetry, which is nothing but the sublimated expressions of their aggressive impulses and wishes. Poets Atish (Fire) and Josh (Ebullition or Agitation) are instances which fully bear this out. Josh (Ebullition) is very aggressive in his poetry, so much so that he becomes abusive. He is known for sudden outbursts of passions. In a review on his poetry, Niaz Fatehpuri, a leading Urdu critic, once wrote:

His reviling and aggressive impulses abated
and expressed themselves in poetic
language...

His name, Josh or Ebullition and the central theme of his poetry fully reflect his wishes. Similar is the case with the poet Atish (Fire). Sauda, meaning madness, is another poet who falls in this category. He, too, is aggressive and knows no limit while addressing an adversary and at times even becomes obscene in his satires.

The wish fulfillment function of name and poetry is fully brought out by the life and works of the Poet Chirkeen (Filthy One). The author of "Tazkira-i Gulistan-i-Sakhun," a historical survey of Urdu literature, says:

"His obscene and filthy language which he used at first only to amuse the laity, had a deep and permanent influence upon his life and conduct. Later on he began to wear defiled clothes and had such a dirty appearance that people regarded him as a sweeper or the untouchable."

Abdul Bari Asi, the author of Tazkira-i-Khandan Gul," commenting on his poetry says:

"Tossing up of filth became an art with him. By the splash of this filth, the skirt of his poetic garment was transformed into a magnificent and blooming garden."

All of this evidence goes to show that Chirkeen was what the psychoanalysts call anally fixated and his fixation is reflected in his life, works, and name. His name Chirkeen (Filthy) like his poetry was a source of gratification of his unconscious impulses.

Another form of Urdu poetry is Raikhti and the Raikhti writers, who are men, use the dialect and phrases of women and they assume female names as their "non de plume." These poets, too, identify their names with their themes.

The gastronomic poets like Ataama (the Great Eater), Sokhta (the Burnt One), Dopiazza (the Liver), and so on, wrote about the culinary pleasures throughout their lives and this fixation was reflected in their names as well.

Here an objection may be raised that the choice of names in these cases may not have an unconscious determinant because names are deliberately made to correspond to the theme of the poetry. In other words, it may be said that a poet deliberately chooses the name which is closely related to the central theme of his poetry. This objection carries no weight because the name is generally assumed in the beginning of the poet's career, while his theme and style undergo an evolutionary process. It is after many vicissitudes that a poet succeeds in finding a theme upon which he writes throughout the remaining years of his life. The reverse may be the case with the poet's assumed names, which are the result of their unconscious impulses. These names lead to a theme which comes to have all the unconscious forces at its

back and thus becomes the central idea of their life work. These names in their turn are assumed by these poets under the influence of their ambitions, wishes and temperament. They reflect their personality make-up which ultimately gives them a style and a theme of their own which fits them so well. These names go on molding the theme in the light of inner urges of the poet of which the names themselves form one of the manifestations.

Thus, Indian and Pakistani names reflect the latent wishes of the giver. It may manifest the desire of our parents or may give a peep into the hidden recesses of the poet depending on the fact whether the name has been given to the individual by others or assumed by himself. These unconscious determinants are more easily discernable in Indian and Pakistani cultures because there are no family names. This allows the individual to select a name for himself or for his child from anywhere in the dictionary. Thus, almost every name reflects unconscious determinants as it reflects the choice of the individual. Indian and Pakistani names, therefore manifest the unfulfilled wishes of the parents like our dreams, jokes, spontaneous artistic creations, etc.

LANGUAGE BEHAVIOR IN THE BLACK COMMUNITY*

AN EDUCATIONAL RESOURCE

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As the title of my talk suggests I intend to share with you some insights that I have gained from an exploration into the relation between Black idiom and Black culture. Specifically, I intend to list varying types of language behavior found in the Black community, analyze some features of function, style, and performance of the speakers in two of the types, and examine the variables: speaker, setting, and audience, of the communication situation, with the ultimate purpose of shedding light on Black cultural values and attitudes.

But before I begin that part of my presentation I should like to provide an educational and social context for it, as it is my belief that if we are to attempt to solve the problems facing educators today we are going to have to construct an entirely different socio-cultural frame of reference from the one we presently use.

To illustrate how far "out of step" and "out of touch" education people are from what is happening in our society today we need to look no further than this session and the title under which Dr. Williams and I are speaking: "Language Problems of the Disadvantaged." I take issue with the title first because it is inaccurate and misleading. If the title is meant to imply that Blacks, Mexican-Americans, Puerto-Ricans, American Indians and Appalachian whites, the poor and powerless groups in our society who are generally classified as "disadvantaged", have problems speaking their language or dialect, that is patently false.

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Nor do these groups experience any greater difficulty acquiring their native language. So far as studies have shown, each physically normal person experiences about the same language learning "problems" of any other in acquiring proficiency in his native dialect or language whether it is English, Urdu, or Zulu.

On the other hand, if the title is meant to indicate that these groups might experience greater difficulty learning standard English because their native dialect or language is different, then I find that the implication, in addition to being inaccurate, is unfair. It is inaccurate because the difficulty speakers of Black English experience in learning Standard English is no greater than the difficulty speakers of Standard English would have learning to speak Black English, or Mexican-American Spanish, or Appalachian English, if that were required. It is unfair to describe these language learners as having problems as though there was something special or different about their learning a second language from the problems you experienced learning to speak French or German.

But the real injustice of the title and that which marks you as being so far removed from current trends is the perspective behind the statement. As with so many other issues we place the educational burden on the shoulders of the learner, as if the accidental fact of his speaking a non-standard dialect and being required to learn standard was his problem, not an educational problem to be solved by the school and the teacher, but his problem.

I am disturbed by this kind of perspective because it places the burden of educational failure where it does not belong, and, which may even be worse for psychological and social reasons, on those least able to sustain it. By what stretch of the imagination does learning become exclusively the problem of the learner, and not of the school, or of the teacher, or of the curriculum, or of the system? Why do we define the

educational roles in such a way that the responsibility for failure becomes the learner's? Under our present educational structure in Chicago we produce 1000 dropouts a month but our perspective and definitions of success or failure exonerate the system. They have failed to learn, not that we have failed to teach.

This is the same perspective behind the statement that "migrants are unprepared to face the life of the cities," not that "cities are unprepared or ill-equipped to receive migrants"; this perspective blames poverty on the poor and the ghettos on the inhabitants, rather than on the system that creates and perpetuates both. Isn't it time that we stopped blaming the victim for the crime?

Fortunately, this perspective is being challenged today. Just as the Kerner Commission report implicated white society in the riots, so the school systems are implicated in the failure of its students.

With respect to language teaching let us examine an approach and underlying perspective and attitude that has contributed to the failure of students. Educators, who do not know what the future will bring, although ostensibly, they are supposed to be preparing people for the future, have become promoters of the status quo. As a consequence, they are either unaware of or unwilling to recognize the latent power and pride behind the culturally pluralistic forces in our society. They have clung in language teaching, for instance, to the assimilationist approach, the favorite one for prescriptive English and Speech teachers. This approach advances the superiority of the standard dialect, and by virtue of exclusion, negation, and derogation, the inferiority of the non-standard dialect, the inferiority of the culture that produces it and the inferiority of the speakers who speak it. Ask yourself why a French accent is "socially acceptable" but a Black accent is not. The plain truth of the matter is that people's attitude toward other people's speech is merely an extension of people's attitude toward their culture and the people of that culture. This point

is not missed by the culturally different when they enter a middle class establishment. Your perspective and attitude says: obliterate what is culturally different, or if you can't, do your best to conceal it.

Your perspective has in the past, made people angry enough not to want to learn. Now it has made them angry enough to demand, through petition and boycott, an end to this kind of attitude and teaching. What other approaches are being advocated?

The linguistic approach advances the teaching of standard English as a second dialect, recognizing that the native dialect has cultural value for its speakers. It also recognizes that the past assimilationist approach has failed. The linguistic approach recognizes the existence of social dialects and attempts to motivate non-standard speakers to learn to speak the standard dialect by telling them that the larger society demands it. This approach is supposedly "realistic". It says that "people make social judgments all the time. We live in a socially stratified and deterministic society, recognize it! Accept the existing social order and its rules!" If the child does not wish to identify with the larger society, emphasize the functional value of knowing standard English: "he'll need it to get a better job," etc., or "teach it to him so that he will be able to decide later on whether he wants to use it or not."

The weakness of the linguistic approach is not methodological but social. One can after all, retrain teachers, purchase language laboratory equipment, buy new textbooks, and reapportion class time. This is possible and necessary if you want to make the linguistic approach effective. The social weaknesses of the linguistic approach, however, are that it does not adequately solve the problem of motivation and reinforcement.

Suppose the child is not motivated by the "realistic" approach because, so far, it hasn't mattered if the Black man could speak standard dialect or not. He

paid the social price for being Black, not because he did or did not speak standard dialect. For those Blacks who attended college, their median income was only 60% of that of whites with comparable education, in 1963, and for those Blacks with an eighth grade education their earnings were 80% of whites with comparable education, in 1966.

Also, what about the problem of reinforcement? Where is the child going to use, outside of the classroom, the dialect the teacher is attempting to teach him inside, and if he can't find a way to use it how is he going to acquire a "new set of language habits". The area in which he lives reinforces his native dialect not the standard. Clearly, the linguistic approach presumes that integration will take place; either that Black families will move into white areas or that Black children will be bussed into white areas where reinforcement of standard dialect can take place. Other than in token fashion, I do not see this happening or likely to happen.

Finally, the linguistic approach is based on a social fallacy: that the social order is immutably stratified, that the social judgments that people are making today are the same judgments that they will be making fifteen years from now. I find this assumption challenged by present social trends. We are experiencing the throes of social reform this very minute. Our cherished prejudices and practices are being assaulted at every turn, besieged with long hair and "bad manners" on the one hand and Black power and creative disorder on the other. What if Blacks succeed in changing the social order so that they and their culture will no longer be regarded as inferior by the larger society? What if, in twenty years, you will regard a Black accent comparable to the way you regard today, the accent of a German professor, French singer, or British actor? Does it really matter how people of status speak? You might ask, what if the social order is not changed? Then I ask you what you have accomplished in terms of language development: the

ability to avoid some stigmatized forms which are stigmatized because the people who speak them are? Will speaking better remove the stigma attached to that person? At the Democratic convention Julian Bond spoke "better" than anyone else there. Will speaking better make Bond president? I doubt it, but Black Power might!

It has become apparent that an alternative approach to promote language development must be found. I do not know whether what I present here will be satisfactory in its entirety. It is clear that whatever is presented in the future must be satisfactory to those in the community who are being taught as well as satisfying educators that learning is taking place. What will be required is a complete overhaul of educational goals. Toward whatever goal you aim you will have to apply the question: Is this what people want for themselves?

What is emerging in our society today is a resurgence of ethnic pride as well as attempts by ethnic communities to establish control over their own destiny. Not only are the culturally different resisting or rejecting the culture of the present establishment they are also no longer relegating or subordinating their own culture to the inside of their homes. Collectively, we see it everywhere in the thrusts that Black people and others are making, but we can also see foreshadowings of pride as having occurred individually, as when Sandy Koufax decided he was not going to pitch on Yom Kippur, or when Barbra Streisand decided she wasn't going to do anything about her "Jewish nose". "Making it" on establishment terms subtly resisted before, is openly challenged today. The sooner we accept this fact, the sooner we can get to the educational task at hand.

What is proposed here is to develop the language resourcefulness of a person in his native dialect through a process of socialization, by which I mean, making the dialect respond to the demands of new social situations:

using it in discussion, reporting, instruction, or as Dick Gregory has been doing for years in Black English, campaigning for political office. Encourage its use in literature and poetry as other dialects have been used in the past.

Is there any reason why one could not develop a person's ability to use language by enriching vocabulary and developing syntactic complexity, which form the bases for conceptualization and cognitive thought processes, in his native dialect? Is it not for social reasons that this had not been attempted in the past?

Should anyone doubt the capacity of a dialect or language to respond to these new socio-cultural demands let me refer you to the history of your own dialect from the time that it became standard, or the present expansion of Hebrew from its role as a liturgical language to serve the multiple roles of a modern society as a consequence of it becoming the official language of the state of Israel. It is important to remember that any statements about the expressive powers of a language and the collective abilities of its speakers to conceptualize in it merely describe the past and present uses to which the language has been put, but do not reveal the potential expressive power of that language. Often it has been left to great writers, like Chaucer and Dante, to realize and demonstrate, through their genius, the "potential" of a language, especially at a time when that language occupied a socially inferior position with respect to another language.

In contemporary situations, as in multi-lingual societies, the function of a language depends to a large extent on the degree to which a speaker has become competent in it. For example, a colleague of mine from India, speaks Kannada, Mahrati, Gujerati, Hindi and English. At home, which for him became Bombay at an early age, his parents speak to him in Kannada but he answers them in Kannada and Mahrati. His parents have developed a facility in Kannada beyond that of my

colleague. What they express with one language he expresses with two. Clearly, what is limiting up to a point, is his ability to express himself in a language. We can only say that the limits of the expressive powers of a language are the sum total of the competency of its speakers up to the present time. That no one may have chosen to express himself in that language on any given subject may suggest either of three things.

1. that the speaker may find it more convenient or easier from past habits to use another language;
2. that the speaker is unable to express an idea because of his limited ability in that language;
3. that there may not be a word or equivalent expression in that language.

Most borrowings are probably as much a result of "two" (above) as of "three". If "three" is the case, there is still the possibility of expanding the native dialect or language as Hebrew is being expanded today.

What I have provided is a rationale and tentative structure for an alternative approach to language teaching which is socially in accord with the pluralistic forces that are emerging in our society. It will require on every teacher's part that he familiarize himself with the culture of the students that he is teaching, should he not be of the same culture as the student. This will involve in language teaching a thorough familiarity with the dialect of the student, a knowledge of the sound system and grammar of the dialect and of the reinforcement the dialect gets outside of the classroom. It will also involve a knowledge of the function that language serves in his culture as well. It is clear that before you can develop the resourcefulness of a speaker in his dialect, you have to know what he is capable of doing when he comes to you, what are his strengths and skills, and what are the prestige norms of his culture that influence his performance. You will have to rely on descriptive studies made by linguistics and anthropologists or, as in the present instance, by an anthropologically oriented linguist,

and on your own observation for this information. This is, in part, what I propose to discuss in the remaining time available.

In Black English, there appear several words and expressions that refer to talking: rapping, shucking, jiving, running it down, gripping, copping a plea, signifying and sounding. In addition, there is the term toast to denote an accomplished oral art form performed by your best Black male speakers. Each of these terms identifies a form of verbal behavior that is generally recognized and often employed by Black street people. This is especially true of the men. Often, they are the models whom boys growing up try to emulate and imitate daily outside of the classroom. In the time remaining I shall discuss two types of verbal behavior in greater detail while abstracting certain features of the other types as they shed light on an overall Black cultural perspective. For a more complete account I refer you to the magazine Trans-Action which will publish the study in an, as yet unannounced, forthcoming issue.

Shucking and Jiving, Sing and Jing, etc., are terms that refer to one form of language behavior practiced by Blacks when interacting with authority figures and to another when practiced by Blacks interacting with each other on the peer group level.

With authority figures, shucking has been used to stay out of trouble, that is, assume a guise or posture that would appease or satisfy "whitey". In an extreme form it became role playing, such as tomming, which, before whites in the South, integrated both verbal and non-verbal behavior into a total performance. In less extreme cases, in the North, the pose and overall verbal accompaniment nevertheless became a convenient coping mechanism to avoid the psychological and physical brutalization that invariably followed a Black vs. authority figure confrontation, and could be assumed whenever the situation demanded it.

Just as Jews developed the verbal technique of answering a question with a question:

"How are you feeling today?"

"So how should I feel?"

to avoid the punishment that was invariably inflicted on them whichever way they answered such a question, so Blacks developed comparable survival techniques.

For many of today's Blacks, self-assertion has displaced accommodation, and the form of shucking that accompanied the accomodationist role. Nevertheless, for many Blacks, the behavior pattern that was such an invaluable aid in "staying out of trouble" was found to be equally invaluable in "getting out of trouble" or avoiding punishment when you were apprehended. What follows are some examples from seventh grade children from an inner city school in Chicago. The children were asked to "talk their way out of" a troublesome situation. Examples of the situation and their impromptu responses follow:

Situation:

You're cursing at this old man and your mother comes walking down the stairs. She hears you.

Response to "talk your way out of this,";

"I'd tell her that I was studying a scene in school for a play."

Situation:

What if you were in a store and were stealing something and the manager caught you.

Responses:

"I would tell him that I was used to putting things in my pocket and then going to pay for them and show the cashier."

"I'd tell him that some of my friends was outside and they wanted some candy so I was going to put

it in my pocket to see if it would fit before I bought it."

"I would start stuttering. Then I would say "Oh, Oh, I forgot. Here the money is."

Situation:

You are at the beach and they've got posted signs all over the beach and floating on the water and you go past the mark!" How do you talk your way out of this to the lifeguard?

Responses:

"I'd tell him that I was having so much fun in the water that I didn't pay attention to the sign."

"I'd say that I was swimming under water and when I came back up I was behind the sign."

Rapping, while used synonymously to mean ordinary conversation, is distinctively a fluent and lively way of talking which is always characterized by a high degree of personal style. The form and style of rapping are determined by and large, by the audience. To one's peer group, rapping may be descriptive of an interesting narration or explanation. Malcom X's MESSAGE TO THE GRASS ROOTS is an excellent example of this.

Rapping to a woman is the means through which the male obtains ego satisfaction as well as the mechanism through which he hopes to become intimate with her. To accomplish this his rap is often especially lively, colorful and persuasive.

To a lame, i.e., sucker, rapping may be used to whup a game, i.e., direct the course of a transaction so as to obtain goods and services from the individual. Here again the verbal component is highly developed in its persuasive power.

In all of the forms of language behavior mentioned above, the element of contest prevails and is an important feature of the confrontation between the speaker and his audience. In the three forms of rapping

for example, the speaker was seeking to service his ego, as well as obtain goods and services in two of the three instances. In shucking and jiving he was attempting to avoid difficulty or seeking to mitigate punishment. In other instances he grips when he is confronted with superior power, and even though he is right, has to back down. In still other confrontations he may have to cop a plea, which is 'to beg and plead for mercy' involving a total loss of face. With signifying he provokes a person by implication or by direct taunt. With sounding he alternately insults the person, his family and his home and is in turn insulted. By running it down he conveys information, generally in the form of a narrative or explanation; this is the only behavior form in which the element of contest is absent.

Since contest is an ever present part of the confrontation the degree to which the speaker exercises control determines his success. Therefore the prestige norms of language use are those which help to manipulate people and control situations. Specifically these are the rich verbal and non-verbal devices, such as intelligence, personality, style, glibness, smoothness, charm, appearance, etc.

There are other aspects of the communication situation which one can discuss further; but of which time permits just a summary: for example, the third variable of the communication situation: setting, seems to have a negligible influence on the form of Black speech behavior used which is in contrast to the influence setting has on verbal behavior in the mainstream culture. Also, the relative absence of status on the street causes street people to develop verbal ability to a high degree since they can establish control over people and situations only with help of the persuasive and projective powers that words can give. People who have status on the street have often acquired it with the use of words. Note that verbal ability is often inversely correlated with status in mainstream culture i.e., we rely on status to get

things done rather than on persuasion. The salesman, who has no status from which he can direct you to buy something, relies more heavily on the art of persuasion than your boss.

To conclude, it ought to be clear to educators that we have missed utilizing the cultural resources that were at our disposal, either because we were unaware that they existed, or felt that they were without value. The time has come to find out what the norms and values of the culturally different are and find some way of incorporating them into the educational process.

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