implicated while also allowing for a recognition of difference and points of resistance. The position from which anthropology may now speak is one of deliberate eccentricity. The point is that the degree of centrality to our own belief system held by various propositions about the world is not a correlate to different degrees of reality (Rorty 1991a: 52). By its double vision, and through its speaking from the perceived periphery rather than the self-declared centre of reason, anthropology challenges received wisdom. Thus, it enables us to make the world new rather than to get it right (cf. Rorty 1991a: 44).

This evidently has to be demonstrated in practice. Ethnography and detailed empirical studies from all over the globe must be produced to that effect. Along with that, the epistemological assumptions of anthropology must be questioned and clarified. As noted by Pierre Bourdieu, progress of knowledge in the social sciences implies progress in our knowledge of the conditions of knowledge (Bourdieu 1990: 1). This book is addressed to an elucidation of some of the basic conditions for anthropological knowledge by the end of the twentieth century, at a time of scholarly uncertainty in the wake of a self-declared postmodernism that made of the world a paradox of unification and fragmentation – inaccessible for science, if ready for narration.

Given this paradox, the passage to anthropology is not easily made by way of a traditional map. Regionalism, grand theory and dogma that once provided fixed coordinates for orientation in the scholarly space are being replaced by moving frames of reference. This calls for an itinerary rather than a map.[4] The latter may show you where you are, while the former tells you where you are going. The itinerary indicates direction and places of reverence, and works on the experience of movement in space. This explains the organization of my book. The direction is towards anthropology as a vital theoretical project; the tour passes what I consider to be points of contemplative relevance as indicated by the chapter headings. It is neither a straight line of argument nor a fixed structure of certainties. It is a tour which – like a pilgrimage – counts by the effort as much as by the goal. At the end of the tour lies nothing but a rather simple point about the intrinsic value of the theoretical project of anthropology – apart from the knowledge that the passage has been made. A renewed confidence in the anthropological project may hopefully ensue upon return.

The ethnographic present

On starting in time

In the context of modern world history the present tends to evade our gaze and to defy our language. 'The present' refers not only to the contemporary but also to the peculiar: what is not yet clear because of its uniqueness and interpretative ambiguity. Our present seems to be substantially different from the present that our predecessors confronted, just a short time ago (Fox 1991b: 1). Decentred, fragmented and compressed are some of the words in current use, signalling the nature of the difference. With the sense of substantial change goes an enlarged mental problem of assessing the present; as Marilyn Strathern has recently argued, it is always the present rather than the future that is the momentous unknown (Strathern 1992: 178). It is only the future that can tell us how to evaluate the present. And with the decentredness of the world, it seems more doubtful than ever that we shall be able to make a uniform future evaluation. The present is endlessly open for interpretation.

Nevertheless, the present is where we start from. Touring means setting out from a particular point in time and space. Trajectories may be made in all directions, but the anthropological traveller literally moves in the present and becomes part and parcel of the global unrest. The old treading stones have to be turned as a matter of course. Occasionally, this will give one a sense of losing one's footing, but the sense of direction is not necessarily threatened.

As implied by the prologue, recent epistemological turmoils in anthropology have been related to no less dramatic changes in the world order. Attempts have been made at recapturing the discipline before it disappears altogether (e.g. Fox 1991a). There has been a certain sense of panic resulting from the disappearance

of the traditional object, and what seems to be the last burial of positivist virtue. In the context of modern world history, englobement seems complete: the 'others' have become sadly like 'us'. What is forgotten by the mourners is the fact that modernity was everywhere indigenized (Sahlins 1993). The present cultural projects of the peoples that earlier were deemed without history are not chance inventions of tradition but full-scale declarations of autonomy and authenticity. Anthropology must seek to contextualize this declaration from a theoretical standpoint, not just a sentimental one.

In a sense, there is no anthropology to recapture because it was never at the point of vanishing; not more than the world itself, that is. There has been a certain degree of epistemological *Angst*, and the death of the discipline has been announced often enough, but the fundamental continuity between anthropology and the world remains as real as ever. The changes experienced are, indeed, connected. The world changes and so must anthropology. Whether we like it or not, anthropology is one of the declarations made by the self-announcing species of *anthropos*.

The *Angst* expressed over the past decade or more bears witness to a temporary theoretical shortcoming of anthropology rather than to its imminent death. The 'obituary mode' is related to the somewhat painful fact that anthropological knowledge all too often has been used to supply us with parables for talking about ourselves, rather than to explore historical alternatives for the vast numbers of 'others' who live under critical conditions, be it due to poverty, famine, civil war, flight, torture, racism or totalitarianism. Thus, the mode is implicated by the theoretical legacy of anthropology, constructed on an idea of other societies as coherent wholes and thereby relegating chaos and disorder to the non-social, or at best to a temporary setback (cf. Davis 1992b). As I have argued elsewhere, this is no longer tenable (Hastrup 1993b). Theory has to catch up with the often distressful fact that the world is chaotic, rather than mechanical. The *Angst* must be faced, not evaded by means of disciplinary suicide.

The parables on ourselves were nourished by the eternal mimetic process taking place between ourselves and others, a process which for long – quite wrongly – was seen as a western privilege (Taussig 1993). To mime is to play the other; the western world and, with it, anthropology has held this in apparent monopoly. *We* made the move that took us bodily into alterity:

as fieldworkers we became part of the space we studied, and to which we attributed a dreamlike order. The dream has vanished. The manifest disorder in the world and the discovery of the others' capacity to mime us have made it clear that, while difference remains, the world is one. To explore the epistemological foundation of anthropology at this stage, therefore, serves a different purpose than just providing a lifeboat for a sinking discipline. It serves to remind it about its own constructive ambiguity: in addition to its being a field of knowledge, a *disciplinary* field, it is also a field of action, a *force* field (Scheper-Hughes 1992: 24–25). This book is an attempt to provide an epistemological basis for a practical integration of these two fields, being the arenas for objectivity and solidarity respectively. The present western disorientation seems to be a privileged starting point for anthropology to once again catch up with its time.

THE HORIZON OF ANTHROPOLOGY

The horizon is as far as we can see from where we are. It is not fixed: if we move in space the horizon shifts. What is within one's horizon is subject to revision and expansion. Scholarly anthropology developed from the Age of Discovery, and was founded upon an exploration of unmapped cultural territories. In this vein, anthropology has continued to contribute to the expansion of the western horizon.

The identity of a person, and of a scholarly discipline, is also firmly linked to the horizon within which we are capable of taking a stand (Taylor 1989: 27). It is not a property but a space with unfixed boundaries, perpetually subject to expansion or contraction. It is a moral space which allows us to orient ourselves, and thus to 'become' ourselves in the first place. The notion of a moral space points to the fact that the space within which we orient ourselves is not just a society or a language, but a space within which our grasping the world in terms of values is inseparable from our way of living (Taylor 1989: 67).

This implies that the identity of the anthropological profession is intimately linked to its practice and to its contribution to the cultural and moral horizons by which our lives are bounded. For some, the claim to a particular profession rather than just a perspective may seem superfluous. To me this is a necessary starting point for qualifying the practice as something other than

ordinary travelling and subsequent pondering about difference. Anthropology may not be a prototypical member of the category of scholarship, let alone of 'science', yet its import derives from its ability to discover and define reality just as much as linguistics and physics. Its potential stems from its power to question the givens of western culture rather than confirming them. As such, anthropology continues the Romantic reaction against Enlightenment reason (cf. Shweder 1984), and against the sanctification of the natural sciences (Rorty 1991b: 18). The discovery of other worlds is explicitly creative.

The point is not to dethrone natural science for the fun of it alone; its displacement from the centre of the category of sciences is principally a means of understanding the shortcomings of the view – stretching from physics and extending far into analytic philosophy – that scientific thinking essentially consists in clarification, or 'in patiently making explicit what has remained implicit' (Rorty 1991b: 12). Clarification does not make the trick as far as the human sciences are concerned. The interpretation, or the scientific explanation of matters cultural, is not an inherent quality of the object; it is the result of a project of linking and contextualizing defined by a specific purpose. The event of understanding is intertextual in the widest sense of this term. This event is mediated in words that have often belied the demands of the interpretative frame and presented the understanding as if given by the nature of the object. This can never be the case; clarification of objective properties is but one step in a larger process of radical interpretation.

Articulation, evidently, is not the target. All scholarship needs to be articulated to make sense. In spite of the delusive nature of language, proponents of silence are unconvincing (cf. Taylor 1989: 91ff., 98). Articulacy, however, is not a matter of finding words corresponding adequately to the reality beyond them in the hope of finding a final resting-place for thought (Rorty 1991b: 19). There is no such final resting-place, no ultimate, ahistorical reality, to which our vocabularies must be adequate. Clarification recedes to articulation, as a way of making sense. In anthropology, articulacy is a way of explicitly escaping the illusion of fit between words and lived experiences, by demonstrating the lack of fit between different reference schemes.

The mismatch between reference schemes, or cultures, as experienced in fieldwork is conceptually overcome by our shared

human capacity of imagination. The range of imaginative power in anthropology is an integral part of its ability to contribute to a liberation of culture from its own obsolete vocabularies by its ability to weave new metaphors into the fabric of common beliefs. Metaphors are not parasites upon reality, they are extensions of it. As such they are forerunners of a new language, stretched to fit new experiences. In short, anthropology is one important source for acknowledging that cognition is not necessarily recognition, and that the acquisition of truth is not a matter of fitting data into a pre-established scheme (cf. Rorty 1991b: 13).

The prime virtue of anthropology lies in the fact that its space is as open-ended as the world to which it belongs. It cannot, therefore, make claims to a particular regime of truth in the Foucauldian sense – implying just another possible epistemic order. The open-endedness of anthropology is owed to its unfailing commitment to exploring different epistemologies, but this does not amount to a claim that all orders are equally possible or equally good. This is where the subjective standpoint is once again insurmountable; as pointed out by Taylor, the

> point of view from which we might constate that all orders are equally arbitrary, in particular that all moral views are equally so, is just not available to us humans. It is a form of self-delusion to think that we do not speak from a moral orientation which we take to be right.
>
> (Taylor 1989: 99)

There is no way of speaking from nowhere in particular, as previously argued, not even for transculturated anthropologists.

So far anthropologists have spoken from an off-centred position within the category of sciences. If this has seemed to marginalize our contribution, I believe that the inherent eccentricity of anthropology *vis-à-vis* the dominant world-view is a source of extreme strength. This, of course, has still to be demonstrated in practice. Trajecting the present horizon of anthropology, as I do in this book, points to the future. In a sense I am trying to 'project back' from some future vantage point to an evaluation of the present. Evaluation is part of knowledge; people – and anthropologists among them – not only learn to think, they also learn to care. If it seems daring thus to stretch the present to its limits it is perfectly in keeping with the anthropological quest: the expansion of the horizon takes place in time as well as space.

Evaluating the present is to make claim to potentiality as well as actuality.

PRACTISING ETHNOGRAPHY

Stressing the need to take off in the present implies an emphasis upon anthropology as practice, that is, a mode of doing and creating. The anthropological practice bifurcates into a field practice and a discursive practice, implicated also in the performative paradox identified above.

The anthropological discourse has been marked by an extensive use of what is known as the 'ethnographic present'.[1] It implies the use of the present tense as the dominant mode of representing the others. The use of tense has been seriously criticized as reflecting a particular relationship of observation and distancing to the object (Fabian 1983: 86). It has been described as a vague and essentially atemporal moment (Stocking 1983: 86), reflecting the ahistoric or synchronic pretense of anthropology (Crapanzano 1986: 51).

The ethnographic present is, evidently, a literary device, and as such it needs to be questioned along with other conventions of representation in anthropology. However, it is not solely an accidental temporal mode loosely linked to the synchronic nature of fieldwork (Marcus and Fischer 1986: 96). Nor is it in any way a simple matter of synchronizing our descriptions. Rather it covers a variety of texual *mise-en-scènes* (Davis 1992a). The ethnographic present is a corollary of the peculiar nature of the anthropological practice as identified in the performative paradox. It is a necessary construction of time, because only the present tense preserves the reality of *anthropological* knowledge. I argue this in full recognition of the critique raised against the earlier ahistoric mode of anthropology. The choice of tense was right but it rested on false assumptions. My contention is that we are now in a position to reassess our assumptions and to reinvent the ethnographic present without previous connotations.

Fieldwork is diacritical in the anthropological practice. While it lasts, it is a radical experience of estrangement and relativism. Afterwards, it becomes memory and the backbone of objectivism. By way of opening this well-known theme I shall present a fragment of my own memories from the field.

Looking back upon my fieldwork in Iceland in 1982–1983 I

recall that I suffered a lot.[2] Although it took place within the boundaries of the self-declared western civilization, my sufferings were of a general kind. In addition to the monotonous diet, the cold, the blizzards, and the inescapable nature to which I was constantly exposed, I had the not uncommon problems of loneliness, of sexual assaults, loss of identity and offensive enemy spirits. In spite of all this, one of my greatest shocks in the field was to be reminded of my own world. Towards the end of my first year-long stay in Iceland, when I lived and worked in a fishing village in pitch-dark and ice-cold winter, and where I had for some time felt completely cut off from the rest of the world, I once received six letters addressed to Kirsten Hastrup. They were full of questions like: would I organize a conference?; what would I like to teach in the spring term?; would I do an Open University course?; and would it not be wonderful to get back? That really got me down, and I knew instantly that I would never, ever go back to that world which had nothing to do with me. I was infuriated that people assumed that they knew who I was. They did not, obviously. I was Kristín á Gimli, worked as a fishwoman, smelled of fish, and shared my incredibly shabby house with three young and wild fishermen. That was who I wanted to be, I decided, and threw the letters into a heap of junk.

They remained there, but as readers will have guessed, I myself returned – at least partly – to the world I had left. In that world I write articles on the fishermen's violence and the god-forsaken village. Experience has become memory, and the relics are embellished so as to pass for anthropology (cf. Boon 1986). The anecdote thus serves the immediate purpose of situating fieldwork between autobiography and anthropology (cf. Hastrup 1992a).

It also illustrates the nature of the ethnographer's presence in the field. At the time of my inverse culture shock I had in some sense 'gone native'. Margaret Mead once warned us that although immersing oneself in local life is good, one should be careful not to drown; allegedly, one way of maintaining the delicate balance is to write and receive letters from one's own world (Mead 1977: 7). In my case the letters pushed me even further down into the native world; I had no choice of degree of immersion. Even though we now recognize that 'going native' is to enter a world of one's own creation (Wagner 1975: 9), there is still reason to stress the radical nature of the fieldwork experience – profoundly marking the entire anthropological discourse. Whether the indi-

vidual anthropologist goes temporarily native or not, the fieldwork practice implies that the well-established opposition between subject and object dissolves in anthropology. The ethnographer is not only labelled by the others, she is also named.

As named, that is, as an identified subject in the alien discursive space, the ethnographer becomes part of her field. Her presence is the occasion and the locus of the drama that is the source of anthropological reflection (Dumont 1978: 12). There is no absolute perspective from where we can eliminate our own consciousness from our object (Rabinow 1977: 151). By her presence in the field, the ethnographer is actively engaged in the construction of the ethnographic reality or, one might say, of the ethnographic present.

This is where we can begin to see that the practice of fieldwork eliminates both subjectivism and objectivism and posits truth as an intersubjective creation. In this sense, fieldwork is almost like a possession, which by itself is nothing but the collapse of the subject–object relation (Fernandez 1986: 247). Although our results cannot be measured against the requirements of natural scientific verification, we have no choice: anthropology is radical interpretation and cannot, therefore, be *wertfrei* (cf. Taylor 1979: 71). It can be scholarship, of course, and of a kind that may have radical implications for the world. Before that, fieldwork has to be transformed into text. The practice of anthropology implies a writing of ethnography from a particular standpoint of knowing and interpreting – in time.

WRITING CULTURES

Culture is an invention, tied up with the invention of anthropology (Wagner 1975). Unlike earlier generations of anthropologists who thought of culture in essentialist terms, we now realize that it is a creation on our part, and one which may become increasingly poeticized – in fact and in text (cf. Rorty 1991a: 110). Whether construed in the singular, and denoting a philosophical counterpoint to nature, or in the plural, designating sociological entities, we can no longer claim culture to be an objective fact. Cultures materialize in contradistinction to each other; differences are exaggerated in the process. Anthropology has cemented the exaggeration and described the others as everything we were not. Conversely, the others have presented simulacra of themselves in

order to fob off and satisfy our search to understand their specifity (Ardener 1989b: 183).

A primary conclusion is, then, that unlike a society which is an empirical entity, culture is an analytical implication. The cultural order is virtual; it is realized only as events of speech and action (Sahlins 1985: 153). Events are the empirical form of system, which is, therefore, under constant risk from practice. Ultimately, that is why we have to *write* cultures in order to perceive them as wholes.

The invention of culture in anthropological writing must (in some sense at least) reflect the ways in which cultures invent themselves if anthropology wants to be faithful to its own aims (Wagner 1975: 30). Not any piece of writing will do, if we want to call ourselves anthropologists and not just travel writers. We have to seriously investigate the lived space, which is the experiential counterpart to the implicational cultural space. I shall term this experiential space a 'world' (Hastrup 1987c). It will be understood that this is not solely an ideational space, but one that is made up of people and actions. Indeed, the old dichotomy between idealism and materialism makes no sense (Ardener 1982: 11). However, the main point here is that the implication of culture – to pose as an analytical object of anthropology – must have a lived counterpart in the world. It is this world that the ethnographers must enter if their writings shall be 'realistic.'

We shall return to realism later (in chapter 9); here I shall sum up about culture that it is sensed only by way of 'culture shock' – summing up in dramatic form the exposure to another culture. In anthropology this implies the ethnographer's deliberately subjecting herself to a world beyond her competence; we cannot write real cultures without experiences of other worlds. The road to anthropological knowledge goes via shared social experience (Hastrup and Hervik 1994). The degree of sharing is often astonishing, as another anecdote from my fieldwork will illustrate.

For some months I lived and worked on an Icelandic farm where I, to the best of my knowledge, practised participant observation. It implied a particular kind of presence that made me an object in the Icelanders' discourse; they wrote their culture all over me. In order to achieve a proper position in the farming world I had assumed the role of milkmaid and shepherdess. During my first stay, I had actually been partly responsible for the milking and tending of some 30 cows. It was gratifying to

achieve new basic skills in itself, but more importantly, my working position also greatly facilitated an actual shift of identity, theoretically implied by participant observation. As an anthropologist one cannot easily get a close relationship to thirty relatively stupid cows, but as milkmaid one is bound to take them seriously. One must surrender to the role in a very direct manner; there is no way of finding oneself between cows handling their udders and still pretending that one is there only for scholarship. For me, the work soon entailed differentiated relations to the cows, which I could no longer deal with as a category but had to deal with as named individuals. I collected their names, of course, for later analysis, but first of all I experienced how some cows were nice and friendly, while others were stupid, and some even hostile. One cow in particular always annoyed me, and once it occasioned a sprained thumb – an injury that is very inconvenient for a milkmaid. I really got to dislike the beast and I am sure it was a mutual feeling.

After a few months I left the farm to go elsewhere, but also to return six months later. On my return I immediately found my old place in the cowshed and went from cow to cow to recall their names. In front of my old enemy I sensed the well-known feeling of anger and murmured: 'So there you still are, you silly old beast.' Next morning, when the farmer and I went into the cowshed to do the morning milking, the beast was lying dead on the floor, for no apparent reason. I was deeply shocked, because I knew that in previous times such occurrences had brought witches to the stake.

The point of this tale is not only to show how the cow recognized me as 'of the Icelandic world' so full of magic and witchcraft, but that even I, the anthropologist disguised as a milkmaid, was prepared to take responsibility for the death of the cow. I had internalized an experiential space where time was another and where the usual patterns of causality were suspended. While undoubtedly in some sense a space of my own creation, the experience was real – and of the kind that makes ethnographers doubt self-evidences.

My own implicit allegation of witchcraft (as against myself) was not a question of belief, and far less of superstition. It was an expression of my experiencing a distinct reality of which I was temporarily part, and which once and for all taught me that we cannot separate materiality and meaning. They are simultaneities in the world in which we live, and as such they write themselves onto the ethnographer who temporarily shares the world of others. It is this simultaneity that makes actual presence in the other world a precondition for the writing of culture, and which transforms the inherent paradox of participant observation into a literary dilemma of 'participant description' (Geertz 1988: 83).

PRESENCE AND REPRESENTATION

Until recently, the ethnographer's presence in the field was the sole stamp of authority needed in the anthropological monograph (cf. Clifford 1983b). Since Malinowski, fieldwork was a strategy of discovery by which the anthropologist could intervene in alien spaces and behave 'like an ideal metering device' (Ardener 1985: 57). The invention of this strategy – of I-witnessing (Geertz 1988) – made a new genre of writing possible, the genre of realism. Within this genre 'the author as fieldworker was always implicitly present; the author as author was always implicitly absent' (Boon 1983: 138). Today, the questioning of the anthropologist's authorial status marks the end of modernism.

Physical presence in the field is no longer the source of absolute authority. The kind of participation needed to identify events and write real cultures cannot be glossed as mere 'being' in the field. It implies a process of 'becoming'. Becoming is a metaphor for a kind of participation that can never be complete and which is no immediate consequence of physical presence. It does not imply that the anthropologist gradually becomes identical with the others. I did not become an Icelandic shepherdess although I participated in sheep-farming and experienced the unreality of shepherdesses in misty mountains (cf. Hastrup 1987a). The concept of becoming implies that one gives in to an alien reality and allows oneself to change in the process. One is not completely absorbed in the other world, but one is also no longer the same. The change often is so fundamental that it is difficult to see how the fieldworker has any identity with her former self. Fieldwork, therefore, escapes our ordinary historical categories. The space discovered has neither a firm future nor a distinct past, because intentions and memories are transformed as definitions, categories and meanings shift. Participant observation today implies an observation of participation itself (cf. Tedlock 1991); it is not self-evident that what we participate in is the real life of the others.

Although part of the anthropologist's life-history and also representing a moment in the course of local history, the experience of the fieldworld as such is outside history (as a particular temporal mode). It is so strongly marked by liminality that the ordinary succession of events is suspended (cf. Turnbull 1990). Furthermore, insight is obtained by a degree of violence; the ethnographer must keep up a certain pressure in order to elicit information (Griaule 1957: 14; cf. also Clifford 1983a). Power differences inform the dialogue and distort history. They also create history, but it is a kind of history that is but a fleeting moment and cannot be spoken about in ordinary historical categories. Hence the ethnographic present. The tense reflects the reality of fieldwork.

The problem is that within realism as a genre, the ethnographic present was thought to represent the reality of the other *society*. For functionalists and consorts, the realist monograph *re*presented what societies were: timeless, islandlike entities (Boon 1982: 14). However, the critique of realism as genre and of the assumptions behind earlier modes of representation should not make us lose sight of the reality of fieldwork and of 'realism' as quite a respectable epistemology.[3] We must not continue the logical error of mistaking the one for the other, that is, of confounding genre and epistemology.

Fieldwork is outside history quite irrespective of the fact that all societies have histories of their own and are deeply involved in global history as well. The reality of fieldwork is a liminal phase for both subjects and objects, in which the distinction between them is dissolved; at alternating points in the discourse subject and object take on the complementary positions of namer and named (Parkin 1982: xxxiii-xxxiv). History seems to be suspended for both parties. The present is what frames the encounter and lends it meaning. The frame is far from fixed, but somehow fieldwork is stuck within it.

The liminality of fieldwork is one reason why it has been likened to a *rite de passage*, and generally identified as the central ritual of the tribe of anthropologists (Stocking 1983: 70). Now, the meaning of ritual is not its inner essence, but its being part of a wider self-defining social space.[4] Rituals often are among the more remarkable declarations of such spaces. Although the history of anthropological theory tends to belie this, ritual cannot be studied isolated as 'text'; it is a context-marker. So also for

the central ritual of anthropology: fieldwork marks the context of anthropology while it does not exhaust its content. The ethnographer's ritual presence in another world, with all that implies of intersubjectivity and intertextuality, has no absolute inner meaning. Something else is meaningless without it: anthropology. As a distinct field of scholarship, anthropology invests itself in the present not only to document cultures but to experience the processes of their making.

In this context we become our own informants on the ethnographic present. The fieldwork ritual implies a particular construction of time; Johannes Fabian has introduced the distinction between the coevalness of fieldwork and the allochronism of writing (Fabian 1983). Fieldwork implies a sharing of time with the other, while writing often implies a temporal distancing. I would suggest that the ethnographic present be re-read as an implication of a shared time. Using the present tense is to speak from the centre of another time-space, which existed only at that fleeting instant when the ethnographer impressed herself upon the world of the others – and changed it. Its implications, however, transcend the Cartesian coordinates of time and space.

Criticizing the split between coevalness and allochronism is relevant only if we conceive of the anthropological endeavour as one of substantive representation, that is, of reproduction and of accurately mapping one space onto another. If, contrarily, we perceive representation as a creative process of evocation and re-enactment (not simply to say: 'description') we have no choice of tense. The ethnographer saw or heard something sometime in an autobiographic past, but the implications must be *presented* to be of relevance as anthropology, and to avoid the imputed loss from fieldwork to writing.[5]

The reality of the encounter is outside ordinary history; it is its own history, if you wish. As discourse it must be realized temporally and in a present (cf. Ricoeur 1979: 74). The ethnographic present reflects the instance of the discourse. In short, the reason for the present tense is located in the dual nature of anthropological practice of fieldwork and writing, or presence and re-creation. The reality of the cultures that we write depends on a particular narrative construction, a discursive present; the realities of other people, of course, have histories that are retold in local language. It is not for anthropology, however, to recast biographies and social histories in full, or for that matter to retell

local stories. That is far more convincingly done by those who live them. The hallmark of anthropology is to experience the force of detail in practical life and to recast it in a theoretical mode that transcends it. Life has to be recreated in a separate language in order to be comprehended.

CULTURAL TRANSLATION

We are led towards a reconsideration of cultural translation. This notion has been used as a metaphor for anthropology, especially within British anthropology since Evans-Pritchard. Although lip service has often been paid to the fact that it is not really like linguistic translation, it is only recently that a serious questioning of the metaphor has begun, notably by Ardener (1989b) and Asad (1986).

One example to which Asad draws attention is Godfrey Lienhardt's seminal work on 'Modes of Thought' (1954), in which he writes:

> The problem of describing to others how members of a remote tribe think then begins to appear largely as one of translation, of making the coherence primitive thought has in the languages it really lives in, as clear as possible in our own.
>
> (Lienhardt 1954: 97)

Leach is even more direct when he says that the anthropological problem of coping with cultural difference essentially is one of translation; it may be difficult but a 'tolerably satisfactory translation is always possible' (Leach 1973: 772, quoted in Asad 1986: 142). Behind the idea of cultural translation lies a mode of thinking about anthropological representation as an attempt to reproduce one social space in the discourse of another as accurately as possible. As we have seen, this is an untenable epistemological assumption.

The problem is not merely that some categories can only be rendered by approximation and then only on a considerable encyclopaedic (or ethnographic) background (Sperber 1985: 44). A much more important source for the unease about the metaphor of translation is the profound asymmetry between languages: the alleged translation takes place between languages that are unequal from the outset (Asad 1986). This is partly due to the lamented legacy of colonialism out of which anthropology grew,

and the related power structure always inherent in the legitimization of language (Bourdieu 1991), partly to the nature of the anthropological discourse. To put it briefly, the discourse in which one can write *about* somebody for a specific audience is by definition a discourse of englobement. The linguistic inequality is aggravated by the implicit hierarchy between between literate and oral forms of knowledge in western culture (cf. Clifford 1988b: 339–341). Dissecting the notion of translation thus leads back to the point that anthropological knowledge is a symptom of our own society (Scholte 1980: 66–67). That is a political point worth repeating.

A theoretical point also worth making is that we cannot properly translate cultures into our own without destroying their specificity. Taken to the extreme, translation implies a transformation of the unknown into something known, and anthropology would clearly become absurd if this was taken literally:

> What lies at the end of translation... is a kind of entropy of the translated system – a total remapping of the other social space into entities of the translating one. At our destination the terrain would, however, be disappointingly familiar.
>
> (Ardener 1989b: 178)

Thus, at the end of the road of translation, anthropology would have to start all over again – by re-establishing difference.

Difference always mattered more than similarity in the writing of cultures. What goes onto the anthropological map is cultural difference. Any idea of translation from one cultural space to another is vastly complicated by the symbolic interpenetration of cultures by which difference is first established. 'Culture' is already an implication, and in spite of claims to accurate representation, ethnographic texts are inescapably allegorical. The difference is not translated, it is posited and transcended.

Difference is posited through the experience of fieldwork, from which we know that cultural understanding is about disequation rather than equation (Ardener 1989b: 183). After the initial experience of relativism, difference is transcended in writing and its implied objectivism. This process is not a mechanical process of translation but a highly complex process of understanding and re-enactment, in which the anthropologist herself plays a crucial part, and which is complicated by features of heteroglossia and mutedness.*

Once we have realized that anthropology is not about replacing one discourse by another, or about representation or translation, we may return to a consideration of the anthropological practice as a creative process – of *presenting* ethnography. Even if the object of study must be historicized in all sorts of ways, the choice of tense is right; what would the point of anthropology be if its truth had already gone at the moment of writing.

THE PROPHETIC CONDITION

However provisional in a larger historical perspective, the truth carried by the message of the anthropologist must be convincing. This is a problem she shares with Hermes, another trickster (Crapanzano 1986: 52). It is also a problem she shares with the prophet whom I shall now introduce. Both timing and translation are put into perspective by the prophetic condition, as identified by Edwin Ardener (1989a; cf. Hastrup 1989). The prophetic condition is a condition of both structures and individuals who find themselves between two worlds. The prophet gives voice to a new world but belongs to an old one. The voice is not always heard. The words seem incomprehensible beforehand; afterwards they are trivial. When the new world has materialized, the words of the prophet are indistinguishable from ordinary speech. The structural conditions for prophecy can be more or less favourable. A privileged condition obtains when a discontinuity is generally sensed, but when it is still not conceivable in known categories.

The anthropologist is 'like' a prophet, structurally speaking. The two worlds mediated by the anthropologist are more often separated in space than in time, but in principle the anthropologist gives voice to a new world. The prophetic position of the anthropologist is further substantiated when we realize that prophets do not *predict* a future. Predictions are always part of current language and when they prove 'correct' it is because they are essentially repetitions. Predictions always fail when they are most needed, that is, when repetition does not occur. The prophet does not predict the future, he foretells it before it has been incorporated into the collective representations. He gives voice to and in that sense defines the world he has discovered. He expands on the present by telling it to its limits. In other words, the perception of a new world is closely related to an expansion of language. A new reality takes shape as it is conceptualized, in

anthropology as well as in prophecy. The 'other' world is discovered and defined simultaneously; observation and theory are one.

There are, of course, realities and histories before and beyond anthropology. But through the dual nature of the anthropological practice, of experiencing and writing, a new world of betweenness is created.[7] It is this betweenness that places the anthropologist in a prophetic position and forces her to speak in the ethnographic present. In spite of recent claims to multiple authorship, it is still the voice of the anthropologist that presents the other world in the text. Like the prophet, the anthropologist offers another language, another space, another time to reality. That is the emergent meaning of the anthropological practice.

I argue, then, that timing in anthropology – seen as an essentially prophetic discourse – involves the use of the ethnographic present. Its inevitability is linked to our ritual presence in the field, without which the context is meaningless as anthropology. The ethnographic present is a narrative construct that clearly does not represent a truth about the timelessness of the others. We know that they are as historical as anybody in all possible ways. But the betweenness implied in fieldwork, and the fact of the ethnographer's sharing the time *of* the others, makes ethnography escape the ordinary historical categories.

The prophetic condition implies that the unspeakable becomes spoken, and that language expands on both sides of the dialogue. Whereas translation presupposes two separate discourses, one of which is the object of the other, prophecy implies intersubjectivity or intertextuality affecting both worlds. To the extent that we are now ready to acknowledge that the ethnographer changes in the field, we should also admit that neither do the informants remain the same. Nor do they remain 'other'. We have to abandon the use, not of the ethnographic present but of the term 'informants' that construes the others as (verbal) pathways to separate worlds. In the newly discovered world between us and them, the illusion of distance is broken.

In the prophetic condition of anthropology there is an implicational truth that is not outlived when the ethnographer leaves the field, and which should not, therefore, be rendered in the past tense. When this is realized, the ethnographic present may lead to many possible futures. As such, the ethnographic present is what potentiates anthropology.

Chapter 2

The language paradox
On the limits of words

The relationship between the language and the world is at the core of epistemology. It has been probed into from various philosophical angles, which have suggested as many ways of seeing it. In this chapter I shall limit my discussion to some areas that have particular pertinence for anthropology. My approach is pragmatic in the sense that I aim at identifying current concerns of anthropology as practice, rather than at tracing the history of anthropological thought about language. This, of course, is related to my wish to expand on the present. My principal focus in this chapter is on local or natural language, but it reflects back upon anthropological language as well.

As indicated by the heading of this chapter, I believe that there are serious limitations on local words and writings as sources of genuine anthropological understanding. The paradox of language to which I refer lies in the fact that while it may indeed sometimes be difficult in real life to determine whether we are dealing with a social or a linguistic phenomenon, because language somehow is to the social as a measuring rod is to the measured, linguistics alone cannot unlock the complexities of social life (Ardener 1989b: 180). Language, spoken or written, measures but does not represent. As measuring rod it imposes its own scale upon the plasticity of the social. This applies to local language as much as scholarly works.

This reflects back upon the understanding of the relationship between language, culture and identity that always had a prominent position on the anthropological agenda. The discussion of this particular item has taken a new turn with the emergence of world-wide literacy, virtually if not actually or statistically. Literacy implies that part of any culture is now stored in writings

ranging from laws to poetry, and the question naturally arises how we should deal with this kind of material. The traditional ethnographic practice of eavesdropping outside the local walls of silence has been supplemented by a reading over broad native shoulders.[1] With reading we are on home ground, and we do not even have to take notes, a practice which has recently been unveiled as cumbersome and loaded with professional frustration (cf. Sanjek 1990). Small wonder that anthropologists have taken such an interest in the multiplicities of native writing as sources of cultural understanding. We might wish to recall that by 'natives' I refer to all of us – in our capacity of being 'at home' in some world or other.

Native words and texts may provide cultural clues and qualify as ethnographic material in all sorts of ways, but I contend that there is an ontological gap between words and social processes that cannot be bridged from within the language itself. To understand this, and to point to a new constructive communion with our principal means of expression I shall explore the relationship between language and the world from a range of perspectives. First, my argument starts from a discussion of categorization as a particular reflection upon the world; the aim is to demonstrate the potential mismatch between the words and the realities they name. Next, I shall deal with the feature of metaphor as a linguistic and literary device allowing people to mean more than they can say, and perhaps also to say more than they mean; the point here is to show the limitations of metaphor as a clue to social action. Third, the argument will make a tour around etymology as an often-used instrument in the reconstruction of social phenomena and meaning. Towards the end of the chapter, I shall make some general points on the relationship between writing and social process and the nature of anthropological understanding. The general idea underlying the argument is that whatever the representational shortcomings of language, and their redoubling in writing, there is nothing to be gained from verbal abstinence. There is no surplus solidarity to be gained from not listening to the natives, nor any extra scholarly reputation to be gained from not writing.

CATEGORY

The nature of categorization is central to any discussion of the relationship between language and the world. In classical linguistic theory, the doctrine held categories to be abstract containers, implying that things were either inside or outside the category, affiliation to which was determined by the sharing of a certain number of properties.[2] As far as identity categories are concerned, this view entailed that all members of a particular category a priori were defined by their shared cultural (and linguistic) identity. No less important, the idea of categories as empty containers had particular implications for the view of *reason* as disembodied and abstract, and of knowledge as essentially objective. As most explicitly specified by Whorf (1956) and his followers, it is language that determines the conceptual system in this particular objectivist view of the world.

The presumed one-to-one correspondence between language and reality has passed for axiomatic truth in philosophy and science for a long time. Accordingly, the scope of scholarship was to formulate those theories or models that best fitted the discovered realities. We have lost our objectivist innocence and the idea of correspondence between language and world, yet we have still to come to terms with a remarkable continuity between words and worlds (Ardener 1982; Hastrup 1987c), which precludes a facile resort to constructionism.

Compared to the old objectivist view of categories as containers of reality, new linguistic theories have turned the world around. Experiment and reasoning have shown that language does not represent the world in any direct fashion; categories cannot be understood independently of a knower or a culturalized subject (Rosch 1978: 29). This implies that categorization is essentially a matter of both human experience and imagination, from which it follows that reason is based on the same factors and cannot be viewed solely in terms of the manipulation of abstract symbols such as categories (Lakoff 1987: 8). Meaning cannot be reduced to reference.

Anthropologists have known this for a long time, of course. In those other cultures that we have been studying we have been met with a kind of reason that did not reflect the western notions of rationality. Many attempts have been made to sort out the relationship between the obvious cultural relativism and the need for a shared scientific standard. Relativism has been variably contrasted with universalism, absolutism or objectivism, and if anything, the endless debates demonstrate the multiplicity of epistemologies even within western scholarship (Hirst 1985). While the debate has not brought us closer to a final solution, in anthropology it has generally confirmed the point that relativization is our only road to objectivity, and at least we have been forced to review our 'strategies for *coping* with the consequences of relativism, accepting that our knowledges lack foundations in independent criteria of validity' (Hirst 1985: 85). One of these strategies is a renewed reflection upon the nature of cultural categories.

If categories are not empty containers – of identity, for instance – their significance shifts. They do not simply reflect the world, they intervene into it, as we have known since Whorf. His insight about intervention was transformed (by Sapir, who in contrast to Whorf was a professional linguist) into a doctrine of determination in the Sapir–Whorf hypothesis, leading several generations of scholars to believe that language not only mediated cultural perceptions but also determined them. The often-quoted statement by Sapir is quite explicit about this:

> The fact of the matter is that the 'real world' is to a large extent unconsciously built up on the language habits of the group. No two languages are ever sufficiently similar to be considered as representing the same social reality. The worlds in which different societies live are distinct worlds, not merely the same world with different labels attached.
>
> (Sapir 1951: 162).

In other words, if a people have seven words for snow, they perceive seven kinds of snow; and if people have no term for blue, they have no idea of it (cf. Lakoff 1987: 40). Further, if a particular language has no tenses, its speakers can have no sense of time – a parallel to the allegation that if anthropologists write in the present tense they have no idea of history. In anthropology, this kind of argument has been implicit in the announcement of 'separate realities' to a point of relativistic caricature (Ardener 1989b: 164ff.). In turn, this has spurred equally reductive universalist statements denying any real basis for cultural misunderstanding (e.g. Bloch 1977).

Neither perception nor meaning can be deduced directly from the category system. The 'properties' of particular categories are

not something that exist objectively in the world independent of particular people; they are what Lakoff calls interactional properties, or 'the result of our interactions as part of our physical and cultural environments given our bodies and our cognitive apparatus' (Lakoff 1987: 51). This firmly locks the meaning of categories into human experience.

This means that even within categories there is no unity and strict symmetry. It is not all members of the category 'bird' that are equally good examples of birds; sparrows are more representative of the category than ostriches, to take just one of Rosch's many examples of what she has called the 'prototype effect' (Rosch 1978; cf. Lakoff 1987: 40ff.). Prototypes reflect clusters of experience, and show how asymmetries prevail within the categories, asymmetries that could neither be predicted nor read from the position of classical linguistic theory, which attributed categories with almost mechanically reflective potential and believed them to be exhaustive. The question of 'Why is the Cassowary not a Bird?' (Bulmer 1967) and thousands of related questions in the anthropology of classification can now be answered by a treatise on how it might be a bird after all, although not prototypical and maybe also something other than a bird.

In anthropology, a striking and independent parallel to the notion of prototype is Ardener's concept of 'semantic density' (Ardener 1982, 1989b: 169). Density is related to frequency, a frequency of association and interaction with reality. Categories contain a statistical feature that is part of their material reality – a kind of materiality foreshadowed by Whorf but often overlooked with the dismissal of his general hypothesis. This feature is the main reason why no reality can ever be exhausted by a set of categories: 'The statistical figure marks irregularities of experience which are flattened by unit categories. This is an important point, accounting as it does for the existence of ways of incorporating experience into the category system' (Ardener 1989b: 169).

The insight into the nature of categories has important implications for our understanding of social stereotypes, where the prototype effect results in a metonymic replacement of the entire category by only part of it (Lakoff 1987: 79f.). Thus the notion of 'working mothers' points to the fact that the category 'mother' is metonymically reduced to 'housewife', to cite one of Lakoff's

examples. The prototype effect also highlights the workings of cultural identity categories, which are particularly prone to features of density. One example is provided by the Scottish; the category more often than not evokes an image of the tartan-clad Highlanders, although they are in a numerical minority. In this particular case the 'Gaelic' emphasis seems to have been a product of Romantic poetry in the first place, and only later interpreted as a 'historical' fact (Chapman 1978; cf. also 1982). Similarly, as I myself have shown, not all members of the category of 'Icelanders' are equally 'Icelandic' in the mental image of Icelandicness (Hastrup 1990d).

Considering the prominent position of identity categories in anthropology ('We, the Tikopia', 'The Tallensi', 'The Icelanders'), we begin to understand the implications of the semantic densities, as expressions of the particular continuity between words and worlds. In a discipline dedicated to the study of peoples, the flattening out of unit categories has had particularly unfortunate consequences, sometimes also for the people defined, because their multiplicity was portrayed as unity. Treating identity categories as real and unproblematic reflections of reality has been aggravated in the featuring of 'others' and 'selves', as if they were equal on the map of the world. Because our ideas about categorization in general made no room for asymmetries, we were prevented from realizing the fundamental imbalance between our culture and theirs. From our new vantage point, however, we can see at least one basic asymmetry in this field: 'they' are always more like 'us' than 'we' are like 'them' (cf. Lakoff 1987: 41). Because we are our own prototypes of humans, they are less representative. The eccentric nature of words intervenes in the experience of worlds. This adds an important dimension to the discursive asymmetry inherent in anthropology.

There is no way of understanding natural language independent of social and experiential context. When the ethnographer is engaged in conversation and in participation in social life somewhere, the experiential basis is to some extent shared. Actually, because anthropologists are themselves part of the class of phenomena studied (i.e., people) there is no way of understanding people independent of the more or less shared human experience (Vendler 1984: 201). This does not imply that whenever we share a word with someone we have a clue to his or her inner life; as forcefully demonstrated by Rosaldo, anthropologists themselves

are positioned subjects whose particular experiences allow only a selective comprehension (Rosaldo 1984). What is more, 'inner lives' are by definition beyond inspection.

When it comes to writings that are often read at a distance – in time or space – from experience, the experiential space is less accessible, and the results of our reading are potentially distorted to an even higher degree. There is no way of assessing the centres of gravity, that is, prototypes and densities, directly from a text. We have no ways of ascertaining that the structure that we 'find' actually binds together the relevant focal areas of the words (cf. Friedrich 1986: 120). We may construct some abstract conceptual system but we will never learn about the degree of chaos in both language and society.[3] In the period when it was considered appropriate to regard society as 'text' these methodological shortcomings did not present themselves as such; today the text metaphor seems exhausted and we can no longer overlook the fact that we cannot 'read' cultures. This particular metaphor died when it became interpreted too literally.

The emergence of native writings does not neutralize this methodological problem; rather, it redoubles it, because writing removes language even further from its immediate referential context (Goody 1987: 292). Literacy has not only facilitated the possibilities of self-distancing in the abstract and general, in the same process it has also facilitated alienation from the sensations of everyday life and reality (Fernandez 1986: 151). Writing is a particular form of representation which may be completely alien to local modes of knowledge. With its stress upon linearity and chronology it suppresses instantaneousness and space. Even if we are able to ascertain that writing actually conforms to local conventions of representation, no native text ever exhausts the full flavour of ethnography. Words of themselves do not reveal the semantic densities of the experiential space. The idea that culture can be exhaustively described as the product of human beings trafficking in signs (cf. e.g. Daniel 1984: 229) must be abandoned. The taste of ethnographic things implies so much more than the sight of signs (Stoller 1989).

METAPHOR

Metaphor is a particular linguistic construction, that has generally been seen to bridge the gaps between categories and to provide

a particular kind of insight into the frontiers of the category system. If there are methodological problems in bounding and comprehending ordinary linguistic categories, they appear to multiply with metaphors that were always seen to be parasitical upon language. Also, they have been feared in an empiricist tradition that was generally repressing emotion, imagination and other elements of what was seen as subjectivism (Lakoff and Johnson 1980: 191).

At the heart of western scholarly discourse has been what Whitehead called the search for 'the One in Many'; in anthropology, too, traditional wisdom had it that to discover the meaning of a particular institution the analyst had to uncover the (structured) reality that was obscured by the haze of appearances (Stoller 1989: 133ff.). The search for Platonic truth, i.e., a reality lurking behind appearances, has always been seriously disturbed by such disorderly features of language and behaviour that could not be directly fitted into the image.

> In our fieldnotes there inevitably lurks a certain amount of material that we perceive as 'disorderly', 'illogical', and 'contradictory'. We ponder over such data, feel guilty about their presence, and in the end must make a decision about how we are going to deal with them.
>
> (Overing 1985b: 152)

We have invented 'metaphor' as a safety net; we do not want to attribute our subjects with irrationality, 'but because we do not truly understand them, we construe their rationality as tropic creativity' (ibid.).

By labelling particular forms of language as metaphor or trope, we have firmly placed them outside the system. Chaos could have no part in the classical model of the world, and metaphors were identified as more or less imaginative associations between separate semantic fields, which were really separate. In the words of Lévi-Strauss, metaphor is 'a code which makes it possible to pass from one system to the next' (Lévi-Strauss 1963: 96). A well-known example is the Nuer's insistence that twins are birds, which has led anthropologists to take great trouble in explaining that of course the Nuer do not really believe that twins are birds, because to them – as to us – twins and birds are clearly distinct categories. Language maps reality, while metaphors do not in this

vision of the world, which is based upon an idea of the autonomy of language.

This idea that language can be viewed as an isolated, identifiable and objective system, as strongly held by authorities like Saussure, Chomsky and their followers, has been undermined. There is no *langue* or *compétence* independent of practice, no tight system of grammar and syntax that is correct while the rest are just individual and accidental deviations from the rules. Deviation and disorder are not exceptions to the system, they are part of it. Things are what they appear to be: chaotic, paradoxical and inexhaustive.

With the dissolution of the opposition between reality and appearance, chaos has been readmitted to the world and must be accounted for. The details that are left out by the grammatical map ('the exceptions to the rules') constitute what the linguist Lecercle has tentatively named 'the remainder' (Lecercle 1990: 19 *et passim*). The remainder is where poetry, babbling, metaphor and fantasy break through and question the autonomy of language; where silent and unspeakable desires uncover the limits of *la langue*.

The remainder is not extrinsic to proper language; it is an intrinsic and constitutive part of it. Thus, language can never be a simple representation of the world; it is also an intervention within it. (An apparent commonplace, perhaps, for anthropologists used to dealing with verbal practices such as that of Melanesian big men whose power was based in rhetoric or with Inuit drum dancers whose verses made all the difference between war and peace in small local societies.) These examples illustrate the fact that words may exercise power and control in the social space, but the point I want to make here reaches further – to the formative power of words upon mental and moral spaces. In any case, the force of words has to be assessed empirically.

When we turn to texts or other dead stretches of experience, we can still not know the power of the chosen words without studying the wider context of social life. We cannot know whether a particular metaphor is 'dead' (like 'this man is a pig' in our own language), or whether it is part of the creative field of linguistic indeterminacy, where new insight is found, and where the old definitions on everyone's lips are constantly put at risk. Such definitions include definitions of particular identity categories that are subject to a remarkable degree of inconsistency.

The field of linguistic indeterminacy has been studied in depth by the anthropologist-cum-linguist Paul Friedrich (1986). He elevates the poet to particular power: if the individual utterance is unpredictable and imaginative this is precisely where poets and others manifest the 'link between the ascertainable order in language and the intimations of disorder in and beyond language' (ibid.: 5). Far from removing us from reality, the poetic indeterminacy recalls the holy union between definer and defined. Language is not just there as an empty container to be filled with meaning; meaning emerges in the articulation of its potential (cf. Lecercle 1990: 167). This point reinstates the individual contribution to reality, and not just as a 'carrier' of culture and categories. As Friedrich has it:

> The imagination of the unique individual gains particular relevance in the case of poetic language, where the role of the poet or the poetic speaker is more important than the role of the anonymous individual in language structure or in the history of language.
>
> (Friedrich 1986: 3)

Not only is language (as a system) inseparable from its usage, but it is also (and for the same reasons) deeply embedded in the social. In short, and in spite of previous attempts to isolate it, it is non-autonomous. The same applies to the 'structures' referred to in anthropology; structuralism had no theory that could account for the essential unity of structure and action: 'structuralism floats, as it were, attached by an inadequate number of ropes to the old empiricist ground beneath' (Ardener 1989b: 159).

One of the ropes was the identification of metaphors. I have already quoted Lévi-Strauss on the subject. For him, 'metaphor' was still a relatively precise technical term, while it has now become a catchword for almost everything ranging from allegory, through fantasy and conceit, to anything involving some degree of similarity across categories (Friedrich 1986: 30). It has become the target of a new wave of interest; some scholars seem to expand the notion by maintaining that there can no longer be any sharp distinction between the literal and the metaphorical, because metaphors reach far into our daily language use (e.g. Lakoff and Johnson 1980). Others want to restrict the term 'metaphor' to that which is consciously opposed to the literal (e.g. Cooper 1986), or are inclined to abandon the term altogether