

EDITORIAL PREFACE

This *Festschrift* is dedicated to Prof. Dr. J. van Baal on the occasion of his retirement from the chair of cultural anthropology at the University of Utrecht. The essays presented here are written by fellow scholars in recognition of his outstanding contributions to the field of anthropology.

In order to arrange the papers around a theme that has never ceased to fascinate van Baal, we have asked the contributors to concentrate on a religious subject. Within this broad area no specific topics have been solicited, and the authors-- mainly fellow anthropologists and students of religion-- have been able to pursue their own personal interests in the articles. Nevertheless, when the papers were collected, we found it possible to group them under three headings, each of which represents a facet of van Baal's enduring interests. Of course, some overlap is inevitable, as it is in any categorisation of heterogeneous items.

The topics of the three sections by no means represent an exhaustive inventory of all fields van Baal has successfully explored. The focus on religion necessarily leaves out many problems van Baal has actively occupied himself with during his many-sided career. Thus the academic stance of the *Festschrift* in no way pays tribute to his prolonged concern with administration and government. During his 25 years of civil service, many of which were spent in New Guinea, van Baal always tried to combine anthropology as a science with its practical applications. His knowledge of and publications on cultural change and acculturation are duly recognized in the contributions but on the whole fall outside the scope of this volume. The same can be said of a related subject which for a long time has profited from van Baal's stimulating influence: the educational problems in the Third World. As the problems associated with religion have longer and more profoundly aroused van Baal's interests than any other topic, we felt we could justly honour him by focussing on this subject. Inevitably, this concentration implied a slight exclusiveness as to possible contributors, so that not everyone

associated with van Baal has been able to contribute. We apologize for anyone who has been excluded by the limitations brought about by this decision or by the more practical limitations as to the maximal size of the volume. At the same time, we should like to thank the contributors who almost without exception eagerly accepted the invitation.

The essays can be regarded as contributions to three themes in religious anthropology which are strongly represented in van Baal's writings:

1. THEORY AND METHOD.

Van Baal's two major contributions to the fundamental theory of religion, *Over Wegen en Drijfveren der Religie* (1947) and *Symbols for communication* (1971), indicate his lifelong fascination by the phenomenon of religion itself. Tertullianus' "*credo quia absurdum*" reflects some of the wonder the nearly universal belief in a reality that cannot be verified has always provoked in him, a wonder and awe he has always been keen to pass on to his students. The notion of communication, the existential basis of human thinking and feeling, the incorporation of affective factors in the fundamental analysis and explanation of religion and the need to resort to formal structural methods in order to unravel fundamental patterns of thought--these elements, so important in van Baal's conception of an anthropological theory of religion, prove to be the guidelines for the authors in this section.

Burridge's essay, in its title allusive to Tertullianus' credo, focusses on the different attitudes rampant in the two categories of people actively involved with the religion of *alter*, missionaries and anthropologists. A historical survey of the discussion between proponents of the two paradigms shows that both have been amply and ably represented in the past. His thesis is that the gap between those two paradigms is not as wide and unbridgeable as some see it, in the description of other people's religion as well as in the definition of science and missionary endeavor.

Van Baaren's contribution attempts to place Christian and Muslim religion in one major analytic frame with tribal religions, a type of comparison always strongly favored by van Baal. He does so by establishing a minor typology in which both varieties fit.

For Hoens, van Baal's major essay in comparison (van Baal 1947) has been the guideline. His thesis is that comparative religion has to be empirical; less empirical approaches to the study of religion should be classed as as phenomenology of religion. In order to demonstrate the validity of this division, Hoens compares religious behaviour in three initiation rituals.

The contribution by Köbben also concentrates on empirical religious behaviour. Köbben not only sees religion as a rule-based behavioural system,

but convincingly discerns official norms and non-official rules for escaping the many burdens a religion can pose on people. This attention on rules within the rules is rather new in the study of religion. Thus, this contribution can be seen as a stimulus for research on a relatively neglected phenomenon.

A different approach to religious behaviour is used by van Beek. Starting from the problem of magic, the subject of van Baal's inaugural lecture (van Baal 1960, 1963), van Beek proceeds with a formal semantic analysis of all religious activities within one religious system. The internal division of the religious field appears compatible with the notion of magic and gives some fruitful suggestions as to the position of magic in the whole field of religion.

Lévi-Strauss' essay bears on a central problem in structuralism, viz. the relation between synchronic and diachronic research. In a way van Baal's Marind-Anim analysis (1966) can be considered as an example of how the synchronic and diachronic approaches can be integrated for one society. Lévi-Strauss presents an Amerindian case in which the importance and possibility of combining synchrony and diachrony is elucidated very elegantly and convincingly.

2. MELANESIAN AND AUSTRALIAN RELIGIONS.

Van Baal is generally considered to be one of the foremost Dutch specialists on Melanesia and Aboriginal Australia. His major Marind publication (van Baal 1966) is a milestone in this field. Therefore we feel grateful to be able to include a substantial section dealing with this area. The first article in this section uses, just as the last two of the preceding section, a structuralist approach. Pouwer's essay* in a way is geared to the problem which engaged Lévi-Strauss' attention. The relation between structure and history is analysed by Pouwer on another level of abstraction as the dialectic between paradigmatic and syntagmatic relations. Using Barthes' semiology, Pouwer advocates an integration of paradigmatic, syntagmatic and symbolic dimensions of signification. The usefulness of this "Holy Trinity of Articulation" is demonstrated in an analysis of Mimika structural history.

Signification and interpretation of natural (though uncommon) phenomena are the subject of the article by van Nieuwenhuizen and Riedeman. They present information on a little-known subject, the reactions to eclipses by a Papuan community. The related belief-system is shown to be tied in with the social structure in an interesting way.

The article by Berndt pursues a fundamental theme in van Baal's thinking on primitive religion, and especially Australian religion. Two songcycles emphasize-- within the context of the "Dreaming"-- the dialectical relation-

ship of life and death and the ultimate unity of the social, natural and supernatural aspects of the environment of man.

A similar problem of relationship between different sectors of human life forms the main theme of van der Leeden's contribution. He ably reviews and assesses a long-standing discussion on territorial and social organisation of Australian Aborigines. The comparison he draws with Marind-Anim social and territorial organisation proves highly illuminating for the Australian problem.

The concluding part of the section contains two articles on a fascinating Melanesian phenomenon: cargo cults. The Muyu-movement School describes is an interesting variation on this recurrent theme. The term "salvation" in the title, as is amply demonstrated in the detailed description, includes temporal as well as more spiritual salvation. Ploeg's contribution bears on the economic impact and after-effects of cargo cults. The role of the latter and of the traditional "Big Men" in the development of an entrepreneurial climate, is sketched in a historical survey, leading to an analysis of "bisnis" (pidgin for business). Bisnis is shown to have retained some unexpected cargo-characteristics.

3. RELIGION IN CHANGE

Many of van Baal's publications and professional activities had a bearing upon culture change. His long-standing concern with the administration of peoples in the Third World made him acutely aware of the rate and impact of culture change. Moreover, this subject formed part of his teaching assignment (the ethnological theory of acculturation). A section on change in religious systems therefore seemed more than appropriate.

Thematically, the first contribution in this section coincides with the last two articles of the preceding one as it also concentrates on a millennial movement. Thoden van Velzen and van Wetering are concerned with the political impact of a prophetic movement. Its actual content, however, is totally different from that of the cargo cults described in the preceding section. The anti-witchcraft rebellion among the Djuka Maroons with its many-sided political effects provides a fascinating story of religious change on a micro-level.

In a way, the chain of causality in Locher's article runs opposite to the one exposed in the contribution on the Djuka. In Locher's essay, the change in the mythic corpus does not result from the action of an individual, but from a change in the political structure. Locher examines the relation between ideology and myth (which in the three examples he gives

are very closely interrelated) and the way in which both can serve as tools for shaping the destiny as well as the history of a nation.

Waardenburg's paper gives a "state of the art" survey of studies on "Dutch religion". Following van Baal's example in "Over wegen en drijfveren der religie" (1947), he gives a critical description of this "tribal" religion. The methodological part of his essay, together with the elaborate appendix and bibliography on "Dutch religion", aims at stimulating further research in this field in order to obtain another kind of information.

The concluding paper in this section tackles the problem of Christian religion in a wholly different manner. Vrijhof starts from a Barthian theological distinction between religion and Christian faith. The pivotal point in the essay is an analysis of the functional continuity of heathen religion and Christian faith, as appears to have been the case in the conversion process. According to Vrijhof, the dualistic interpretation frames, up to now prevalent in Christian thought, are due to that origin. After the decline of the function of Christian faith, this dualistic thinking is no longer acceptable. Thus ways have to be sought for new interpretations of ultimate reality.

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Drs. W.E.A. van Beek,
Dr. J.H. Scherer.

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