

## Notes on Anderson (1989)-Chap.4, "The Artist"

### Sexual Division of Labor

- 1.) Segregate Technology: Yoruba & Quechua, both male & female weavers **but** males use horizontal looms for narrow fabrics  
women use vertical looms to weave wide fabrics
- 2.) Segregate Behavior: when women aren't in village & a Waiwai man needs to do a feminine task, **he arranges his hair in a feminine coiffure** to signal he is breaking the rules
- 3.) Segregate time="task alternation by gender", but males **initiate**, females **terminate**, therefore male power (often because raw materials lie in the outside world, forbidden to women)
- 4.) Segregate space="gendered space" (concentric model for S.A. villages); **the men's hut**
- 5.) Make segregated behavior complementary
- 6.) Most artists tend to be male, but not all; this is because most religious specialists are men and most ethnic art is religious

### The Form Code:

- 1.) Body Image & Art=males:long,sharp::females:round,curved
- 2.) Body Process & Art=males:reduction::females:construction  
But, exceptions to the rule: pottery=male in Europe, Indian & central Africa; **male craft appropriation** (among Maori of New Zealand, women wove cloaks but were forbidden to carve, yet a man could weave if he wanted to)="asymmetry of power"

Body Architecture & Energetics=upper body:men::lower body:women  
(greater upper body strength; notice Anderson mentions the cross-cultural tendency for men to work in hard materials and women in soft media, but he doesn't mention obvious differences in strength, not PC)

Ralph Linton=geometric:female::naturalistic:men (but, note the Shipibo exception, altho perhaps only partial)

- 1.) past highest category of shaman, the mëraya, transferred figural visions to women, but now, due to culture-loss, is extinct; women soldier on in geometric mode
- 2.) the Shipibo have a **dual or gendered ethnoaesthetics**; males prefer hallucinogenic figural motifs, women geometric, abstract motifs

"Chilkat" Tlingit blankets: women wove geometric, when wove for men made representational designs by copying **pattern boards** male artist drew;  
"political inequality"=male art was more valued & among women even blankets with male representational designs are valued over female geometric motifs

Yet, in most societies, arts are male. Why?

- 1.) most religious specialists are men
- 2.) most sacred focused on interpersonal relations:humans & animals
- 3.) compensation for male lack of ability to give birth

Hence **Symbolic Feminization of the Artisan**:

among the Ashanti, the king called his woodcarver by the term "my wife" (ethno-physiology=baby's body from mother/soul from father (the stool comes from the king's soul as a symbol of royalty + Ashanti are matrilineal, so women perpetuate men's flesh & blood, woodcarvers give tangible form ("giving birth") to the clan's continuity

symbols.=**womb envy**

Who Becomes an Artist? ("folk explanations")

-**Chokwe** of Central Africa believe everybody can carve; exceptional artists (among similar-believing Anang of Nigeria) are blessed by spirits, but all men carve.

-**Mundugumor** of the Sepik, New Guinea, believe that if one is born with the umbilicus wrapped around one's neck that person will be an artist="arbitrary assignment", but such societies are not well known for their art (moreover, it is just a prerequisite, not the sole determining factor)

-**Tiv** of Nigeria are the rare example of "group artistry", that is one person will begin carving a chair, and then another will pick it up, and a 3rd will finish it, but levels of art in such societies are not high\*

-**Yoruba**, skill (which is derived from one's **destiny**) is given by Olorun, the Sky God, hence when boy is born a diviner is used, i.e., "deflection from self"; must pay cult throughout life to the god.

-**Afikpo** of Nigeria, Chukwu Okoro, the profile, more "ambivalent" views of the artist, reincarnation=he was reincarnated secret society priest (everything determined in traditional society, no **chance!**)

-**Gola** of Liberia, believe anyone graced with affective ability is a

**potential danger** due to his closeness to spirits, malevolent forces like angry ancestor, might die young & tragically; if he succeeds he has mastered the malevolent forces (the artist's creativity is a threat to social order)

### **The Role of Play**

Traditional play imitates adult activities with "toy" copies of gender-appropriate adult artifacts.e.g., Afikpo boys a play in a mock secret society with masks, just like adults. Chukwu Okoro carved & sold to other boys for a few yams=**play as imitation**

Play\*:

- 1.) random initiation of activity (whenever one feels like it)
- 2.) **galumphing**=non-economical (extravagant) expenditure of energy
- 3.) non-goal oriented, i.e., **process oriented**
- 4.) **self-rewarding** ("fun")
- 5.) inhumans often tends to be **object play**, as adults **play conceptually**
- 6.) Therefore play is **search activity**
- 7.) corelated with **intelligence**

How do artists learn to do art?

- 1.) "Informal associational & observational learning" (key to all primate learning); boys from a potting village in rural Mexico scored higher on cognitive tests (that a ball of clay or a roll made out of it contain the same amount of clay) than boys from non-potting villages
- 2.) **Abatan**, a Yoruba female artist **in pottery** (a feminine "additive, gestational" art), for offering bowls (stones in water, inside pot which is a female effigy=fecundity, since water & women are linked in Yoruba religion). She learned by informal learning (see below) from her mother "The Matrilocal [Deetz-Longacre] Hypothesis"=which she illustrates, that co-residence (propinquity) is essential for style transmission -but see Shipibo exception where a mother helped her child to produce art different from her production, but, again, from the pressures of propinquity & ethno-aesthetics\*
- 2.) Knowledge is age-dependent (where cultural knowledge does not obsolesce, age matters); Abatan, when young, made only utilitarian containers, was 30-40 when she attained enough skill to do Onile

=Eyinle, goddess of water & childbirth pot (illustrated)

3.) Travel is important [because it increases the "information density" of the artist's world], Abelam artists in Sepik work for patrons up to 5 miles away (a great distance in their many-style area)

4.) Apprenticeship (as we saw in the "Kingdom of Bronze" Film) where apprentices start off with low-skill level tasks (core making) & master does the skilled work=modeling features in wax on the core of the king (Oba) busts.

Linton's hypothesis that apprenticeship will occur in those societies where an economic benefit accrues to individuals with special training

5.) Criticism=neophyte Afikpo artists sometimes bring their masks to a master for comment & criticism

The Social Status of the Artist

The Creativity of the Artist

1.) "Generality/Specificity of Demand"\*, that specific demands on the part of audiences will produce rudimentary art (where they specify shape, size, color, materials, etc.) versus just a general request, "we want a mask of Gelede", will produce elaborate & creative art (e.g., record & CD cover art & the input of the bands or execs)