

A. M. Halpern

In the course of linguistic field work among the Pomo (1), data was more or less accidentally gathered which points to a division of the world, among various Pomo groups, into two mutually exclusive spheres. Although the terms applied to these spheres are etymologically variable from group to group, informants from different groups consistently translated their own terms into English as "the Outside" and "the Inside" respectively, a practice which is adhered to in this paper. Terms designating the Inside were not collected from all groups. Where they were collected, the literal meaning is "inside of the house," e.g. EaP gáw, NoP žáw. The term for "house" in most Pomo languages also connotes, explicitly or implicitly, "rancheria, village." The terms for the Outside are more variable, but in general, in each language, denote what might be adequately rendered as "the brush," i.e., the wild or uninhabited areas where one goes to hunt or to collect wild food. The SEP term is cina, and one says, "I am going to the cina," meaning "I am going hunting." SEP cina has no cognates, so far as my data goes, in other Pomo languages. The EaP term is ya'yó', whose cognates are SEP Xeqo "world, Earth" (thus, Ghost Dance dreamers claimed to be inspired by Xeqo ?axekewi "Earthmaker"), NoP gagó and SoP gahgo~gag:o "a flat, a field." The NoP term is go' "the outside" (lit.), which is related to the NoP directional prefix gó- "out, away" (e.g. gohún "to go out," cf. žahún "to come back, go back," žawhún "to come in, come into," etc.). Cognates of this directional prefix occur, with the same meaning, in some of the other Pomo languages. The SoP term is gu:lu~gul:u, whose meaning is much the same as that of SEP cina, and which again has no cognates, as far as my data goes, in other Pomo languages. In some contexts, SoP uses am:a žahtimuyžo "world that lies extended" as an alternative for gu:lu~gul:u, the difference being roughly as between address and reference respectively. SoP am:a "place, thing, world" has cognates of similar meaning in all the other Pomo languages, but the phrase am:a žahtimuyžo seems to have no parallels.

The concept of the Outside, and the dichotomy between Outside and Inside, appear to be more uniform throughout the various Pomo groups than the terms employed. My data are not sufficiently detailed or systematic to make a statement of minor variations in the concept possible. I shall here treat it as if it were the same for all groups and cite data from various groups to indicate the different facets of the concept. The SoP and NoP data are the fullest; my CeP and SWP notes contain hardly any relevant data, but casual statements by informants indicated that the concept was familiar to them in substantially the same form as to their neighbors.

From the terms alone, it is clear that one facet of the dichotomy is as between the wild and the tame, or nature and civilization. Thus,

EaP gáwbaX "of the Inside" and Ya·Yó·baX "of the Outside" are the equivalents respectively of "tame, domestic" and "wild," as are NoP ǰawké and go·ké. An EaP informant stated that house cats were first called gáwbaX da·lóm "tame wildcat," a phrase later replaced by a loanword from Spanish.

Pomo mythology attributes the origin of wild things rather consistently to breaches of etiquette, the breaking of taboos, or incidents involving the overt expression of hostility. In NoP myths these incidents seem to have no integral connection with the plot but are rather appended to some myths as concluding episodes. The following appear typical.

A NoP myth in which Deer is the protagonist reaches its climax in Deer's marriage to his own sister. Deer remains secluded in his own house for some time after the wedding and does not go out hunting. Eventually he is taunted by others for his laziness. He becomes angry, curses them, and sends them off to be animals here and there, thus bringing on a flood which destroys the world. The concluding paragraph of the text reads:

"Then there inside the house those people became wild things (go·ké). They flew out through the smokohole and flew away. They became wild things (go·ké) for ever, they became geese, they became deer. So they were all gone. They said something they shouldn't, so the world ended."

Another myth relates the adventures of Chickenhawk Chief with the Gilak monster. Returning alive from these adventures, he gives a dance for all the people. After the dance, Chickenhawk Chief is sitting outside the sweathouse. "Then Meadowlark said that he smelled something on the person who sat there. 'What is this thing that smells rotten?' he said, they say, that Meadowlark. Now since he said this, (Chickenhawk) flew up from the house. He grasped (Meadowlark) with his feet, they say. Then he picked him up, he took him away (gol "to the outside, away"), and he became a wild thing (go·ké) for ever, that Chickenhawk Chief."

In SoP mythology, the final incident is more closely integrated with the plot. In one myth Sparrowhawk (liklis) is married to Wildcat, the symbol of passionate or promiscuous women, and the pair have a child. Wildcat elopes with Screech-owl. Sparrowhawk pursues them and tries to take the woman back but is defeated in the fight for her. After four unsuccessful attempts, Sparrowhawk gives up his claim on the woman. On the following day she returns of her own will, only to be rejected by her husband. The text continues:

"'For what purpose have you come here? You ought to be married to another man. I don't want you.....'"

"At dawn he awoke; then he arose; he built a fire and cooked game. Then he woke his own child; then he fed him game; he didn't feed his own wife. The child finished eating the game. (He said) to his wife, 'Go out! We will go away.' He picked up his own child and carried him

outside; he put the child outside. Sparrowhawk went back into the house. Then he set fire to the inside of the house. He set his own house afire.

"Then he lifted the child on his back and went, uphill, to the old tree, he went, went, went. His wife went behind him, the woman. He arrived at his own tree. He lifted the child on his back; he climbed up high, up to the top, placing the child in a fork of the tree; then, 'lik lik lik lik lik,' he said. The child for his own part gave a call. Wildcat, his wife, sat close to the tree; she wailed; 'My husband,' she said; 'My husband, come down. I want my child,' the woman wailed. 'lik lik lik lik lik,' he said.

"That arm disappeared; it became a wing; down grew; feathers grew; then they became birds and flew away. Then his wife, the woman, 'I in turn will become a wildcat,' she said and ran down into the brush."

Similarly, in the myth of Skunk Woman and her children, Skunk Woman, pretending illness, sends her children to call their greatuncles, the Elks, to come and cure her. Pretending to have a pain in her lower abdomen, she causes the Elks to suck there and kills them by breaking wind. Then, sending the children far off to the ocean to wash the tripe, she greedily eats all the good meat. When the children return, she tells them that Elks came and took the meat and that they must content themselves with tripe.

After the fourth repetition of this incident, the Elks become suspicious and refuse to come when called by the children. At this, the children kill all the remaining Elks themselves by breaking wind in through the openings of the Elks' sweathouse, roast the meat, and eat it. The text continues:

"Their mother, Skunk Woman, having missed them, having missed her children, went off towards there after them. Having done so, she arrived there, while her children were eating meat. Those children became angry, when their mother came, they chased their mother away. 'You (are the one who) didn't let us eat good meat. (It is) now (that) we eat good meat. Don't come in here! Go away!'

"They having done so, their mother, having gone off, turned into a skunk. Now, those children ate up the meat, they ate up all the Elks. Having done so, now, they burned the sweathouse. Having done so, now, "we will be skunks," (they said, and) they turned into skunks."

On the basis of these and similar less detailed mythological passages (2) the Outside can be characterized as the realm of the animal as opposed to the human. Further, the animal inhabitants of the Outside are, in a more than metaphorical sense, fallen angels, the ancient perpetrators or victims of some destructive—which is to say, sinful—act. Aboriginally, Pomo parents and chiefs engaged in considerable moralistic preaching, and the burden of much of this was that fighting and quarrelling were to be avoided. The physical and verbal violence which such

preaching defined as wrong are substantially the same kinds of behavior that led to the mythological animals' becoming wild things.

The proper attitude towards the Outside is one of awe and respect. Any levity towards the Outside, even on the part of an anthropologist, produces nervousness among the Pomo. An anthropologist who was in the area at the same time as I innocently enough produced excellent imitations of the hoot of a certain small owl, which invariably aroused apprehensive tittering among any Pomo who were within earshot. On one occasion, when I made a discourteous remark in the general direction of a noisy meadowlark, I was surprised to find that I had severely shocked my NoP informant. She reprimanded me for the thoughtless action, saying that such behavior might come under the categories called gowká? baléma?an "to ridicule the Outside" or gowká? nánamo'on "to rival the Outside." The former expression also applies to any transgression of moral rules or taboos, and the latter to any attempt "to do something which is in the power of the Outside only." A SoP expression gu:lun na:namhuy, containing a verb cognate with NoP nánamo'on, was translated to me as "to disobey the Outside," e.g., by disregarding an injunction received in a dream, or by disobeying a parent, or by being on bad terms with anyone. Another SoP expression, gu:lun i:to?tagay "to disbelieve the Outside," also applies to failure to pay attention to one's dreams.

In the matter of the owl imitation, there may have been some association with beliefs concerning sorcery. Aboriginally, the Pomo would not normally travel by night excepting sorcerers on a mission. These in some cases travelled in bear disguise, accompanied by an assistant who produced owl calls and who was said to be "playing owl" for the sorcerer. The sorcerer would approach the house of his victim from outside the village.

The Outside appears from the above as in some sense a source of power, as a source of supernatural sanction for moral and religious rules, and as the agency of punishment for infractions of such rules. As a source of punishment, the Outside is sometimes conceived of quite vaguely, the statement being made that if you "do something wrong," then at some later time, when you go to the Outside, "you might see something" or "something might happen to you." In other cases, specific localities have the power to punish specific infractions. There is a NoP belief, for example, that a woman who breaks menstrual taboos will be stricken with sickness when she next passes near certain bitter springs (kómka). A SoP ethnological text tells of a fisherman who, against his better judgment but instigated by his wife, broke the taboo against mixing fish and game by skinning a rabbit during the season when he was engaged in setting fish weirs. On his next trip to his fish weir he fell into the stream and disappeared. He was presumed drowned, but in actuality had been pulled down by a spirit called the Long-Haired Fish Woman (he?:ekohša), who reproached him as follows:

"You have handled unclean things. These salmon are my children. You, the owner of the basket-hole fish weir, made them go around a

polluted place. Your hands are all over blood. Not in this way should you stalk my children. You are unclean, having handled the blood of small game. On your hands nothing but blood stinks, and you stalk my children. Look at this hair of mine. Loosening this hair of mine I let it float out on the water. It is behind my hair that my children come. This being the case, after this if you wish to set baskets, you shall not touch the blood of small game. It is in order to tell you this that I took you for a while. This being the case, go home."

The fisherman then returned home, to the discomfiture of his wife and relatives, who had already destroyed his possessions and gone into mourning.

This last episode, involving the apparition of a supernatural being, bears a certain resemblance to reported cases of a kind of catatonic trance induced by such apparitions. The phenomenon is described in the literature under the rubric "frightening." I did not collect any detailed data on "frightening" but obtained the impression, from several oblique comments by informants, that "frightening" was always punishment by the Outside for the infraction of a taboo. This impression receives some confirmation from a check of the literature in that the actual "frightening" is invariably reported as taking place away from the rancheria, and in those cases where a cause is attributed, it is reported as the breaking of a taboo. The cure, of course, is performed at home, in the Inside (3).

Conversely, the Outside is also a source of favor and protection, in which capacity it is often approached through prayer. The practice was still commonly observed in 1940 of uttering a short informal prayer with the first puff of a cigarette, especially one obtained from some one else. The smoker would turn slightly away from his companion or companions and direct the puff of smoke outwards and upwards. He would then usually utter the invocatory formula SEP yo šwe, EaP yó sumé, NoP yo sime, SoP yuhsuwe, yuhsuwe:li, with or without a longer prayer.

Following are portions of EaP smoking prayers which were recited to me as typical.

"yó sumé. Make it lucky. This summer let me find money, let me become a rich man. ?ów, grant it from the Outside (da ká gilim ya yów)."

"hyó. This summer let me go around well (i.e., safely). hyó. Then, let me go around with a sound heart (i.e., in good health), let me reach old age. Now, this season has come. ?ów, grant it to me from the Outside (ya yów da ká gilim)."

"yó sumé. May the day break well, I say beseeching you the Outside (ya yó l ba díkkin); (give me) things I have not earned, good magnesite beads, baskets, all kinds of things, money, too, I say; thus I am praying. To you of the Outside (má ya yó baX), Our Father, you who made us, I say it. I say this to you, Old Man širum da, who created us. ?ów, may it come true, I say, being pitiful (Xá piṭa yaw)."

NoP prayers, according to my data, are not explicitly addressed to the Outside, but seem implicitly to be so directed, as in the following two examples.

"Let me be healthy, let me be strong. Do not let anything bad come to me. I have nothing with which to pay you, since I am poor (ka·piṭ'a·yaké)."

"Accept from me this poor (ka·piṭ'a·yaké) food, before I let people eat it. Have pity (ka·piṭ'a·adim) on me for this. Let the people's affairs go well. Do not let people quarrel when they eat this. Let everything be well for everybody. ʔów, now ye hear me."

SoP prayers are addressed usually to am:a žahtimuyžo "World that lies extended," as in the following smoking prayer:

"yuhsuwe:. Make it good for my children. Make it clear for my children. Oh world that lies extended, have pity on me."

In other SoP prayers, similarly addressed, the author of the prayer is described as "claiming kinship with the Outside (gu:lunhkay ga:nimčedu), or even as addressing the Outside as "Father! Mother!" Thus, in a myth relating to a time of famine, Old Man Coyote prayed as follows:

"World that lies extended, have pity on us, have pity on my children, have pity on my rancharia (am:a žahtimuyžo, ši:batgačinyan, ši:batgačinke ga:wiyá, ši:batgačinke nop:o).' Sitting on a knoll on top of a hill, Old Man Coyote was talking. He claimed kinship to the Outside (gu:lunhkay ga:nimčedu)."

Again, a text describes the prayer offered by a doctor at the feast following a curing ceremony. The doctor stands by a fire with a basket of food in his hands, faces east, and prays:

"This I eat (sharing it) with you, world that lies extended (am:a žahtimuyžo). With this offering let me be healthy. I speak humbly (ši:ba:taw). I humbly call you my kin (ga:nimčedu). I talk humbly to you. With this offering let me be healthy. With this offering let (things) be clear (for me). I eat this food (sharing it) with you.' He drops the food into the fire" (4).

The survival of the practice of praying to the Outside raises almost automatically the question whether the Outside was not aboriginally the object of other ritual observances. Data on this point are exceedingly sparse, but two relevant observations can be made. First, several of the Pomo groups did or possibly still do observe a first fruits ceremony in the spring. The SoP ceremony centered on wild potatoes, the SWP ceremony on wild strawberries, and the SEP ceremony on wild tobacco. A text describing the SoP ceremony indicates that it was conceived of as a year-opening ceremony whose nucleus was the year's first consumption of products of the Outside (5). The SEP ceremony has latterly been carried

out on the first Sunday in May and was observed in 1940. I could not obtain the text of the sacred song which formed the climax of the ceremony. The song was followed by the passing of a pipe containing new crop wild tobacco, from which all present took a puff and then uttered the formula yo Swe with or without a short prayer. Aboriginally, this ceremony initiated the ceremonial season during which the Kuksu Cult Dances were performed. Second, the name of the SEP Kuksu Cult Ghost ceremony is cinamfo Xe. The cinamfo, lit. "Outside People," apparently represented simultaneously certain aspects of the wild and the ghosts of the recently dead (6).

In summary, based on the data presented here, the Outside, whether conceived as a concrete expanse of territory or as an abstract incorporeal Nature, can be characterized as the sphere of the wild, the animal, the dangerous, and as endowed with supernatural power to punish and to reward. The Inside cannot be positively characterized from the data, but it seems a reasonable inference that it is the sphere of the tame, the human, the safe, the ordinary, and, vis-à-vis the Outside, as weak, insecure, and supplicant. Confidence in these characterizations is necessarily limited by the sporadic nature of the data, which were, as previously noted, collected incidentally to other inquiries. The qualification must also be made that the concept may well be less uniform throughout the Pomo area than is suggested by this presentation. There are also certain rather puzzling questions that could be raised concerning the historical depth of the concept. I have no doubt that it is aboriginal, although certain features of the prayers cited above indicate modifications under the influence of the post-contact Ghost Dance and in all likelihood of Christianity as well. There is also the matter of the etymological heterogeneity of the terms referring to the Outside. One of them, SEP cina, may well be a loanword, possibly from Patwin. The others could plausibly be interpreted as loan translations of one another. In this case the concept, though aboriginal, may quite conceivably be of no great depth, historically speaking.

From the standpoint of the ethnological present, however, a sufficient number of ramifications has been indicated to suggest that the Outside-Inside dichotomy is one of those permeative ideas which sometimes provide a link of psychological association, if not of logical consistency, between several practices in a given culture which otherwise might seem superficially unrelated.

One is also tempted to regard the data presented here as throwing a useful sidelight on Pomo character structure. The natural environment in which the Pomo live is far from a hostile one except, one may guess, insofar as man has projected upon it those capacities for anger and magical destructiveness which he dares not express in his own behavior. The Pomo image of man, the Inside thing, seems to be crystallized in the terms which occur so frequently in the prayers: NoP ka^{*}pith^{*}yaw and its CoP and EaP cognates; SoP ši;ba;taw and its SWP cognate; and SEP Xemažešal. All appear to have an identical range of meaning, which can be indicated by the series "pitiabale-wretched-humble-poor." Consistently with this,

the Pomo seem to live on a fairly high level of apprehensiveness, particularly with regard to the future. A fairly common conversational gambit between ethnographer and informant consisted in the ethnographer taking leave of the informant with some remark to the effect that he would be back to see the informant next week; the standard reply was something like, "Yes, boy, you come back and see me. I'll be here, if I don't die." This reluctance to commit oneself to a positive prediction of even the near future may also account for the unusual difficulty experienced in getting information as to the precise date on which, say, a scheduled dance or ceremony would take place.

Similarly, the accumulation of wealth in the form of baskets, shell-bead money, etc., was still in 1940 undertaken in a compulsive spirit. The symbols of wealth seemed to be regarded as a necessary form of insurance against some dimly sensed, but imminent, disaster which could not be adequately coped with by means of one's inner resources alone.

Man, then, for the Pomo, is an impotent creature, who can achieve success by self-abasement and by supplication. By these means he may gain for himself the favorable intervention of the sources of power. Conversely, by self-restraint, by the repression of his impulses and the strict observance of moral and religious rules, he may avoid their unfavorable intervention. This code is not only subscribed to but fairly generally observed by typical Pomo—which does not exclude from Pomo character a rather formidable capacity for hate.

ENDNOTES

- (1) A linguistic survey of the Pomo family was carried out in 1939-40 on funds supplied by the Department of Anthropology, University of Chicago. Most of the data cited in this paper are from my unpublished notes and will not be more specifically cited. Abbreviations used are: SoP—Southern Pomo; SWP—Southwestern Pomo; CeP—Central Pomo; NoP—Northern Pomo; EaP—Eastern Pomo; SEP—Southeastern Pomo. The Northeastern Pomo are excluded from consideration.
- (2) See, for example, S. A. Barrett, "Pomo Myths," Bulletin of the Public Museum of the City of Milwaukee, Vol. 15, esp. pp. 85, 106ff., 180, 187, and 304.
- (3) Cf. L. S. Freeland, "Pomo Doctors and Poisoners," Univ. of Calif. Publ. in Amer. Archaeol. and Ethnol., Vol. 20, pp. 57-73. Especially interesting is Freeland's report of a Pomo classification of diseases as "from outside" and "from inside," and her statement that "those of the first sort are in the main the 'frightening cases.'" See also E. M. Loeb, "Pomo Folkways," Univ. of Calif. Publ. in Amer. Archaeol. and Ethnol., vol. 19, no. 2, pp. 322-23, and E. M. Loeb, "The Western Kuksu Cult," Univ. of Calif. Publ. in Amer. Archaeol. and Ethnol., vol. 33, no. 1, pp. 10-11.
- (4) The term for "offering" in the text of this passage is benli; undoubtedly a loanword from Spanish.
- (5) E. W. Gifford, "Clear Lake Pomo Society," Univ. of Calif. Publ. in Amer. Archaeol. and Ethnol., vol. 18, no. 2, p. 386, reports that among the SEP "food was never sold, being regarded as 'wild produce.'" According to my own recollection of informants' statements, which I apparently failed to record in writing, the same was true of other Pomo groups.
- (6) This ceremony is briefly described in E. M. Loeb, "The Western Kuksu Cult," Univ. of Calif. Publ. in Amer. Archaeol. and Ethnol., vol. 33, no. 1, pp. 126-27. I rely here also on unpublished notes of my own.