THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN
SYSTEM OF CLASSIFICATION,
SELECTION OF SYMBOLS,
AND SYSTEM OF PROHIBITIONS

Introduction
In every society, whether it is simple or complex, we always find some systems of classification. The basic type of classification is dichotomous partition, i.e., all things in the human and natural world are split into two groups, such as moistness—dryness, binary opposition of good and evil in Japan or yin-yang in China. Concomitant with the basic classification, in some societies we might still find other classification of triadic categories, of four-sections, of five-clases, of seven-groups, and of nine-divisions. The preliminary purpose of classification is to simplify all things in the human environment.

Theoretical Reference
First of all, the concept of classification itself means, according to Needham, "a systematic set of classes, a class being regarded as a conceptual grouping of things by virtue of particular resemblances that in some way or another associate them together" (1979: 3). This definition seems to emphasize the characteristic relationship among things in a class or a group. The principal procedures for classifying things, living creatures, events, and so forth are to determine their basic relation of inclusion or exclusion. Between inclusion into a group and exclusion from another group, there must be a boundary, a concept which is also very fundamental in this essay. In supplementing the above definition, it is better to present another complementary definition i.e. "to classify things is to arrange them in groups which are distinct from each other, and are separated by clearly determined lines of demarcation" (Ouspensky et al. 1989: 4).

We are going to discuss the concept of symbol. "A symbol is any object or event that refers to something" (Spradley, 1979: 95), or "something that stands for something" (Needham, 1979: 3). These definitions tell us that symbol is a tool of communication like language, which encodes one or more messages. However, these definitions do not differentiate the grade of decoding the messages. So, in this respect, they do not differentiate among signal, sign, symbol and icon.

Correspondingly, Edmund Leach presents a terminology for naming every certain message which can be differentiated from each other. To follow his diagram, messages can be defined as "bearing entity A conveys information message B" (1976: 12). It is simply two aspects of the same thing. A message can be an index or a sign. It is a signal when the bearing entity A causes message B, and obtains a trigger response such as shaking head and begging. Then, an index means A indicates B, and can be a signal or a natural index. It is a natural index whenever "A is associated with B by nature, but selected as an index of B by human choice" (Leach, 1976: 12), for example lightning is an index of thunder. Accordingly, a sign indicates that A stands for B, as a result of arbitrary human choice, and it can be a symbol or a sign. A message will be a sign whenever A stands for B as part for whole (metonymy), for instance an insignia or a sign for a certain organization. So far, symbol A stands for B by arbitrary association, but "there is no intrinsic prior relationship between A and B, that is to say A and B belong to different cultural contexts (ibid, 14). For example, a crown is a sign for royalty but it is used as..."
A boundary separates two zones of social space-time which are normal, time bound, clear-cut, central, secular, but the spatial and temporal markers which actually serve as boundaries are themselves eternal, timeless, ambiguous, at the edge, sacred (1970: 35), or polluted, as I have stated above.

According to Durkheim, the sacred is contagious. They are merely ideas awakened by the experience or society, merely collective ideas produced subconsciously, mere expressions of morality. Therefore, they are ultimately rootless, fluid, liable to become unfocused and flow into other experience, it is their nature always to be in danger of losing their distinctive and necessary character. The sacred is to becontinuously hedged in with prohibitions. The sacred must always be treated as contagious because relations with it are bound to be expressed by rituals of separation and demarcation and by belief in the danger of crossing forbidden boundaries (quoted by Douglas, 1965: 21-22).

In addition, pollution and uncleanness can also be characterized as contagious as well as sacred, and take part in its opposition. So, in this respect, the system of prohibition is used as a fence to prevent the sacred flowing out and pollution flowing in. This theoretical frame of reference will be valuable for discussing the problem of the relationship between the way people classify the world, their selection of symbols and the system of prohibition. Subsequent-ly, this essay will consider two main themes, i.e. I) Human classification, 2) Spatial and animal classification.

Human Classification
Classifying things, events or living-creatures is to arrange them into categories, based on certain relations, which are different from each other and separated by boundaries. There are many kinds of classification, but these can roughly be grouped into two, mundane and symbolic classification. The former is based on the resemblance among natural kinds; which can be further classified into species and kinds, subsuming them under the other, as being simple, for instance flora and fauna taxonomies for scientific purposes. On the other hand, the symbolic classification is not only based on the similarities of things, but also on the association of ideas and law of contiguity and similarity between mental states, " (Durkheim, et.al. 1959: 5).

We can also use flora and fauna categories for symbolic classification, such as when an
eagle stands for a nation, or a lion stands for power. In the following discussion we do not deal with both kinds of classification, but rather stress symbolic classification, and the mundane classification can be analysed in another discussion.

The essential problem has been put forward by Durkheim and Mauss, namely:

- that man cannot quite naturally, by a sort of necessity of his individual undertakings, we must on the contrary ask ourselves what could have led them to arrange their ideas in this way and where they could have found the plan of this admirable division (1909: 6).

So far, to solve the problem they try to adduce certain evidence by investigating "...the most rudimentary classification made by mankind..." (fals). By this approach, they want to see with what element the classification has been constructed.

Presumably, because "...the human mind lacks the innate capacity to construct complex system of classification such every society possesses, and which are cultural products not to be found in nature" (Neecham, 1979: 25), so, at the outset, groupings were found in social categories. The things in social life, which could immediately be classified, are classes of human beings into male and female. The necessity of such classification is to identify for example, who a man-may marry and who he is forbidden to sleep with. We can imagine that in all human societies, there are always dichotomous distinctions between those women who are potentially accessible and those who are not.

Among the tribes of Australia, the division has become more complex and are expressed in terms of moieties, classes and clans. In general, every tribe is divided into two large basic partitions which are called moieties. Meanwhile every moiety is segmented into two classes which are called marriage-classes. The purpose of dividing into classes is to regulate marriages among the members of the tribe. A member of a particular class of a moiety may only marry a woman of a certain class of another moiety. A man is forbidden to marry a girl in his class and moiety. Consequently, the girls who belong to his class must be given to men from another class and moiety. So, there is a fundamental rule of gift and re-ceiver of the bride, and the former is higher in status than the latter. Furthermore, each moiety consists of a number of classes, which are groups of individuals with the same "to-

em. To some it is a form of symbolic classification. The principle of totemism for Durkheim is that:

The individual himself loses his personality. There is a complete lack of distinction between him and his external god or his totem. He and his false animal together compose a single person. The justification is that the man abandons the character of the thing or animal with which he is united (Durkheim, at 1969: 6).

For example, among the people of Ma-

biring island, "people of the crocodile class are thought to have the temperament of the crocodile; they are proud, cruel, always ready for battle" (Haddon, quoted by Durkheim, at 1969: 6). Among the people of Sioux, there is a section of the tribe which is called red, and which comprises the clans of the mountain lion, buffalo, and elk, all ani-

mals characterized by their violent instincts. whereas the farmers, people who are natu-

rally peaceful, belong to clans of which the totems are essentially pacific animals" (Cor-

ney, 1914 quoted ibid).

Correspondingly, totemic system among Australian aborigines are similar to the above principle as Durkheim and Mauss describ-

ed among the Wakebura. The Wakeburia (quoted from Howitt, 1889 a, and Curr, 1966), a tribe which lives in north-central Queensland, are divided into moieties, i.e. Maliera and Waleli. Every moiety is also divided into marriage-classes. So, there are four marriage-classes, each of which has a certain name. In the Maliera moiety there are Maliera and Bambeey; and in the Waleli moiety, there are Wungu and Obro. Hence, the entire universe is divided between Mal-

erea and Waleli, in which water, rain, fire, and thunder are belongs to to each class-

es, all foods eaten by the Kurgila and Bam-

beey are called Maliera, and those of the Wungu and Oboro are called Wundera. However, some sorts of broods are only allowed to be eaten by a certain marriage-

class, and not by others. The Bambeey are restricted to opossum, kangaroo, dog, ho-


ary of small bees etc; while the Kurgila live on porcupine, plankey turkey etc. The Wungu are allowed to eat emu, bunndool, black duck, black snake, brown snake etc; and the Oboro eat catled snakes, honey of the singing bees etc. It seems to be an excep-

 tion that in Wakeburia, each moiety or class consumes their totemic animals and is for-

bidden to eat totemic animals belonging to
of ma- le clas- s of the ye- raihsen Sissor, an as- si- ains of all ari- inaln; f na- bu- oth the "Dur- mmang e ab- lesori- eobure Cur, central s, i e. i al- se re aar e a ten y eau- ene Maf- lie, clas- Bam the here. only sige- y are l no live nggo black and if the class is for- big to others. Whether this applies in ritual events or in everyday life is not known. 

Presumably, the system of classification has entered their whole way of life and has been embodied in all principal rites. In the Wakeaiwa society:

"Death is never consumed as natural event, due to the action of purely physical causes; it is al- most always attributed to magical influence of some sorcerer, and the determination of its guilty party forms an integral part of funerary rites. The classification of these by moesty and marriage-class which furnishes the means of distinguishing the class to which the person res- ponsible belongs, and perhaps the very indi- vidual. The warriors will then cut the body and not the skull, which is allowed in the case of the corpse rede, and round about it, so that slightest mark will be visible. The next day they will examine the ground under the corpse. If an animal has pass- ed by, its tracks are easily discerned; from this the black infer the class of the person who has caused the death of the rite. For example, if the tracks of a wild dog are found they will know the murder is that of a Malere and Bambout; for this animal belongs to this moesty and to the mar- riage-class (Dusolier et al. 1889: 15-16).

In this respect, death (natural event) is imagined to be caused by sorcery, which is thought to be done by the other class. Fin- ding out the sorcerer is through identifying the tracks of the totemic animal, which is approaching under the corpse. The wind behind the facts is symbolic association.

Furthermore, men could also be classi- fied in terms of age groups. Every individual in a society has to pass through every phase of the age groups. Someone in the society cannot automatically move from one phase to the others without the risk of supernatural punishment. He must become an adult always in a sacred condition and dange- rous. Crossing the boundary involving being punished in a symbolic ritual and the respect of certain prohibitions. The prohibitions are to avoid doing or eating something which might cause sickness flowing out and uncleanness flowing in.

Some complex classifications and sto- cotic classes can be found in the Javanese societ- y, among people who live in the densely populated parts of Central and East Java, Indonesia. Culturally, there are several va- riations which are slightly different from each other. The most traditional form of Javane- se culture, which is well known nowadays, is in the east part of Central Java, where the two remaining Javanese Kingdoms are located, and which still retain many of their customs. One Javanese system of classi-

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into a defined social group pledged to mutual support and cooperation (1970: 11).

It is true to say that thalassei reflects social unity through all the guests sitting together on the floor mats around the food. Everyone is treated equally, but actually where one should sit is determined by social status. The closer a person sits to the center and the host, the higher a person's status is.

Meanwhile, the thalassei also symbolizes mystical unity, not only with local spirits, dead ancestors and near-forgotten gods, but also with God Almighty. This is particularly manifested in the form of the main sacrificial meal, i.e. a conical form of rice like a mountain. It is a sublimative or outsufing representation of the host himself to God.

Furthermore, according to Javanese thinking, the pregnancy perilus is deemed as beyond the ordinary condition. A woman becomes sacred after the first rite is performed. She and her husband become the subject of prohibition in preventing risk of supernatural danger. For instance, she is not allowed to sit down in the centre of a door. Her position is neither inside nor outside. Because, if she does this, she will endanger the pregnancy, have miscarriage, catch a cold and suffer like. This is simple because she herself is in a liminal condition, and at the same time undergoing a transition. So, at the moment she is in danger and vulnerable. She also cannot eat all kinds of meat of animals which were born in an upside-down position (sumbang Jr.), because it is thought that her fetus will be in the same position. She, and also her husband, cannot kill or hurt any animal, because it is thought that the newborn baby will be defective, malformed or abnormal. These sorts of thinking are consomous associa-

Spatial and Agital Classification

Very often arranging the world into spatial categories birds all things or objects related to each of them. An interesting example is of position into categories in the Javanese culture, human society there was thought he interwoven with other phenomena and to form greater unity of existence. Men's social and economic position was part of a cosmic order (Day-vendak 1894, quoted by Needham, 1973: 11). By the conception the whole human character, social and cultural traits and nature are divided into five categories. Four categories are associated with the cardinal points and the last with the center. So, every category consists of a specific human passion and character, its cosmic element, a particular colour, a metal, Javanese style week day, a deity, some kind of profession, natural phenomena, and so forth.

A similar system can be found in the village of Saan Phraan Muan, north-eastern Thailand, described by Tambiah. Here, each of the four directions has its certain value in relation to direction of house building, human dentity, character etc. They are:

- East = auspicious; represents life, a sacred ... and is the direction of the royal seat. East is also, when one faces north, the direction of the right hand, and represents the white sea. West is inscrupluous and represents death, impurity and the setting sun. It also points left hand and the femal sea. North is auspicious and is associa-

The direction of cardinal point values, according to Tambiah, can be related to building and arranging spaces of a house and also with placing animistic animals in the spaces under the house. Most houses in the village are raised from the ground on wooden stilts or columns. All floors are divided into four divisions, each of which has its own. The lowest level (level 0) is the washing place (growing room); the next level (level 1) is an entrance floor (kitchen), including the kitchen, which is on an upper floor without roof; reaching this floor one must step up a ladder as the first 'threshold' (klin dan). The higher level (level 2) is the guest room (housed naat), which is roofed and has walls, and its limits are fixed by two pillars. The highest level (level 3) is the sleeping room (koused paja), which means large house. Entering the sleeping room, one must pass the second threshold that separates it from the guest room. This pas-

Presumably, most of the houses in the Saan Phraan Muan stand in a southerly di-

Consequently, when a person en-

Everything at the house which are re-
garded to be lower or impure, are located in the west or left side, such as the kitchen, washing place, son-in-law's sleeping room etc. On the other hand, higher status or pure things are always located in the east or right side, such as parents' room, water jar etc. The sleeping room is the most sa-
cred place and divided into two parts by an invisible border. Those are the eastern half part (nang phong) for the parents' room and western half part (nang suan) for the son-in-law and married daughter's room. "Thus the relation of parents vis-a-vis son-
in-law and married daughter in the house is expressed by values associated with east and west" (Tamibahl, 1977: 134-135). It re-
\[\text{[more text...]}\]
eating dog is disgusting. The dog is viewed as a low creature and eats filth, and is also an inauspicious animal, that is why it is unclean and ineligible. Thus, the description shows us that the attitudes to the dog are parasitical. The cat is similar to the dog in its food habits and sex behavior, but arouses different attitudes. It is not a pet in the same way as the dog and is also ineligible. There is no prohibition on consuming cat flesh, but they just do not eat it. It is viewed as a useful animal because villagers say: ‘the Buddha created the cat in order that it may eat the rat, which is harmful to man because it gnaws his clothes, ... that the cat brings cleanliness to the house’ (Tambliah, 1917: 140). A cat is also used in rain-making ritual: showing a cat to the sun or washing it attracts rain. It is also allowed to enter and sleep in the sleeping room, while the dog is not.

It thus seems that the dog and cat, both of which live with man in the house, represent opposite values centering around a single problem. The dog is unclean, unANTED toward food and incestuous, eating it is as revolting as incest. The cat is clean, useful, and cute so the house. Its appearance in rain-making ritual also conveys willed fertility; not eating it appears to be associated with its positive metaphoric representation of proper and prosperous family relationship (ibid 140).

The habits and appearances of the dog and cat, more or less, are the same as those in Javanese culture. The definitive prohibition of eating dog comes from Islamic dogma. However, we do not see the opposition of uncleanness against cleanliness between the two. The Javanese identify the two animals as enemies. The cat guards inside the house and the dog outside. Presumably, the Thas villagers treat their own and buffaloes in the same attitudes; both are not opposed to each other. At night both animals must penned underneath the sleeping room, which other animals cannot. The villagers believe that if a buffalo or an ox, by accident, sleeps in the washing place or under the entrance platform, an inauspicious thing may happen and a ceremony must be conducted for removing bad luck. Both are also kinds of important livestock in economic assets, that can be used for plowing rice fields and pulling carts. It is looked after with great care, and there is undeniably an emotional relationship with the owner. The villagers usually hold a ritual for its guardians’ pet before plowing fields. They ask for health for themselves and their h-failes and for generous yields. The same ritual is held after harvest for the blessing. It is also an object of taboo associated with the Bud- dha’s ‘subhut’ in that it is a prohibition of plowing a rice field on that day.

The crucial thing among the villagers is that the buffalo and ox are eminently ceremonially good.

A buffalo or an ox is killed to provide meat for village Buddhist temple feasts such as Rin Seti and Rin Phrama (upward-caste collective meal-making ritual), and household and family ritual, i.e. house building, marriage, mortuary rites and the ordination of a son of the household (Tambliah, 1977:140).

It is not regarded as an animal sacrifi- ced in a ritual, but rather simply provides the most appropriate food. Nevertheless, there is a general attitude concerning the killing of both animals. When they carry on the collective village ritual, they do not want to slaughter the animal that belongs to the village. Again, when a family or household carries on a ritual or ceremony, no animals reared in the house may be slaughtered there. It should be acquired from other households or villages. The villagers believe that if they break the ethical norms, inauspicious events will afflict the village or household, such as loss of the animals through death or difficulty in rearing animals.

According to Tambliah, ‘the attitudes to the buffalo and ox in respect to their killing and eating thus show a correspondence to the attitudes relating to proper marriage and sex relationship among Javanese and “human beings”’ (ibid. 42). Sex relationship within the house are legitimate if the marriage partner comes from another household and ‘beyond the range of forbidden kin’. Meanwhile, in a ritual festivity, a villager must not slaughter and consume a buffalo or an ox belonging to his household, which corresponds in the rules of correct exchange in marriage and sex relationship. Then Tambliah also relates some taboos concerning the dog with parallel negative attitudes towards incest and uncleanness.

The associations in the above cases are logical correspondences but this raises the question as to whether the associations among these matters reflect the esceegical explanation of the villagers. For example, is the prohibition of slaughtering and eating their own animals a deliberate symbol of incest prohibition? In the Javanese tradition, although there is no definitive norm, people
tend to buy slaughtered animals for ritual or ceremony rather than kill their own animals. However, it seems to be not an expression of an incest prohibition, but rather perhaps, the feeling of pity of the owner toward the animals.

The role of the pig in Thailand as ceremonial food is most or less the same as those of buffalo and ox, i.e., a secondary preference. At night it is penned under the guest room, side by side with the duck and the chicken. It raises a question of why the pig is penned under the guest room. Does it happen by chance or has it a meaning?

The duck is associated with negative ritual attitudes; it should not be eaten at feast or ceremony, which is in contrast to those towed the buffalo on the one hand, and chicken on the other. It is feared for economic purposes, as is the pig. The prohibition on serving duck meat at marriage feasts is regarded as having symbolic meaning linked to its laziness to hatch its eggs, a characteristic inappropriate when celebrating the formation of a new household with reproductive responsibility. There is no prohibition on killing a duck and a chicken for consumption that brings to the house and no ritual prohibitions are linked to the chicken. It can be served as an ordinary food and at feasts as well.

Conclusion
Symbolic classification is the association of ideas; and of the law of contiguity and similarity between mental states. What could have led native people to arrange the ritual ideas in this way and where they could have found the plan of this remarkable disposition is by discovering the most rudimentary symbolic classification made by human beings. Presumably, at the outset where those most available for classifying the world, principal the social categories split into male-female, with the purpose of identifying marriage preferences. There are always dichotomous distinction between marriageable women. Furthermore, a group such as class characteristically prohibits its men from having sexual relations with their own women, so that they have to acquire from other groups by taking or exchanging their women. As a result, the most simple classification was formed into the groups, i.e., moieties. Furthermore, all things, events, living creatures and natural phenomena were associated to one or to the other group.

In the more complex classification, there are correspondences among human classification, sexual accessibility and animal classification in terms of terms. Each moiety tends to break down to some marriage-classes or clans, which usually affiliate to a totem. A totem, an animal or something else, was chosen as a representation or expression of the group's characters, Usually the members of a group are forbidden to eat their totemic animal, but the Wakebura of central Australia are an exception. They eat animals belonging to their clan and are prohibited from eating animals belonging to other clans.

Symbolic classification in a tangible world is also associated with supernatural power or religious belief. The Wakebura associated death as the result of sorcery by another moiety's member. To find the sorcerer it is necessary to identify the owner of the totemic animal which passed by under the scaffold on which the corpse rests. Another example, in Javanese culture, shows that every transition from one social group to another or between age groups along life cycle must be accompanied by some rites which symbolize purification. At that moment, the actor is in total submission to the supernatural. represented by sacrificial meal or animal. These rites have two dimensions, the first is a vertical relationship mankind and supernatural power, and the second a horizontal relationship in terms of social level. Meanwhile, he and his family are always in the prohibited condition, and are not permitted to do anything that might pollute their minds.

Symbolic classification is also reflected in the relationship among human categories in terms of sexual accessibility with the spatial and animal classification. In Thai villages, the cardinal points correspond to house building. Arranging the house space into four symbolic levels relates to placing domestic animals, dietary rules and marriage rules. Everything or part of the house which is regarded to be lower or impure is located in the west or left side, such as the kitchen, the washing place, the son-in-law's sleeping room, and the son-in-law himself. On the other hand, higher status and pure things are located in the east or right side, such as the parents' sleeping room and the water jar. Between the two sides in the sleeping
room there is a boundary, which in every-
day life only the lower status is the house
cannot cross to enter the sacred place, par-
ticularly the parents' sleeping room. How-
ever, in a ritual event, everyone could enter
the sacred place.

Placing domestic animals and dietary
prohibition are also involved in an interw.
oven chain of symbolic classification. The
dog has a close relationship with man, but
its deceased status and insective rigor
ration are reflected in a prohibition on eating
to flesh. The cat is also close to man and
symbolizes insective prohibition, but it has
positive and ritual value. At night the buffalo
cow are always penned under the sleep-
ing room and they are reared with great
care. Their meat is eminently ceremonial fo-
col, but there is an ethical norm that the
buffalo or cow which will be slaughtered must
not belong to the village or the household.
It is related to sexual accessibility.

Obviously, in every society we always
find systems of associated ideas about ca-
tegories of things, events, living-creatures
and natural phenomena. In the symbolic
domain, the association of ideas is by me-
thaphore, a by-product of classification, and
there is always a boundary which is iden-
tified as ambiguous or anomalous and has
sacred or polluting values, and which is of-
ten regarded as dangerous. So, it becomes
an object of prohibition, preventing the sa-
cred flowing out and pollution flowing in.

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