

Wim van Binsbergen, Leiden and Rotterdam

23. G.K. Mueller: *QR&umdDimensionstfPUu^hf*, New York 1965, p. 395.

24. R.K. Gupta, loc cit. (note 12), p. 2.

,, „• U Okafor 'In Defence of Afro-Japanese Kthnophilosophy', in: *Ph.losophj East & West. A Ouarterlj ofCo,nparat.ve Ph.losophj*, 47, 3, 1997, p. 377; see also his 'African Philosophy m Comparison with Western Philosophy', in. *The Journal of \aim Inquiry*, 31.2, 1997, p 266.

e point of departure in Kant's theory of *sensus communis*<sup>2</sup> is what he claims to be the subjective necessity of the individual's aesthetic judgment. Such necessity implies that the subject cannot afford to consider his judgment as merely idiosyncratic, but has to assume that it is shared by all others. A present-day social scientist like myself looks with a mixture of profound admiration and intense bewilderment at Kant's argument here.

1. Why the social sciences have difficulty appreciating Kant's theory of aesthetic judgment?

Bewilderment in the first place. Kant's critical thought is not an explicit and recognized part of the social science canon (however diverse) today. Any social-science perspective on Kant therefore would mean trying to bring Kant in from the outside, inventing ways of accommodating, isolating or annihilating this alien body of thought within a more familiar disciplinary framework of social science. Kant was unmistakably an influence on the founding fathers of the social sciences (Marx, Durkheim and Weber). But the process of intra-disciplinary professionalization of the social sciences especially during the first half of the twentieth century has meant that these sciences have sought to create ever greater distance between themselves and older, possibly rival disciplines in academia: belles lettres, the arts, history, philosophy. This applies especially to the Anglo-Saxon social-science tradition which has also prevailed in the Netherlands and Scandinavia, rather than to the German and French national social-science traditions.

For the social scientist it is difficult to conceive that Kant's critical investigation of pure knowledge, practical knowledge, aesthetic and teleological judgment does constitute the foundation and the touchstone of modern thought. For did not Kant write a hundred years before the social science came under wing? Had Kant therefore not inevitably to write in an idiom which favours a classical individual-centred rationality,

Jally without any recognition of the ways in which social institutions and social processes structure and restrain individual consciousness, impose and warp judgment, contaminate it with subconscious reference to groups the social actor would like to belong to or from which he seeks in vain to dissociate himself? What would remain of

it if we tried to rewrite his work in the idiom of today's social science? Does not a neo-Marxist or functionalist sociology of knowledge, a la Mannheim<sup>3</sup> or Merton, render the *Kritik der reinen Vernunft* as obsolete as its date of original publication would suggest to a serious social scientist, who prefers not to cite work more than twenty years old.

The democratic and relativist Tylorian concept of culture which became standard in the social sciences, although harking back to Herder, did not find a promising early exponent in Kant, although via German *Kulturphilosophie* of around 1900 there was a direct link with Max Weber. Confronted with the title *Culture and practical reason* the anthropologist thinks not of Kant in Königsberg but of Marshall Sahlins in Chicago.<sup>6</sup> Are not the repeated allegations<sup>6</sup> of racist elements contained in Kant's pre-critical work sufficient pretext for a social scientist today not to bother with him any more? Does not *IM distinction*, Bourdieu's<sup>6</sup> sociological reading of *Kritik der Urteilkraft*, contain everything which could possibly sail be worthwhile in Kant's critical assessment of aesthetic judgment? For the social scientist the sociologists reduction inherent in Bourdieu's argument would not so much constitute a travesty of Kant (as it certainly is from a philosophical perspective), but a salvage operation of what little of Kant could still be used in the social science of taste today.

Of course I am slightly exaggerating. One notable exception to the anthropological aloofness vis-a-vis Kant has been Man- Douglas, the grand old lady of British anthropology, who cites him repeatedly.<sup>7</sup> Moreover, in the most recent decades the social sciences, having established themselves securely in acaderrua, have opened up again for philosophical inspiration, and this is likely to lead to their renewed appreciation of Kant, as mediated through philosophers like J.-F. Lyotard, G. Deleuze, H. Arendt, and S. Žižek.<sup>8</sup>

Three elements in particular are missing from Kant's theory if, stripped of its project as a philosophical theory of transcendentalism, it were to be reformulated as a mere theory of the production of the social.

In the first place, as I have already indicated, the strictly rational consciousness of Kant's subject make that subject a sociological monster if not (as a whole range of philosophical critique has argued, from Scheler, Freud, Sartre right down to Robin Schott)<sup>9</sup> a philosophical monster.

Secondly, the community which is implied in that subject's aesthetic judgment is supposed to extend infinitely so as to encompass the whole of mankind, without subdivisions of a racial, national, ethnic, regional, professional, class or gender nature. This is the only answer Kant can give if he is not to make nonsense of his transcendental project. However, if we were to mistake Kant's philosophical expose for an empirical description of the social processes of aesthetic production and aesthetic reception, such a view of social life would only apply in closed and homogeneous, totally autarkic local communities. Under the designation of 'primitive isolates', such communities were for a long time paradigmatic in cultural anthropology, but their existence could only be postulated as a theoretical possibility. For, participating both in her original (usually

North Atlantic) community and in a supposedly isolated local community, her very access there, and her commuting between that community and academia, would already introduce a plurality of life worlds, alternatives of experience, judgment and truth, into that local community

And of course, closer historical analysis would bring out the fact that, clearly sharing in modern mankind's genetic make-up, language capabilities, faculties of discursive thought, traditions of tool making and food production - in a whole range of human achievements less than 40,000 years old - it could never have been absolutely and totally isolated in the first place. Anyway, even marginally primitive isolates have long been supplanted by peasant communities which, however much inclined to a subjective perception of self-sufficiency, would meet the standard anthropological definition of being 'part societies with a part culture'. There is overwhelming empirical evidence that in virtually all situations today, humans identify with a community which they subsequently perceive as a subset of humanity, not as the whole of humanity. In such a situation the subjective necessity of the subject's aesthetic judgment creates not one clearly delineated and unequivocal community, but a field of tension: on the one hand, in the abstract sense, the subject has to abide by Kant and take his aesthetic judgment so absolutely seriously as to imply the whole of mankind in it; but on the other hand,<sup>10</sup> the subject cannot always ignore the fact that others in his immediate or remote social environment would unavoidably happen to disagree with his judgment, by virtue of this opt out of the universal community his judgment has implied, and instead throw him back on the awareness of a less than universal judgment backed up by a less than universal community. Whether this less than universal community turns out to be based on class, gender, regional ties or whatever, its effect is that the *sensus communis* implied in the abstract and absolute judgment, is confronted with a *sensus particularism*<sup>11</sup> implied by the contrastive, alternative judgment. In other words, Kant's notion of community is too monolithic, and does not take into account the complexity and plurality of communities, identities, reference groups, which are constantly being constructed and discarded in the social process.

Situating the subject in this kaleidoscopic social process of incessant construction and dissolution of multiple communities, immediately brings to mind the third objection: not only Kant's community but also Kant's subject is too monolithic, too much integrated and consistent, which is in line with the consistent rationality attributed to that subject. In social practice, it would not even be correct to say that people are aware of the plurality of communities, beyond the one community to which they have committed themselves totally. In fact, most people turn out to have committed themselves to more than one community, cherishing several identities in that connexion, in such a way that each identity is either activated or latent depending on the social expectations and

pressures to which the person is subjected in a particular place and at a particular place. The recognition of shifting and plural social identities united in one and the same person, and alternately activated according to the different specific roles which this individual plays, in the course of a life, a year, even a day, would render the step between aesthetic judgment and community rather less compelling and unequivocal than Kant suggests. Constantly aware of alternatives in oneself because of the non-monolithic nature of the self with its many social roles and may attending communities in which to play these roles, the sense of community generated by implication on the basis of aesthetic judgment is likely to be less than total.

Admittedly, to some extent the awareness of multiple, incompletely integrated identities united in the same person is typically an achievement of postmodern social science reflecting on postmodern society. However, multiplicity of roles and social contexts, and the awareness of alternatives, is demonstrably a feature which all societies display in varying degrees; postmodernity may have helped us to perceive this feature, but has not entirely created it.

## 2. What Kant has yet to offer to the social sciences

If I would have stopped here, I would never have made the grade from social scientist to philosopher. But in addition to bewilderment, there is profound admiration of Kant's position. Social scientists of my generation were early in their careers exposed to Popper's *Logic of scientific discovery* as the paroxysm of epistemological sophistication;<sup>12</sup> we were scarcely aware of the book's being rooted in continental German-language philosophy, let alone of its major indebtedness to Kant despite the shift from synthetic to analytic a priori. Reading Kant after Popper is an overwhelming intellectual and aesthetic experience, like steering a reliable small ship out from the river and onto the open sea. Admittedly, Kant's world is that of the conscious rational subject, and he can scarcely make the concept of the social and the meta-subjective, the super-organic, work for him.

But whereas the discovery and scientific articulation of the social can be said to have been the fundamental project and merit of the social sciences, this has usually led to a reductionist reification best exemplified with Durkheim's undeservedly famous adage 'Les faits sociaux sont des choses.'<sup>13</sup> Well, we know that social facts i.e. institutions and the institutional facts (Searle)<sup>14</sup> they create, are not things of the same order of tangible reality as a rock, a petal, a baby, a farmhouse, a microcomputer. On the contrary, social facts are merely invisible, language-based networks of social relationships, which have an impact on our lives because they weave for us the social illusion as taken for granted, as

inescapable even, suggesting at the level of our subjective consciousness a distinct plane of institutional reality hovering over us, one elusive quantum leap away from what is very much the world of Kant's critical project: our individual knowledges, evaluations, motivations and actions. Methodological individualism<sup>15</sup> has repeatedly reminded us that the social sciences, despite their voluminous output of social description, theory and method over more than a hundred years, have far from solved the fundamental problem of how precisely to account for the forms and transformations of the social on the basis of its being generated in the context of individual consciousness and action. Parsons<sup>16</sup> has made us understand that the fundamental and unsolved problem of the social sciences has always been: *how is society possible*. On this point Kant's suggestion in *Kritik der Urteilskraft* deserves to make a fresh impact on the social sciences. In -addition to Marx's relations of production; Durkheim's collective representations;<sup>17</sup> and Weber's subtle analyses of rationality, authority, power, class as lifestyle, and above all the social circulation of meaning - Kant's view of the social as necessarily implied in the aesthetic judgment looks for the social in a novel direction hitherto largely overlooked by the social sciences. For as I have indicated, in their professionalizing entrenchment the social sciences have lost, among other things, the capability of a sophisticated, non-reductionist discourse on art.

What if it were true that not production (Marx), the sacred (Durkheim) or meaning (Weber), but beauty could be argued to play a major role in social life? But no, that would be another reductionism. Let us instead be content if a perspective on aesthetic judgment could at least suggest some additional insight into the social, which, along with truth, death, love, birth, and God ranks among the central mysteries of mankind.

The complementary perspective has already presented itself: if I have suggested in this section what the social sciences might yet derive from Kant, in the previous, critical sociological section I have suggested three specific points in which present-day social-science insights would have something to contribute to an attempt to take Kant's theory of *sensus communis* into the third millennium: the non-rational dimensions of the individual consciousness; the plurality of communities; and the plural and situational nature of personal identity.

## 3. The Nkoya people and their Kazanga festival: symbolic production and *sensus communis* in western central Zambia

Let us try to bring these general considerations to life in the course of an excursion to western Zambia, where we are going to examine a social context for the production, experience and judgment of art, specifically music and dance.<sup>18</sup>

MY case study" concerns an ethnic association in modern Zambia, and its annual festival. The African people whom I vicariously present as the subjects of my argument in majority identify as belonging to a nation called 'Nkoya'. They are invariably non-academicians, many are semi-literate or even illiterate, and any rendering of their ideas in terms of contemporary global academic discourse would have to be largely based on an externalizing anthropological hermeneutics to be applied to their forms of social and political action, organization, and symbolic production. In over a quarter of a century of close association and participation I believe I have understood something of how they construct their life-world on the basis of notions of community which have both artistic and political aspects.

In the villages in the early 1970s, I was at first deeply impressed, and sought successfully to engage myself, in the Nkoya *sensus communis*. By that time Nkoyaland was ethnically and culturally highly homogeneous. The chief, his council and the village headmen had a tight grip on day-to-day village life, which further revolved on the succession of the agricultural, hunting and fishing seasons. Kinship festivals (girl's initiation ceremonies, weddings, inheritance ceremonies, funerals) and healing cults offered frequent opportunities for all villagers to engage in musical and dancing activities within a circle of equals who were long-time associates, speaking the same language and liking the same songs and drum rhythms. Not only was even Nkoya adult and child a competent and frequent musical performer. Administrators, educationalists and development workers in the district entertained, not without grounds, the stereotype of Nkoya children staying away from school in order to dance and make music. And in fact musical expertise was such that throughout western Zambia royal orchestras were staffed by Nkoya musicians singing Nkoya praise-songs their royal audience could not even understand. Improvised jesting songs were the idiom to exercise social control and to articulate competition between kin groups. Nkoya peasant society was by no means a primitive isolate, but the sense of community celebrated in these expressions was inner-directed, neither addressing strangers nor being challenged. In the villages, being Nkoya was virtually synonymous with being human, and with the very great emphasis on music and dance made Nkoya society, in retrospect, appear as a textbook illustration (duly bowdlerized for social-science consumption) of Kant's theory of *sensus communis*.

By the end of the 1980s however this situation had considerably changed and I became aware that my earlier appreciation of Nkoya life in terms of an aesthetically-underpinned *sensus communis* had given way to one in which *sensus particularis* had become far more conspicuous. Class formation, the local emergence of commercial farming and the opening up of the region for modern political relations, had pushed the time-honoured ways of generating *sensus communis* through music and dance to the background. Instead of being taken for granted, being lived, at the many festive

moments of village life, music and dance were now predominantly *performed* at a brand-new annual festival, before an audience largely consisting of ethnic and cultural strangers. Aesthetics were still involved, but it now combined much more clearly *sensus communis* with *sensus particularis*, where Nkoya specificity was explicitly mediated, as a minority expression of great aesthetic value, to the outside worlds recognized to be committed to other identities than the Nkoya one, and to have other aesthetic judgments than those prevailing in the time-honoured thatched men's shelters, kitchens, hunter's camps and king's councils, of the Nkoya.

What had happened? In western Zambia a large number of ethnic identities circulate, among which that of the Lozi (Barotse) is dominant because of its association with the Luyana state. The latter had its pre-colonial claims confirmed and even expanded with the establishment of colonial rule in 1900, resulting in the Barotseland Protectorate, which initially coincided with North Western Rhodesia, and after Zambia's independence (1964) became that country's Western Province. Lozi arrogance, limited access to education and to markets, and the influence of a fundamentalist Christian mission, stimulated a process of ethnic awakening. As from the middle of the twentieth century more and more people in eastern Barotseland and adjacent areas came to identify as 'Nkoya'. In addition to the Nkoya language, and to a few cultural traits recognized as proper to the Nkoya (even if these traits have a much wider distribution in the region), royal 'chiefs', although incorporated in the Lozi aristocracy, have constituted major condensation points of this identity. The usual pattern of migrant labour and urban-rural migration endowed this identity with an urban component, whose most successful representatives distinguished themselves from their rural Nkoya nationals in terms of education, income and active participation in national politics. While the Lozi continued to be considered as the ethnic enemies, a second major theme in Nkoya ethnicity was to emerge: *the quest for political and economic articulation with the national centre, by-passing the Lozi whose dominance at the district and provincial level dwindled only slowly*. In this articulation process the chiefs (lacking education, economic and political power, and being the prisoners of court protocol) could only fulfil a symbolic function. The main task fell to the urban Nkoya 'elite' (in fact mainly lower- and middle-range civil servants and salaried workers), and with this task in mind the most prominent among them formed the Kazanga Cultural Association in the early 1980s. In subsequent years, this association has provided an urban reception structure for prospective migrants, has contributed to Nkoya Bible translation and the publication of ethno-historical texts, has assumed a considerable role at the royal courts next to the traditional royal councils, and within various political parties and publicity media has campaigned against the Lozi and for the Nkoya cause. The association's main achievement, however, has been the annual organization (since 1988) of the Kazanga festival, in the course of which a large audience

(including Zambian national dignitaries, the four Nkoya royal chiefs, Nkoya nationals and outsiders), for two days is treated to a complete overview of Nkoya songs, dances and staged rituals. Of course what we have here is a form of bricolage and of invention of tradition: not only is today's wider socio-political context (dominated by intercontinental financial institutions via the postcolonial state; and by global conventions of commodity style in clothing, music etc. as mediated by radio, television, books and magazines), it would have been impossible to completely revive the nineteenth-century Kazanga harvest festival, which comprised not several but only one royal, and not just the pouring of sacrificial libations in the form of home-made beer, but also the immolation of human slaves.

Even though present-day Kazanga is not a faithful copy of the original model, few local people notice the difference because the festival had not been held for close to a century. It is not exactly an academic notion of authenticity which bothers the closely-packed crowds of local spectators, the great majority of them native speakers of the Nkoya language, identifying with the Nkoya ethnic identity, - people whose National Registration Card lists the name of one of the Nkoya traditional rulers as their chief, and the area of his jurisdiction as their rural home. When one mingles with these crowds, there cannot be the slightest doubt that many of these spectators experience great beauty when, in accordance with the Kazanga festival's programme, item after item of 'Nkoya traditional culture', i.e. ritual and ceremonial music and dance, is being performed. People shout and cry in excitement, point out nice details to each other, and shed tears. Many rock their bodies inadvertently to the familiar music which the local musicians (most of them mere boys) play on their village-made xylophones and drums. Many appear to be uncomfortable with the role of passive, incompetent spectator to which the tight orchestration by the festival's leadership reduces them, and they occasionally join in the singing and the dancing as if this were not an annual festival recorded by the media, but simply a village ceremony like the scores of such ceremonies in which I participated during local fieldwork a few decades ago.

It is the interplay between *sensus communis* and *sensus particularis* which constitutes the Kazanga festival's most striking characteristic.

Certainly the newly revived festival does operate on the basis of an unbounded inclusiveness: not only members of the Nkoya ethnic group, but all other locals are welcome, as well as ethnic strangers residing at the district capital, officers and soldiers from the nearby army barracks (who at other times are considered a public nuisance because of their unquenchable sexual appetites), regional entrepreneurs and petty politicians, civil servants, medical personnel, missionaries, and perhaps a few tourists; some of the obvious outsiders stand out not only by their expensive attire but also by their exotic, White somatic features. Two kinds of outsiders are especially welcome.

There are, in the first place, representatives of the national media who (after many decades when the Nkoya identity and its language were totally excluded from national media and from educational institutions) since the festival's inception in 1988 have given it a broad media coverage, and thus have greatly boosted ethnic pride and national recognition. And secondly, national-level politicians, including a handful of Cabinet ministers and junior ministers, have from the inception formed the guests of honour at the Kazanga festival, they are groomed and pampered during even-minute of their visit, and the obvious goal is to trade the immaterial expressive production of the festival (music, dance, art, beauty) for more tangible tokens of special attention from the national political centre: development projects enhancing collective access to income, markets, commodities; ethnic recognition to make up for a century of humiliation at the hand of the Lozi who were privileged by the colonial state; and individual patronage for the Kazanga leadership themselves.

This inclusiveness carries a hidden message which may well be explicitised in terms of *sensus communis*. For if the Nkoya performers, producers and spectators of the Kazanga festival programme would not be convinced that what was a powerful source of artful beauty to them (Nkoya music and dance) could also be communicated and admired across the boundaries of Nkoya ethnic identity, by ethnic and cultural strangers, the whole idea of the Kazanga festival as an exchange of performance for development benefits would be defeated. Clearly, if the Nkoya experience their music and ceremonies as beautiful, this implies to some extent that they take these to be beautiful for all of mankind.

Now for the *sensus particularis* aspect. In terms of admission to the festival and enjoyment of its performances, there is a formal all-inclusiveness — provided the strangers remain strangers, and by their very presence enable the Nkoya to articulate themselves in their ethnic, linguistic and cultural identity. There is an emphatic particularism when it comes to production. There is not the slightest invitation to the strangers to cross the boundary between Nkoya and non-Nkoya: they are not jokingly drawn into the dancing groups, are not presented with honorary Nkoyahood, there is even no attempt to introduce them to the specific local background knowledge needed in order to understand and appreciate the rich performative repertoire. Among the performers and producers only those are allowed who are socially recognized as Nkoya, who speak the Nkoya language (though not necessarily as a first language), can claim descent (socially recognized descent, at least, not necessarily biological) from at least one Nkoya parent, and is conversant with the details of Nkoya life at the level of family life, productive activities, chieftainship and its history, puberty ceremonies, hunting and healing ritual. Contrary to the Kazanga festival in the nineteenth century (when it was an exclusive celebration of one royal incumbent's power among her or his subjects) the

present-day festival is outward-looking in that it would be pointless if exclusively performed among ethnic insiders — hence it implies the generation of *sensus communis*. At the same time the festival hinges on the creation of a boundary between ethnic and cultural insiders and outsiders, it presents performances whose *raison d'être* for the performers is not only that they are beautiful but also that they are 'ours' (the performers') and not 'theirs' (not the outsider spectators'). In the Kazanga festival the dissociation between the Nkoya insiders and their outsider guests is emphatically constructed. Kazanga articulates *sensus communis* in tension with emphatic tension with *sensus particularis*.

#### 4. The Kazanga festival and constraints of artistic production: identify, commodification, and embodiment

Another thing becomes clear when we consider the Kazanga festival as a focus of artistic production. The music and dance they produce, and the image of the traditional ruler which is at the centre of the fesival performances (for Kazanga is a transformed royal festival, which may ultimately derive from the ancient Egyptian *sed* festival), are in its present form modern constructs and not time-honoured givens of a local cultural repertoire of the *longue dure'e*. Nor could they very well be, since the ethnonym Nkoya itself is less than a century old. Kazanga is part of the construction of an ethnic identity - *sensus particularis* is at its very heart.

##### 4.1. Production of identity in the Katanga festival

The Kazanga fesival revolves around the mediation of the local Nkoya identity towards the national, and by implication world-wide space, - a mediation which is to transmute the local symbolic production (one has hardly any other products eligible for exchange with the outside world) into a measure of political and economic power via access to the national centre. Besides the *selection* and *presentation* of culture, this involves the *transformation* of culture: the Kazanga festival has the appearance of presenting items of traditional Nkoya culture, but in fact all these elements have been largely transformed towards a performative format, orchestrated, directed, rehearsed, subjected to the streamlining ordering by an organizing elite and its mobilizing and mediating ambitions. The models for this performative format derive from radio, television, the world of Christian missions, agricultural shows, state intervention in national ethnic artistic production through music and dance, and intercontinental pop media culture.

The Nkoya identity which is thus put on display, is not only recent and situational, but also 'virtual',<sup>29</sup> in the sense that it does not at all coincide any more with what the participating and performing villagers do experience as the self-evident ordering (in terms of space, time and social relations) of village life, in whose context superficially similar (but on closer scrutiny fundamentally different) truly historic forms of symbolic production are engaged in which might be more properly termed 'Nkoya traditional culture'. The artistic production during the *Katanga* fesival is somehow suspended in the air. Yet (or perhaps precisely because these features) it is passionately acclaimed among the very representatives of such particularisms. It goes through the motions of *sensus communis* in order to bring about both *sensus communis* and its opposite, *sensus particularis*.

##### 4.2. Commoditification in the Katanga festival

Artistic presentation in the context of the Kazanga festival has become a form of commoditification. The performative format anticipates on the expectations of the visiting non-Nkoya elite, and has to produce goodwill and rapprochement, some sort of symbolic ready cash, to be effective within the wider world of political and economic power which is represented by these dignitaries. There is also more tangible cash involved: the performers are paid a little for their services. Moreover the performances take place in a context which is increasingly dominated by characteristic commodities from the global consumerist culture of reference: supported - and this is absolutely unheard of in the villages - by public address systems, while all royal protocol has to give in to the urge, among those possessing tape recorders, photo cameras, and video cameras, to 'record' the event - an act most characteristic of our electronic age and of the possibilities of individually reproduced and consumed, virtual and vicarious experience it entails. The standardisation of a commoditified artistic production is also borne out by the emphasis (which is in absolute contradiction with historic village patterns) on identical movements according to neat geometncl patterns, the avoidance of 'offensive' bodily movements particularly in the body zones singled out by Christian prudery, and in the identical uniforms of the members of the main dancing troupes. The representatives of the urban Kazanga troupe moreover advertise themselves through exceptional commodities such as shoes (which are not only expensive, but offensive and impractical in village dancing), expensive coiffures, sun glasses and identical T-shirts impnnted for the occasion. The commoditification element is finally manifest in the separation - extremely unusual in this rural society - between

passive, culture-consuming spectators, who explicitly are not supposed to join in the singing and dancing,

- the producers (who clearly act not by their own initiative — as in the village — but as they have been told), and
- the supervising elite (who in their turn single themselves out through such commodities as formal jackets and ties).

#### 4.3. Embodiment in the Katanga festival

Even under the performative format Kazanga has no choice but to present the Nkoya identity (recently constructed as it clearly is, and even reduced to virtuality in the commoditified and invented context of the festival) as inscribed onto the very bodies of those who define themselves socially as the bearers of that identity, and who express it through their bodily manifestations in music, song and attire. The performance embodies the identity and renders it communicable in an appropriate format, even to an outside world where, before the creation of Kazanga in its present form, that identity did not mean anything of positive value. The stress on uniformity of the performers and their actions paradoxically creates both

- an illusion of being identical — which dissimulates actual class differences (for each dance troupe again represents the entire Nkoya nation as a whole), and
- a sense of distinction — for very visibly, the urban elite's troupe is 'more equal' than the other performers, and than the spectators.

In this incorporative context one also borrows from a repertoire which has certainly not been commoditified even though it is performative. Dressed in leopard skins, around the temples a royal ornament of Conus shells, and brandishing an antique executioner's axe (all these attributes - regalia, in fact - have now become non-commodities, pertaining to a royal circuit that in the present time no longer engages in long-distance trade as it did during the nineteenth century), an aged royal chief, with virtuoso accompaniment from a hereditary honorary drummer of the same age (he has always been far above performing with the state-subsidised royal orchestra in the routine court contexts), performs the old Royal Dance which since the end of the nineteenth century was hardly seen any more in this region. At the climax the king (for that is what he shows himself to be at this point) kneels down and drinks directly from a hole in the ground where beer has been poured out for his royal ancestors — the patrons of at least his part of the Nkoya nation, implied to share in the deeply emotional cheers from the audience. And young women who have long been through girls' puberty initiation, perform that ritual's final dance, without any signs of the appropriate stage fright and modesty, and with their too mature breasts against all tradition not bare but tucked into conspicuous white bras. Yet despite this

performative artificiality their sublime bodily movements, which in this case are far from censored, approach the village-based original sufficiently close to bring the spectators, men as well as women, to ecstatic expressions of a recognized and shared identity. In the midst of *sensus particularis* as derived from the performance of reified, and commoditified music and dance before strangers (non-locals, non-peasants, non-Nkoya), yet outburst of *sensus communis* confirm and restore a sense of identity which one feared had been lost with the advent of development, class and modern politics, in the course of the latest decades.

Obviously such concepts as 'commoditification' and 'transformative selection', however important, do not tell the whole story, and even after the recreation of Nkoya culture in the Kazanga format enough reason for enthusiasm and identification is left for us not to be too cynical about the levels of virtuality, unauthenticity, and performativity which are reached in Kazanga, and in many comparable situations of globalizing symbolic production in Africa today. Lost is certainly the taken for granted sense of authenticity of the celebrations of music and dance which only a few decades ago were incorporated in the rhythm of village life and in which all villagers freely joined in as competent fellow-performers instead of being reduced to passive and inhibited spectators. *Sensus communis* is now offset much more noticeably against a performative and ethnically divisive *sensus particularis*. But perhaps this is partly an optical illusion: perhaps I have not searched too closely for manifestations of *sensus particularis* also at the village level, a few decades ago. Nor are the peregrinations of *sensus communis* and *sensus particularis* fully predictable, and capable of being relegated to a reductionist automatism, as my closing vignette may well indicate.

One moonlit night in the mid-1990s, I returned to the land of Nkoya after a few months' absence. The last part of the journey had, as usual, to be completed on foot. The pale sandy paths across the forested savannah gleamed up under the full moon as if purposely illuminated, and we allowed ourselves to follow these paths to where distant xylophone music attracted our attention. We finally found a score of ten-year olds having a nocturnal party. As usually they passed the night without any parental supervision, and without any food or drink. But they frantically and expertly played their musical instruments, and danced ecstatically to the tune, not of time-honoured village songs, but of the purposely composed and orchestrated, politically and ethnically inspired songs which half a year earlier had blasted from the loudspeakers at the Kazanga festival — in other words to the manifestations of commoditification and *sensus particularis* introduced above. What we were witnessing that night was a form of re-appropriation of a local product which had in the process shifted its emphasis from predominantly *sensus communis* to a mixture of the latter with *sensus particularis*, and hence had lost all chances of retaining authenticity. And yet the Kazanga songs were regaining in the acts of these

children a new authenticity, as no truly 'traditional', unchanged item of local culture could ever aspire to. The children were negotiating the tension between *sensus communis* and *sensus particularis m.* their own, effective way.

##### 5. Envoi

The plurality of communities and identities as perceived and lived by individuals in society is the point of departure of intercultural philosophy. Is this plurality a mere surface illusion, under which the fundamental unity of mankind lurks as a truer reality? Or is, on the contrary, the thought of boundless community in the face of the empirical fact of the incessant social construction of boundaries and distinctions, a mere escape from social reality into the ivory tower (or shall we say, the Konigsberg) of philosophical abstraction? More likely, it is the development of tools to think and negotiate the field of tension between plurality and unity, between boundaries and their dissolution, which constitutes the true mission of intercultural philosophy. Probably this tension is analogous to the tension between philosophy and empirical social science. I have argued that greater insight in these central questions of the human condition may be gained if we let ourselves be guided both by Kant's theory of *sensus communis*, and by such corrections and additions as present-day social sciences would suggest in this connection: stressing non-rational aspect of the person, the plurality of identities and groups and the shifting nature of identity, in short, offsetting *sensus communis* against its Manichaean counterpart, *sensus particularis*. We stand to gain, not if we deny the tension, ignore the difference between a present-day social science perspective and Kant's philosophy, but admit their complementarity and seek to position ourselves within the tension they generate between them.

As someone who, for most of his adult life, has combined the detached investigation of Nkoya society with my own committed participation in it as a member, I detect another analogy here: the tension between analytical distancing and participant engagement may be peculiar to the anthropologist's exceptional professional role, yet at the same time is only another manifestation of the same field of tension. Acknowledging the tension amounts to an admission of the legitimacy of both of the polar position between which the tension is generated; that surely is a more promising strategy than by all means seeking to resolve the tension by privileging one of the constituent poles.

##### Notes

1. Karlicr versions were presented at the September 1997 meeting of the Research Group of the Dutch-Flemish Association for Intercultural Philosophy (NYYIf), and at the conference 'Sensus communis in arts and politics in Western and non-Western philosophies', organized by the NYYIf and the Faculty of Philosophy at Erasmus University Rotterdam. November 21-22, 1997. A few months later I took up the chair of *Foundations of intercultural philosophy* at that university, but in the conference paper as rendered here, my position is still primarily that of a social anthropologist, for useful comments I am indebted to the members of the Research Group and the conference participants, but particularly to my colleague Ilenk Oosterling.
2. I. Kant: *Kritik der Urteilskraft* (KdU), in: W. YC'eischdedl (ed.), *Kritik iter Urteilskraft und Schriften ~nr Saturphilosophie*. Bd 8: *Kant.. Werke in Zehn Banden*, Sonderausgabe. Darmstadt 1968, p. 233-620 (§ 6-8,40-41,56-57).
3. Mannheim however was greatly inspired by Kant: cf. K. Mannheim: 'Strukturanalyse der Krkenntnistheorie', in: *Kant-Studien*. f.rganzungshcft 57, Berlin 1922; translated as 'Structural analysis of epistemology', in: K. Mannheim: *Essays on sociology and social psychology*, London 1953, p. 15-73.
4. M. Sahlins, M.: *Culture and practical reason*, Chicago 1976; on the deliberate non-connection with Kant in this case, cf. P. Drechsel: 'A'orschlagc zur Konstruktion einer "Kulturthconcc" und was man unter einer "Kultunnterpretation" verstehen konnte', in: MAX. Mullcr/P. Konig/K.-I'. Koepfig/P. Drechsel (eds.), *Ethnologie ah Sosjalwtssenschaft*, Opladen 1984, special issue of *Kblner Zeitschrieffur So'ologie und So'alpsychologie*, p. 44-84, p. 83 n. 12.
5. Cf. P.L. Rose: *Revoluntionaiy anti-Semitism in Germany from Kant to Wagner*, Princeton 1990; K.C. Kzc (ed): *Race and the Enlightenment: A Reader*, Oxford 1996; ders.: 'The color of reason: The idea of "race" in Kant's anthropology', in: KC. Kzc (ed.), *Postcolomal African philosophy: A critical reader*, Oxford 1997, p. 103-140. for a partial refutation with emphasis on Kant's critical writings, cf. R. Palter, R: 'f lghteenth-cctury historiography in Black Athena', in: M.R. 1 -cfkowitz/G. MacLcan Rogers (eds), *black Athena revisited*. Chapel Hill/London 1996, p. 349-401, J.I I. Blok: 'Proof and persuasion in *Black Athena I*: The case of K.O. Muller', in: W.M.J. van Binsbergen (ed.), *Black Athena: Ten Years After*, special issue, *Talanta*, (1997), p. 28-29, 173-208.
6. P. Bourdicu: *La distinction: Critique social du jugement*. Paris 1979, p. 42f.
7. K.g. M. Douglas: *Implicit meanings:.. Essays in anthropology*. London 1984; reprint of the first edition of 1975.
8. J.-f. Lyotard: *E'enthousiasme: La critique kantienne de l'histotre*. Pans 1986; G. Deleuze: *Laphilosophie critique de Kant*. Paris 1963; S. Zizck: *Tarrying with the negative:.. Kant, Hegel, and the critique of ideology*, Durham 1993; II. Arcndt: *Lectures on Kant's political philosophy*, lid. R. Beiner. Chicago 1982; for philosophical reactions, cf. R.J. Dostal: 'Judging human action: Arendt's appropriation of Kant', in: *Review of Metaphysics* 37, 4 (1984), p. 725-755; B. PTynn: 'Arendt's appropriation of Kant's theory of judgment\*', in: *Journal of the British Society of Phenomenology*, 19, 2,(1988),p. 128-140; J.D. Ingram: 'The postmodern Kantianism of Arendt and Lyotard', in: *Remew of Metaphysics* \2 (1988), p. 51-77.
9. R.M. Schott: *Cognition and eros: A critique of the Kantian paradigm*. Boston 1988

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10. As Kant himself was well aware: 'daher ein Neger norwendig unter diesen empirischen Bedingungen eine andere Normalidee der Schonhcit der Gestalt haben muB, als ein WeiBcr, der Chinese eine andere, als der Kuopacr.' (KdU, §17)
11. Cf. K. \\\iredu: *Cultural Universals & Particulars: An African Perspective*, Bloomington/Indianapolis 1996; for a shorter version of the same argument, cf. ders.: 'Are there cultural universals', in: I. Il. Coetzcc/A.P.J Roux (eds), *The African philosophy reader*. London 1998, p. 31-40, 50-51 (bibliography); originally published in: *The MomstIS* (1995), p. 52-64.
12. K.R. Popper: *The logic of scientific discovery*. New York 1959; first published as *Logik der Forschung*, Vienna 1935.
13. K. Durkhcim: *Les regies de la methode sociologique*. Pans 1897; first published in 1895.
14. J. Searle: *Speech acts*. London 1969, section 2.7.
15. J. Agassi: 'Methodological individualism', in: *British Journal of Sociology*, 11(1960), p. 244-70; S. Lukes: 'Methodological individualism reconsidered', in: D. Kmmct,/A. MacIntvrc (eds), *Sociological theory and philosophical analysis*. New York 1970, p. 76-88.
16. T.C. Parsons: *The structure of social action: A study in social theory with special reference to a group of recent European writers, I-IL*. New York 1937.
17. Which concept, not without indebtedness to Kant, does for the religious field what Kant proposes to do for the aesthetic field; cf. K. Durkhcim, *Les formes elementares de la vie religieuse*. Paris 1912.
18. Cf. I..D. Brown: 'Drums of life: Royal music and social life in Western Zambia', Ph.D. thesis, University of Washington, School of Music; University Microfilms, Ann Arbor 1984, W.M.J, van Bmsbergen: *Tears of Rain: Ethnicity and history in central western Zambia*. London/Boston 1992; ders: 'The Kazanga festival: Lthnicity as cultural mediation and transformation in central western Zambia', *African Studies* 53, 2 (1994), p 92-125; ders: 'Nkoya royal chiefs and the Kazanga Cultural Association in western central Zambia today: Resilience, decline, or folkionsation?', in: E.A.B. van Rouverov van Nieuwaal/R. van Dijk (eds), *African chieftaincy in a new socio-political landscape*, Hamburg/ Munster 1999, p. 97-133.
19. Anthropological and oral-historical fieldwork was undertaken in Western Zambia and under migrants from this area in Lusaka, in 1972-1974, and during shorter periods in 1977, 1978, 1981, 1988, 1989, 1992 (twice), 1994 (twice) and 1995. I am indebted to the Zambian research participants, to the members of my family who shared in the fieldwork, to the Board of the African Studies Centre for institutional and financial support since 1977, and to the Netherlands foundation for the Advancement of Tropical Research (WOTRO) for financial support in 1974-75.
20. Cf. Van Binsbergen: 'Globalization and virtuality: Analytical problems posed by the contemporary transformation of African societies', in: B. Meyer/P. Geschicrc (eds), *Globalisation and identity: Dialectics of flow and closure*. Oxford 1998, p. 273-303.

Man by nature seeks *consensus*. But the means he manipulates for this end do not always serve the purpose. Human history is full of momentous events whereby certain individuals or groups have endeavoured to effect an agreement but the consequences of these events have far exceeded the innocence of their initiators. Religions or belief systems have always occupied a significant place in man's struggle for consensus. Some contemporary intellectuals have stressed the importance of interreligious communication to the degree that without a factual understanding between the adherents of various world religions, they claim, the future of mankind will remain under threat.'

However, it is ironic that despite persistent attempts by the adherents of many religions in history, to implement a universal belief system for all humanity, a common ground for intercultural dialogue was first brought into reality-, though not at a desired level, by secular states and institutions in the last two centuries, in which period religious assertions and differences were put aside. The proponents of secularism were arguing that all medieval religious strife was finally over, and that humanity was at the verge of a new era, when scientific inquiry was the new occupation of the minds. All obstacles between man and the knowledge of nature were at last eliminated. This knowledge was further idealized and imbued with a semi-religious zeal, which was termed as scienflsm, a substitute for the abandoned beliefs.<sup>2</sup>

But the hopes attached to this new phenomenon were not fulfilled. Happiness and peacefulness of mind as ends for mankind have not yet been achieved. So a new attempt of search for a better system has now arisen, and many publications from both Western and non-Western countnes are appearing. The common themes in all these works are that the heydays of modernity are over, and that a movement of deconstructivism is already underway. The name which commonly used for this new era is postmodernism.<sup>3</sup>

In this new period a considerable interest has been aroused for various social matters, among which traditions and belief systems that make the crux of worldviews, are the most discussed issues. Moreover, certain religious movements both in the Muslim and the Christian worlds are other indications that the old-abandoned beliefs for the sake of modernity are reappearing and that all reservations against non-scientific matters adopted during modernity are no longer at work.

Another characteristic of this new beginning is that scholars have begun to notice that the subjugation of social studies to the methodology of scientific inquiry is wrong. Therefore, social matters where human beings are agents but not physical objects, require a methodology of their own. This new approach to social phenomena which is