

# “Mary Douglas and beyond - a cognitive anthropological approach to translation”

Mary Douglas along with Erving Goffman, George Lakoff, and others provide a framework for understanding communication (and thus language and translation) as a form of human interaction. In such a scheme negotiation plays a crucial role, establishing a dynamic means of understanding the creation of structures of understanding and interpretation (i.e. culture). Whether at the level of specific cases (e.g. ideas of holiness and purity), or at a theoretical level (e.g. grid-group analysis), Douglas and others present the social self at the center of the communication process, and in so doing highlight important ways that communities and cultures differ not only in the way they symbolically represent the world, but diverge in their very understanding of that world. It is these divergences which present some of the most difficult challenges in translation of any kind, and especially those kinds of translation involving great cultural and temporal distance.

It should not be necessary to convince anyone that the work of Mary Douglas, the British anthropologist (d. 2007), is of relevance to the task of Bible translation. Her seminal work, *Purity and Danger* (1966), has long been required reading for undergraduate students of biblical studies. Since then, besides her further studies in anthropology, Douglas has written several books explicitly dealing with biblical studies (*In the Wilderness: The Doctrine of Defilement in the Book of Numbers*, 1993; *Leviticus as Literature*, 1999; *Jacob's Tears: The Priestly Work of Reconciliation*, 2004). These biblical studies excursions are interesting enough and admirable for someone crossing disciplinary lines. But for many, Douglas's best insights (even for biblical studies) still come from her work in anthropology, following both on her original work on purity and from her over-arching grid-group analysis. Thus what follows will concentrate on these two areas and briefly attempt to relate them to Bible translation.

## Purity and taboo systems

Douglas's approach to purity in the Hebrew Bible is from an anthropological point of view, and she thus sees the concepts of holiness and purity found there in terms of taboo systems anthropologists have encountered world-wide. The basic anthropological idea of the holy is that there are two spheres, material and spiritual, sacred and common, which must be kept apart, and that any unratified crossing of the boundary between them represents a symbolic (understood as literal from within the system) contamination and transgression. There are many symbols of both the spheres and the boundaries which separate them. Arguably one of the most important is the human (or animal) body itself. As Douglas notes in *Purity and Danger* (65):

. . . the idea of holiness was given an external, physical expression in the wholeness of the body seen as a perfect container . . . rituals work upon the body politic through the medium of the physical body. . . The body is a model which can stand for any bounded system. . . We cannot interpret rituals concerning excreta, breast milk, saliva and the rest unless we are prepared to see in the body a symbol of society.

A student of religion and the Bible will not be limited to the purely anthropological interpretation of this symbolism, but will appreciate how this symbolic approach sheds light on the common elements in such seemingly diverse ritual matters as “leprosy,” the insistence on the skin of the sacrificial animal being without any blemish, and cloven hooves in the Hebrew Bible. All of these (and many more) symbols are the means by which a society embodies its notion that there must not be any unwarranted contact between the sacred and the common. Boundaries must be maintained. Veils and talismans (such as small containers with bits of scripture written on them) protect the borders of the body or the holy precincts of the temple, and cleansing rituals protect one from or repair the damage done by transgression, whether purposeful or accidental.

In such a symbolic taboo system holiness is not the same thing as purity. The holy defines the sacred sphere, but purity is the result of maintaining the boundary between the holy and the common whole and intact. It is the crossing over, the boundary violation that is the sin. This is how contact with holy things (or unholy things, which in a taboo system are on the same “holy” side of the holy/common boundary) can make a person unclean. It is handling the *canonical* books which makes the scribes' hands unclean at Qumran, and the priests must wash their hands coming and going in and out

of the temple. In terms of the body, anything on the inside that ends up on the outside can be a symbol of this transgression.

Interestingly, even the moral meanings of holiness and purity are often understood in terms of such symbolic systems. The Hebrew Bible (as opposed to the New Testament) makes no principled distinction between moral and ritual holiness or purity. In Lev 19 not only are the ritual and the moral injunctions listed together, but throughout the Hebrew Bible the moral commands and prohibitions are often described in terms of the ritual taboo system.

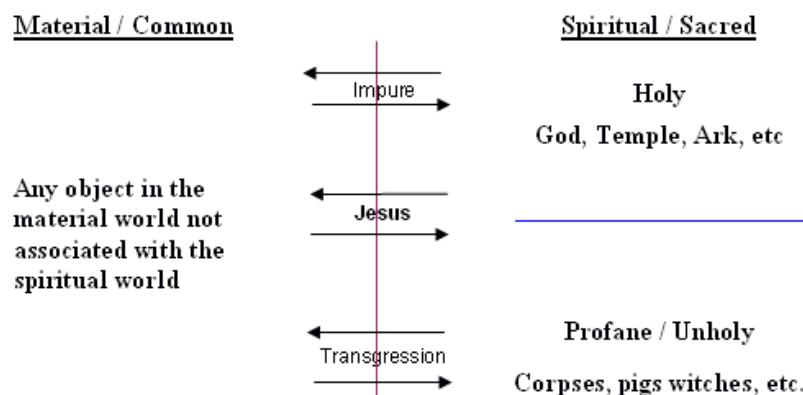
Thus the sexual sins in Lev 20 are framed in terms of the taboo system: “If a man takes his brother’s wife, it is impurity; he has uncovered his brother’s nakedness” (v. 21). The boundary crossing is that of the brother’s own body, here represented by his wife’s body. It seems to work the other way around as well, in that the ritual transgressions, while not carrying the punishment of moral sins as long as cleansing rituals are performed, are nonetheless taken quite seriously: “You shall therefore make a distinction between the clean animal and the unclean, and between the unclean bird and the clean; you shall not bring abomination on yourselves . . .” (v. 25)

An interesting twist to this system can be seen from the classic work of Arnold van Gennep in his *Rites of Passage*. Van Gennep notes that in many rituals involving change of identity the participant passes through a liminal state during which he or she is neither one thing nor the other. In rites of passage this may be the boundary between boy and man or girl and woman, but in other (e.g., sacrifice) rituals it can be a restoration to purity from impurity (sinner). In such cases it seems to involve a temporary sacralizing of the participant within the frame of the ritual. A special time (Sabbath), special place (temple) and special person (priest) are all usually involved.

Victor Turner (in *The Ritual Process*) takes this anthropological insight a step further in what he calls the “dramatic reversal” (pp. 166 ff.). He notes that in certain rituals, while in the liminal state, the participants will be called upon to enact the very things which are normally considered taboo. This strange behavior is seen to be precisely related to Douglas’s similar notions of the relatedness of purity and danger. The taboo is the gods’ (or God’s) arena, but in special times and places, mediated through special people, the participant in a ritual can be seen to pass from the common to the sacred sphere, if only temporarily, and there symbolically reach out and touch the untouchable.

In the Hebrew Bible, this symbolic taboo system intersects with blood symbolism (blood = life, belongs to God) in passages such as Exod 24.8: “Moses took the blood and dashed it on the people, and said, ‘See the blood of the covenant that the LORD has made with you in accordance with all these words.’” While not all blood contact made one unclean, certainly in this setting a dramatic reversal seems to be at work.

This reversal is referenced in turn in the New Testament (and in Hebrews especially), where Jesus’ blood is supposed to cleanse people from their sin (an odd notion at least without this taboo system background). Even such a seemingly insignificant act such as using his own saliva to heal (Mark 8.23) shows Jesus’ relation to the taboo system. He is seen as the permanent dramatic reversal. Now all days are holy, all money is God’s, and all commandments are radicalized (the law is “fulfilled”). The sacred has invaded the common and sacralized it for those who are able to see it. In the terminology of Hebrews, the temple veil is torn in two and the people can now reach out and touch God. The figure below tries to capture some of this ritual taboo system:



The irony is that many if not most translators into minority languages will understand most of this ritual taboo system in the Hebrew Bible intuitively better than most translation consultants. Those consultants with a fair bit of anthropological research in their background will at least have an outsider's understanding of such systems, albeit not an intuitive understanding. Yet this outsider's understanding can help the translator who understands his own systems from the inside distinguish it properly from similar (but not the same) biblical ones. This is not unlike the common linguistic situation in which a translator intuitively understands his or her own language perfectly, while an outside linguist has written the grammar. Mary Douglas, along with some others, has helped us begin to write the grammars of human behavior. It all starts with the negotiation of the self.

## The negotiation of the self: frames, roles, or whatever

Over the last half century various scholars (Goffman, Douglas, Lakoff, et. al.) have made the case that a rich network of frames make up what could be called the matrix of experience for human beings everywhere. Furthermore, these scholars agree that these frames are *not* static entities, but rather are in constant flux, being evoked, discarded, transformed, broken, subverted, adapted and re-situated within the network in a never-ending dynamic process of negotiation on the part of participants through various kinds of social interactions. Erving Goffman (1959, 1963) and Mary Douglas (1998) make the case that the most fundamental and far-reaching of these negotiations has to do with the presentation of the self.

Sociologists and anthropologists generally agree that the way frames come into being (and pass out of existence) is through social interaction. This way of looking at frames (i.e. as dynamic and socially constructed) is somewhat different than that of the rest of cognitive science, which usually presents conceptual frames as either schemata –metaphors based of our bodily experience with the world around us (Lakoff), or as a set of “canonical” cognitive frames assumed to be widely shared by humans everywhere.<sup>1</sup>

Goffman admits to two primary frameworks, natural and social (1986:p.22). But even here the meaning of most natural frames (e.g. the weather) would be mediated through social negotiation for Goffman. His definition of a primary framework is one which cannot be reduced to another. As a sociologist, Goffman believes cognitive frames are always reducible to social (or natural) ones, since they are evoked within the context of social (or natural) interaction and negotiation. He goes on to describe these negotiations with various metaphors, from framing (*Frame Analysis*) to theater (*The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*), to the concept of sanity (*Asylums*), spoiled identity (*Stigma*), public behavior (*Behavior in Public Places*), or the idea of the sacred self (*Interaction Ritual*). Goffman is more interested in the actual “grammar” of behavior than in taxonomies, and works with various local concepts based on the metaphors he utilizes (e.g. front and back space from theater, deference and demeanor from ritual, the maintenance of appropriate identity from mental health, etc.).

Two of Goffman's clearest and strongest statements in relation to the negotiated self as the basis for all human interaction and communication come in lesser-known works. The first is from *Asylums*, where he puts forth the idea that the self is not so much revealed in all the diverse interactions it has with others as it is constituted by these interactions. Furthermore, to the extent that these interactions are represented by symbolic means (including communication), the symbols can be understood as constitutive of personal and group identity. He goes further in *Interaction Ritual* (pp. 84-85):

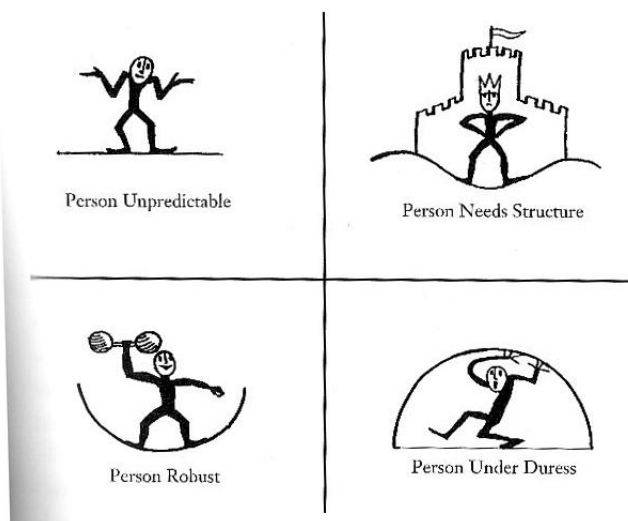
...the individual must rely on others to complete the picture of him of which he himself is allowed to paint only certain parts. Each individual is responsible for the demeanor image of himself and the deference image of others... While it may be true that the individual has a unique self all his own, evidence of this possession is thoroughly a product of joint ceremonial labor...

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<sup>1</sup> See E. Wendland, “Framing the frames” p. 11: “...from the most general, i.e., *cognitive* frames, down through *sociocultural*, *organizational*, *conversational*, *intertextual*, and *textual*—to the most specific, *lexical* frames.” He names ten “macro-frames” for heuristic purposes, but also cites Fauconnier and Turner (2006:336-337), who list fifteen. Lakoff thinks there are some universal *schemata* such as “more is up”, based on the human body's interaction with the world, but has not defined them in any systematic way.

Douglas, an anthropologist, begins and ends with social frames, but is willing to put forth a short canonical-looking taxonomy of her own. She expands Emile Durkheim's concepts of *Gemeinschaft* / *Gesellschaft* into four categories or cultural types applied across a two-dimensional grid of freedom and solidarity. Thus personal freedom comes at the cost of solidarity and vice versa, or else the combination is unstable. As it applies to the concept of the self, it looks like this:

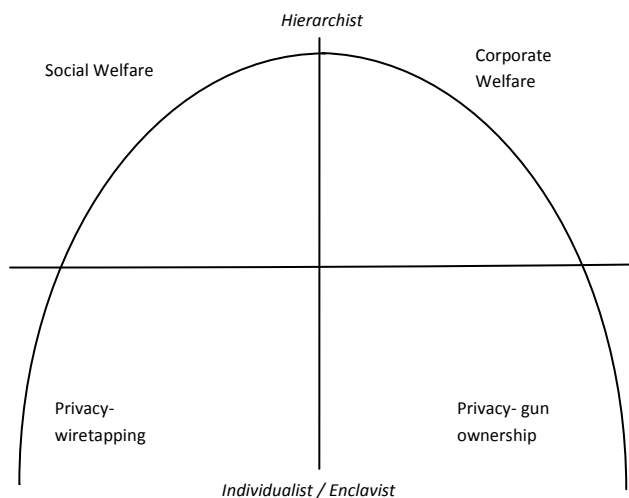
#### Four selves in four cultures



This presentation is consistent with what Douglas has put forth elsewhere, and deserves a more extended treatment below. But it is important to note that she, like Goffman, seems to use her cultural types more as a matter of descriptive convenience than as somehow encompassing the complexity of human interaction. She states:

If anyone protests that there are really fifteen, five hundred, or two thousand [cultural] types, or six or eight dimensions, they mistake the exercise. Eleven thousand or a million would *not* be enough to cover the variety that is out there (Douglas, 1998: p. 101).

That this four-fold structure is not “canonical” is that not only is it an explicit “exercise” according to Douglas, but also in that hybridization can be seen at work within the scheme, as individuals and groups negotiate meaning in three or four categories at the same time, or within different situations. A diagram of traditional political divisions in the USA can illustrate this:



Here we can see that those on the right can argue against government involvement in individuals' lives when the issue is gun ownership, yet argue for government involvement when it comes to helping out business with tax breaks, subsidies, and incentives. Those on the left also argue for and against government involvement, depending on the issue (social welfare, wiretapping). Note that the horseshoe brings those in favor of government involvement together at the top of the arc, while those opposed are more typically irreconcilably divided ideologically at the bottom. There seem to be elements of Douglas' enclavist category (especially boundary-setting) at work in this aspect of the representation.

What Douglas states here is consistent as well with how Goffman views framing. It is seen as specific-purpose driven, arising from human interaction, and based on the negotiation of the self as the primary layer of all human interaction and therefore, communication. The resulting matrix of experience has been referred to as the maintenance of social occasions and the organization of experience by Goffman and as thought styles or cultural biases by Douglas. It also can be seen as directly related to (if not identical with) the concept of a shared cognitive environment in relevance theory.

### **Thought-Communities and Cultural Clusters**

Douglas starts from the point of view that the conceptual worlds formed from the purposeful categorizing activities mentioned above are essentially social, not individual.

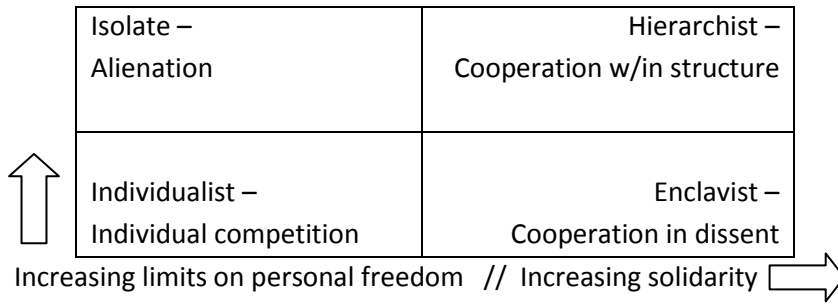
Emile Durkheim had another way of thinking about the conflict between individual and society (Durkheim, 1903, 1912)... For him the initial error is to deny the social origins of individual thought. Classifications, logical operations, and guiding metaphors are given to the individual by society. Above all, the sense of a priori rightness of some ideas and the nonsensicality of others are handed out as part of the social environment. He thought the reaction of outrage when entrenched judgments are challenged is a gut response directly due to commitment to a social group. (Douglas:1986, p. 10).

Douglas uses the work of Ludwick Fleck to further develop this idea of the social origins of conceptual systems, which he calls thought collectives and thought styles (Douglas elsewhere call them cultural biases, among other things):

For Fleck, the thought style sets the precondition of any cognition, and it determines what can be counted as a reasonable question and a true and false answer. It provides the context and sets the limits for any judgment about objective reality. Its essential feature is to be hidden from the members of the thought collective.

Douglas has developed a grid/group theory of cultures which is an extension of the idea of personal freedom versus social solidarity put forth earlier by Durkheim and others as the contrast between community and society. The original social argument stated that where there existed a high degree of individual freedom, there usually was also a lack of social solidarity, and vice versa. In other words, in communities where an individual's business is everyone's business, that person is nevertheless supported by means of the social structure as long as she or he plays by the rules of the group. In societies where one may do pretty much as one pleases, there is also a marked lack of support from others when anything goes wrong. Douglas has mapped this onto a graph which describes not two, but four different cultural patterns.

## Cultural Clusters



In this graph, the horizontal axis describes increasing solidarity while increasing limits on options is plotted along the vertical axis. The resulting chart describes four cultural models, and Douglas argues that cultures tend to cluster in these corners, such that one does not usually get the values and behaviors of the differing patterns mixing together to any great extent. The cultural modes can express themselves in various aspects of life, whether economics, religion, politics, the arts, or even such things as “personal” taste. The four models are:

**Hierarchists** – socialist or welfare economies (as well as traditional communities), those cultures whose various and varied attempts to form a more structured society than that of the individualists give them a great deal of social cohesion but rob them of personal freedom. Knowing and keeping ones place in society is highly valued.

**Individualists** - market economies, individualist cultures where the free and open exchange of goods, ideas, values, etc., is the primary mode of interaction. Personal achievement is rewarded; failure to achieve on a personal level is not well tolerated. Competition is expected, conspicuous consumption a sign of wealth.

**Enclavists** - also known as sectarians or communards, they value both personal freedom and social solidarity. The only way to achieve the latter without sacrificing the former is through sheer commitment to the group. Utopian groups cluster here. Leadership is weak, membership often temporary (e.g. political campaigns).

**Isolates** - these people are not connected well to their peers, but feel trapped by rules imposed by the dominant cultural forms. They are the homeless, the blue-collar workers on the bottom rung without union support, and others living at the margins of the other cultural models.

Douglas considers isolates and enclavists by their nature to be less stable, and thus less viable as long-term cultural patterns than the individualist and hierarchist models. That is because she believes that what she traces out as the diagonal between individualists and hierarchists (shown below as the diagonal of power) describes the older, but still valid observation (by Durkheim) that individual freedom and social solidarity naturally work as opposing pairs to form the most stable cultures. While isolates and enclavists do exist, they usually do so in some sort of subordinate (marginalized) or dissenting relationship to an individualist and hierarchist culture.

Douglas further maps out the cultural types along the two diagonals of her graph. The first, which she calls the positive diagonal (below listed as the diagonal of power), is where most organized groups and societies cluster. Hierarchy and individual competition seem to be the most stable of the cultural groupings. Again, these two types correspond most closely to the original Durkheimian community/society contrast. Though they differ in how they are structured, they both have strong leadership which can reward members (by personal honor or financial gain or by prestige within the group structure) and punish them (by personal failure or poverty or by exclusion from the group) based on how well they are able to play by the rules of the ruling cultural type.

### Diagonal of Power

|                                           |                                               |
|-------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|
|                                           | Hierarchist –<br>Cooperation within structure |
| Individualist –<br>Individual competition |                                               |

While Durkheim and other sociologists were keenly aware of isolates (the term they used to refer to their alienated states was *anomie*), Douglas adds the dissenting enclave and completes her paradigm with a negative diagonal (listed below as the diagonal of dissent). Here, whether in groups or as individuals, are the cultural clusters which are anti-structure. Environmentalist groups, anti-war movements, and some sectarian communities represent the enclavist cluster. They have weak leadership and not much structure. They can neither structurally punish nor reward. Yet individual members have such a high degree of solidarity with other members of the group that enclavists can achieve a great deal together, until such a time as they decide not to work together any longer. Isolates, on the other hand, are completely independent, not even forming the temporary alliances of the enclavists. Either by choice or by lack of options, isolates are the marginalized persons from every other cultural cluster.

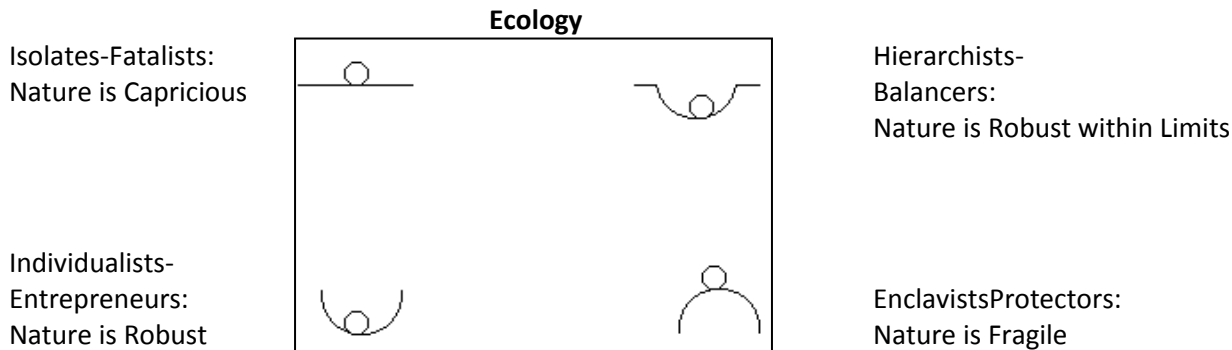
### Diagonal of Dissent

|                         |                                       |
|-------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Isolate –<br>Alienation |                                       |
|                         | Enclavist –<br>Cooperation in dissent |

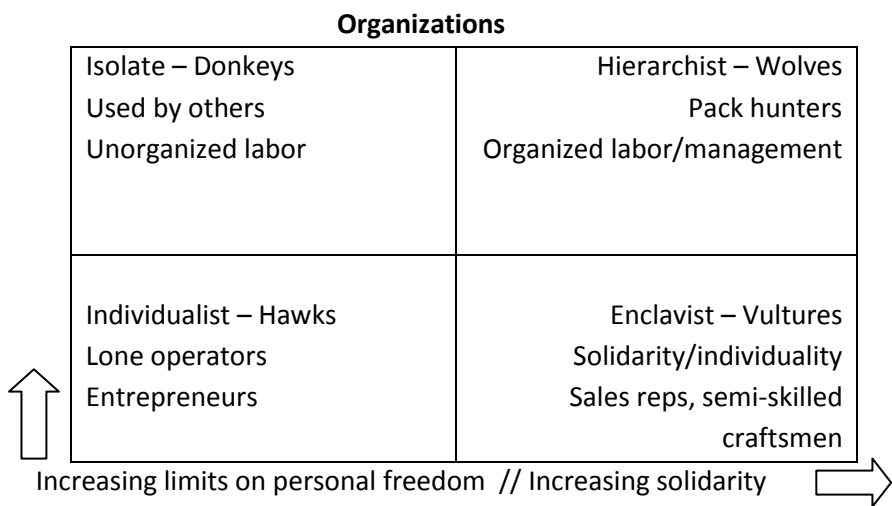
An important feature of Douglas' argument is that most of this loyalty to whatever cultural type or cluster one belongs to goes on without the explicit recognition of it or how it works by the members of the group. In this way it acts like the grammar of a language, known and obeyed by all who speak the language, but often explicitly known only to a few. In fact, the group loyalty is usually expressed not positively, but negatively. In her article "On Not Being Seen Dead: Shopping as Protest", she describes the choices made by consumers as "an agonistic struggle to define not what one is, but what one is not." (1996):p. 104). Many have noted (cf. Hall:1990) the hidden dimension of cultural beliefs and values (though one might argue that marketing specialists must understand some aspects of these very well). Douglas' contribution is to attempt to categorize the kinds of systems to which these heretofore little-understood or examined areas of social structure belong.

In more that one of her books (1992, 1996) Douglas uses her model to look at different approaches to the problems of dealing with the natural environment. Here a different sort of illustration is useful. One can see the different cultural styles at work in the attitudes towards nature and human interaction with it. Individualists see nature as robust. Thus human intervention (logging, drilling, mining, etc.) is not to be feared, since nature will recover its equilibrium easily (in

the figure, the ball representing the environment will roll back down into the bowl even when pushed far up one side or the other). Isolates take no particular view, and see nature as essentially unpredictable. Hierarchists are willing to interfere to a degree, but wish to put limits on human action with regard to nature. And enclavists see nature as precariously balanced and in need of protection. Thus enclavists oppose the intervention of the hierarchists and especially of the individualists. While all these positions seem to be about nature, according to Douglas they are really about the cultural types. One can see how these views of nature justify the very kinds of behavior one expects from each of the clusters.



In another application of Douglas’ grid/group model, Gerald Mars (Douglas:1992) has analyzed organizational cultures using various animal metaphors. The categories are self-explanatory, and the metaphors are helpful in capturing the distinctive traits of the four different styles or cultures.



One can easily expand the model to include cultures relevant to whatever area is under discussion. Thus religion, or one particular form of it, can be classified as shown below:

| Christianity                          |                                                  |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|
| Isolate –<br>Some forms of asceticism | Hierarchist –<br>Roman Catholicism               |
| Individualist –<br>Protestantism      | Enclavist –<br>New Testament Era<br>Christianity |

In this representation, the history of modern Europe and North America can be seen a general move from hierarchist to individualist modes. Whether in the arts (The Renaissance) or science (The Enlightenment) or religion (The Reformation), the trend has been from the upper right to the lower left.

### Grid/groups and Bible translation

In terms of Bible translation, another table presents itself. Some of the problems which can result may be seen clearly in such a table. Since the Hebrew Bible comes fundamentally out of a hierarchist culture, and the translating cultures (a phrase truer to the dynamic of translation than “receptor cultures”) are also often hierarchist, it should not come as a surprise that many of these translating cultures demonstrate a great deal of interest precisely in the Hebrew Bible, even more so than in the New Testament. Translation consultants, on the other hand, run the risk of understanding the biblical text overwhelmingly in terms of their (usually) individualist cultures and training.

**Bible Translation Process**

|                                                                                  |                                                                                             |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Isolate –<br>Marginalized persons                                                | Hierarchist –<br>HB and most translating<br>language cultures and<br>some national cultures |
| Individualist –<br>Most translation<br>consultants and some<br>national cultures | Enclavist –<br>New Testament and some<br>translating language cultures                      |

This scheme can also be applied to the actual task of translation. The following examples of the biblical concepts of faith, righteousness, and salvation provide test cases for Douglas’s model.

### Faith

Faith in the Hebrew Bible (a hierarchist culture) is arguably mostly presented as faithfulness (though Israel is called upon to “wait upon” Yahweh as well). In a society valuing social solidarity, it is hardly surprising that this should be so. The NT situation is already quite different. The nascent Christian community is enclavist, and thus we see faith as trust and hope cf. Paul’s’ famous reinterpretation of the Habakkuk citation “The just (person) shall live by his/her faith(fulness).” –Rom 1.17/Hab 2.4. Yet in modern interpretation (within individualist cultures for the most part), *belief*, or strength of conviction are usually emphasized. For isolates, faith would likely be both personal and risky.

**Faith**

|                                                 |                                                       |
|-------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------|
| Isolate –<br>“Blind” faith?                     | Hierarchist –<br>Commitment/loyalty<br>(faithfulness) |
| Individualist –<br>Belief/confidence/conviction | Enclavist –<br>Trust/hope                             |

In translation it is of course important to know about and account for the translating culture type as well as the source text, since one might need to mediate understandings of commitment and loyalty into a culture of personal belief and conviction, or alternately ideas of trust and hope into a culture of social solidarity and hierarchy. Individualist culture often understands commitment negatively as odious duty, and hierarchist culture often sees trust or hope as too weak to sustain the relationships between God and humans described in scripture. Translators need to mediate these

understandings one way or the other in order to be true to the presumed original communication as well as ensure that the translating culture comes away with the right understanding.

## Righteousness

Righteousness is another term/concept with which translators wrestle. In Gen 38 the Hebrew Bible relates the story of Judah and Tamar, his daughter-in-law. At the end of the story (which includes Tamar tricking Judah into having sexual relations with her), as Tamar is being brought out to be stoned and in that moment reveals that Judah is the father of the child she is bearing, Judah declares: “she is more righteous than I am.” This sentence is nonsense to most modern readers from individualist cultures. For them, righteousness is personal piety and virtue. Seducing your father-in-law by trickery does not only does not qualify one as righteous, but quite the opposite. Yet for a culture of hierarchy, the whole point of the story is that Tamar was simply doing all she could to fulfill the mutual obligations which existed in the relationship between herself and her father-in-law. He owed her a husband, and she owed him an offspring to continue his lineage. That she felt forced to do this by subterfuge and incest is secondary to the real point of righteousness in such a culture. The NT at times assumes the hierarchist perspective of the Hebrew Bible with regard to righteousness, but at other times (cf. Romans) seems to take an enclavist position whereby righteousness is more of a state of being in a right relationship based on trust (faith and universal love).

### Righteousness

|                                                       |                                     |
|-------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Isolate –<br>Existential good faith<br>(true to self) | Hierarchist –<br>Mutual obligations |
| Individualist –<br>Personal virtue / rights           | Enclavist –<br>Universal love       |

## Salvation

Salvation is a term/concept which normally is discussed in commentaries under the headings of the individual or the community, and of physical or spiritual realization. As a matter of fact, the Hebrew Bible speaks often of salvation in both physical and communal terms (though the Psalms seem to have a personal salvation in view in many contexts as well). The NT is many times less clear on both levels, speaking of salvation through/in Christ without specifying directly whether it is personal or communal, physical or spiritual or some combination of these possibilities.

In modern contexts of interpretation, there is often a sharp difference between different interpretive communities on the biblical concept in general. Personal spiritual salvation is often the preferred (esp. Protestant) interpretation within the individualist cultures of European descent. Yet the Theology of Liberation has sprung up in the more traditional hierarchist soil of Latin America, emphasizing both the communal and physical aspects of salvation, and not surprisingly, depending mostly on texts from the Hebrew Bible to support their case. And when the audience is truly marginalized (isolates), the salvation message is often of both a personal and an apocalyptic (future) nature. According to Douglas’ analysis, we would expect just these patterns, as represented in the illustration below.

### Salvation

|                                       |                                    |
|---------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Isolate –<br>Personal/apocalyptic     | Hierarchist –<br>Communal/physical |
| Individualist –<br>Personal/spiritual | Enclavist –<br>Communal/spiritual  |

At this point it is useful to turn to Douglas again. In *How Institutions Think*, she does not balk at turning her attention to those beliefs and values which her readers would most resist subjecting to the scrutiny of her scheme:

...the idea of justice is not a natural response as to an emotion or to an appetite. As an intellectual system, it has a kind of second-order naturalness because it is a necessary condition for human society. Fabricated precisely for the purpose of justifying and stabilizing institutions, it is founded on conventions ... no single element of justice has innate rightness: for being right it depends upon its generality, its schematic coherence, and its fit with other accepted general principles. Justice is a more or less satisfactory intellectual system designed to secure the coordination of a particular set of institutions. (1986, p. 114).

Douglas examines the concept of justice in the context of the individualist cultural pattern within which both she and most of her readers live:

The more the discrimination by birth and the larger the gap between the entitlements of different classes, the more we would condemn the inequality of it. Yet, however vehemently we assert our own principles of justice, they are still the principles which have emerged over the last two hundred years, along with the emergence of an economic system based on individual contract. Turning itself from a horizontal pattern of integration to a vertical one...The result has been the sacralization of a society based on an extravagant use of energy unprecedented [sic] in the history of the world. This is a society that uses equality of individuals to justify itself, but in world-wide comparisons of justice its economic ascendancy and its efforts to maintain its unequal advantage become hard to justify by its own principles of legitimation. (1986, pp. 118-119).

Thus a network of ideas of loyalty, obligation, and physical salvation of the community within the hierarchist culture of mutual obligation represented by the Hebrew Bible were first transformed in the enclavist culture of the NT into concepts of trust, love, and spiritual community salvation. And these both have finally been largely distilled out within modern individualist cultures as conviction, virtue and personal salvation.

In the end, Mary Douglas and the other scholars mentioned above cannot be held responsible for what use is made of them. Yet whether or not the applications above are found to be convincing, the work of Douglas and these other scholars is well worth exploring.

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