AN INTRODUCTION TO
SOCIAL ANTHROPOLOGY

VOLUME TWO
AN INTRODUCTION TO
SOCIAL ANTHROPOLOGY

RALPH PIDDINGTON, M.A., PH.D.
PROFESSOR OF ANTHROPOLOGY, AUCKLAND UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE, UNIVERSITY OF NEW ZEALAND

VOLUME TWO

OLIVER AND BOYD
EDINBURGH: TWEEDDALE COURT
LONDON: 39A WELBECK STREET, W.1
PREFACE

1. Scope of the Present Work

When Volume I of An Introduction to Social Anthropology was published in 1950, I estimated that the period to be taken to complete the present work would be from two to three years. In fact it has taken about twice that time, mainly because my present appointment has made unexpected demands on my time, particularly in regard to administration and extra-mural commitments. I should like warmly to thank my publishers for the understanding and forbearance which they have shown to me in this situation.

One result of the above circumstances is that I have been forced to curtail somewhat the projected scope of this work. I originally intended to deal more fully with such topics as race relations, language, and the results of the application of anthropological methods to modern societies. But as these are very wide topics, involving many controversial issues, an adequate treatment of them would have delayed indefinitely the production of this book.

Furthermore, I originally intended to include a chapter on anthropological theory. Since 1950, however, there have appeared, quite apart from numerous theoretical articles, five major works in this field: Nadel, The Foundations of Social Anthropology; Parsons and Shils (Ed.), Toward a General Theory of Action; Kroeber and Kluckhohn, Culture; Bidney, Theoretical Anthropology, and Radcliffe-Brown, A Natural Science of Society. My omission of any treatment of this material, however, has not been due merely to considerations of expediency. I seriously doubt the relevance of much of it to the anthropological issues which I regard as of major importance. Lest I be accused of impudently denigrating these works of high scholarship, I should like to make my position clear to teachers and to advanced students who may be interested in the problems concerned. Others need not read the next two sections of this Preface.

2. Anthropological Theory and Ethnophilsophy

As will be clear from Chapter XIV and from Chapter XVI, Section 13, my conception of theory is operational. I regard it
essentially as a charter for research. And I am in complete agree-
ment with Dr. Richard Sheldon in holding that no body of theory
can be regarded as scientific until its conceptualizations can be
translated into operational terms.¹ The following passage sum-
marizes his criticisms of the Theory of Action: "The theory is
indeed an all-embracing one, and the potentialities for developing
a unified social science theory are high, provided one can give
factual meaning to the categories in terms of operations and pro-
vided one can derive from these categories relationships subject to
empirical test. It is on these two 'provideds' that the theory will
stand or fall, and for the present we must await their full testing".²
I suggest that the same applies, at least in part, to the other theo-
retical developments which have been mentioned.

The distinction which I am attempting to draw between
anthropological theory and ethnosophistry (to coin a term for a
special branch of social philosophy) may best be illustrated with
reference to the work of the late Professor Nadel, because of his
outstanding scholarship in both fields. The Foundations of Social
Anthropology is a brilliant work. But it contains no internal evidence
that it was written, as it was, by one of the greatest ethnographers
of our time. It might have been the work of a scholar who had
never even visited a non-European community. I suggest that
the reader who is interested in human relations, and particularly
the prospective field-worker, will learn far more theory from
A Black Byzantium, The Nuba, and the many other contributions
which Nadel made to scientific social anthropology.

I am not suggesting that, of the two types of enquiry with
which we are concerned, one is inherently "better" than the
other. I merely insist that they must be distinguished from each
other according to their function, and their pursuit justified on
different grounds. In general terms, our cultural heritage includes
two bodies of knowledge: Firstly, scientific knowledge, the pursuit
of which leads to an understanding, through research, of the
relationships between natural, biological or social phenomena;
it thus provides, actually or potentially, practical solutions for
concrete human problems. Secondly, there is the body of knowl-
edge often termed "cultural", in the non-anthropological sense; for
example, knowledge of literature, art, music and philosophy.

¹ Sheldon, "Some Observations on Theory in the Social Sciences" in Parsons and
Shils (1), pp. 30-44.
Such knowledge is mainly pursued "for its own sake"—not primarily because it leads to practical solutions for social problems but because it provides the individual with a more satisfying appreciation of the world around him. The distinction, it must be emphasized, is one which refers to function and not to motives (cf. Vol. I, pp. 7–9). Individual scientists derive intellectual satisfaction from contemplating the regularities in nature and in society which their researches reveal to them, while other scholars may organize "cultural" knowledge to achieve practical results—for example in the "social" novel. But this should not obscure the broad differences in social effects and in institutional functions between the two bodies of knowledge. In these terms much philosophy, and ethnophilosophy in particular, may be categorized as "just talk", but only in the same way as literature is "just writing" or music "just noise". What such statements mean is that we are not for present purposes interested in the body of knowledge concerned, that we recognize no moral or pragmatic imperative to be so, and that we can afford to neglect it in the prosecution of scientific research and in the consequent formulation of conclusions relevant to human welfare.

It may, then, be suggested that much of what nowadays passes as anthropological or sociological theory belongs more properly with philosophy than with anthropology, while at least some of it recalls the parable of the Mexican Invisible Fish (pp. 526–7). This conclusion will no doubt be disputed, and I may be accused of taking a naïve, superficial and restricted view of the anthropologist's task and of perpetuating the academic compartmentalism which does so much harm in University teaching. There may be some substance in these charges. I can only invite readers to refer to the works I have cited, from which they will certainly derive intellectual stimulation, and to make up their minds for themselves.

3. Some Research Directives

While urging the importance of the distinction drawn in the preceding section, we must admit at once that it is often difficult to say at what point semantic disputation ends and operational directives for research begin. Though such directives may not be explicitly formulated, they may be implicit in the argument. To illustrate this, let us consider the discussion by Kroeber and
Kluckhohn of definitions of the term "culture". The authors classify definitions of culture into six major categories, which they exemplify and subject to critical analysis:

Group A: Enumeratively descriptive—those definitions which consist of a more or less complete list of the kinds of traits included in culture.

Group B: Historical—those which lay major stress on the transmission of culture.

Group C: Normative—those which emphasize the rules or ways of life implied in culture, or ideals and values reflected in behaviour.

Group D: Psychological—those which emphasize adjustment, problem-solving, learning or habit as the essential elements in culture.

Group E: Structural—those which stress social structure or organization.

Group F: Genetic—those which treat culture primarily as a product, both material and social, of human activity, or as a set of ideas or symbols.

Now it might at first sight appear that such analyses and criticisms of definitions have no operational relevance. In fact, while conducting class discussions on them, I have more than once been accused by post-graduate students of attempting to usurp the functions of my colleagues in the Department of Philosophy. How, such students ask, will all this help us in studying the actual behaviour of Fijians or Maoris? The answer can be given in terms of the history of anthropological theory in relation to actual research. Each of the categories emphasizes an important facet or dimension of culture which has at various times in the past been either ignored or over-emphasized. Thus definitions of Group A stress the vast range of crude data which may be observed in any culture (cf. p. 557), but by themselves lead only to tedious inventories of "traits" (Vol. I, pp. 22-4; Vol. II, pp. 521, 530). Transmission (Group B) is obviously an important feature of culture, but over-emphasis on it may lead to a confusion between synchronic and diachronic studies (Appendix C). The normative system of generally accepted cultural values (Group C) is one of the most important things which the ethnographer must

1 Kroeber and Kluckhohn (1), pp. 40 sqq. The following exposition is very much condensed, and omits certain categories of minor importance.
study; but such study must not lead him to produce over-simpli-
fi ed "patterns" (Chapter XVI) or to ignore the incidence and
character of deviations from the accepted way of life (pp. 536–8).
That emphasis on the psychological phenomena connected with
culture (Group D) is of vital importance will be clear from
Chapter XVI, but it is also necessary to stress in that chapter the
danger of facile psychological interpretations of complex cultural
phenomena. Again, structure and organization (Group E) are
essential features of every culture, a framework which every field-
worker must understand; but they must not be regarded as defin-
ing the whole of the ethnographer's task, as has sometimes
occurred in the past. Finally, the emphasis on culture as a system
of products—material, social and psychological—directs attention
to the concrete object of the field-worker's study—the existing
artefacts, ideas and symbols, as he observes them. But this system
must also be considered by him in terms of how it functions; and
also perhaps with reference to its genesis (so far as this can be
ascertained) and the changes taking place to produce a new
system of products in the future.

To summarize, discussions such as that of Kroeber and Kluck-
hohn draw attention to types of conceptual approach which have
both stimulated and limited actual research in the past. They
therefore serve both as a stimulus and a warning to those who will
carry out field-work in the future. It is probably true that the
operational significance of some of the theoretical material
referred to in Section 2 above might be argued on similar grounds.
But so far as most of it is concerned, the present writer is sceptical.
C'est magnifique, mais ce n'est pas l'ethnologie.

4. Acknowledgements

I should like, in the first place, to acknowledge again the deep
debt of gratitude which I owe to my wife for her help and en-
couragement in the preparation of both volumes of this work.
I must also express my profound indebtedness to my colleagues,
Dr. W. R. Geddes, Mr. Bruce Biggs, Mr. J. Golson, Mr. R. A.
Scobie and Dr. R. M. S. Taylor, for valuable criticisms which
have helped me greatly in writing this book, as also for their
unfailing co-operation in dealing with teaching and administra-
tive problems in our Department. As a research assistant, Miss
Joan Metge gave invaluable assistance in the writing of Chapter
XII. The same applies to Mr. R. R. Nayacakalou in respect of
Chapters XIII and XVIII, Section 5 of the former chapter being based on his own original observations. Miss Myrtle Pulham has typed the manuscript, much of it through more than one draft. I am grateful to her, not only for her impeccable work, but also for saving me many times from over-indulgence in the academic privilege of absent-mindedness.

I renew my thanks to the Executors of the late R. W. Williamson and the Cambridge University Press for their permission to reproduce sections of text originally contributed by me as Editor to Mr. Williamson’s posthumous works. The International Institute of African Languages and Cultures and Dr. Otto Raum have kindly allowed me to reproduce in Chapter XV, Section 6, an extract from the latter’s work, *Chaga Childhood*. The Institute has also given permission for the reproduction from their publications of Figures 25 and 28. For Figures 24, 27 and 29 I am similarly indebted to Messrs. Routledge and Kegan Paul, and for Figures 26, 30 and 31 to Messrs. George Allen and Unwin. I also wish to thank the Editor of *The Lancet* for his permission to reproduce the extracts from that journal cited in Appendix D.

RALPH PIDDINGTON

DEPARTMENT OF ANTHROPOLOGY,
AUCKLAND UNIVERSITY COLLEGE,
UNIVERSITY OF NEW ZEALAND,
January, 1937
CONTENTS OF VOLUME II

Preface . . . . . . . . . . v

CHAPTER XII
PLACE—WORK—FOLK

1. The Human Organism and its Environment . . 443
3. The Anthropologist's Approach . . . . . 450
4. The Socio-Geographical Adjustment of the Nuer . 452
5. Environment and Culture . . . . . 455
6. Natural Resources . . . . . 458
7. Climate and Seasonal Variation . . . . . 462
8. Topography and Communication Routes . . . 470
9. Demography . . . . . . . . 478
10. Bibliographical Commentary . . . . . 482

CHAPTER XIII
PEOPLE AND THINGS

1. Material and Social Culture . . . . . 483
2. Technology and "Inventiveness" . . . . . 484
3. Technology as an Aspect of Culture . . . 487
4. The Trobriand Bwayma . . . . . 490
5. The Fijian House . . . . . . . . 497
6. Implications of the Evolution of Maori Clothing . 501
7. Diffusion and Independent Evolution . . . 507
8. A Note on Museums . . . . . . . . 511
9. Primitive Art . . . . . . . . . . 516
CONTENTS

10. Material Culture: A Contradiction in Terms . . 521
11. Bibliographical Commentary . . . 523

CHAPTER XIV

METHODS OF FIELD-WORK

1. The Necessity and Dangers of Theory in the Social Sciences . . . . 525
2. Method and Technique: The Strategy and Tactics of Field-work . . . . 527
3. The Interrelationships of Ethnographic Data . . 530
4. The Task of Creative Synthesis . . . . 531
5. The Concrete Orientation of Enquiries . . 533
6. Reliability of Informants: Deviations of Opinion and Behaviour . . . . 534
7. The Integration and Organization of Ethnographic Material . . . . 538
8. Relevance of Information and the Problem of Rambling 542
9. Imponderabilia of Social Life and Implicit Values . 544
10. The Danger of Personal Bias . . . . 546
11. Participant Observation . . . . 547
12. The Problem of Initial Contacts . . . . 550
13. The Interview . . . . 553
14. Incentives of Informants . . . . 555
15. Mnemonic Aids and Check Lists . . . . 557
16. European Residents . . . . 559
17. Period of Field Research . . . . 561

CHAPTER XV

METHODS OF FIELD-WORK (continued)

1. Language as a Tool of Field-work . . . . 564
2. Documents and Records . . . . 567
CONTENTS

3. Team Work and Follow-up Studies . . 571
4. Publication . . 575
5. The Birth of a Toda Child . . 579
6. The Birth of a Chaga Child . . 584
7. Ethnographic Criticism . . 587
8. Training for Field-work . . 594
9. Bibliographical Commentary . . 595

CHAPTER XVI

CULTURE AND PERSONALITY

1. Psychology and Anthropology . . 597
2. The Study of Cultural Configurations . . 599
3. The Individual and the Cultural Pattern . . 606
4. Theme and Counter-theme . . 609
5. The Classification and Analysis of Cultural Orientations . . 611
6. Components and Determinants of Personality . . 613
7. Criticism of Certain Trends . . 615
8. Some Questionable Assumptions . . 618
9. Spurious Comparisons . . 625
10. Universal Conditions and Prepotent Cultural Responses . . 630
11. Intuitive Interpretations of Ethnographic Data . . 632
12. Culture and Personality as an Operational Problem . . 640
13. Bibliographical Commentary . . 645

CHAPTER XVII

CULTURE CONTACT: AGENCIES OF CHANGE

1. Limitation of the Field and some Terminological Points . . . . 647
CONTENTS

2. The Variety of European Agencies . . . 655
3. "Trade Follows the Flag" . . . 657
4. Indirect Rule and Self-government . . . 659
5. Economic Influences . . . 664
6. Missionary Influences . . . 670
7. Native Education . . . 680

CHAPTER XVIII

CULTURE CONTACT IN TWO AREAS

1. Introduction . . . . . 685
2. The Hehe Experiment . . . 686
3. Traditional Social Organization of the Hehe . 688
4. European Influences . . . 703
5. Conclusions of the Hehe Experiment . . . 707
6. The Traditional Culture of Malaita . . . 709
7. European Contacts in Malaita . . . 717

CHAPTER XIX

CULTURE CONTACT: TRENDS AND POLICIES

1. Emergent Development . . . . . 727
2. Adjustment Cults . . . . . 735
3. Assumptions of Policy and the New Imperialism . . . 744
4. Bibliographical Commentary . . . . 748

CHAPTER XX

THE STUDY OF MORE COMPLEX SOCIETIES

1. Types of Human Society . . . . 751
2. Modern Urban Civilizations . . . 758
3. Some Problems of Method . . . . 765
## CONTENTS

4. The Interdisciplinary Approach .................................................. 768
5. Social Anthropology and Modern Life ........................................... 775
6. Bibliographical Commentary ......................................................... 776

## APPENDICES

A. An Ethnographic Document ......................................................... 778
B. The Rationalizations of Yuari ..................................................... 781
C. Synchronic and Diachronic Studies ............................................... 796
D. The Carefree Primitive  
   **BIBLIOGRAPHY** ................................................................. 806
   **INDEX** ............................................................................. 815

## FIGURES

22. Paradigm of *Merbok* Exchanges ..................................................... 460
23. Seasonal Rhythm of Effort, Northern Chota Nagpur Plateau .......... 468
24. Extract from Maori Seasonal Cycle ............................................... 469
25. Extract from Nupe Seasonal Cycle ............................................... 471
26. Trobriand Chart of Time-reckoning .............................................. 472
27. Chart of Tikopia Economic and Social Activities,  
   1928–29 ................................................................................. facing page 474
28. Extract from Seasonal Cycle of the Tallensi .................................. 476
29. Extract from Table of Calendrical Equation in  
   KaisSenkung ........................................................................... 477
30. Side View of a *Bwayma* .............................................................. 490
31. Front View of a *Bwayma* ............................................................ 493
32. Rough Plan of a Fijian House ....................................................... 499
33. The Cultural Setting of Artefacts .................................................. 522
34. Table of Cultural Cross-references  .  .  .  541
35. Bronislaw Malinowski: Field-work and Use of Native Languages in Melanesia  .  .  .  562
CHAPTER XII

PLACE—WORK—FOLK

1. The Human Organism and its Environment

Like any other natural species, man must adapt himself to the physical environment in which he lives. Having certain imperative biological needs, he must exist in a habitat which allows of their satisfaction, or must modify the environment so that such satisfaction is achieved. But when we contrast man’s ecology with that of the lower animals, we are struck by three important differences.

Firstly, man is biologically the least specialized of the animals. In a sense, man is very ordinary. His anatomy lacks such specialized adaptive organs as claws, fangs and horns; he does not possess the speed of the deer nor the thick hide of the pachyderms; even when contrasted with the sub-human primates, he is not well adapted for climbing, while his physical strength is inferior to that of the orang-utan or the gorilla.

Notable exceptions to the generalized physical adaptation of man are his power of speech and the specialization of his feet and legs for locomotion. The significance of the latter specialization is not that it greatly increases his speed of movement but that it makes possible the emancipation of the hands.

As we saw in Vol. 1 (pp. 220–21), man’s power of speech permits the development of language, while the emancipation of his hands facilitates the construction of artefacts. But neither of these human characteristics—language and tool-making—is instinctive. Different cultures have canalized man’s power of speech on the one hand and his manipulative potentialities on the other to produce the wide variety of languages and artefacts found among human communities.

The central nervous system of man is relatively unspecialized. It represents the culmination of a long process of evolution, in which the neopallium of the more primitive types of nervous system evolved into the highly developed cerebral cortex of man.¹ On the behavioural side this was correlated with the increasing

¹ For an account of how this occurred, see Herrick, An Introduction to Neurology.
predominance of acquired as opposed to innate reflex or instinctive behaviour. Moreover, in the later phases of this evolutionary process, a new feature appeared, a characteristic which has been called insight behaviour in contradistinction to the well-known mechanism of trial and error. Contrasting the learning processes of monkeys with those of lower mammals, Zuckerman writes:

A hungry dog or cat is confined in a problem cage, and to stimulate its efforts to escape food is placed near-by. In the course of the random movements the animal makes, it operates a catch that opens a door and so secures the food. Every succeeding time it is deprived of its freedom, it escapes in the same way, and gradually the number of random movements decreases until finally the only movement it makes to secure freedom is the adequate one of working the catch. From experiments of this kind, Thorndike found that cats and dogs learn by trial and error, and by similar methods he discovered that monkeys learn in a different and characteristic manner. After spending some time in useless movement, the monkey may suddenly go through the necessary series of movements as though they were part of an already established and adequate habit. The learning of the monkey thus differs qualitatively from that of the lower mammal, since such a solution does not bear the stamp of chance that characterizes “trial and error”. It also differs quantitatively, since it is superior to that of the cat or dog in the greater number of habits that can be formed, in the greater rapidity of their formation, and in their greater permanence.¹

Man’s alimentary potentialities are likewise generalized, as is illustrated by the structure of his teeth, which have affinities to those of the carnivores on the one hand and of the herbivores on the other. This is reflected in the nutritional systems of different human communities. While most of them have a mixed diet, we find, for example, the Eskimo living almost exclusively on flesh foods in contradistinction to the Bemba, whose diet is heavily weighted on the vegetarian side.

Secondly, man’s distribution over the surface of the globe is wider than that of any other animal species.² Only relatively small areas of the world’s surface lack any human population, whereas almost all the other primates are restricted to wooded habitats in warm and temperate climates.

¹ Zuckerman (1), pp. 156–57. It should be noted that students of animal behaviour are not agreed as to whether insight behaviour is qualitatively different from learning by trial and error; nor as to whether it is a peculiar characteristic of primate behaviour or is to be found in a rudimentary form among the lower mammals (op. cit., pp. 158–63). But whatever the nature of the difference, its existence is of considerable importance in understanding human behaviour.
² The apparent exceptions of the dog and the rat have been mentioned previously (Vol. I, p. 224).
Thirdly, man modifies his environment to a greater extent than any other animal. Even such special adaptations as the dams of beavers or the warrens of rabbits are restricted to particular localities and climates; nor do they exhibit, for any given species, the variability seen in the comparison between an igloo, a long house and a modern skyscraper. Unfortunately, anthropologists have neglected to pay sufficient attention to the ways in which man has modified his environment. They have stressed the influences exerted on man by nature, neglecting the reverse relationship.¹

These characteristics of human ecology are interrelated. Because man’s anatomy is generalized, he can adapt himself to life in the jungle, steppe or desert; because of the plasticity of his behaviour and his manipulative ability, he can invent and fashion material adaptations to ice-floe, canyon or atoll; his power of speech facilitates the co-operation necessary in such adaptations and their transmission from one generation to the next.


The significance of the natural environment in the study of human culture must be neither underestimated nor overestimated. It has been a subject of controversy, not only among anthropologists but also among geographers. Some geographers in the past have interpreted their science as the study of the physical features of the earth’s surface, envisaging human beings as passive fauna crawling about the landscape, their thoughts, customs and temperaments being determined primarily, if not exclusively, by their natural environment. At the other extreme some anthropologists and sociologists have in the past tended to consider human societies without reference to the physical conditions of their life, and have discussed human communities as though they lived in a void and subsisted on dewdrops.

From ancient times men have been aware of their close association with nature and have interpreted it in different ways. The most consistent tendency has been for philosophic thinkers to attribute to the physical forces of nature (the natural environment) a controlling influence, not only on man’s manner of life and on his institutions, but also on his physical and spiritual development. There are examples of this view in the works of

¹ See Stewart (1).
some of the ancient Greek philosophers, and it reappears in the writings of Bodin, Montesquieu and Rousseau.¹

A more balanced evaluation of the relationship between man and nature was advanced by two German geographers of the nineteenth century, Ritter and Humboldt. They were agreed that the action of man on the earth is quite as important as that of the earth on man; in short, that the relationship is reciprocal. Neither, however, was concerned primarily with this aspect of their science, although Ritter wrote that the aim of geography is "to present a living picture of the whole land, its natural and cultivated products, its natural and human features, and to present all these as a coherent whole in such a way that the most significant inferences about man and nature will be self-evident, especially when they are compared side by side."²

Friedrich Ratzel (1844–1904) was the first geographer to devote himself to the serious and systematic investigation of the subject, for which he originated the term "Anthropogeographic". Ratzel's approach was systematic, not regional.³ It was based on Darwin's theory of evolution. Ratzel saw man as the end product of evolution, the result of a natural selection of the types best adjusted to their physical environment. Man is moulded by the physical forces around him, the success of his life being measured in terms of his adjustment to their demands.

Though Ratzel specifically warned against the dangers of placing too great an emphasis on the influence of physical factors on man, there were those among his followers who failed to heed his warning. They revived the old belief in the determination of man's destiny by his natural environment in the guise of scientific theory. The chief exponent of this environmentalism⁴ was Ellen Churchill Semple, whose views are summarized in the following quotation from her well-known book first published in 1911:

Man is a product of the earth's surface. This means not merely that he is a child of the earth, dust of her dust; but that the earth has

¹ For citations and a systematic account of thought on the subject, see Tatham (3). The following statement by Montesquieu is representative: "Cold Europe has vigorous, hard-working men, their tempers bold, active and free; Southern Asia, hot and fertile, makes soft, slack, timid peoples, with despotism, slavery and monkish religions."

² Cited in Tatham (2), p. 43; italics ours.

³ Geographers draw a distinction between regional geography, which studies the totality of interrelations of all geographic features found together at one place, and systematic geography, which is concerned with the differential character of the earth's surface in terms of any single geographical element, natural or cultural; for example, vegetation, peoples, agriculture and so on.

⁴ Also referred to as geographical determinism or environmental determinism.
mothered him, fed him, set him tasks, directed his thoughts, confronted him with difficulties that have strengthened his body and sharpened his wits, given him his problems of navigation or irrigation, and at the same time whispered hints for their solution. She has entered into his bone and tissue, into his mind and soul. On the mountains she has given him leg muscles of iron to climb the slope; along the coast she has left these weak and flabby, but given him instead vigorous development of chest and arm to handle his paddle or oar. In the river valley she attaches him to the fertile soil, circumscribes his ideas and ambitions by a dull round of calm, exacting duties, narrows his outlook to the cramped horizon of his farm. Up on the windswept plateaux, in the boundless stretch of the grasslands and the waterless tracts of the desert, where he roams with his flocks from pasture to pasture and oasis to oasis, where life knows much hardship but escapes the grind of drudgery, where the watching of grazing herds gives him leisure for contemplation, and the wide-ranging life a big horizon, his ideas take on a certain gigantic simplicity; religion becomes monotheism, God becomes one, unrivalled like the sand of the desert and the grass of the steppe, stretching on and on without break or change. Chewing over and over the cud of his simple belief as the one food of his unfed mind, his faith becomes fanaticism; his big special ideas, born of that ceaseless regular wandering, outgrow the land that bred them and bear their legitimate fruit in wide imperial conquests.¹

Other geographers have rejected this extreme viewpoint. The possibilists, led by Vidal de la Blache and Brunhes in France and by Isaiah Bowman and Carl Sauer in America, speak of "geographical relations between physical facts and human destinies", but avoid such words as "control" and "determinants". They emphasize, however, that man, no matter how highly developed his material culture, can never entirely free himself from the influence of his environment. Nature sets the absolute limits within which man has freedom of choice between a number of alternative courses or "possibilities". The number of these alternatives varies from place to place on the earth's surface and from one historical period to another. Thus nature has a greater influence on man's activities in marginal environments, such as extremely hot, cold or arid regions; and upon human communities with a low level of technological achievement. The "possibilities" for human action are greatest in the warm and cool temperate zones and among peoples with an advanced technology. The possibilists thus recognize man's power of choice, while acknowledging that it is limited to a greater or lesser extent by nature. Man is to them, moreover, not a passive being, but an active force reacting on his

environment, modifying both the inorganic and organic features of the earth. In the words of Vidal de la Blache, "Nature is never more than an adviser".¹

A classic contribution to the understanding of human communities in relation to their environments was made by Sir Patrick Geddes, whose central theme of PLACE—WORK—FOLK² is a valuable formula to define the possibilist position. Geddes used the term "Place" to denote the physical environment, "Folk" to refer to the human community inhabiting it and "Work" as a summary of the activities of the community so far as they mediate between the people and their environment. He thus emphasized and summarized two important principles, which as we have seen were being increasingly recognized by geographers:

1. That the relation between man and his environment is essentially a reciprocal one. Environment limits and conditions the activities of the community, but these activities in turn modify the environment. Neither is entirely a slave to the other.

2. That the relation between man and his environment must be interpreted in terms of "work", that is the institutional activities of a community so far as these relate the community to its natural environment.

How these principles operate in the writings of a modern geo-

¹ Quoted in Tatham (1), p. 154. Other extracts from the writings of the possibilists, cited by the same author, give an indication of their views. For example:

There are no necessities, but everywhere possibilities; and man as master of these possibilities is the judge of their use. This by the reversal which it involves puts man in the first place, man and no longer the earth, nor the influence of climate, nor the determinant conditions of localities (Febvre).

Earth facts do not determine the form and nature of human society in development. They condition it. New earth facts are continually being discovered and old earth facts given new significance as human knowledge, thought and social action develop. The relations are reciprocal (Isaiah Bowman).

The power and means which man has at his disposal are limited and he meets in nature bounds which he cannot cross. Human activity can within certain limits vary its play and its movements, but it cannot do away with its environment; it can often modify it, but it can never suppress it and will always be conditioned by it (Brunhes).

² This concept was an adaptation and elaboration of Lieu-Travail-Famille of the French sociologist Le Play by whom Geddes was considerably influenced (cf. Watson (1), pp. 473–74). Many of Geddes's preliminary generalizations, particularly regarding the alleged relation between natural environment and temperamental type, show (like the writings of Le Play) elements of determinism and require modification in the light of current trends in psychology and sociology. But Geddes was always cautious in advancing his hypotheses, and his theoretical speculations were based upon numerous local surveys in parts of the world as far apart as Edinburgh, Mexico, Cyprus and India.
grapher may be exemplified by the following quotation from Professor K. B. Cumberland:

It is not surprising that the environmentalists find high mountain communities, desert tribes, forest pygmies and the Eskimos all highly lucrative and abundantly satisfying subjects for study. This may explain why such relatively insignificant groups bulk so largely in many a school geography syllabus. It is easier, for example, to discover "controls" and "influences" attributable to the "geographic factor" in the high country of the South Island [of New Zealand] than it is on the plains of Canterbury or Southland. On the plains the farmer grows oats and wheat not, as the schoolboy would say "because the climate is good and the soil fertile", but primarily because it is made worth his while and because the New Zealand taxpayer has not yet objected (in peace and in times of apparently ample food) with sufficient force to subsidizing the wheatgrowers' effort. In this case—and it is not a very unusual one—objective analysis relegated the so-called "geographic factor" to an inferior place.

The aspect of the land undergoes profound change by the will and effort of social groups. With his simpler culture and skills the Maori sought out swamp, river, lake, coast or forest habitats. For him the grassy plains of the South Island, devoid of surface water, offered little attraction: but when these natural virgin grasslands were discovered by Australian "shagroons", some ninety-five years ago, the grazing proved so suitable for the extensive pastoral techniques developed in New South Wales that the immigrant sheepmen could not get swift enough passage across the Tasman; nor were they content with the normal natural rate of increase of their Merino flocks. As external and internal economic conditions changed, grain farming (not unlike that of Manitoba and Alberta) replaced extensive pastoralism. It was this change in mode of life, economy and social organization that finally put an end to the natural grasslands of the plains. Almost the last of the virgin tussock sod was turned in the 'eighties. Yet 500-acre paddocks of waving grain were in turn to pass, for in the 'nineties refrigeration was to bring an equally significant transformation of landscape and economy. Irrigation technique, the growing popularity of lucerne and the introduction of subterranean clover—these presage a further abrupt change in farm economy, in work and social life, in density of settlement, size of farms and fields, in the growth and decay of rural townships and in the general prosperity of Canterbury and its metropolitan hub.

Physical factors have contributed little to these frequent transformations in the life and landscape of the Canterbury Plains. The primary causes of change have been cultural: vegetation, slope, soil drainage, though not without significant relations, have been but secondary concerns. The arrival of an alien culture (via Australia), the growth of trans-Tasman markets for grain, the cutting of a network of stock water races, the arrival of the refrigeration ship Dunedin in the Thames estuary, the mechanical excavation of a channel to
take water from the Rangitata and drop it into the Rakaia forty miles away, the successful demonstration on the Canterbury Agricultural College experimental farm at Ashley Dene of the merits of subterranean clover—these have been the heralds of change. The choice of several possibilities rests with man.¹

3. The Anthropologist’s Approach

The above review has indicated how modern geographers have formulated the relation between man and nature in a manner which is fully in accord with the approach of the social anthropologist. But the two distinct points of view emerging from the different operations and fields of study of the geographer and anthropologist respectively should not be confused.

This is clearly seen when we turn from the writings of geographers to a work which is a classic in our own field, namely Professor Daryl Forde’s *Habitat, Economy and Society*. Qualified in both sciences, the author of this book was eminently fitted to adapt the general theoretical position of the possibilist geographers to the specific operations of social anthropology.² In his work Forde takes a series of primitive communities—hunters and food gatherers, cultivators and pastoralists—and considers the reciprocal relations between society and natural environment. A study of Forde’s work, together with an examination of ethnographic monographs so far as these deal with natural environment, brings out the main differences between the work of the geographer on the one hand and that of the social anthropologist on the other.

Firstly, the anthropologist is mainly concerned with small-scale societies having a comparatively simple technology, whereas geographers very naturally pay greater attention to more advanced communities where a higher level of technology has had a more marked impact upon the natural environment and allows for more efficient ecological adjustment.

Secondly, there is in general an absence of any historical discussion in the studies of anthropologists. This is for reasons which are already clear to us, namely that primitive societies are relatively static and usually very little which is worth while can be learned of their history. This is, of course, not true of modern civilized societies. Thus in the passage quoted at the end of the

² For a statement of his position from the more strictly geographical point of view, see Forde (5).
previous section, Professor Cumberland illustrates his point by reference to changes in the geographical character of the Canterbury Plains over a period of a hundred and fifty years, as a result of the diffusion to the South Island of New Zealand of types of ecological adjustment, such as sheep farming from New South Wales and grain growing from Canada. This is possible because of the existence of reliable historical documents. Such documents do not exist for the pre-contact development of primitive cultures. The anthropologist is therefore usually limited (by the paucity and unreliability of data relating to the past) to a description and analysis of the ecology of a primitive people as it exists or existed at a given point of time.\(^1\)

Thirdly, the anthropologist’s study of the societies with which he is concerned is more intimate, comprehensive and detailed. For the geographer, only a broad knowledge of the functioning of a culture is important. The *minutiae* of family life and kinship observances, educational systems, magico-religious institutions, systems of values and, above all, the complex interrelationships between the various aspects of culture—these are not studied by the geographer for their own sake, but only for their effect on the manner of man’s utilization of, and adaptation to, the environment.\(^2\)

The anthropologist’s study necessarily includes much information which is not relevant to the relation between man and his natural environment. Thus the term “Work” as used by Patrick Geddes does not cover *all* the institutional activities of members of a community. Much of what they do is not conditioned by environment and does not modify in any way the “Place” in which they live. We might summarize the main difference between the emphases of the two sciences by saying that geography is concerned with “Folk” only so far as they are related to “Place”, and that anthropology is concerned with “Place” only so far as it is related to “Folk”. They thus have a common focus of interest in “Work”, but each science covers a very much wider field peculiar to itself.

\(^1\) In situations of culture contact, diachronic studies (including those relating to ecology) are often possible. In fact, as we shall see in Chapter XVII, the modifications in the ecologies of primitive peoples brought about by civilized technologies and economic practices have been of very great importance in situations of culture contact.

\(^2\) The geographer of course studies in greater detail than the anthropologist the physical conditions of the environment—for example, surface configuration, climatic conditions, soils and plants. These interest the anthropologist only in so far as they are recognized by members of the community or affect their lives in some way or other.
Before going on to a general discussion of the relation between human culture and natural environment, we may examine briefly an illuminating example, derived from the field-work of Professor Evans-Pritchard, of how a primitive community may be affected by their habitat.

4. The Socio-Geographical Adjustment of the Nuer

The Nuer are a Nilotic people living on either side of the Nile south of its junction with the Sobat and Bahr el Ghazal and on both banks of these two tributaries. Nuerland is completely flat, a vast, almost featureless plain of clayey savannah with a climate which alternates each year between extremes of wet and dry. Heavy rains set in with the cooler weather at the end of May; the swollen rivers flood into the many depressions which criss-cross the plains between them, the clay soil becomes saturated, and by the middle of June the whole country, except for occasional elevations, has become a great swamp covered with rank savannah grasses. When the rains decline in September, the floods abate, the blazing sun evaporates the standing water and at the end of December drought conditions prevail.

The Nuer are predominantly a pastoral people, although horticulture has an important place in their seasonal cycle of food production. Physical conditions are such that a purely pastoral life would be possible if it were not for heavy stock losses due to rinderpest. Pastoralism is therefore supplemented by agriculture, though crops can be grown during only part of the year.

The paucity of raw materials in Nuerland has prevented the development of an elaborate material culture. The Nuer have neither iron nor stone and know little of working in either medium. Plants and beasts supply most of their technological needs. Clay, mud and sand are their main building materials. Wood is restricted in quantity and quality; although thornwood and brushwood are used as much as possible, they are limited in supply and unsuitable either for carving or for making wooden utensils. Even the ebony for Nuer spears comes from foreign parts; while dried dung replaces wood as a fuel except in the kitchen, and even there grasses and millet stalks are sometimes used. Cattle and some wild animals provide all other materials required in the simple technology of the Nuer.

The Nuer do not lead a settled life. During the rains they live in villages above water-level on sandy ridges or knolls, cultivating
gardens behind their kraals and grazing their cattle in front. As soon as the rains cease the savannah is burned, and the younger members of the village begin to herd the cattle across the plain towards the rivers, moving from one small camp to another as the cattle eat up the new growth and the earth dries out. As the season advances and water and pasturage become scarcer, more and more people join the camps. By the time the drought has become severe the Nuer are concentrated in camps of from several hundreds to over a thousand persons on the banks of those rivers and lakes which provide a permanent water supply. Here they supplement their diet by fishing and to a lesser extent by hunting and gathering. With the onset of the rains the people return with all haste to their villages, which they occupy during the wet season for up to ten or twelve years, seeking new sites only when the fertility of the soil has been exhausted.

The seasonal activities of the Nuer are obviously closely connected with variations in their natural environment. Their pastoral bias is, however, more than a response to conditions more suitable for cattle-raising than for cultivation. To them cattle have more than a mere economic value. As with many other African pastoralists,¹ their cattle are surrounded by a complex set of ritual and ceremonial values. Herdsman at heart, the Nuer regard horticulture as a drudgery made necessary by the ravages of rinderpest among the stock.

The characteristic seasonal migrations of the Nuer are a direct response to the exigencies of the climatic and vegetation cycle. The floods force the Nuer away from the rivers to the higher land, which provides not only dry building sites but also short grasses for grazing at a time when the savannah is flooded and rank. Moreover, millet can be grown only above flood-level, and dry grazing is needed if the cattle are not to suffer from diseases of the hoof. With the coming of the drought, the shallow-rooted grasses on the ridges quickly wither, agriculture becomes impossible and the Nuer with their herds must go in search of water or perish. Fishing is important during the dry season mainly because of the ease with which the large numbers of fish trapped in the stagnant water of lagoons can be killed. Although fish are found throughout the swamp in the flood season, fishing is unimportant at that time partly because of the inefficient nature of Nuer fishing methods and the protection afforded the fish by the

tall savannah, and partly because of the greater abundance of other food.

The social and political life of the Nuer is also in accord with the physical conditions of their habitat. Trained in a hard school where the margin between sufficiency and famine is exceedingly narrow the Nuer are at once strongly individualistic, independent and hostile to foreigners and mutually helpful, co-operative and egalitarian among themselves. Politically they show a lack of organized leadership and specialized legal institutions are notably absent. Though they are culturally and linguistically homogeneous, the Nuer have no political cohesion. They are divided into tribes, all disputes between which are settled by war. These tribes are territorial units, each with its own building sites, its own pastures, water supplies and fishing pools. However, the density of the population is very low, and despite concentration around water in the dry season and on the higher ground in the rains, villages, except in a few favoured areas, are miles apart and often isolated completely by grass-covered swamp. Even in the dry season it is only rarely that any one camp shelters more than a segment of a tribe. Thus, despite the ramifications of the kinship system, the tribe lacks political unity. And there is an ever-present tendency to further segmentation and fission because of the lack of contact between component groups which is imposed by the nature of the country. It is the village which is the most significant economic, social and political unit.

There is no co-operative economic combination and no organized ritual association between groups larger than the village. In the village, however, and to a lesser degree in the camps, mutual assistance in economic production is necessary in view of the constant danger from famine, the restricted range of material goods and the lack of trade relations with other peoples. Though cattle and grain are private possessions, food is shared to such an extent that it may be said to constitute in fact a common stock.

Co-operation is so fundamental to village life that even when it is not essential to survival, it is customary to ask for and to render assistance. There is thus little inequality of wealth: material objects are few and must therefore be shared; food cannot be accumulated in store when there is only enough to satisfy the needs of the community; every man is under a moral obligation to use his surplus cows either to marry himself or to assist a kinsman to do so. The demands of the natural environment thus
foster and reinforce the influence of kinship ties as the principal social force.

Finally, the cycle of Nuer social and ceremonial activities also reflects the seasonal variation in the quantity and kind of food available. Weddings, initiation rites and religious ceremonies of various kinds are held during or towards the end of the rainy season, when there is an abundance of porridge and beer. The same was true of raiding forays in the days before government intervention.

Among the Nuer, then, a people who live constantly under the threat of hunger, who have a simple technology and few material possessions, the seasonal organization of economic and social activities is directly conditioned by the natural environment, and their social and political structure is to a certain extent influenced by it. But it is by no means the only determinant. The character of the Nuer themselves; their attitude which has limited greatly the acquisition of foreign cultural traits; the high social and spiritual value placed on their herds; and the importance of kinship ties instead of political control as the chief force of law and order—all of these are non-material factors which must be recognized in an examination of the social and political life of the Nuer.

5. Environment and Culture

As regards the more general relations between primitive cultures and the environments in which they are found, it is extremely difficult to generalize. Types of social grouping, magico-religious beliefs and practices and the total value system of a community may or may not be directly related to physical circumstances. For example, there is no demonstrable relation between patriliney or matriliney on the one hand and natural environment on the other. Yet geographical environment affects political development by limiting the size of political groups and contacts between them. For example, no hunting and food-gathering community living in a desert has developed an elaborate and centralized system of political authority. The character of the nomadic, politically independent bands of the Australian aborigines, of the Bushmen of South Africa and of the Area of Wild Seeds are clearly related to similarities in habitat and level of technology. Yet the peculiar elaborations of Australian kinship are not found

in the other two areas mentioned, while they occur in widely varying natural settings in Australia from the tropical jungles of Arnhem Land and Cape York Peninsula through the arid central desert to the temperate woodlands of Southern Victoria and South-west Australia.

The same lack of system is found in the relation between environment and magico-religious belief. The Society Islanders and the people of Ashanti lived in very different environments, yet there were striking similarities in their religious systems. The belief that a sorcerer can approach his victim while the latter is asleep and extract some vital part of his body without leaving any scar is found in very different environments in both Australia and New Guinea. On the other hand, the rituals connected with rain among Pueblo communities and with seasonal changes among the Eskimo are clearly related to the geographical environments of these communities.

The cultural definition of value orientations (cf. p. 612) is even more independent of geographical environment. Referring to island-dwellers of Polynesia, we have already mentioned the high development of warfare in Mangaia in contradistinction to its absence in Manihiaki and Rakahanga, reflecting a totally different evaluation of aggressive behaviour within similar geographical environments. There seems to be no environmental reason why many African pastoralists should despise agriculture, nor why Melanesians should be more afraid of sorcery than the inhabitants of Polynesian outliers who live in the same geographical area. On the other hand, fundamentally similar orientations in regard to wealth and prestige are found in widely differing environments; for example, in the institutions of the potlatch and of Feasts of Merit, and in the system of social advancement in Malaita.

Even in the evaluation of nature itself, the actual character of the environment may or may not be obviously related to the way in which a people feels about it. In this field Dr. Florence Kluckhohn has distinguished three possible orientations: (1) man subjugated to nature, (2) man in nature and (3) man against nature, implying rational mastery over the environment. We

1 Piddington (5), pp. 362-64.  
2 Vol. 1, p. 396.  
4 "The three-point range of variation for the relationship of man to nature—that of man subjugated to nature, man in nature, and man versus nature (or over nature in the sense of rational mastery of it)—is too well known from the work of philosophers...
find these three orientations reflected in varying degrees in the mythologies of primitive peoples. Thus the Eskimo myth of Sedna seems to reflect the first orientation—a passive acceptance of a universe in which man is at the mercy of natural phenomena; the totemic ancestors of Australian mythology are mystically merged in the natural species associated as totems with their descendants, reflecting perhaps the second orientation. And many of the tales of the culture heroes of Polynesia tell how they fished up islands, raised the sky and harnessed the sun, feats which might be held to imply a conception of man's mastery over nature. How far these mythological themes imply the dominance of certain orientations in the cultures concerned and how far such orientations are directly related to environmental factors (for example, the precarious ecology of the Eskimo in contradistinction to the relative security of the food supply in Polynesia) are interesting speculations which cannot be pursued here.

Before concluding our general discussion of the relationship of geographical environment to such elements of social culture as we have mentioned, a word of warning is necessary. We have pointed out that the relationship may or may not be a direct one. But because all elements of culture are interrelated, there is always an indirect relationship though this may not be immediately apparent. Thus of the possible ways in which illness may be interpreted in magico-religious terms,¹ Eskimo culture offers an interpretation in terms of taboo rather than sorcery. Now both of these interpretations occur and co-exist in other primitive communities living in widely differing environments. At first sight the Eskimo emphasis on taboo bears no relation to geographical environment. But it must be remembered that the Arctic environment made necessary a social organization which was inimical to warfare and hostility, the aggressive potentialities of human beings being directed towards the environment rather than towards one another. And since sorcery rests upon the postulate that human beings are inimical towards one another, its virtual

and culture historians to need a detailed explanation. Mere illustration will demonstrate the differences. The classical-typical Chinese with their emphasis upon the harmony of the person with all in nature, or the loss of self in the world of nature of which the self is a part, illustrates the man-in-nature orientation. Those peoples of the West who dualize mind and body and regard the universe, including the physical self, as something to be conquered illustrate well the man-against-nature orientation. Mystics, fatalists and all others who see man as helpless and at the mercy of natural forces, be these viewed as worldly or other-worldly, are those who are stressing the man-subjugated-to-nature principle" (ibid.).

¹ For example, as the result of sorcery, of breach of taboo or of the anger of ancestors.
absence in the Arctic wastes is understandable. Again, we have seen\(^1\) that the Australian gerontocracy is correlated with the detailed topographical knowledge possessed by the old men. Here there is no direct relationship between the system of authority and the geographical environment, which as we have seen varies greatly throughout Australia. But the generally sparse natural resources of aboriginal Australia, and the techniques adopted by the aborigines for their exploitation, place a premium upon the knowledge of a special class of individuals and are a partial explanation of their privileged position.

It will be seen that it is dangerous to generalize about the effects of environment on culture. The situation for any given people must be examined on its merits without either exaggerating or minimizing the determining factors in the geographical environment. But we may indicate broadly the types of influence which environment may exert on human cultures. These may be considered under four headings, namely: \((1)\) natural resources; \((2)\) climate and seasonal variation; \((3)\) topography and communication routes; \((4)\) demography. These subjects will be treated in the next four sections.

6. Natural Resources

The most significant of the natural resources of a given environment are the flora and fauna which provide the food supply. These place limits upon the type of ecology adopted by the human population, and therefore partially determine their culture. Thus the Australian environment provided neither the ungulates nor the cultivable plants which form the basis of pastoral and agricultural economies elsewhere in the world, hence the aboriginal ecology was limited to hunting and food gathering; the population, particularly in the centre of the continent, was necessarily sparse; and political organization was therefore limited in the way described in the preceding section. Again, the Eskimo food supply was based primarily upon fish and the sea and land mammals available in the Arctic. Finally, the main dependence of the desert Bedouin upon the milk of camels is correlated with the fact that these animals are specially adapted biologically to life in arid regions. And the fact that they can also be used as beasts of burden makes possible the particular type of nomadism of the Bedouin; their import of grain and artefacts from more

\(^1\) Vol. 1, p. 75.
fertile and developed marginal areas; and the use of camels themselves as items of export.

On the other hand, it does not follow that because certain types of food supply exist in a given area they will necessarily be utilized. The three groups of Chenchus offer an illuminating example. The jungle Chenchus know of the cultivation of grain, and actually carry it out to a limited extent and in a very haphazard way. It appears that food gathering is more congenial to Chenchu culture, as is suggested by the disruption caused by attempts to impose settled agricultural life upon the Chenchus of Madras Presidency. On the other hand, the northern Chenchus have made the adjustment to agricultural life without serious maladjustment, through a spontaneous diffusion of Hindu methods.\(^1\) Thus all three groups of Chenchus know of the possibility of using cultivated grain for food, but their respective reactions to this environmental possibility are widely different.

Similar considerations apply in the case of the non-edible natural resources of the environment. The occurrence or non-occurrence of clay suitable for pottery, of metallic ores or hard stone for making tools and weapons and of animals whose pelts or wool can be made into garments are obviously limiting factors in the technological fields concerned.

Sometimes deficiencies in one area are overcome by trade with another. Thus of the islands around New Guinea some only have deposits of clay from which pots can be made, but these islands export their pottery in return for food and other goods.

As regards such examples of primitive trade, it must be emphasized that their geographical implications cannot be considered in purely economic terms. Thus the natives of the Amphlett islands, in the Kula ring, have a monopoly of the pottery industry of the area. They obtain good-quality clay from a neighbouring island, and from it make pots which are traded southwards to Dobu and northwards to the Trobriand Islands. In return they receive food and also material objects, some of which are not obtainable locally. This appears to be, and to some extent is, an economic transaction whereby each community is supplied with resources not immediately available to it. But it is far more than this. Trade is carried out in connection with the Kula exchanges, in which the focal elements are the non-utilitarian *vaygu’a* and in which interest is focused upon the non-material

\(^1\) Vol. 1, pp. 65-66.
and social aspects of the Kula transactions, with their associated mythology, magic and political implications. To the hard-headed European economist, the subsidiary trade in pots and similar goods may appear to be of primary importance. To the natives the purely economic aspects of Kula expeditions are secondary.

Similar implications are to be found in the merbok exchanges of a group of tribes on the north-west coast of the Northern Territory of Australia, recorded by Dr. W. E. H. Stanner. The tribes to the north-east and south-west of the Daly River exchange objects of value known as ninymer. These are always material objects, never food or perishables. They are exchanged at intervals between partners who are always friends or close relatives. Merbok partners are located in neighbouring tribes, but ninymer are also exchanged within the individual family, as indicated in Fig. 22. Members of

an individual family (A, b, C, d, E and f) exchange ninymer among themselves and also with S.W. (an individual in a tribe to the south-west) and with N.E. (belonging to a tribe in the north-east). The individual C is the first to receive, say, a spearhead of red granite from S.W. After passing through the possession of the members of the family, as indicated by the arrows, it is handed on by f to N.E. Other objects—for example, bamboo—travel in the reverse direction. While the paradigm given in Fig. 1 represents an ideal pattern sometimes realized in practice, the paths indicated by the arrows are often short-circuited through the death or defection of one of the individuals involved.

The essence of merbok is temporary possession, though certain
ninymer may be "milked". For example, as a large lump of red ochre is passing along the merbok route, individuals may break off small pieces from the lump and appropriate them for their own use. Furthermore, ninymer may at times be diverted from the intertribal exchange system into the tribal economy; for instance, to meet such economic obligations as bride-price.

What interests us here is the geographical distribution of the raw materials of ninymer. Some of them are peculiar to certain regions within the merbok area. Thus bamboo travels from the Daly River to areas in the south where it does not occur, while red granite spearheads are traded northwards from a particular granite outcrop in the south. But many of the objects traded over hundreds of miles of merbok routes could quite easily be produced independently by each tribal economy.

Thus, while merbok does serve an economic function in the limited sense, it is far more than a mere trade mechanism. It unites members of individual families and also binds them to remoter kin. Though they lack the glamorous mythology and spectacular ceremonial of the Kula, which they resemble in many other respects, the merbok exchanges take place at large intertribal gatherings and add to their social interest. Finally, merbok provides routes of diffusion, and items of non-material culture such as songs and kinship usages travel along the same route as the material ninymer.

The function of merbok in the mobilization of the resources of the environment is seen to be secondary to its social implications. As Stanner summarizes the situation:

The Australian aborigine knows of everything in his environment which is of use to him in his way of life, and the merbok draws heavily upon the most valuable of these material resources. It is not possible, however, to interpret merbok solely in terms of utilitarianism. Why should articles be sent in merbok which can easily be duplicated by the craftsmen any tribe possesses? Merbok may well have begun in an exchange context of pure utility, but today it is overlaid with friendships, sentimental ties, traditional influences, and cultural associations which have thoroughly transformed that context. As in so many primitive exchanges, it is the gift rather than what is given that matters. A gift of merbok has always been an affirmation of friendship and attachment: and today one sees withered old men bring some simple little merbok gift to a partner who can promise little more in return. One should not miss the symbolism of merbok, or the bonds which lie under its show of material gain.\footnote{Stanner (2), p. 163.}
While the availability of raw materials in a given environment limits its technological exploitation, it does not follow that all available resources are used. As Professor Forde points out, the Tasmanians had the natural resources necessary to construct solid houses in permanent villages, as did the Amerindian peoples of the north-west coast of America; yet the former continued with the crude shelters appropriate to their nomadic existence. The meagre technological development of Tierra del Fuego is not due entirely to environmental limitations. Finally, the New World provided the resources necessary to make bronze, and occasional bronze objects have been discovered there. But even the elaborate pre-Columbian civilizations of Central and South America never knew a "bronze age" in the sense in which the term is applied to prehistoric development in the Old World.

It is sometimes difficult to say whether failure to exploit one of the natural resources of the environment is due to choice or to failure to perceive its potentialities. For example, in sub-tropical Australia, even in the central desert, the nights are often extremely cold. The aborigines sleep close to fires, but have never used the skins of such animals as kangaroos to make protective clothing. This may be due to the fact that the idea of such use has never occurred to them. On the other hand, their nomadic existence means that in the daytime their clothing must be either carried while on the move or worn. It may well be that the making of garments of animal skins occurred to them, but that they found less discomfort in shivering at night than in sweating by day.

7. **Climate and Seasonal Variation**

Regional variations in climate throughout the world are mainly important anthropologically in their extreme forms, particularly of cold. Intense cold, in which the unprotected human organism could not survive, produces adjustments, particularly in the field of clothing and habitations, of which the thick tailored skin garments and winter dwellings of the Eskimo are the best examples. But apart from bare survival, peoples will often put up with a considerable amount of discomfort through adherence to convention. Thus there are indications that the Northern Tungus occupied a more southerly habitat until comparatively recent times, and they retain a southern type of clothing, partially open.

\[1\] Forde (1), p. 374.
at the front, which is unsuitable to the cold climate of their new habitat.¹

Apart from the extreme north of the Asian and American continents, it would be impossible to explain the almost universal occurrence of clothing in purely environmental terms. Some tribes, in Australia for example, habitually go completely naked, though they wear items of clothing or ornamentation on ceremonial occasions. This gives a clue to some of the other functions of clothing which, particularly in the tropics, are far more important than its protective value. Clothing meets the canons of modesty, as defined by each particular culture; it provides satisfaction for self-assertive tendencies through display, and it is indeed sometimes difficult to distinguish between clothing and ornament; clothes may serve to differentiate individuals or groups from one another on a basis of sex, age, occupation, rank or other social functions; and, finally, variations in clothing serve to define ceremonial occasions, particularly those connected with religious ritual, marriage and mourning.

The structure of habitations likewise shows some correlation with climate, though by no means a perfect one. In Arctic regions habitations must provide the maximum of protection against cold with the minimum of ventilation. In warmer climates protection against the sun is an important consideration, and the most suitable type of dwelling is one with some form of roof overhead and plenty of open spaces around the sides to admit as much air as possible. Thus the tents of the Bedouin, made of goat-hair cloth, have an open side which can be quickly reversed by a minor structural alteration so as either to catch the breeze or to gain protection from blown sand.² Similarly the roofs of houses in Samoa are raised on posts, with movable blinds between the posts. The European tropical bungalow is another example of a dwelling with ventilation appropriate to hot climatic conditions.

But well-ventilated dwellings are not found in all hot climates. The mud huts of West Africa and corresponding wattle-and-daub structures in East Africa are almost completely closed in around the sides, though the latter sometimes have a verandah.

Similar considerations regarding open sides apply to regions of heavy rainfall, where this is not accompanied by cold weather or high winds. Thus during the rainy season some of the aborigines of Arnhem Land construct shelters made of strips of bark cut

¹ Ibid., p. 367. ² Ibid., p. 318.
from large trees. These strips are flattened out and bent over to form an inverted "U". Several of these, overlapping each other, form a sort of tunnel, completely open at both ends, which provides shelter from the heavy tropical rain.

Apart from such extreme examples as we have mentioned, climate exerts its most significant influence on culture through its seasonal variation in any given area. Most climates are characterized by marked cyclical changes which recur every year. The way in which a given culture is adapted to such changes is termed the **seasonal cycle**. The community must plan its activities in relation to anticipated seasonal changes, which often entails a considerable amount of organized co-operation. This is not only important for an understanding of the economic adjustment of a given community; it usually has also a profound effect on other institutional activities, particularly in the fields of ceremonial, magico-religious ritual and recreation.

The seasonal cycle affects different cultures in different ways. In particular, its influences vary between hunters and food gatherers on the one hand and pastoralists and agriculturists on the other. The former are dependent on the flora and fauna as provided in their environment, and must gear their lives to seasonal periods of plenty and shortage in the case of different species. The second group of peoples control the biological adaptations of animals and plants respectively in conformity with climatic change. Thus many pastoralists are seasonally nomadic, as we have seen to be the case among the Tungus and the Kazaks, moving their herds about according to a cycle determined by climatic conditions and particularly by the availability of pasture. But it is among agriculturists that the seasonal cycle is of greatest importance, since their whole ecology rests upon a regular sequence of activities from planting to harvesting and storing.

While adjustment to climatic change is thus mandatory from the purely economic point of view, it also affects, as we have said, the whole social life of a people. It usually involves an integrated seasonal rhythm of activities, as is vividly brought out in the diagram, based on an original by Dr. Arthur Geddes, reproduced in Fig. 23. This depicts synoptically the seasonal cycle of peasants of the Chota Nagpur Plateau in India. Dr. Geddes elaborates on this diagram as follows:

---

1 Vol. 1, pp. 61, 64.
This attempts to show when the cultivators' occupations may be said to fill a normal day, when they demand maximum effort, and when, on the contrary, they pass to such easy conditions as approach idleness, inviting or forcing him to temporary migration. . . . In January work is light, except for a little spring harvesting, followed immediately by one ploughing if the soil is not too hard. In February, the hunt is a strenuous and joyous diversion. Ploughing in March, April and May depends upon showers falling sufficiently to soften the land. The idle periods between are varied by festivals. . . . Heavy May showers, and their wives' complaints, remind the men that the roofs must be repaired before the monsoon sets in in June. Final ploughing and sowing, transplanting, irrigating and weeding fill the early months of the monsoon. September with its promise of the first harvest of "autumn" rice permits a little festivity. . . . It also permits readily of quarrels being carried to the point of expensive litigation, though such occupations may not be wholly superseded even at other times of the year! The chief winter rice harvest, if it is good, is of course celebrated by jollification.

Even before the harvest has been gathered in at home, some men of the family or hamlet, sometimes accompanied by their women folk, may descend to harvest in the plains, to the mines or to conservancy work in Calcutta. From this they may return in time for the monsoon and its labours.¹

This brief synopsis of Dr. Geddes's observations brings out one very important characteristic of the lives of peasant societies such as those he is describing, and of primitive communities generally: *Work, recreation and social activities follow a seasonal rather than a daily and weekly rhythm, as among ourselves.* Hence the whole social system and the subjective attitude of the people towards work and relaxation are geared to a seasonal rhythm. This is one reason why primitive peoples do not take readily to the regular daily and weekly round of our economic life, a characteristic which has often led superficial observers to describe them as "unreliable" or "lazy".²

While Dr. Geddes's diagram gives a vivid impression of the general character of the seasonal cycle, most social anthropologists prefer synoptic tables accompanied by narrative descriptions which give a more detailed presentation of the economic and social activities involved. Examples of such tables are given in Figs. 24 to 29. In some cases, for reasons of space, extracts only are given. The reader should in any case refer if possible to the original monographs for fuller statements on the seasonal cycles concerned.

It will be seen that the synoptic records of different observers vary according to the purpose of the investigation which they record, but the groups of facts most commonly represented are: (1) the equation of native months and seasons to those of the European calendar; (2) economic activities; (3) correlated social activities of a non-economic character. We may deal with these in turn.

**Calendrical Equation.**—The four seasons of the European calendar are adapted to the specific climatic conditions existing in Europe. In other parts of the world, particularly in tropical climates, the seasonal round does not follow the same sequence, and consequently we find that the seasons are categorized in a different way. Whereas the European seasons are based primarily on annual variations in temperature, many primitive peoples recognize variations in the character and direction of prevailing winds and also in rainfall. For example, the Tikopia recognize two seasons only, termed respectively tonga and raki (see Fig. 27). Tonga is the period of the trade winds which lasts from April till September, the weather being often wet and even chilly. Raki is the “monsoon”, when there are variable northerly and westerly winds with occasional periods of calm but also occasional gales. The weather is hot and torrential downpours of rain occur. On the other hand, we have seen that the Karadjeri recognize five seasons, and differences in economic pursuits, as well as the performance of increase ceremonies, are determined by these.

The categorization of months in primitive calendars likewise varies from our own, but for different reasons. The variable number of days in our months and the adjustment made each Leap Year cause our twelve months to approximate very closely to the solar year of 365.24 days. But most primitive calendars employ the lunar month of 29.53 days. If only twelve months of this kind were regularly recognized, the lunar reckoning would drop behind the solar calendar at the rate of about eleven days per year. The adjustment commonly adopted is to add a thirteenth intercalary month every two or three years.

Finally, the native year does not usually begin at the point in the seasonal cycle corresponding to January, and it is often impossible to assign its commencement to any definite date in terms

---

1 The different kinds of facts which it may be desirable to record should be carefully noted. The Tikopia calendar (Fig. 27) is the most comprehensive, giving as it does a conspectus of socio-economic activities throughout the year.

2 Vol. 1, p. 76.
of the European calendar. For example, the Nupe year begins with the heavy rains which in Fig. 25 are assumed to occur at the beginning of April. But in fact they may occur a fortnight or three weeks earlier or later. From the rains the Nupe count twelve, thirteen or sometimes even fourteen lunar months until the new rains break, the last month of the old year being identified with the first month of the new year. The Nupe year is thus elastic, and may, for example, be lengthened if the rains occur early in one year and late in the year following.

The calendrical situation among a given people may be complicated by the co-existence of different systems of time-reckoning. For example, in the Chinese village of Kaisienkung three different calendars are employed for various purposes. The traditional system of lunar months, with an intercalary month every two or three years, determines most ritual activities. Sacrifices are offered to the kitchen god and visits made to temples on the first and fifteenth days of each month. But because of its failure to correspond exactly with seasonal changes, the lunar calendar is not suitable for the regulation of agricultural activities. These are determined according to the traditional Chinese solar calendar which divides the year into twenty-four periods known as Chieh. Periods of agricultural work and leisure are regulated by this system. Finally, the Western calendar is used in such institutions as the school, the co-operative silk factory and the administrative office which have to integrate their activities with the system of time-reckoning prevailing in the outside world (see Fig. 29). Similarly the calendrical situation among the Nupe is affected by their partial conversion to Mohammedanism and the consequent introduction of a Nupe adaptation of the Mohammedan calendar. In certain years this may correspond with the indigenous Nupe calendar, but sometimes confusion arises. In June 1936 Nadel found that certain Mohammedanized communities were counting it as the second month, while pagan Nupe maintained that it was the fourth.

Economic Activities.—The main significance of the seasonal cycle lies in the economic field, for reasons which are apparent. A description of the seasonal cycle thus includes a definition of the sequence of economic activities. Its character varies with the community concerned and the nature of their ecological activities; it also varies with the purpose of the investigation, as will be apparent from a glance at Figs. 23 to 29. Thus the Maori calen-
dar lays major emphasis on the organization of productive activities, whereas that for the Tallensi is designed to show the seasonal correlation between food production and food consumption, and a striking characteristic of Tallensi ecology, namely that food supplies are at their lowest at the point in the seasonal cycle at which most effort is called for, namely in May and June, while they are most abundant at times of minimal agricultural effort.

While the seasonal calendar is primarily designed to describe activities connected with food production, other economic activities of a technological character may also be included, as in the Trobriand and Tikopia calendars.

Correlated Social Activities.—As graphically illustrated in Fig. 23, non-economic social activities tend to take place or reach their

![Seasonal Rhythm of Effort, Northern Chota Nagpur Plateau (Dr. Arthur Geddes).](image)

Fig. 23.—Seasonal Rhythm of Effort, Northern Chota Nagpur Plateau (Dr. Arthur Geddes).

greatest intensity at periods when the minimum of effort is necessary in the exploitation of the environment. At such periods time and attention can be given to social activities, ceremonial and otherwise. The Trobriand year is divided into two periods, both on the side of production and on that of consumption. As regards the former, *geguda* is the period when the gardens are unripe and *matuwo* that in which they begin to mature. These phases of the productive cycle overlap the periods of *malia* (plenty or abundance) and *molu* (hunger or shortage). During periods of intense agricultural activity, all social activities are secondary to work in the gardens. Even the vitally important Kula expeditions are postponed if the work of moons 2, 3 and 4 has not been completed (Fig. 26, column 5), and it is said that in former times warfare was not allowed to break out during this busy season. On the other hand, the period of rejoicing, dancing and cere-

1 Warfare had been completely suppressed at the time of Malinowski's observations.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Season</th>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Climate</th>
<th>Mean Monthly Temp. in Shade</th>
<th>Mean Monthly Rainfall</th>
<th>Work of the Month</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>June</td>
<td>Cold.</td>
<td>Auck. 53° F. Dun. 44° F.</td>
<td>4·8 in. 3·1 in.</td>
<td>PIPIRI: &quot;All things of the earth are contracted owing to the cold, as also man.&quot; Bird-snaring and rat-trapping begin; game preserved. Toitoi fish, lamprey, and kakahi mussel taken inland, warehou and moki sea-fish. Certain fungi and orchids collected. Pleiades appear. New Year festival. Breaking up of new ground for crops (occasional).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Winter</td>
<td>July</td>
<td>Coldest month. Frosty, wet.</td>
<td>Auck. 52° F. Dun. 42° F.</td>
<td>5·0 in. 3·0 in.</td>
<td>HONGONUI: &quot;Man is now exceedingly cold, he kindles fires to warm himself.&quot; Taking and preserving of birds and rats. Fat kaka parrots caught by hand. Tui taken by hand at night. Toitoi fish, lamprey, and mussel taken inland; warehou and moki sea-fish. Parengo sea-weed collected. Cutting of trees and brushwood to make new cultivations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Aug.</td>
<td>Cold, rainy, frosty.</td>
<td>Auck. 52° F. Dun. 44° F.</td>
<td>4·2 in. 3·1 in.</td>
<td>HERETURI-KOKA: &quot;The scorching effect of fire is seen on the knees of man.&quot; Taking and preserving of birds and rats. Burning off fern; turning over ground for crops. Toitoi fish inland; Tarakihi, kehe, and gurnard sea-fish.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Fig. 24.—Extract from Maori Seasonal Cycle. Reproduced from Firth (5), p. 57.
monial corresponds approximately with the moon of Milamala, which marks the pause between harvest and the new cycle of gardening activities. ¹

An important feature of primitive ceremonial is that it is usually accompanied by feasting and the distribution of food. This means that either it must be arranged to correspond with a well-marked period of plenty, as in the Trobriands, or special arrangements for provisioning must be made, as was done in the case of the makahiki festival in Hawaii. This began with the collection of tribute and taxes due to the king, which meant that resources had to be mobilized by the people. Though the king was dependent upon the tribute so collected, he reserved a large proportion of it for the provisioning of the makahiki festivals.

Seasonal ceremonies among primitive peoples are often associated with the belief that their performance promotes the food supply. They may thus have a pronounced magico-religious significance. Australian increase ceremonies are usually performed at the time of the year when the species concerned is about to become plentiful,² and it is believed that through them the seasonal fertility of the species is ensured. But as different species become plentiful at different times of the year, the seasonal character of these rites is not so marked as in the case of agricultural communities. Here we find such ceremonial as rain-making rites, the magic of planting and growth, and harvest festivals, often accompanied by the ceremonial eating of the first fruits. Such rites not only give confidence in the efficacy of toil and express the social value of economic production, but actually stimulate productive activity by punctuating the seasonal round and forcing individuals to keep up with the ceremonial cycle.

8. Topography and Communication Routes

The influence of topography on culture is fairly obvious. The character of the country inhabited by a given people determines the natural resources available to them, and thus as we have seen influences their culture by limiting its ecology. Whether or not fish form an article of diet is determined by the proximity of sea, rivers or lakes, while agriculture cannot be carried out on mountains above a certain altitude.

¹ It may be mentioned that the correspondence is not always exact. It varies from one district to another, as is shown in Fig. 26, column 10.
² Vol. i, p. 389.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Calendar</th>
<th>Planting operations</th>
<th>Trees</th>
<th>State of food stores</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Europ.</td>
<td>Native</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1st month</td>
<td>Belated preparation of yam plots and planting of yams by farmers who have left it till the new season. Sowing of bulrush-millet and maize. Sowing of late millet and sorghum. Sowing of ground-nuts. Interplanting of okra, melon and cassava. First weeding (takes 2–3 weeks). Short period of rest (5–7 days). Yam is sprouting leaves, bulrush-millet and maize 2 ft. high. Second weeding. Sowing of cotton. Planting of sweet potatoes, rice and red pepper. Also of cassava grown on separate plots. Latest date for planting ground-nuts. Harvesting of bulrush-millet and maize. Interplanting of ground-beans and late beans. First yam harvest. Picking of okra. Third weeding, and 'shifting the ridges'. (This operation may be postponed by 2 months.)</td>
<td>Planting of cassava or sweet potatoes.</td>
<td>Fruit of locust-bean tree picked, also mango.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May</td>
<td>2nd month</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June</td>
<td>3rd month</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July</td>
<td>4th month</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5th month</td>
<td></td>
<td>Harvesting of cassava and sweet potatoes; sowing of rice. Sowing of first maize crop.</td>
<td>Shea-nut harvest finished.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aug.</td>
<td>6th month</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sept.</td>
<td>7th month</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sweet potatoes and melons harvested. Some farmers carry out the 'shifting of ridges' now instead of two months earlier. Harvest of early maturing rice.</td>
<td>Transplanting of rice. Harvest of first maize crop.</td>
<td>Second mango crop.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Fig. 25.—Extract from Nupe Seasonal Cycle. Reproduced from Nadel (4), p. 213 by courtesy of the International African Institute.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>OTHER ACTIVITIES</strong></td>
<td><strong>FISHING</strong></td>
<td><strong>TRADE and KULA</strong></td>
<td><strong>WIND SEASONS</strong></td>
<td><strong>MOONS</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social and Sexual Life (cf. also Column 10)</td>
<td>Shark fishing</td>
<td>Preparations in Overseas trading Communities</td>
<td>South-East Trade Wind</td>
<td>August 1 MILAMALA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fishing in the Open Sea</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>September 2 YAKOSI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>October 3 YAVATAKULU</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In non-KULA Communities, Industrial Activity: Carving in BWOYTALU, Basket work in LUYA and YALAKA, Producing of Nets</td>
<td>Lagoon Fishing (Mullet)</td>
<td>Sailings from the Trobriands to the East and South</td>
<td>North-West Monsoon</td>
<td>November 4 TOLIYAVATA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fishing in the Open Sea</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>December 5 YAVATAM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>January 6 GELIVILAVI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>February 7 BULUMADUKU</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>March 8 KULUWOTU</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social and Sexual Life</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>April 9 UTORAKANA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>May 10 ILAYBISILA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>June 11 YAKOKI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>July 12 KALUWALAS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>August 13 KULUWASAS</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**NOTE:**—Alternative Names for certain Months:—GAYGILA = TOLIYAVATA.

**Fig. 26.—Trobriand Chart of Time-reckoning.** Reproduced from Malinowski.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
<th>10</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>AGRICULTURAL SEASONS</strong></td>
<td><strong>KAYMATA (Main Gardens)</strong></td>
<td><strong>KAYMUGWA (Early Gardens)</strong></td>
<td><strong>TAPOPU (Taro Gardens)</strong></td>
<td><strong>CEREMONIAL</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malia</td>
<td>Pause in Gardening; Gabu</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Milamala in Kiriwina</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Kamkoka and Sopu</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Milamala in Vakuta</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sopu and Making Fences</td>
<td>Isunapulo</td>
<td>Planting (Dry Soil)</td>
<td>Dancing; Kayasa; Ceremonial Distribution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Molu</td>
<td>Isunapulo</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Growth Magic (1); Kayatam and Weeding</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Matubo</td>
<td>Isunapulo</td>
<td>Second Cycle</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Growth Magic (2)</td>
<td>Basi</td>
<td>Harvest</td>
<td>Isunapulo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Kayutubutabu Season</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malia</td>
<td>Okwala and Tum; Harvest begins</td>
<td>Kayaku; Kayaku; Takaywa</td>
<td>First cycle</td>
<td>Dress in Preparation for Milamala</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Gabu</td>
<td></td>
<td>Milamala in Kiava</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Filling the Bwayma; Vilamalia</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yowota; Takaywa</td>
<td>Koumwa; Early Planting: Kuvi, Taro, etc.</td>
<td>Isunapulo</td>
<td>Milamala in Sinaketa, Luba and Western District</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Katubugibogi = Yavatam. Obwatayoyo = Yakoki.

The human need most directly affected by topography is that for defence. The various forms of Maori pa and the cliff villages of the south-western U.S.A. represented different adaptations of local terrain to the need for defence. Topography likewise affects political organization and the expansion of tribes and groups of tribes under primitive conditions. There is evidence that the Bantu were expanding southwards at the time of European penetration into South-east Africa, a development made possible by the absence of any formidable geographical barriers against their movement southwards. On the other hand, whereas the inhabitants of the major island groups of Polynesia were intensely warlike and major dynasties were set up in some of them, there is no evidence that any large island group was ever conquered by any other, the intervening wastes of ocean making such a development impossible.

Apart from making possible or preventing military conquest, topography is important in so far as it facilitates or hinders communication between peoples. We have just said that none of the major island groups of Polynesia ever conquered another. But there were reciprocal influences between them through the peaceful diffusion of elements of culture. There were systematic contacts over the Pacific Ocean, and there were also casual contacts by drift canoes, of which several instances have been recorded. There must have been many more in pre-European times.

The significance of topography has long been recognized by students of diffusion. Over wide areas of land such as North America, there is a tendency for items of culture to originate at a certain point (known as the *centre of diffusion*) and to spread outwards in all directions. A chronological series of inventions may thus spread outwards from the centre of diffusion like waves from a stone thrown into a pool. The culture of the outer zone or *periphery* is characterized by the older elements of culture, while the newer ones are progressively found as we approach the centre of diffusion. In the case of artefacts it is sometimes possible to confirm the chronological sequence by archaeological excavations at the centre of diffusion.

---

1 It should be mentioned that the significance of such processes of diffusion has been greatly exaggerated in the literature on Polynesia. Cf. Beaglehole (1 and 3).

2 For example, the missionary Gill in 1862 saw on Manua an open boat which had drifted from Moorea, 1,250 miles distant, without loss of life; a few months later in the same year a canoe from Manihiki drifted to an island in the Ellice group, 1,360 miles away, half of the party on board having perished from want of food and water; and in January 1858 a family of natives drifted from Fakaofo, Union Group, to an uninhabited island (?) Nassau), thence to Palmerston's Island, and finally to Mangaia, a distance of upwards of 1,200 miles.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>July</th>
<th>August</th>
<th>September</th>
<th>October</th>
<th>November</th>
<th>December</th>
<th>January</th>
<th>February</th>
<th>March</th>
<th>April</th>
<th>May</th>
<th>June</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ground cleared for taro, yams, manioc.</strong></td>
<td><strong>Taro planting.</strong></td>
<td><strong>Yam planting.</strong></td>
<td><strong>Manioc planting.</strong></td>
<td><strong>Taboo on coco-nuts in Reinae lifted.</strong></td>
<td><strong>Taro planting (sporadic).</strong></td>
<td><strong>Sago prepared.</strong></td>
<td><strong>Taro planting (sloan).</strong></td>
<td><strong>Taboo on coco-nuts in Faeo imposed.</strong></td>
<td><strong>Forest foods gathered during period of mourning.</strong></td>
<td><strong>Store pates utilized.</strong></td>
<td><strong>Breadfruit harvest.</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Fishery:**

| **Seine-net fishing for mulched.** | **Mourning taboo in Tafina lifted.** | **Reef fishing.** | **Canoe and reef fishing.** | **Openning of channel to lake (a sea).** | **Canoe fishing everywhere.** | **Seine-net fishing.** | **Canoe fishing.** | **Canoe fishing diminished.** | **Fish channel opened (a sea).** | **Diving for green snail.** | **Spoodiffa lake and sea fishing.** | **Spoodiffa sea fishing.** | **Reef fishing.** | **Spooniffa sea fishing.** | **Spoodiffa sea fishing.** | **Reef fishing.** | **Birds netted.** | **Turtle caught.** | **Seine-net fishing.** | **Fish channel opened.** | **Turtle caught.** | **Seine-net fishing.** | **Fish channel opened.** | **Turtle caught.** | **Seine-net fishing.** | **Fish channel opened.** | **Turtle caught.** | **Seine-net fishing.** | **Fish channel opened.** |

**Bark cloth for initiation ceremony.**

| **Bark cloth prepared.** | **Ritual manufacture of turmeric (3 days).** | **Bark cloth prepared.** | **Canoe built.** | **Woodwork.** | **Much plaiting of mats and beaming of bark cloth.** | **Tafina net made.** | **Canoe repairing.** | **Net making.** | **Canoe building.** | **Tree felled for canoe.** | **Sacred Canoe of Ariki Kaifka repaired.** | **Back cloth prepared.** | **Back cloth prepared.** | **Sinnet cord plaiting.** | **Back cloth prepared.** | **Sinnet cord plaiting.** | **Back cloth prepared.** | **Sinnet cord plaiting.** | **Back cloth prepared.** | **Sinnet cord plaiting.** | **Back cloth prepared.** | **Sinnet cord plaiting.** | **Back cloth prepared.** | **Sinnet cord plaiting.** | **Back cloth prepared.** | **Sinnet cord plaiting.** | **Back cloth prepared.** | **Sinnet cord plaiting.** |

**Tafina in mourning; Ariki Kaifka placed in Faeo; no dancing.**

| **Work of the Gods.** | **Initiation ritual (5 days).** | **1 Funeral.** | **Games: no dancing in Faeo; mourning almost lifted in Tafina.** | **Repair of sacred oven house of Tuanako.** | **3 Funerals.** | **Games; no dancing in Faeo; mourning almost lifted in Tafina.** | **Repairs return to Faeo; funeral of brother of Ariki Tafina; funeral of child; dancing in Ravenga, none in Faeo; dance over orchards.** | **Young men in Faeo lined heads in preparation for dance.** | **Ratika tayo harvest rit.** | **Funeral.** | **Secular dancing in Ravenga.** | **Week of the Gods.** | **No dancing.** | **Ratika dancing in Ravenga.** | **Secular dancing in Ravenga.** | **Week of the Gods.** | **No dancing.** | **Ratika Kaifka visited Ariki Tafina.** | **Dancing in Ravenga.** | **Dance festivals.** | **Visits between chief. Sightseeing tour.** | **Illness of Ariki Tafina.** | **Illness of Ariki Tafina.** | **Ratika Kaifka visited Ariki Tafina.** | **Dancing in Ravenga.** | **Dance festivals.** | **Visits between chief. Sightseeing tour.** | **Illness of Ariki Tafina.** | **Illness of Ariki Tafina.** | **Ratika Kaifka visited Ariki Tafina.** |

**Social Activities:**

| **Ariki Kaifka living in Faeo.** | **Illness of Ariki Kauiva.** | **Ariki Kauiva marriege ceremony.** | **Dance festivals.** | **Dance matches.** | **Rite for rain by Ariki Tafna.** | **Illness of Ariki Kaifka.** | **Illness of Ariki Kauiva.** | **Ariki Kauiva marriege ceremony.** | **Dance festivals.** | **Dance matches.** | **Rite for rain by Ariki Tafna.** | **Illness of Ariki Kaifka.** | **Illness of Ariki Kauiva.** | **Ariki Kauiva marriege ceremony.** | **Dance festivals.** | **Dance matches.** | **Rite for rain by Ariki Tafna.** | **Illness of Ariki Kaifka.** | **Illness of Ariki Kauiva.** | **Ariki Kauiva marriege ceremony.** | **Dance festivals.** | **Dance matches.** | **Rite for rain by Ariki Tafna.** | **Illness of Ariki Kaifka.** | **Illness of Ariki Kauiva.** | **Ariki Kauiva marriege ceremony.** |

---

**Fig. 27.—Chart of Tikopia economic and social activities, 1928–29. Reproduced from Firth (19).**
From the geographical point of view, the interesting characteristic of this process is that described by Wissler as follows: "One of the most striking characteristics of the zone-like distributions we have just noted is their circular character. Considering the variable nature of the phenomena, their regularity is remarkable. However, we must not expect that the boundaries to all culture areas will closely approximate circles, for since culture lives upon the land it must adjust itself to topography and to other geographical features. The shapes of the areas are therefore various and their boundaries irregular; a range of mountains here, a desert there, a lake between, etc., will dent or otherwise distort the lines that define trait distributions."

In connection with Wissler's formulation two points must be noted. Firstly, wider topographical characteristics may distort the process of concentric distribution: in Polynesia, for example, distributions tend to be irregular as a result of the characteristics of contacts between Polynesian peoples to which we have already referred. Secondly, the process of diffusion is not automatic, as implied in our earlier analogy with a stone thrown into water. There is always an element of selectivity, which causes some traits to be acceptable to the receiving culture while others are not. Only the former diffuse. The Australian aborigines had in pre-European times contacts with Malays and perhaps with natives from New Guinea. But there is no evidence that their culture was significantly affected by such contacts. It was already a satisfactory adaptation to Australian conditions. Moreover, in Australia itself, channels of communication which favoured diffusion existed, as in the case of merbok routes, and culture traits did in fact diffuse along these routes. But because a trait passed along the routes, it did not follow that it would be accepted and incorporated into every culture to which it became known. Thus the Mulluk and Madngella tribes do not make boomerangs or use them extensively. They receive boomerangs as ninymer from tribes to the south and pass them on to the north. They sometimes keep them for a while but only as playthings, so that the boomerang has never diffused to their culture though the opportunities for such diffusion existed.

The extent to which topography permits communication be-

---

1 Wissler (1), p. 61.
2 The significance of the boomerang in Australian culture has been greatly exaggerated in popular thought. Apart from its spectacular flight, it is not a particularly efficient weapon and is absent from large areas of the continent. Cf. Elkin (3), p. 18.
between peoples also has an effect on trade between them. On land masses, it is usually possible to establish trade routes, even though some detours may be necessary. Within the area of the United States there existed, in pre-Columbian times, a network of trade routes such that objects from the Atlantic littoral, the Gulf of Mexico and the Pacific coast might be found together in Ohio or Tennessee. Extensive trade has for centuries been carried on over the continent of Africa, while in Australia, or the north-eastern

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Productive Cycle</th>
<th>Food Cycle</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>April</td>
<td>First planting—rain fell on March 26, and early millet and some cow-peas and <em>neri</em> was planted in the valley settlements. Rain again in mid-April enabled most people to plant early millet, etc. Women sowed their vegetable patches. Hoeing begun, but not more than one day in three devoted to agriculture. Communal fishing expeditions.</td>
<td>Food stores very low in average households and being rationed. Many dependent upon supplementary sources of supply. People buying grain abroad for re-sale. Ample food supplies in market and many buying grain. Market-prices average. Children gleaning ground-nuts. Wild fruits... being consumed to stave off hunger.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May</td>
<td>Rains continue erratically. Early millet planted in the stony and hilly areas. Others inter-planting guinea-corn and late millet on compound farms and some ground-nuts. Work on bush farms preparatory to planting commenced. Tempo of agricultural activity increasing rapidly.</td>
<td>Food stores deplenished and severe rationing. “Hunger” commences. Poorer households suffer two or three days’ hunger a week, living on vegetable soup, ground-nuts and wild fruits. Householders send their wives to purchase grain abroad for consumption and re-sale if they have money. Many selling livestock bit by bit to buy grain in market. Prices of all commodities rising. Visits being made to relations in more fortunate areas to get some grain.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June</td>
<td>Height of agricultural season. Men completely absorbed in hoeing and weeding, planting guinea-corn and late millet on bush farms, rice, ground-nuts and minor crops. Hiring labour for help in hoeing and weeding. Women plucking nangena.</td>
<td>Peak of “hunger” reached. Granaries empty among poorer households. Much livestock sold or bartered for grain very cheaply; grain scarce and dear. Much ground-nuts for sale. Small groups of children wander about hungry, feeding on wild fruits and small animals they find near the settlements. Toward the end of the month many people are staunching their hunger by cutting the ripe or half ripe heads of early millet which they roast on the embers and nibble at.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Fig. 28.—Extract from Seasonal Cycle of the Tallensi, reproduced from Fortes, M. and S. L. (1), by courtesy of the International African Institute.
TOPOGRAPHY AND COMMUNICATION ROUTES

parts of it at least, there existed ramifications of trade routes of which the merbok system represents but one segment. Among the islands of Melanesia, again, there were many trading systems similar to the Kula. On the other hand, no systematic trade existed between the major island groups of Polynesia. While this may in part be due to cultural factors as well as to the wide distribution of certain essential natural resources, it cannot be doubted that topographical factors tended to rule out extensive trade in this area.

In concluding our discussion of topography so far as it permits communication between human communities, we must emphasize that from the anthropological point of view it is the

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of the Chief</th>
<th>Traditional Calendar and Time</th>
<th>Western Calendar and Time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Li Ch’un</td>
<td>13th of 1st month</td>
<td>Feb. 5—7.45 a.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Beginning of Spring)</td>
<td>Ch’en Ch’u 3 K’e</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yu Shui</td>
<td>28th of 1st month</td>
<td>Feb. 20—3.30 a.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Rain Water)</td>
<td>Ch’ou Ch’u 2 K’e 10 Fen</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ching Che</td>
<td>13th of 2nd month</td>
<td>March 6—1.57 a.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Waking of Insects)</td>
<td>Ch’ou Ch’u 3 K’e 12 Fen</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ch’un Fen</td>
<td>28th of 2nd month</td>
<td>March 21—3.3 a.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Spring Equinox)</td>
<td>Yin Ch’u 3 Fen</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ch’ing Ming</td>
<td>14th of 3rd month</td>
<td>April 5—7.17 a.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Pure Brightness)</td>
<td>Ch’en Ch’u 1 K’e 2 Fen</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ku Yu</td>
<td>29th of 3rd month</td>
<td>April 20—2.44 p.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Corn Rain)</td>
<td>Wei Cheng 1 K’e 14 Fen</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Li Hsia</td>
<td>16th of 3rd (intercalary) month</td>
<td>May 6—1.14 p.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Beginning of Summer)</td>
<td>Ch’ou Ch’u 14 Fen</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Fig. 29.—Extract from table of Calendrical Equation in Kaihsienkung. Reproduced from Fei (1), pp. 146–147, by courtesy of Routledge and Kegan Paul Ltd.

character of the human relations involved which is important rather than the mere transfer of goods by trade or of culture traits by diffusion. Thus, except in the case of the minority of primitive peoples who are extremely peaceful (such as the Eskimo or the Semang), contact usually means conflict, though the causes of this are variable. On the other hand, political unity may be established over a wide area, as in the League of the Iroquois or some of the states of West Africa. Finally we must emphasize that the blanket term “trade”, like “warfare”, covers a wide variety of types of human relationship. In dumb barter these may be such that no personal contact between those participating is involved.

On the other hand, trading systems of the merbok type are essentially means of reflecting and cementing social relationships of a personal kind.

The ethics of trading systems are also variable. It may be the rule to drive a hard bargain and to outwit the other man if possible; this is usually the case when professional traders, and particularly alien traders, enter the picture, as in many of the trading systems of Africa. On the other hand, the exchanges of the Kula take place in an atmosphere of etiquette and ceremonial, in which honour, overtly at least, is far more important than material gain. Thus, while topography facilitates or hinders communication according to the routes of communication which it provides, the character of the intercourse which takes place along these routes is influenced by human motives operating within a context of social institutions and not by environment alone.

9. Demography

The density and distribution of a population over a given territory necessarily affects its culture. We have already mentioned how the sparse population of a desert-dwelling community of hunters and food-gatherers limits political organization. On the other hand, an environment which will support a large and dense population makes possible the development of a stratified society, economic specialization and hence a well-developed external trade. The early history of our own civilization is an example of the progressive operation of this principle. Fertile areas, such as the Nile Valley and the rivers of Mesopotamia, were the cradles of our civilization. They allowed for the cultural developments which we have mentioned and therefore for increased technological control over the environment, which in turn allowed for increase and expansion of population. Each centre of civilization grew, and through increasing intercourse its cultural achievements expanded like a rapidly reproducing colony of cells. The broad outline of this process has been well described by Childe:

One very concrete result of intercourse, peaceful and war-like, has been the expansion of civilization itself measured archaeologically by the physical remains of cities. About 2500 B.C. such shone out like isolated stars or tiny clusters in the night of illiterate barbarism only on the Nile, the lower Tigris–Euphrates, and the Indus. A thousand years later cities form a continuous constellation from Egypt, Crete, and Central Turkey to the mountains of Western Iran, and one star is dawning on the Yellow River. Before 500 B.C. the constellation has
become a galaxy embracing the whole Mediterranean basin, with the Black Sea coasts, Iran, India, and Southern Arabia with another nebular cluster in China. By A.D. 50 the western galaxy expands to the Irish and North Sea coasts and across the Alps to the Danube, while the Chinese cluster is spreading out to meet it in Central Asia. After 500 a single galaxy girdles Eurasia from the Pacific to the Atlantic, despite many dark patches and the waning of some bright stars in the west.\(^1\)

In parts of the world which were until recently inhabited exclusively by primitive peoples there are rudimentary developments of this kind; for example, the pre-Columbian civilizations of the Americas. But usually the situation was stabilized. Particular in the case of hunters and food-gatherers, the community lived up to the limit of its resources. Conditions in the northern region of America are vividly described by Wissler:

Observations on Eskimo life are especially illuminating, because it is clear that the tribal groups among these peoples were as large as the environment would support. For example, there is an island in Hudson Bay, known as Southampton, formerly inhabited by a tribal group of Eskimo. Occasionally whalers visited them and from the information they give, it appears that these islanders had a well-balanced life, except that every now and then there was not enough food, so the surplus population starved. They were too far from the mainland to engage in trade, and so there was no temptation to do what the white settlers of Long Island did; but eventually that temptation came. An enterprising whaler, with a large steam vessel, appeared on the scene, armed all the able-bodied men with rifles, taught them to shoot, and offered liberal prices for skins and oil. For one season these Eskimo prospered as never before, they became rich in goods, and when at last the ship was loaded with spoil, it weighed anchor and sailed away. Then as winter came on, the hunters with their new weapons found game exceedingly scarce and at last there was nothing to kill. No one knows the details of the tragedy, for all the returning whalers found were the bones of the once happy islanders. Yet this sad event is but an exaggerated version of what was happening over and over again along the whole Arctic coast. Everywhere the Eskimo lives up to the food supply. The Indian hunters of eastern Canada and the corresponding parts of the United States were also in a state of equilibrium, a special student of the subject having shown that from two to four hundred square miles were required to feed a family, and that the population was at the maximum level. So in general, it appears that all hunting cultures, long sustained, show such a balance between the fauna and population. If too many game animals are killed one year, a proportionate number of persons starve during the next.\(^2\)

\(^{1}\) Childe (3), p. 77. On the relation between population and the development of culture in prehistoric times, see Childe (1), Chapter I.

\(^{2}\) Wissler (1), pp. 342-43.
Even the more productive ecologies of cultivators and pastoralists do not permit of indefinite expansion. For example, the Tikopia have achieved a delicate balance between population and food supply; birth control and infanticide are deliberately encouraged and practised in order to maintain this balance. But generally speaking, emigration and warfare are the more common expedients. In the case of the Society Islands both occurred. There were constant wars between the inhabitants of the fertile coastal regions and those of the inland mountains and, in addition, there were migrations to other islands.

In primitive societies then, as in prehistoric times, the balance between population and natural resources was maintained by harsh Malthusian factors. The low level of technical achievement did not permit the population to increase beyond a given point. But the expansion, in both the geographical and technological senses, of Euro-American civilization during the past few hundred years has introduced an entirely new set of determinants into world demography, and specifically into the population trends of primitive peoples. At first the tendency was towards a diminution of native populations, either by ruthless extermination, as with the aboriginal Tasmanians, or by the introduction of muskets (increasing the scale of indigenous warfare) and of new diseases to which the natives had little resistance. As regards the latter, for example, about one-quarter of the population of Fiji died in 1875 from an epidemic of measles, a disease which we regard as hardly more serious than a common cold.

But this phase was a transitory one. Indigenous warfare was largely suppressed or disappeared with increasing detribalization. At the same time, medical and hygienic measures have increased the life-span of European and non-European peoples alike. The resulting increase in population has produced or aggravated extensive malnutrition in many under-developed areas. The fact that this has stopped short of wholesale starvation has been due largely to the introduction of improved methods of agriculture and animal husbandry, as well as to measures of famine relief in certain cases. All this has offset, though it has not paralleled, the increase in population.

This present ecological problem of non-European peoples is part of the wider problem of world population in relation to world resources. As man's technical command of his environment has increased—for example, from digging stick to mechanical
plough and from shifting cultivation to the use of artificial fertilizers—the resources of nature have been forced to support an increasing population. Can this process continue and be so guided that science will produce the Age of Plenty envisaged by such great thinkers as H. G. Wells and Lancelot Hogben? We have been accustomed to regard an affirmative answer to this question as axiomatic. The obstacles have been seen as lying merely in the problems of man’s socio-economic organization—in the effects of ignorance, prejudice, political and economic interests and international tensions. But some recent researches have led us to query the optimistic faith in man’s ultimate omnipotence, certainly so far as non-edible resources are concerned. A review of his doings on the earth’s surface during recent years has suggested the conclusion that “the kind of change [in the natural environment] produced by human activities very often, if not always, works to man’s own ultimate disadvantage”.¹

Professor Sears reviews some of these changes: the spoliation of vegetation and soil; the misuse of air and water; and the wholesale plundering of mineral resources upon which our modern technology is founded. He concludes: “Through science, man now has the means to be aware of change and its effects, and the ways in which his cultural values and behavior should be modified to ensure their own preservation. Whether one considers ethics to be enlightened self-interest, the greatest good for the greatest number, ultimate good rather than present benefit, or Schweitzer’s reverence for life, man’s obligation toward environment is equally clear.”²

This, then, is the problem which, however imperfectly it is appreciated, civilized man has presented to the peoples with a less advanced level of technology with whom we are concerned in these volumes. We cannot give a final and simple answer to the ethical problem involved, much less a firm prediction as to what will ultimately happen in the future relationships between man and nature. But the principle which underlies many primitive value systems—that healthy social relationships are more conducive to human happiness and dignity than material progress—may help us in facing some of our immediate problems. It would certainly do us no harm, in our nerve-racking pursuit of material amenities, to remember the parable of the Southampton Island Eskimo.

¹ Sears (1), p. 36. ² Ibid., p. 43.
10. Bibliographical Commentary

The classic work dealing in general terms with primitive peoples in relation to their environment is Forde (1). Apart from this there are the relevant sections of modern accounts of primitive peoples, especially Evans-Pritchard (3), on which Section 4 above is founded, and Firth (5), in which the general rôle of environment as a determinant of culture is also discussed. Stewart (1) contains valuable observations on the influence exerted by primitive man on his physical environment. For a discussion of some ecological concepts, and particularly the anthropo-biological conception of human ecology, see Bates (1).

From the geographer's point of view, Taylor (1) contains a valuable collection of essays, some of which deal with problems mentioned in Section 2. Among these the essays by Tatham and Watson, cited in the bibliography, may be specially mentioned. Sears (1) gives a survey of modern man's relation to his physical environment and contains a valuable bibliography on the subject.
CHAPTER XIII

PEOPLE AND THINGS

1. Material and Social Culture

As we know, man is the only tool-making and tool-using animal, and we have mentioned the importance of his artefacts in relation to the early history of the development of socio-economic institutions. Artefacts, indeed, constitute the only evidence as to such development. This important field of study, however, is one for the prehistoric archaeologist and not for the social anthropologist. In terms of the socio-economic classification of prehistoric cultures, all the contemporary primitive cultures with which we have been concerned are either "Palæolithic" or "Neolithic"—even the iron-using peoples of Central and Southern Africa belong in the latter category. So we are not concerned with artefacts in the same way as the prehistorian, partly because we do not need them to reconstruct the social culture of the peoples we study—this we can observe in actual field-work—and partly because our observations, usually limited in time-span to at most a few decades, cannot cover the same chronological range over which to detect the gradual, progressive and inter-connected developments in material and social culture which interest the archaeologist.

But to say that artefacts do not possess the same significance for the social anthropologist as they do for the prehistoric archaeologist is not to say that they are unimportant for the former. On the contrary, they are relevant to his study in three ways.

In the first place, a brief description of the material equipment of a people is often essential to a study of their social culture. Without such descriptions certain institutions—particularly economic institutions—cannot be fully considered in all their significant aspects. Thus Professor Firth in his accounts of both Maori and Tikopia economics includes a brief review of the arte-

1 Vol. 1, p. 3.
facts made and used by the peoples concerned. But such descriptions need not be elaborate, and should not go unnecessarily into details of technology. Their purpose is merely to indicate in general terms the use made of natural resources, the type of material adaptation to the environment and the kinds of artefacts which form the material substratum of the various social institutions found in the community.

2. Technology and "Inventiveness"

In the second place, the study of the material culture of primitive societies sheds light on the much-disputed question of human inventiveness. This was an important point at issue in the nineteenth-century controversy between the evolutionist and diffusionist schools. The more extreme adherents of the latter school went so far as to assert that no invention was ever made twice. While nobody would assert this view today, it remains true that those interested in diffusion tend to underestimate the significance of inventiveness, and the possibility of independent invention, in primitive societies. Thus many diffusionists who have studied material culture in Polynesia have set up their problems in terms of the question "Where did this come from?" rather than in the form "How did this artefact come to be here? Was it invented separately or did it diffuse from somewhere else, or are its character and occurrence to be explained in terms of both principles?"

We shall return to this issue in Section 7.

Apart from specific examples of inventiveness under preliterate conditions, we must draw attention to the wide variety of primitive artefacts. It is true that the physical and chemical principles underlying them are generally of a simple order when compared with the advanced technology of modern civilization. But subject to this limitation there is great variety. In the first place, most primitive societies do not merely have one form for each type of artefact—one type of house, one type of canoe, one type of knife and so on. Each of these kinds of artefact usually exhibits a

1 "Technology must not be confused with economics. But some outline of the level of technical achievement which the Tikopia have reached; the kind of rules which they formulate to guide them in their technical procedure; and the manner in which their body of practical knowledge is treated as a cultural possession for transmission to their descendants is relevant to our enquiry" (Firth (10), p. 78. Cf. Firth (5), Chapters II and V).

2 Vol. 1, Chapter I, Section 8; also Section 7 of the present chapter.
considerable variety of types. These are in part adapted to different functions which they may serve, and are in part a result of the originality and personal preferences of different craftsmen. This being the case, the variety exhibited over the whole range of primitive artefacts is very wide indeed. It is not necessary to make a detailed study of primitive technology to prove this. A walk through any anthropological museum will establish the point.

Why, then (a question often asked by students), are primitive technologies primitive? In other words, why have primitive societies not achieved for themselves anything like the elaborate techniques of modern civilizations? In the case of the primitive peoples of the Americas, Australia and Oceania, a partial explanation is found in the geographical remoteness of these areas from the centres where civilizations originated, first in Asia and later in Europe also. But this explanation does not apply in the case of primitive peoples of Central Africa, Asia and Malaysia who have had ample opportunities of copying advanced technologies, opportunities which until recent times they have exploited to only a very limited extent. In a few cases it may be pointed out that under certain circumstances the adoption of a more advanced technology would bring more disadvantages than advantages. A more elaborate material culture would have been an encumbrance to the Australian aborigines (cf. p. 462 above).

But such explanations in terms of particular circumstances are inadequate to give a general answer to our question. Such an answer is to be found in the theory of needs. We have seen that every culture is an adaptive mechanism which provides with a greater or lesser degree of effectiveness for the satisfaction of human needs. This means that human beings eat culturally, they find sexual satisfaction and enjoy the experiences of family life culturally, they find satisfaction for their desire for fellowship and self-assertion through the particular social structure in which they live, and they gain assurance and comfort through the

---

1 This may be illustrated by referring to any thorough description of the material culture of a primitive people, for example Buck (1). The table of contents of this book lists nearly three hundred headings and sub-headings of sections each referring to a type of artefact or technique, and in a few cases to social customs connected with them. And since many of the sections describe several variants of the type of artefact under consideration, the Samoan inventory is far more extensive than might be thought. Cf. also what will be said in Section 5 about the differentiation in form and function of the various kinds of Trobriand *bwaugma*.

2 These principles are admirably illustrated by Firth's brief review of canoe types in Polynesia (Firth (1), pp. 58–70).
magico-religious institutions of their culture. Cultures thus provide for their members a life which is on the whole tolerable, often pleasant and at times exciting. In general, man is content with his lot. Why should he look for new ways of doing things when existing ways are generally agreeable to him? The normal condition of man is characterized by uninvntiveness.

The problem, therefore, is not to answer the question why primitive technologies are primitive but to discern why the more advanced technologies of civilizations, and particularly of our own, have developed. Obviously nothing more than a partial and summary answer can be attempted here, but we may mention:

(a) The increasing economic surplus since neolithic times which has allowed for the development of technical specialists.

(b) Increasing contact between peoples, enabling different groups, and finally the whole world, to profit from the accumulating knowledge of mankind (cf. p. 478 above).

(c) Writing, which still further extends this process of intellectual cross-fertilization by making it possible for people to profit from the experience of other human beings remote from them in time or place.

(d) Mathematical knowledge, without which modern physical science, and the technological developments derived from it, would have been impossible.

The above factors, and no doubt others which have been omitted, have made possible in our civilization the growth of special institutions which foster inventiveness, such as universities, research institutes and innumerable scientific agencies for the development of technical knowledge connected with agriculture, industry and war. The normative aspect of those institutions is to be found in our adulation of inventiveness and our feeling that new ways of doing things are a Good Thing. So we honour (and reward) those who contribute to our advancing technology. But this does not make "us", as a total community, much more inventive than primitive man, apart perhaps from a few household gadgets "invented" by individuals. It will help the reader to realize this if he asks himself: "What contribution have I made to the technology of our society, and how many people known to me personally have made any such contribution?" The answer
which the vast majority of readers must return to this question will lead them to appreciate more clearly just what we mean when we speak of "our" scientific and technical achievements.

Those who have a lingering feeling of ethnocentric self-complacency may suggest that a "racial" factor has also been operative. Let us grant, they may say, that the vast majority of people in civilized society are hardly, if at all, more inventive than those in primitive communities. But the fact remains that we have produced more outstanding individuals capable of profiting from their own experience and from that of others, more people of originality and genius capable of exploiting possibilities made available to them by historical circumstances. This argument, has a disconcerting corollary when we recall that the major inventions—such as metallurgy, writing and mathematical calculation—which were the basis of the development of civilization were made by people who were racially more akin to the modern inhabitants of Asia Minor and Mesopotamia than to the majority of Western Europeans or Americans.

3. Technology as an Aspect of Culture

In the third place, and most important of all, there is the significance of the material equipment of a people as an aspect of culture in its own right.¹ This of course implies that, if studied at all, material culture must be considered in relation to all other aspects to which it is related. This may appear obvious, but it is necessary to stress the point. Few anthropologists today would study political organization without attempting to relate it to economics, kinship organization, magico-religious institutions and so on; and the same applies to the other non-material aspects of culture. But if the reader will turn to any monograph, or chapter in an ethnographic record, relating to "Material Culture" he will find, not the sort of treatment demanded above, but merely a more or less complete list of gadgets.²

The way in which material culture is related to other aspects of culture varies greatly from one primitive society to another. But it is always true that by far the greatest number of artefacts

¹ Cf. Vol. 1, Chapter VI, especially Section 9.
² It is true that some technological studies, notably those of the late Sir Peter Buck in Polynesia, do contain incidental references to social customs connected with the artefacts described. But these are in the nature of obiter dicta rather than a full statement of the kind required. If there is any comprehensive study of the material culture of any people to which the above observations do not apply, the writer will be grateful for the reference.
are those employed in the food quest.\footnote{Cf. Herskovits (4), p. 245.} The most important relationships of material culture are therefore with the economic system. On the basis of the particular type of economic organization prevailing, artefacts are first and foremost a means whereby the community exploits the resources of its natural environment. But their significance does not end here. They may be related to political organization in the form of insignia of rank, of special types of houses for those standing high in the social hierarchy, or of elaborate tombs or mortuary monuments. As regards the legal aspect of culture, we have seen that this is characterized in primitive society by a lesser degree of emphasis on formalized legal procedure. Consequently, special instruments of execution or punishment and paraphernalia of court procedure are less common than in more advanced cultures, though they do occur.

The material aspect of the educational system is of great importance. We have already referred\footnote{Vol. 1, p. 181.} to the way in which objects which may equally well be called toys or tools play a part in the increasing participation of the child in adult activities. As regards moral education, there is the training of the child in the way in which it should behave towards different material objects—objects which are breakable, which belong to other people or which possess some magico-religious or ceremonial importance. Even children’s games such as top-spinning, kite-flying or making string figures (cat’s cradles) are often associated with moral tales, proverbs and maxims which embody social norms. In short, the relation into which a child is brought with the material culture of its society forms an important part of the way in which it acquires culturally approved skills and sentiments.

The magico-religious system of any people is always connected with material objects which are held to possess extraordinary spiritual value or magical efficacy. Temples, shrines, figures of gods and ancestors, totemic emblems, “medicines”, charms and amulets—these are some of the many material objects connected with magico-religious institutions. Their importance, speaking very generally, lies in the fact that they provide an outward and visible sign of the truth of beliefs in the supernatural and of the mandatory character of religious sentiments. As the Tallensi say: “Our ancestor shrines are our books.”

Much the same might be said of ceremonial and recreation, so far as the latter possesses social significance beyond mere diver-
sion, and even in the latter case what we have said about children’s
games should be borne in mind. The significance of art as one
phase of material culture will be discussed separately in Section 9.

What we have said about the material implications of the
special aspects of culture may be extended to the general aspects.
Knowledge, belief and the whole system of values which we have
described as the normative aspect of culture are all correlated
with a basic material equipment. Material culture is also related
to language, partly through technical terminology but even more
significantly through metaphorical usages relating to material
objects. For example, the Maori used the term waka (canoe) to
refer to groups of tribes descended from one of the canoes of the
great migration to New Zealand from Hawaiki, while a Maori
chief was described as “the mooring-post of the canoe”.

Social organization, too, always has its material aspect, specific-
ally in the different kinds of clothing, houses, ornaments and tools
pertaining to men and women, young and old, chiefs and com-
moners, or to members of voluntary associations or those who
occupy a special social status in the community. Kinship groups
are sometimes differentiated from each other by totemic emblems.

Finally, the life-cycle of the individual is lived within a material
setting. Firstly there are the material objects connected with the
various rites de passage. But apart from such ceremonial observ-
ances, the individual’s relations to the material equipment of his
culture in more secular and mundane situations changes gradu-
ally as he passes from infancy through childhood and adolescence
to full adult vigour, and through senility to death. In each of these
phases his outlook and ways of behaving, as well as the attitude of
society towards him, is related to the material equipment of his
culture. Elderly and distinguished citizens do not normally run
up stairs two at a time, not merely because of advancing age or
adipose tissue, but because such conduct would be inconsistent
with the behaviour patterns expected of them.

We have tried in this section to outline in general terms the
relations which material objects may bear to other aspects of
culture. To provide a more specific illustration of this approach
we shall in the next section discuss a particular object of material
culture—the Trobriand bwayma.

1 This is a term used by Van Gennep to describe the various forms of ritual by which
an individual comes to occupy a new position in the social structure—for example,
at birth, initiation, marriage and death. See Lowie (2), pp. 100–01.
2 Cf. the statement by Kluckhohn and Mowrer cited at p. 621.
4. The Trobriand Bwayma

The Trobriand bwayma are storehouses in which the staple yam crop (taytu) is stored after harvesting. They are a regular feature of each village, being either interspersed between the houses around a central open space or, in the case of villages of rank, forming an inner ring around this open space with the houses forming an outer ring.¹ There are a number of types of

¹ See Fig. 14, Vol. 1, p. 168, where bwayma are shown as shaded rectangles and dwelling-huts as plain ones.
bwayma, but the following description applies primarily to the larger ones, used mainly by chiefs or headmen and built to be of great permanence.

The foundation of the bwayma is laid when the village is built. It is necessary to dig down to bedrock where stones are laid, and on top of these the large pyramidal foundation-stones (ulilagwua) are placed, one in each corner. The position of these corner-stones determines the dimensions of the storehouse. In some cases there are six foundation-stones, three on each side. They are all made of coral stone and stand to a height of about 50 cm. Lying longitudinally on top of these ulilagwua are the foundation-beams or kaytaulo, each being considerably longer than the distance between the corner-stones, and measuring some 20 to 30 cm. in diameter. The protruding ends are sometimes covered with boards crosswise, thus forming a platform at the front. Resting transversally on top of these kaytaulo, and directly above the corner-stones at each end, are two logs known as po’u, which are also sometimes longer than the distance between the corner-stones, and may or may not be specially ornamented.

The log cabin¹ is built on top of this structure, so that the four corners rest directly above the four corner-stones. The first pair of longitudinal logs (kaybudaka) rests on grooves cut into the po’u directly above the corner-stones, and the first two transversal logs (kaylagim) rest on grooves cut into the first pair of kaybudaka. Each log used for this purpose is carefully prepared, cut and planed. The arrangement is repeated until an imposing structure of four walls (liku) is obtained, consisting of eight or nine pairs or rows of kaybudaka and a similar number of kaylagim. At the top another pair of po’u tops off the last pair of kaybudaka, and between these po’u transversal logs, also known as po’u, are placed, cutting the whole length of the storehouse into anything from three to eight sections. On top of these again, and longitudinally along the centre of the cabin, are two poles (teta), lashed to the po’u very close to each other, cutting the previous sections into twice the number. A series of long rods (kabisiwisi) is inserted between these teta, reaching down to the floor below and almost to the ridge-pole above, dividing the entire cabin longitudinally into two parts. Further kabisiwisi are lashed to the po’u, reaching from the floor to

¹ The main structure does, in fact, resemble the traditional log cabin of Northern America, except that the logs are not fitted at the ends so as to lie flush with each other. Consequently there is a space between each pair of logs. The significance of this will become apparent later.
the roof. These rods now divide the entire well of the cabin into six, eight, ten or anything up to sixteen compartments according to the number of po’u.

The floor of the log cabin, known as the bubukwa, consists of rough timber inserted transversally between the foundation-beams and the first pair of kaybudaka, forming a platform at the level of the lower po’u. It is covered with coconut-matting, which is renewed every year before a fresh crop is packed into the storehouse.

The roof is a triangular prism, resting on two longitudinal poles (kiluma), which themselves rest on the top po’u at the base, and on the ridge-pole at the top, with the frame-boards joining these parts slightly curved outwards. This framework is filled in with a network of rods and thatching. Thatching is of lalang grass, coconut or sago leaves. The gable-end boards, which are nearly always carved, are curved and determine the curvature and slope of the roof on both sides. When the different compartments of the log cabin are filled up to the level of the top po’u, taytu are permitted to overflow freely into the roof, as these compartments reach almost into the thatching.

Such are the structural characteristics of the larger bwayma. There are a number of types of smaller ones, which are constructed on similar principles, but with the main differences, both between them and the larger ones and between themselves, occurring mainly in the part between the foundation and the roof. One type, for instance, imitates the larger ones, but with the log cabin carefully covered up with coconut leaves, especially where they are owned by common people, for the open cabin befits only persons of rank. Another type has its log cabin shorter by half than the foundation-beams and the roof, thus leaving a long sheltered platform in front. In these bwayma the front end of the foundation-beams is supported on wooden pillars and, as in the previous case, they may have their log cabins either open or covered according to the social status of the owner. A third type is built on wooden pillars, but with the floor raised very much higher than the standard ones, leaving the log cabin about half the usual depth. This type may or may not have a lower platform, and this may or may not be enclosed. A fourth type has no liku or cabin wall at all, and consists merely of a raised thatched platform. Sometimes it has a second platform underneath which, when enclosed and covered with coconut-matting, provides a cool
Fig. 31.—Front View of a Bwayma.

1. Foundation-stone  5. Log cabin  13. Inner frame-rod
2. Foundation-beam  (a) transversal cabin log  14. Curved frame-rod
3. Framing log      (b) longitudinal cabin log  15. Outer frame-rod
4. (a) at the bottom  8. Horizontal support of  16. Thatch
      of the log cabin  thatch
4a  (b) at the top of  9. Upper ridge pole  17. Gable-end floor
      the log cabin      10. Lower ridge pole  20. Base-board of gable
        12. Gable-board  11. Vertical gable-rod

(Reproduced from Malinowski (5), Vol. 1, p. 253, by courtesy of Messrs. George Allen & Unwin)
resting-place during the day. A fifth type has a very shallow log cabin raised on wooden pillars as in the previous cases, but has, in addition to the usual platform, a lower platform half the length of the cabin itself. This type is claimed to provide better ventilation and to be the classical pattern for seed *taytu*. In the coastal fishing villages, where tubers are not so important, another type of *bwayma* is found. These are makeshift or jerry-built arrangements consisting simply of a rough roof covering a raised platform. Finally, there are the toy *bwayma* for young boys who have just started to make a garden. These are very small, but are raised high above the ground.

The above is a brief outline of the structural characteristics of *bwayma*. But these only become significant in so far as they can be related to the institutional context in which they occur; in other words, by a statement of their function.

At the purely utilitarian level the *bwayma* is a structure in which the harvested yams are stored. The fact that it is raised above the ground and that there are spaces between the logs of which it is built means that ventilation is provided to prevent the stored crops from rotting, and the annual renewal of coconut-matting on the floor helps towards this end. We have already referred to the importance which the Trobriander attaches to his gardens (Vol. 1, pp. 268–69) and his crops, and he is acutely aware of the distinction between *malia* (plenty or prosperity) and *molu* (famine or shortage). The significance of the latter is reflected in a poignant account of a famine in which many people died of starvation.

But agriculture, though primarily satisfying the need for food, has very much wider implications. It is associated with an elaborate series of magical rites which on the one hand guard against anxiety and on the other serve to stress the importance of agricultural activities (cf. Vol. 1, p. 369). The distribution of produce through the custom of *urigubu* reflects the matrilineal social organization, and also the political system in which the chief occupies a favoured position through his privilege of polygyny (cf. Vol. 1, p. 111). The complex rules governing the distribution of the harvest and the filling of *bwayma* are summarized by Malinowski as follows:

---

1 For a detailed description of their technology, including an account of the building of a *bwayma*, see Malinowski (5), Vol. 1, Chapter VIII.

2 For an analysis of the text in which this is recounted, see Malinowski (5), Vol. 2, pp. 23–28. A free translation is given in the same work, Vol. 1, p. 163.
The average man in the Trobriands makes a garden. He owns also a main storehouse and one or two smaller storehouses. The produce of his gardens he has to divide into two parts. The best tubers and those which he will most carefully clean, most conspicuously display, and ceremonially transport—this part of the produce he gives to his sister’s husband or to the husband of some other kinswoman. The other portion of his harvest he keeps for himself, and puts away in the smaller storehouse or in the less conspicuous portion of his main storehouse.

The open well of his main storehouse must, however, be filled by a kinsman or kinsmen of his own wife. This is the urigubu gift which he receives every year. His wife’s nearest relative in the mother line, her brother, her maternal uncle, later on her son or her sister’s son, will be the giver of the urigubu. If his wife dies leaving no children, his own kinsmen will fill his bwayma. If he is a chief, his wife’s father may help to fill his bwayma, though since this is not a father’s duty, he would not do it if his daughter were married to a commoner. Or again in the case of a chief, a fictitious relationship may be established between his wife and certain other people who, though really filling his bwayma as his subjects, perform this duty, by a legal fiction, as his relatives-in-law.

In any case, a man must have his storehouse filled every year by someone, otherwise his social status is adversely affected. The man can and must provide himself with next year’s seed. He usually provides himself and his family with most of the food for daily consumption, but the food which is to be displayed as show food and will be reserved as long as possible for festive occasions, gifts and exchanges, must be given him at the dodige bwayma, either as urigubu from his wife’s brother or from his junior kinsman as a harvest gift.¹

Let us now consider some of the characteristics of the bwayma against this wider institutional background. In the first place the location of bwayma within the village is significant, though there are variations in this regard from one Trobriand village to another. Commonly, there is an inner ring of show bwayma occupying the most conspicuous position in the village; other bwayma are tucked away inconspicuously among the dwelling-houses in the outer ring. In the village of Omarakama, the village of the paramount chief of Kiriwina, the chief’s principal bwayma occupies a central position as shown in the diagram previously cited.

Differences in rank are also reflected in the size of the bwayma; those of chiefs and headmen are always much larger than those of commoners. They are, moreover, open at the sides so that the stored yams show through the gaps between the logs of the main structure. On the other hand, as we have seen, commoners are

expected to cover the outside of their *bwayma* modestly with coconut leaves, though this is not observed in all villages. The *bwayma* of chiefs are also more carefully constructed and have large and brightly painted gable boards.

The *bwayma* is the most elaborate and ornate structure built by the Trobriand Islanders. By comparison, dwelling-houses are somewhat shoddy structures. Though it may seem anomalous that yams should be more carefully housed than human beings, the difference we have mentioned reflects not only the importance of the yam crop but also native beliefs in sorcery. Dwelling-houses are crowded together so that there shall be no room for sorcerers to prowl around along the walls. For a similar reason dwelling-houses have no foundation-stones, as in the case of the *bwayma*.

Another respect in which the structure of *bwayma* reflects social differences, is the contrast between inland villages, which rely, apart from trade, exclusively on agricultural produce, and coastal villages, where fish forms part of the staple diet. In the latter the *bwayma* tend to be shoddy and jerry-built structures, reflecting a less exclusive interest in the yam crop.

The floor of the *bwayma* is, in a sense, its most sacred part. Here are kept the *binabina* stones of volcanic rock which are imported to Kiriwina, where only coral rock is available. The symbolism of the *binabina* stones is that they are designed to impart their qualities of firmness and solidness to the stored yams and at harvest-time the magician performs magic over them in order to "anchor" the harvested yams. Now it is one of the anomalies of Trobriand culture that the floor of the *bwayma*, in spite of its magical associations, is the least carefully constructed part of the whole building—it is made of badly cut stakes, broken poles, in fact of any old pieces of timber thrown together. Thus, the correlation between the social importance of parts of the structure and the care given to their construction is by no means perfect, although it exists.

A point of interest in connection with the different types of *bwayma* is the length of the foundation-beams. In the case of the show *bwayma* of chiefs, the foundation-beams project from the main structure only far enough to allow one man to sit on each. In the case of the smaller *bwayma* of the commoners, they project for several feet, and may be covered with boards to form a platform on which villagers sit and gossip in the day-time. In some of
these smaller bwayma the roof is carried forward to form a sort of covered verandah or porch, where young couples seeking privacy by night may meet. The significance of the short foundation-beams of the chief’s bwayma is that only people of high rank are allowed to sit upon them. It would be inconsistent with the dignity of the chief’s bwayma for it to be used for casual gossip by day or for philandering at night.

The division of the interior of the bwayma into compartments is significant because each compartment is filled by one man who owes urigubu obligations to the owner. The main bwayma of a chief may have as many as sixteen compartments, and thus, under the system of chiefly polygyny, the traditional gifts based on kinship are in fact a form of tribute. But the number of compartments in a chief’s bwayma is always smaller than the number of his wives, because only headmen of the most important tributary villages are allowed to fill his main store-house.

Finally, the toy bwayma are naturally smaller in size and less impressive in appearance, though they bring home to the rising generation in material terms the significance of agriculture and its associated social usages.

In conclusion, we have seen that the technological details of the construction of the bwayma which we summarized at the beginning of this section are culturally significant in so far as they can be related to such institutions as agriculture and chieftainship. They reflect differences in economic organization and social status between villages, and their significance cannot be understood without reference to such social customs as urigubu. The bwayma is thus a material embodiment of some of the most important principles of social organization and some of the most fundamental values of Trobriand culture. In the next section we shall see how similar principles apply in the case of Fijian houses.

5. The Fijian House

The shape of a Fijian house and the detailed techniques employed in tying timber, reeds and thatch together are conditioned by the type of materials available and the level of technological and artistic efficiency achieved by the Fijians. In this section we shall consider briefly the relation of its most general physical characteristic—its rectangular shape with a door in each wall—to certain aspects of the social behaviour of Fijians. This be-
haviour reflects some of the basic values and assumptions of Fijian culture and certain features of social organization.

Basically the Fijian house is a one-room building, with an “upper end” (kubu i cake) and a “lower end” (kubu i ra). The bed or beds and sleeping and dressing appurtenances are at the upper end, and the cooking-place and eating utensils at the lower end. The “living space” for the householders (and in general for visitors too) is situated in the middle—preferably near the walls and “below” the side doors. The arrangement is represented in Fig. 32.

The Fijian has an extremely keen sense of relative status, reflected in behaviour which is delicately balanced according to a number of broad principles which impose social distinctions in the rank structure between chiefs and commoners; in occupation or political power between high and low; in the kinship structure between senior and junior kinsfolk, and also between distant and close kin; in the sex dichotomy between male and female; and in age differences between the older and the younger. This balance is preserved with varying degrees of strictness in different situations, between the same or different persons and according as the one or the other principle is the more appropriate or convenient to apply. But it provides a general pattern within which the most powerful rules of propriety, decorum, respect and obedience attain full significance in regulating the recognized social relations which are valued in the culture. The slightest ignorance or open disregard of these relations is very often met with opprobrious asides and raised eyebrows, while the person who commits no wrong in them is admired as the pillar of custom and an example of proper upbrining.

These balances have certain physical implications, of which one extreme prescriptive form is that a commoner must crouch or even sit down on the ground in the presence of a chief so as to place himself at a physically lower level than his social superior. The physical implications of the other principles of social differentiation are best illustrated within the Fijian house itself, where the “upper end” of the house is associated with higher social status and the “lower end” with lower social status.

The house is one of the objects of material culture which can be

---

1 Sometimes cooking and eating are performed separately in another house regarded as the kitchen and generally much smaller than the main house, which is then known as the “sleeping-house”.
Fig. 32.—Rough Plan of a Fijian House.

The diagram illustrates the accommodation of certain facts of social relations to the general physical arrangement of the inside of a Fijian house. The details of that arrangement are not given in full; for example it is not shown where valuables are kept, where clothes are hung or how food or firewood are stored. All that it is intended to show is the manner of operation of some of the principles of social differentiation within the specific physical environment.
identified with the owner, so that the respect due to a man is reflected in the way individuals behave towards his house. Nobody stands on the threshold: either one gets out altogether or comes inside and sits down in the house. If there are members of other households inside the house nobody stands up, although, if strictly necessary, they may do so in a crouching position. Nobody from a different household may go in or out at the "top" door. But the side doors are open not only to members of the household but to certain classes of close kin, to persons who are highly respected by members of the household because of political power or character, and to chiefs. The latter are generally required to enter by the side door. The "bottom" door is open to everyone. Persons entering by it may not remain standing, but must seek the first opportunity to seat themselves somewhere in the house, preferably towards the side walls. The proximity of the place occupied by any visitor to the "upper end" of the house is determined by his social status in relation to the community generally, in relation to the owner of the house and in relation to those who are already seated inside the house. In proceeding to such place, one either walks in a crouching position or moves on all fours.

All this means that it is possible, by merely sitting down in the house and watching people come in, to gauge their relative importance both in relation to one another and in relation to the owner of the house. When all are seated, one can determine social status purely according to the order in which they are seated in relation to the "upper" and "lower" ends of the house. Such classification can be very closely correlated with the rank structure, although any discrepancies can usually be explained by one of the other principles—sex, political power, kinship and age being the most important.

On the occasion of a more or less formal gathering of the household—for example, at a meal—seniority by age and sex becomes the governing principle in determining where each member sits. There is always that sense of propriety which holds that the elder is prior to the younger and that the male is prior to the female. This generally determines the order in which members of the family are found in relation to the basic "orientation" of the house. The male members are nearer the "upper" end, where

---

1 See Fig. 32. The anomalous position of the mother in relation to her daughter derives from the practical consideration that she must be near the fireplace.
the sleeping-places are located. These places are particularly re-
spected, because it is here that the head, the most respected part
of the body, comes into contact with the mats on the floor. The
females are generally nearer the "lower" end, where are to be
found the cooking-place and all the paraphernalia connected
with food—and food is never held near to the head. Thus each
member of the household has a place in relation to every other
inside the house, although here, as in European society, the children
enjoy a certain amount of freedom.

In conclusion we may refer briefly to the effect of culture
change on this item of material culture. Thus, when Fijians today
build houses of European type for themselves, it is not always easy
or even possible to say which is the "upper" and which the
"lower" end of the house. At the same time, the types of social
relation which we have seen to be based on a definite number of
principles still persist, even though they are difficult to accommo-
date to the new types of houses. The adjustment, however, is made
by simply identifying the "main" door to the lounge, room or
verandah where a group of people are to congregate, with the
"lower" end of the house, and the opposite wall with the "upper"
end. This secures the orientation necessary to accommodate the
persisting social relations to a new physical arrangement.

6. Implications of the Evolution of Maori Clothing

We have so far been concerned with the cultural context of artefacts in purely synchronic terms. If we could gain a sub-
stantial body of knowledge as to how and why the form of primitive artefacts has changed in the past, we could detect similar
factors at work in the diachronic dimension, determining in part
the direction of changes in technology. Normally, however, in static primitive societies this is not possible.

An exception is to be found in the case of Maori material cul-
ture, particularly houses, canoes and clothing. The migration of
the Maori from central Polynesia, probably from the Society
Islands, about the middle of the fourteenth century, is one of the
few major facts in pre-European Polynesian history which can be established beyond reasonable doubt. Between the time of this
main migration and the discovery of New Zealand by Captain

---

1 Ideas concerning the special significance or "sacredness" of the head are widespread in Oceania.
2 There were probably earlier migrations of Polynesians known as "Moa hunters".
Cook, a period of about four centuries elapsed. During this period the Maori settlers were subjected to a new and much colder natural environment, and one which provided raw materials different from those found in central Polynesia. This stimulated, and in certain respects made necessary, radical changes in technology. And as the period was a relatively short one, it is possible to discern what changes took place by comparing the material culture of the Maori with that of central Polynesia. More important still, it is possible to discern some of the cultural forces which produced change, and in the specific field of Maori clothing an analysis of this type was brilliantly carried out by the late Sir Peter Buck. Passing over details of technology, which are available in his work, we may summarize (a) some of the cultural factors which maintained the traditional techniques of Maori clothing at the time of the arrival of Europeans in New Zealand and (b) those which had earlier produced the changes which we have mentioned. These may be referred to as factors of stability and factors of change respectively.

Among the factors of stability which were operative, there were first of all the human needs or interests involved. But, as we know, human needs are always satisfied in a traditionally sanctioned manner, and we shall have to mention some of the ways in which this occurred in the case of Maori clothing. As regards factors of change, we have said that Maori techniques of clothing manufacture had changed since the migration to New Zealand, and we shall therefore have to consider the factors which had differentiated Maori clothing from that found in central Polynesia. These may be grouped under three headings: (1) geographical factors; (2) individual variation and (3) cultural efflorescence. We shall examine these factors of stability and change in turn presently, but we must first refer in general terms to the types of Maori garments and the techniques of their manufacture.

As regards the different types of garments, not all of these were peculiar to the Maori. The apron and the kilt or short skirt have parallels in other parts of Polynesia, though the Maori manufactured them of different materials and by different techniques. The most significant developments were capes and longer cloaks, the former being in the first place, according to Buck, an adaptation of the kilt by wearing it upon the shoulders, and the latter being produced by a lengthening of the cape.

1 Buck (2).
In regard to the material employed in the manufacture of clothing the most significant fact was the substitution of a kind of flax (*Phormium tenax*) for the beaten *tapa* (bark cloth) manufactured from the inner bark of the paper mulberry tree elsewhere in Polynesia. There is evidence that bark cloth was known to the Maori and was originally the material from which clothing was manufactured. But in historic times it had been relegated to such minor uses as the making of kites, decorations and coverings for sacred symbols.

The substitution of flax for paper mulberry bark as the main raw material for the manufacture of clothing necessitated a radical revision of technical processes. Whereas the fibres of the latter are inextricably interlaced and were therefore amenable to the beating technique, those of the former are long and parallel and necessitated a method of combining fibrous elements together into a fabric. This was evolved by the Maori through the development of the single-pair twine (which was found in a rudimentary form elsewhere in Polynesia) into an elaborate technique which has been termed "downward or finger weaving". No loom was employed, the Maori craftswoman working with her fingers downwards from the commencing edge, which was suspended between two vertical sticks. It is important to note that in the weaving\(^1\) of Maori capes and cloaks the commencing edge was that part of the garment which would be at the bottom when it came to be worn. This was correlated with the addition of rain-tags, which, in order to serve their purpose, must hang downwards in the completed garment. But if they were in this position during its manufacture each successive row of tags would interfere with work on the succeeding west. Maori capes and cloaks were therefore constructed as described above, the bottom of the garment being at the top during manufacture.

The technique of producing a garment with rain-tags itself underwent evolution. The original technique, based upon the principle of thatching, consisted simply of leaving loose warp ends projecting from the fabric, but this was subsequently altered by attaching separate tags to a continuous warp.\(^2\) The use of tags underwent an elaboration in function also; designed primarily

---

\(^1\) In spite of certain technical objections, the term "weaving" will be employed here for the Maori technique, which was in fact founded on basketry.

\(^2\) The suggested evolutionary process, seen in different kinds of Maori capes and cloaks, is described in detail in Buck (2), p. 216.
as a protection against rain, they were subsequently employed as a method of ornamentation.

The technological advances described above made possible a number of collateral developments such as the manufacture of war-capes by close (as opposed to spaced) single-pair twining, a unique form of attachment in feather-work, and specialized methods of shaping garments (in the process of manufacture) to allow for the contours of the body.

Factors of Stability.—Turning now to the human interests involved, we may mention first protection, decoration or ornamentation, and modesty. These are general motives in the development of human clothing,1 and the problem of their relative importance need not detain us here. But so far as the specialization of Maori clothing was concerned, it was the factor of protection from cold and rain which was of outstanding importance in the first instance, and which was correlated with the development of the techniques referred to above. This development led to specialized forms of ornamentation, and also to protective clothing of a different type in the war-cloak.

Ornamentation underwent a certain amount of autonomous development, and in addition to attachments such as tags and feathers, derived from the protective rain-tag technique, a number of ornamental features were introduced into the fabric itself by the elaboration of single-pair twining into more complicated forms of weft technique, which made possible the introduction of attractive geometrical designs. To the motive of ornamentation, which was sometimes even allowed to outweigh utility, must be added comfort; for example, the advanced technique of inserts in the shaping of Maori cloaks was, according to Buck, inspired by a desire to free both arms.

The motives listed above concern primarily the wearer of clothes. But the making of clothing was a craft highly honoured among the Maori, and skilled craftswomen took pride in the public approval which their technical and artistic achievements brought them.2

The most important traditional factors which validated techniques of making clothing were those concerned with the whare pora, or houses specially set aside for the teaching of weaving. Here experts instructed novices in the technical procedures, and this teaching was associated with a body of magico-religious belief and

1 Flügel, The Psychology of Clothes, pp. 16 sqq.  
2 Cf. Firth (5), p. 73.
practice. The installation of a new student was the occasion for ritual and the recitation of invocations. Weaving had its myths, its gods and its omens, and was governed by a number of taboos which served an important function in ensuring concentration upon the work.

The economic traditions involved in the making of Maori clothing included a division of labour between the sexes, most of the work being done by women; a set of specialized terms expressing judgments on good and bad weaving; and the association of traditional materials, techniques and types of ornamentation with specific garments. The importance attached to the use of the correct traditional materials is well exemplified in the following story concerning the recent substitution of pheasant feathers for those of indigenous New Zealand birds in the decoration of cloaks. "Some years ago at an exhibition in Christchurch, some feather cloaks were entered in a competition in the Maori Arts and Crafts Section. The two European judges carefully explained to their Maori colleague that the prize was to be awarded for pure Maori work and material. One cloak stood out above the others for neat workmanship and the two European judges had no hesitation in coming to a decision. To their surprise, however, their Maori colleague after casually glancing at it, minutely examined the others and decided in favour of the best of an obviously inferior lot. Then, with a smile on his face, he patiently listened to the arguments of his brother experts. When the oratory subsided, he glanced apologetically at the beautifully made cloak and quietly asked, "Since when was the pheasant a Maori bird?""

Factors of Change.—We have mentioned some of the specialized techniques in the manufacture of Maori clothing and the traditional forces which sanctioned them. We now turn to the factors which had produced these specialized techniques after the main migration to New Zealand.

Geographical influences were undoubtedly of outstanding significance. In fact, the contrast between the physical environment of New Zealand and that of the Polynesian islands to the north was probably the most important single factor in stimulat-

---

1 An interesting sidelight is cast upon the traditional character of this by the following extract from Buck's work: "The author's female relatives were at first unwilling to teach him the details of plaiting technique, because they said it was women's work and beneath a man's dignity to do the actual plaiting."

ing the development of the highly specialized clothing of the Maori. It is probable that demographic influences also played a part. As the descendants of the original Maori settlers spread over both islands, it is likely that local techniques were developed; while the growth of population increased the number of skilled craftswomen, and therefore the possibilities of invention.

Physical environment influenced the evolution of Maori clothing in several ways. In the first place the aute, or paper mulberry from which the Polynesians made their tapa garments, did not grow in New Zealand. The ancestors of the Maori brought plants with them, but the climate did not allow of extensive cultivation. Light tapa garments, moreover, were not suitable for a cold, wet climate. For these two reasons the original Maori were called upon to seek some new raw material for the manufacture of clothing. This they found in the variety of flax referred to above, but owing to the structure of its fibres, they were obliged to abandon the beating technique, evolving their elaborate technology of finger weaving. The need for protection against rain led to the development of rain-togs, and the introduction of these was correlated with the special technological development of weaving the garment in an inverted position, as described above. Size, ornamentation and shaping of garments were all influenced directly or indirectly by geographical environment; and though, as we have seen, the exclusive importance attributed to it by some writers is open to criticism, it is impossible not to recognize its primacy in setting in motion a series of inventions in the technology of Maori clothing.

But, as Professor Firth has most convincingly argued, the whole story of Maori clothing cannot be told in terms of ecological adjustment. "Physical environment presents the limiting condition to economic activity, but there is no rigid environmental mould into which fluid economic effort is poured and allowed to set firm." The ancient Maori were not content merely to produce some sort of clothing which would suit their environment. They continued to invent new methods of manufacture, new types of garment and new styles of ornamentation. Buck shows very clearly that the evolution of Maori clothing was a gradual and cumulative process. Skill, initiative, inventiveness, aesthetic preferences and other factors of individual variation operated in

1 Firth (5), p. 74.
succeeding generations of craftswomen. Unfortunately, the precise incidence of such variations in bygone times will never be known; we can know only their cumulative effect, the end products of a progressive series of inventive achievements. But no one will disagree with Buck's statement of the position: "Each difficulty was a problem that stimulated the inventive faculties of uncivilized woman. Each solution, no matter how crude from the standard of modern civilization, was to the inventress a glorious victory. Viewed from this standpoint, the dry details of technique became infused with a living interest and brightened with the romance of successful human achievement."¹

The wealth of accumulated knowledge and technique embodied in the technology of Maori clothing may be viewed from two angles: firstly as something developed in response to environmental pressure, and secondly as something which attained a degree of autonomy in its development by a process of cultural efflorescence. The development of tag and featherwork ornamentation from the original technique of the rain-tag, dictated by necessity; the patterning of dress cloaks on lines originally laid down by considerations of utility; the whole institutionalization of weaving, with its ceremonial, its ritual and its legends, in the whare pora—all of these were factors which made the manufacture of clothing, both technologically and socially, something radically different from anything connected with the making of garments elsewhere in Polynesia.

7. Diffusion and Independent Evolution

The development of Maori clothing illustrates very well the fundamentally limited view of invention implied in a thorough-going diffusionism, with its implicit reluctance to admit that any invention is likely to be made twice. A useful practical corrective to this is research in clinical psychology. Here, in the application of one of the standard batteries of psychological tests to a series of individuals, the examiner sees the same "invention" made not twice but ad libitum: imperfectly by some individuals; simply and straightforwardly by others; and with a wealth of additional detail and elaboration by the more intelligent and imaginative. On the other hand, the diffusionist approach to culture very often implies a conception of invention which makes no allowance for intelligence, invention being envisaged as a fortuitous ebullition of

¹ Buck (2), p. 127.
human guesswork or a series of happy accidents, unlikely to occur twice in the course of human history.\footnote{This applies not only to the solid facts of material culture, where the concrete factors of environment and the physical constitution of raw materials impose limiting conditions upon inventiveness; but also to the facts of social, religious or political life, where the development of cultural elements in response to human needs has more free play.}

As Buck points out, the development of Maori clothing does not support the view of extreme diffusionism, and his analysis shows very clearly the logical, progressive and purposive character of human invention. An invention, whether of an artefact, a technological process or a social custom, is not a happy intrusion of Divine Providence into the muddle of human stupidity; it is a reasonable solution for a concrete problem, not always the most satisfactory solution, often inhibited by existing traditionalized techniques or by the absence of any particular spur towards inventiveness (cf. above, Section 2), but produced invariably by the interaction of two groups of factors which are the same everywhere in the world—physical reality, and man’s intelligence subserving his biological, psychological and social needs.

A number of other conclusions concerning the process of invention also emerge from Buck’s work. In the first place, his insistence upon the treatment of the form of artefacts in terms of technological processes aimed at a satisfactory solution makes clear the importance of studying the steps by which a final form is reached.\footnote{"The question of diffusion has been confused by comparing end products which have been arrived at by different technical processes. . . . Technique . . . indicates how different groups of people have sought to supply their material needs by adapting an old method to local material, by evolving improvements or by inventing a new technique. Throughout each technical process difficulties occurred that had to be surmounted, and human thought is expressed by the manner in which skilful fingers sought to achieve the desired end" (Buck (2), p. 7).}

A study of the detailed nature and historical development of technological processes is essential to comparative studies in the sphere of material culture.\footnote{It seems probable that if more information of this kind were available many comparisons based on formal similarities between artefacts would require revision. Cf., for example, Buck’s comparative study of Maori and North American clothing (Buck (2), pp. 205–12).} For example, the developed form of rain-tag in the \textit{hieke} cloak was never “invented”—it was the end product of no fewer than four modifications. We must think of artefacts and technological processes not as unitary revelations vouchsafed to man or achieved by him \textit{ad hoc} and \textit{en bloc}, but as the cumulative effect of prolonged experiments, adaptations and minor modifications.

This point has been well made in a valuable contribution to the
theory of invention by Dr. H. S. Harrison, who aptly points out that "an aeroplane is a bundle of inventions". He goes on to discuss the various processes subsumed under the somewhat loose term "invention", and in another publication he elaborates his discussion of the methodological problems and issues and devotes special attention to the subject of evolutionary series. For example, he questions the usual explanation of the origin of the plank canoe in the dug-out, the view that the former evolved from the latter by the addition of side-planks or wash-strakes until the dug-out portion shrank to the dimensions and position of a keel. He suggests, as an alternative, that the plank canoe evolved from the raft, through the type of raft canoe which is a receptacle as well as a floating platform. At this stage of evolution the use of planks for houses or other structures may, he thinks, have given the cue for the final development of the plank canoe. According to this view, the dug-out is to be regarded as a degenerate plank canoe rather than as the original form from which the latter evolved. Dr. Harrison recognizes that either of the two explanations represents a possible interpretation of the facts.

If we consider these two alternative evolutionary series in the light of the considerations set forth above, the most salient fact which strikes us is that the plank canoe is a satisfactory adjustment for a maritime people. It has advantages over both the dug-out and the raft, though for certain purposes these are suitable and their comparative simplicity of construction makes them preferable. But granted that the plank canoe is the *terminus ad quem* of a series of inventions, may it not have had, in different parts of the world and at different times, more than a single *terminus a quo*? If the modern technologist can imagine two distinct series of discoveries leading to a useful adjustment, it is clear that either or both may have occurred in the slow, progressive and purposive work of generations of primitive craftsmen.

The same is true, *mutatis mutandis*, of the status of the dug-out canoe itself. Is it, as Dr. Harrison suggests, a product of degeneration from the plank vessel, or in terms of the current view which he criticizes, the "all-father of canoes"? Since each view is plausible, it may be that one is true for certain areas and the other elsewhere.

---

We may now summarize what has been said about diffusion, independent evolution and the related problem of human inventiveness:

1. Diffusionist interpretations often ignore the factors which may produce change within a culture itself without any influence from outside. How factors of this kind may operate in a specific instance has been illustrated with reference to Maori clothing.

2. But this example is exceptional and arose primarily from specific environmental influences. Man is usually content with his lot, so that inventiveness is relatively rare in primitive society. The emphasis on inventiveness which characterizes our own culture is a specific development in human history, the result of the growth of special institutions and values which foster "progress".

3. The question of inventiveness is related to wider problems of evolution in material culture, such as those discussed by Dr. Harrison. But here the possibilities are so manifold that there is no hope of reaching a conclusion as to what actually happened merely by speculating about evolutionary origins. We simply do not know enough about the social context in which technological changes took place to say anything definite and significant about them.

4. Much the same applies to diffusionist interpretations. Not only are they based on questionable assumptions, but even when they can be demonstrated as valid they cannot, as a rule, treat artefacts in their social context, as we have done with the Trobriand *btuayma* and the Fijian house. Specifically, they can only rarely give an account of the dynamics of diffusion—the forces which lead one community to "borrow" from another; nor can they explain why neighbouring communities with different cultures have often failed to influence one another significantly.

5. To say that evolutionary interpretations are concerned with guesswork and diffusionist studies with trivialities would be an exaggeration, but not a gross exaggeration. Sometimes, and in limited fields, it is possible to construct valid evolutionary sequences—for example, in the evolution of Maori clothing—while some diffusionist studies attempt to indicate the dynamic forces at work. The worthwhileness of any particular problem and the validity of each particular solution must be considered on their merits. But we must guard against pretentious evolutionary interpretations on the one hand and diffusionist studies, which are usually based on questionable assumptions, on the other. This
remark applies only to those diachronic studies which are based on ethnological evidence and emphatically not to those founded on the solid evidence of prehistoric archæology. The earth may corrode or destroy the artefacts which it holds; but it cannot modify them constructively, as happens, however slowly, in every living human culture.

6. The social anthropologist, in studying material culture, can most profitably concentrate almost exclusively on synchronic studies of primitive artefacts in their cultural setting. How this can be achieved in the case of museums will be discussed in the next section.

8. A Note on Museums

We have already referred to the importance of museums in connection with the teaching of social anthropology.¹ In this section we shall consider further the functions which they may serve in promoting understanding of non-European cultures.

In the first place, museum organization is a highly skilled profession. It is not just a matter of arranging specimens tidily behind glass. Every museum should have a policy designed to make the best possible use of its specimens and display space. One of the most important questions here is whether the specimens should be arranged in a comparative or a geographical series.

In a comparative series artefacts are grouped according to their use or purpose; for example, fire-making appliances from all over the world are placed in one case or section of the museum, all specimens of pottery in another, and so on. To give an idea of the content of such a series, the following is a partial list of objects displayed in the ethnological galleries of the Horniman Museum, London:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Weapons of War and the Chase</th>
<th>The Domestic Arts—contd.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arts and Crafts of the</td>
<td>Spinning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Andamanese</td>
<td>Mat-making</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture and the Preparation of Food</td>
<td>Weaving</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fire-making</td>
<td>Bark-cloth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natural and Artificial Vessels</td>
<td>String-work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baskets</td>
<td>Skin-dressing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pottery</td>
<td>Musical Instruments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glass</td>
<td>Vibration of Bars, Plates,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thongs, Cord, etc.</td>
<td>Membranes, etc.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

¹ Vol. 1, p. xiii.
In a geographical series, on the other hand, artefacts are not grouped according to their use but according to the part of the world from which they come; for example, all objects from Australia in one case or part of the museum, those from South America in another, and so on. There may also be cases devoted to specific tribes or peoples; for example, the Eskimo or the Maori.

Each of these systems of display has its advantages. The comparative series illustrates very well how artefacts are solutions devised by man to solve certain basic human problems. Consider, for example, fire-making. This originated in paleolithic times and is well-nigh universal, though the Andaman Islanders had no knowledge of any way of making fire and merely lit one fire from another. Methods of fire-making, then, are practically ubiquitous, but they vary greatly between different peoples. There are numerous ways of making fire by friction (for example, the fire-plough, the fire-saw and the fire-drill), by percussion and even, in the case
of that very rare specimen, the fire-piston, by igniting tinder by the heat produced by compressed air. Finally, in more advanced societies there are methods of producing fire by chemical means; for example, our own matches and lighters. Other types of artefacts, such as pottery or woven garments, have a more limited distribution, but the principle brought out by a comparative series is the same: how different peoples have employed a variety of techniques to achieve common human ends.

Another advantage of the comparative series is that artefacts from modern societies can be grouped together with those from primitive communities; for example, rifles, pistols and other modern weapons of war are exhibited side by side with bows and arrows, spears, clubs and other primitive weapons. This sort of display helps to increase our sense of the community of peoples, in contradistinction to the conception of “savages” on the one hand and “ourselves” on the other.

But the arrangement of specimens in a geographical series also has advantages. It can be made to stress the unity of each culture and the interrelation between its parts; for example, agricultural tools may be grouped with magical objects or substances connected with rain-making and other agricultural ritual. This stresses, albeit at a very elementary level, the interrelationships of different aspects of primitive institutions. The geographical series can also include specific exhibits illustrating particular institutions; for example, the display of objects used in the Kula in the Auckland War Memorial Museum.

Both comparative series and geographical series, then, have their respective advantages. But whatever system be adopted, one principle is of the utmost importance. If the maximum educational effect is to be achieved, specimens should be regarded as the least important part of the display. This paradoxical statement may be illustrated with reference to certain comments on the work of Dr. H. S. Harrison, one of the greatest museum directors of our time, who originally organized the Horniman Museum. Some of Dr. Harrison’s critics accused him of thinking that a museum is “a collection of labels illustrated by specimens”. And so it should be. This does not mean that labels, maps, diagrams and similar illustrative material should necessarily occupy

---

1 It is, of course, possible to combine the two by having, in different galleries, a geographical and a comparative series in the same museum. This is done in the Royal Scottish Museum, Edinburgh. On the other hand, considerations of space and staff may make this arrangement difficult or impossible.
more space than the specimens, but that those who are charged with organizing museums should concentrate their main interest upon them. After all, it does not take much intellectual effort to put a specimen in a museum case with an identifying label attached. The biggest problem in arranging a museum display is how to convey to visitors the cultural significance of artefacts, how to re-create the living context in which they were made and used.

Informative material, then, in printed or typewritten form is essential to enable casual visitors to a museum to gain a grasp, however vague, of the significance in human terms of objects of material culture. But a better way is through lecture demonstrations for adults or school-children. These may be taken around a museum in groups of not more than ten or fifteen at the outside. In the case of larger parties some members have to stand at the back and listen to the talk of the demonstrator, which is pointless unless the specimens he is talking about can be clearly seen.

Such demonstrations are particularly important in the case of school-children. There have been in recent years several proposals for the teaching of social anthropology in schools. While on the face of it this would appear to be desirable, there are objections. The teaching of social anthropology as a subject would be impractical except for senior classes. And even here there are points against it, particularly the complicated principles of social organization which have to be mastered before the main characteristics of primitive cultures can be thoroughly understood. On the whole, it appears better for teachers to introduce anthropological principles as part of their teaching of such subjects as geography, social study or civics, and history. Visits to museums can be a valuable supplement to this.

In connection with the part which museums can play in bringing anthropology into the schools, an interesting innovation was introduced at the Auckland War Memorial Museum some years ago by Dr. Gilbert Archey and was carried out by Mr. R. A. Scobie. Specimens are packed in display form in specially designed cases which are sent out on loan to schools for varying periods. This gives the teachers an opportunity to talk with school-children about the specimens and their implications; it also allows the children to look at them at greater leisure than in a short visit to a museum. Furthermore, this system is particularly appropriate to a country like New Zealand with a scattered popu-
lation, where children in remote areas rarely have an opportunity of visiting museums.

To conclude, it may be said that anthropological museums have four main functions:

Firstly, they can make a substantial contribution to the improvement of race relations. An imperative need in the world today is for tolerance and mutual respect between peoples, and particularly in the relations between the so-called white races and those more liberally endowed with melanin. The attractive exhibition of native artefacts in a museum can do much to foster humanistic appreciation across the barriers of race and culture. This is particularly important in the case of school-children, whose mental attitudes are not so firmly set. For example, in one experiment at the Auckland Museum a "racial distance questionnaire", designed to assess the degree of racial prejudice, was applied to a group of children before and after visiting the museum. It was found that their reactions towards non-European peoples became markedly more favourable as a result of their experience at the museum.

Secondly, museums can help to give a concrete background to the study of the more abstract principles of social anthropology. One difficulty in teaching this subject is to convey to students what life is really like in primitive society. Students are apt to interpret what they read and hear in lectures in terms of their own experience, and in the majority of cases this does not include close contact with non-European cultures. The task of enabling them to think in terms of exotic environments is thus one of the most difficult problems of the teacher of social anthropology. Well-organized visits to museums are a very great help in this regard.

Thirdly, museum displays, and particularly comparative series, can do much to offset the impression mentioned earlier that primitive peoples are somehow of a different order of humanity from ourselves.

Fourthly, museums are a great help in clarifying the relations between the different anthropological sciences, which is another difficulty in conducting courses in general (as opposed to social) anthropology. This difficulty can be partially overcome by museum displays showing prehistoric stone implements in relation to those of contemporary primitive communities or of casts of fossil skulls with the artefacts associated with them. This sort of exhibit can
help to convey that impression of the fundamental unity of mankind, irrespective of time and place, which it is the task of anthropology as a cultural discipline to instil.

9. Primitive Art

The material cultures of all peoples, primitive and civilized, include productions which may be designated as art. These consist on the one hand of artistic forms specially created with no end in view other than aesthetic appreciation (for example, pictures and other objects exhibited in our Art Galleries); and on the other hand of the artistic treatment of artefacts which have other purposes, such as the graceful shaping or ornamentation of objects of everyday use (for example, canoes, food vessels, houses, weapons and implements), as well as those which have a religious or ceremonial significance. We are sometimes apt to think of art primarily or exclusively in terms of the first category, and to designate the second as consisting mainly of "craftsmanship". But this conception will not serve us in dealing with the art of primitive peoples, practically all of which is associated with objects which possess utility or social significance apart from their aesthetic qualities. The appreciation of this fact is vital for an understanding of primitive art.

The art of any primitive people, or primitive art in general, can be appreciated in two distinct ways. In the first place, it may be considered, from the purely aesthetic point of view, as a set of artistic creations in their own right quite apart from the people who produced them, the conditions under which they were made, the uses for which they were intended and the non-aesthetic values centring around them. They may be appreciated in terms of such criteria as their proportions, design or use of colour. Thus during the past few years there have been many exhibitions of primitive art which have been appreciated by art critics and connoisseurs who knew little or nothing about primitive culture or the part which art plays in it.²

In the second place art can be viewed as an aspect of culture; that is, primitive artistic creation and appreciation may be considered in relation to other activities of the people concerned. This is, of course, the study which interests the anthropologist and

¹ This section is exclusively concerned with plastic and graphic art; that is, those types of artistic expression which are embodied in material form, as distinct from such arts as singing and dancing.
² Some of them have made the latter fact obvious by their comments. Cf. Firth (16), pp. 159–60.
the only one on which, as an anthropologist, he is qualified to speak.

In terms of our definition of art as embracing all objects, including those of utility, the fashioning of which is influenced by aesthetic standards, the first sentence of this section is an understatement. In fact, all material culture is art, apart from such products of phantasy as Heath Robinson machines and Emett trains. Artefacts are always shaped in a form which is aesthetically pleasing according to the standards of the culture concerned. But in the case of some artefacts the amount of attention paid to form, or the amount of artistic decoration or embellishment, is much greater than in the case of simple, undecorated objects. It is with the former that we are primarily concerned when we speak of primitive art.

The conception of making an object merely in order to contemplate it from an aesthetic point of view is foreign to primitive society. In other words, there is no ideal of art for art's sake. But each primitive society has a set of aesthetic standards by which artistic creations are appreciated and criticized. By conforming to these standards the primitive artist gains renown, usually accompanied by material benefits. The representations achieved are hard for the European to appreciate, mainly because of differences in artistic conventions. For instance, only rarely does primitive art aim at realistic representations of living figures, human or otherwise. Thus on the north-west coast of America the beaver on totem poles is traditionally represented by figures so badly proportioned (from our point of view) and so lacking in detail that it is at first impossible to recognize the carving for the animal which it represents. But such clues as the two large incisor teeth and the flat tail serve to identify the carving at once to anyone familiar with the artistic conventions of the people. Again, Maori carvings of ancestral or legendary figures make no attempt at a precise delineation of the human face which will identify the figure represented—in fact, they often appear grotesque and ill-proportioned to unsophisticated Europeans. But certain conventions of identification exist. For example, Tamatekapua, the captain of the Arawa canoe of the great migration, had, before leaving Hawaiki, been involved in a quarrel with another chief. Tamatekapua stole fruit from the other's tree by the stratagem of approaching it on stilts so that no tell-tale footprints were left on the ground. Consequently, carvings of Tamatekapua show him
with his legendary stilts which serve to identify him. Similarly, in the famous legend of the love the maiden Hinemoa for Tutanekei, she was attracted to him by his serenading her with a flute; consequently Tutanekei is today depicted in carvings with this particular musical instrument.

While such highly conventionalized representations of human or animal figures are difficult for us to appreciate, they are of a type not altogether foreign to our culture. Consider, for example, our heraldic emblems, or even the representations of king, queen and knave in a pack of playing-cards.

The degree of meaning associated with primitive works of art is highly variable. At one extreme there are geometrical forms (for example, the taniko designs employed on Maori clothing) which have no special significance; they are produced merely because they are pleasing to the eye. Then there is the highly elaborate geometrical art of the Plains Indians; here a meaning is often attributed to certain designs, but the similarity is difficult to detect and varying meanings may at different times be attributed to the same pattern. On the other hand, much of the art of the Australian aborigines is based on the simplest possible representative designs; for example, concentric circles representing a water-hole or a zigzag line standing for a river. Yet these designs, and the natural features of the landscape which they represent, are sanctified in an elaborate mythology, and are rich in institutional associations with totemic and initiation ceremonial.

In general, it is probably true to say that the non-aesthetic values associated with art in primitive society are of greater relative importance than among ourselves. Yet we are far from lacking in appreciation of such values. To the Christian believer our religious art is more than the representation of Biblical figures; our pictures of the Royal Family are appreciated not merely for their aesthetic merit but because they appeal to sentiments of loyalty; the artistic proportions and decoration of war memorials appeal to a complex of values and feelings—of pride, of sorrow and of national solidarity—which is deeply rooted in our cultural experience; the portrait galleries of aristocratic houses reflect family continuity and the solidarity of kinship groupings; and our statues of statesmen and other distinguished persons reflect the particular values and ideals of which they were exemplars. It would be easy to find parallels for all of these instances in the field of primitive art. Statues of deities or of
chiefs, living and dead; emblematic representations, totemic or otherwise, of kinship groupings; and monuments commemorating those who have died and glorious episodes in tribal history—these are among the forms in which various primitive peoples express their social values in an aesthetically pleasing form.

A word should be said about the position of the artist in primitive society. Sometimes, where there is a large population and a substantial economic surplus, he is a specialist devoting all or most of his working time to his craft. But more commonly he cultivates his fields, goes fishing or hunting like anybody else in his society, and devotes only a part of his time to the production of artefacts. He obtains satisfaction from artistic creation, is complimented on and usually rewarded for his work, but his efforts emerge from specific social demands made upon him and not merely from a spontaneous urge to create, much less from a desire to “sell” his work. He may produce a work of art to meet some social obligation of his own or in response to a request from a kinsman or chief; but in any case his dealings with those who will ultimately possess his work are essentially personal, a reflection of social relations and values.¹

Because his work must be appreciated by those who have learned to think in terms of a particular style of art, the primitive artist always works within a traditional framework—but so, too, do the modern “schools” of art. He shows much originality, but always within certain limits. To illustrate this, use may be made of museums. If the visitor will compare the art of the Plains Indians with that of the north-west coast of America, he will find within each tradition a considerable range of variation. But each

¹ The principle involved here may be illustrated from the contemporary Maori, who in this as in so many other respects have preserved to a very large extent the values of their pre-European cultural heritage. Graceful and useful artefacts are today produced by Maori craftsmen and craftswomen, and to those who have admired them it has sometimes seemed a pity that they are not more widely available to New Zealanders in general and to tourists from abroad, who normally have to be content with shoddy imitation “souvenirs”. Towards this end some well-meaning people (including the writer when he first came to New Zealand) have suggested that commercial channels should be opened up. On the face of it, this is a reasonable suggestion. During the war the Government of Nigeria maintained at Lagos a shop where very fine Hausa leatherwork might be purchased at cost price. But Hausas, traditionally accustomed to monetary trade, are not Maoris, for whom the suggestion is impractical. When the Maori makes things or does things with his hands in the context of the introduced economy, he does so for wages or payment. But when he uses his hands to create something belonging (though usually in a modified form) to his traditional culture, it normally passes from him only as reflection of aroha (love or affection). Apart from a very few professional specialists, most Maori craftsmen (and more particularly craftswomen) will give, and give unstintingly, but they will not sell.
tradition is quite distinct and provides the framework within which the artist must work.

The primitive artist thus observes aesthetic standards broadly laid down by his culture. And he can explain details of technique, design and so on. But he does not seek to justify what he does in terms of aesthetic theory: “It is the custom”, “It is the way I was taught”—these are apt to be his responses to requests for a more abstract discussion of the basis of his art.

To conclude, we have seen that art is more closely related to other aspects of life in primitive society than it is in our own: by the close association of art with objects of utility and of non-aesthetic cultural significance; by the essentially personal relation of the artist to those who appreciate his work; and by his preoccupation with the life which is going on around him rather than with philosophic principles. The significance of these characteristics will be largely a matter of personal evaluation. Some will hold that the individual creative urge is limited by the pragmatic and traditionalized context within which the primitive artist works. Others will argue that the lack of self-consciousness of the primitive artist means that he is more intimately in touch with his fellow human beings, and that he is artistic but notarty. But whichever viewpoint be adopted, the important thing to recognize is the difference, in this field, between most primitive societies and our own. This difference becomes clear when we contrast what has been said about primitive art with the description by Professor Melville Herskovits of our own values in this field:

The arts, in the conventions of Euroamerican culture, have been dissociated from the principal stream of life. Artistic creation is the function of the specialist; while the appreciation of what these specialists create is the privilege of those who at least command the leisure to pursue their avocation. The painting hangs on the wall, often of a museum; the sculpture is on its pedestal. The symphonic theme is somehow deemed vulgarized, violated, when it is transmuted into a popular dance tune. We speak of “significant form”; yet the aerodynamic streamlining of the high-speed train or aeroplane, or other utilitarian forms of this type, are largely held to be “applied art” in disregard of the creative mastery with which the significant form of these useful instruments has been realized. The highest expression of the aesthetic experience is held to reside in objects that are not “profaned” by use, but are there to be looked at; or which, in music, are heard as “pure” forms. Considerations of utility or associations with everyday living renders the object, the melody, the poem, something less than a work of art.¹

10. Material Culture: A Contradiction in Terms

Throughout this chapter we have used the term "material culture" in its conventional sense to refer to the body of artefacts found in any community. But we must now seek a more abstract definition because the conventional approach to material culture is inadequate to the sort of scientific analysis which is necessary.

The significance of the material culture of any people can only be defined in terms of the relationships of artefacts to the whole system of institutional activities in which they are made and used. Relationships of this kind constitute the essential facts of our science so far as we are concerned with technology, for in any scientific study a fact is not something immediately apparent to the senses. The desk at which I am writing is not for the atomic physicist something which can be seen, touched or measured, neither should it be for the anthropologist. Its physical reality lies in a complex and abstract set of relationships between atomic particles. Its anthropological reality lies in its relationship to the educational institution in which it exists, in its function as part of the educational system of our culture. This function would have to be defined in terms of the personnel of the university, of the educational needs of our community and of the whole system of knowledge, beliefs and values connected with the institution concerned. The anthropologist, like any other scientist, has a definite conception of the reality of his subject-matter. The reality of any item of culture, material or otherwise, lies in its relationship to the totality of the culture of which it forms a part.

In the past this principle has been neglected largely as a result of the influence of the conception of the culture "trait", the conception that culture can be broken down into a series of discrete particles which are capable of description apart from the structure and functioning of the organic whole of which they are parts. This approach bears the same relation to the scientific one as the technique of the butcher does to that of the anatomist. The culture trait does not exist for the scientific anthropologist. Paradoxically, his view of culture is akin to the Irishman's definition of a net as "a number of holes tied together with a piece of string". Culture traits are like the holes, having no existence apart from the relationships which connect them with each other. "Material culture", though it is a useful label for one of the many aspects of

our study, is in itself a contradiction in terms since culture scientifically viewed consists of abstract and therefore immaterial relationships. There is no Science of Gadgets.

Some readers may be better able to grasp the central thesis of this chapter by means of Fig. 33. Here the word ARTEFACT is presented in broken lines to indicate that it is not an anthropological reality in itself. The scientific facts about it are indicated by the heavy double-ended arrows which stand schemati-

**Fig. 33.**—The Cultural Setting of Artefacts.

cally for the various relations which the artefact bears to the institutions in which it is used.¹

We have in this chapter considered certain artefacts in their cultural setting. How far it would be profitable to review the whole material culture of a people in this way it is impossible to say. The task has never been attempted. But it is certain that many details of form and technology usually included under the title of

¹ It should be added that the same material object may be considered from the point of view of its function within various institutions; thus a weapon may be used in war, in hunting, for the execution of a criminal or as an emblem of office. Again, we have seen that the *bewapna* is significant for the understanding of both agriculture and chieftainship, and that the arrangement of the Fijian house reflects both kinship and rank organization.
material culture do not bear any significant relationship to the system of human activities in which they occur. In this case they do not matter. On the other hand, it is equally certain that some significant relations between the form and function of artefacts would emerge from technological studies having an anthropological orientation; that is, directed towards describing the relationships of artefacts to human beings. Other features of technology are not subjects for study by the social anthropologist. They are, in the words of Raymond Firth, nothing more than "embryonic aspects of applied mechanics".  

II. Bibliographical Commentary

As stated above, there is no discussion of the material culture of any people, or of material culture in general, from the point of view adopted in this chapter. Specific artefacts are considered in this way in Malinowski (1), Chapter IV (canoes) and Malinowski (5), Vol. I, Chapter VIII (the bwayma), while Firth (5 and 10) contain valuable sidelights on the significance of certain Maori and Tikopian artefacts. An excellent discussion of the Blackfoot war lodge, bringing out its many functions in relation to the institution of warfare, is contained in Ewers (1). Spencer and Barrett (1) provide a brief but instructive account of the functions in community life of a group of buildings connected with the ancestral halls of a group of extended families in a Chinese village.

An excellent discussion of technology in relation to the utilization of natural resources is contained in Herskovits (4), Chapter XVI, while Boas deals with invention in Boas (3), Chapter VI. One of the best reviews of primitive artefacts is contained in a series of handbooks prepared by Dr. H. S. Harrison and published by the Horniman Museum, their titles being The Evolution of the Domestic Arts (Parts I and II) and Travel and Transport by Land and Water. Another valuable survey is contained in Notes and Queries on Anthropology (published by the Royal Anthropological Institute), Part III, while Sayce, in Primitive Arts and Crafts, deals with some of the important artefacts of primitive peoples.

There are numerous descriptions of the material culture of specific peoples or of particular kinds of artefacts found among them. These are mainly local in their interest and references may be obtained from the bibliographies in Herskovits (4) and Boas (3), and in Notes and Queries on Anthropology.

1 Firth (15), p. 477.
In regard to primitive art, the best assessment of its significance is to be found in Firth (16), Chapter V; while Firth (17) deals with some aspects of the social significance of art in New Guinea. Classic works on primitive art are Balfour, *The Evolution of Decorative Art*; Haddon, *Evolution in Art*; and Boas, *Primitive Art*. Valuable comparative surveys are to be found in Boas (3), Chapter XI (written by Ruth Bunzel), and in Herskovits (4), Chapter XXIII.
CHAPTER XIV

METHODS OF FIELD-WORK

1. The Necessity and Dangers of Theory in the Social Sciences

While it is true to say that all scientific knowledge is founded on observation, the observation concerned is of a special type, depending upon the training of the observer as much as on his natural intelligence. It is essentially a directed and controlled observation. To take a very simple illustration, consider the case of a chemist who takes his small son into his laboratory where various chemical experiments are in progress. So far as mere visual impressions are concerned, the two are on an equal footing; in fact, the small boy’s eyesight may actually be keener than that of his father. But the latter is the only one who can make scientific observations; the son sees burettes, retorts, thermometers and vessels containing different coloured liquids. While these make an impression upon his senses, he is unable to understand their significance in terms of scientific knowledge. His father, on the other hand, can read the instruments, interpret colour changes in solutions, and in other ways understand scientifically the meaning of his sense impressions because of his training in the science of chemistry.

This very elementary example illustrates a principle which requires constantly to be re-emphasized in the social sciences. Here the untrained observer is all too ready to assume that his observations of human behaviour can yield information comparable with those of the trained social scientist. Whether in industry, in administration or in far-flung outposts of what used to be Empire, the “practical man” is always ready to assert dogmatic conclusions, even when these are in opposition to the results of patient and thorough research in such sciences as psychology, economics and anthropology. Just as theoretical equipment is necessary in understanding physical nature, both

---

1 For convenience of presentation this discussion of methods of field-work has been divided into two chapters. A bibliographical commentary covering both will be found at the end of the second.
animate and inanimate, so it is essential in observing and seeking to understand the complexities of human behaviour.

Having stressed the need for theory in social anthropology, we must utter a word of warning about its dangers. In its historical development, social anthropology has been less closely associated with the physical and biological sciences than with the more humanistic disciplines, such as history, law, ethics and social philosophy. The pursuit of these disciplines is always fraught with the danger of what Roger Bacon called “the pernicious and inveterate habit of dwelling on abstractions”. The history of anthropology shows many examples of theoretical developments which, because they have departed from the hard road of empirical observation, have produced formulations which are either incorrect or are irrelevant to the major problems with which the anthropologist is or should be concerned.

Though all this may appear obvious, there are two reasons why it must be stressed. In the first place, modern nations are becoming increasingly concerned with the study of what is usually called “the human factor”. The relevance of social facts to political and economic policies is being gradually realized in such fields as town planning, industrial organization and the distribution of population. This has led to a spate of investigations which have greatly increased our knowledge of certain aspects of human behaviour in modern society. But it is in general true that they have been but little related to each other, and have concentrated on the study of obvious social problems ad hoc rather than on the continuous prosecution of systematic lines of enquiry based upon a carefully elaborated theoretical framework. For this reason social scientists in the academic field have been inclined to regard them as a form of intellectual slumming. On the other hand, much social theory has been concerned with such questions as “the individual and society”, “the nature of social grouping”, and other issues which have little or no bearing on scientific research or human welfare.

The danger just mentioned is reminiscent of a story told by the late Alexander Woolcott. There was once a proprietor of a sideshow at a funfair who found himself in great difficulty because the human freak which he was managing fell from a hotel window and broke its neck. Finding himself without any source of income, he soon devised an alternative exhibition for the public. In the middle of a tent he placed a large glass bowl full of clear
water, then he stood outside the tent and exhorted the public to "roll up and see the greatest wonder of nature—the Mexican invisible fish". Much of what passes under the pretentious title of "social theory" or "theoretical sociology" is neither more nor less than an intellectual equivalent of the Mexican invisible fish. You may scrutinize it *ad nauseam* without detecting anything corresponding to reality.

To sum up, the social scientist must avoid undiscriminating and uncritical fact-gathering on the one hand and the pursuit of abstractions remote from reality on the other. The former is exemplified by some of the techniques employed, for example, in social surveys and in Mass-Observation. These consist of accosting people in the street or knocking at their doors to ask them how often they take a bath or what they think of the latest doings of the Royal Family. On the other hand, we must equally avoid the type of empty verbiage involved in disputations about the Mexican invisible fish.

2. *Method and Technique: The Strategy and Tactics of Field-work*

What has been said implies that the observations which a social anthropologist makes when doing field-work in a primitive community are distinguished from those of the untrained observer by the employment of a special *method* and special *techniques*. A distinction may be drawn between these two terms, though admittedly it is an arbitrary one. We might use the term "method" to refer to the overall systematic approach to the problems of field-work and to the broad scientific principles in the light of which the ethnographer approaches his task. "Technique" might be used to refer rather to ways of dealing with the minor day-to-day problems which confront the field-worker in carrying out his work on the spot. It might be said that, as the terms are used here,

---

1 This sort of superficial observation leads to all sorts of unjustified and uncritical inferences, as in the following illustration from Little (3), p. 9, n. 2:

"For example, in the analysis of 'interest in crises' (*Britain by Mass-Observation*) at the end of August 1938, 460 people were asked if their interest in crises was increasing or decreasing. Mass-Observation came to the conclusion that 'the important point to notice is that the largest group here is that which is feeling a definite decreasing interest in crises'. Ten typical replies in the 'decreasing' group were quoted, and five of them included the following statements:

1. 'Decreasing, so much so that I dislike listening to the News.'
2. 'Decreasing interest; it's too blasted uncomfortable.'
3. 'Decreasing, because the helplessness of the individual appals me.'
4. 'Makes me sick to open a paper.'
5. 'If people start talking about another war, I feel like saying, "For goodness sake, shut up!"'"
method corresponds to the strategy and technique to the tactics of field-work. Method is the more important of the two. Mistakes of technique made in the field are inevitable and can usually be rectified; but nothing will compensate for the lack of a comprehensive and systematic approach to ethnographic material.

It is, of course, not always possible to decide whether a particular problem belongs to the sphere of method or of technique; but the distinction between the two must be stressed, if only in order to emphasize the fact that good field-work depends on far more than a set of rule-of-thumb prescriptions in the sphere of technique. In fact, very few such prescriptions of universal application can be laid down. Much of what will be said regarding techniques in the following pages will be found to be inapplicable in certain field situations. Our aim is to raise problems of technique which the field-worker must face, rather than to provide in advance specific solutions for them. In any case, circumstances, and particularly the attitude of the community itself, may make it impossible or undesirable to adopt certain solutions. For instance, in Section 11 we shall deal with the general advantages and disadvantages of the technique known as participant observation. But it may not be for the ethnographer to decide just how far and in what ways he will participate in the life of the community. In this connection, Professor Evans-Pritchard draws an interesting contrast between two communities studied by him: "Azande would not allow me to live as one of themselves; Nuer would not allow me to live otherwise. Among Azande I was compelled to live outside the community; among Nuer I was compelled to be a member of it. Azande treated me as a superior; Nuer as an equal." Similarly the advice given in Section 11 to keep out of native quarrels and factional disputes may at times be impossible to follow.

Problems of technique, then, vary from one community and

---

1 Evans-Pritchard (3), p. 15.
2 To appreciate the significance of what has just been said the reader should, after perusing this chapter and the next, read Elenore Smith Bowen, Return to Laughter. This is a popular narrative of a period of field research written (under a pseudonym) by a woman anthropologist who had worked in West Africa. Thoroughly amusing in some parts and highly dramatic in others, it is to be recommended as general reading. But its main interest to the student lies in its demonstration of the fact that it is impossible to adhere rigidly to tactical principles in the field, and that at times it is undesirable to do so. For example, at one stage the ethnographer is accused of being a witch, and this leads to her becoming embroiled in disputes. But the fact that she is accepted as a witch gives her access to information on witchcraft which she could not otherwise have obtained.
situation to another. Successful solutions depend mainly upon the tact and insight of the investigator. But the principles of method are of much more general application. Like the principles of anatomical dissection and description, they are imposed upon the research worker by the structure of the phenomenon which he is investigating, in this case human culture. The ethnographer's training in anthropological theory provides him with the conceptual framework which is essential to scientific field-work.

It should be added that this conceptual framework is something which concerns the anthropologist over a much longer time-span than the period actually spent in the field. In the first place, there is the preliminary training in theory which is, as in other sciences, essential to effective research. Secondly, there is the Problemstellung, the setting up of a problem or group of problems, the formulation of hypotheses for investigation in the field and the planning of lines of enquiry relevant to these. Thirdly, there is the period actually spent in the field. Fourthly, there is the writing up of material and the presentation of results in ethnographic monographs and articles. All of these phases of the ethnographer's work must be inspired and guided by his theoretical framework. Theory is sometimes condemned by the unenlightened as involving "preconceived ideas". It involves rather preconceived problems. In other words, the formulation of a set of questions which the field-worker, as it were, puts to his material. Only through this can he be sure of making observations which are relevant and of rejecting those which are irrelevant. The saying that "the art of writing history consists in knowing what to leave out" applies with equal force to ethnography.

There is, of course, the danger that the field-worker may unconsciously select material in accordance with his own preliminary ideas of the answers which he expects to receive. But this danger can be largely overcome by thorough training. Such training should be directed towards ensuring that the field-worker shall overlook nothing which is relevant to his problem and shall see the facts which he observes in their relation to each other. We shall return to these questions—the possibility of bias and the use of mnemonic devices—in later sections of this chapter. But we must emphasize at the outset the overwhelming importance of the interrelationships of

---

1 It is of course true that special problems of sociological interpretation, and therefore of ethnographic method, arise in specific situations; for example, in cases of acute cultural clash or social disorganization.

2 On these two phases of the strategy of field-work, see Chapter XV, Section 8.
observed facts. This is a field in which it is impossible to give any precise directions or mnemonic aids. An understanding of the principle involved emerges essentially from a broad conception of the nature of human culture and of the specific lines along which it may be approached, whether through needs, through aspects of culture or through institutions.

3. The Interrelationships of Ethnographic Data

Modern anthropological field-work, in fact, differs from that of fifty years ago in its emphasis on studying the interrelationships of cultural elements as distinct from merely compiling a list of them. The conception of culture as a list of "traits" has in the past led to fantastic records of field-work, well satirized in the following quotation from Malinowski:

We can only plead for the speedy and complete disappearance from the records of field-work of the piecemeal items of information, of customs, beliefs, and rules of conduct floating in the air, or rather leading a flat existence on paper with the third-dimension, that of life, completely lacking. With this the theoretical arguments of Anthropology will be able to drop the lengthy litanies of threaded statement, which makes us anthropologists feel silly, and the savage look ridiculous. I mean by this, the long enumerations of bald statement such as, for example, "Among the Brobdignagians when a man meets his mother-in-law, the two abuse each other and each retires with a black eye"; "When a Brobdignag encounters a Polar bear he runs away and sometimes the bear follows"; "In old Caledonia when a native accidentally finds a whiskey bottle by the roadside he empties it at one gulp, after which he proceeds immediately to look for another"—and so forth. (I am quoting from memory so the statements may be only approximate, though they sound plausible.)

The kinds of observation referred to in the above quotation arose not merely from the lack of an adequate theoretical framework but also in part from the techniques of observation employed in the earlier phases of anthropological field-work. From some ethnographic records one might infer that the older procedure was somewhat as follows: The anthropologist would go to stay at the District Officer's bungalow and after breakfast request that the old men of the tribe should be paraded before him. He would then speak to them in turn, asking Number One in the front rank: "What do you do when you meet your mother-in-law?" If an affirmative answer were forthcoming the anthropologist would

1 Malinowski (2), p. 126.
record in his notebook: "Mother-in-law avoidance practised." He would then ask Number Two in the front rank: "Do you take any special action when your wife is about to have a baby?" A negative answer would lead to the note: "Cowade absent." The anthropologist would then proceed down the lines until he had obtained answers to all the standard questions of that age.

The above may appear a flippancy parody, but it is not so very much at variance with the conception current a few decades ago in regard to the sort of information which an ethnographer should collect. We may illustrate this by reference to a set of questions from Notes and Queries on Anthropology, 1929 edition. Under the heading "Habitations" we find, among other things, the following entry:

Permanent Huts and Houses.—Are the houses, though ordinarily permanent, so constructed that they can be easily taken down and re-erected? What is their form and plan, and is this arrangement uniformly observed? How are they constructed? Is the work of construction individual or communal, or assigned to a special class or guild? Are they specially oriented? Are there few or many separate rooms? If so, for what purposes? or for what class of persons? Are they structurally separate? grouped round a central space? or in series along one or more passages or corridors? or are they passage-rooms communicating with one another directly, without passages?

And so on. It is quite clear that questions of this type could never lead to the sort of analysis of the cultural function of structures briefly exemplified in our discussion in the last chapter of the Trobriand bwayma and the Fijian house.

4. The Task of Creative Synthesis

The "question and answer" method, involving only the most limited and superficial contacts between the ethnographer and his informants, has given way to a technique of field-work whereby the field-worker lives in close association with the community which he is studying. He sees native life as it is lived instead of trying to reconstruct it from a series of answers to questions. But though it is necessary for the field-worker to enter into a very close relationship with the people he is studying, it must be emphasized

1 This does not mean that the anthropologist or anyone else can ever become "fully accepted as a member of the tribe". This is a pretentious claim which is often made by those who have some knowledge of a native people. An appropriate comment on such a claim in certain circumstances would be, "Well, how many wives have you got and what bride-price did you pay for them?"
that no one of his informants possesses the kind of information which the anthropologist aims ultimately to acquire. *The native does not know his own culture.*

This important principle may be illustrated by a simple analogy. A taxi-driver in a large city such as London knows what he should do in certain circumstances. He knows that he must stop before red traffic lights, he knows which are one-way streets, he knows where he may or may not park his vehicle, and so on. But he does not know the traffic system of London as do those in charge of its organization. They have made a special study of such factors as volume of traffic and accident rates, and on the basis of this have laid down a set of regulations which govern the movements of individual drivers within the system. *The drivers themselves, however, do not know the system.* They merely know what to do. If you were to ask a taxi-driver why a certain thoroughfare has been declared a one-way street or why traffic lights have been installed at a certain crossing and not at another, the chances are that he would be unable to answer.

Extending this analogy to the work of the ethnographer, it must be emphasized that it is useless to question natives in abstract sociological terms about the principles underlying the cultural system within which they live. It is true that informants can sometimes provide certain general formulations and statements, and these are usually important; but in themselves they fail to provide the kind of scientifically significant information which the field-worker requires. Consider, for example, four of the structural characteristics of an institution—charter, norms, motives and function. If you question an Australian aborigine about a totemic increase ceremony, he will give you the myth of origin of the increase centre and its associated ceremonial. He will further give you the norms connected with the institution; for example, the rule that women and uninitiated men may not participate in certain ceremonies. He will tell you that the ceremony has as its objective the promotion of the fertility of the natural species, thus giving a partial statement of the motives involved in the institution. But the anthropologist is aware from his knowledge of general theory and from his comparative study of other magico-religious institutions that the increase ritual serves to give confidence in a plentiful food supply, that it expresses the social value of the various natural species on which a hunting and food-gathering people are dependent, and that it reflects certain
features of social structure; for example, differentiation between totemic clans or moieties. Such statements as these define the function of the institution, and quite clearly they are statements of a kind which could never be elicited from informants. They are the product of the creative synthesis carried out by the scientific ethnographer.

5. The Concrete Orientation of Enquiries

One implication of this is that questions addressed to informants should be as concrete as possible. It is unfruitful to ask, for example, "How would you punish a murderer?" The correct procedure is to ask, "Can you tell me about any cases of murder?" Questioning should be based as far as possible on actual instances. Even this may be unreliable, but less so than the more abstract approach. And even when the information supplied is factually incorrect, the commentaries obtained from informants are valuable as reflecting their attitudes and values, a point to which we shall return later.

It is sometimes necessary to ask what would happen in certain hypothetical circumstances, though here the accuracy of the reply is obviously open to question, since it does not rest upon any case actually known to the informant. Hypothetical questions, moreover, may be silly or inapplicable in terms of the native culture, as in an instance from the writer's experience: I was once questioning a Karadjeri informant about certain places where bull-roarers and other sacred objects are kept and which may never be approached by women. In connection with the latter rule, I asked what would happen if a woman should visit such a place. The reply was that she would be killed. But when I went on to ask whether this had ever actually occurred, the reply was in the negative. Obviously, no Karadjeri woman in her senses would be fool enough to commit suicide in this way, even if she were tempted by curiosity or other motives to do so. To ask such questions is rather like a hypothetical case of an anthropologist from Mars asking a Londoner what would happen if a high dignitary of the Church of England were to attempt to auction water-melons from the foot of the Nelson Column in Trafalgar Square. A possible answer might be that he would be unfrocked, but obviously both question and answer are far removed from social reality.

A further example of the fact that some questions which make quite good sense in our culture are inapplicable to those of primit-
tive peoples is provided from Dr. Hogbin's work on land tenure in Wogo, summarized in Vol. 1, Chapter VIII, Section 2. He once asked who owned certain areas of barren and stony land. In terms of our culture, where all land is owned by the Crown or by somebody else, the question is a sensible one. The attitude of the people of Wogo is summed up in the answer which Dr. Hogbin received: "What do you say of the ash which falls from your cigarette? Do you say that it is yours alone and that no one may touch it?"

In conclusion, it may be mentioned that hypothetical questions are sometimes useful, not as a means of obtaining information but to open up lines of investigation. Thus to quote a hypothetical case is one way of breaking down reticence on sensitive topics. If, for instance, the ethnographer knows that his informant has been involved in a scandal, the citation of the informant's shortcomings or misdeeds in the form of a hypothetical case is one way of indicating delicately that he (the ethnographer) already has some knowledge of the matter.

6. Reliability of Informants: Deviations of Opinion and Behaviour

Failure to distinguish between questions and answers referring to hypothetical situations and those referring to real events is probably responsible for some of the defects of earlier field-work to which we have referred above. One suspects that the ethnographer has asked a question beginning "What would happen if . . .?" and has translated the answer in his ethnographic record into the form "When . . .". To take one of Malinowski's hypothetical examples quoted in Section 3, the ethnographer might ask a native of old Caledonia, "What would you do if you found a bottle of whisky by the roadside?" and so elicit a completely spurious answer in the terms given above.

The most reliable type of record which the ethnographer can provide is, of course, one of events which he has himself witnessed; but in the nature of the case such events must form a very small proportion of the material which he actually collects. This must include records of real (or occasionally hypothetical) cases narrated to him. These should be discussed at length with a variety of informants, for several reasons. In the first place a single informant (or even several) may intentionally or unintentionally mislead the ethnographer. Informants may lie or pretend ignor-
ance, as we all do, in regard to matters which for one reason or another they do not wish to discuss. They may boast or exaggerate. They may tell deliberate lies with the purpose of gaining some material or social advantage, either from the ethnographer or from other members of their community. Or they may out of courtesy return to the ethnographer the answer which they think he wants, much as a gentleman in our society, if asked by a lady what he thinks of her hat, would not reply, "I think it is hideous."

Finally, informants may sometimes take a delight in pulling the anthropologist's leg for the fun of it, at least during the early phases of his field-work.

These are dangers of which every field-worker should be constantly aware. They are often cited in a critical way by commentators who infer from them that anthropological field-records must in the nature of the case be unreliable. This, however, is an exaggeration. Probably in all cultures there are some things which no anthropologist can elicit; but he can obtain a reliable overall picture in spite of the hazards mentioned above. One might in this connection invert Abraham Lincoln's famous saying that you can fool some of the people all of the time, you can fool all of the people some of the time, but you can't fool all of the people all of the time. The same sort of thing might apply to being fooled by the people.¹

The questioning of a variety of informants is important, not merely for checking accuracy but because it provides valuable sidelights on different opinions about particular events and on the values of the community. One may find, for example, different opinions expressed by men and by women, by old and by young, by chiefs and by commoners. Furthermore, attitudes of individuals, of groups and of the community as a whole may vary from time to time according to the trend of events. Two of Dr. Hogbin's cases of adultery in Wogeo illustrate this. In one case there was a difference of opinion between old and young in regard to an instance of adultery.² In another the sympathy of the community first lay with the husband, then veered against him, and finally came back to support him again (Vol. 1, p. 332). Such fluctuations of attitudes occur in all societies. It is probable that many of

¹ The dangers referred to above are of course aggravated by the use of questions which suggest that there must necessarily be an answer to them, questions of the "When did you stop beating your wife?" type. Obvious as this may seem, such questions are not so easily avoided in dealing with an alien culture.
² See Appendix A.
the airmen who fought and died in the Battle of Britain were among those members of the Oxford Union who, a few years before, voted for the famous resolution that "This house will under no circumstances fight for King and Country".¹

Another reason for obtaining the views of a number of informants is to establish the range of prescribed or permitted social behaviour both in statement and in action. One must study both what the natives say and what they do. Professor Radcliffe-Brown has stated his view on this subject as follows:

Social usages may be defined as norms. The norm, however, is not one imposed by the scientist. It is one which he notes as observed by the society. It may be sufficient in some instances to go and see what all the people are doing to determine a social usage. You see, for instance, that all men in the United States wear trousers: you have established a social usage. In many instances, however, it is not as simple as that, because you find certain variations in behaviour. You have then to go to the people themselves and ask, "What do you think is the proper thing to do?" They may give you a rule. It is the recognition of that rule, together with its observance, which constitutes the usage. Any given rule has two aspects, both of them establishing the norm. First there is the recognition of the rule, and you get at that simply by asking people questions. You may find that in a given instance 80 per cent. of the people will tell you that that is the rule; 15 per cent. will say, "I don't know"; and 5 per cent. will say, "No." Second, there is the degree of conformity, and in an instance in which you get an 80 per cent. recognition of the rule, you are likely to get perhaps only 60 per cent. conformity. Twenty per cent. may say, "I know that is what I should do, but I get away without doing it." Your norm, therefore, is always of this double nature. You cannot define a social usage except in terms of what people do and what they think ought to be done. The norm is not established by the anthropologist. It is a rule which has an average distribution and a certain standard deviation in its observance; it is characterized by what people say about rules in a given society and what they do about them.²

Leaving out of account the situation where the percentages approximate to 50 and also the important question of individual motives in determining both the affirmation and the observation of socially accepted rules, this formulation is inadequate as a directive to field-workers because it leaves out of account the question of the opinions and behaviour of the minority. Trans-

¹ It is true that deviations and shifts of opinion of this kind are less common in the small homogeneous groups which the anthropologist usually studies, but they nevertheless occur.
lating the issue into a hypothetical field situation, we may con-
sider Radcliffe-Brown's formulation and percentages in relation to
what one might possibly find in regard to church-going in a small
town. One might find that 80 per cent. of people affirmed that it
was the right thing to attend church and that 60 per cent. in fact
did so. There remains the important question of the behaviour of
the minority groups. In regard, for example, to the 15 per cent.
who said they did not know the rule, one would ask in the first
place whether this was in fact true, or whether they were lying or
evading enquiry, and if so, why. In regard to the 5 per cent. who
denied the existence of the rule, one would ask such questions as
whether they were merely ignorant of it or actively hostile to
religious observances. The same sort of questions would have to be
put to the 20 per cent. who affirmed the rule but did not observe
it. In short, the attitudes of deviants, even if they are merely
individual eccentricities or psychopaths, can be of enormous impor-
tance in deciding how social usages work and in defining the values
embodied in the themes and counter-themes of any given society.

As has been said, it is necessary constantly to distinguish be-
tween the ideal and the real. One might cite Malinowski on clan
incest in the Trobriand Islands\(^1\) and Hogbin's conclusions on
adultery and theft in Wogo\(^2\) as examples of this important prin-
ciple of field-work. There are, in fact, at least six groups of data
which the field-worker may have to distinguish for purposes of
investigation:

\[(a)\] The opinion of the majority of the community as to what is
right and wrong.

\[(b)\] Deviations of opinion in this regard pertaining to sub-
groups or individuals within the community.

\[(c)\] Statements by the majority of the community as to what
people do in fact do. It should be noted that these do not
necessarily correspond to the realities of behaviour.

\[(d)\] Deviant statements of a similar order.

\[(e)\] The general practice of most members of the community in
regard to the rule in question.

\[(f)\] Deviations of actual behaviour by sub-groups or individuals
within the community.

In the study of law and custom, of course, one observes the
social sanctions which are brought to bear upon offenders, but

\(^1\) See Malinowski (2), pp. 71-99.  
\(^2\) See Hogbin (7), passim.
another situation which is apt to occur is that the community accepts the inevitable. Individuals with sufficient force of personality, provided that they do not break any vital rule of the community, may succeed in "getting away with" anti-social behaviour. Thus in Australian aboriginal society, where there are definite types of prescribed and proscribed marriages between kin, one often finds that two individuals in the wrong relationship wish to marry. Strong opposition is raised and threats may be uttered; but if they do in fact run away and are not too closely related, their marriage may ultimately be accepted by the community, which readjusts its kinship system to meet a fait accompli.

In this section we have stressed the need for obtaining information and opinions from a number of informants. But we must emphasize in conclusion that this principle must not be carried too far. The establishment of the right kind of relationship with an informant involves the expenditure of a considerable amount of time in mutual psychological adjustment, in "getting to know each other". Furthermore, the ethnographer needs to establish relations of psychological depth, to be regarded as a friend rather than as an acquaintance, and it is impossible to achieve this with more than a few informants. Probably, as Professor Paul suggests, the best way of achieving a compromise between the two conflicting principles is to devise a system of "primary" and "secondary" informants, the latter being employed mainly for checking and the former for the collection of the main corpus of information about the culture.¹

7. The Integration and Organization of Ethnographic Material

It must be repeated that the opinions of informants to which we referred in the last section must as far as possible be obtained in relation to concrete cases. Discussion of such cases will lead on to the investigation of others which reveal different facets of the culture. For example, a field-worker discussing with an informant a case of crime may find that at some point in the narrative a headman intervenes. This may lead him on to the discussion of the place of the headman in the system of political and legal authority; and in this field he may find that the headman's economic functions are an important sanction for his authority. This is, of course, a corollary of the interrelationship of cultural

¹ Paul (1), p. 17.
facts, and the field-worker must be ready to shift the direction of his investigations when such shifts seem desirable.

The result of investigations of this type is sometimes that the field-worker finds that he has collected a great amount of heterogeneous information which he finds difficult to reduce to any sort of system. He often feels that he cannot see the wood for the trees. For this and other reasons, rest pauses during field-work are essential. The ethnographer should from time to time stand back from his material and cease his actual investigations for a period. Even to read novels or go shooting is helpful in this regard.¹

More positively, the field-worker can be helped to organize his material by the use of synoptic tables. For example, in considering any institution he might review his material in the light of tables of needs and aspects of culture, as well as the several structural characteristics of an institution.² He might also compile tables of "sub-aspects", to which we shall refer presently. Such tables, providing numerous cross-references, lead the field-worker to ask such questions as: "Have I considered the magico-religious aspect of this institution specifically in relation to religious dogma?" or "Have I considered its economic implications in relation to distribution as well as production?" Such questions are basic to any thorough investigation; and other tables, dealing with specific problems, should be compiled ad hoc by the investigator.

Devices of this kind do not, of course, provide a guarantee that the field-worker will not omit to investigate certain important interrelationships, but they do provide some safeguard against this danger.

The actual construction of synoptic tables in the field will be determined partly by the nature of the problem for investigation and partly by the field-worker's own thought processes. One example, Fig. 34, represents synoptically the interrelationships between the important aspects of any human culture. The letters and numbers represent bodies of information in regard

¹ It is a very great advantage if the field-worker can for a period of weeks or months get right away from the field and return to "civilization" to brood over his material. This is particularly advantageous if he can visit a Department of Anthropology and present seminar papers on the material which he has so far collected. Important gaps in the information as well as new problems for investigation often emerge when field material is thus exposed to criticism from, and discussion by, other trained anthropologists. This is really an extension of what is said in Chapter XV, Section 8, about the Problemstellung which, it must be emphasized, is constantly being modified in the light of accumulating information.

² See Vol. 1, pp. 235 and 248, and Section 7 of Chapter VI.
to cultural interrelationships to which the field-worker must pay attention.

It will be noted that each pair of aspects has two cross-references, one on each side of the heavy diagonal line. This is because the interrelationships between aspects of culture are reciprocal, each aspect influencing and being influenced by every other. Thus the magico-religious system tends to reinforce economic institutions (E₁), and economic activities have an effect on magico-religious institutions (A₄). The direction of the arrows is intended to indicate the direction in which influence is exerted.

To make this abstract formulation clearer by a concrete example, we may take some of the facts connected with the interrelationships between the political and economic aspects of Hehe culture, specifically with reference to the institution of chieftainship.¹ These we would categorize as follows with reference to our table:

A₁: Economic sanctions for chieftainship (influence of economics on political organization):

(a) Wealth giving prestige to the chief.
(b) Right to confiscate property and exact levies.
(c) Titular ownership of cattle.
(d) Right to demand forced labour and tribute.
(e) Monopoly of ivory trade.

B₁: Influence of chief in economic affairs:

(a) Distribution of cattle to warriors.
(b) Rôle of chief in organizing ivory trade.
(c) Accumulated wealth of chief acting as emergency store to meet various economic exigencies.

This example, of course, represents a summary of a summary, and does not adequately reflect the many and complex facts which the field-worker must observe. It merely indicates one way in which they may be systematically arranged. To secure greater detail, aspects of culture may be broken down into "sub-aspects"; for example, economics into production, exchange, distribution and ownership or religion into dogma, ritual, ethics and personnel. By constructing "sub-tables" showing cross-references between these categories, it is possible to enquire more analytically into, for example, the influence of the various phases of economic

activity on religious institutions (A4) or religious influences in the economic system (E1). Or the various types of social grouping may each be considered in relation to the several aspects of culture. Or a particular institution may be similarly analysed, as was done with the Tikopia dart match.  

Synoptic tables such as we have suggested have a limited use. They must be constructed *ad hoc* according to the type of field situation involved. Thus, since anthropologists do not study “cultures as wholes”, Fig. 34 would cover far more interrelationships than could be studied in any one investigation. But in studying, for example, political organization, it provides a useful general guide in that it insists that the field-worker must study the way in which political institutions are affected by the various aspects of culture (vertical row of spaces A1 to M2), and also the influence of political forces on other types of activity (horizontal row of spaces B1 to B12). Tables of this kind thus have the advantage over lists of questions or topics in that they emphasize cultural

---

1 Vol. i, pp. 107-08.  
interrelationships which, as we have seen, are the really important facts in dealing with a culture, as against the mere listing of disparate items.

A question of technique arising from the above discussion is whether the field anthropologist should have a series of notebooks for different topics or should record his information continuously in a series of notebooks as it comes to him. On the whole, the latter is generally preferable as giving a more integrated picture of the culture, but it may be expedient for practical purposes to deviate from this rule; for example, genealogies cannot be recorded in ordinary notebooks, and it may be convenient to assemble bodies of mythology or details of material culture as separate records. Whatever procedure be adopted, the anthropologist, if he does not proceed by a mere questionnaire technique, will find, as stated above, that information not relevant to the subject which he is investigating at the time will inevitably creep in; and this leads to the problem of rambling.

8. Relevance of Information and the Problem of Rambling

Informants will from time to time start off on themes which are of personal interest to them but which do not appear to the anthropologist to be leading to any relevant information. It is sometimes necessary in such circumstances for the anthropologist tactfully to bring the informant back to more fruitful topics of conversation. Only a flair for relevance will solve this problem in particular instances—no general rule can be laid down. And the field-worker should not adhere too rigidly to any one pattern of interviewing technique. In certain situations a directive interview, aimed at eliciting specific information on particular points, is preferable. In other situations, particularly in the earlier phases of field-work, it is better to carry out non-directive or open-ended interviews, in which the ethnographer and his informant merely converse without any preconceptions on the part of the former as to what kind of information will emerge. But, as will be apparent from what has been said, most interviews will represent a compromise between the two principles, and the ethnographer should, if anything, err on the side of passivity.

There are several important reasons for allowing rambling in moderation, quite apart from the fact that the anthropologist may well stumble upon some important fact which he could not elicit by more direct and guided lines of enquiry.
RELEVANCE OF INFORMATION

In the first place, it must always be remembered that the anthropologist in the field is a human being dealing with other human beings, and that the personal relations which he establishes and maintains with his informants are vital to the success of his investigations. In the earlier phases of his work, of course, the attitude of his informants is likely to be characterized by shyness, diffidence, reticence or even suspicion or hostility. Once rapport is established, however, the anthropologist will realize the truth that most people like talking about things which interest them. When doing so they will readily volunteer information which they would be unwilling to reveal in response to direct questioning. Our own resentment at filling up forms in modern civilization is a case in point, and the reaction to prying enquiries is well revealed by the following letter which appeared in an Edinburgh newspaper in 1948:

May I draw attention to an astonishing incident which took place in an office in Edinburgh? As a member of the staff I was witness to a ridiculous piece of interrogation by an interviewer engaged in carrying out a survey in connection with office planning.

The questions asked were on the following lines: “Would we like to work in a sunlit office or a dark office? In summer did we like the sun in the morning, afternoon, or all day; and ditto for the winter? When did we use the lights in the office (a) in summer and (b) in winter—in the morning, the afternoon, or all day?”

It seems to me that in such a time of economic crisis the country cannot afford expenditure on such enquiries. Surely the interviewers could be employed in a more useful capacity?

Now, it is quite possible that all the information required would have been readily revealed by the writer of the letter in the course of an ordinary conversation. If, for example, a friend complained about bad lighting in the office in which he worked, the writer would perhaps have been perfectly ready to enlarge upon conditions in his or her own office and to provide information much fuller than that asked for by the official investigation. It is one thing to communicate facts and opinions spontaneously, as part

1 A somewhat extreme example of this principle is provided by the following story: A certain American author, who was famous for his loquaciousness, lived some distance out of New York and used to commute with a friend every day. The friend took on a bet that on one occasion he would make the journey with the author without speaking a word. The next morning he greeted him on the suburban station with a smile but in complete silence. He remained silent throughout the whole journey, and merely waved good-bye when they parted at Grand Central Station. The next morning, when they met as usual, the author remarked, “Say, that was a very interesting conversation we had yesterday.”
of the ordinary social activity of conversation, and quite another to feel that one is being badgered for information. Good relations with informants, then, depend in part upon the anthropologist's readiness to be or appear to be interested in matters which concern them; he should not silence them peremptorily, even for the purpose of bringing them back to the point.

In the second place, every culture is characterized by certain nuances of thought, feeling and behaviour which it is virtually impossible to discover by directed enquiry. They emerge spontaneously in the speech and behaviour of informants. These "invisible facts", as Malinowski once called them, will be discussed in the next section.

9. *Imponderabilia of Social Life and Implicit Values*

The ethnographer working among a native people observes and describes certain definable activities such as standardized behaviour patterns between individuals, the routine of productive work, the formalities of economic exchanges and procedure in ceremonial. But he should also observe certain social facts which refer not merely to what is done but to the way and the spirit in which it is done—the subtle tones of inter-personal relationships, the tempo of activities, the expression of emotional feelings or moods and the way in which natives go about their day-to-day activities. Malinowski has called these facts the *imponderabilia of social life*.¹ The description of them gives life to the bare framework of social structure and the formal definition of rights, obligations and activities. They include what Professor Kluckhohn has called *implicit values* as distinct from *explicit values*. In our own society, for example, it is possible to elicit by direct questioning statements of such values as that it is wrong to steal or that parents should care for their children. These are explicit values. But many values and attitudes which play an important part in our culture are never formulated as such, and for this reason cannot be elicited by direct questioning—they must be inferred from social behaviour, from particular attitudes taken up in specific social situations and from the form and emotional tone of utterances.

A good example of this principle is to be found in attitudes towards cricket in England. One has heard the story of the foreigner travelling in a London bus who saw over the shoulder

¹ Malinowski (1), pp. 18–19.
of a fellow-passenger the newspaper headline, "No Hope for England". He immediately concluded that some grave political or economic crisis faced the country, whereas, as every English reader will recognize at once, the news referred merely to the current test match.\(^1\) It is, of course, possible to elicit from English informants the rules of the game, conditions of play, descriptions of the material equipment of bat, ball and stumps, and similar straightforward information of this kind. But the implicit values reflected in the famous saying that the Battle of Waterloo was fought upon the playing-fields of Eton can be inferred only from observations of spontaneous utterances and actual behaviour.

In order to highlight the specifically English attitude towards cricket one may contrast the behaviour of the English in relation to a cricket match with that of the Trobriand Islanders who have also adopted the game. The following is a translation of an account of a Trobriand Island cricket match given by an informant to Malinowski:

These people quarrelled because of the cricket. The people of Kwaybwaga went to M'tawa and cricketed. They cricketed, they finished, they counted; they counted and they said: "Who has won?" The people of Kwaybwaga spoke and addressed the people of M'tawa: "You lie, we others have won." The M'tawa people answered: "No, you have not really won." They quarrelled: "Good, we shall beat you." They hit one another with throwing-sticks. The people of M'tawa drove off the people of Kwaybwaga, and these latter departed to their village, saying: "Good, you have driven us off; but tomorrow come you to Oamarakana. We shall beat you." Later on they came to Oamarakana, the people of Kwaybwaga stood up against the people of M'tawa, they took their revenge, fighting with spear and shield.\(^2\)

Malinowski prefaces this text with the following remarks, which incidentally stress the fact that the diffusion of material equipment and definable rules is not correlated with the diffusion of correlated implicit values, which differ from one community to another: "I will quote the account which was given to me of this quarrel because it . . . is a good illustration of how difficult it is for real diffusion to take place. Cricket, which to an Englishman has become a synonym for honour and sportsmanlike behaviour is, to a Kiriwinian, a cause for violent quarrelling and strong passion, as well as a newly invented system of gambling; \(^3\)

\(^1\) The bewilderment of foreigners at English attitudes towards cricket is amusingly portrayed in the film *The Final Test.*

while to another type of savage, a Pole, it remains pointless—a tedious manner of time-wasting.”

10. The Danger of Personal Bias

The recording of the imponderabilia of social life requires great insight and complete honesty on the part of the investigator. All field-work calls for documentation, but this is particularly true where one is attempting to portray subtle and unformulated values and attitudes. The investigator can and will get “hunches” about such things, but he should document them with reference to the actual statements and observed behaviour from which the inferences are made. Hunches are, of course, extremely useful as leads, and it does no harm to record them provided that they are labelled as such and that every effort is made to provide concrete documentation. Failure to do this is one of the great weaknesses of much of the field-work done by the configurationist school. As we shall see, such field-work has often been characterized by a tendency to make sweeping statements about native values, and particularly implicit values, on the basis of intuitive impressions gained by the observer and without the documentation which is necessary.

We mentioned above that the relationship of the field anthropologist to his informants is essentially a personal one. And just as he must always remember that his informants are human beings, so he must also remember that he is one himself. His own temperament and outlook will inevitably influence his observations to some extent. This fact has led some critics to suggest that anthropological field-work is in the nature of the case subjective and unscientific. Provided, however, that the observer has had a thorough training in the scientific methods of social anthropology and is aware of the danger of his own personal bias, this need not be a serious danger. The very fact that the field-worker is aware, as he should be aware, that his own attitudes may distort his observations, tends to guard against such distortion.

A critic once remarked that the Trobriand Islanders are very like Malinowski and the Tikopia very like Professor Raymond Firth. Yet it is probable that if Firth had gone to the Trobriands and Malinowski to Tikopia the field records for the two peoples would

---

1 For this reason it is desirable that the field-worker should have some knowledge of psychology and particularly of such psychological concepts as transference, resistance and identification which may cast valuable light on the person-to-person relationships involved in his contacts with his informants.
PARTICIPANT OBSERVATION

have been in all essential matters similar and reliable in their conclusions, although there would have been different emphases. We should, for example, know more about the details of social structure in the Trobriands because this is a field in which Firth is more interested and more at home than was Malinowski.

There is another factor which may account in part for this alleged tendency for primitive peoples to appear to resemble the investigator who has studied them. The implication of the criticism, of course, is that investigators have unconsciously selected or emphasized certain facts in accordance with their own temperaments. An alternative interpretation is that anthropologists living in close and intimate contact with a primitive people may be influenced in regard to their own values and attitudes. As an example of this, one administrator in the Colonial Service, with some training in anthropology, who had administered Mohamedan peoples in Africa, was himself converted to Islam and died in that faith.¹

II. Participant Observation

The danger of personal bias is, of course, much greater in the interview than in actual observations of behaviour. When an anthropologist is watching people working in the fields or carrying out a ceremony, he does not in any way guide or influence their behaviour, at least not intentionally. On the other hand, in the interview, which is essentially a conversation, he inevitably influences behaviour by the nature of the questions which he asks and the comments which he makes. This is one reason why in anthropological field-work the emphasis has in recent years been

¹ An interesting commentary on the way in which an anthropologist who knows an alien culture thoroughly is influenced by that culture is provided by the following extract from a discussion at the 1947 interdisciplinary conference on Culture and Personality:

"Dr. Linton: If personality is entirely a reflection of culture, does Dr. Kluckhohn have a different personality when he is living among the Navaho, a culture different from the one from which presumably his personality was derived?"

"Dr. Blidney: I did not say that personality is entirely a matter of culture. I said it is primarily to be conceived in cultural terms, but I do not exclude psychobiological aspects. In that sense, Dr. Kluckhohn among the Navaho would be carrying with him action and reaction patterns adopted in this particular culture which he would not shed so easily.

"Mrs. Kluckhohn: He acts very differently though when he's down there!" (Sargent and Smith (1), pp. 54–55).

It may be mentioned that though Mrs. Kluckhohn's remark applies only to the behaviour of the anthropologist in the field, it seems likely that the influence of the alien culture should sometimes have more permanent effects on the personality of the investigator.
increasingly laid on observation of native behaviour, and more particularly on observation connected with actual participation. The modern anthropologist must to some extent do what the people do, firstly in order to be accepted and not to be regarded as a complete outsider, and secondly to gain some knowledge of what it feels like to carry out the activity involved. A good example of this technique in the study of modern society is provided by the work of the psychologist Professor O. A. Oeser and his colleagues in their research on factory workers in Dundee. Investigators actually obtained employment in the mills, and worked side by side with the workers whose behaviour they were studying and also participated in their leisure-time activities. The term coined for this procedure was *functional penetration*, but a more suitable term current today is *participant observation*. The technique consists essentially of doing what the people do together with them. This technique has very great value, but its validity and the conclusions which may be drawn from it should not be exaggerated. It has been to some extent a reaction against mere questioning, and needs to be treated with caution.

In the first place, there is the purely practical consideration that in so far as the anthropologist or sociologist has his interest focused on the activity which he has undertaken, his attention is inevitably diverted to some extent from his proper task of thinking about the people he is studying. In the second place, he must not infer that the experiences which he has while participating in community activity are necessarily those of the people who have been conditioned from childhood to such activity. The experiences of a university graduate working in a jute mill are necessarily different from those of the ordinary worker, perhaps not of high intelligence, who left school at the age of fourteen. And the same applies to an ethnographer in the primitive field when he undertakes activities completely alien to the culture to which he belongs. For this reason he can never participate fully (in the psychological as well as the sociological sense) in the life of the community he is studying.

The field-worker is debarred from full participation, not only by his differing cultural background but also by age and sex. In a community which pays great respect to age, a young ethnographer, however well-liked, can never acquire a high degree of prestige and influence. Similarly a male ethnographer can never partici-
pate fully in the life of the women, and the converse is also true.¹

Another danger of the technique of participant observation is that the observer may become too closely identified with some particular section of the community; for example, with a particular social class in a stratified society.² This may close certain avenues of enquiry to him; for example, among other classes. Or, if he forms close personal bonds, often based on adoptive kinship, he may become embroiled in factional disputes within the community. This, of course, must necessarily have some effect on the information which he gains and on the cordial relations which he should seek, so far as possible, to establish and maintain with all members of the community. He should avoid taking sides in quarrels or becoming involved in backbiting or gossip. And the more intimately he is involved in the life of the community, the more difficult it becomes to do this.

It will be seen that the utmost tact is required in handling personal relationships with informants. For example, the field-worker may at times desire to quote statements on delicate issues made by one informant for checking by another. In this case it is better to say "Someone told me" or, since most peoples are interested in what goes on elsewhere in the world, "Among such-and-such a people this thing sometimes happens". At all costs, the field-worker must retain his objectivity, and the more he becomes personally involved with members of the community the harder it is to do this. He will, of course, establish personal bonds by doing services for informants such as writing letters for them in illiterate communities or giving them medical attention, but he should emphatically not aim at becoming "a full member of the tribe". This goal, as we have said, is in any case unattainable, and in spite of the need to participate in the activities of the people

¹ For this reason it is advantageous if a community can be studied by a husband and wife who are both trained anthropologists. In these circumstances the sexual identification to which we have referred can actually be an advantage. Thus when Professor and Mrs. Paul studied a Guatemalan village, he was helped in his relationship with males by the concept of solidarity embodied in the phrase "we men", while she established a corresponding "we women" relationship with the females (Paul (1), p. 7).

² It may be impossible to avoid some such identification, particularly during the initial phases of field-work. If so, the ethnographer should seek to be identified with the upper rather than with the lower classes, since, as Professor Paul says, "filtering down from the top presents fewer obstacles than attempting to work upward, whether the strata are castes, informal classes or nobility and commoners" (Paul (1), p. 2). At all costs the field-worker should avoid becoming identified with the deviants, bad lots and misfits in the community. This is not always easy, as these are often just the types who are only too eager to take the ethnographer under their wing.
there is a point beyond which this participation leads to the dangers mentioned above.

Thus, though it might appear at first sight that the field-worker should seek to become merged in the community as far as possible, this is not the case. The term stranger value is used to indicate the fact that a stranger as an observer has many advantages over a member of the community itself. In the first place, the fact that he comes from an alien culture, with all which this implies in terms of attitudes and interests, may lead him to observe certain important things which to the member of the community itself are too “obvious” to notice. In the second place, he is a transient visitor from another world, as it were. Informants are therefore likely to give him more intimate information than they would impart to one of their own community with whom they are actually or potentially involved in permanent social relationships. The force of this can be realized when we reflect that we ourselves would give to a visiting anthropologist from Mars information which we would probably not impart to our friends or neighbours.

12. The Problem of Initial Contacts

It has become increasingly apparent that the success of field research depends largely on the personal relations which the field-worker establishes with his informants. This is apt to raise a difficult problem in the early phases of field-work, particularly among a people such as the Nuer, who have a generally suspicious attitude towards strangers and whom Professor Evans-Pritchard was led to describe as a community of “nuerotics”. Even apart from such specific attitudes, the community will take some time to realize what the anthropologist intends to do—a mere statement of his profession will, of course, mean nothing unless some other anthropologist has previously worked in the area. Initially, the natives will seek to identify the ethnographer with some category of Europeans known to them—government official, missionary or trader.1 And even when such

1 This tendency is well illustrated by the following account given by Professor Paul, which incidentally shows how easily one may jump to wrong conclusions during the initial phase of field-work: “When my wife and I arrived in a Guatemalan Indian village, it was apparent that we were not officials of the government. Nor were we taken for American tourists, since we settled down to live among the Indians. We had been cautioned in advance to take up cigarette smoking in order not to be classified as missionaries. But we were unaware that many of the people, assuming our trunks to be filled with trade goods, expected from day to day that we would set up shop. This impression was perforce dispelled in the course of time. Had we realized that we were thought to be merchants, we would not have wondered at the un-
initial misunderstandings have been dispelled, the field-worker in any community cannot expect to establish too quickly that intimate rapport which is essential to good field-work. He must therefore be prepared to face a certain amount of difficulty and even frustration during the earlier phases of his work, and during this period he must exercise the utmost tact in order not to arouse distrustful or antagonistic attitudes in his informants. He may be keenly interested in what might be termed "ethnographic dynamite", namely those phases of native life which are the subject of deep emotional feelings or strong taboos; for example, marriage and sex life, esoteric beliefs and secret ritual, or interpersonal relations which are the subject of tension within the community. But however keen may be his interest in such topics, he should avoid enquiring into them until he feels himself accepted by the community or until informants themselves spontaneously raise the matters concerned. There is, of course, no golden rule for the avoidance of mistakes of judgment in this regard, but a useful guiding principle is for the field-worker to select in the earlier phases of his work topics and activities which are not so likely to lead him to pry into emotionally significant beliefs, attitudes and activities.

The most obvious field is material culture. While the field-worker should not devote undue attention to details of technology, he should have some general knowledge of how native artefacts are made and used, and he should make some attempt to make and use them himself. This gives a basis of common interest between field-worker and informants, and provides one avenue through which he may initiate his enquiries into their ecological adjustment and economic system.

In the second place, he should observe and participate in expected reception we received on the day of our arrival. Neighbors crowded the doors and peered in at the window. They admiringly fingered our clothes, asked the price of each item, and inquired whether we would sell them a pair of shoes or trousers or a jacket. We were pleased to attract so many people, many of them children with little else to do, and concluded that Guatemalan Indians matched those of Mitla in their boundless curiosity, for we recalled reading Elsie Clews Parsons' statement that the natives of Mitla were always asking the price of everything they saw or heard of. When she mentioned that one of her relatives had been killed in a motor-cycle accident, a listener quickly asked how much the motor-cycle had cost. We were not wholly wrong in judging the Indians to be curious about prices—and about distances and sizes of buildings and steamboats—but the avidity with which they crowded around to feel and look at everything made better sense in retrospect when we learned that our private residence was assumed to be a public shop. We had to revise our initial exaggerated estimate of their bold inquisitiveness. Inadvertently the misconception had solved the problem of making friendly contacts even before we had time to unpack (Paul (1), pp. 4-5).
ordinary day-to-day activities, such as agriculture, fishing and recreation. He should exercise the same tact in regard to associating himself with native groups for these purposes as he does in the raising of topics. He should not "freeze on to" a party of natives unless he is quite sure that his presence is welcome. They may be too polite or diffident to tell him to go away, but the resentment caused by his intrusion may jeopardize the good relations which he is seeking to establish.

In the third place, the field-worker should start at once to learn the native language, not only because he should in any case acquire a measure of fluency as soon as possible, but also because a desire to learn the language for purposes of communication is something quite readily understood by informants and the mere acquisition of a knowledge of vocabulary and grammatical structure is unlikely to lead him prematurely into delicate fields of investigation.

In the fourth place, he can observe, and to some extent participate in, the activities of children, though he should avoid doing this to the point at which he loses status in the eyes of adult members of the community. The study of children should in any case be an important part of the field-worker's activities; firstly because it is only in this way that he can gather material on the life-cycle of the individual and the genesis of cultural attitudes and values; and secondly, because children in all societies, including our own, are apt to "give the show away" and reveal to the field-worker events and aspects of activities which adults would perhaps prefer to keep from him.

In the fifth place, the collection of genealogies may provide a useful opening. In Australia, for instance, so much of native life turns upon kinship systems that the collection of kinship terms is essential to an understanding of the culture, quite apart from being a useful way for the field-worker to introduce himself to the society on the basis of matters which are of common interest to everybody. It should, however, be remembered that a mere collection of kinship terms is no more than what Malinowski once called "mock algebra". The ultimate aim of the collection of such material is to discern how the kinship structure affects interpersonal relations, and these, as stated above, are among the topics which the field-worker should avoid at the beginning of his work. At this time he is wiser to concentrate on the bare bones of kinship, leaving till later the task of giving life to the kinship structure.
Furthermore, in some communities—among the Maori, for example—genealogies are regarded as a family matter and premature prying into them may produce just the effect which it is desired to avoid.

13. The Interview

As stated above, the technique of participant observation must be supplemented by interviews with informants. These may be directed towards one or both of two objectives. In the first place, the interview may be aimed at eliciting the personality of the informant and his attitude towards the culture in which he lives and towards what is going on around him. In the second place, it may be primarily designed to reveal the objective reality of that culture itself. Each of these aims is important and even an interview or series of interviews which produce nothing more than a mass of exaggeration and misstatement may nevertheless be extremely significant in attaining the first objective, that is to say, in understanding the reactions of the individual to his culture; and such information, even though incorrect, may indirectly cast light upon the objective reality of the culture itself. An example of this principle is given in Appendix B.

So far as the second objective of the interview is concerned, information gained in a single interview may often need to be checked in three ways:

(a) By direct observation. In this way it is possible to discern the difference between what natives say they do and what they in fact do. The importance of this has been stressed in Section 6.

(b) By interviews with other informants. This is, of course, a matter in the first place of cross-checking the accuracy of different informants, but it also provides additional information (cf. again Section 6).

(c) By a repetition of the interview with the same informant. This procedure may have three functions: (1) to detect inconsistencies or inaccuracies in the information supplied; (2) to gain a clearer impression of what is really significant to the informant about the matter under discussion; (3) to discuss a topic from a different angle. For example, one may witness a ceremony which has been affected by European influences, and afterwards discuss it with an informant.
At the first interview one may guide the enquiry towards the differences between the present form of the ceremony and that which it had or is said to have had in olden times. At a repetition of the interview on the same ceremony, one may press enquiries into the extent and nature of European influences which have affected it and led it to assume its present form. For a full understanding of the ceremony and its significance for the natives, each line of enquiry is important and each may profitably be pursued separately.

An important aspect of interviews with different informants is that they often reflect the extent of the diffusion, differentiation and elaboration of knowledge, feeling and moral attitudes in the community (cf. Section 6). To take an example from our own society, a British sociologist once described the religious beliefs of workers in a certain factory as amounting to no more than the affirmation that "there must be something somewhere". Obviously this very vague and generalized religious attitude is quite different from the statement of religious belief which would be obtained from a Professor of Theology. Yet neither would give an adequate reflection of the nature of religious belief in our community. One would find all shades of belief from the most precise and sophisticated to the most vague and generalized. This is also true, though to a lesser extent, in less differentiated primitive societies.

The extent of knowledge and attitudes of different informants reflects not only their individual personalities but also what Ralph Linton has called their status personalities. One finds systematized differences in regard to knowledge and attitudes between old and young, between men and women, between those who have been initiated and those who have not, and between people of different rank in stratified societies. All of these require to be delineated, as they cast valuable light on the attitudes, beliefs and values correlated with social structure.

In professional discussions among anthropologists one often hears the term "good informant". It must be emphasized that this term refers primarily to the convenience of the anthropologist and not necessarily to the validity or value of the infor-

---

1 In obtaining such information one must of course beware of the tendency of informants to idealize or denigrate the past, and to see the pristine culture either in terms of "the good old days" or "the bad old days". Haziness of recollection or imaginative "embroidering" may also be disturbing factors.
mation supplied. Some individuals adopt a critical attitude towards their culture, are interested in reasons for doing what they do and are capable of clear verbalization of their attitudes and beliefs. Others have a much more generalized conception of their culture, are content to do what they do "because it is the custom" and find it difficult to put their thoughts and feelings into words. The former are "good informants" from the point of view of the convenience of the anthropologist, but they cannot be regarded as typical of the community. A culture is, as Kroeber has pointed out, something "super-organic"; that is to say, it transcends the knowledge and belief of any one of its carriers. Consequently, one must consider information obtained from a variety of informants in order to obtain a comprehensive view of the culture.

The interview in anthropological field-work may be individual or collective; that is to say, one may be alone with a particular informant, or interview him in the presence of others, or indulge in a collective interview amounting to a general conversation guided by the field-worker. The individual interview and the collective interview both have their advantages. An informant will sometimes say things at a private interview which he would not be prepared to say before others; but, on the other hand, the presence of other people tends to check any tendency towards inaccuracy or exaggeration on the part of an individual informant. Furthermore, at a collective interview informants more readily forget the presence of the ethnographer, and their comments then become less calculated and self-conscious. In fact, when the discussion becomes heated, skeletons may come rattling out of the cupboard as they would not do in the calmer atmosphere of the individual interview.

14. Incentives of Informants

For the anthropologist to obtain useful information through the interview, it is necessary that the informant should be interested in imparting it. The best way to secure this is of course for the investigator to establish the right sort of rapport with his informants so that they are ready to talk freely and at length with him. But even with the best possible personal relations, informants may find that their attention wanders because much of what the anthropologist wants to know is dull and prosaic to them. In our own society, for example, a housewife would probably become
bored if questioned at length regarding the precise procedure she adopts in preparing a meal or in putting the children to bed. Similarly, a business executive might be bored if he were required to give details of office routine which are matters of his everyday experience and as such are not of absorbing interest to him. Yet the prosaic aspects of social life may be quite as important as its more spectacular and emotionally toned phases. This is one reason why earlier field records were deficient in regard to the first type of information—it was not particularly interesting either to the informant or to the anthropologist, and consequently was not mentioned, or if mentioned was not recorded.

In order to sustain the interest of informants under difficult conditions, a number of steps may be adopted. An obvious one, of course, is to provide the incentive of material rewards in cash, or preferably in kind. These should be thought of essentially in terms of the native economic ideology. In most primitive societies they should be considered as part of the general system of reciprocities between field-worker and informants, rather than as specific payments for specific services. In some more individualistic communities, on the other hand, payment, and particularly over-generous payment, by the field-worker may actually bring him into contempt with the people.

One way of reviving flagging interest is to talk to informants about one’s own society—what might be called field-work in reverse—or about other primitive societies known to the ethnographer. One technique is to show to informants photographs from ethnographic monographs on other communities, which sometimes produces illuminating commentaries.¹ Similarly, natives will usually display some sort of interest in the way of life of the European, though this interest will, it must be emphasized, be circumscribed by the knowledge and value system of the community concerned. Such comparisons, apart from conducing to good relations between field-worker and informant and stimulating the interest of the latter, can also cast valuable sidelights upon native attitudes, and on the stereotypes² (usually unflattering) which the natives have formed either of Europeans or of non-European peoples of other cultures.

¹ See, for example, Elwin (1), pp. 241–42.
² This is a term used in the study of acculturation and race relations. It refers to the mental picture which members of one ethnic group have of members of another; for example, the idea once current in Britain that all Frenchmen are excitable, gay, irresponsible and partial to sensual pleasure in all its forms.
15. Mnemonic Aids and Check Lists

The field-worker studying any culture will be impressed with its enormous wealth and the extensive range of ethnographic facts which he could record. Since it is impossible to describe everything in the culture, a certain amount of selection is necessary; but this must be deliberate and conscious selection dictated by methodological principles embodied in a conceptual framework. Every field-worker has the experience of omitting to ask certain important questions, and to guard against this it is desirable to have some form of mnemonic device in the form of an extensive list of topics for investigation and even of individual questions. Of course the field-worker will have to overlook or investigate superficially a very large number of facets of culture which are not relevant to his problem, but he should consciously reject them as irrelevant and not merely overlook them. After all, any observation may turn out to be significant.

For this reason the field-worker inevitably collects much information which ultimately turns out to have no bearing on his research problem. Though there is no rule to decide in advance what will be relevant, some lines of enquiry appear *prima facie* more promising than others. For example, one might say that except for a limited range of problems bearing on economics and ecological adjustment, no field-worker should today waste his time recording the tiresome inventories of artefacts and details of technology which come under the heading of "material culture". But, as stated above, any given set of observations may or may not prove to be relevant to any problem. Thus details of food preparation would not normally be important in a study of social structure, but instances may be quoted where they are definitely relevant; for example, the division and distribution of the meat of a Mithan among the Chins of Burma,\(^1\) or Sir Peter Buck's record of the somewhat similar division of pigs, bonito and sharks in Samoa. In the division of a pig, for instance, the loins go to the chiefs of the first grade, the anterior part of the back to the chiefs of the second grade, the neck to the talking chief, and so on, so that the whole animal is divided and special parts allocated to individuals and groups in conformity with the rank and village structure.\(^2\) In these examples it is clear that the division of the

---

\(^1\) See Firth (1), pp. 84–86.

\(^2\) For a diagram illustrating the division, see Buck (1), p. 121.
animal reflects the social relationships existing between individuals and groups. Similarly, details of the building of houses and other structures may not be vitally relevant to sociological enquiry, but, on the other hand, they may be significant, as Malinowski has shown in his treatment of the Trobriand bwayma summarized in Chapter XIII, Section 4.

In order to make sure that nothing significant is missed the field-worker will find it useful to have a comprehensive list of topics for investigation. One of these is provided by the booklet Notes and Queries on Anthropology, published by the Royal Anthropological Institute. The most recent edition should be used. Another is The Outline of Cultural Materials, produced by the Human Relations Area Files at Yale University. This is a comprehensive list of items of culture which may or may not be found in any society, primitive or civilized. Each item has a serial number, and there are a considerable number of cross-references. As we have referred to buildings, we may reproduce here the list of topics under the heading “Structures” in the work cited:

341 Architecture
342 Dwellings
343 Outbuildings
344 Public Structures
345 Recreational Structures
346 Religious and Educational Structures
347 Business Structures
348 Industrial Structures
349 Miscellaneous Structures

As an example of the more detailed listing of information given in the sub-headings we may cite the following:

342 Dwellings—description of residential buildings; seasonal local and status differences in dwelling types; durability and portability of dwellings; mode of construction; adequacy (e.g. for protection from elements, for security, for light and ventilation); typical number of occupants; ceremonies during and after construction; etc.

For housebuilding specialists, see 33; for household organization, see 592; for names of houses, see 552.

Such lists of topics are a valuable aid to the field-worker, but he must never forget that they have their dangers. From their very
nature they break up culture into isolated items or traits; whereas, as we know, the cultural reality which the field-worker is investigating is not the isolated traits but the interrelationships between them. This will become apparent in the course of field-work because, as stated above, relevant information listed under one topic may appear during the investigation of another. The field-worker must beware of becoming obsessed with the collection, however thorough, of disconnected details of culture.

16. European Residents

The ethnographer working in remote parts of the world will inevitably have social contacts, not only with the native community which he is studying but also with other individuals of European culture such as administrators, missionaries, traders and plantation owners. The anthropologist will naturally wish from time to time to make contact with such people. It must be stressed that field-work is not all beer and skittles. True, the scientific interest of the work and the new experiences involved in living and working in an exotic culture provide psychological satisfaction for the ethnographer. But these may be to some extent offset by physical discomforts, poor food and the very real psychological strains involved in having to adapt oneself constantly to the demands of the work and to the prescriptions and proscriptions of an alien way of life. Most field-workers have had moods of exasperation and resentment on this score, and have experienced a craving for the company of people of their own culture. In these circumstances local residents may provide relief by being able to discuss matters of interest to Europeans in the European cultural idiom.

While this can be a pleasant form of relaxation, the ethnographer may find that such European residents try to tell him, very often in a superior tone, things about the native culture. Such information is hardly ever reliable, comprehensive and relevant. It may provide useful leads in the initial phases of anthropological study. But for reasons stated above in Section 1, the anthropologist should after a few months in the field have a far better knowledge of the culture than any untrained European

---

1 The following general remarks necessarily ignore the very great differences in experience, intelligence and attitudes between different individuals belonging to the various categories of European residents. In particular, much of what will be said is not applicable to many missionaries and administrators.
resident, whatever the length of his residence in the country may have been.\footnote{There are a very few untrained observers who are an exception to the above generalizations—people belonging to the class which Malinowski once described as "field workers by the Grace of God".}

Furthermore, it must never be forgotten that the attitude of the anthropologist to native culture varies essentially from that of the missionary, trader and administrator whose interest in the native people is not primarily scientific. They wish to influence the native community in certain ways, and their attitudes towards native culture will inevitably be coloured by such interests. It must be emphasized that such interests are not necessarily selfish or deleterious to native welfare, and the ethnographer should exercise tact and tolerance in his evaluation of them. But it remains true that the anthropologist is interested in the native culture in an objective way, and misunderstandings or even tensions are likely to arise between him and other European residents because of divergences of outlook and interests. On the whole, the anthropologist is wise as far as possible to avoid discussions of a native community with European residents, because such discussions are rarely fruitful scientifically and may lead to personal misunderstandings and tensions.

An exception to the above statement is of course the situation in which the anthropologist is studying race relations (cf. p. 655); that is to say, when he is not merely concerned with what is going on in the native community but also with the European community in its relations with, and attitudes towards, the indigenous population. In this situation, of course, European residents themselves become informants to be studied by much the same methods as are applied in studying the native community.

Finally, it must be emphasized that the character of the field-worker's relationships with European residents, and particularly with administrators, should not be determined by scientific considerations alone. This can be a matter of the utmost practical importance. On the one hand, to be too closely identified with other Europeans, and particularly with "government", may produce suspicion and reticence in members of the native community. On the other hand, if the field-worker ignores the local administrators completely they are apt to become suspicious. And since they are in a position to do much to further or hamper the
anthropologist’s work, as well to help in purely practical matters, their opinions should be considered.

17. Period of Field Research

The sort of detailed field record required of the modern ethnographer makes necessary a prolonged period of study in the field—say, from one to three years. Within such broad limits, the time required varies with specific circumstances—the nature of the problem, the reception accorded to the investigator by the community, the accessibility of informants and the personality and experience of the investigator. In the same way, the time taken to achieve linguistic fluency (see Chapter XV, Section 1) varies with the investigator’s preliminary knowledge of the language or of cognate languages, with the inherent difficulty of the language itself and with the linguistic capacity of the investigator.

Though it is impossible to lay down in general terms the period of research necessary to thorough field-work, we may cite as an example the conditions under which Malinowski did his field-work, which are indicated in Fig. 35. From this it is seen that he spent two and a half years in Melanesia, two of them in the Trobriand Islands. The intervening periods were largely spent in working over his ethnographic and linguistic material away from the field. Such periods of review, as we have seen, are very important in the attainment of high standards of field-work.

What has been said about prolonged field-work does not mean that useful work cannot be done in a shorter time. But it is probably true that no major contributions to ethnography can be produced, or theoretical advances made, except under the conditions which have been outlined. And a period of less than a year in the field, apart from special circumstances, will probably not justify the effort and money expended.

It is important in this connection to emphasize that mere length of residence, even when accompanied by a thorough knowledge of the language, is not in itself sufficient. After all, many administrators, missionaries and others so equipped have failed to make any profound observations on the people among whom they lived. A knowledge of the theoretical principles of field-work is the primary requirement.

In conclusion it must be mentioned that the length of time to be spent in the field will usually not be determined by scientific considerations alone. It may be curtailed by limited finance or by
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1914</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(a)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1915</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>(3)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(b)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(c)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1916</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(5)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1917</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(6)</td>
<td>(7)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1918</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(8)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Key:** Periods spent in field shown thus:

a-b: Mailu.
c onwards: Trobriands.
Learning of native languages shown thus:

1–2: Use of Motu among Mailu, starting with some preliminary knowledge.
3: Arrived Trobriands; commenced study of language.
4: Able to speak, but not follow conversations among natives.
5–6: Study of material (including linguistics) in Melbourne.
7: Returned to Trobriands.
8: Able to take notes in language and follow general conversation of natives.

**Fig. 35.—Bronislaw Malinowski: Field-work and use of native languages in Melanesia.**
other professional or personal commitments of the research worker. But if such limitations do not exist, the intending field-worker should add several months to whatever original estimate he has made of the period required. Work done in the field always requires longer than was originally anticipated; partly because new problems for investigation are constantly arising as work progresses, and partly because of purely practical difficulties. Thus in remote parts of the world transport facilities are often irregular and unreliable, while periods of illness, floods, hurricanes and similar unexpected hazards may delay the completion of the project. It is therefore well to err on the side of liberality in allocating time to field research.
CHAPTER XV

METHODS OF FIELD-WORK (Continued)

1. Language as a Tool of Field-work

Language may be important for the anthropologist in three ways: Firstly, it may be regarded as a phonetic system which can be studied as a linguistic phenomenon *sui generis* through the collection and linguistic analysis of texts and oral recordings. In this way its structure may be determined, even although as spoken it may sometimes be unintelligible to the investigator. This type of study is the province of the linguist. It is of direct use to the ethnographer only in so far as some knowledge of general linguistics makes it easier for him to learn the language of the people he is studying.

Secondly, language can be considered as an aspect of culture in its own right and related to all other aspects. As such it can be studied as a system of symbols correlated with aspects of social organization such as rank structure or kinship, with the thought habits and values of those who speak it, and in various other contexts.

Thirdly, language can be regarded as a tool of field-work—as something which the social anthropologist deliberately manipulates in the several situations with which he is confronted in order to elicit valid ethnographic information. It is in this context that language is being considered here.

It is possible for the ethnographer to establish linguistic communication with his informants in four ways. The first alternative is to use interpreters. This is, of course, a very unsatisfactory system of communication, and for obvious reasons is extremely likely to lead to misunderstanding. Furthermore, the presence of a third party who is not directly concerned in the conversation and the necessary pauses in communication to allow for translation entail an element of artificiality and self-consciousness in the situation which is one of the things which the field-worker should aim to avoid. It is quite impossible to establish through a third person the intimate *rapport* and mutual understanding which are so important.

564
The second alternative is for the field-worker to communicate with his informants through some *lingua franca*, such as Swahili in East Africa or pidgin English in New Guinea. This method is preferable to the use of interpreters because there is at least direct communication between ethnographer and informant. But it is still likely to lead to misunderstanding, particularly because the types of *lingua franca* to which we have referred are essentially designed to establish communication between natives and Europeans in purely practical situations. They are not well adapted for the communication of abstract ideas or for the expression of subtle shades of meaning and feeling. Finally, such languages are generally in use between a dominant European group and a subordinate native population. The very fact that they are spoken may imply a master-to-servant relationship which is inconsistent with the feeling of easy camaraderie which should characterize the ethnographer’s relations with his informants.

As a third alternative there is the possibility of obtaining informants who speak the language of the field-worker. The effectiveness of this procedure depends mainly on the fluency of native informants in the language concerned. This is usually insufficient to enable them to communicate information on certain topics clearly and precisely or to establish the easy rapport to which we have referred.

The fourth alternative is for the ethnographer to learn the language of the people he is studying. This is unquestionably the best means of communication, though its adoption raises certain problems.

In the first place, learning a native language calls for a considerable amount of time and hard work which the ethnographer is apt to consider might be better employed in gaining information through one of the other means of communication. And for a limited range of problems such methods may prove adequate. Thus in the collection of scraps of information from moribund cultures or in the study of purely formal elements of culture, a knowledge of the native language is not essential. This may be illustrated from the work done by Professor Radcliffe-Brown as a preliminary to the studies of Australian aboriginal sociology which he inaugurated in the late ’twenties. He collected from some of the almost completely detribalized natives of New South Wales scraps of information about social organization, totemism and so on. He obtained lists of kinship terms which sometimes pro-
vided a bare outline of the original kinship structure of the tribes studied. This was important as an attempt to fill in gaps in the much more comprehensive studies of Australian social organization which were subsequently undertaken, but information of this kind is of limited value. Accounts of ceremonies, for example, which have never been witnessed by the informant but have merely been described to him by one of his elders cannot be full or reliable.

Other research projects in which a knowledge of the native language is not essential are in the comparative field; for example, extensive comparative studies of art forms or of technology. Here it would be neither possible nor desirable to master the languages of all the cultural groups involved in the comparison.

Such studies as we have mentioned are, however, of minor anthropological significance. In the nature of the case they cannot involve the full study of cultural interrelationships which we have insisted is essential to really scientific field-work. For this a knowledge of the native language is essential, for several reasons: It is the best way of avoiding misunderstanding on questions of fact. It is the only medium through which the anthropologist can come to appreciate the subtle nuances and shades of meaning involved in native expressions of attitudes and feelings. And, finally, it is the best way for the anthropologist to establish the right kind of personal relationships with his informants.

Since it is impossible for most people fully to master any language which they have not learned as children, the question arises as to the degree of linguistic fluency required by the ethnographer. Here Dr. Margaret Mead draws a distinction between using a language and speaking it. The latter term places emphasis on what she calls “virtuosity”; that is to say, the capacity of the ethnographer to express whatever he wants to say exactly as it would be expressed by a native. She considers that language should instead be regarded essentially as a tool, and that a high degree of fluency is not necessary. She draws a distinction between understanding and speaking the language. The former is easier in some ways since it involves the ability to recognize rather than to recall words and grammatical forms. On the other hand, there is all the difference in the world between understanding the speech of natives among themselves, often under conditions of excitement or stress, and understanding it as spoken to the ethnographer in the privacy of his tent, where he can ask his informant to speak
more slowly or to repeat phrases which he has missed.\textsuperscript{1} The former kind of utterance is most important to the field-worker, because such utterances are made naturally and spontaneously and provide information which the anthropologist would find it difficult to elicit in the calm, and sometimes artificial, atmosphere of an interview.

The anthropologist should, according to Dr. Mead, be able to speak the language well enough to ask questions clearly, idiomatically and economically; and she offers a number of useful hints towards this end. But it may be doubted whether this degree of fluency is really sufficient, particularly in the establishment of \textit{rappor} with informants. The distinction between using and speaking a language is a matter of degree, and the extent of fluency required depends very largely upon the extent to which the ethnographer must rely upon language for his information. Thus in studying economics he can observe a great deal of the economic organization of the people, and such observations can be made intelligible by fairly simple questioning in a \textit{lingua franca}. But when he comes to study the subtleties of such problems as values, which are largely manifested in emotionally toned utterances, then the field-worker requires a very full degree of fluency. He also requires a much more intimate \textit{rappor} with his informants, so that they may express to him values and attitudes concerning which they may be shy or ashamed, or which cut across the dominant value system of the community. Only by fluent use of the native language can reliable information be obtained in this field. And for the study of most ethnographic problems a degree of fluency much higher than that suggested by Dr. Mead is highly desirable, if not absolutely essential.

2. Documents and Records

Field-notes, embodying records of interviews and observations of native activities, contain the main corpus of information which the ethnographer brings back from his research in the field. They are normally taken down in longhand in notebooks, though occasionally records of interview material may be taken down directly on a typewriter. When there is only one copy of the material, the field-worker should consider the desirability of

\textsuperscript{1} Thus Professor Lowie writes of his earlier attempts to "use" an Amerindian language: "I discovered that it was one thing to grasp the simplified speech of an Indian trying to make himself clear to an ignorant outsider, but quite another to understand him in the midst of a rapid conversation with his peers" (Lowie (3), p. 82).
transcribing it in duplicate, posting carbon copies home in batches from time to time. This is because there may be a danger of loss through fire, flood or similar hazards; cases have actually occurred of field-notes being lost in this way. On the other hand, the labour of transcription is time-consuming and tiresome. A compromise is to hope for the best so far as the main body of notes is concerned and to transcribe them merely in summary form.

Notes should whenever possible be taken at the same time as the observations embodied in them are made, particularly during an interview. On the other hand, some informants may become reticent on delicate issues if they feel that what they are saying is being noted down, though normally they are quite happy for the ethnographer to take notes. In fact, after some experience of working with him, they may even expect him to do so, interpreting failure to note down information as a sign of lack of interest.

In regard to observations of work, ceremonies and other native activities, the issue whether notes are to be taken while they are actually in progress will be determined partly by their tempo. When things are moving fast, the ethnographer may find it impossible to keep up with them, and is liable to miss some important observation by attempting to write down everything which is going on. On the other hand, when the speed of action permits it, notes taken at the time provide valuable material for subsequent discussion in interviews. And it should, in any case, be possible to jot down points for future enquiry.

When it is not possible or desirable to record interview material or native activities at the time, they should be written down as soon afterwards as possible. Otherwise much is likely to be forgotten, particularly if the field-worker goes on in the meantime to deal with other material.

In any case, field-notes should record as fully as possible not only the information imparted or activities observed but also the context in which the material was collected. In recording an interview, for example, the ethnographer should note, where it appears to be relevant, such details as the mood of the informant, whether other persons were present and any other factors which might influence the information imparted. In particular, where a dramatic or significant social event is being narrated by an informant the ethnographer should record how long ago the event took place, because of the possibility that the informant may have forgotten or rationalized something important, and
also because of those shifts of attitude and feeling to which we refered in Chapter XIV, Section 6. It is often useful, too, to record whether a statement by an informant was volunteered or was given in reply to a question; for example, by marking the statement “V” or “R”. It would be pedantic to do this for all statements made, but it is a useful procedure where there is disagreement between different informants or where some crucial and perhaps controversial point of interpretation is involved.

In addition to notes, the documents collected by the fieldworker will usually include genealogies, maps, diagrams and census data. It is also useful for the field-worker to keep a fairly detailed diary of his work.

Among the most valuable materials which the anthropologist can record are what are known as personal documents, referring to particular individuals in the community, the commonest being biographies and autobiographies. Personal documents may be collected with one or both of two objects in mind. The first is sociological—to show the culture in action by revealing its effect on a particular individual throughout his life-cycle. The second objective is psychological: Given a specific cultural environment it may be desired to indicate the individual’s psychological reactions to it. If the primary aim is sociological, considerable attention should be paid to sampling to ensure that the data recorded refer to representative individuals. On the other hand, when the objective is psychological it may often be more revealing to record the reactions of deviants than those of respectable pillars of society.

The full-scale biography is by no means the only type of personal document which the ethnographer can collect, and indeed it has its disadvantages. Full biographies entail so much work in recording that only a few can be collected. Again, the informant who tells his life history will necessarily have forgotten much which may be relevant, particularly in regard to early childhood; and even where this can be filled in with information from other informants—for example, his parents—this information, too, is likely to be incomplete and of questionable reliability.

The personal document should not be entirely retrospective. The informant’s present attitudes and fantasies about the future may be even more revealing, particularly as the former will inevitably colour to some extent his recollection of the past. Furthermore, as Professor Kluckhohn remarks, “with trifling
exceptions, all anthropologists seem to have assumed that a life history had to be an all or none affair'. Equally valuable, and certainly more economical, are episodic and topical personal records. The former record from several informants their reactions to a particular situation in which their lives have converged significantly. The latter deal with a particular phase of the individual's life history; for example, his participation in economic or ceremonial life. Finally, it is possible to compile an ongoing record of an informant's experiences and reactions to events during the period when the ethnographer is resident in the community.

In addition to written records in the form of field-notes, the ethnographer should take photographs and if possible films, which give vitality and added meaning to his account of native life and can replace a great amount of description. But their importance should not be exaggerated—they are essentially a supplement to, and not a substitute for, the field-worker's direct observations interpreted by him in the light of his anthropological training. Tape recordings may also be a valuable form of subsidiary information in regard to language, song and music. In studies of culture and personality a wide range of psychological records may be kept; for example, the results of projective tests such as the Rorschach and Thematic Apperception tests. Again, the free play of children with standard toys may be recorded as providing an indication of fantasy life.

It may in a few field situations be desirable to make anthropometric measurements or physiological observations; for example, in enquiries into the highly controversial question of Sheldonian somatotypes or studies of native diet or health. In the rare instances where there is a possibility of reconstructing valid historical records for the community concerned, archaeological excavations provide the most reliable type of evidence.

The use of all of these supplementary techniques presupposes, of course, that the ethnographer (or a colleague working with him)

1 Kluckhohn (1), p. 83.
2 The first of these presents meaningless blotches to the subject, who is called upon to give his interpretation of them. In doing this he "projects" something of his emotional life through the particular interpretation which he chooses. The Thematic Apperception Test (of which there are several variants) consists of meaningful pictures, and the subject is asked to say what situation is presented by them or to tell a story about them. In doing this, again, he projects something of his personality through his replies; for example, feelings of guilt, aggression or anxiety.
3 For an example of the material collected by these and other psychological techniques, see Leighton and Kluckhohn (2), Part II.
has had a thorough training in their use. And a warning in the strongest possible terms must be given against the dissipation of energy and interest by the employment of too many subsidiary techniques. The primary task of the field-worker in social anthropology is to understand and describe aspects of the culture of the people he is studying, and this, if it is to be done properly, is very much a full-time job. And it is not merely a matter of time, but also of the focusing of interest intensively on a limited range of social problems within their cultural setting. This cannot be achieved unless the ethnographer devotes practically all his energy and interest to his main task of interviewing informants and observing social activity. The basic body of information so acquired may sometimes be filled out by the types of specialized observation of which we have spoken. But only one or two of them should be employed in any one project, and that only if the field-worker’s problem seems to call for such action. For example, to take anthropometric measurements in connection with the vast majority of ethnographic problems is a sheer waste of time. It can perhaps be justified on the ground that the material collected, though it has no bearing on understanding the culture, may be useful to colleagues in physical anthropology. This may be public-spirited, but it is bad ethnography. The intending field-worker should review the techniques at his disposal, and employ only those which promise to provide data relevant to his problem. It is of course possible that in doing this he may omit some technique of potential value, and so fail to collect a few observations which might be relevant. But if he dissipates his energy and attention by the employment of a number of heterogeneous techniques, his work will inevitably be superficial all along the line. He will produce just one more second-rate ethnographic record—and we have far too many of these already.

3. Team Work and Follow-up Studies

In the preceding sections we have considered mainly the usual type of field situation in which a single people is studied by one anthropologist—what one might term the “one man one culture” approach to the collection of ethnographic data. Most of our knowledge of primitive peoples has been gained in this way. But in recent years there have been several experiments in the application of methods of team work to ethnographic problems.

These joint projects have been of two types: In the first place,
a single primitive people may be studied by two or more social anthropologists, usually working together but sometimes independently. This procedure has certain advantages: the work of one anthropologist serves to check that of the other, and errors or gaps in information arising either from failure to investigate certain points or from the influence or personal bias may thus be corrected. Furthermore, each anthropologist can concentrate on one particular aspect of the culture and rely to a large extent on his colleague for information on aspects in which he is not particularly interested. In this way each may obtain information which the other might well have missed. The best type of collaboration of this kind is when a single community is studied by a husband and wife who are both anthropologists. Some of the advantages of this arrangement have been mentioned previously.

On the other hand, research by team work in social anthropology has its disadvantages. Firstly, it involves some duplication of information. Much material is necessarily collected twice over when it might have been more profitable for each anthropologist to study a different community, thus increasing the scope of our knowledge of primitive societies. Secondly, there is a great advantage if information about a primitive people is, as it were, filtered through an individual mind. Discussion of such information with another individual who is also a product of European culture may militate against that absorption in native life which the field-worker should cultivate. Last, but by no means least, we have referred to the nervous strain which is very often associated with field-work; and where a team is involved this is likely to lead to personal tensions which may threaten to wreck the research. On the whole, if two anthropologists are to study the same people it is probably better if they do so separately or compare notes only occasionally during their period of study.

The second type of team work is interdisciplinary. Here social scientists, trained in different disciplines such as social anthropology, psychology, sociology, economics or psychiatry, apply their respective techniques to the same people. This is a very great advantage because the application of a number of different techniques to the study of any human community means that each will reveal something which would be missed by the others. From the point of view of study through a single discipline such as social anthropology, valuable sidelights can be cast upon native cultures by the observations of other social scientists. Finally, where
TEAM WORK

it is necessary to apply specialist techniques such as psychological testing or physical examinations, it is better if these can be done not by the social anthropologist himself but by someone fully trained and experienced in the use of the techniques concerned.

Interdisciplinary team work, however, also has its disadvantages. In the first place, there is the possibility of personal tensions mentioned above, and quite apart from such emotional hazards there may be conflict at the purely intellectual level as to who is to be the prima donna. The representative of each discipline will naturally be inclined to think that the whole research should centre around his own observations and to regard the work of his colleagues as essentially secondary. Finally, the discussion of material in the field with representatives of other disciplines may actually prevent the anthropologist from exploiting his own techniques to the maximum advantage. Thus one anthropologist working together with an economist in a socio-economic survey of a West African tribe found that he was constantly being forced by the nature of the questions put to him by the economist to think within the conceptual framework of economics rather than that of anthropology (cf. p. 774 below). He was thus prevented from penetrating into the complexities of the native culture as deeply as he could have done if he had been working alone. This difficulty can, of course, be offset if representatives of the different disciplines see little or nothing of each other while they are actually working in the field. This procedure has been adopted in the Rimrock project, where five communities in the South-western United States have been studied over a period of years by representatives of a variety of disciplines, each working independently. Under this procedure each research worker provides copies of his notes for a central file at Harvard University, where his material is available for reference to representatives of other disciplines. There are also discussions at the theoretical level with a view to co-ordinating and integrating information. But each research worker is free to concentrate on his own techniques in the field.

To sum up, though there is much to be said for team work, it also has its disadvantages and dangers. Apart from the situation where a husband and wife (either both of them anthropologists or trained in different disciplines) work together in the field, it is probably better if studies are carried out independently by different research workers. We have, of course, been speaking
of team work in relation to the traditional locus of the anthropologist's work, namely primitive or isolated cultural groups. When a modern urban civilization is involved, team work, as we shall see in Chapter XX, becomes essential.

Most of the primitive peoples about whom we have ethnographic information have been studied by one anthropologist only, either in a single field trip or by two visits with a short interval of time between them. In most cases only one substantial field study has been carried out by a single ethnographer who has spent a year or two investigating the people as they were at the time when he carried out his research. This procedure provides a synchronic study, which may have no reference to processes of social change. Sometimes attempts have been made to reconstruct some phases of tribal history from the memories of the old folk, from written records of early observers or from ethnological and archaeological evidence, but at best these provide only partial accounts of the changes which have occurred, and at the worst are hopelessly unreliable. Just as in a synchronic study only the methods of modern anthropology can reveal the full complexity of cultural reality, so for an adequate diachronic study the same detailed observations are necessary. It is obviously impracticable for the ethnographer to reside in the community for a period of decades to observe changes actually going on in it, but he or another anthropologist can revisit the community after a lapse of time. The first study, then, acts as a base-line (p. 654), and by comparing it with subsequent observations it is possible to detect many of the factors of stability and change which have been operative during the intervening period. The subsequent investigation—termed a follow-up study—can provide valuable information on diachronic processes. Thus two Mexican villages, originally studied by Professor Robert Redfield, were restudied after an interval of years, one of them by Redfield himself and the other by Dr. Oscar Lewis. Again, shortly after the war, Mr. H. A. Powell visited the Trobriand Islands in order to assess the changes which had taken place there since the time of Malinowski's field-work done some thirty years previously. Similarly, Professor Raymond Firth, with Mr. James Spillius as his research assistant, in 1952 revisited Tikopia, where he had

1 A few communities, like the Zuni, have been studied by a number of ethnographers over a period of years; in fact, it has been said that the definition of the Zuni family is husband, wife, children and one anthropologist.

2 Redfield (4) and Lewis (2).
carried out his original field-work in the late 'twenties.\(^1\) An example of a similar procedure in the study of modern societies is provided by the Lynds’ restudy of Middletown (cf. p. 798).

4. Publication

We stated in Chapter XIV, Section 2, that the strategy of field-work includes as its final phase the publication of results. The best form of publication is an ethnographic monograph, but commercial publishers are not always willing to accept such works, particularly since anthropological monographs have become more scientific and less spectacular. Apart from publication through university presses or other non-commercial channels, the ethnographer may be forced to embody his findings in articles in scientific periodicals.

An important consideration in the publication of results is that the field-worker should be absolutely candid regarding the conditions under which his work was carried out. Malinowski was the first to emphasize that this amounts to no more than doing what workers in the physical and biological sciences invariably do—they always give a description of the conditions under which an experiment was carried out.\(^2\) In the same way anthropological field records should include a statement of the period or periods spent in the field; the conditions under which the ethnographer lived; the periods spent in a single village or in visiting others; and the extent of the field-worker’s participation in native activities (cf. Appendix B). It is also an advantage if the ethnographer states candidly his attitude towards the community and their culture, particularly if this is at all likely to have coloured his observations. For example, the Lynds, in their study of the effects of the depression and the New Deal on Middletown, were careful to indicate the ways in which their attitudes towards certain socio-political issues differed from the dominant ideology of Middletown.\(^3\)

The ethnographer should state what degree of facility he acquired in speaking and understanding the native language, and he should define, where this appears to be necessary, the native attitudes towards him during the various phases of his field-work. Above all, he should provide documentation for his statements. This does not mean, of course, that every single statement made in an ethnographic monograph should be copiously illustrated by

---

\(^1\) The results of the last two studies are not available at the time of writing.  
\(^2\) See Malinowski (1), p. 2.  
\(^3\) Lynd and Lynd (2), pp. xv–xvii.
texts and records of events, but that the field-worker should give life to his bald statement of social usages by illustrative cases, both typical and atypical. An example of this is provided in Appendix A. He should in his own mind distinguish between those things which he has observed, those things which he has been told by an informant who had witnessed the event or activity and those things narrated to him by someone who had no direct experience of them. On critical issues he should make quite clear to which of these categories his information belongs.¹

The field-worker should not, of course, be pedantic on the matter of documentation. His information must to some extent be taken on trust by the reader. If he makes such statements as "The village begins to stir at about 6 a.m." or "May is a busy month in the gardens", there is no need to document them with precise details of times at which villagers emerged from their huts or accounts of foot-pounds of energy expended in the gardens during May. But certain facets of social life require very careful documentation. In short, one might say that the greater the likelihood of the ethnographer being misled or biased, the greater the need for documentation.

An important question in the recording of field observations is the place to be occupied in them by quantitative data. Most of the material collected by the field anthropologist under normal circumstances does not lend itself to statistical treatment. But certain aspects of the culture, particularly economics, do call for quantitative statements; and similar statements are desirable in the recording of certain social facts; for example, the incidence of polygamy,² the frequency of divorce and the number of individuals of different kinds in the community, as revealed in the rough census which the field-worker should usually take. Quantitative data, then, should be included where it is possible to do so and where they are relevant to the enquiry. But the field-worker should not waste time collecting such data for their own sake or merely because they will make his record look more exact (cf. Chapter XX, Section 3). An ethnographic account is not necessarily made more scientific by the inclusion of a mass of figures. Finally, as a minor point of presentation, it is often desirable to incorporate tables and other quantitative data in appendices

¹ As an example of this, see the description of the Yausa custom in Malinowski (4), pp. 231–36.
² Cf. the table given in Vol. 1, p. 112.
rather than in the body of the text, where they are apt to interfere with smooth reading and the flow of the narrative or analysis.

An important preliminary to any ethnographic account is the inclusion of a *thumb-nail sketch* of the community and its environment, geographical and ecological conditions, climate and seasonal cycle. These should be given in outline, also some indication of economic organization, social structure and material culture. The patterns of settlement should be indicated and major institutions briefly mentioned. A sketch of the daily round of activities should be included, and a statement of the people's contacts with other groups, both European and non-European. Such information can usefully be included as the first chapter of an ethnographic book, but a much shorter account suffices for a brief article. Even here, however, the anthropologist should not plunge at once into, for example, a description of kinship structure without giving some concrete background to help the reader to orient himself to the community which is being described. One has even read ethnographic accounts in which the author has neglected to mention in what part of the world the people whom he is describing are to be found.

The arrangement of the body of an ethnographic monograph will, of course, depend upon its subject. The only general observation which can be made is that the material as finally presented should be carefully checked again against synoptic charts and mnemonic devices in order to make sure that nothing relevant is omitted. Of course, the ethnographer who has left the field will inevitably find that he has failed to record certain facts, and it is useful to record such gaps and omissions, as did Malinowski in his work on Trobriand agriculture.¹

In this chapter we have been for the most part concerned with the traditional field-work situation in which an anthropologist goes out to a primitive community remote from civilization. Such communities are wholly or partly illiterate, and are far removed from the activities of the civilization within which the anthropologist works. But, as we shall see, anthropologists have in recent years extended their studies to other communities, both rural and urban, living within the context of modern civilization.

Now, these communities are studied by techniques broadly similar to those employed in the traditional field situation, subject to reservations made elsewhere. These techniques lead to the

¹Malinowski (5), Vol. I, Appendix II.
collection of material covering all phases of social life, including what we have called "ethnographic dynamite". Inevitably the ethnographer will obtain information reflecting on the conformity to certain standards of the community as a whole and of groups or individuals within it.

In the traditional field situation the publication of such material, which is sometimes vital to an understanding of the social situation and to the documentation of the field-worker’s report, presents no problems. It is unlikely that serious embarrassment has been caused to the people of Wogeo by Dr. Hogbin’s account of their adulteries, or to the Chenchus by Professor Furer-Haimendorf’s accounts of their drinking parties. Published results do not get back to the community to cause shame, backbiting or recrimination within it.

It is quite otherwise with more civilized communities. When field-work is done among them they know that they are being studied, and when a report is published by the ethnographer they are naturally eager to read it. The ethnographer is therefore faced with the difficult ethical problem whether to curtail his report by omitting material which reflects on the moral or social standards of the people he has studied, or to publish such material and so produce unpleasantness and tension within the community and often acute embarrassment to individuals. It is sometimes possible to some extent to disguise such material by altering names or recasting the narrative of events without distorting their significance but so as to make it well-nigh impossible to identify the characters concerned. Usually, however, it is impossible to do this really effectively. Anybody living within the community can usually guess what event is being narrated and what particular persons were involved.

This issue constitutes a very real problem for the research worker. It is an ethical issue involving the balancing of the claims of scientific clarity and precision against other values. One can only express one’s own opinion. That of the present writer is that, where conflict arises, the claims of the community should come first. There is no code of professional standards among anthropologists, but it might well be argued that they should impose such standards upon themselves and should regard information imparted to them in their professional capacity in the same way as does a doctor, a lawyer or a banker. The anthropologist is dependent upon the community for the information which provides
THE BIRTH OF A TODA CHILD

him with a great deal of scientific interest and in part for his livelihood. It is a poor return for the confidence won from the community to blazon its shortcomings in print. There is also the purely practical point that such action makes impossible any subsequent field-work in the community concerned, and since follow-up studies often prove to be desirable, this consideration should be borne in mind. There is also the question of considering the reception which may be accorded to other field-workers in the community studied or related communities, and the public reputation of anthropologists generally.

Adherence to these principles should not of course be carried too far. It is not suggested that the ethnographer should build up an idyllic picture of the community and suppress its minor shortcomings; but really harmful material should not be published in a form which is likely to reach the community concerned. There are several ways of meeting the problem. Material can be published in obscure and highly technical journals not likely to be read by those whose activities are being described; or it may be produced in roneo form for confidential circulation to colleagues interested in the problems discussed. When this is done there is of course no guarantee that the material will not get into the hands of the community, but in certain circumstances a chance may be taken in the interests of full and accurate scientific reporting. How far and in what circumstances this should be done cannot be stated in the form of any definite rule. As in many other matters connected with the delicate personal relationships involved in field-work, the issue depends essentially on the tact and good sense of the individual ethnographer.

5. The Birth of a Toda Child

Having indicated some of the methodological principles necessary for effective field-work, we may exemplify some of them by considering critically the adequacy of two ethnographic documents. These record for two different communities a standard event, namely the birth of a child. This has been selected because it is an event which possesses certain universal characteristics depending upon the conditions of human reproduction, is almost invariably associated with ritual practices and beliefs, and always forms an important element in the sociology of the universal human institution of the family. These standard conditions make for effective comparison.
METHODS OF FIELD-WORK

We shall present first the treatment of this subject by Rivers in his book on the Todas, published in 1906.¹ Rivers’ account is as follows:

Childbirth

1. When the woman returns from the seclusion-hut after the urvat-pimi ceremony she lives in her usual home with the rest of the family and does her usual work, and she is delivered there. It seemed that anyone might be present, and that there was no special ceremony connected with delivery.

2. During delivery, the woman kneels with her head resting on the breast of a man, usually her husband, who clasps his hands behind her neck. She is tended by a woman, usually by one noted for skill in these matters. If there is much delay, all men and women present lay their hands on the head of the woman and say: “Swami maz vurma; swami pudikan terma.”

3. If this is not efficacious, a man brings water in a vessel and prays, stirring the water with a piece of grass of the kind called kakar. When the prayer is finished, the man sprinkles the water over the woman.

4. The cord (peku) is cut with a knife, being held down with a stick while it is being cut.

5. The afterbirth is called naj or pekukudri. If there is delay in its delivery, a medicine called najmad is given which is procured from the Badagas. The afterbirth is buried on the day on which the woman goes to the seclusion-hut, a few days after delivery. If the child is still-born, its body is buried at the same time.

6. A caul is named kwadri (umbrella), but no importance is attached to it, nor is it kept.

Seclusion after Childbirth

7. Two or three days after childbirth the mother and child go to the seclusion-hut, or puzhars, the same structure being used as after the hand-burning ceremony. Various rites are performed, both when going to and leaving the seclusion-hut, and these have many points in common with those which take place before and after the hand-burning. As in that case, the procedure for the Tartharol differs considerably from that of the Teivaliol.

8. The general name for the ceremony of going to the puzhars is polk potha nir utpimi—“to the calf back (or hind-quarters) water we pour”, from one of the chief features of the proceedings. The ceremony takes place either in the early morning or in the evening.

9. The woman who is to be secluded, whether she be Tarthar or Teivali, rubs ashes on her head and face (puthi adipimi, ashes we rub), and comes out of the ordinary hut in which she has been living since the delivery. She holds over her head a branch of the “Nilgiri holly”,

¹ Rivers (1), pp. 325–31. The paragraphs in this and the following excerpt have been numbered for ease of reference in the subsequent discussion. Pages and figures cited in this text refer, of course, to The Todas and not to the present volume.
which has spreading leaves so that it resembles an umbrella; this leafy umbrella is called *torikwadr*, and the act is called *torikwadr patipimi*, "we hold the umbrella". The head is also covered with the *putkulii*. From the moment she leaves the hut the woman is very careful to keep her face turned away from the sun, not on account of its noxious influence, but in order to avoid the star or other body called Keirt, which is supposed to be near the sun. The child is carried in front of the mother by another woman, who also holds a *torikwadr* to shelter the infant from the evil influence of Keirt. Among the Tartharol a small artificial dairy is made, exactly as in the *uroatpimi* ceremony, and four reeds are cut to represent dairy vessels. As the woman walks towards the place where the *pulpali* has been erected, another woman lays on the ground before her a leaf of *kakud* on which she puts some threads taken from a *madumi*—i.e. the garment worn by the *wursol*. These threads are called *tunikar*, and they are taken up by the mother and put in the string round her waist on the right side. Water is then poured by the husband from the imitation *patatpun* over the hind-quarters (*potha*) of a calf, so that it falls into the *entatpun* just as in the *uroatpimi* ceremony. Before the woman drinks this water, three drops of it are put into the mouth of the child and a four-anna piece (*panm*) into its hand. The mother then drinks three times and bows down at the threshold of the imitation dairy, after which she goes into the seclusion-hut. During the whole of the proceedings she is careful not to turn her face towards the sun.

10. Among the Teivaliol there is no imitation dairy and, as in the *uroatpimi* ceremony, only two reeds are used as *ertatpun*. A fire is made on an improvised fireplace of three stones and lighted by means of thatch brought from the hut, and food is put on a fragment of an earthenware vessel and placed over the fire.

11. After the woman has drunk of the water which has been poured over the back of the calf, she breaks the earthenware fragment over the fire, saying, *Namaoku, “to Namav”, this rite being called Namavtur kwudrtpimi, “to Namav we give”. The woman then goes to the seclusion-hut, being assisted by her husband, who now acquires the impurity which is called *ichchil*, and any one else who touches the woman after this ceremony also becomes *ichchil*.

12. I saw the ceremony of going to the *puzhars* on two occasions, the woman each time belonging to the Teivaliol. The most striking feature of each occasion was the obvious and intense dread of Keirt. In one case, soon after leaving the hut, the woman, Sintagars, called out for another umbrella as she feared that the *torikwadr* was not sufficient to shelter her from Keirt, and during the rest of the proceedings she held over herself both the leafy umbrella and one of the ordinary kind.

13. I was told that all the chief incidents of the ceremony—the rubbing on of ashes, the holding of the leaf umbrella, the pouring of water over the calf and the giving to Namav—were all designed to avert the evil influence of Keirt, which they call *Keirtpudrtruti* (see p. 269).

14. After the woman has gone to the seclusion-hut she is visited by
relatives and friends, who stand at a distance, just as they did after the hand-burning ceremony. They bring rice with them as a present and call out “Have you had a son (or daughter) and are yet alive?” The visitors then go to the huts of the village and are entertained.

15. The woman and child stay in the seclusion-hut, accompanied by the husband and by a woman who is usually the assistant at the birth. If the child is not the first, the mother remains in seclusion till a few days before the next new moon, this kind of seclusion being called natersper. If the child is the first-born, the stay in the seclusion-hut is longer and is called kadrihersper. In this case the woman stays in the hut till a month has elapsed after the new moon following the birth. Thus Sintagars went into seclusion on Sunday, October 19th, and came out on Thursday, November 27th, 1902, exactly four weeks after the new moon of October 31st.

16. The proceedings on leaving the seclusion-hut are like those which take place after the seclusion following the urvatpimi ceremony, but with a few additional rites.

17. Among the Tartharol there is only one ceremony, called marthk maj atpimi, in which a buffalo is milked on the morning of the day by a Melgars man. Before the woman drinks the milk in the evening, another woman lays threads of tuni on leaves of kakud, and puts them on the ground before the mother, who puts them in the right side of her waist-string as when going to the seclusion-hut. After returning to the hut the woman drinks Melgars buttermilk and eats food cooked in Melgars buttermilk in exactly the same way as after the hand-burning ceremony.

18. Among the Teivaliol the return to ordinary life takes place in two stages, as after the hand-burning ceremony. The woman first goes to the aliars, or to the hinder part of the merkalars, after drinking water, which has been supposed to be turned into milk by pretended milking from a pregnant buffalo. I saw this ceremony on one occasion (Fig. 47) when the pretended milking was done by a small boy, Pongudr (52), and the supposed milk was poured into the leaves and given to the mother by a woman who had not been present in the seclusion-hut with her. The person who pretends to milk the pregnant buffalo becomes ichhil by doing so, and the reason why a young boy was chosen for this office was that the adult members of the family might escape the disabilities attendant on this condition. On this occasion especial care was taken that the mother should sit facing the sun during the ceremony. She at first sat down with her face turned away from the sun, and she was made to turn round, so that she directly faced it. This was the exact opposite of the procedure followed when going to the seclusion-hut.

19. After being in the aliars or merkalars for a week, there follows the ceremony of marthk maj atpimi, which is the same as that after the urvatpimi ceremony, with the addition that a representation of a hut is made with five or six sticks of the kind called kwadrikurs. A boy goes within the imitation hut with a brass vessel (achok), and coming out gives this to the woman, who bows down (nersatiti) with her child at
the threshold of the imitation hut. She then takes butter and buttermilk which have been placed by the palikartmokh on fire-brands (see p. 318). After taking the mixture the woman goes to the dwelling-hut and resumes her ordinary duties.

20. It is the custom for everyone present on this occasion to give the child a four-anna piece (panm), and near relatives may often give more. A small loincloth (tadrp) provided with a pocket called terigs is put round the child, and into this pocket the money is put, this action receiving the name of terigs kaplitmi, or "we tie the terigs". I did not hear of this pocket in any other ceremonies, and, so far as I know, it is only made in the tadrp used on this occasion, or if a constant feature of the tadrp, it has no other ceremonial use. So far as I am aware, the representation of a house is only used by the Teivaliol, while the imitation dairy made on going to the seclusion-hut after hand-burning and childbirth is only made by the Tartharol.

21. It is tempting to suppose that the water poured in these ceremonies from an imitation dairy vessel over the back of a calf is regarded as milk, and if this is so, the drinking of milk, real or fictitious, would be the essential feature of all these ceremonies. Further, the conjecture is natural that the drinking is designed to promote the formation and flow of milk in the woman. It is perhaps in favour of this that in the ceremony after childbirth, when this motive would be especially important, the water is poured over the hind-quarters of the calf and not over the middle of its back, as in the earlier ceremony. But if the promotion of lactation is the leading motive of the ceremonies, it is difficult to see why a buffalo in full milk should not have been chosen instead of a two-year-old calf.

22. It is possible that there is some reason why an adult buffalo should not be used on such an occasion and that a calf is used as a substitute, and, on the whole, the view that some features of the ceremonies had their origin in the motive suggested is the most probable one; but this can only be conjecture, for it is, I think, quite clear that the ceremonies have now become purely ritual, and are performed with no other reason than that they are prescribed by custom.

23. The use of an artificial dairy among the Tartharol, however, has almost certainly a deeper meaning. It is a striking fact that a pregnant woman and one soon after childbirth should have relations with a dairy, even if only artificial, when in ordinary life they have nothing to do with it or its ceremonial. Still more remarkable is the fact that a Tarthar woman after childbirth puts round her waist threads from the garment worn only by dairy men, a garment which has a distinctly sacred character. If this were done only in the case of a male child, it might be supposed that the idea is one of initiation into the life connected with the dairy, but the artificial dairy after the hand-burning ceremony is made when the sex of the child is unknown, and, so far as my information goes, the use of the dairy and the threads from the tuni occurs after the birth of either a boy or girl. It is possible that the ceremonial observances are relics of a time when women had more to do with the dairy and its ritual than they have at present; or it may
be that contact with the sacred objects, real or fictitious, is held to neutralize in some way the dangerous nature of pregnant and parturient women.

24. There is some reason to believe that the material of which the tuni is made is the same as that of the ancient clothing of the Todas, the cloth called an. As we shall see later, the an is still used in the funeral ceremonies, and it is possible that the threads of tuni are used in these ceremonies as relics of the ancient clothing of the Todas, and that they are obtained from the madtuni because it is the most convenient way of obtaining the ancient material. If this had been the motive, however, I think the word an would almost certainly have been used, as it still is in the funeral ceremonies. Nevertheless, this remains as a possible alternative explanation of the use of a sacred dairy garment by a woman after childbirth.

25. A further mysterious feature of these ceremonies is that the two rites which seem to bring women into special relation with the dairy are limited to the Tartharol. If these rites be regarded as relics of a time when women had more to do with dairy operations than at present, the possibility follows that this former function of women was limited to one division of the Todas.

26. I could obtain no explanation of the meaning of the word pulpali, used for the imitation dairy made in the Tarthar ceremonies. Puli means tamarind, and in a ceremony of the Nairs of Malabar called pulikati, performed in the ninth month of pregnancy, the woman drinks tamarind juice. It is possible that the two ceremonies have a common origin, the only indication of which in the Toda ceremony lingers in the name of “tamarind dairy”. It is, however, possible that the dairy is so called because it is made on the outskirts of the village, though I do not know definitely that the word pul would be used for outskirts in this special sense.

6. The Birth of a Chaga Child

In contrast, the following is the account given by Raum1 of the same event among the Chaga:

1. The principle active during pregnancy, that the responsibility for the unborn human being is diffused throughout the paternal and maternal family, becomes intensified as birth approaches. In the last months the woman’s mother wears a bead necklace as a charm to prevent herself from being employed as a medium of evil powers. This vicarious responsibility is particularly marked in the case of the husband who, it is believed, in the first month of pregnancy suffers in sympathy with his wife, feels the growth of the embryo in his own body, and experiences exceptional thirst. As the event draws near his responsibility assumes a temporarily negative character. All his belongings and possessions, such as weapons and cattle, must be removed from the hut. Such objects are held to engender fierceness, a quality unbecoming in girls and dangerous in boys.

1 Raum (2), pp. 81–86.
THE BIRTH OF A CHAGA CHILD

2. Customs like these resemble the *couvade*, as the husband's lying-in is called. This has been explained by some ethnologists as marking the advance in human history connected with the recognition of paternity (Bachofen); according to others, it expresses a sympathetic connexion between father and child (Tylor, Frazer). But it is actually a substitutive taking over by the husband of the functions of the mother. This is done to divert upon himself the magical dangers threatening mother and child during the crisis of birth. In this extreme form, the custom is not known among the Chaga. But the father, although not allowed to be present at the birth, comes to the assistance of his parturient wife and defends the infant by means of prayers outside the hut: "Fight bravely like a warrior! Be victorious in your struggle, and bring booty home with you! If you were conquered, you could not celebrate the feast of victory!" When he hears the child utter its first cry, he gratefully spits against the sky, goes into the grove to praise God, and propitiates the ancestors with a sacrifice.

3. While, outside, the husband thus performs his duties as spiritual protector of the family, his mother directs the activities of the midwives in the hut. She is the commander-in-chief for the critical period, thus reasserting the paternal family's final power of control over the child. The woman's mother is also present, but she keeps in the background. Her anxiety increases as the crisis approaches. Will her daughter pass the test of womanhood upon which her future well-being and reputation depends? Her own inactivity makes her liable to be overcome by emotion, and custom allows her to yield to her feelings; she trembles violently, and has to be comforted. For this purpose many women are present, for as soon as the news gets abroad, one woman after another slips into the hut, foremost among them relatives, like the woman's sisters, but also neighbours and friends. The higher the family's standing, the more visitors come, arriving even from distant places in an incredibly short time. The speed at which they come and the solicitude exhibited are closely observed as indicating their real concern for the patient. All of them are busy giving good advice and assistance, but the most authoritative pronouncements are uttered by the husband's mother, for whom also are the important ministrations reserved.

4. If she is not alive, the woman's mother or sister takes her place. Diffidence is felt about inviting another person, not belonging to the two families, to act as substitute. Such a midwife might handle the child roughly, bathe it in hot water, or bury the placenta superficially, especially if she feels herself to have been slighted. It is therefore the husband's concern to facilitate her work and to be generally responsible for her activities, while his wife is commissioned to watch her manipulations. Without willing co-operation from all present, not only will the organization break down, but a blight fall on the blessing about to descend.

5. The propitiation of the spirits, and the favourable emotional adjustments in the mother's personal environment, are not enough to secure a successful birth. The obstetrical skill of the midwives is called in to do the rest. Breech delivery is distinguished from normal pre-
sentation, and, if necessary, even an internal version may be performed. To induce labour, medicines are administered, and when the uterine contractions have started, the woman is told to "bear down". The anxiety now becomes general and the hum of voices louder. The husband's mother gives her orders, brandishing a piece of firewood. She hastily warms a bowl of soup and pours it into the patient's mouth. Then she rushes away to fetch leaves with which to wipe away the faeces. She has too many duties to perform to give way to weariness.

6. A young woman can secure the willing assistance of the midwives during delivery if she does not offend them during pregnancy. Again, she is directly responsible for the life of the child, for her unruliness during delivery may cause its death. Most women stoically obey the unwritten law to suppress loud cries during labour. From their childhood, girls are prepared to face their ordeal with composure. Grandmother will tell a child in answer to questions that it is man's nature to groan like a goat when in distress, but women suffer silently as do sheep. Through the rites involving mutilations, e.g. the removal of teeth, the girl is inured to pain, but clitoridectomy causes scars which interfere with an easy delivery and make its last stages excruciating. A newly married woman is taught that her crying will kill the child and disgrace her sex, and that her husband will hate her for being cowardly. During labour these considerations are strengthened by the presence of many relatives, among whom she is anxious that her own mother shall not be put to shame; and she also fears the censure of her mother-in-law. She knows, too, that her husband is listening outside, and that if through her lack of self-control the child is killed, he may divorce her and the family may be broken up.

7. But even though a Chaga woman only moans during labour difficulties do occur. The child may be delayed, and in the frantic search for the "someone who has blundered", it is the woman herself who is first singled out. Frequently a quarrel she has had with her parents-in-law is unearthed. She has to ask their pardon by sending her necklace round to be spat at, and thus have the curse withdrawn. Or it may be said that the woman's hardheartedness has offended an ancestral spirit, who retaliates by obstructing the birth. The husband, as mediator between living and dead, must reconcile him, and the libation offered is to break the spell. The husband himself may be blamed, especially if the placenta is retained. An occasion will be remembered when he scolded his father, and if the latter has since died a sacrifice has to be offered. If he is still alive, he must be persuaded to take the woman's necklace into his mouth to cause the placenta to come away. The husband's guilt is irrefutable if his wife dies in her first confinement. He has to settle the affair by composition, and traditionally pays the full wergild to her family. If the child dies in the womb, the woman's relatives will say: "Look, it is his spear!" or accuse him of kicking his wife. In short, disharmony in the three important parent-child relationships of a patrilocal marriage reveals itself during childbirth.

8. When the child is born, there is a hush to hear its first cry. If this
is delayed, anxiety grows afresh. Several remedies are used to startle an asphyxiated baby into breathing. Knives are whetted above its head; someone beats a drum or a pot. As soon as it utters the first sound, the women, led by the husband’s mother, raise a long and high-pitched trill: *kyulili*, the call of victory, shouted by the women on the successful completion of a hunt or a raid. The word is quickly passed round the whole neighbourhood that another woman has succeeded in her test of courage and morality.

9. Now the husband’s mother attends to the umbilical cord. To prevent it from bleeding she spits upon it, and ties it with banana bast. She places it on a stick and severs it with a grass knife. For a boy the bast is taken from the species *mchare*, the noblest banana, and for a girl from the less valued *mararo*. At the wedding a couple of banana trees have been planted near the hut for this purpose. These “wedding bananas” are symbols of fertility, for, like them, the young couple is to be blessed with plentiful fruit. To take the fibre from other bananas, even for subsequent children, would result in their early death.

10. A similar identification of the fortunes of the child with a plant underlies another rite. After the trill the women go into the grove to cut a bunch of bananas from a tree, which henceforth is called the “child’s root”, and magically secures by its thriving the infant’s well-being. Several authors report a similar custom carried out with the shrivelled-up umbilical cord that has dropped from the baby’s navel. It is buried under a banana tree in the case of a girl, and under a yam in that of a boy. None of them tells of a custom which at one time would probably have been explained as a survival of parental cannibalism. In some families the umbilical cord is put into a receptacle and placed for two months in the attic to dry. Then it is ground with cleusine into flour from which a porridge is made. This is consumed by the old women of the family, who claim in this way to be preserving the child’s life.

11. Immediately after delivery the mother sits up to eat a special dish of bananas cooked with sour milk. To expel the placenta, she is given the juice of two grasses crushed in the hand and mixed with butter and her husband’s urine. When the placenta is delivered, the husband’s mother again raises the cry of victory. Then she removes the blood and soiled clothes, wraps the placenta up in banana leaves, as is done with meat, and places it in the store of the hut. There it is left in the daytime, but during the night she keeps it under her head. She buries it next day inside the hut, in the byre if a boy was born, in the store if a girl, thus anticipating their future occupations. The cord is kept on top and turned towards the mountain, and sometimes a piece of fat meat is placed over it. These features are reminiscent of the burial of a human being.

7. Ethnographic Criticism

It will be apparent that the second of the above accounts of childbirth is the more satisfactory. Before clarifying the criteria on
which this judgment is based, certain considerations must be emphasized. No reflection is intended upon that great scholar Rivers, or on the unique pioneering task which he accomplished in his field-work among the Todas. Rivers was an outstanding figure in psychology as well as in anthropology. In regard to methods of field-work he made significant advances, notably by his employment of the genealogical method. It would be ungracious and unjust to imply any criticism of the capacity of a man who did so much to advance the sciences of anthropology and psychology and to further the trend towards integration between them. In fact, Rivers' intellectual stature itself makes more cogent our argument that brilliance is less important to the ethnographer than a grounding in methods of field-work—methods, it must be emphasized, which had not been developed when Rivers wrote. Our criticism, then, is directed not against Rivers but against the methods of field-work and the concept of the ethnographer's task which were current at the time when he worked. We desire to stress what has been the main theme of this chapter, namely that good ethnography must be founded upon a conceptual framework which provides an adequate charter for research in the field. It is emphatically not a matter of intelligence or of intuition but of modern scientific method. The lack of this accounts for the shortcomings in Rivers' work, to which we shall now turn.

The most conspicuous weakness in Rivers' account of Toda childbirth is his failure to place the event in its sociological setting or to describe the practices connected with it in relation to social organization. In paragraph 1, for example, he states that "anyone might be present", but this is not a satisfactory way of defining the personnel involved. All that he tells us is that there is no taboo on certain people being present, but one wants to know in a more positive way who, if anyone, is specifically expected to be present, and who, in fact, attends. To illustrate the importance of this, let us consider a wedding ceremony in our own civilization. The same statement as that made by Rivers could be said of the church ceremony—anyone may be present. Yet what is really important is that at a wedding the kin and friends of the bride and bridegroom respectively assemble, that some of them assume particular positions, for example, best man or bridesmaid, and that the parents and siblings of the couple are emphatically expected to be present unless they are living some distance away. The absence of any of the individuals concerned otherwise than
through illness or similar causes would almost certainly reflect
tensions or quarrels and would thus be sociologically significant.
The same principles apply to ceremonies connected with birth.
Clearly, what is required is a positive definition in sociological terms
of the rights and obligations of particular individuals in relation
to the fact of childbirth such as is given in Raum’s account,
especially paragraphs 3 and 4.

In paragraph 2 of Rivers’ account we find that a particular rôle is assumed by a man, “usually her husband”. Here it must be remembered that the Todas are polyandrous and paternity is established by the bow-and-arrow ceremony, as described elsewhere.² It is most important to know whether in a polyandrous family the husband who takes up this position at childbirth is the husband who previously carried out the bow-and-arrow ceremony in respect of the child. It may perhaps be assumed that this would be the case, but the fact should be clearly stated with a view to defining more clearly the Todas’ conception of paternity. Another omission in paragraph 2 is the lack of any statement as to the assumption of the rôle of midwives, apart from the fact that the midwife possesses “skill in these matters”. It should be stated whether she is always or usually a kinswoman either of the father or of the mother, and, if so, whether any type of relationship is preferred. If she is not a kinswoman one would expect that she would receive some fee or other recognition of her services. The latter point is also overlooked by Raum.

The insertion of the spell at the end of paragraph 2 is quite pointless. No translation is provided, nor is any indication given of its significance in relation to the event. It is just one of those unrelated “facts” which ethnographers of Rivers’ day felt it their duty to record.

Paragraph 3 brings out an example of a defect which is manifest several times throughout Rivers’ account, namely the failure to define the significance in native thought of material objects used in ritual. He makes reference to the grass called kakar, but does not give any indication whether this grass is selected for some symbolic reason or whether it is merely a convenient type of grass for stirring liquid.

In paragraph 4 we find a reference, of a type very common in older ethnographic records, to the umbilical cord. No indication is given, as it is given by Raum in paragraph 9, as to any social

² See Vol. i, pp. 113-14.
or ritual significance which may attach to the procedure. Such scraps of information are of no value. Similarly, in paragraph 6 Rivers gives the native term for a caul and states that no importance is attached to it. In that case there seems to be no point in mentioning it.

In paragraph 9 we find reference to ashes and to "Nilgiri holly", again without any indication of possible symbolism of these objects. The common behaviour of the mother and child in relation to the object called Keirt is baldly stated without any suggestion that usages such as those described are one way in which the new social relationship set up between mother and child is ceremonially expressed.

In paragraphs 9 to 12 Rivers refers to differences between the ritual as carried out by the Teivaliol and the Tartharol respectively, but he does not even ask the question whether these differences have any sociological significance.

In paragraph 11 we find a further reference to the woman's husband which is open to the same criticism as we offered in respect of a similar reference in paragraph 1. Furthermore, there is no suggestion that the father's participation in ritual at birth is an important way of establishing his social relationship to the newly-born child.

In paragraph 12 Rivers states that he saw the ceremony on two occasions, on each of which the woman belonged to the Teivaliol. One infers from this that he did not witness the ceremonial of the Tartharol, and if this is correct he should have stated the evidence on which he based his account.

In paragraph 14 we find another brief text in the native language, this time with a translation to which Rivers appends the comment, "I am doubtful whether this is essential". Whether the statement in question is obligatory or not, it appears to be an example of the expression of euphoria following upon a successful birth, a point very clearly made in Raum, paragraph 8.

In paragraph 17 there is a reference to the Melgars, one of the clans of the Tartharol which occupies a special position in Toda social organization and in dairy ceremonial. Here again it is probable that important relations between social groups are

---

1 These are two endogamous groups into which the Todas are divided. In respect of their endogamy they resemble Indian castes, but there is no restriction on social intercourse between them.

2 Rivers (1), pp. 660-64.
ETHNOGRAPHIC CRITICISM

reflected in the ritual described, but neither they nor the symbol-
ism of buttermilk and food cooked in it are made clear.

In paragraph 18 there is a reference to a particular rite being
carried out by a small boy, and to a part played in the same rite
"by a woman". Here again the kinship or other relationships
existing between the parties concerned should be stated. At the
end of the same paragraph Rivers refers to the mother turning
round so that finally she directly faces the sun. This rite is
presumably related to the beliefs concerning Keirt. If this is the case,
then, it would be an example of the bringing back of the woman
from a state of what Radcliffe-Brown calls "ritual uncleanness"
into the normal everyday life of the community. But Rivers is not
sufficiently precise to enable us to draw any conclusions on this
point.

In paragraph 20 we find a reference to the presentation of a
four-anna piece by those present and to the fact that "near
relatives may often give more". While precise quantitative data
are not absolutely necessary in reporting such events, some indi-
cation should be given of which relatives do in fact give more,
whether they are expected to do so or merely give from spon-
taneous affection, and whether there is any differentiation between
relatives in regard to the actual or prescribed amounts given.

Paragraph 21 of Rivers' account is extremely significant as
illustrating the fundamentally different conception of the ethno-
grapher's task which was held at the turn of the century when
compared with that of the present day. The idea then was that the
ethnographer in the field merely recorded "facts" and left his
theoretical interpretations until afterwards. In the middle of the
paragraph concerned Rivers states that the "conjecture is natural
that the drinking is designed to promote the formation and flow
of milk in the woman". This may or may not be correct, but why
did he not ask the Todas? The difficulties which he mentions at
the end of the same paragraph might well have been overcome
if he had enquired fully into the matter in the field.

In paragraph 22 we see an example of how enquiries into
origins which had dominated nineteenth-century anthropology
militated against scientific interpretations of custom. Rivers is
concerned with the possibility that some features of the cere-
monies may have had their origin in a magical intention. He
states that this "can only be conjecture"—as is indeed the case
with most of such speculations regarding origins. The most
significant defect of paragraph 22, however, comes at the end when he refers to ceremonies having become “purely ritual” and being performed “with no other reason than that they are prescribed by custom”. Nowadays, of course, the fact that ceremonies are prescribed by custom, and that they perform functions in the organization of culture and in the perpetuation of social systems, is a problem for investigation which the field-worker must attack.

Towards the end of paragraph 23 one finds again the obsession with the past in the suggestion that certain ceremonial observances “are relics of a time when women had more to do with the dairy and its ritual than they have at present”. This is put as an alternative to what we would nowadays call a functional interpretation, namely that the ceremonies may be interpreted as having a magical function. Actually, of course, the two possible interpretations are not mutually inconsistent and should not be posed as alternative to one another. The difference between them is that whereas the first could probably never be proved, the latter if properly treated would form an essential part of the definition of the ritual ideology of childbirth.

In paragraph 24 Rivers again fails to give any precise definition of the symbolism of certain materials employed in ceremonial, but he does draw a comparison between the ritual of birth and that of death. This analogy might have been extremely important if the account had been adequate and the reasons for his conclusions clearly stated.

In paragraph 26 Rivers refers to the possibility that the use of the term *pulphali* might have a common origin with the drinking of tamarind juice among the Nairs of Malabar. This speculation is quite pointless, and on the face of it the suggestion in Rivers’ concluding sentence would seem to be a more plausible one, though here as elsewhere he did not make the necessary enquiries on the spot.

When we turn to Raum’s account of childbirth among the Chaga, we find that most of the criticisms to which Rivers’ account is open do not apply. Throughout Raum’s account the sociological implications of birth practices are clearly defined, and in paragraph 1 the ritual is seen not merely as a series of events recorded, as it were, on a cinematograph film, but as part of a total and continuous sociological process leading up to the episode of birth and leading on from it. The husband’s rôle is clearly
defined, and in paragraph 2 Raum discusses some of the implications of Chaga birth ritual for the more general interpretation of customs of the cowade type. His comments on this point are not very clear, and a more detailed analysis of the bearing of his material on the more general theory of birth ritual would have been valuable. But he has nevertheless made an attempt to indicate the bearing of his data on more general theoretical problems.

The clear definition of symbolism, which we found to be missing from Rivers' account, is apparent in Raum's; for example, at the end of paragraph 1 we are told why the husband's belongings are removed from the hut before birth. Raum's account defines very clearly the way in which the fact of birth sets up social relationships, not only within the immediate family which it forms or augments but also with the kin of the father and the mother. The ritual duties which they are expected to carry out reflect the social structure, and the emphasis on the participation of kinsfolk in paragraph 4 shows how in a very real sociological sense birth is for the Chaga a family affair. The moral functions of magico-religious beliefs are clearly delineated by Raum, particularly in paragraphs 6 and 7, where it is shown how girls are trained from childhood onwards in the obligations which they must observe when they become mothers; and in paragraph 7 we see how the moral obligations between generations in the system of patrilocal marriage are reflected in the magico-religious beliefs concerning the cause of misfortunes connected with childbirth. Towards the end of the account we see the forward-looking aspect of the ceremony which again emphasizes the continuity of the social process. The wedding bananas have been planted in advance of the event, and the future economic rôle of the child based on the sexual division of labour is defined at the conclusion of paragraph 11.

To summarize, the comparison between the two records illustrates in concrete terms certain general principles of method which have a very much wider application:

Firstly, whereas Rivers is content to give a bald narrative of the activities connected with birth as they were, or might have been, witnessed by him, Raum constantly infuses these activities with meaning by relating them to their cultural context.

Secondly, where several people are involved in an activity, their social relationships to one another are defined by Raum, and he shows how these relationships are reflected in the rôles which they
undertake and in the ritual of birth generally. Rivers does not do this.

Thirdly, where material objects are employed in ritual, their symbolic significance is indicated by Raum but not by Rivers.

Finally, the fact of birth is related by Raum to its place in the total culture, to the past and future lives of the participants, and to some of the fundamental values of Chaga society. Rivers does not do this because the essential interrelatedness of cultural activities was not appreciated at the time when his field-work was carried out.

8. Training for Field-work

The preliminary training of, and preparation by, the field-worker at a Department of Anthropology will vary according to circumstances, in particular the community chosen for study and the kind of field-work which he proposes to undertake. But in general it should include the following:

(a) A grounding in general anthropology, including some knowledge of physical anthropology and the social implications of pre-history. It cannot be demonstrated that these studies are directly relevant to the field-worker’s task, but some knowledge of them will certainly increase his appreciation of the significance of what he is doing. He will see his ethnographic records as part of the history of that interesting animal, man, and will acquire a deeper understanding of how this animal has in the past devised varying cultural responses to his biological needs and to the necessary conditions of his life in society. The acquisition of this attitude will correct any impression that the seriatim description of contemporary individual cultures adds up to a science of anthropology, though such description is probably its most important branch.

(b) The acquisition of an all-round knowledge of the social sciences (particularly psychology and sociology) and particular study of any one of them specially related to the field problem to be investigated—for example, geography or economics. From the point of view of interviewing and other personal relationships with informants, it is a very great advantage if the intending field-worker can gain some experience in clinical psychology.

(c) A training in linguistics so far as this facilitates the learning of the language of the people to be studied, and where possible some preliminary study of that language or of cognate languages.

(d) Advanced lectures on social anthropology and especially on anthropological theory in relation to field methods.
(e) Participation in seminars in which bodies of ethnographic material are reviewed. This will enable the field-worker to "get the feel of" non-European cultures. It is to some extent comparable with clinical training in medicine through which the medical student sees the application of general principles to particular cases, and so acquires a flair for assessing the relevance of observed facts. We will not split hairs as to whether such training can properly be called "scientific". Suffice it to say that it is one of the most important phases of preparation for field-work.

(f) The reading of seminar papers by the intending field-worker on the people he intends to study or cognate peoples if ethnographic records by other observers are available. The discussion of such material by other members of the seminar is a valuable contribution to the Problemstellung (cf. Chapter XIV, Section 2).

9. Bibliographical Commentary

There are no major works dealing specifically with methods of field-work, but reference should be made to the essays by Herskovits, Hilger, Colson, Mandelbaum and Holmberg in Spencer (1) and to Lewis (1). The introduction to Malinowski (1) is a classic, and shows in a vivid way the respects in which modern ethnographic methods, which Malinowski did so much to develop, differ from those of the early observers. Richards (5) includes an account of the development of field-work methods, while Schapera (4) deals with specific problems in the field of culture contact. Paul (1), a most valuable contribution, covers far more ground than its title suggests, and contains a useful bibliography. Geddes, W. R. (2), gives a vivid account of ethnographic work in a Land Dayak village.

As regards mnemonic aids, we referred in Section 15 to Notes and Queries on Anthropology and the Outline of Cultural Materials of the Human Relations Area Files. Lists of questions on two specific topics are contained in Ackerknecht (1) and Simmons (1). It is useful in this connection to read Appendix II of Malinowski (5) in order to gain some knowledge of the sort of gaps and omissions which occur in the work of even the best field-workers.

The general place of language as a tool of field-work is discussed in Mead (4), Lowie (3) and Nadel (8), pp. 39-48. Specific advice on learning native languages is contained in Capell (1), Ward (1) and Henry (1).

There is a considerable literature on personal documents which are, of course, used in other social sciences besides anthropology.
Among the references of particular interest are Dollard (1) and C. Kluckhohn (1 and 2). Biographical material from American Indian tribes is contained in Radin (1), Dyk (1 and 2), Ford (1), Simmons (2) and Underhill (1).

Valuable discussions of specific topics in the field of ethnographic method are contained in F. Kluckhohn (2), Nadel (7), Richards (6), Passin (1), Paul (1), Henry and Spiro (1), Klineberg (1) and Warner and Lunt (1), pp. 38–75.

In addition to the above, reference should be made to the prefaces and introductions to standard ethnographic monographs, which often contain references to methods employed and problems encountered by the author in the field. Finally, as suggested above at p. 528, n. 2, the reading of Bowen, *Return to Laughter*, is a valuable supplement to more academic discussions of the problems of field method.
CHAPTER XVI
CULTURE AND PERSONALITY

I. Psychology and Anthropology

Today, when the common problems of psychology and anthropology are receiving increasing attention, it is hard to realize how recent is this development—a matter of only about twenty-five years. In the ’twenties, anthropology had but little in the way of relevant data and valid conclusions to contribute to psychology. Some pioneering but inconclusive work done by such anthropologists as Rivers, Seligman, Sapir, Boas and Goldenweiser exhausted the valid contributions of anthropology to psychology.¹ In addition, there were Lévy Bruhl’s misleading analysis of primitive mentality and the unjustified intellectualistic assumptions about primordial thought processes underlying the theoretical systems of Tylor and Frazer.² The most vigorous theoretical contribution to social anthropology during the first two decades of this century was Radcliffe-Brown’s application to ethnographic data of the theoretical system of Durkheim. But this was of little help because of its explicit exclusion of the individual qua mind from the studies of the social anthropologist.

It is small wonder that psychologists in the middle ’twenties found little to stimulate them in the psychological observations of contemporary anthropologists. Such observations were characterized by four main defects. Firstly, many of them suffered from the intellectualistic bias previously mentioned. Secondly, there was a lack of clear definition and delimitation of problems—for one

¹ For references to the observations of the earlier anthropologists on psychological issues, see Lowie (2), especially Chapter VIII; see also Index, s.v. “Psychology”.
² The detachment of such speculations from the realities of primitive behaviour may best be illustrated by reference to Frazer’s theory of the alleged derivation of religion from magic in the early history of mankind. According to Frazer man first sought to influence events directly by a mistaken application of the laws of association (magic). When he realized that magical techniques were ineffective he sought instead to achieve his ends by appeals to a supernatural power or powers (religion). Now, if there is one thing which real primitive communities never do it is spontaneously to question the efficacy of their magical techniques as such. Failure of such techniques always has some culturally accepted explanation which is entirely logical and convincing, given the basic assumptions of the people concerned.
thing, emphasis on historical speculation led to a confusion between the hypothesized mental processes of man in the early phases of his history and those actually found among contemporary primitive communities; here as in other fields the past was emphasized at the expense of the present. Thirdly, the impact of scientific psychology as a basic social science had not yet been fully felt, and the psychological assumptions and conclusions of anthropologists were for the most part couched in terms of what Lowie has aptly called “vulgar psychology”. Fourthly, the psychological observations of anthropologists were incidental to the pursuit of other interests. They were afterthoughts, as it were, emerging from ethnographic observations made with other ends in view, or, more often, with no particular end in view beyond “collecting facts”. There was no planned attack on psychological problems in the field and no special techniques had been developed towards this end. The position has been succinctly stated by Dr. A. I. Hallowell: “Paradoxical as it may seem, anthropologists, although recognized as students of Man, have not, until recently, been much concerned with People.”

The last two decades or so have witnessed remarkable changes in this regard, and two major groups of problems have been recognized as common to anthropology and psychology:

The first group of problems is concerned with the question of group differences in cognitive processes, particularly in general intelligence and special abilities. What differences, if any, exist between various ethnic groups? To what extent are such differences correlated with racial variation on the one hand or with differences in cultural conditioning on the other? How far are the differences to be conceived as quantitative or qualitative? Such problems as these, important as they are, do not come within the scope of our present discussion.

The second group of problems is connected with cultural differences in value orientations: What are the differing assumptions

---


2 For a review of this field, see Klineberg, *Race Differences*, and on the alleged correlation of psychological differences with the physical characteristics of race, Ashley-Montagu (2). Valuable observations on the qualitative, as distinct from quantitative, differences between two groups of West African subjects are contained in Nadel, “A Field Experiment in Racial Psychology”, *British Journal of Psychology*, Vol. XXVIII, 1937, pp. 195-211. See also his article on “The Application of Intelligence Tests in the Anthropological Field” in Bartlett (1).
and values imposed by culturally varying communities on their members? How are these differences to be studied and defined? What is the place of the individual deviant in each system of cultural values? How are the specific attitudes and values of each culture inculcated in the individual during his life history? It is with these and related problems that we are here concerned. We shall begin with a brief summary of the development of interest in them.

2. The Study of Cultural Configurations

The idea of differentiating cultural groups according to their dominant psychological characteristics was not a new one. The concept of "national character" has for a long time figured explicitly or implicitly in the writings of historians, geographers, philosophers and literateurs. But it had never been systematically applied to primitive societies, nor had any attempt been made to develop it into a general theory of cultural variation prior to the publication, in 1934, of Ruth Benedict's *Patterns of Culture*. It is mainly to this book that we owe the approach to culture which is best termed **configurationist** and the increasing interest in the problems of culture and personality. It inaugurated a decade of exploratory work which forms the subject of this and the following section.

Benedict's work owed much to an interpretation of the typology of cultures formulated in Oswald Spengler's *Decline of the West*. Spengler characterized classical culture as "Apollonian" and modern culture as "Faustian", implying contrasting ideas and ideals in regard to the nature of man and his place in the universe. These are reflected in different styles of architecture, music and painting. Benedict regarded Spengler's interpretations as oversimplified: "Western civilizations, with their historical diversity, their stratifications into occupations and classes, their incomparable richness of detail, are not yet well enough understood to be

---

1 It will be seen that two complementary groups of facts are here involved. Firstly, the basic assumptions or premises of a people about the nature of man and about his relationship to other men and to his geographical environment; and, secondly, the affective correlates of such assumptions manifest in differing types of personality. Each of these implies the other. For example, Leighton and Kluckhohn state that one of the basic premises of the Navaho is: "Life is very, very dangerous" (Leighton and Kluckhohn (1), p. 223). This is, of course, correlated with a type of personality of which anxiety is a prominent feature. Conversely, a high incidence of behaviour motivated by anxiety reflects the basic premise concerning the dangers inherent in life.

2 It is true that since 1927 various groups of American social scientists had been grappling with the problem of culture and personality (Mead (5), p. 3), and that Edward Sapir had earlier made pioneering contributions (Mandelbaum (1), Part III). But Benedict's work was the first major contribution in this field.
summarized under a couple of catchwords.\textsuperscript{1} Unfortunately, she proceeded to do precisely the same sort of thing in the field of primitive cultures where "catchwords" are only slightly less misleading. Benedict contrasts the "Apollonian" culture of the pueblos (and particularly Zuni) with the "Dionysian" way of life of the Plains Indians: "In the pueblos there is no courting of excess in any form, no tolerance of violence, no indulgence in the exercise of authority, or delight in any situation in which the individual stands alone."\textsuperscript{2} These, and similar generalized attitudes, are the opposites of those found in Dionysian cultures.

She then turns to Dobu, a community in which sorcery is prevalent. She characterizes its culture as "paranoid" and affirms the ubiquity of attitudes of suspicion and aggressiveness:

Life in Dobu fosters extreme forms of animosity and malignancy which most societies have minimized by their institutions. Dobuan institutions, on the other hand, exalt them to the highest degree. The Dobuan lives out without repression man's worst nightmares of the ill-will of the universe, and according to his view of life virtue consists in selecting a victim upon whom he can vent the malignancy he attributes alike to human society and to the powers of nature. All existence appears to him as a cut-throat struggle in which deadly antagonists are pitted against one another in a contest for each one of the goods of life. Suspicion and cruelty are his trusted weapons in the strife and he gives no mercy, as he asks none.\textsuperscript{3}

Finally Benedict devotes a chapter to the peoples of the northwest coast of America, who, like the Plains Indians, are characterized as Dionysian.

It is difficult to be fair in assessing the significance of Ruth Benedict's work. Her vivid and dynamic personality (from all accounts she was a supremely inspiring teacher), reflected in her writing, has led her disciples to accept her interpretations as substantially correct, with perhaps a grudging admission that on some points she may have exaggerated; while the same qualities have led some of her critics to dismiss her work as so much flambouyant journalese. In attempting to reach a balanced judgment, several facts must be borne in mind.

In the first place, Benedict was a poetess, a literateur, rather than a scientist. Her judgments tend to be founded on intuition rather than induction. Now, intuition has its place in ethnographic interpretation, just as it has in clinical psychology. But, as every clinical psychologist knows, intuition must be used as a

\textsuperscript{1} Benedict (2), p. 54. \textsuperscript{2} Ibid., p. 122. \textsuperscript{3} Ibid., p. 172.
supplement to, and not a substitute for, scientific techniques. The synthetic and largely intuitive assessment of the personality or potentialities of a subject should emerge from a careful and balanced consideration of test scores, educational record and similar objective data.

Much the same is true of the interpretation of cultural configurations. Patient and thorough examination of a vast range of facts should precede and govern intuitive synthesis. In contradistinction to this, Benedict's procedure was to reach an intuitive assessment of each culture and then to select and emphasize those facts which were consistent with her interpretation. The personality types to which her cultural patterns correspond thus resemble the characters in a melodrama or morality play.

Secondly, she was passionately interested in debunking certain popular misconceptions, reflected, for example, in attempts to correlate ethnic variations in personality with race rather than culture, or the assumption that aggressiveness as reflected in modern warfare is something universal and inherent in "human nature". And in stressing the importance of culture in determining personality, the wide variation in the elaboration of human potentialities, and the psychological plasticity of the human organism, she was often led to overstate her case.

By far her greatest contribution to social science, and to psychology in particular, was her emphasis on what has been termed the principle of cultural relativity, the principle that human behaviour in one culture can be understood and evaluated only in terms of the particular assumptions and values of that culture.¹ Specifically, social science has developed within the

¹ This is a scientific and not an ethical concept, though it may have ethical implications, particularly in relation to the treatment of dependent peoples by administrators, missionaries and others involved in situations of culture contact. In itself it represents merely the application to the field of moral behaviour of the far more general principle that any item of culture or of human behaviour must be considered within the institutional context in which it occurs, a context which varies from one culture to another. Physical aggressiveness, premarital intercourse or economic acquisitiveness are different phenomena in cultures which tolerate or encourage them when compared with those cultures in which they are condemned or discouraged. In each society they must be considered in relation to the observable context of institutions, values and gratifications which determine their presence or absence, or the extent of their occurrence. In other words, the moral behaviour of individuals or groups of human beings must be considered in the light of what they have learned to regard as right or wrong, as forbidden or permissible. This has no direct bearing on discussions of the philosophical question of ultimate or universal moral values, which refer to types of moral norms as such rather than to the behaviour of individuals within any given context of moral values. But it does suggest the caveat that such discussions should not proceed from the a priori assumption that the values and standards of modern Western civilization are the only right and proper ones. This principle was stated many years
context of modern Western civilization and has paid insufficient attention to human behaviour in other cultures:

Custom did not challenge the attention of social theorists because it was the very stuff of their own thinking: it was the lens without which they could not see at all. Precisely in proportion as it was fundamental, it had its existence outside the field of conscious attention. There is nothing mystical about this blindness. When a student has assembled the vast data for a study of international credits, or of the process of learning, or of narcissism as a factor in psycho-neuroses, it is through and in this body of data that the economist or the psychologist or the psychiatrist operates. He does not reckon with the fact of other social arrangements where all the factors, it may be, are differently arranged. He does not reckon, that is, with cultural conditioning. He sees the trait he is studying as having known and inevitable manifestations, and he projects these as absolute because they are all the materials he has to think with. He identifies local attitudes of the 1930's with Human Nature, the description of them with Economics or Psychology.¹

On the other hand, the great defect of Benedict's work lay in her basic assumption that cultures can be characterized by simple, pervasive trends:

All the miscellaneous behaviour directed toward getting a living, mating, warring, and worshipping the gods is made over into consistent patterns in accordance with unconscious canons of choice that develop within the culture. Some cultures, like some periods of art, fail of such integration, and about many others we know too little to understand the motives that actuate them.²

It should be noted that even the phrase which we have italicized is so worded as to suggest that consistent patterning is something towards which all cultures tend or approximate.

Related to this assumption is her over-emphasis on the diversity of human cultures, and her treatment of each culture as a discrete entity, incommensurable with any other. It was this tendency which led Malinowski to describe her approach as that of "cultural monadology". She neglected the universal needs and principles of organization found in all cultures, as well as those predominant types of institutional organization which the present ago by Descartes in his Discourse on Method: "While travelling, having realized that all those who have attitudes very different from our own are not for that reason barbarians or savages but are as rational or more so than ourselves, and having considered how greatly the self-same person with the self-same mind who had grown up from infancy among the French or Germans would become different from what he would have been if he had always lived among the Chinese or the cannibals... I found myself forced to try myself to see things from their point of view" (cited in Kroeber and Kluckhohn (1), p. 3).

¹ Benedict (2), p. 9. ² Ibid., p. 48; italics ours.
writer has termed "prepotent cultural responses" (see Section 10 below). She regards the institutions of each culture primarily as reflections of its peculiar pattern, rather than as responses to universal human needs which impose upon them certain common features in spite of diversity in form and emphasis: "Mourning, or marriage, or puberty rites, or economics are not special items of human behaviour, each with their own generic drives and motivations which have determined their past history and will determine their future, but certain occasions which any society may seize upon to express its important cultural intentions."  

As indicated earlier, the configurations of cultures may be viewed from two aspects, the cognitive and the affective. Ruth Benedict's delineation of cultural patterns lays primary emphasis on the latter aspect; that is, on the values and emotional drives characteristic of each culture. Two years after the publication of *Patterns of Culture* there appeared another book in which considerable attention was devoted to clarifying and emphasizing the difference with which we are concerned. It is to Dr. Gregory Bateson that we owe the very important distinction between what he terms the *eidos* of a culture on the one hand and its *ethos* on the other.  

In the first place, every culture manifests a series of formulations or premises which are built up into a coherent whole by logical processes which can often be reduced to syllogistic form, of which Bateson gives the following paradigm: "A mother gives food to children, a mother's brother is identified with the mother, therefore mother's brothers give food to children."  

By such syllogisms the structure of a culture is netted together into a coherent whole.

---

1 Benedict, *op. cit.*, p. 244. Contrast the following statement by Warner and Lunt: "The several kinds of structures in a particular society differ more from each other than do structures of the same type in different societies. The immediate family in modern America, for example, resembles more closely the immediate family in many African tribes than it does, let us say, the contemporary American economic or political organizations" (Warner and Lunt (1), p. 28). Though this statement refers to social structures, the same principle applies to the attitudes and values correlated with them.

2 Bateson (1). In his foreword (p. viii) to this book the author acknowledges the influence exerted on his thinking by part of the manuscript of Benedict's *Patterns of Culture* which he read while in the field.

3 On the justification for the use of the term "logic" in this connection see Bateson, *op. cit.*, p. 25 n. It may be noted that in a work published a year later Professor Lloyd Warner employs the term absolute logics to describe how various phases of Murngin culture such as magic, totemism and mortuary ritual serve to "integrate the group and relate each of the separate parts of the society and of nature into a larger and general unity" (Warner (1), p. 11). In Part III of the book Warner analyses the social logics of the Murngin from this point of view.

which may be termed its eidos. But every item of cultural behaviour is affectively toned and can be related to the emotional needs or drives of individuals. The summation of these gives us the emotional emphases of the culture which may be referred to collectively as its ethos. It is important to note the origin of these two contrasting concepts in view of their significance in the contemporary study of culture and personality.

As we have seen, the work of Ruth Benedict reflected and stimulated the interest of social scientists in ethnographic data, and in 1934 a group of such scientists\(^1\) who were planning research on competitive and co-operative habits in modern society invited Dr. Margaret Mead to survey the data on this subject from primitive communities. She assembled a group of anthropologists, each of whom undertook to review data from one or more of thirteen primitive societies. The results of their collaboration were published in *Cooperation and Competition among Primitive Peoples* (1937), edited by Margaret Mead. This book is divided into three parts: an introduction by Dr. Mead, a series of chapters by the various collaborators summarizing the ethnographic data, and an Interpretive Statement by Dr. Mead.

In her introduction Dr. Mead stresses, as had Ruth Benedict, the need for social scientists studying modern communities to take into account types of human behaviour found in, and produced by, cultures radically different from our own. She stresses a point which had received only passing attention from Benedict, namely the importance of cultural conditioning, of the question "*how* the members of each generation were made into the individuals whose behaviour is recorded".\(^2\) In doing this she makes two important points. Firstly, she speaks of "the *long* process of building the cultureless individual into an adult";\(^3\) and refers specifically to initiation in addition to other cultural forces influencing the growing individual. Secondly, she warns against too easy linking of observed educational processes with adult behaviour. "If Zuni parents—as a rule—treat their children in a certain way, and Zuni children—as a rule—grow up to behave in a certain way, we can assume that the method of education, within the total Zuni cultural scheme, is related to the adult character. But we cannot assume that the Zuni character could not be formed in


other ways. We cannot assume that those items in the Zuni educational process which have so far been observed and recorded are the most significant items. Furthermore, we cannot assume that if all these items of parental behaviour could be incorporated whole in the educational programme of some people whose total culture was very different from the Zuni, that the same character formation would result."\(^1\)

These very clear statements by Dr. Mead contrast with the tendency, which we shall have occasion to criticize later, to lay exclusive emphasis on the first two or three years of life in character formation and to stress the method, as distinct from the content, of the educational process.

Dr. Mead also devotes attention to clarifying the sense in which certain terms are used. She starts with the definitions formulated by the sponsoring subcommittee. Competition is defined as "the act of seeking or endeavouring to gain what another is endeavouring to gain at the same time", and co-operation as "the act of working together to one end". She adds a third category of behaviour, namely individualistic, in which "the individual strives towards his goal without reference to others". She also distinguishes between collective activity and individual or solitary activity, which refer to the modes of activity and not to goals; between competition and rivalry; and between co-operation and helpfulness. In view of the confused way in which these terms are used in discussions of current social problems, the distinctions drawn by Dr. Mead are of considerable importance. They may be illustrated by reference to the examples given in the following table. It should be noted that the last two distinctions are not absolute and refer to degree or emphasis.

**CONTRASTING TYPES OF HUMAN ACTIVITY**

- **Collective**, in which individuals are assembled. This may be co-operative (women joining together to weave mats to provide the dowry of a bride), competitive (a sports meeting), or individualistic (a group of men fishing from a pier).

- **Individual (or solitary)**, in which individuals act alone. This may also be co-operative (when women weave mats for a common purpose, but each does so in her own home), competitive (a number of people sending in entries to a newspaper competition), or individualistic (householders mowing their lawns).


\(^2\) The present writer prefers to substitute the latter term in order to avoid possible confusion between "individual" and "individualistic" behaviour.
Competition: The primary emphasis is on the goal with little or no reference to competitors (a competitive examination).

Co-operation: The goal is shared because its attainment will bring benefit to each individual (a shareholders' meeting seeking to promote the interests of the company).

Rivalry: Behaviour oriented towards another human being the worsting of whom is the primary goal (the potlatch).

Helpfulness: The goal is shared only through the relationship of the helpers to the individual whose goal it is (the raising of a subscription to assist some impoverished individual).

In view of Dr. Mead's very valuable discussion of these and other issues and the obvious relevance to them of ethnographic data, the interpretative statement with which the book concludes is disappointing. Dr. Mead herself repudiates the idea that the statement is definitive. The conclusions are mainly negative. Having classified each of the societies concerned as primarily competitive, co-operative or individualistic, she finds little or no correspondence between these major emphases and such characteristics as subsistence level, type of food-getting activity and culture area. She examines the relation of major emphases to various aspects of social structure and social institutions, for example rank and warfare, and considers each society from the psychological point of view according to how far it fosters strong ego development and what types of psychological security it provides or fails to provide for its members. But hardly any positive correlations emerge from the study. This is in part due, as the authoress points out, to inadequacy in the information, particularly to the dearth of material on the educational process from societies for which modern field records are not available; for example, the Maori and Kwakiutl. But the shortcomings of the analysis arise, not only from the lack of material or the inherent difficulty of the problems, but also from certain mistaken assumptions and basic methodological weaknesses which will be discussed later.

3. The Individual and the Cultural Pattern

During the years immediately following the publication of Patterns of Culture anthropologists placed increasing emphasis on the study of the individual as crucial to the analysis of cultural configurations, as we have seen in the case of Mead's work on co-operation and competition. This trend was stimulated by the specific interest of psychologists and psychiatrists. One of the latter, Dr. Abram Kardiner, instituted in the middle 'thirties a
seminar at the New York Psychoanalytic Institute, where over a period of three years anthropologists, psychologists and psychiatrists met to discuss their common problems. The anthropologists involved included Ralph Linton, who subsequently contributed forewords and ethnographic reports to the books in which Dr. Kardiner’s findings were published.¹

The main value of Kardiner’s work lies in its emphasis on the individual as a dynamic factor in the cultural situation, as a biopsychic organism having needs and drives which interact with the forces of cultural conditioning to which he is subjected. Benedict had by implication represented the mind of the individual as being a *tabula rasa* on which each culture had only to imprint its particular pattern. The individual for Benedict was merely a mass of potentialities, some only of which were selected quite arbitrarily by each culture for elaboration in conformity with its particular pattern. The methodological corollary of this view was that the educational process was to be regarded as one in which the individual played a purely passive rôle. In contradistinction to this, Kardiner emphasized the fact that the educational process is one in which the individual, as it were, goes out to meet his culture—seeking satisfactions from it, developing individual behaviour patterns within the framework allowed by it and responding emotionally to the restraints and disciplines which it imposes.

Kardiner is one of those psycho-analysts who have re-formulated the doctrines of orthodox Freudianism in such a way that they become more acceptable to those who are not of the faith. Thus he rejects Freud’s phylogenetic account of the genesis of basic social attitudes which, since the publication of *Totem and Taboo* with its figment of the “primal horde”, had virtually made psycho-analysis a taboo word in anthropological circles. Kardiner distinguishes between the neurotic and the normal development of the super-ego² and follows Fromm in widening this concept³ and in regarding the Oedipus complex as insufficient to explain

---

¹ Kardiner (1 and 2).
² Kardiner (1), p. 65.
³ “In his essay on ‘Group Psychology’, Freud attempted to answer, on the basis of the libido theory, the question of what held society together. There Freud introduced two concepts: identification and the libidinous ties between individuals, the latter being reduced to forms of sexual love. The ‘libidinous’ aspects of the union of members of society to each other, Fromm supplements by another and much more useful concept—that of authority—with the aid of which many relationships are made clear. It is not the magic eye of the leader who holds the group in place by virtue of their passive sexual love to him, but rather by virtue of his authority. This is Fromm’s modification” (op. cit., p. 67).
the relationship between the family and the structure of society: "The authority of the father in the family is subsequently supplemented by socially ordained authorities which are a part of the authoritarian structure of society, and the father is not the prototype (Vorbild) of social authority but its replica (Abbild)."¹

Kardiner stresses the point first made by Malinowski² that even if we were satisfied that psycho-analytic interpretations are absolutely correct for our society, they require drastic modification when applied in very different cultures—where, for example, authority in the family is not vested in the father. Kardiner, while applying psycho-analytic concepts, to a large extent gets away from what might be called the "consulting-room couch approach" to cultural data and pays some attention to the complex system of interaction which constitutes society. Kardiner's system is open to many serious criticisms, particularly on his preoccupation with the early years of childhood, but such criticisms should not be allowed to obscure his positive contribution.

The central point of Kardiner's theoretical system is his concept of basic personality structure or modal personality which he defines as "that group of psychic and behavioral characteristics derived from contact with the same institutions". Linton's elaboration clarifies the concept: "The basic personality (ego) structure . . . is a derivative of the psychological concept of personality and differs from the latter in that its delimitation is based upon a study of culture rather than upon that of the individual. Basic personality structure, as the term is used here, represents the constellation of personality characteristics which would appear to be congenial with the total range of institutions comprised within a given culture."³

The genesis of the basic personality structure is held by Kardiner to lie in the experiences of very early childhood when the drives and interests of the infant, particularly those connected with sex (in the Freudian sense), hunger and bodily functions, interact with the child-rearing techniques of his culture, especially within the individual family. These child-rearing techniques Kardiner calls the primary institutions of culture, and of course they vary greatly from one culture to another. The primary institutions of a culture mould the basic personalities of its component individuals and this in turn gives rise to the secondary institutions,

¹ Ibid., p. 66. ² Malinowski (3). ³ Kardiner (1), pp. 12, vi.
that is the configuration of accepted usages within which the adult lives.

4. Theme and Counter-theme

We have seen that the work of Ruth Benedict was largely vitiated by a tendency to postulate unitary and pervasive trends as characteristic of, at least, a number of cultures. It soon became apparent that this approach required modification; and in dealing with competitive, individualistic and co-operative systems Dr. Margaret Mead held that one of these trends might be of primary and another of secondary importance in any given culture. For example, the economic system of the Maori was held to be primarily co-operative and secondarily individualistic.

However, the first general statement of the principle in question was made by Dr. Morris Opler.\(^1\) He defines a theme as “a postulate or position, declared or implied, and usually controlling behaviour or stimulating activity, which is tacitly approved or openly promoted in a society”. He illustrates this concept with reference to the Chiricahua Apache, among whom it is held, for example, that men are physically, mentally and morally superior to women. This is one of the themes of the culture. The ways in which it is manifested in cultural behaviour he terms the expressions of the theme. These expressions may be formalized or unformalized. Formalized expressions are exemplified in ritual practices or prohibitions (for example, against a woman using the sweat lodge) which are specifically laid down and generally observed. Unformalized expressions are less rigid and are liable to modification. For example, the Chiricahua woman is expected to be retiring and deferential in the presence of men and to allow them to make the first friendly overtures in speech or action. But the degree to which this is observed is largely affected by the ages of the persons concerned and their specific social relationships to one another. The unformalized expression is thus a general guide to conduct rather than an inflexible rule.

Expressions of themes may likewise be primary or symbolic. An example of a primary expression is the practice of a man preceding a woman in walking or eating—the relationship of super-ordination-subordination is here sufficiently obvious, even if little is known of the particular culture concerned. But the belief that

---

excessive movement of a foetus during gestation means that a male child is about to be born is a symbolic expression, since here there is no necessary logical link between the theme and its expression, the latter depending upon culturally created symbolism in that excessive activity is held to stand for the male principle.

The importance of any given theme in a culture can, according to Opler, be assessed by examining the number of times it is expressed and the variety of contexts in which expression is manifested; the degree to which a group shows concern when the theme is violated; and the number of facets of the total system of ideas and practices in which it appears. But most important of all in assessing the place of a theme in culture is the recognition of the restraints placed upon its extreme and unimpeded expression. The emphasis on these limiting factors, including opposed or circumscribing themes which he terms counter-themes, constitutes the most valuable part of Opler's contribution. Thus in the example cited the theme of male dominance is not exclusive. While women are barred from certain rituals, they do have their own part to play in ritual life; though they are not allowed to accompany men on the hunt, they have their own essential and esteemed economic tasks to perform. These usages are expressions of a counter-theme emphasizing the importance of women and thus tending to offset the major theme of male dominance. The existence of this counter-theme Opler relates to institutional factors such as matrilocality, marriage and the sexual division of labour.

The importance of Opler's contribution should not be underestimated from the necessarily brief illustration which it has been given above. It might be said, quite correctly, that there is nothing in what has been said about the evaluation of the roles of men and women in Chiricahua Apache culture which cannot be paralleled in Dr. Phyllis Kaberry's field-work on Australian aboriginal women. But this is only one of the themes which Opler examines for the Chiricahua Apache, while in another work he defines twenty themes for Lipan Apache culture, though here his consideration of counter-themes and other limiting factors is not so satisfactory. In more general terms, the importance of Opler's concepts lies in the light which they cast upon the question of

---

1 Kaberry (1).
equilibrium in culture and upon some of the dynamic factors affecting social structure. His observations on these matters (from the article first cited) may be quoted in full:

Such a view of the interplay of theme and countertheme has important implications for social theory. It is probable that much of what we have loosely called “structure” in culture is essentially the interrelation and balance of themes. Also this analysis of the nature of themes offers a clue to the unformulated but real dissatisfaction of social scientists with writers who present extreme aspects of “exotic” cultures as typical, and who arrive at a caricature of a culture because they overemphasize unusual themes and pay far too little attention to the limiting factors which provide equilibrium. Moreover, the approach points to the essential weakness in the theoretical views of social anthropologists and sociologists who limit inquiry into the nature of the structure of culture to the study of the realm of social organization. Even from the few examples given above it should be clear that themes important to the structure and ordering of a society are not delimited by kinship or its extensions. Familial structure is not more important by definition than, say, religious structure, and both of these respond to the more comprehensive system of themes. Structure is not something to be abstracted from one aspect of a culture. Rather it is the organization of fundamental ideas and their derivatives revealed by empirical study of actual behaviour.

To discuss how far these comments are applicable to work done on social structure, and particularly on kinship, by some anthropologists would entail a lengthy digression. We shall merely refer to Professor Raymond Firth’s discussion of the relation between values and social structure in terms of his distinction between social structure and social organization.¹ Firth’s analysis is an advance upon Opler’s treatment of the problem, as it is upon Radcliffe-Brown’s conception of “gratifications” helping to maintain the social structure as one of the processes of “social physiology”.² Radcliffe-Brown and Opler are thinking primarily in terms of the maintenance of equilibrium in the social structure. Firth’s emphasis on the expression of values through individual acts of choice leads us to consider not merely the forces of social stability but also those which produce change or social disorganization.

5. The Classification and Analysis of Cultural Orientations

An analysis of cultural values which is akin to that of Opler but which is more systematic and comprehensive has been provided

¹ Firth (16 and 18).
by Dr. Florence Kluckhohn.¹ She starts with the concepts of dominant and alternative cultural orientations, which in the aggregate make up, for any given society, its dominant profile of cultural orientations and its substitute profiles. These require precise definition. While acknowledging the contributions of those who have employed such concepts as “configurations” and “themes”, she suggests that their analyses “have been both too generalized to permit dynamic analyses of variations in single societies and too particularized in terms of one culture to allow systematic comparisons”.² She therefore aims at an “ordering of the most central types of cultural orientation and their ranges of variability”, and produces a scheme based on five common human problems:

(1) What are the innate predispositions of men? (2) What is the relation of man to nature? (3) What is the significant time dimension? or, What is the direction in time of the action process? (4) What type of personality is to be most valued? (5) What is the dominant modality of the relationship of man to other men?

Dr. Kluckhohn’s tabulation of the possible cultural orientations in regard to these central problems is presented in the following table:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Innate Predispositions</th>
<th>Evil</th>
<th>Neither good nor bad (or mixed)</th>
<th>Good</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Man’s Relation to Nature (includes man’s own physical nature)</td>
<td>Man subjugated to nature</td>
<td>Man in nature</td>
<td>Man s. nature (rational mastery over nature)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time Dimensions</td>
<td>Past</td>
<td>Present</td>
<td>Future</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personality</td>
<td>Being</td>
<td>Being-in-becoming</td>
<td>Doing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Modality of Relationship (man’s relation to other men)</td>
<td>Lineal</td>
<td>Collateral</td>
<td>Individualistic</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Dr. Kluckhohn’s very comprehensive elaboration of this table cannot be reproduced here. Its most important feature is that it

¹ Kluckhohn, F. (1).
² For example, if we categorize the Kwakiutl as “competitive” in contradistinction to the Maori, who are as “co-operative”, we are led to ignore alternative themes or orientations such as co-operativeness among the Kwakiutl and competitiveness among the Maori. On the other hand, when thematic analyses are limited to a single society, cross-cultural comparisons are often impossible. Thus Opler postulates one of the themes of Lipan Apache culture as being: “The extended domestic family is the basic social and economic unit and the one to which first allegiance and duties of revenge are due.” This theme is neither affirmed nor denied in cultures in which the extended family simply does not exist. The possibility of comparison is thus ruled out.
provides, for each common human problem, a range and variety of orientations which may co-exist in any given society while varying in relative emphasis from one society to another. She states the implications of this very clearly in relation to orientation towards the time dimension: “Obviously all societies at all times must deal with all the three time problems. All have some conception of the past, all have a present and all give some kind of attention to the future-time dimension. They differ, however, in their emphasis on past, present or future at a given period, and a very great deal can be told about the particular society or part of a society being studied, much about the direction of change within it can be predicted, with a knowledge of where that emphasis is.”

Dr. Kluckhohn’s scheme is tentative and may require revision in the light of further research. But it does provide an example of the sort of conceptual framework required to do justice on the one hand to the detailed (or “functional”) analyses of individual cultures, and on the other to the requirements of cross-cultural comparisons. It corrects the tendency to one-sided emphasis which has characterized much of the work done in this field and opens up a number of new problems for investigation, such as how far dominant orientations in regard to one problem are related to those concerning others. For example, it would appear *prima facie* that there is a necessary connection between preference for the “doing” type of personality and a time orientation towards the future.

6. Components and Determinants of Personality

We may now return to the question of the place of the individual within the cultural pattern. This matter has been treated by Professors Clyde Kluckhohn and O. H. Mowrer\(^1\) in an article which is a model of methodology in this field. Kluckhohn and Mowrer distinguish four types of components in every personality, namely (1) universal, (2) communal, (3) rôle and (4) idiosyncratic. These depend upon four postulates regarding the personality of any individual:

1. All human beings have certain . . . personality traits in common. We shall call these *universal* traits, or components, and their antecedents *universal* determinants.

\(^1\) Kluckhohn and Mowrer (1).
2. The members of any given society tend to share more personality traits with each other than with the members of other societies. We shall call such traits communal traits, or components, and their antecedents communal determinants.

3. Within a society the behaviour characteristic of certain groups of categories of persons shows some constancies. The social stimulus value of those who are playing the same rôle has a common quality. We shall call this the rôle component and the antecedents of traits dependent upon roles the rôle determinants.

4. The members of any given society, even those who are playing similar rôles, differ among themselves in social stimulus value. We shall call such distinctive and relatively unique traits idiosyncratic traits, or components, and their antecedents idiosyncratic determinants.¹

Each of the determinants listed above may be further subdivided into four categories, namely those arising from the biological constitution of the organism, from the physical environment, from social situations and relations and from cultural factors. The results of this analysis are summarized by Kluckhohn and Mowrer in synoptic form in the following table:

**Components of Personality**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Determinants</th>
<th>Universal</th>
<th>Communal</th>
<th>Rôle</th>
<th>Idiosyncratic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Biological</td>
<td>Birth, death, hunger, thirst, elimination, etc.</td>
<td>“Racial” traits, nutrition level, endemic diseases, etc.</td>
<td>Age and sex differences, caste, etc.</td>
<td>Peculiarities of stature, physiognomy, glandular make-up, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical-environmental</td>
<td>Gravity, temperature, time, etc.</td>
<td>Climate, topography, natural resources, etc.</td>
<td>Differential access to material goods, etc.</td>
<td>Unique events and “accidents”, such as being hit by lightning, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social</td>
<td>Infant care, group life, etc.</td>
<td>Size, density and distribution of population, etc.</td>
<td>Cliques, “marginal” men, etc.</td>
<td>Social “accidents”, such as death of a parent, being adopted, meeting particular people, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural</td>
<td>Symbolism, taboo on incest and in-group murder, etc.</td>
<td>Traditions, rules of conduct and manners, skills, knowledge, etc.</td>
<td>Culturally differentiated rôles</td>
<td>Folklore about accidents and “fate”, etc.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

¹ *Op. cit.*, p. 2. It should be noted that the concept of rôle components corresponds to what Linton has termed “status personality” (cf. p. 554).
7. Criticism of Certain Trends

In the preceding sections we have reviewed some of the methodological concepts developed during two decades of study of the problems of culture and personality. While the treatment has been summary, we have covered sufficient ground to make possible a critical statement of the past and present position of studies in this field. The critical discussion will fall into two parts. Firstly, a questioning of certain basic assumptions which have influenced research and interpretation; and, secondly, an evaluation of the operational treatment of certain ethnographic data.

Lest our comments be misinterpreted or regarded as unfair, four points must be made clear at the outset.

In the first place, our criticisms are intended to point out dangers which are to a large extent inherent in the situation. The study of culture and personality has constituted a monumental advance in thinking about human relationships. But like other such advances, it has led to a tendency to one-sided emphasis and over-explanation. We are familiar with this sort of tendency in the history of anthropological science. Marxism, orthodox Freudianism, geographical determinism or the current emphasis on social structure have each illuminated a wide range of human relationships, but have also led to one-sided or restricted interpretations. The level of technology and the organization of production, the initial emotional situation in the family, geographical environment and the structured interrelationships of individuals in societies—all of these are important to the study of cultural dynamics, provided that no one of them receives undue emphasis.

In psychology, likewise, we are familiar with the one-sided emphasis which has often been placed on experimental methods, on behaviouristic studies and on the specific theories of the various schools of psychopathology. Each has something to contribute to our understanding of individual behaviour. No one interpretation provides a solution to all our problems.

The same is true in the field of culture and personality which lies on the borderline between the two sciences. Thus, while culture is one of the most important determinants of personality, it is only one of several, as has been demonstrated by Kluckhohn and Mowrer. Likewise, the type of personality produced by any given culture is important in understanding how that culture works, but represents only one facet of the total problem.
In the second place, our criticisms will cover what are sometimes called "popular" works as well as those written specifically for scientific readers. Now, popularization in the sense of making scientific conclusions available as far as possible to the general public is a commendable pursuit. It necessarily distorts to some extent the realities as the scientist sees them—one cannot explain atomic structure or the principles of cultural dynamics in words of one syllable. But avoidable distortion or exaggeration is not justifiable, a principle too often ignored in the field with which we are concerned.

It is sometimes argued that highly coloured presentation of material is the best way of conveying a convincing impression, much as a caricature often gives a more vivid impression of a person's appearance than a photograph. So far as writings on culture and personality for purely popular consumption are concerned, there is something to be said for this point of view. Schoolteachers or social workers in Birmingham or Jersey City will certainly adopt a more intelligent attitude towards the behaviour of those for whose training or welfare they are responsible if it is forcibly brought home to them how largely human behaviour is influenced by factors specific to any given culture. And it may be contended that if they get exaggerated ideas about the paranoid Dobuans or the too, too marvellous Tchambuli men, it does not matter very much.

But this is the way, or one of the ways, in which popular fallacies start. Furthermore, the line between popular works and those which contribute to, and therefore influence, scientific thought about social problems is often hard to draw. It may rightly be argued that anthropologists usually know enough about what human behaviour is like in exotic cultures and about the principles of ethnographic interpretation to discount exaggerated statements and question unjustified inferences from inadequate data. But this is not in general true of colleagues in the other social sciences, such as psychology or economics, whose training in scientific discipline has usually been limited to that of their own specific fields. They cannot be blamed if they lap it up. It thus comes about that so-called "popular" works in anthropology are sometimes set as textbooks in other disciplines without, so far as the writer can judge, any adequate attempt to warn students against the methodological snags involved. Consequently, we find undergraduates in psychology
talking glibly about the character structure of the Brobdignagians or the major emphases of Rum-ti-Foo culture in a manner which reveals a naïve and myopic interpretation of anthropological material. This is in some ways worse than downright ignorance. What the effects will be on future generations of social scientists, and how far these effects will be modified by more restrained and scientific discussions and treatments of the problem, remains to be seen.

In the third place, we shall later criticize some examples of the use and abuse of ethnographic data. Such a procedure may meet the objection that it consists merely of looking for weak points in otherwise sound material. This is not so. The misinterpretations concerned are not merely examples of the errors of judgment of which we are all guilty at times. They represent a misleading selection of data determined by a one-sided methodological approach. That it is so easy to detect the misinterpretations concerned suggests that the material almost certainly contains other distortions which are not obvious even to the critical reader. It is a characteristic of anthropological writing that much is necessarily taken on trust from the author, whether he or she is analysing ethnographic documents or recording original field-work. The reader rarely goes back to the original sources, much less does he think of making an expedition to New Guinea to see for himself. Hence the need for rigorous standards of presentation and analysis, and for a keenly critical attitude towards ethnographic interpretation, particularly when subtle and complex problems are involved.

We must stress again the fact that the misinterpretations which we shall criticize arise from the method employed. As in the extract from Rivers’ work (Chapter XV, Sections 5 and 7) the methodology rather than the investigator is at fault. The comments offered below are not a reflection on the author’s competence, which has usually been fully established in other works. But when anthropologists fall into the habit of writing in such sweeping terms as “The Kwakiutl gives to shame his rival, the Dakota to honor someone else”, the complex sociology and psychology of gift-giving in both societies is necessarily obscured.

In the fourth place, not all the criticisms to be advanced apply

---

1 Thus Dr. Margaret Mead’s Social Organization of Manua, to name only one of her contributions to scientific anthropology, is one of the finest ethnographic records in the Polynesian field, or, for the matter of that, in the literature on social organization generally.

2 Mead (5), p. 487.
to all writers in the field. Thus it will be suggested that some of
them have over-emphasized the causative significance of infantile
training. But some writers pay attention to the experiences of
eyearl childhood, not so much because of their direct causal influ-
ence on adult behaviour, as because they often reflect in a striking
and clear-cut way the values placed on inter-personal relations in
the culture concerned.

8. Some Questionable Assumptions

Much of the early work of the configurationist school was
dominated by the assumption that cultural factors are all-important in
determining personality. This was in part a reaction against the
assumption that the personality standards of our own culture are
to be equated with human nature. And, as we have seen, Ruth
Benedict did a great service to our understanding of human
behaviour in stressing the variability of cultural patterns corre-
lated with different types of dominant personality. On the other
hand, this led to a neglect of the universal determinants of person-
ality, the importance of which has been emphasized by Kluck-
hohn and Mowrer. The significance of these universals lies in the
fact that human personality is not, as Ruth Benedict suggests,
ininitely malleable, but is variable within certain limits only,
these limits being imposed by the inborn physiological character
of Homo sapiens and by the necessary conditions of his existence in
society.

The second assumption which has been widely accepted is that
the first two or three years of life are of pre-eminent importance in
the formation of personality. They are sometimes referred to as
the “formative years”. This ignores the possibility that various
periods in the maturation of the individual may have greater or
less significance in one culture as against another. Thus it may
well be that in a society such as that of the Australian aborigines
where no very great attention is paid to young children, but
where elaborate initiation ceremonies focus social attention upon
the youth at adolescence, this latter period may well be regarded
as being more “formative” than that of early infancy. Furthermore,
the assumption which we are criticizing derives from Freud-
ian psychology, and it must never be forgotten that this system
of psychology emerged as a result of the study of upper and middle
class Viennese neurotics. In this connection it is often forgotten
that many neurotic individuals are neurotic precisely because they
are fixated upon infantile experiences and have not responded to subsequent processes of enculturation, such as the influences of school, occupational groupings, associations and marriage. It may well be argued that the influences of the latter kind are, in the case of normal individuals, more "formative" than the early family situation which has received so much attention in psychological literature.

The position is summarized in relation to the Navaho in the following quotation from Leighton and Kluckhohn:

Perhaps some readers who are familiar with modern psychological theories are asking: how can the anxiety level be so high among a people where infants are nursed whenever they want to be, where childhood disciplines are so permissive, where there is so much affection for children? It is true that, if the writings of certain psychoanalysts and other child psychiatrists and psychologists were literally true (and were the whole truth), adult Navahos would inevitably have calm and beautifully adjusted personalities. However, this is certainly not the case. In spite of the fact that Navaho infants receive a maximum of protection and gratification, when they grow to be adults they are very moody and worry a great deal. The explanation is probably not that the theorists are utterly wrong but that they claim too much for the earliest years and do not pay enough attention to later events and to the total situation in which the mature person finds himself. Infantile indulgence probably does constitute the firmest foundation upon which, if later circumstances are reasonably favourable, a secure and confident adult personality can be developed. But it affords only a possible basis; it does not, in and of itself, promise fulfilment. The high degree of tension observed among adult Navahos may be traced partly to the exceedingly grave pressures to which Navaho society is at present subject, and also to the conflicts caused by weaning, other experiences of later childhood, and beliefs about supernatural forces. These days most Navaho groups are "worked up" about something most of the time.1

Finally, it may be noted that Linton who, with Kardiner, once stressed the "formative" influence of the infantile period (cf. Section 3) subsequently repudiated this view. In a posthumous work he even suggests that the infant is incapable of experiencing the psychological traumas which figure so prominently in psychoanalytic interpretations.2

The third assumption which we have to criticize is that adult character is formed exclusively by person-to-person relationships, particularly those experienced during early childhood. Such widely used terms as "indulgence" and "frustration" imply that the growing

1 Leighton and Kluckhohn (2), pp. 110–11.  
2 Linton (3), pp. 11 sgg.
human organism is primarily influenced by what is done or not
done to it by members of the adult community, to the exclusion
of other influences. In contradistinction to this, we would advance
what might be called the hypothesis of impersonal control,
namely that much of the effective conditioning of the individual
in culture emerges not from the way people react to him directly
(for example, by "indulging" or "frustrating" him), but from his
observation of adult behaviour and his passive reactions to what
is going on around him. As an illustration of this, we may take an
example which is particularly appropriate in view of the emphasis
laid by Neo-Freudian configurationists upon toilet training in
early infancy. The episode comes from Professor Raymond Firth’s
account of kinship in Tikopia and is narrated in the following
passage:

Peculiarly incumbent upon the mother and other women of the
household is the duty of removing the child’s faeces when such happen
to be deposited in a public place; carelessness in this respect is a matter
for deep reproach. . . . A domestic incident I myself witnessed shows
the frankness employed in such affairs. The small son of my next-door
neighbour had relieved himself in the path; observing this, a youth
who frequented the house called out to the child’s grandmother,
"Mother! Tekila has defecated in the place there.” “Where has he
defecated?” “In the path leading to the beach.” “In the path?” she
replied anxiously, and hastened with a bunch of leaves to remove the
offence. They conducted this conversation some fifty yards apart, and
in loud tones, without embarrassment to themselves or to the audience.¹

It will be noted that in the above account there is no mention of
anything actually being done to the offending child. The episode
can hardly be interpreted either in terms of indulgence or frustra-
tion, but it seems a reasonable assumption that experiences of
this kind in which a child’s act produces a tense and spectacular
reaction in the adult environment may have a very considerable
influence in conditioning it along culturally approved lines.

In this and other respects it might be asserted that the situations
which a child witnesses as an observer are quite as important as
those in which it is personally involved. Cultural experience con-
sists of far more than inter-personal relations. There is, for ex-
ample, the whole field of material culture. In this connection the
following quotation from Kluckhohn and Mowrer is significant:

In some ways, the term “impersonal environment” is preferable to
“physical environment” because the latter tends to have the exclusive

¹ Firth (8), p. 174.
connotation of topography, weather, and the like, whereas actually dwellings, furniture and all human artefacts are a very important aspect of the external, objective and non-human environment. These objects all acquire symbolic (including prestige) value for individuals, for social groups, for whole societies. Both symbolically and in the immediate physical sense they are depriving or frustrating agencies. We often speak as if deprivation and frustration were imposed on children only by their elders, but a high shelf which makes a coveted delicacy inaccessible or a gadget which cannot be manipulated will also interfere with a goal response.¹

Another impersonal cultural influence is language. Malinowski has laid emphasis upon the importance of language as a socially creative force in the field of magic, and extended his hypothesis to cover the fields of propaganda and advertisement, though he did not deal with these matters fully.² The conception of the binding power of the word which plays such an important part in his interpretation of Trobriand magic may well be applied in the field of personality formation. That which is verbally labelled as good tends to be accepted uncritically as such by the individual; that which is labelled as bad tends to be rejected. And these conceptions of what is good and what is bad to a large extent determine those adult attitudes and patterns of behaviour which go to make up personality. One of the most important linguistic mechanisms in this sphere is to be found in what might be called the metaphorical imperative. Many languages have, like English, a number of words which are used in a double sense to indicate on the one hand truth or falsehood and on the other hand what is desirable or undesirable. The words “right” and “wrong” are the most obvious examples. We say that the answer to a scientific problem is right or wrong, meaning that factually it is either in accord with reality or not. But we also describe certain lines of conduct as right or wrong, even though the latter may be, and often are, followed by individuals. In the same way such phrases as “You cannot do that”, “His conduct is impossible” or “That is not done” tend to identify undesirable lines of conduct with a sphere outside reality. In this way the mechanism which we have called the metaphorical imperative means that in the thinking of the enculturated individual moral traditions become, as it were, embedded in reality and are given a binding force comparable with the laws of nature.

Language thus defines very largely how peoples should behave,

and it might even be argued that it does not matter much in the formation of modal personality whether meanings and moral evaluations are belted into the growing individual or absorbed by him passively and peacefully from the adult world.

This brings us to the fourth assumption, namely that it is the method rather than the content of the process of conditioning which is primarily important in determining personality. In other words, that it is how the child is taught rather than what it is taught which forms its personality. If the preceding argument is correct, then it might be asserted that language and other cultural influences form the personality of the growing individual largely irrespective of the disciplines or sanctions by which they may or may not be supported. Most of the indulged and physically undisciplined children in Samoa grow up to be good little Samoans, just as Chaga children who undergo violent physical punishment grow up to be respectable Chaga adults. The behaviour of those who go to "progressive" schools in our own society does not differ significantly from that of individuals who have been subjected to rigid school discipline. In other words, what is taught is more important than how it is taught.

This principle of the preponderance of content over method explains certain contradictions which have emerged from configurationist studies. For example, Mr. Geoffrey Gorer attributes certain characteristics of the Russians to the particular type of child-rearing techniques employed in their culture. In commenting on this, Dr. Kenneth Little has pointed out that among other societies, such as the Mende of Sierra Leone, the same types of adult character are produced in a culture whose child-rearing techniques are entirely different.¹ In the same way Professor and Mrs. Beaglehole attribute certain characteristics of adult Maori character structure (such as generosity and cooperativeness) to the specific ways in which young children are treated among the Maori.² But among the Land Dayaks of Sarawak similar child-rearing techniques exist, while the adult Dayak personality is in many important respects diametrically opposed to that of the Maori.³ If the causal relation between child-rearing techniques and adult character were so important, we should find that similar types of child-rearing techniques are invariably

² Beaglehole and Beaglehole (1), Chapter IV.
³ For this observation I am indebted to my colleague, Dr. W. R. Geddes.
SOME QUESTIONABLE ASSUMPTIONS

correlated with similar types of adult personality. Actually the
above examples show that similar adult character types may
exist in societies which have different child-rearing techniques,
while similar child-rearing techniques may be correlated with
different types of adult character. Altogether, they support Dr.
Little's suggestion that "there seems to be more readiness, in
some cases, to use cultural data for the purpose of confirming
rather than checking psycho-analytic hypotheses".1

Our argument for the preponderance of content over method
does not mean that the latter is unimportant, particularly so far
as personality conflict (as distinct from cultural conformity in
behaviour) is concerned. But even here there are indications that
the widely emphasized polarity between "permissiveness" (pro-
ducing well-adjusted personalities) and "frustration" (producing
various types of maladjustment) is an oversimplification.2 Normal-
ity, in the sense of relative freedom from personality conflicts,
depends not so much on the scope given to individual impulses
by a given value system, but on the internal consistency of that
system itself. "The cultural causes of personality conflict can be
explained in terms of the extent to which any given culture im-
poses rôles, goals and self-conceptions which are internally
inconsistent."3

This principle may be illustrated with reference to the values
connected with warfare. In our own society, individuals are faced
with inconsistent values—specifically the conflict between the ideals
of Christianity and the reality of war. In Semang society it was
generally agreed that it was foolish to fight (Vol. 1, p. 71), and
there was no moral conflict. In old-time Maori society it was re-
garded as unequivocally a desirable and noble thing to kill in
battle, with no nonsense about the sanctity of human life. Here,
too, there was no psychological conflict in ideals. The partial survival of this pre-European constellation of values

2 Cf. the statement by Leighton and Kluckhohn cited above at p. 619; also the
The latter suggests that consistency in the treatment of the growing individual is more
important than "love" or "rejection". In a group of fifty American girls exposed to the
anxiety-creating situation of unmarried motherhood it was found that "girls subjected
to early experiences in which they were consistently rejected and often treated sadisti-
cally were, nevertheless, able, not only to meet anxiety adequately but formed warm
relationships with peers". Apparently it is the capricious alternation of indulgent
sentimentality and stern demands for obedience in our child-rearing techniques which
is most conducive to psychological and social maladjustment.
probably accounts in part for the fact that in World War II the incidence of war neuroses among Maori soldiers was exactly half that occurring among New Zealand soldiers of European descent.\(^1\)

The fifth assumption to be dealt with is that **there exist consistent and all-pervasive patterns of culture**. We have already criticized and will criticize again this assumption so far as it is reflected in the work of Ruth Benedict. It arose as a result of the desire to find an organizing principle or principles in culture, as distinct from particular interrelationships. Professor Ralph Linton puts the matter as follows: "The integration dealt with by the Functionalists is primarily a matter of the mutual adaptation and working interdependence of behaviour patterns. The picture which emerges is that of a mass of gears all turning and grinding each other." The argument here is that whereas functional analysis describes certain relationships between particular institutions and aspects of culture (for example, between religion and law, between economics and political organization and so on), it does not indicate how all of these aspects of culture hang together. To explain this, some configurationists have tended too readily to postulate dominant and easily defined trends analogous to Benedict’s patterns of culture. Because they have tended to think exclusively in terms of "patterns" and "themes" they have failed to distinguish between functional integration and logical integration. Dr. A. K. Cohen elaborates this point as follows:

If a social system is going to function at all well, the activities of its members must be so ordered that the various functional necessities ... get done without too much frustration, conflict and confusion. ... I will call such an ordering of activities, to the extent that it conduces to the solution of these functional problems, **functional integration**. The logical consistency of the postulates or maxims expressing the values and beliefs on which behaviour proceeds I will call **logical integration**. ... As long as we remain on the level of themes alone, logical integration is the only kind we can talk about. Only if we make assumptions about or have knowledge of the needs of the individual or of the social system can we make statements about the functional integration of a system of themes. It is the requirement of functional integration that makes impossible the full realization of logical integration.\(^2\)

---

\(^1\) Beaglehole and Beaglehole \((1), p. 243.\)

\(^2\) Cohen \((1), pp. 441–42.\) Taking two terms from Sorokin, *Social and Cultural Dynamics*, he illustrates the last point as follows: "A perfectly ‘Ideational’ or perfectly ‘Sensate’ society would be an impossibility. In the former, people would never get around to eating; the latter would degenerate into a *bellum omnium contra omnes*".
The assumption of dominant and all-pervasive cultural trends has, of course, been extensively criticized, but it still requires to be emphasized that generalizations about cultural patterns must be made with the utmost caution. They should be couched in such terms as “The Mundugumor are on the whole more individualistic than the Arapesh” or “The Dобuans suffer from rather more anxiety than the Zuni”. Such formulations differ markedly from those which have from time to time been employed in configurationist writings.

9. Spurious Comparisons

As stated in the preceding sections, we have occasion to criticize not only the underlying assumptions of much of the work of the configurationists, but also the influence of these assumptions on the interpretation of ethnographic documents and on the presentation of material collected in the field. In the following sections we shall illustrate the latter point.

The assumption of consistent and pervasive cultural patterns has often led, firstly to special attention being paid to communities which possess unusual and striking cultural features; and secondly to a misinterpretation of these features themselves. Thus Benedict’s initial work dealt with societies which exhibit unique trends not paralleled in the ordinary run of human cultures. And within this framework she laid emphasis on institutions and types of activity which lend themselves readily to interpretation in terms of patterns. For example, from the Kwakiutl we have the sensational institution of the potlatch which was specifically associated with ceremonial connected with persons of high rank; but there is no way of telling how far its ideals of cut-throat competition influenced the other classes of society—whether, for example, their marriages were “dramatized, like the purchase of a copper, as a warfare”,¹ as those of more exalted station were said to be; nor whether practices of ostentatious generosity and competitive waste permeated the more mundane phases of social life and economic exchange. Since the field records concentrate on the ceremonial and aristocratic phases of Kwakiutl life² it is

¹ Benedict (2), p. 205.
² For example Boas, in discussing Kwakiutl marriage, does so without reference to the manifold non-ceremonial factors—social, economic and personal—which influenced marriage and family life, and in citing field material deals exclusively with marriages of people of high rank (Boas, The Social Organization and Secret Societies of the Kwakiutl Indians, pp. 358–66).
not surprising that Kwakiutl marriage is interpreted simply in terms of the ceremonial and economic activities which accompany it, and which generically are common features of stratified societies. The mistake lies in trying to reduce to a simple “pattern” the complex factors in marriage; its character among the ordinary people; the non-ceremonial factors in the marriages of the aristocracy; and, above all, its place in the major institution of the family. We are given hints as to the latter in Benedict’s admission that “in the intimacies of Kwakiutl family life also there is opportunity for the expression of warm affection and the easy give-and-take of cheerful human relations. Not all situations in Kwakiutl existence require equally the motives that are most characteristic of their lives.”

The inference from this is obvious. Granted that in Kwakiutl family life harmonious personal relations co-exist with competitive ostentation in special circumstances, what right have we a priori to declare one to be the “pattern” rather than the other? We cannot assume that a particular set of motives dominated the culture because they dominated the field records.

Fortunately, a Chinese scholar has been able to demonstrate the importance of this principle in the case of another of Dr. Benedict’s communities (Zuni), in connection with which he has been able to show that the particular orientation of the field studies, for which he holds Dr. Benedict and Dr. Ruth Bunzel largely responsible, has given a mistaken impression of the native religion. From a critical review of the existing sources, and from his own field-work, Professor Li An-Che shows that the airy talk about Zuni religion being “impersonal” is misleading, while the study of religion apart from practical activities (a methodological point which should not require stressing today) has given a mistaken picture of Zuni life and values. In the same way he shows how the statement that the Zuni is afraid of becoming “a leader of his people” arises from a mistaken interpretation of certain selected facts in terms of Western concepts of leadership, while he disposes with equal facility of corresponding caricatures of Zuni education and family life.

The same selection of material is apparent in Dr. Benedict’s discussion of a “paranoid” type of cultural pattern in the case of

---

1 Benedict (2), p. 241. These statements are documented with texts illustrating the importance of motives other than those emphasized in the spectacular ceremonial of the Kwakiutl.

2 Li An-Che (1), p. 63.
DOB. For this purpose she chooses a community which has been studied with special reference to sorcery, an activity which is correlated with emotional reactions of fear and suspicion. Again she stresses the competitive and hostile aspects of the Kula at the expense of its co-operative and integrative functions, and having done so states that "conjugal life in Dobu is actuated by the same motives as Kula trading", thus neglecting exactly the same factors in family life as she does in the case of the Kwakiutl. In this connection, it is of interest to refer to the original record and to note that Malinowski is able, from Dr. Fortune's own material, to indicate that the latter has not attached sufficient importance to just the type of factors which in Benedict's analysis are left out of account altogether.

Even at the spectacular and ceremonial level Benedict fails to compare parallel institutions and their corresponding affective patterns; for example, witchcraft "omnipresent in the Pueblos today" is glossed over with a merely incidental reference to the pursuit of witches during epidemics and the distinctly non-Apollonian procedure of hanging them up by the thumbs, a punishment which is regularly inflicted by official war priests in a society which "thoroughly distrusts authority of any sort".

As regards Zuni witchcraft we are asked to accept an ex cathedra statement that it reflects an "anxiety complex", presumably to draw a specious psychological distinction between it and the "paranoid" beliefs in sorcery of Dobu. All this distortion and confusion is necessary to avoid the simple statement that in both cases witchcraft (or sorcery) is a response to situations of danger or frustration, though the specific nature of these situations and the responses to them may be somewhat differently defined in the two cultures. On the other hand, in contrasting the "Apolnonian" religion of the Zuni with that of the Plains, she ignores, as Lowie points out, certain unequivocally Apollonian traits of the latter,

---

1 Benedict (2), p. 239.
3 Benedict (2), pp. 122, 261.
5 Lowie (2), p. 279: "Borrowing, for example, a Nietzschean antithesis, Benedict defines the Pueblos as 'Apolnonians' who institutionalize 'sobriety and restraint in behavior', while the 'Dionysians' of the Plains favor 'abandon and emotional excesses'. Hence, the contrast of ritual formalism with personal shamanism; of subdued and frenzied mourning ceremonial; of diffident hiding from public notice and boastful competitiveness. Now this is, indeed, to oversimplify a real antithesis. We have already repudiated the notion that the Eastern Indian's vision conforms to the pattern of orgiastic excess. Going further, we find in much of Plains religion a ritual formalism that attains Apollonian degree. The opening of a Blackfoot sacred bundle has no
while as regards Zuni she is constantly jumping from formal quantitative criteria to unjustified inferences as to qualitative psychological correlates; the fact that, in a dispute over the ownership of a dwelling-house, the rival claimant offered a deadly insult instead of creating an unseemly brawl is taken as evidence of "mildness"; because the Pueblos break nothing more than a hairbrush and a food bowl at death, their psychological reactions are held to be different from those of other Indian tribes who strip the mourners of almost all their property; the "violent and uninhibited grief" of the latter is unjustifiably contrasted with the psychological reactions of the Pueblo, who "adjusts himself with only such discomfort as finds expression in breaking a hairbrush".  

In dealing with adultery and marital discord, social advancement and "unemotional" religious rites, she similarly places her own psychological interpretations on acts which, precisely because of their restrained and pointed character, may emphasize and provide expression for deeper emotion than any unrestricted, haphazard or exaggerated release of spectacular activity. It might as well be said that religious feeling is less strong in the Christian Communion that in primitive commensal rites at which vast quantities of food are consumed.  

The distortion produced by the facile psychological interpretations which are placed upon ethnographic facts is well illustrated by her contrast between Zuni initiation ritual and that of Africa, South America and Australia, which "is very often an uninhibited exercise of their prerogatives by those in authority".

element of frenzy, let alone orgy. The celebrants assume positions not to be altered before there is ritual dispensation. They burn incense, shake rattles and sing interminable chants. Even the mildly dramatic imitation of buffalo is highly stereotyped. The performance is as solemn and sober as imaginable."  


2 Ibid., pp. 104-05, 107-08, 123.  

3 Cf. Li An-Che, op. cit., p. 64, for a demonstration of this point in terms of the actual Zuni material. As he remarks: "Upon entering a different culture, one is likely to forget all the intricacies of one's own cultural forms. Should an American student of ethnology be asked whether the Holy Rollers or a church group, with its methodically conducted ceremony, have a greater degree of personal feelings in their religion, he is more apt to make a refined judgment. And the analogy of the Christian Church serves to show that the participants in a well-conducted service following stereotyped prayers and songs, may differ immensely in their levels of participation. One may respond to the outside collective behavior with all individual fantasies quite irrelevant to the service. Another may be identifying himself so well with the surrounding fellowship that collective behavior is an embodiment of his personality as a whole for the time being. No doubt some of the Holy Rollers, as some of those who indulge in vision quest, are entirely mechanical in their yelling and frenetic manifestations. After all, there is a tremendous difference between the official appearance and the inner reality."
By contrast with these, Zuni initiation "does not unload upon the children, the adults' pitiful will to power".¹

So far as Australia is concerned, it would be hard to imagine a more drastic misrepresentation of the values involved in initiation ceremonies. Thus in those of the Karadjeri, a typical Australian tribe, there is a ceremonial usage which reflects the resistance of those in authority against actually carrying out the supreme rite of circumcision: the operators, who number from three to five, are selected by younger men who jump upon and nearly smother them; they protest against carrying out the operation, and after it is performed they file past the initiate weeping, and drop presents of boomerangs before him; the fact that they have operated upon him sets up a restraint relationship called mungabundji which is only dissolved by a final reconciliation ceremony.² In one case a kind-hearted and conscientious old man actually carried his protests against being chosen as operator to the length of flatly refusing to act. In fact, the whole attitude of those in authority towards the rite of circumcision itself is one of awe towards a solemn and sacred act, in which the physical mutilation parallels the social damage which is being done to the boy's immediate kinship group, who are explicitly excluded from active participation. There is a considerable amount of spectacular ceremonial and social excitement, but not a trace of any "pitiful will to power". Though initiation does have the indirect effect of reinforcing the authority of the gerontocracy, this is not its immediate motivation, which is a humble deference on the part of all to a traditional procedure mythologically laid down, ritually executed and protected by an elaborate system of taboos which emphasize its supernatural, as opposed to its political and personal implications.

On the other hand, such initiation rites as those of the Karadjeri, considered in terms of sociological realities instead of capricious sadism, are very similar to those of the Zuni, as described by Benedict.³ The provision of a sponsor, close physical contact during the ordeal, making the children valuable by giving them group status, and their "accolade in the supernatural world", all have parallels in Australia, and there are only two significant points of difference: Firstly, the whipping of the Zuni initiate is directly reciprocated, whereas with such an operation as circum-

¹ Benedict (2), pp. 102–03.  
² Piddington (2), pp. 71–73.  
³ Benedict (2), p. 103.
cision this would be impossible; and, secondly, whereas the Zuni are pleased when an initiate cries out with pain, the Karadjeri youth must remain silent and impassive throughout, a contrast which, incidentally, should brand the former culture in this respect as Dionysian and the latter as Apollonian.

This brings out the weakness of the type of cultural comparison which we are considering. Zuni initiations are more similar to Australian initiations than they are to, say, the Zuni cultural handling of sexual jealousy, because the basic human conditions are comparable.\(^1\) Man's biological constitution, his material needs and the limitations placed upon them by the physical environment, as well as the universal conditions of communal life, present every society with certain basic problems. And though the manner of their solution varies from one community to another, and within any given community shows a certain congruence with other phases of social life, the real problem is to examine particular institutions and aspects of culture in terms of their substratum of universal conditions. To construct, as Benedict does, pervasive cultural patterns for each community necessitates on the one hand an overemphasis on similarities within the culture, and on the other hand an exaggeration of its difference from other cultures.

10. *Universal Conditions and Prepotent Cultural Responses*

It follows from what has been said that the intuitive method of configurationist studies, though its intention is to establish a comparative science of culture, is apt to lead directly away from the really comparable categories, namely universal human needs, sociological relationships and aspects of culture on the one hand, and the cultural forms by which they are satisfied or expressed on the other. Thus when Benedict compares the attitudes towards death and the mortuary customs of her three communities in terms of their respective cultural patterns, she is obscuring the universal pattern of reaction to death, which is founded on ubiquitous biological, social and psychological conditions. In all human communities the annihilation of an individual produces a series of culturally regulated responses: Firstly, customs which distract the attention of the living from a contemplation of the stinging reality, while emphasizing the significance of the event; and secondly, procedures which mark the reintegration of

\(^1\) Cf. the statement by Warner and Lunt quoted above at p. 603, n. 1.
society and the healing of the emotional wounds of those immediately bereaved. The possibilities of the first are limited; weeping, self-mutilation, abstinence from social activity, the destruction or sacrifice of property, retaliation against a real or putative murderer, spectacular gatherings with exchanges of gifts, feasting and ceremonial are general types of human adaptation to this situation. Again, the process of reintegration and readaptation may be slow or rapid; it may be continuous or intermittently punctuated with deferred mourning ritual; it may be concluded at a fixed point of time or theoretically indeterminate.

But the cultural forms which embody these limited possibilities do not exist in vacuo. Because of the interrelatedness of cultural phenomena they become, in each culture, connected with other institutions, which in turn exemplify the principle of limited possibilities. Consider, for example, government. Every human community requires some form of authority, and here again the principles of selection are limited: hereditary rank and caste, wealth, seniority and proficiency or status in terms of specialist pursuits such as war, economic production, magic and religion, together with the direct or indirect influence of all individuals in the community which might be termed "primitive democracy". Interpreted in terms of local, geographical and social groupings, these are the elementary principles upon one or more of which all systems of government are founded. And, similarly, with all the universal phases of human activity, it would be possible to draw up a list of the limited cultural possibilities to which they may give rise.

Whence, then, the variety of cultures? The explanation lies in the fact that in the interrelationship of social institutions the basic cultural forms may be differently combined. This, however, is not merely a restatement of the theory of patterns, for it emphasizes the bases on which cultures may be compared as well as contrasted, instead of regarding each as an arbitrary integration of detached possibilities. Thus, against Benedict's suggestion that "the cultural pattern of any civilization makes use of a certain segment of the great arc of potential human purposes and motivations",¹ we would insist that there is a limited arc of human necessities, divided into segments each offering a limited number of possibilities, and by the differential selection and combination within these limits the variety of cultures is produced.

It must at once be emphasized that as regards both the possibilities

themselves and their combinations, not all of them are of equal potency, as measured by their incidence throughout the whole range of human cultures. Some of them are prepotent cultural responses (Vol. 1, p. 247). Others are rare or unique, for example, competitive destruction of property, alternate matrilocal and patrilocal residence, permitted or prescribed incest, and the "ignorance of physiological paternity". For this reason a comparative ethnology of the future will have to pay more attention to prepotent cultural responses in terms of their statistical frequency and institutional importance, and will have to adopt the ordinary scientific procedure of passing to the abnormal or atypical from a preliminary study of the normal or typical; of basing its initial methodological premises on the usual forms of organization rather than upon the unusual, bizarre and sensational; and of starting with a comparison of relatively homogeneous types as a preliminary to wider comparative studies.

All of these procedures have been reversed in certain configurationist studies. Aberrant cultures have been selected for special treatment, their exotic aspects have been emphasized at the expense of the features which they share with other human cultures, and widely divergent cultures have been compared when material existed for a comparison with their congeners, particularly for a comparison of the Dobuan material with that from the neighbouring Trobriand Islands.

11. Intuitive Interpretations of Ethnographic Data

As we saw, the configurationist approach to culture first emerged in the middle thirties. This was a time when the most important activity of anthropologists—the actual observation of native communities—had at last achieved the status of genuine scientific research, with its insistence on detailed observation, full documentation and a description of the conditions under which observations were made and conclusions reached. From the point of view of these requirements, the configurationist trend meant a retrograde step in ethnographic research because of its predominantly intuitive approach to ethnographic data. An example of this is Dr. Margaret Mead's work on sex-temperament,\(^1\) in which the authoress addressed herself to the question of the possible association of temperamental characteristics with the two sexes. In our own society we are accustomed to think of such traits

\(^1\) Mead (6).
as aggressiveness, individualism and dominance as being primarily associated with men and of contrasting characteristics (such as gentleness, co-operativeness and submissiveness) as being likewise associated with women. Is this alleged association universal and inevitable, or is it merely the product of the specific interpretations of our own culture? In attempting to answer this question, Dr. Mead studied three New Guinea tribes and came to the conclusion that the second interpretation was correct. As regards temperamental characteristics, and in terms of our own conceptions of sex-temperament, she considers that among the Arapesh both men and women are "feminine"; among the Mundugumor both sexes are "masculine"; while among the Tchambuli men display the temperamental characteristics which we associate with women and vice versa—as one critic has put it, "men develop female characteristics to the verge of parturition".

In presenting her material, Dr. Mead constantly asks us to accept at their face value her own formulations, in a different language, of the attitude of individual natives and, more questionable still, of the culture as a whole. To describe, for example, the Mundugumor as "a society that counts loyalty to be a stupid disregard of the real facts about the essential enmity which exists between all males" implies a degree of abstract formulation not usually found in primitive society, and the manner in which such concepts are used without any attempt to correlate them with real human behaviour suggests that the ethnographer merely hypostatized her own impressions of native life. Such impressions may be wholly or partially correct or may be entirely misleading. The absence of detailed and comprehensive documentation makes it impossible to decide, and the position was well summarized by Nadel: "One cannot help feeling dubious and a little helpless in face of this ambitious theory of sex, based as it is on so meagre a material, and so simplifying and elusive an interpretation. The complete lack of exact definitions and tangible criteria in Dr. Mead's book turns this most intricate problem of human psychology into a subject of novelistic exercise rather than of scientific examination."

In spite, however, of the lack of documentation, we should be more inclined to accept Dr. Mead's impressions if there were

indications that the facts had been comprehensively observed and objectively considered. Unfortunately, so far as empirical material is cited at all, it is always from a specific point of view, and it is impossible to escape the conclusion that facts which might lead to an entirely different type of interpretation have been overlooked, while we find the same facts interpreted in contradictory ways in different contexts, in order to fit them into the pattern. For example, consider her treatment of the mother's brother-sister's son relationship among the Mundugumor. We are perhaps prejudiced by what we know from more systematic studies of this relationship in other communities, but it is impossible to form any idea of what it is like among the Mundugumor, because of the contradictory nature of the evidence presented. Dr. Mead's main purpose is to demonstrate the pervading hostility, antagonism and lack of co-operation and loyalty among the Mundugumor. When she is discussing the mother's brother relationship in terms of the relation of mother's brother to father, the shelter given to a sister's son is interpreted as an expression of hostility existing between brothers-in-law; in terms of the relationship itself, it is merely a pleasant fact in an unpleasant context without the slightest reference to what makes it pleasant or to the positive ties existing between the two individuals concerned.

Again, the differential attachment of sons to their mothers and daughters to their fathers is phrased in terms of hostility between the parents, rather than in terms of the positive attachments between parents and children of the opposite sex which lead the former to prefer the claims of the latter against their siblings.

Finally, the attitude of a father towards his daughter is phrased in two contradictory ways in different contexts; when it is a matter of demonstrating hostility and rivalry between fathers and sons, Dr. Mead stresses the bonds uniting father and daughter, and particularly the fact that the father values the daughter as someone whom he can exchange for a possible wife, thus defrauding his son of the sister whom the latter wishes to give in exchange for a wife for himself; but when she is demonstrating the hostility of both parents towards children, and their resentment of parenthood, a father's attitude towards his daughters is brushed aside by saying that "defend them as he will, (they) will eventually be torn from him". Now, she cannot have it both ways. If the father

---

1 Mead (6), p. 184.  
2 Ibid., p. 207.  
3 Ibid., pp. 179–80.  
4 Ibid., p. 190.
is attached to his daughter for sentimental, social or purely selfish and calculating motives, he must have some of the "interest in parenthood" (that is, so far as daughters are concerned) which she excludes from her picture of Mundugumor culture. Her whole treatment of parenthood, in fact, is marked by contradictions of this kind. It is true that she shows to her own satisfaction that though motivations opposed to the preservation of offspring "set the tone of Mundugumor feeling about birth" they are not allowed sufficient sway to prevent Mundugumor society from reproducing itself.¹ But her account of the adoption of one of a pair of twins² merely shows why children are adopted, not why any are allowed to survive in the households of their biological parents. In fact, taking her account as a whole, it is impossible to see how Mundugumor society does survive, unless we assume that there exist motivations which have been ignored or insufficiently stressed by the ethnographer.

It is true that we are nowhere given adequate information to state this definitely, but the whole record gives the impression that the ethnographer has built up an artificial picture of Mundugumor society by patching together isolated and dissociated observations: the hostility of one man towards his son here, a quarrel between relatives there, and a particular women's objection to pregnancy in yet another case. It is as though we were to cite, in relation to our own society, a parliamentary vote of censure, a theological controversy and a domestic quarrel to prove that there exists nothing but hostility, rivalry and competition in political, religious and personal relationships. This interpretation is suggested by the fact that most of Dr. Mead's material is drawn from the large, competitive, polygynous households which she says are attained only by about one man in twenty-five,³ while the quiet, cooperative monogamists who hand on the rules of the society are styled as misfits. Repeating our criticism of Benedict's treatment of the Kwakiutl (p. 626), we may again ask here: Which is the pattern and which the deviation, when the deviants are in the majority and are culturally strong enough to perpetuate ways of behaviour which are out of keeping with the alleged dominant trends of the culture?

As with the Mundugumor, so in her treatment of the Arapesh, we find the same tendency to sweep up a few selected facts in a whirlwind of impressionistic generalization, but here the field

material is more substantial, and it is possible to point to certain facts which might put the Arapesh results in a new light, and which have certainly been inadequately emphasized. Most important of these is the position of "big men" whose duty it is to initiate and organize activity on ceremonial occasions. Now such activities, she states, require a measure of initiative, aggressiveness and ambition, but she suggests that in the case of Arapesh men this is artificial or assumed, though her grounds for doing so are not clear; any reluctance which the "big men" may evince towards their duties may be comparable with that of certain prominent men in our own society who have honours "thrust upon them", while the fact that they are ultimately glad to retire from this active life to a more peaceful domestic existence again finds parallels in our own society, and is not inconsistent with genuinely ambitious attitudes during the period of activity. In any case, the Arapesh have no "big women" and this important differentiation of function must have some psychological or temperamental parallel.

Another point in regard to which the interpretations are not justified by the facts is the obedience which wives show to their husbands. This is put down by Dr. Mead to the fact that the husbands are usually older as well as being solicitous towards their wives—"feeding them"; and she suggests that deference is due to a respect for seniority rather than to temperamental differences. But since Arapesh husbands are normally older than their wives, this may be merely a native rationalization, which interprets a relationship founded on temperament in terms of age. Here again the fact remains that Arapesh husbands do play the dominant rôle in such vital family matters as deciding on the survival of children, and taking the initiative in the making of marital arrangements for their offspring.

Apart from these important facts in public and personal life, there are a number of other considerations which, if they had been given proper emphasis, might have led to other conclusions; in the practice of sorcery, or rather in importuning the plainsmen to practise it, men seem to be more prominent; we are told practically nothing of the complicated trading arrangements between the mountain-dwelling Arapesh on the one hand and the plains-

---

1 Professor Li makes the same point in his criticism of Benedict's corresponding denial of leadership and ambition to the Zuni: "Even the most eager and legitimate aspirants to high position will make the ordinary official declination of an offer" (Li An-Che, op. cit., pp. 68–69).
men and coastal people on the other, but here again it seems probable that men take the initiative; and, finally, the elaborate system of economic co-operation based on kinship whereby men work for one another (apparently) to a greater extent than women, is not at all inconsistent with individualism. We already know of communities in which individualism expresses itself through systems of co-operation and exchange whereby no man consumes his own produce—in fact, though our own economic arrangements are different from those of primitive society, the high development of individualism, initiative and acquisitiveness which Mead denies to the Arapesh is correlated with elaborate systems of co-operation.

However, while it is impossible to accept Dr. Mead's far-reaching conclusions, it is also difficult to formulate alternative hypotheses, in view of the lack of solid and relevant facts which would make the cultures in question intelligible as organizations of human beings instead of hasty caricatures. This is particularly true of the Tchambuli, the description of whose entire culture is compressed into thirty-eight pages. In this society "the actual initiative and power is in the hands of the women", and a man's experience teaches him that "at every turn the women expect to rule him, as they rule his father and his brother". Now, the only instance of women actually exercising authority in adult Tchambuli life is the observation that women manufacture mosquito bags, which the men trade for valuables called *kina* and *talibun*, which are returned to the women, who subsequently give them back to the men for purposes of ceremonial and the discharge of kinship obligations. All that this means is that, in the scheme of economic co-operation, the women have certain claims to property acquired as a result of their own labours, and it is as inadequate to support the claim that women "rule" men as would be a citation of the Married Women's Property Act in England. If we were told who initiates and directs important social and economic activities such as housebuilding, initiation, trading expeditions and head-hunting raids, we should be able to form a better picture of the nature of authority and leadership in Tchambuli life.

It seems probable, then, that if the three cultures upon which Dr. Mead bases her conclusions were to be subjected to the same sort of critical re-examination as Professor Li has given to the Zuni material, her conclusions would require radical reformula-

---

1 Mead (6), pp. 256, 271.
tion. But even if we assume that her cultural "profiles" represent an approximation to the actual realities concerned, that she has not selected the facts nor exaggerated their implications in the interpretation of native psychology, there still remains the very important question of the relation of her material to her theoretical conclusions.

Taking her three New Guinea societies, she sets out to examine the temperaments which they assign to men and women respectively, and because she does not find distinctions uniformly comparable with our own, she infers that the linking of certain temperamental characteristics with the two sexes is a specific product of our own culture, and discusses it quite apart from any basis which it may have in the innate endowment and biologically determined rôles of men and women respectively. She suggests that in our civilization it is usual to think that "traits of the order of dominance, bravery, aggressiveness, objectivity, malleability are inalienably associated with one sex (as opposed to the other)", and this ideology, together with the human behaviour founded on it, she regards as a purely cultural product.

Now, it should be noted in the first place that the formulation of the problem is already one-sided so far as our own culture is concerned. We do not assign the traits in question exclusively to one sex as opposed to the other, but rather in drawing the sort of distinction to which Dr. Mead is referring, we impute a quantitative variation in the characteristics concerned. We assign, for example, a greater degree of parental feeling to the female sex, without denying the existence of paternal affection. Nor do we arrange the temperamental traits of sex in a neatly opposed dichotomy—we consider masculine bravery not in terms of feminine cowardice, but of the differential social functions of the sexes in a society where from the school playground to the battlefield males are expected or allowed to settle differences by physical violence, while women are not permitted to participate actively in warfare and are taught that by indulging in physical violence

1 In one place she says that her study "is not concerned with whether there are or are not actual and universal differences between the sexes" (ibid., p. xvi), but the concluding paragraph of her Introduction clearly indicates that she has been led to the conclusion that such differences do not exist, while her general conclusions (ibid., Chapters XVII–XVIII) are based on the same assumption, as when she refers to "the knowledge that the personalities of the two sexes are socially produced", not, be it noted, "socially elaborated" or "socially over-emphasized in certain cultures" (ibid., p. 311); or when she suggests that temperamental traits are as arbitrarily connected with sex as they might be with the colour of the eyes (ibid., pp. 318–19).

2 Ibid., pp. xxi–xxii (italics ours).
they are degrading their sex rather than upholding their honour. Nor do we expect temperamental variations always to follow a neat pattern of sexual differentiation such as one based on a distinction between masculine dominance and feminine subservience—male employees are expected to be submissive towards female employers, female parents are dominant towards male children, and, quite apart from such special instances, we have, both in legend and history, our Amazons, our Joans of Arc and our suffragettes, who embody ideals normally inconsistent with the dominant “pattern” but which are none the less honoured and sometimes realized in everyday life.

Finally, the problem arises how far we are justified in formulating current beliefs regarding temperamental variation in terms of a definite affirmation of differences which are “inalienable”, a term which she substitutes for “innate” without changing the real intention of her argument. In all communities, such explicit formulations are the prerogative of a few, and in defining cultural beliefs as they actually work we must recognize that there is a limit to explicitness of formulation. As regards variations between groups, many people accept their existence without enquiring whether they are “inalienable” or not. This is probably the case with beliefs in sex temperament, which may be simply taken for granted, just as, for example, an Englishman might take for granted the accent of a foreigner’s speech without assuming any inalienable difference in speech mechanisms.¹

Granted, however, that we attribute a difference in temperament to the two sexes, and that in some of our more explicit statements this is put down to alienable differences, the question arises how far this has actually been disproved by Dr. Mead’s material. There is here a logical confusion between the existence of

¹ We have had occasion to note here and elsewhere how the configurationist approach is apt to distort our own cultural configurations as well as those of primitive peoples. But with the hasty vignettes of our own pattern which we are given, the artificiality and one-sidedness are not so misleading, because we are well aware of the complementary facts which offset extreme assertions. When, for example, we find ourselves labelled “competitive” we know perfectly well from our own experience that in every phase of life co-operation co-exists with competition, and we do not take the assertion at its face value. We already know the true pattern and the one-sided emphasis upon one aspect does not obscure it for us. But this is not the case with primitive communities, in regard to whom we have no opportunity of gleaning facts which would offset extreme statements. It would be a useful exercise to go through the works of such writers as Benedict and Mead, picking out and piecing together the references to our own culture, and then to ask what sort of impression a “pattern” thus produced would give to an anthropologist from Mars who had no first-hand knowledge of complementary and contradictory facts which modify the picture.
temperamental differences and their recognition in the cultures concerned. Dr. Mead seems to assume that the fact that the Arapesh, for example, do not recognize differences in temperament according to sex proves that such differences do not exist. Even taking her material at its face value, there are alternative interpretations. One, which seems plausible, is that innate temperamental differences exist, but may be exaggerated, suppressed or modified by cultural influences. No one would deny that unequivocally innate characteristics may be profoundly modified by culture, or hold that the existence of celibate communities, of fasting or of voluntarily suffered physical ordeals disproves the innate character of sex, hunger and aversion to physical pain. And the same, mutatis mutandis, might also apply to innate temperamental differences. On this view, we might assume that there exists an innate difference in temperament between the sexes which among the Arapesh has been overlaid by cultural imperatives, and is, perhaps, exaggerated in our own ideology of sex-temperament. Another view, which parallels Professor Li's insistence that the psychological correlates of alien activities cannot be interpreted in terms of our own reactions to them, is that the temperamental traits in the communities concerned may be given forms of expression which we simply do not understand; a Tchambuli man may require as much "aggressiveness" in a trading expedition as a Mundugumor on a furtive head-hunting raid; or a Tchambuli woman may feel less possessive towards her kinas and talibun, which she holds only for a while before they are devoted to ceremonial purposes, than does an Arapesh man towards his tamberan.

A third interpretation is that innate temperamental variations exist and are given expression but are interpreted or rationalized by the natives in other terms, a possibility which we have suggested in the case of the Arapesh belief that women obey their husbands merely because they are older. But in relation to the three societies concerned, the field material does not allow us to explore any of these possibilities further.

12. Culture and Personality as an Operational Problem

We saw in earlier sections of this chapter that two decades of study of problems of culture and personality have been largely taken up in the correction of unjustified assumptions and extreme statements which should never have been made in the first place.
And we have stressed some of the methodological weaknesses which were apparent in earlier attempts to interpret ethnographic data in configurationist terms and which, in spite of the work of such writers as Opler and the Kluckhohns, still appear in more recent studies. There is still an impression that it is possible to study culture and personality apart from the context of social institutions in which personality develops in response to cultural influences.\(^1\)

The main reason for this is that there has been insufficient emphasis on the actual operations through which, in the last analysis, the concepts of science are defined.\(^2\) There has been much chewing over and redigesting of largely inadequate ethnographic data, much of which was not collected with the problems of culture and personality in mind. This is rather like trying to delineate the economic system of a people on the basis of a book written on their religion. On the theoretical side there has been much interdisciplinary discussion not rooted in a thorough knowledge of the material discussed or of the operations by which reliable and relevant ethnographic data may be collected and analysed. Professor Kroeber summarizes the present position as follows: "What culture and personality pre-eminently yet lacks is a large corpus of cohering informational fact. But I do not sense that there exists within the subject much feeling that there is need for such a corpus. . . . Culture and personality studies are being pursued with intensity and devotion, but one feels that they are popping off in diverse and unaccountable directions much like a string of fire-crackers. One inquirer is interested in tensions, another in Rorschachs, another wants to experiment on frustration; but, in effect, each starts off on his own—except when a string of them go in for an exaggerated fad like toilet training."\(^3\)

We would add to Kroeber's statement the suggestion that it has been the lack of an adequate conceptual framework (that is a body of concepts referring to what culture is, how it works, and above all how it should be studied) that has been responsible for

---

\(^1\) Cf. Cohen (1) for a penetrating theoretical elaboration of this point.

\(^2\) See Bridgman, The Logic of Modern Physics, Chapter 1, and Piddington (7), pp. 109 sqq., for a brief statement of some of the implications of Bridgman's approach for social anthropology; see also Warner and Lunt (1), p. 36. On the relation between social theory and operations, see the admirable paper by Dr. R. C. Sheldon, "Some Observations on Theory in the Social Sciences", in Parsons and Shills (1). Sheldon's central point—that theoretical concepts become fully significant only when they can be translated into operational terms—is painfully applicable to much of the theorizing which has been associated with studies of culture and personality.

\(^3\) Kroeber (2), p. 303.
the dissipation of energy at the operational level to which he refers.

It would of course be incorrect to assert that no advance has been made in the operational field. Much has been done in the application of such techniques as the use of questionnaires and projective tests, the recording and analysis of biographies and other personal documents and the linguistic approach to value systems. But the results obtained by these techniques are at best supplementary or confirmatory. The cornerstone of the operational approach to the problems of culture and personality must be adequate field-work—the study of the behaviour of human beings in real situations considered in their wider institutional context. With a few exceptions, work done on culture and personality has been conspicuously weak in this regard, because it has not been fully realized that significant and reliable conclusions can only emerge in the course of the detailed examination of social behaviour in the field.

As an example of the importance of this, reference may be made to Chapters 11 and 12 of Malinowski, *Coral Gardens and Their Magic*, Vol. 1. These chapters deal with Trobriand land tenure with special reference to methods of field-work. In them Malinowski not only gives a formulation which has formed the basis of subsequent studies of primitive systems of land tenure, but also traces the processes of analysis and synthesis by which this was achieved. He starts with the crude observations of such phenomena as the disposition of garden plots, the techniques of agriculture and native statements regarding ownership which he collected at the outset of his field-work. He describes the methodological steps by which he reached his final conclusions. We see how over a period of time the systematic accumulation of data led him, one might almost say forced him, to an entirely new interpretation of what land tenure means. In Bridgman’s terminology, his concepts are defined by his operations, and by the use of this technique the puzzling and apparently heterogeneous and mutually contradictory observations were synthesized into a coherent interpretation of Trobriand land tenure in terms of four doctrines:

1. The doctrine of first emergence;
2. The law of marriage, matriline and exogamy;
3. The doctrine of magical organization; and
4. The doctrine of rank.
AN OPERATIONAL PROBLEM

These would nowadays be called “themes” or “basic premises” of Trobriand culture, so far as it defines the Trobrianders’ relationship to their land. Malinowski’s exposition constitutes the best demonstration of how such concepts should be treated.

To speak more generally, we may refer again to some of the more important criteria of reliable field-work discussed in Chapters XIV and XV. These are: (a) residence in the community for a period of from one to three years; (b) a thorough familiarity with all aspects of the culture, leading to (c) a treatment of the particular topic studied (for example, culture and personality) in relation to all other aspects, such as social organization, economics, and magico-religious institutions; and (d) a knowledge of the native language adequate to the particular task in hand. The last criterion does not necessarily mean that the field-worker must speak the native language as Malinowski spoke Kiriwinian or as Kluckhohn speaks Navaho, but that he should have a sufficient grasp of it to make possible mutual understanding with informants and, above all, to establish with them that intimate rapport which it is impossible to achieve through any other medium. Finally, we must again emphasize the overwhelming importance of a knowledge of the theoretical principles of fieldwork. The two most general of these principles are that all aspects of culture must be studied, and that detailed consideration of any one of them must take into account its relations to the others. These principles have received ample lip service, and would probably not be explicitly denied by anyone. But in practice the tendency has been to consider problems of culture and personality without a thorough study of other aspects of culture. The short time taken over some field investigations would alone have precluded such a study, even if the research workers themselves had been aware of its importance.

As previously stated, the principle enunciated above does not mean, as is sometimes implied, that anthropologists study “cultures as wholes” in the sense of giving equal attention to all their aspects and attempting to present a picture of everything which goes on. Such a task would be beyond the powers of any known intellect. What the field-worker actually does is to select a particular problem—let us say it is economic organization.1 To

1 The field-worker may and often does select more than one field for special investigation. A single problem is referred to here merely for the sake of simplicity.
deal with this adequately he must acquire a thorough knowledge of kinship, of political organization, of magico-religious institutions and so on. It is true that he is concerned with these only in so far as they affect or are affected by economic organization, but he must gain sufficient familiarity with them to be able to decide what is and what is not relevant to his main task. The same should apply to studies of culture and personality, but in most of them one fails to detect signs of an overall grasp of the many inter-related aspects of the culture concerned.

There are exceptions to the above criticisms of field-work on culture and personality. One of them is Leighton and Kluckhohn’s work on the Navaho. Their books are based on prolonged field-work and a thorough knowledge of the Navaho language. In the first book they give an outline of Navaho culture, concluding with a statement of some of its basic premises. In the second work they study the whole process of the education of Navaho children from infancy to adult life, and supplement their observations on Navaho character by data derived from the application of projective tests and other psychological techniques. They also indicate some of the idiosyncratic variations between Navaho individuals. When we have a few more really thorough studies, the foundations of a scientific approach to the problems of culture and personality will have been laid.

That this should be done as soon as possible is not merely desirable from the point of view of the progress of social science. It also has vitally important practical implications in the easing of tensions between peoples and in the rational adjustment of modern man to the world in which he lives. The task calls for cooperation between social scientists from all disciplines and from all nations.

It is on the last of these scores that results so far have been disappointing. The cliché that science is international is only partially true so far as social anthropology is concerned. Certainly in the field of culture and personality there is a broad difference between the attitudes of American anthropologists on the one hand and of British anthropologists on the other. Of course, not

---

1 Leighton and Kluckhohn (1 and 2). These works are designed, in part, to provide administrators and others with some knowledge of the people concerned with a view to helping in the solution of practical problems. They must be considered in relation to the authors’ voluminous contributions of a more academic character to Navaho ethnography.

2 For a statement of some of the differences between American and British social anthropologists see Murdock (2) and Firth (15).
all investigators conform in this regard to the national stereotype, but in general anthropologists in the two countries have tended to adopt significantly different approaches to the field with which we are concerned. Broadly it might be said that the Americans have made all the mistakes because they have done all the work. But many of these mistakes could have been avoided or more quickly rectified if the principle that theory must be rooted in thorough field-work had been generally accepted and implemented. In general, American investigators have tried to do too much too quickly. British anthropologists, on the other hand, have tended to brush aside much of the work which has been done as unreliable or pretentious. But they have largely ignored this vital field of advance in social science. What is needed is a recognition of the importance of the task, combined with a determination to do it thoroughly.

13. Bibliographical Commentary

The literature on the problems of culture and personality is voluminous. A standard work on the subject is Honigmann (1), while Sargent and Smith (1) contains a valuable collection of essays by different authors in which the issue is discussed from the point of view of different disciplines—psychology, psychiatry and anthropology. Essays which may be specially recommended are Herzog (1), Klineberg (1), C. Kluckhohn (1), Komarovsky and Sargent (1), Linton (1) and Murphy (1).

To gain an appreciation of the history of thought on the subject, students should consult the works, particularly those by Benedict, Bateson, Mead, Kardiner, Opler and the Kluckhohns and their associates cited in footnotes to Sections 2 to 6 above and in the Bibliography. Critical assessments of recent developments are contained in Cohen (1), Kroeber (2) and Nadel (8).

On the application of psycho-analytic concepts to anthropological material, reference should be made to Erikson (1), Fromm (1) and Kardiner (1 and 2).

On the concept of values in the anthropological field, special reference should be made to C. Kluckhohn (3) and Firth (18). Firth (16), though not dealing specifically with the issue, contains many observations on values in relation to the author’s conception of social organization.
Field studies are numerous, though most of them are open to a greater or lesser extent to the objections raised in the preceding pages. Among them may be specially mentioned Leighton and Kluckhohn (1 and 2); also Mead (2 and 3), du Bois (1) and Whiting (1).
CHAPTER XVII

CULTURE CONTACT: AGENCIES OF CHANGE

1. Limitation of the Field and some Terminological Points

We have so far been concerned mainly with a study of primitive cultures as they functioned before the impact of European civilization. But for the most part such cultures no longer exist today. Practically all primitive peoples have been influenced, often drastically, by the spread of European culture throughout the world.

Processes of culture change resulting from the impact of alien cultures have gone on since Paleolithic times and are familiar to us under the term “diffusion”. Another term for the process by which one culture influences another is acculturation. This has been an enormously significant factor in human history. The pre-historic “revolutions” were all processes of acculturation except at the centres where they originated. In historic times the growth of empires has provided many examples of how dominant civilizations have influenced communities which came under their suzerainty.

Clearly, however, the whole range of processes of acculturation in historical and contemporary times is far too big a mouthful for the social anthropologist to chew. Moreover his training, preparing him as it does for the operations of anthropological field-work, does not fit him to compete with historians and archaeologists who have their own methods and techniques of research and who, in the nature of the case, cannot study the intimate personal reactions and changes in social relations resulting from acculturation.\(^1\)

1 The advantages and limitations of the approaches of history and of social anthropology respectively have been neatly summarized by Raymond Firth: “The work of the anthropologist in this respect differs significantly from that of most historians. More conscious of the theoretical issues of social process, the anthropologist is more concerned that the minutiae of events recorded should be seen to be relevant to some problem in social relationships. He relies far more as a rule on his own personal observations than on documents. This gives him the great advantage of being able to give first-hand evaluation to events. He can collect the type of information which he thinks is most appropriate to his inquiry. What would an historian not give for the privilege of a personal scrutiny of men and affairs in his period, to be able to talk to
In the past the anthropologist was traditionally concerned with primitive cultures. He is now concerned with the effect which has been produced and is still being produced by the impact on these cultures of more advanced civilizations, particularly during the past century or two.

Interest in this process of European ¹ expansion is not confined to anthropologists. It is a matter of concern to historians, economists, geographers and technical experts of one kind and another, particularly so far as it involves the introduction of European science and technology in remote parts of the world. A full understanding of the situation can be provided only by co-operation between the various disciplines, and in this the social anthropologist has an important part to play. His contribution has been described as *micro-sociology*—the detailed study of small and relatively isolated communities.

In spite of its unspectacular character, this is perhaps the most fundamental aspect of the whole study of culture contact. Only the anthropologist can observe in detail the effects in human terms of the impact of alien cultural influences on primitive communities and assess the probable effects of further processes of acculturation. Many mistakes have been made and are still being made through lack of understanding of the effects which European cultural innovations are likely to have on primitive communities. Those in charge of European agencies of acculturation—politicians, administrators, missionaries and economic agents—have (often from the best motives) introduced new ways without realizing the fundamental fact that in all processes of diffusion formal elements or institutions from one culture when transported to another are changed by introduction into a new context. There are many examples of principle. The missionaries who followed Livingstone spoke optimistically of bringing “the blessings of Christianity and commerce to the Africans”. Their successors

¹ The influence of American culture, first on Amerindian peoples and subsequently in the Pacific, is not excluded from the topic we are discussing—in fact, it would provide valuable comparative material for a fuller study. But we shall avoid, in speaking of culture contact, the rather clumsy though correct term “Euro-American civilization”, particularly as we shall be concerned almost entirely with situations in which the agents of civilization have derived from specifically European origins.
have discovered how very mixed these blessings are when introduced to cultures to which they are not adapted. Even such admirable schemes as the Colombo Plan have often failed to take into account the effect of economic changes upon the total system of cultural activities of the communities which they are designed to help. In the field of nutrition a great deal of research has been done, but one of the greatest problems has been the difficulty in overcoming traditional food habits. European systems of administration, efficient enough in their proper context, have produced unexpected results when attempts have been made to apply them in communities having totally different political structures and values. Finally, education has often produced results quite different from those expected by its advocates.

The anthropologist, then, has a vital task to perform in warning against such dangers as these. This task is particularly important today. The situation with which we are concerned emerges largely from the colonialism of the past hundred years or so. Today areas of the world which were formerly colonies have advanced or are advancing to self-government, but the influence of European culture (particularly technology and systems of political organization) will continue to be felt. These forces indeed may be even more significant when their diffusion is not guided by those accustomed to handling them. Whether the anthropologist, be he a European or a member of the indigenous population, will receive a more sympathetic hearing from the new rulers and administrators of formerly dependent territories than he did from the old colonialists is doubtful. What he has to say about the ordinary folk with whom he is concerned is hard for the more sophisticated to understand, and is often unpalatable. But this does not absolve him from the duty of saying it.

The rôle of the anthropologist in the culture contact situation is one on which there are differences of opinion. According to one view, held by a minority of anthropologists, he should not be concerned with the situation except as a scientific problem. If, for example, native labour is drafted away from the community which he is studying and this produces repercussions in the native socio-economic system, he should merely record the phenomena which he observes and keep aloof from any practical implications or policy decisions which may be involved. Strange as it may seem, this attitude has something to be said for it. In the first place it is the best way of ensuring scientific objectivity. Secondly, the task
of the anthropologist is less likely to be limited by an undue preoccupation with those phases of social life which have practical implications. Indeed, one of the most important tasks of anthropology is quite remote from the practical problems connected with culture contact, namely to seek to gain by cross-cultural studies a deeper appreciation of what is meant by human nature. The psychological and sociological implications of this study are likely to be neglected if anthropologists are too exclusively concerned with problems of culture contact, however important these may be both theoretically and practically. In the third place, this attitude prevents the anthropologist from becoming a tool of interested parties. He may not approve of existing or projected policies or of the way in which any advice which he may give may be put into practice. He is certainly safer, if less effective, if he keeps aloof from practical issues.

The second view is that the anthropologist should make his findings available in such a way that they can be applied in framing and implementing policies, but that he should offer no advice as to how this should be done. This again tends to preserve his objectivity and to prevent him from being used for purely political ends. If he washes his hands of any responsibility in practical matters and confines himself to stating facts, he cannot be blamed if policies go wrong.

The third view is that the anthropologist should actively advise administrators, and others concerned with practical affairs, on matters of policy and advocate those lines of development which he feels to be best. This procedure has obvious disadvantages, particularly the likelihood of personal bias being accentuated when the anthropologist becomes involved in the hurly-burly of political controversy. But it has the advantage that the anthropologist plays his part as a citizen as well as a scientist, and as he is better qualified than anyone else to advise on certain issues of policy, he should not be afraid of doing so. Certainly mistakes will be made, but they will be minimized if the expert advice of the anthropologist is made available to, and heeded by, those responsible for framing policies.¹

¹ It should be emphasized that the professional skill of the anthropologist reveals only one facet of the problem, albeit the most important one. He is primarily concerned with the human repercussions of policies in the communities which he studies. But other issues are also relevant to the formulation of policies—for example, financial limitations, strategic considerations, the vested interests and legitimate claims of European settlers, and the specific attitudes and interests of others involved in contact with non-European peoples. Thus, as regards the last of these, we shall have occasion
LIMITATION OF THE FIELD

It may be contended that there is another and even more important reason for suggesting that the anthropologist, without neglecting his scientific task, should take an active part in the development of policy. He has a specific rôle to perform apart from "fact finding". Most anthropologists appreciate primitive cultures not only scientifically but also ethically and aesthetically. They perceive certain values in the way of life of the people they study and certain features in their culture which cannot be lost without producing social disintegration and individual unhappiness. The anthropologist is the only person—apart from the people themselves, who are usually inarticulate in such matters—who can act as an advocate for certain indigenous traditions and values in their own right. We shall return to this point later.

It must be emphasized, however, that whatever attitude the anthropologist adopts towards practical affairs, he should do his utmost to preserve objectivity. He must make the same sort of detailed scientific study of a primitive community under European influence as did his predecessor who sought out the most remote island in the South Seas and cut himself off as completely as possible from the stream of contemporary history. The modern anthropologist is thus able to provide field records showing the effect of the impact of European civilization on primitive communities. It is with this phase of his work that we shall be concerned here, but before going further we must deal with certain terminological issues which are likely to cause confusion. The danger of such confusion arises from the fact that various writers use the terms concerned in different senses or describe similar situations by different terms. We shall indicate the senses in which the terms will be employed in this chapter, without implying that these are the only senses in which they can be used.¹

As has been said, the phenomena with which we are concerned are all examples of diffusion. But this term, as it has commonly been used in anthropological research, is too limited in its implications for our present purposes. In the first place, it applies primarily to the spread from one community to another of particular items or traits of culture, and especially of material
to point out that in the missionary field the anthropologist must take into account the missionary's religious convictions; and he will merely waste his time if he proceeds on the assumption that these will readily be discarded merely because he (the anthropologist) disapproves of certain aspects of mission policy founded upon them. Anthropologists have often been accused of being woolly-headed and unrealistic in their attitudes on questions of policy, and they have not always been guiltless in this regard.

culture. In the second place, studies of diffusion have in fact been based upon an observation of the end product rather than of the process itself. For example, if we observe a native in primitive New Guinea using a steel axe we know that this item of material culture has diffused from a more advanced civilization. And we may be able to define its provenance exactly from the manufacturer's name on the blade. But in the nature of the case we can learn little or nothing about the complex social processes and the human activities which have been involved in the process of diffusion. Moreover, diffusion may occur without influencing the receiving culture significantly—thus the introduction of a new item of material culture may have only a negligible effect on the culture as a whole or on its major institutional activities.

The term acculturation, or, in the usage of some writers, transculturation, refers to the social mechanisms involved in diffusion, for example, whether there is or is not direct personal contact between members of the community from which cultural features are derived and those of the receiving community; whether relations between them are peaceful or hostile; whether force is used by one community to impose its ways on the other, and so on. It should be added that acculturation is generally used only to describe significant changes produced in a community by processes of diffusion. When European tourists buy native artefacts as souvenirs and use them as ornaments in their homes, this is a process of diffusion; but it would hardly be called acculturation, because the receiving culture is not significantly affected. On the other hand, the reverse process—the diffusion of European material culture to primitive communities—has been one of the most significant processes of acculturation in the history of mankind.

One of the terminological confusions to which we have referred arises from the fact that some psychologists and educationists use the term "acculturation" to refer to the process by which the individual becomes adapted to his culture. For the anthropologist, more convenient terms for this process are socialization, cultural conditioning or enculturation. But the latter term is also used by some writers as equivalent to acculturation, in the sense in which we are using the term.

---

1 We shall pass over the question how the term "significant" is to be defined. Clearly, we are concerned merely with differences in degree. But differences in degree can be extremely important.
LIMITATION OF THE FIELD

As we have seen, acculturation is a very wide field—almost as wide, in fact, as human history. And most anthropologists confine their attention to the processes of acculturation involved in the spread, in comparatively recent times, of European culture to parts of the world inhabited by primitive peoples. A convenient term to describe these processes is *culture contact*, though there is a tendency nowadays to replace it by the term *social change* or *culture change*. In the view of the present writer these terms are unfortunate, because of their very much wider connotation. Thus the culture which the ancestors of the Maori brought with them from central Polynesia changed significantly between the times of the main Polynesian settlement of New Zealand *circa* 1350 and the arrival of Captain Cook in 1769. But since it appears that no outside influences were at work, this process was one of culture change but not of culture contact or acculturation. Indeed, all cultures may and do change for reasons other than the influence of alien cultures. Variations in density of population, the emergence of outstanding leaders and environmental catastrophes such as volcanic eruptions or hurricanes—all of these may produce social change irrespective of external cultural influences. It is better, therefore, to use the term *culture contact* to delimit the field to those changes which arise directly or indirectly as a result of the influence of European civilization on primitive communities.

The process of culture contact, as we have defined the term, has been going on for many decades, and in some cases for centuries. Two useful terms are employed to define specific points in this historic process. One is *zero point*, which refers to the period when a primitive culture was first affected by European civiliza-

---

1 It should be noted that Europeans are not always the only significant agents of change. In particular situations (for example, the Chinese in Malaya or the Indians in Fiji) other influences alien to the indigenous cultures may be profoundly significant.

2 The following diagram may help to clarify the senses in which we are using the terms involved:

![Diagram of culture change](image-url)

**CULTURE CHANGE**

(All significant changes occurring in any culture)

- **Acculturation**
  - (Changes due to the influence of one culture on another)
  - Culture Contact
    - (The recent and contemporary influences exerted by European civilization on primitive communities)

- **Internal Change**
  - (Changes not due to alien cultural influences)

- **Other Processes of Acculturation**
  - (For example, the spread of the Roman Empire or influences exerted by one primitive culture on another)
tion—in our Maori example 1769. This term is valuable because it refers to the condition of a primitive culture completely unaffected by European civilization. But it is in some ways unsatisfactory. European influence may at first be negligible and amount to no more than the diffusion of a few artefacts. Moreover, the influence of European culture may actually precede the arrival of Europeans, as in the case of the horse in North America. Europeans brought the horse to the shores of the New World. But its use spread inland ahead of the settlers, so that when the pioneers came to the Great Plains they found the horse already fully incorporated in the indigenous cultures.

Finally, the available evidence concerning early contacts is often so scanty that zero-point is not a profitable point at which to commence the historical study of culture contact.

For these reasons a better and more flexible term is base line. This refers to any arbitrary point on the time scale which may be selected, for reasons of convenience, as the starting-point of an historical study. Thus, in dealing with many problems of culture contact in New Zealand, it is appropriate to select 1840 as a base line, because it was about this time that extensive European settlement began to produce new tensions, particularly in regard to land ownership, and that new political relations between Maori and Pakeha were established by the Treaty of Waitangi.

A field of enquiry closely related to and largely overlapping that of culture contact is the study of race relations; that is, the interrelationships of human groups of different racial type who are in contact with each other. Because all non-European cultures pertain to human groups of non-European racial origin, all situations of culture contact involve race relations. But the converse is not true. For example, negroes in the United States have preserved but little of the African cultural background of their ancestors. The same principle applies to negroes who have settled in Britain during more recent times. One reason for this is that in such situations the groups of European origin greatly outnumber those of alien race, a situation which may be contrasted with that existing throughout Africa and in the islands of the Pacific. Here the indigenous inhabitants of non-European race are overwhelmingly in the majority, and preserve their original culture to a far greater extent than minority groups of immigrants, often of heterogeneous origin, plunged into a new geographical and social environment.
Studies of race relations, furthermore, differ somewhat from those of culture contact in regard to their main focus of interest. The former are concerned largely with the tensions which arise, though by no means universally, between groups of different racial origin. Their practical value lies in the knowledge which they can make available for the easing of such tensions. And as these derive primarily from European prejudice against non-European races, both groups must be studied, with perhaps a primary emphasis on the European group. The student of culture contact, on the other hand, is concerned with European culture only so far as it influences the non-European culture under consideration. For example, during the depression the world price of copra fell. This, of course, lessened the money available to native producers and labourers in the Pacific, producing significant social, economic and psychological effects. The student of culture contact in such a situation does not have to study the whole European economic system or do research on the causes of the depression in Wall Street or the City of London. He takes the fall in the price of copra for granted, and studies merely the effects which it produces on native communities. The student of race relations, on the other hand, is keenly interested in European institutions in so far as they influence the attitudes and activities of Europeans in contact with peoples of other races. He must study the complex of economic, educational, political and religious institutions which go to build up attitudes, whether of antagonism or tolerance, towards non-Europeans. Finally, though the student of race relations is interested in the working of social institutions, he is primarily concerned with the way in which they influence the attitudes and values of individuals and groups.

2. The Variety of European Agencies

Returning to our main theme of culture contact, we may now refer to some of the major agencies of European civilization which have affected primitive peoples. These agencies may be classified as political, economic, religious and educational. They have, of course, operated in different ways in various parts of the world, but they have almost always interacted with one another and with native cultures in such a way that the effects produced on the latter can never be attributed to one of the agencies alone. It is necessary to stress this because students often tend to attribute the disorganizing effects of European civilization to "imperialist
administrators", to "exploiters" or to "meddling missionaries"; or its more beneficent effects to "efficient administration", "improved standards of living" or the "spread of the Christian spirit", according to the personal convictions and socio-political outlook of the individual concerned. All such formulations oversimplify a very complex situation. For example, we shall see that the power of chiefs and other traditional native authorities has frequently been undermined, with consequent disorganization or even demoralization of the community. This has been due partly to the necessary curtailment of their political power implied in European administration; partly to new economic factors giving status or independence to those who did not formerly possess it; and partly to the weakening, through missionary teaching, of magico-religious sanctions for authority—to name only a few of the influences which are commonly operative. On the other hand, improvements in native health and lowered rates of infant and maternal mortality have been due partly to directives under administrative authority, partly to a greater amount of money being made available to provide for dispensaries and for the medical training of members of the indigenous community, and partly to the work of missions and other educational agencies.

Apart from the organized European agencies which we have mentioned, there exist in certain areas other less institutionalized influences, for example, beachcombers and tourists. Though their influence has been, on the whole, relatively slight they add to the confusion in the native mind as to what European culture really is, what the white man is like and how he expects the native to behave. Thus the moral code of many settlers deviates significantly from that laid down by missionaries, as does the standard of dress of many tourists, for example women in shorts. Again, if the native cultivates shrewdness in financial transactions, it brings him material rewards in the economic field but may be condemned by missionaries as "worldly", and if applied in relation to administration (for example, by presenting a douceur to a chief) is condemned as venality. Finally, the "brotherhood of man" is conspicuously absent from most of the dealings which natives have with Europeans.

The heterogeneous and conflicting values of our civilization\footnote{Cf. Vol. 1, pp. 187–89.} are, in fact, keenly observed by native peoples, though usually
they cannot make head or tail of them. A striking example of this was observed by Malinowski in the course of his field-work in the Trobriand Islands during World War I. For years the natives had been taught by missionaries that the white man's creed was to love his neighbour as himself, to "turn the other cheek" and to obey the Commandment "Thou shalt not kill". Yet now they were told by traders of a war in which Europeans were daily slaughtering more of their fellow-men than would make up the population of a Melanesian village. They were satisfied that either the missionaries must be liars or the traders must be braggarts, and they only wanted to know which was the case.

In conclusion, it should again be mentioned that in some parts of the world the culture contact situation is still further complicated by the influence of substantial populations of non-European aliens; for example, the Chinese in Malaya or the Indians in Fiji.

We have had occasion to stress the general homogeneity of values and the close interdependence of the various aspects of culture in primitive societies. This means that changes in values or activities in one field of social life produce far-reaching repercussions in all other fields. A modern community can change its political system without modifying drastically its economic life; or it can adopt a totally new technology without altering its political or religious system to any great extent—for example, Japan at the end of the nineteenth century. But this is not true of primitive societies, where the close interlocking of the various aspects of culture means that a major alteration in any type of activity—economic, political or magico-religious—produces far-reaching and usually unexpected changes throughout the whole social framework. And where the influences producing change are operating not at one but at many points (through the divergent activities of the various European agencies), the effects produced are extremely complex and difficult to predict. However, they have in the past shown certain common trends which give us some indication of the way in which culture contact operates, and in this lies the very great practical significance of our present subject of study.

3. "Trade Follows the Flag"

The title of this section was a saying current in the hey-day of European imperialist expansion during the nineteenth century.
The motives for this expansion were primarily economic and only secondarily strategic. Increasing population in Europe led to extensive emigration to distant parts of the world, where the new migrants sought access to natural resources, land for settlement and labour for the development of primary industries, as well as for a number of other purposes. At the same time, expanding European manufacturing industries demanded new markets, which were largely found in the areas with which we are concerned. Primitive peoples, living under a wide variety of cultural arrangements, were thus drawn into colonial economies organized by European agents who had practically no knowledge of, or personal interest in, the indigenous inhabitants.¹

Under these circumstances the dominant type of administrative policy was what is known as Direct Rule. Native communities or those in authority over them were told what to do, and the concern of the administration with native affairs was, generally speaking, limited to protecting European interests, abolishing "barbarous customs" and maintaining law and order as conceived by Europeans.² Otherwise, native culture was left to stew in its own juice and, through indifference and ignorance, no attempt was made to consider scientifically the effects of European activities on native life. Even when attempts were made to safeguard native welfare—for example, by limiting or controlling the alienation of land—the administrators were so ignorant of principles of native land tenure that, in effect, European interests prevailed. Native responses were naturally enough apt to be

¹ The mixed motives for imperial expansion, the sincerity with which they were mixed and their remoteness from what we now know of culture-contact situations are well exemplified in a speech delivered by the famous explorer H. M. Stanley in 1884 to the Manchester Chamber of Commerce, the audience consisting mainly of cotton merchants. Professor P. T. Moon summarizes a part of this speech as follows: "Assuming that civilization and Christianity would teach the naked negroes of Congo to wear decent cotton clothes, at least on Sundays, he estimated that one Sunday dress for each native would mean '920,000,000 yards of Manchester cotton cloth' (Cheers from the audience); and in time, when the natives had learned the importance of covering their nakedness on week-days as well as Sundays, the amount of cloth required would amount to twenty-six million pounds sterling per annum. In his peroration he fused the mercantile and missionary motives in masterly style: 'There are forty millions of people beyond the gateway of the Congo, and the cotton spinners of Manchester are waiting to clothe them. Birmingham foundries are glowing with the red metal that will presently be made into ironwork for them and the trinkets that shall adorn those dusky bosoms, and the ministers of Christ are zealous to bring them, the poor benighted heathen, into the Christian fold' " (Moon, Imperialism and World Politics, p. 66).

² This was possible because of the conditions summarized in Hilaire Belloc's couplet:

Whatever happens, we have got
The Maxim gun, and they have not.
violent, producing the colonial wars of the period and often wholesale confiscation of native lands.

It is true that the picture was not always as black as this, nor was the process of imperial expansion one of ruthless and single-minded exploitation. Many administrators had a paternalistic concern for the people they governed, and many who had a profound humanitarian interest in native peoples believed firmly in "the blessings of Christianity and commerce". But, even where actual bloodshed was avoided, the effects on native cultures were everywhere disorganizing.

The beginning of the twentieth century witnessed the growth of a more enlightened outlook, resulting in part from a growing appreciation of the fact that any primitive culture is not just a ragbag of savage customs and blind superstitions, but a working system which organizes members of the community and gives meaning to their lives. In this process the pioneer anthropologists played an important part in that they sought to make the customs and beliefs of primitive peoples intelligible to their fellow-Europeans, while at the same time administrators and missionaries were learning much the same lesson through practical experience. This growing appreciation of primitive cultures went hand in hand with an increasing realization of the disorganizing effects which were being produced by contact with European agencies of cultural change.

4. Indirect Rule and Self-government

The keener appreciation of the realities of the colonial situation stimulated a desire to protect native institutions against the more disruptive effects of European contacts. Politically, this was reflected in the policy of Indirect Rule. The essence of this policy was that native political authorities were officially recognized and endowed with authority by the European administration; that they were given the greatest possible degree of autonomy in running native affairs; and that they were encouraged to do this in the traditional way.¹

Naturally this new policy in its early phases suffered from certain defects and was subjected to many criticisms. In the first place, the application of the policy in particular instances was not pre-

¹ Though the clear formulation of the policy of Indirect Rule and its consistent adoption as a principle of British colonial policy only took place after World War I, enlightened administrators had previously accepted its basic principles in particular areas; in Fiji, for example, the native policy developed during the seventies of the last century was essentially one of indirect rule.
ceded by a detailed study of the structure and functioning of indigenous political systems. In particular it was not realized that a system which worked well in the case of stratified societies could not be applied to segmented societies where political and legal institutions were rudimentary or lacking altogether. Thus the policy of Indirect Rule was successfully applied by Lord Lugard among the Emirates of Northern Nigeria. These were, in effect, Moslem States, having fully developed systems of political authority and legal institutions. The policy thus did not do any violence to indigenous customs and attitudes towards authority, but, on the contrary, gave official support to them. Later, however, an attempt was made to apply the same policy among the Ibo in the south. Since the Ibo were a segmented society with no existing system of chicftainship, the Government appointed “Warrant Chiefs” as native authorities. Actually these officials had no traditional standing or authority among the largely autonomous communities with which they had to deal, and considerable resentment and disorganization was produced by their attempts to exercise their functions, particularly the collection of taxes. Actually this problem of the definition and appointment of effective native authorities in segmented societies is still a difficult one, since working through a number of headmen or elders who exercise authority only over villages or small districts presents serious administrative difficulties. But modern administrators are at least aware of the problem, and some successful attempts have been made to bring into being formal or informal councils designed to amalgamate or federate for certain purposes the small autonomous groups such as districts or villages.

Another source of trouble in the early administration of Indirect Rule was the tendency to regard it as a panacea for all administrative ills, and “governing through native institutions” became a dogma to be applied in all circumstances. Thus certain mining settlements in West Africa were composed of Africans who had emigrated from various tribes with different systems of political organization, and, for obvious reasons, attempts to apply Indirect Rule to such communities were unsuccessful. It was rather like taking a composite community consisting of Englishmen, Chinese, Ethiopians and Navaho Indians and inviting them to “govern themselves through their traditional institutions”. It is not surprising that one critic described Indirect Rule as being the game of “Find the Chief”.
Another criticism levelled at Indirect Rule was that it tended to freeze indigenous political institutions at a certain point in their development, and so bar the way to political progress. Native authorities often tended to be conservative and unwilling to listen to constructive proposals for change, whether these came from the European administration or from progressive members of the indigenous population who did not possess power or status in the traditional social structure officially recognized and supported by government. This was in part responsible for the criticism of better-educated and more sophisticated members of the indigenous populations that Indirect Rule is an imperialist subterfuge designed to make native authorities the mere spokesmen of the administration, and to use their traditional power and prestige to impose the wishes of the European administration upon the population without doing it honestly (as had been done under Direct Rule) at the point of the bayonet.

Such criticisms were, on the whole, exaggerated and ill-informed, deriving as they did from emotional resentment at European domination rather than from a disinterested desire to promote constructive political and social development. But some colour was lent to them by the necessary conditions under which Indirect Rule was applied. Quite clearly, chiefs and other native authorities could not be given absolute power to do just as they liked. They could be dismissed for incompetence, corruption or subversive activities, and there was a constant temptation to define these shortcomings in terms of failure to comply with the wishes of the administration. When, for example, native authorities persistently refused to adopt reforms which the administration regarded as urgent, did this constitute “incompetence”? When, under systems in which all wealth belonged traditionally to the chief, the latter appropriated to his private purse what appeared to be a disproportionate share of tax revenue, was this “corruption”? And when native authorities asserted their traditional rights, which were supposed to be safeguarded, against those of the European administration, did this amount to “subversive activities”? Furthermore, where traditional authority was not determined by any clear-cut principle of hereditary rank, the administration was often forced to choose between different candidates supported by rival factions in such circumstances the natural tendency was to select the candidate who appeared most easy to work with and most willing to conform to the wishes of the
administration. It thus sometimes happened that authority was vested in an individual who did not, by traditional standards, enjoy the prestige appropriate to his office.

It will thus be seen that European officials who have had to administer Indirect Rule, particularly in its initial phases, have been faced with difficulties which have not always been appreciated. They made mistakes and were occasionally high-handed or even unjust; but, on the whole, they have been successful in introducing a new concept of colonial government and in putting it into practice. Moreover, the difficulties which they have to face do not arise only from their dealings with the indigenous population. In the British Colonial Empire, for example, administrators on the spot are members of the Colonial Service. They take their orders from the Colonial Office, and are often called upon to put into practice administrative measures which are not adapted to local conditions. Sometimes this is the result of the well-known anomaly of centralized government or administration—that those at the centre must of necessity formulate general principles for the people governed as a whole, principles which may be inapplicable under certain local conditions. Sometimes, too, it has been the result of the uncritical imposition of decisions taken at the centre in situations which could only be fully appreciated by the man on the spot.

For these reasons, directives from the Colonial Office have often been regarded as authoritarian or dictatorial. But the officials responsible for them are no more free agents than are the administrators actually working in the colonies. Colonial policy and administration are never major issues in British politics, though they do from time to time become occasions for self-congratulation by the government or for sniping by the Opposition. They are shaped by the government in power at any given moment, the tenure of office of which is determined by political issues remote from the colonial scene. Nor are issues of colonial policy and administration determined exclusively by the internal politics of the metropolitan power. Since the introduction after World War I of the mandate system under the League of Nations for the administration of the former German colonies, they have become increasingly a matter of international concern. Not only in the Mandated Territories, but in other dependent areas as well, the welfare of the native inhabitants was held to be "a sacred trust of civilization". Colonial powers were expected to consider
not only the interests of European immigrants but also those of the indigenous populations who should be guided to ultimate self-government. The welfare and progressive political development of dependent peoples was thus brought to the forefront of international politics.

On the whole, this has had a salutary effect in making colonial powers more keenly aware of their responsibilities. But it has inevitably led to recriminations determined not by interest in or knowledge of dependent peoples but by international tensions arising from other causes. Until comparatively recently, it might have been said that the only point on which Washington and Moscow were agreed was the iniquity of the British Empire.

In these circumstances, when everyone from the Colonial Secretary to the most junior District Officer in the Colonial Service may at any time find himself a target for criticisms resulting from international tensions, there is a temptation to play safe and to refrain from adopting measures which may be unpopular, whether these appear to be in the interests of dependent peoples or not.

Returning to Indirect Rule, it must be emphasized that though this is a step towards self-government and involves the recognition of native political rights, it represents a purely local form of administration. With rare exceptions, it can in itself never develop the machinery necessary for the self-government of large territorial units. All colonies consist of several, sometimes many, tribes or other cultural units. To set up systems of Indirect Rule within these units may provide a form of administration which is both progressive and acceptable to the people themselves. But this is no more than a form of local government, and the question arises how self-government of the larger and culturally heterogeneous areas of territory may best be achieved. In fact, leaders of the indigenous populations have often criticized the concentration on Indirect Rule as diverting attention from what is to them the main problem—the establishment of an autonomous central government for the whole territory. They have sneered at the slogan of "ultimate self-government", holding that the operative word here has been "ultimate". It may be true that British colonial administrators have been too slow in ceding powers to legislative councils and assemblies in the colonies, and in giving increased membership in such bodies to representatives of the numerically preponderant indigenous populations. But now the
issue has been virtually taken out of their hands by insistent and
effective demands, so that at the time of writing such territories as Nigeria and the Gold Coast are for most practical purposes
self-governing. And similar trends are observable elsewhere.
“Political independence” and “self-determination” are shibboleths of our modern world, and often reflect worthy ideals and
legitimate aspirations. But they must be realistically considered
in the light of the capacity of inhabitants of the territories con-
cerned to operate the machinery of government which they seek
to control. In some cases, notably in the Sudan, they have led to
the substitution of self-government for good government. Whether
the British administration has in general been too slow in sur-
rendering its powers or whether leaders of the local populations
have been too impetuous in pressing their demands is today largely
an academic question. Only the future will provide the answer.

5. Economic Influences

The political influences which have affected primitive cultures,
backed as they have been by physical force, have often been
decisive in imposing European demands upon indigenous com-
munities. But economic influences have been of far greater signi-
ficance, and have not been so much imposed as accepted and even
welcomed. Primitive communities have almost always resented
European domination and have shown some resistance to the
edicts of the European administration. But they have, as it were,
come out to meet the economic forces impinging on their society.¹
The main reason for this is easy to discern—the vastly greater
efficiency of European technology. Steel tools are more effective
than those of stone, bone or wood; guns are greatly superior, in
war or hunting, to primitive weapons; and material amenities
such as bicycles, gramophones and radios have as great an appeal
for primitive peoples to whom they were previously unknown as
they have for ourselves. In fact such artefacts, as well as European
ornaments, may through their scarcity and novelty have an even
greater prestige value than they have in European communities.
Starting with the activities of the early traders, increasingly wide-

¹ There are exceptions to this statement. For example, the imposition of taxation,
legally enforced, has obliged native communities to acquire money to pay taxes, and
in the early days of culture contact the imposition of forced labour for public works
had important effects on native economies, as well as on attitudes towards Europeans.
But, by and large, such instances are of far less significance than the spontaneous
reactions of primitive communities to the introduced economy.
spread and complex marketing organizations have made them available to primitive communities. And the desire for European goods has been the most potent factor of all in producing far-reaching changes in the socio-economic systems of primitive peoples.

Apart from cases of barter in the early days, natives have needed money in order to acquire European goods. This they have obtained in three main ways—by selling export crops such as cocoa, copra or rubber; by earning wages working for Europeans in mines, on plantations, on public works such as roads, railways and docks or in domestic service; or by alienating their land to Europeans. As regards the latter, the wholesale and voluntary selling of native lands has, in many parts of the world, been quite as significant as the more spectacular cases of deliberate and forcible expropriation by Europeans in producing land shortage and in disorganizing native economies.

In view of the close interrelationship between the economic systems of primitive communities and all other aspects of their social life, the economic factors to which we have referred have influenced not only economic activities but also all other features of the social framework, producing radical changes. We shall now indicate some of the ways in which European economic influences have affected primitive systems of production, exchange, distribution and ownership\(^1\) and have thus produced the social repercussions which have been mentioned.

In regard to production there has been a marked and significant change in the things produced and the ends towards which productive effort is directed. Broadly, much native labour is now devoted to producing goods for and rendering services to Europeans. Examples of this are the production by agricultural communities of cash crops for export and the employment of native labourers by European enterprises. In part, this has been made possible by the superior efficiency of European tools and methods of production; for instance, the substitution in many communities of the plough for the hoe or digging-stick. Such innovations have resulted in an overall increase in productive efficiency so that an increasing proportion of the labour potential can be diverted away from the production of food for subsistence, which is the dominant type of productive activity under primitive conditions.

---

\(^1\) Cf. Vol. 1, Chapter VII, Sections 4 to 7. The student should re-read these sections before proceeding further.
Often, however, this suffers, to the detriment of the food supply of the community. The urge to produce cash crops may lead to insufficient attention being paid to the production of food for consumption within the community. And when young native labourers leave the community, often travelling great distances and remaining away for several years, the remaining labour power in the community is in many cases inadequate to maintain subsistence production, while a heavy burden is thrown upon the women and older men. Furthermore, the adverse effects of this system are not merely economic. Social life is also dislocated, particularly through the inevitable postponement of marriage among young people. This is conducive to immorality among the unattached females left at home and to homosexuality among the absent labourers.

The new economic influences also have an effect on productive organization. Under primitive conditions this is often collective in character, and is based on bonds of kinship and neighbourhood. Working teams of this kind are not adapted to many of the new forms of production, particularly the predominant pattern of European employment which generally requires individuals to work as individuals and not as members of a team.

The motives and attitudes underlying productive effort have also changed. The spontaneous interest of the work itself is absent from the drudgery involved in manual labour in mines, on plantations or on roads. Such work is not honoured for its own sake, but is regarded merely as a means to an end—the acquisition of money to buy European goods or pay taxes. The stimulus of collective interest is absent from the more individualized pattern of productive effort to which we have referred. And finally, new attitudes towards work and leisure become necessary. Under primitive conditions such attitudes are geared to a seasonal rather than a daily and weekly rhythm in the output of effort. Usually, periods of intense activity alternate with periods of comparative idleness at times when there is nothing in particular to be done (cf. p. 465). Such periods are often given over, for days or weeks on end, to recreation and festivities. These activities are frequently in conflict with the European demand for so many hours of work per day for so many days per week. It is not surprising that the native finds it difficult to adapt himself to the new productive pattern, and as a consequence is dubbed "lazy" by uncomprehending Europeans.
Systems of exchange have likewise been altered, primarily by the introduction of European money. At the same time a vast and potentially inexhaustible range of European manufactured goods has been made available. This means a very much higher "ceiling" to the standard of living of any individual or group than when wealth mainly takes the form of food, plus a limited range of artefacts produced locally. Concretely, there is a limit to the number of cattle which an African chief can eat over a given period and to the number of yams which can be contained in a Melanesian stomach. Any excess over this must be used for display or otherwise as an index of status, or must be distributed to other members of the community or used for public purposes such as feasts. Again, when wealth takes the form of primitive artefacts such as hoes, there is little material advantage to any individual in possessing more than one, whatever heightened prestige may be involved. But the situation is quite different when wealth takes the form of money. It is easily convertible either into capital goods which may still further consolidate the owner's economic position, or into a wide variety of consumption goods which make life more pleasant or make it possible to gain prestige by providing lavish hospitality in connection with marriages and other ceremonial occasions. Finally, not only money but also credit is part of the European economy, and many primitive communities have been impoverished to the point of destitution by the activities of alien money-lenders.

The new productive patterns and the introduction of money have also affected the distribution of wealth within the community. In most communities there is a correlation between rank and wealth, either because the holders of hereditary titles have special economic privileges or because wealth itself confers prestige and power. Such political systems have been affected in various ways. Sometimes the traditional economic privileges of men of rank have been increased and reinforced by new conditions, sometimes the superior ability of certain men of lower rank to cope with the introduced economy has led to the formation of a class of nouveau riche, much as the Industrial Revolution affected the balance of distribution in the economies of Europe.

The relations between old and young have also been disturbed. Under indigenous conditions the former tend to be in control of wealth, and on this, to a large extent, rests their authority; for example, they may be in a position to refuse to pay bride-price
on behalf of insubordinate youths. But where young men are able to earn money in European employment they acquire a measure of economic independence which makes them less willing to recognize the authority of their elders, a tendency often reinforced by the feeling that they are more sophisticated after contact, however limited, with European civilization.

We have referred to the potentially infinite command over European goods which the possession of money brings with it. This tends to make individuals more calculating in their economic transactions, to the detriment of traditional standards. We have seen, for example, that where the chief is the focal point of the economic system, his rights to tribute and other material privileges are generally not abused, partly because under the indigenous economy there is no particular advantage to be gained by making exorbitant demands. But the possession of money is a constant temptation to the chief to seek to acquire as much wealth as possible and to divert funds from public purposes into his own pocket. Much the same applies to negotiations concerning bride-price, which are now apt to be characterized by a mercenary element which was previously lacking.¹

We have seen some of the ways in which the attitudes and motives connected with production and distribution have been affected by the introduced economy. Among these attitudes and motives some of the most important are those connected with saving or restraints upon immediate consumption in order to increase material welfare in the future. Concretely, when the peasant acquires a sum of money by selling his labour or produce, he can utilize it in one of two ways. Firstly, he can spend it on consumption goods or give it away immediately or over a short period; secondly, he can spend it on capital goods, such as a truck or a tractor, which will increase productivity in the future. Clearly the second of these is the course of action which will in the long run prove most profitable under modern conditions. But the first is usually more in accord with traditional standards and ways of behaving. Under primitive conditions the conflict between present wants and future advantages does not exist to anything like the same extent. It is true that capital goods, such as canoes for fishing or storehouses for keeping food, must from time to time

¹ "The bride-price, which when paid in cattle, was public evidence of a contract and in many societies was a security reserved to be returned if the contract was broken, when paid in cash becomes a mere source of profit to parents" (Mair (3), p. 7).
be produced. The diversion of labour towards such ends is determined by traditional factors, such as an order from a chief or the demands of kinsfolk, rather than by the free choice of the individual; and the goods are made available by the expenditure of effort rather than by self-denial. When consumption goods become available in large quantities—for example, from an exceptionally good catch of fish or a bumper harvest—they are generally consumed at once, either by the giving of lavish gifts to relatives or by the provisioning of feasts and other social occasions which bring pleasure to the participants and prestige to the individual or group responsible for organizing them.

Under modern conditions, it is in terms of the latter type of situation that the native tends to think of the acquisition of money. Since money means capacity to purchase food, clothing and other consumption goods which can be given away according to the traditional pattern of obligations, there is a tendency to use it in this way rather than to acquire capital goods. Sometimes the second alternative is not even considered; sometimes the demands of kinsfolk make it impossible to adopt it without incurring humiliation. In short, the man who is provident by European economic standards must necessarily flout or evade his traditional obligations; while the man who honours the latter may be in an inferior economic position in the future. Clearly this sets up a conflict in the values connected with prestige and with the evaluation of personal behaviour.

The demands of the European economy may conflict with traditional obligations in other ways. For example, the obligation to attend the ceremonies connected with birth, marriage and death for numerous kinsfolk is apt to produce absenteeism among native labourers. In fact, this is a common charge levelled against them by European employers. Clearly the "grandmother's funeral" has a much more disruptive effect upon regular work when a number of classificatory grandmothers must, in turn, be buried.

We have referred to some of the ways in which the new economy has affected the ownership of wealth. The most important changes in this regard have been in the field of land tenure, which has been mentioned in connection with political influences. Apart from the alienation of land in the early days of culture contact, the attitudes towards land in the indigenous communities has altered radically because land has acquired a value in terms of
money—it can either be used to produce cash crops for export or can be rented to Europeans. This has led to an increasing assertion of individual claims to absolute possession of given areas of land, to the detriment of the delicately balanced system of interlocking rights and obligations which existed under primitive conditions.\footnote{1}

To sum up, the introduction of the European economy, and particularly money as a medium of exchange, has radically affected the economic systems of primitive peoples and produced secondary results of a disorganizing character in other aspects of native life. In some areas a fairly satisfactory readjustment, involving new economic values and forms of organization, has been achieved. But generally speaking the conflicts of interests and social disorganization resulting from new economic conditions are perhaps the most important features of culture contact situations.

6. Missionary Influences

The work of Christian missionaries was among the first agencies of change to exert an influence during the early phases of culture contact, and it has had a profound effect on subsequent development. Its significance, however, is not easy to summarize because of the very great differences between mission policies and the various ways in which those policies have been applied in the field from time to time and from place to place. Firstly, the modern missionary's conception of his task is very much wider than that of his predecessors in the nineteenth century. Secondly, there have been differences between the various Christian sects in regard to the major emphases of the missionary's work. Thirdly, the policies of various mission organizations, formulated by experienced missionaries with administrative ability, have not always been effectively carried out by less enlightened missionaries in the field. Last, but by no means least, the actual effects of mission work have varied according to the outlook, experience and temperament of individual missionaries.\footnote{2}

\footnote{1} See Vol. I, Chapter VIII.

\footnote{2} The significance of this last point is highlighted by the fact that one or two colleagues who have read the following pages have criticized my treatment of the subject as representing an ideal and even idyllic picture of missionary influences rather than a statement of hard facts. They point out, from personal experience, that some missionaries approximate to the worst stereotypes of their vocation by making unjustified, unnecessary and ignorant attacks on native custom; by seeking economic advantages for the Church (for example, through the acquisition of unduly large}
Further variations in the effects of missionary work derive from the native side. Some communities have been converted *en masse*, usually following the lead of a chief or other leading man; in some cases individuals have been converted one at a time, often leading, as we shall see, to schisms within the community; and a few, like the Zuni, have consistently resisted the efforts of missionaries to convert them and have clung tenaciously to their indigenous religions.

The difficulty of making any general statements about the place of missions in situations of culture contact is thus apparent. One generalization, however, can legitimately be made. With negligible exceptions, the men and women who have undertaken missionary work have been sincerely devoted to their vocation and to the principles which they held to be right. Otherwise they would not have faced the dangers, hardships and severance from civilized life which their calling entailed. There has been much to criticize in their work, or rather in the effects which this work has had upon primitive societies. But the sincerity of their convictions and their devotion to what they conceived to be their duty cannot be impugned. This fact and its implications are sometimes forgotten by hasty critics. It is all very well to point out that interference with certain native beliefs and customs has produced disruption and other social evils. But since missionaries sincerely believed such customs to be inconsistent with Christianity they could not tolerate them without being untrue to their principles, although in most cases they could have dealt with them more intelligently.

In appraising the work of the early missionaries in particular, it is all too easy to be wise after the event. But it must be remembered that they approached their task without the understanding of primitive culture which would have enabled them to appreciate the significance of the customs and beliefs which they felt it their duty to suppress or extirpate. We know today that primitive magico-religious beliefs and practices serve important social functions in maintaining authority, law and tribal standards.
generally. But to the early missionaries they were merely works of the Devil.\footnote{The words of William Ellis, an early missionary in the Pacific, provide an interesting commentary on the attitudes of the period. In regard to the Society Islanders he thought it not impossible "that communities, so wholly given over to idolatry of the most murderous and diabolical kinds, should be considered corporeally, as well as spiritually, to be lying in 'the wicked one'" (Ellis, Polynesian Researches, Vol. 1, p. 362).} Their total elimination was therefore regarded as a wholly desirable goal, the attainment of which could bring nothing but good results.

The ways in which this attitude exercised a disruptive effect on tribal life are easy to understand. We know that beliefs in the power of ancestors to punish misdeeds or in the ability of sorcerers to exact vengeance for wrongs inflicted are important sanctions for morality and civil rights. Taboos of various kinds are mechanisms for discouraging misdeeds, for organizing economic life and for supporting political authority. Religious myths provide a charter for specific social institutions and help to promote social conformity. Yet all of these were denounced uncritically as "barbarous superstitions". Initiation ceremonies, which serve vital functions in regard to moral education, were suppressed because of the religious beliefs connected with them or because the associated bodily mutilations were inconsistent with European standards. It is small wonder that disorganization ensued. Indigenous magico-religious sanctions were undermined, while no effective attempt was made to adapt those of the Christian religion to the new cultural context in which they would have to operate.

Not only magico-religious institutions but also purely secular customs were attacked by the early missionaries. Lobola and other forms of bride-price, which constitute important forces of validation for family organization, were condemned as involving the "sale of women". Dancing and other native forms of recreation were condemned. In the interests of the missionaries' conception of modesty, the wearing of European clothes was enforced, often to the detriment of native health; in the Pacific, for example, the unsuitable clothing introduced by missionaries was in part responsible for the diseases which decimated the islands of Polynesia and Melanesia during the nineteenth century.

Most important of all, missionaries have always made an attempt to suppress polygamy. Unlike the examples just cited, this is one of those instances where native custom cannot be reconciled with Christianity, since monogamy for the vast
majority of Christian sects is the central principle of Christian marriage. The view of most missionaries has been that when polygamists are converted they must show their sincerity by renouncing all their wives except one. Now, quite apart from the emotional and sentimental blow to women thus put away, they are in a difficult position economically and socially. In primitive societies generally, the economic division of labour between the sexes is based on the organization of the family, whether it be polygamous or monogamous. There is no place in such societies for an unattached woman who is neither immature nor senile, nor, for the matter of that, for her children. The position is made worse by the natural tendency of polygamous husbands to put away the wives whom they find least efficient, congenial and attractive; in other words, the ones who are least likely to be able to remarry. Concubinage and other forms of sexual irregularity are also apt to arise, as we shall see presently.

Some missionaries who wish to mitigate these evils achieve a compromise by allowing polygamists who become converts to keep their wives, while insisting that no man who has already embraced the Christian faith shall take more than one wife. In view of the inconsistency between polygamy and the Christian conception of marriage, this is a considerable concession and mitigates the worst effects of interfering with existing marriage arrangements. But even this liberal policy may cause some disorganization; for example, when the economic privileges and social status of chiefs and other men of rank depend upon their being able to command the services of a number of wives.

Even the positive achievements of missions have often had unfortunate repercussions. Where whole communities were converted at one time, a new basis for social integration was provided. But where a section only of the community accepted Christianity, bitter antagonisms often arose between Christians and pagans. Similarly, the missionaries were the first Europeans to introduce education for literacy, primarily with a view to enabling converts to read the Bible, and this often had the effect of driving a wedge between the literate and non-literate sections of the community, and of making the younger educated men and women contemptuous of their illiterate elders and ready to flout their authority.

Other factors of dissension often arise where more than one denomination carries out missionary work in the same area—
bitter sectarian antagonisms may occur within the native community. To prevent this, some missionary organizations have subscribed to the policy of zoning, involving an agreement to restrict the missionary activities of each denomination to specified zones. But apart from the fact that some denominations object on principle to zoning, the absence of competition is apt to lead to the emergence of what are virtually local theocracies.

The disorganizing effects which we have mentioned were most marked in the early phases of missionary work. Since that time missionaries in general have become increasingly aware of the issues involved and, so far as their consciences permitted, have sought to adapt their policies to the realities of the situation. Often, however, they have found that the damage had already been done. In some cases, for instance, they have sought to reintroduce native institutions such as dancing, only to find that this was impossible because native converts had become deeply convinced that such institutions were un-Christian. In other cases they have been successful, and have, for example, incorporated elements from native initiation ceremonies in their educational programmes or introduced indigenous customs connected with marriage into the Christian wedding ceremony. Perhaps the outstanding example of the harmonization of indigenous custom with Christian practice is the Maori tangi (funeral). Here we see Christian communities farewelling their dead with much of the collective ceremonial of pre-European times and in a way which is more in accord with Maori attitudes and social organization than is the more individualized and less spectacular ritual of a European funeral.

The changed and changing conception of the missionary’s task has been due to increasing realization of three important principles. In the first place, modern missionaries have acquired something of that understanding of the interrelatedness of elements of culture which was lacking in their predecessors. They realize the positive value of native magico-religious beliefs and practices, and have tried to mitigate the damage done by their wholesale extirpation. A corollary of this has been that they have tended to offer Christianity rather than to force it upon the native community, to stress its positive advantages rather than to attack indigenous beliefs. They tend to preach Christianity as the highest form of religious experience and expression without condemning other forms as utterly and completely evil. In the words of a pioneer in the new
MISSIONARY INFLUENCES

approach to missionary work, Christianity should be presented to natives, not in antagonism to, but as a fulfilment of, their aspirations.¹

In the second place, r-issionaries have achieved a less naïve conception of the complex determinants of the undesirable features of the culture contact situation. For many of the early missionaries un-Christian behaviour, whether of heathen natives or of ill-intentioned Europeans, was the main if not the only cause. It followed that the propagation of Christian belief and practice would provide a panacea, and it was on this that they concentrated their efforts. Modern missionaries are increasingly realizing that many if not most of the evils which they wish to eliminate are not due to the un-Christian acts of individuals; they are the product of a number of actions not in themselves un-Christian, and in many cases motivated by Christian principles, which by the nature of their interaction produce results incompatible with Christianity and humanitarian ideals.

The way in which forces which are not in themselves un-Christian can by their interaction produce undesirable results in the field of marriage and sex relations, is well illustrated by information collected by Professor Schapera among the Kxatla of Bechuanaland.² Among the Kxatla, native records indicate that there has been a marked increase in sexual immorality and pre-marital pregnancy under European influence. Various factors have conduced to this. The general breakdown of tribal codes, and particularly the decay of initiation ceremonies, has led to a weakening in the moral attitude towards premarital pregnancy, reflected in the abandonment of infanticide previously connected with it, and of the obscene songs of mockery which discouraged premarital intercourse; school education has produced emancipation from tribal tradition among the younger generation; attacks on polygamy by the Dutch Reformed Church and the imposition of a government tax on polygamists has led directly to concubinage; the absence of large numbers of adult males at European centres of employment has produced a surplus of women, and native desire to maintain population, correlated with the ideal of “raising up seed”, makes this a situation conducive to immorality—the need for utilizing the child-bearing potentialities of the women is even cited as justification by Church members who surreptitiously keep concubines; marriage tends to be less by

parental arrangement correlated with the payment of bride-price and more by courtship, consequently parents have lost interest in and control over the morals of their children.

Here we have a state of affairs in many respects typical of culture contact situations. Analysis shows that it is produced by a variety of motives most of which are not in conflict with Christianity: The native desire to maintain and increase population and to obtain education; the imposition of taxes by the European government partly at least for the financing of native administration and with a view to discouraging polygamy; the need of employers for labour power essential to the development of natural resources; and the attack by missionaries upon customs which they sincerely believed to be inconsistent with Christianity; for example, polygamy, the levirate and the obscene songs of mockery. Yet what is the result? A situation repugnant alike to the Christian, to secular conceptions of social well-being and last but not least to the Kxatla themselves.

In the third place, the appreciation of the fact that "conversion" is not the only goal of missionary endeavour has led to the widened conception of the missionary's task which we mentioned at the beginning of this section. The objective of individual salvation has been integrated with other aims concerned with enabling communities and individuals to adapt themselves to modern conditions. This is being achieved largely through education and welfare work. For example, in the past the effort to produce a literate Christian community has been largely directed towards enabling natives to read the Bible. Today, while this still receives emphasis, education is also aimed at making the resources of European knowledge available to native communities in a way which will benefit them materially and socially, as well as spiritually. Useful crafts, improved methods of agriculture, hygiene and the training of natives for leadership occupy an increasing place in the educational programme. Missionaries cooperate to a greater extent than formerly with administrative and technical officers in the furtherance of schemes for purely secular welfare. And, finally, several missionary organizations have established training schemes for intending missionaries. These are designed to equip them with bodies of knowledge, including some acquaintance with anthropological principles, which will help them to assume the responsibilities which situations of culture contact impose upon them.
MISSIONARY INFLUENCES

Because of the great variations in the character and effects of missionary work, mentioned at the outset, it is difficult to reach a fair evaluation of it. The anthropologist, because of his professional appreciation of the workings of primitive culture and of the social disorganization and individual maladjustment caused by its disruption, is apt to stress the less fortunate results of missionary work, as has been done in the preceding passages. Let us therefore attempt to assess, in purely secular terms, its positive contributions.

In the first place, as pointed out in Section 2, missionary influence is exerted in the context of a situation in which other powerful forces, political and economic, are also operative. Much of the disruption which we have mentioned is only in part the result of the work of missions. For example, we have seen that missionaries have removed some of the sanctions for chieftainship and the authority of elders. But these were also being undermined by the economic influences mentioned in Section 4, as well as by the imposition from above of an alien European administration. In fact, it might be argued that the direct and indirect effects of economic forces have been the primary determinants. It is therefore unfair to lay responsibility for the decay of authority and tribal demoralization wholly, or even primarily, upon the missions. In fact many of them, particularly in recent years, have actively sought to protect tribal standards against the deleterious effects of secular European influences.

In the second place, missionaries have done much to improve native health and material standards, and were the first to introduce education to most primitive communities. From the first they have ministered to the sick with such medical knowledge and equipment as was available to them; they have introduced the superior European techniques of preventive and curative medicine; and though much of the education which they provided was unnecessary and ill-adapted to the needs of the peoples concerned, it gave them some help in dealing with the more sophisticated and often predatory European economic agents, as well as laying the foundations for the wider and more realistic educational developments now taking place.

In the third place, Christianity, after an initial phase of disruption, has often proved to be a valuable force for individual adjustment and social reintegration. It may be true that many if not most converts accepted Christianity in the first place because of
the material advantages which association with missions involved—the so-called "rice Christians"—or because they thought that the "white man's magic"\(^1\) and the knowledge gained through European education would in some way bring to them the material advantages and political power which were enjoyed by the white man. But even if "conversion" was in many cases produced by such motives as these, this is far from being the whole story. For many natives Christianity has provided a sense of psychological integration and security quite as great as it provides for devout Christians in European society. Moreover, Christianity as preached by the missionaries has come to communities which were in any case doomed to partial or large-scale detribalization through the operation of the other forces which we have discussed. In these circumstances it has served as a new mechanism of social integration, replacing, with a greater or lesser degree of effectiveness, the traditional magico-religious forces of social cohesion. And in the culture contact situation it is well adapted to do so. Being a universal religion, it provides principles of integration—summed up in the phrase "the brotherhood of man"—which extend beyond local boundaries. It must be remembered that indigenous religions, such as ancestor worship or the cult of local deities, provide integration only for relatively small social units such as clans or tribes. They cannot in their very nature transcend the boundaries or purely local social bonds, however effective they may be in maintaining these. Christianity provides, potentially at least, a basis of integration uniting all men, however much its ideals may be negated by the behaviour of Europeans and the stresses and tensions arising from culture contact.

In the fourth place, missionaries have been consistent in their defence of native rights against predatory economic interests and sometimes against high-handed administrative action. This accounts largely for their unpopularity in certain quarters. When European expropriation and exploitation of native peoples was

---

\(^1\) An illuminating sidelight on certain native attitudes in this regard is provided by two observations of the late Camilla Wedgwood during her field-work on Manam, the inhabitants of which are nominally Christians. In one case, an informant who had given to her information on native magic asked, in return, to be taught the magic of the white man. When she denied that there was any such thing, the informant was incredulous. The white man, he argued, had guns, machinery and aeroplanes—how could he have these things if he had no magic? On another occasion Miss Wedgwood was present at a confinement involving difficult labour. The native magical spells appropriate to such an occasion had been uttered to no avail. Then one of the women present said, in effect: "Why not try a little [Christian] prayer?" This was done, and the mother was safely delivered.
at its height during the nineteenth century, they fought, individually and through their organizations, to stem the tide of European imperialism, and in many cases were successful in mitigating its worst effects. Even if their intervention in secular affairs sometimes had unfortunate consequences—for example, in securing administrative suppression of native customs—their influence in this field has on the whole been beneficial.

In the fifth place, what is perhaps the most important positive contribution of missionaries is the most difficult to assess. Briefly, and speaking very generally, they have been the only agents of European civilization who have treated natives as human beings. Employers and traders, having no interest in primitive peoples except as a source of labour or easy money, have almost always treated them as an inferior order of humanity, a conception summed up in such terms as "niggers", "kanakas" and "coons". At best they have regarded them as "children", displaying a measure of patronizing indulgence towards what they regarded as an inferior mentality. And in spite of the work of disinterested and humanitarian administrators, many government officials have regarded those under their control as a bunch of unruly savages who must be taught to behave themselves and not to give trouble. Furthermore, it must be remembered that the legal and executive responsibilities of administrators necessarily impose upon them a measure of aloofness, while their personal contacts with natives are largely circumscribed by their official duties.

Missionaries, on the other hand, have lived in close personal contact with members of native communities. With few exceptions they have striven to regard and treat them as equals and to stress the essential dignity of individual human personality irrespective of race or culture. They have lived out the ideal of the brotherhood of man, and so, in situations of exploitation and racial discrimination, have saved many native communities from complete cynicism concerning the professions and motives of the white man.

It must be emphasized that the contents of the present section are an attempt to assess as fairly as possible and in purely secular terms the contributions of missions to culture contact situations. But many (including missionaries themselves) would argue that their most important positive contribution has been ignored, namely the revelation of spiritual truth which they have brought to native communities. In this connection we must remind ourselves that
such contentions lie outside the universe of discourse of science, and involve issues on which the anthropologist, as a scientist, is not entitled to express an opinion. But like everyone else he has a right to express his views, provided that he does so as a matter of personal conviction and does not claim for them the authority of scientific knowledge. One such expression of personal conviction by a pioneer anthropologist is the following:

I think that we may easily exaggerate the differences in culture and, more especially, in religious insight and understanding that exist between the ruder peoples and ourselves. In view of our common hope, and our common want of knowledge, I would rather identify religion with a general striving of humanity than with the exclusive pretension of any one people or sect. Who knows, for instance, the final truth about what happens to the soul at death? I am quite ready to admit, indeed, that some of us can see a little farther into a brick wall than, say, Neanderthal man. Yet when I find facts that appear to prove that Neanderthal man buried his dead with ceremony and to the best of his means equipped them for a future life, I openly confess that I would rather stretch out a hand across the ages and greet him as my brother and fellow-pilgrim than throw in my lot with the self-righteous folk who seem to imagine this world and the next to have been created for their exclusive benefit.¹

In conclusion, then, it might be suggested that the ultimate value of missionary endeavour is to be assessed largely in terms of its conformity, in both theory and practice, with some such principles as those stated by Marett.

7. Native Education

As we have seen, European education was first brought to primitive communities as part of the work of missions. But with the extension of effective European administration and the growing sense of responsibility towards dependent peoples which developed at the beginning of the present century, an increasing number of secular government schools were established. In some areas they assumed the main responsibility for native education, and in others this was left to mission schools, partially subsidized by government funds.

But in spite of the increased attention being paid to native education, progress was painfully slow. This is illustrated by a calculation made in 1938 by Mumford and Jackson. They considered the rate at which school facilities were expanding against

the numbers of children receiving schooling in the Gold Coast. Only about 6 per cent. of children of school age were actually attending government and government-aided schools. If, they calculated, the population remained stable and educational facilities continued to expand at the existing rate, it would be 600 years before all children of school age would be attending school. If, however, the population continued to increase at the rate then existing, it would be 3,500 years before universal elementary education existed in the Gold Coast.¹

This calculation, of course, was not intended as an accurate prediction of what would happen,² but was designed to show the magnitude of the problem and the difficulties facing those who wish to raise the level of literacy in dependent areas. Most of these difficulties arose from lack of finance. Because of low economic standards, local taxation was insufficient to provide educational facilities adequate to the situation, and there was a limit to the extent to which native education could be subsidized by funds provided by governing powers. Moreover, the education of children in a predominantly pre-literate community is a slower process than in communities where universal elementary education has been in force for many years. For one thing, native children suffer from special educational handicaps, not because of inferior intelligence but because European education is something alien to their cultural background. They not only have to learn their lessons, but must also learn a European language different from the vernacular spoken in their homes and among their companions. And their parents and other members of their community are usually not in a position to help them with their studies. Moreover, the whole routine of school life is alien to the pattern of activities in primitive society. Regular lessons, lacking in any of the spontaneous appeal of the processes of primitive education, are more tiresome, while teachers are often alien in race and cultural background. Considering such difficulties and the limited educational facilities available, it is not surprising that progress has been slow.

Nor has educational policy always been adapted to native needs. There has been a tendency to transplant European educational methods and values to situations to which they were not

¹ Mumford and Jackson (1), pp. 194–95.
² It has, in fact, been proved incorrect by the adoption after World War II of a vigorous programme of elementary education.
adapted on the assumption that such action was a Good Thing and would somehow help to produce better citizens. This assumption is only partially correct. For example, until comparatively recently, native education was primarily "literary"; that is to say, it consisted of the three R's and, in the case of mission schools, religious instruction. But such education at the primary level was of little use to children who, in the overwhelming majority of cases, would later return to their homes to lead the lives of peasants or else undertake unskilled labour. Even as secondary education developed, the economic institutions which would provide adequate openings for adult employment lagged behind educational developments. Educated natives, naturally enough, wanted the "white collar jobs" to which their education entitled them—and there were not enough such jobs to go round. The lives which most native pupils would have to lead as adults seemed to call for a different and more "practical" type of education.

Efforts were accordingly made to provide this. Increasing emphasis was placed on training in improved methods of agriculture which might raise the standard of peasant production, on mechanical skills which would lead to skilled or semi-skilled types of employment and on crafts such as carpentry which would be useful both at home and in European employment. But by this time it was too late to effect this reorientation without producing resentment. Educated and sophisticated natives interpreted it as a European device to "keep the native in his place" and to maintain his subordinate position as a hewer of wood and drawer of water. In some territories where a rigid colour bar in adult employment prevailed, this was at least partially true; but in such areas as West Africa, where discrimination did not exist to anything like the same extent, it was a misinterpretation of reforms introduced in a constructive spirit. But the resistance was there. Whether it was immediately attainable or not, the more ambitious members of the indigenous populations wanted economic and social parity with Europeans—and this could only be attained through the European type of education. As in so many other phases of culture contact situations, the realization of what was required came too late, after the damage had already been done, and educational reforms met with resistance because they did not conform to native aspirations.

We have referred, in dealing with missions, to the effect which
native education has often had in driving a wedge between the educated and semi-educated younger generation on the one hand and the illiterate and (in European terms) unsophisticated older generation on the other. The former have often acquired a contempt for their traditional culture without being fully adapted to participate in that of Europeans, from which, in any case, they were excluded by the lack of social and economic openings and in many areas by the colour bar. They thus lived in a sort of social limbo, largely divorced from their traditional cultural standards yet only very partially assimilated to those of Europeans. Malaise, resentment and political unrest have been the consequences.

In order to counteract this tendency, many successful efforts have been made along two lines. In the first place, attempts have been made to integrate native schools with the wider life of the society as a whole by making them into community centres where adults and children foregather for recreational and social purposes as well as for formal education. In the second place, efforts have been made to stimulate interest and pride in native culture by systematic instruction in arts and crafts, in folk-lore and in traditional history. Sometimes this tendency has had a somewhat "arty" flavour, and has presented a largely artificial and idyllic picture of traditional culture as something belonging essentially to a romantic past, rather than as a growing and developing mechanism for adjustment to present situations. But, on the whole, the increasing attention and respect paid to traditional culture has had a salutary effect.

An important issue of policy facing educationists in areas where literacy is at a low level lies in deciding between the claims of the mass of natives against the "favoured few". Given limited funds for educational development, should these be devoted primarily to producing universal literacy at a low level—the policy of mass education? Or should the main objective be to allow the more able and progressive pupils in the indigenous population—the favoured few—to reach the highest possible educational standards by providing increased facilities for secondary and higher education, leaving the mass of illiterate or semi-illiterate natives to fend for themselves? Some systems of native education—for example, in French dependencies—have leaned towards the latter policy,

---

1 A pioneering plan for educational developments along this line in New Guinea is outlined in Groves (1).
while British systems of native education have laid more emphasis on mass education, including the education of adults, on the assumption that there is no point in producing educated leaders unless they are to have educated followers. Clearly the two goals are not mutually exclusive—both mass literacy and the education of a cadre of leaders and experts are essential objectives. The balance to be struck between them will depend upon conditions prevailing at any particular time and place, and particularly economic and political trends in the territory concerned.

(A bibliographical commentary appears at the end of Chapter XIX.)
CHAPTER XVIII
CULTURE CONTACT IN TWO AREAS

1. Introduction

In the last chapter we reviewed in general terms some of the factors which are operative in situations of culture contact. We must now give greater concreteness to our exposition by examining in more detail the operation of some of these principles in two communities affected by European influences.

One point must be stressed at the outset. We have said that situations of culture contact are highly variable. The occurrence and influences of the various factors with which we are concerned differ widely from one situation to another. The communities which we shall examine should therefore not be regarded as "typical", though they do exemplify some of the changes which may take place in native societies under European influence.

The ethnographic material which we shall review was collected during the early 'thirties. Undoubtedly changes have occurred in both areas since then, though, as there have been no full-scale follow-up studies (p. 574), we cannot say what these have been. For the sake of smoothness of presentation we shall employ the "ethnographic present", that is to say, we shall write in the present tense, with the reminder that this applies to the time at which the ethnographic observations were made and not to conditions existing at the present time.

The two studies reviewed below emphasize different aspects of culture contact. The first, that of the Hehe tribe, is primarily concerned with the consequences of administrative influences, and the political and legal aspects of the situation are therefore emphasized. It gives a very good impression of the administrative mechanisms through which Indirect Rule operates and of some of the difficulties involved in carrying out this policy. In Malaita, on the other hand, economic and religious influences have been relatively more important and consequently a more rounded treatment of the subject is provided.

685
2. The Hehe Experiment

We review here material presented in Brown and Hutt, *Anthropology in Action*, a classic work in the field of applied anthropology. This monograph is the outcome of an experiment in collaboration between an administrator (A. McD. Bruce Hutt) and an anthropologist (G. G. Brown) in an attempt to discover to what extent anthropological knowledge can be applied to the practical problems connected with the administration of an African tribe. The experiment was carried out over a period of one year, amongst the Hehe tribe, who inhabit the District of Iringa, in the Iringa Province of Tanganyika Territory. In this territory a policy of Indirect Rule had been adopted. This was designed to provide the framework within which the administrative, social and economic progress of the people might be promoted from foundations resting on their past, compatible with their present and suited to their future. It aimed at a system deriving from and resting on local organizations, loyalties and traditions, but supervised by a trained British staff to assure to the people proper standards of security, honesty, justice and efficiency, and to allow for continual growth and development to suit current conditions.

In part, the experiment sought to discover whether the local government was based on tribal loyalties and traditional authority, deriving from the past, acceptable in the present and capable of appropriate development to meet future conditions, and whether the people were well governed and content. But it involved much more than this. In another context the key to it was stated by Malinowski: "The practical man should be asked to state his needs as regards knowledge on savage law, economics, customs and institutions; he would then stimulate the scientific anthropologist to a most fruitful line of research, and thus receive information without which he often gropes in the dark."

The main practical problems involved in this experiment were as follows: firstly, to evolve some criterion whereby the administrator may "state his needs" and not merely satisfy an idle curiosity; secondly, to evolve some method of presenting results which will include all that is relevant, and exclude all that is irrelevant, to the problems formulated; and, thirdly, to assign to the anthropologist and to the administrator each his proper task. The method finally adopted was that the administrator should
ask the anthropologist questions of fact and of the probable and actual consequences of administrative action, which concerned his practical problems; and that the anthropologist should limit his answers by a consideration of the particular circumstances which gave rise to the questions.

It soon became apparent that it was necessary to formulate precisely the duties of an administrator and the knowledge he should have in order to discharge them. These duties were firstly to give effect to policy and legislation formulated by the central government; secondly, to supervise and control the executive and judicial organs of the native administration so that they conformed to that policy and at the same time ensured proper standards of security, justice, honesty and efficiency; and, thirdly, to advise on the adequacy of existing arrangements and on the need for change. Such duties involve the supervision of Native Authorities and judicial functionaries; of native revenue, expenditure, taxation and the native treasury; and of the system of native local government under the policy of Indirect Rule. They imply consideration of problems of economic development, including improved agricultural methods, problems of over-stocking, soil erosion and marketing; and such general observations on changing conditions as the effects of European settlement, wage-labour, detribalization, education and so on.

All this means that a fairly wide range of knowledge is necessary, including knowledge of native political organization, the status of tribal functionaries and the position of the subject; native legal institutions and customary forms of punishment; the family and kinship; marriage and divorce; new religious beliefs; and more specific problems which may arise from time to time. From such an analysis the administrator was able to determine more precisely the range and scope of his questions and the criteria of what is relevant. What questions were actually asked was left to him to decide; but the anthropologist tended always to press that a larger body of knowledge was required by the administrator.¹

¹This illustrates a very important principle relevant to collaboration between anthropologists and administrators. The former, keenly aware of the richness and complexity of every human culture, are sometimes apt to stress observations which, though they may be vital to a thorough scientific understanding of a native culture, are not directly relevant to practical problems. On the other hand, administrators, particularly if they have had no anthropological training, are often too ready to seek solutions in terms of catch phrases such as “the land is owned by the clan” or “the chief was traditionally an absolute despot”. Such misleading and over-simplified formulations can have grave practical consequences. How far and along what lines the two points of view can be reconciled will depend upon the particular situation.
Some disagreements arose on this point, but they were finally solved by an agreed principle—that the administrator should be left to decide whether the information in question would or would not enable him to discharge more efficiently his tasks as analysed.

This system of question and answer resulted in emphasizing the importance of certain fields of knowledge and in minimizing certain others in accordance with the needs of the administrator. The latter is the principal factor responsible for the kinds and extent of information included in the monograph.

3. Traditional Social Organization of the Hehe

Political Organization.—The Hehe tribe justify their political organization by reference to traditions which tell of the military exploits of the two Muyinga chiefs, Muyugumba and Mkwawa, who unified by conquest the twenty-nine or more sub-tribes which are now comprised under the Hehe tribe. The factual accuracy of such traditions is very doubtful, but they are important because they are believed and accepted throughout the tribe as a charter for existing social relations between the various tribal factions, and for the right of the Muyinga family to rule. The political structure as it was during the rule of Mkwawa and up to the time of the German occupation in 1898 comprised the elements enumerated below, based upon a hierarchy of paramount chief, sub-chiefs and headmen.

The Chief.—The paramount chief performed judicial, legislative, administrative, economic and military functions. He was interpreter of the law and keeper of the peace. Appeals were made to him, and serious offences, such as murder, treason or witchcraft, could be judged only by him. He was assisted in these tasks by a council of vatambuli, who were chosen on account of their ability in sifting evidence and interpreting the law. The chief’s legislative powers were exercised through case-law decisions and through direct decrees. He had extensive economic powers. He owned large herds of cattle and made large acquisitions through the frequent raids of his tribe. In times of war he had unlimited powers of requisition over all cattle in the land. He had powers to call upon the labour of his men for the execution of heavy tasks, such as housebuilding, and to call for organized tribute from his headmen. Of very great importance was his monopoly of the ivory trade. It was he who supplied the guns and ammunition and organized the convoys to Kilosa or Bagamoyo, where tusks were
exchanged for guns, ammunition, cloth and other goods, which were distributed to members of the tribe. These distributions of wealth through the chieftainate had a consolidating influence and enhanced the power of the chief. He was the war leader, and this, in the time of Muyugumba, was the principal function of chieftainship. Universal service for all able-bodied men soon became a powerful factor of unity, drawing men together in a common aim. The chief collected special medicines to promote his power, and he was the chief priest of the tribe. He had a large household to serve him, a multiplicity of wives both at his residence and at other places of importance throughout the tribal territory, a host of slaves, a retinue of youngsters drawn from all parts of the tribe, and a cadre of men whom he ordered to live at his capital to act as a guard for himself. Thus an extensive network of powers, privileges and obligations established the complicated political structure in which the entire Hehe tribe was united, only to be upset by the Germans in 1898.

During the period of German occupation the power of the greater sub-chiefs was greatly reduced (see below). There was no tribal unity, and the Germans ruled directly through the headmen. When the British administration took over in 1926, Indirect Rule was introduced, and the old chieftainate was re-created in the person of Sapi, the eldest and senior son of Mkwawa. His rule was, however, very much modified. As judge, his function had not changed very much from what it was in the days of his predecessors. He still interpreted the law, heard appeals from the judgments of his sub-chiefs and exercised considerable influence on the growth and administration of Hehe law; but he had only limited jurisdiction, and his judgments were subject to appeal to the District Officer, while all serious crime was dealt with by a European magistrate. His administrative duties had undergone greater changes. His main police duty was now limited to merely assisting in the capture of criminals through the mechanism of the native administration. His financial duties comprised the collection of hut and poll taxes, of fines, fees and local dues, and the disbursement of tribal revenue. These duties had the effect of supporting the chieftainate, which was further strengthened by government support, by the power to call on communal labour in gardening or housebuilding, and similar privileges. The people accepted their obligations willingly because Sapi was hereditary ruler and was the chief recognized by the government. Opposition or
resentment there was, but it was neither organized nor effective.

The Sub-chiefs.—The paramount chief delegated some of his powers to about thirty sub-chiefs, who ruled in specified territories in the land. The sub-chiefs were either conquered rulers or close kinsmen of the chief. Mkawa seems to have tried to retain local chiefs as sub-chiefs under him, but to replace them or to balance their power by appointees of his own where they were likely to be troublesome. Their judicial functions were a replica of those performed by the paramount chief, except that they were limited by territory, that their decisions were subject to appeal to the chief and that they did not hear certain cases which were reserved for the chief. There were also limitations on their powers and functions as leaders in war and as accumulators and distributors of wealth, and on their privileges. Under them were the headmen who performed similar functions but who had no special privileges.

During the German occupation, attempts to rule through the native chief and through the sub-chiefs failed, a system of Direct Rule which ignored and disrupted the traditional political organization. The result was that they had to rule through the headmen. The old sub-chiefs were made to rule over smaller areas, and the headmen were given powers similar to those sub-chiefs, so that there was now actually a larger number of petty rulers, known to the Germans by the Swahili term *jumbo*. These *jumbe* had great powers. They were the only judges and there was no higher court of appeal. They soon grew corrupt, not only judicially but also financially, since the introduction of a poll-tax by the Germans and inadequate accounting methods gave them the chance to embezzle native revenues. These corrupt privileges partly accounted for the *jumbe*'s opposition to the chief when he was temporarily restored in 1920. In 1926 the British reintroduced the old system, retaining the existing headmen and creating a number of posts of sub-chief above them. There were changes in the relative functions of sub-chiefs and headmen, the most important being that the sub-chiefs alone had power to enforce their judgments, though the headmen actually heard more cases than did the sub-chiefs. The sanctions from which the sub-chiefs derived part of their authority were now descent and the fact that they retained many of their old privileges. As judges they performed their tasks well, but some forms of corruption remained. Some of them were
dilatory in granting hearings; some were inclined to delay; others to exercise favouritism; and, finally, some sympathized with their subordinates so much that they often gave corrupt assistance to them. However, the sub-chiefs were checked by their advisers, by the right of appeal and by the spread of education. Their main executive duty was the collection of taxes, and in this some corruption appeared, but not on a serious scale.

The Headmen.—There are seventy headmen in Hehe territory, and each is in charge of an average of a little over a thousand subjects, spread over an average area of 150 square miles. They derive their authority largely from government recognition, but their significance in the political structure is far wider than that. They have status through descent, and they act as intermediaries between their people and the superior authorities. Occasionally the area ruled by a headman coincides fairly well with the independent tribal areas of former days. Also, in very many cases the present headman is the only effective person who can supplicate the ancestral spirits on behalf of the community. This lends powerful support to his authority. There is also the fact that he "owns land"; in the sense that his permission must be granted before any man can build or plant on any area under his control. He fixes the boundary where necessary. Sometimes he employs special medicines to ensure the efficacy of his power; for instance, to kill his enemies or to make his followers favour his cause. He has several means of acquiring wealth, and may marry many wives to add to his social prestige. All these factors contribute towards stabilizing his position in the political structure. For their part, however, the people have to give their assent for the headman's authority to be effective, for they can if they wish exert passive resistance and thus render it ineffective.

The headman is judge, leader and executive of his community. As judge he listens to, and arbitrates in, the cases brought to him, and his judgments merely voice public opinion as expressed through his advisers and assistants at court. He has no power to enforce his judgments, but the people generally accept them willingly. Serious cases are sent on to the sub-chief. Many cases that come to the headman's court are merely cases which require public declaration of guilt or innocence without compensation being sought. The arbitrating character of the headman's functions coincides with the Hehe conception of a leader as an arbitrator. His executive tasks are many, but the commonest are tax
collection, carrying out the chief’s orders, collecting porters when official parties are on tour, and generally preserving the peace.

The headman rules over a number of native settlements known as *lilungulu*. These are not villages, but a number of houses strewn sparsely over a stretch of country. In the sparse nature of these settlements the headman finds very great help in the services of the *vakalani*, subordinates who act as delegates, messengers, legal assistants, tax collectors and helpers generally to the headman. They often have their own courts and dispose of much that would otherwise have had to be disposed of by the headman. In these capacities they fulfil an essential function, sometimes having to resort to physical violence to preserve peace. But they are unpaid officials, and are retained in the structure only by minor considerations such as prestige and exemption from unpleasant communal tasks. They also hold their posts purely at the will of the headmen, who personally appoint them, sometimes on the basis of kinship and sometimes on the basis of ability. At times they find it convenient to secure the support of important families in the community in the matter of general government. The position of the *vakalani* emphasizes that the smallest unit of effective government is that of the headman.

*The Subject.*—The Hehe is free to pursue his own social and economic interests in so far as he is not interfering with the person, activities, property and reputation of others, which are closely guarded by the tribal authorities. He is given full freedom of movement within the tribal boundaries, and can freely change his residence, except that while he is free to leave the area under the charge of one headman he must secure permission to build or plant in the territory ruled by another. He is obliged to refrain from breaking the law and from infringing other persons’ rights; to pay the government tax; to perform communal duties such as making roads and paths; to carry loads for government officials touring the country, which is the most disliked obligation; to build or plant for the local chief; and to discharge a number of other minor obligations. But apart from paying the tax, the Hehe’s obligations are not very heavy, requiring only some three or four days’ work in the year.

*Kinship.*—Among the Hehe kinship bonds take precedence over political obligations. The most fundamental bonds develop in the individual family between a father, mother and their children, and
these give a clue to the operation of kinship obligations in the wider kin group.

The father is the person in authority in his family. He makes the most important decisions affecting the progress of his children through life; for example, their education or marriage. He states the amount of *mafungu* (bride-price) for his daughter when she marries and supplies the *mafungu* for his son. From him the children derive their clan-name, their praise-name and their avoidance—atributes which they retain throughout their lives; and the bulk of his valuable property is divided between them when he dies. While the children owe him obedience, they are not obliged to obey his orders if these are contrary to customary proprieties. The mother’s authority is subordinate to that of the father; but her influence is often greater when the children are very young, and sometimes even when they are much older. Her consent to her daughter’s marriage is essential, and she is entitled to one-third of her *mafungu*, while she must supply one-third of her son’s. She leaves little to be inherited by her children, and no formal attributes are derived by them from her. When children have the same father and mother (the Hehe are polygynous and divorce is very common among them), their ties of association and co-operation are very much stronger than when they have only one parent in common.

Between brothers and sisters there are mutual bonds of assistance, co-operation and interdependence. The brother is guardian and protector of his sister, and their relations endure throughout life with greater permanence than between any other man and woman of the same generation. Between them there is the strictest incest bar, and certain acts, such as reference to sex during conversation, are strictly forbidden. Relations between half-brothers or half-sisters are less intense, although the incest bar extends to all persons classed as brothers and sisters in the wider kin group.

Because they perform functions similar to those performed by the mother, the mother’s sisters are regarded and addressed as “mothers”. The mother’s brother, however, belongs to a different category which, although it still involves a certain amount of protection for the child, is similar neither to that of the father nor to that of the mother. Similarly, the father’s brothers are regarded and addressed as “fathers”, but not the father’s sisters, who belong to a different category. The children of all these “fathers” and

---

1 This consists of a prohibition against eating certain kinds of food.
"mothers" one calls brothers and sisters, and the ties binding them to one are similar to those binding true brothers and sisters. Cross-cousins, on the other hand, are not regarded as similar to brothers or sisters, and it is from this group of kin that one chooses one's spouse.

Kinship relations vary in nature and in degree. The nature is determined by its dependence on the male or female line, by the sex of the persons involved and by the emphasis on patrilineal descent. Thus our previous references to the formal attributes deriving from the father do not negate the existence of relations with the maternal group, which are just as real and intimate, but perhaps inclined to become less effective as the degree of kinship becomes more distant. The emphasis on patrilineal descent, however, makes it impossible to forget one's descent line, which is crystallized in the patrilineal groups which may be called clans.

The clan is an exogamous group bound together by belief in direct paternal descent from a common ancestor—using the same clan-name, praise-name and avoidance. A man addresses a woman of his clan either as "aunt", "sister" or "daughter", except where the exact relationship is not known, when she is addressed as "daughter". Between clan members there are obligations for support in trouble, hospitality and recognition of kinship. Clan members form neither a local nor a functional group; they are scattered throughout the tribe and have no clan home. When a clan subdivides, lineage groups are formed. In these, as distinct from the clan, the degree of relationship to kinsmen is precisely known. A new mulongo (clan-name) is adopted, but the praise-name and the avoidance remain the same. The clan thus grows from the emphasis placed on patrilineal descent, and is merely a factor of social integration without political importance.

The bonds of kinship are stronger, and its obligations more strictly observed, when kinsfolk are living in the same community. Kinship and community obligations sometimes conflict, but at other times reinforce each other. While the Hehe are very meticulous in observing kinship obligations, the physical nature of Hehe settlements is a powerful factor which may cut through or reinforce these bonds.

Marriage.—The marriage bond is more intimate than other kinship bonds, but it is terminable, and does not blur the spouse's membership in his or her own family group.

The marriage ceremonial is divided into three stages: The
consent of the bride and of her parents must first be gained; next, all outstanding disputes between the two families must be settled by suitable compensation; and, finally, the mafungu, or bride-wealth, is stated by the bride’s father and paid over by the bridegroom, who then has a legal claim over his bride. A normal mafungu consists of about two cows, one bull, two sheep, two or three hoes and a little money, which must be refunded in case of divorce. The mafungu plays an important part in the marriage and can affect the marriage relationship in definite ways. If its amount were to be limited by legislation, as was once attempted by the chief, it would loosen the marriage bond and therefore increase divorces. It would also result in opposition from the bride’s father, whose family prestige rests partly on the privilege of demanding a high payment; and by depriving him of the discretion to fix the amount it could loosen his control over his daughter. But it would probably help those who elope, because they cannot pay the mafungu to arrange a regular marriage. The mafungu legalizes the marriage, and, unless it has been paid, the husband cannot force his wife to return to him if she deserts him, nor exact compensation in case of adultery. But while it is necessary to legitimatize marriage, it is not necessary to legitimatize children. Their position depends upon evidence of physical paternity, which takes precedence over any existing marriage bond.

Marriage involves certain mutual obligations. The husband has exclusive rights to the sexual favours of his wife; but he may distribute his own freely among his wives and other women provided he does not render himself liable to pay compensation for adultery with another man’s wife. He is under an obligation to provide his wife with children, and to assist in their upbringing. Each spouse must regulate his or her social contacts with persons of the opposite sex with customary propriety, although the husband is freer in this regard. Economic co-operation involves some division of labour—the woman doing most of the cultivation, cooking and other household duties, and the husband caring for the cattle, cutting firewood and doing the housebuilding. Failure in these obligations can lead to divorce.

The dissolution of marriage may be initiated by either husband or wife, but the wife must prove a good cause in order to obtain a divorce. Grounds such as ill-treatment by the husband, failure to fulfil his obligations, denial of sexual intercourse, neglecting to
seek medicines for fertility or for illness, or desertion are acceptable in court. If she does not love her husband, a woman may occasionally be granted a divorce, but only if she persists in claiming it.

The Hehe practise polygyny. The mutual obligations between a polygynous man and his wives do not differ greatly from those of a monogamist. But the polygynist’s first wife receives special social recognition (though not marital or material benefits), and her eldest son has the first right of succession to his father’s hereditary office if he holds one. Apart from this, the husband should give his wives equal attention in all respects and must treat each impartially. Each wife must have at least one room of her own, whether in a common house with her co-wives or in a separate hut.

Polygyny serves certain useful social ends: it provides a recognized status for surplus women; it is a traditionally accepted manner of improving one’s standard of living; and it releases a number of men for the performance of public duties. On the other hand, although there is effective co-operation between co-wives, jealousy sometimes prevails. Divorce is more common in polygynous marriages than in monogamous ones, and the worst adulteresses are the wives of polygynists.

Marriage involves far more than two persons. The husband has to treat his wife’s parents with ceremonial respect. On the other hand, the liberties existing between kin of the same generation lead not only to the levirate but also to what might be called preferred adultery, in which a man is more apt to commit adultery with his wife’s sister or his brother’s wife. When a man inherits his brother’s wife, no further mafungu is paid; but if she refuses to be inherited, as she can now do under the new law, and if she has not had any children, her mafungu is returned.

The Public Regulation of Family Life.—The apparently disproportionate treatment of kinship and of marriage by Brown and Hutt was determined by the terms of their agreement. A very great deal of the litigation going on in the law courts arises from marriage—hence its greater relative importance.

Family and matrimonial disputes which are not serious enough to go to court are dealt with by the family councils. These consist of all the senior men of the community who wish to participate and have the ability to take part in settling disputes. The wife

1 On the incidence of polygyny, see Vol. 1, p. 112.  2 Cf. p. 701 below.
takes her complaints to her father and kindred, who might advise her to return to her husband or to go to the headman. Petty thefts or adultery are summarily settled by the family councils, and when the family has to act as a unit, its actions are regulated by the family council. As unlimited free discussion is allowed and grievances may be stated publicly, men of the greatest legal skill are drawn in to participate. The family council is therefore also a legal training-ground and an educational institution.

Law.—We have seen in outline the complex system of social relationships which exists in Hehe society. There are both specific and general rights, interests and obligations, such as those arising from kinship, marriage or community of residence. Hehe law is based upon a recognition of this state of society, and is only called into operation to restore disturbances in it, such as the failure to fulfil a customary or legal obligation or the violation or infringement of a personal right. In this sense law is not the same as custom, for some customary obligations which have a moral basis are not supported by legal sanctions. The social disturbances which necessitate a process of law are infringements of the rights of individuals, even though they affect society as a whole. Hence no distinction is made between civil and criminal law. Individuals always initiate legal action, and society attempts through its legal mechanism to restore the balance. In pre-European times the only two criminal offences which were recognized were witchcraft and treason, for which the punishment was death; every other disturbance in the social balance had to be restored by the payment of compensation. Restoring the balance means that legal decisions must receive the consent of all parties—the offender admitting his guilt (in practice he never does so until it is proved) and the injured party accepting the compensation. Every case is fully argued in public, and the parties may be supported by witnesses, relatives and friends. Only the judge and the more responsible men keep the animated proceedings in order, and the defendant has the right of appeal to a higher court if he feels aggrieved by the decision.

Hehe law takes account not only of the purely objective act of offence but also of all other social factors, such as the relative social positions or sexes of the parties, their kinship relations and all relevant facts of social relation which can be adduced from the fullest social and legal context. This is easily appreciated, since
the object of law is to preserve these social relationships, and the jurisdiction of headmen’s courts, being limited to imposing compensation and not a fine, is consistent with the native concept of law. The sub-chiefs’ courts and that of the chief, of course, have now adopted British principles of punishment—such as fines and imprisonment.

*Land Tenure.*—The Hehe system of land tenure is comparatively simple because there is plenty of land, the population density being only about seven per square mile for the whole tribe. A tribesman must ask the local headman for permission to settle in the area. If this is granted, he receives a building site and sufficient land for cultivation. If the area is sparsely populated, he obtains a block of land and generally cultivates the land around his house. If it is thickly populated, he is given strips for cultivation amongst strips belonging to other men, the idea being that the best and the worst arable lands should be shared by all. Occupation is effective only in so far as the occupant lives in the area, and so long as he keeps his lands in continuous cultivation. A lapse of one year on any plot entitles anyone else to plant on it. Thus the value of land consists simply in the right of occupancy, since it is neither heritable nor saleable. Standing crops are, however, both heritable and saleable, but this does not affect the ownership of the land on which they stand. Grazing is entirely free, provided the cattle do not damage standing crops.

Within the family the man must divide his landholding among his wives for cultivation, and sometimes among his children. Each wife has a legal right to the allocation made to her, which can be defended both in the family council and in a court of law.

The system works satisfactorily in these conditions because there is plenty of land and there is no permanent improvement on it. But such factors as changes in agricultural methods or in the availability of land may necessitate radical alterations in the Hehe rules of land tenure.

*Economics.*—Three interdependent major divisions of Hehe economic activity can conveniently be distinguished: fundamental activities to maintain traditional life, the most important being cultivation of the soil, the care of livestock and house-building; the practice of traditional crafts such as smithing, pottery and woodwork; and, finally, activities connected with the acquisition of money.

Hehe agriculture is necessary to feed the household; to enable
the Hehe to dispense generous hospitality; and to earn a little cash, although the market for cash crops is very limited. The hardest task is the breaking of new ground, which is generally done by the men after the rains. The hoeing and planting is done mainly by the women. If a man has one wife, he will generally cultivate about one-third of the strips of land which provide for his family; if he has more than one, he cultivates proportionately less; if he has four wives, he does not cultivate at all. The area cultivated varies greatly, but in soils of average fertility a man with one wife and three children would cultivate about three and a half acres to provide food, seed and a surplus for sale. The staple crop is maize, but eleusine, sweet potatoes, beans, ground-nuts and marrow are also grown, and occasionally onions and tomatoes. The same ground is cultivated for years at a time, but a man often leaves exhausted soil after six or eight years to cultivate more and more distant land until he finds it more economical to shift his house closer to his planting grounds.

Plantations are cultivated either individually or co-operatively. Apart from co-operation between a man and his wife or wives, there are also co-operative efforts made by the local community. An essential feature of the latter is the preparation of native beer for the helpers, but this is reward for labour only in a limited sense. Co-operation takes place on the strength of social bonds and reciprocity, and the beer is shared even by people who have not worked for the supplier. A man always reciprocates the help of others, and in the end he gives as much help as he gets. The preparation of native beer would therefore seem to be an economic waste, but this method strengthens social bonds and turns drudgery into a social occasion.¹

Weeding and harvesting are done by the women. Each person has his or her own store, and a husband will still have one even if he cultivates nothing; but the wives' stores, though they are owned by themselves, are subject to household needs and to the general authority of the husband. Both men and women may own cattle, but the tasks of their herding, milking and shelter fall on the men. A woman has her husband or her brother to do this for her; a man may delegate the task to a son. Cattle are valued little for their milk or for food. They are far more important socially—being used as currency, as a means of storing and increasing wealth and as bride-price. They are also sometimes slaughtered

for funerals or for prayers to ancestors, but apart from this they have no ritual value.

Housebuilding is a heavy task. In the first place, the minimum requirements of a Hehe house are that it must have an idama, or entrance place, where the cattle are kept, cooking is done and the herd-boys sleep at night; a bwalo, or the social centre of the house, where beer is served and the younger children sleep at night; and a gati, or bedroom, which belongs properly to the wife and which may not be entered by anyone except the husband without her permission. Each wife must have her own gati and, preferably, her own idama. The gati is about thirteen feet wide by thirteen to twenty feet long. The rooms of an entire house may be laid out in a row, or it may be T-shaped, L-shaped or even enclose three or four sides of a quadrangle. Some of the houses are of the old Hehe type, with stout posts firmly lashed together and smeared inside and out with mud. Others are of the Bena type, made of a heavy mud wall built up in layers, each layer being allowed to dry before the next one is applied. In any case, they certainly take much effort in building, and with regular repairs to the thatching and with occasional additions, the work required is quite considerable and heavy.

The Hehe smiths form a clearly recognized group, and knowledge of their skill, including knowledge of the associated medicines, is handed down from father to son. They live the same social life and perform the same agricultural tasks as other members of the community. Their products consist of spears, bill-hooks, axes, hoes, bells, razors and adzes. Woodworking is practised by all men, and the products include hoe-handles, axe-hafts and spear-shafts. The women plait their own baskets and make their own earthenware, but knowledge of the latter skill is much less widely distributed among the tribe than that of the former.

A money economy has developed to serve the need to pay taxes, which account for about 31 per cent. of money incomes, and the need to buy imported goods such as clothes and hoes. The two principal sources of money income are wage-employment and the sale of surplus produce. Wages account for 32 per cent. of total money incomes, being generally earned on government works, on European plantations or from traders and missionaries. The sale of crops such as maize, potatoes and onions, small quantities of milk, eggs and chickens, and of stock, procure for the Hehe an average of thirty shillings a year. Some 5 per cent. of the tribe are
permanently employed on European farms. The use of money has become a widespread feature of Hehe culture. Perhaps one-half of all transactions by Hehe are made on a money basis, and many traditional transfers, such as payment for medicines and even bride-price, are now transacted in terms of money or with money itself. The form of exchange which is least likely to be reduced to a money basis is the co-operative exchange of labour in the cultivation of the soil.

The economic development of the Hehe must depend on increased cultivation, on the introduction of higher-priced crops, on the efficient utilization of the economic possibilities of their cattle and on an increase of wage-earning activities. Each factor has its own possibilities and limitations. Thus, increased cultivation must depend largely upon increased effort by the men, whose position in the organization of agricultural labour still allows far more room for expansion than does that of women. This change may result in the increased economic dominance of men over women, but it must decrease their efficiency as public men and in the conduct of tribal affairs, as the time available for these activities will have been much reduced. The major limitation to this development is the absence of a market sufficiently large to absorb the extra production. This factor alone also imposes a limit to the more efficient utilization of the economic possibilities of cattle, not to mention such other factors as cattle diseases, difficulties of large-scale organization and the absence of efficient methods of breeding cattle for quality.

If the Hehe are to depend upon higher-priced crops, then such factors as seed-selection, organization and management, and the acquisition of capital equipment, have to be considered. With regard to organization, we need only state that if indigenous social institutions are to be utilized as a basis of co-operation, then kinship and community bonds hold out the most promise. The political organization can be of limited use only; for example, for the purchase of equipment and the disposal of crops for which there is a stable market.

An increase in wage-earning activities must depend primarily upon the success of European farms and the successful adaptation of Hehe to labour conditions. The former must depend on Europeans, but the Hehe are not good labourers and are particular in their selection of employers.

Religion.—Hehe religion may be called ancestor-worship. It is a
system of begging ancestral assistance in certain emergencies and of placating the ancestral wrath which follows certain offences. Ancestral spirits are invoked for dangerous journeys, for inexplicable illness and to give rain. When a father curses his son or when there is family discord, the ancestors are angry and must be ritually appeased. Hehe religion is a family affair, uniting ancestors and descendants. The essential element of communion is the sacrifice, which may consist of flour, unfermented beer, sheep or oxen, of which kinsmen partake after the ritual. Sometimes communion is secured through diviners, but when intervention on behalf of the tribe as a whole is desired, it is sought through the chief. In addition to ancestral spirits, the Hehe also believe in a god, ngulwī, who is not worshipped, is remote from the affairs of men and is not ritually recognized. This deity seems merely to provide a simple explanation or expression of incomprehensible powers.

*Traditional Histories.*—Traditional histories are both scanty and unimportant among the Hehe, the emphasis being on tradition rather than on history, and their importance is confined to the charter they provide for existing social relations. There are also folk-tales which have no sociological significance except through their didactic value. A common feature, however, of these tales and traditions, and even genealogies, is that they are constantly contracting and modifying factual history, while preserving the full sociological significance of tradition.

*Magic and Witchcraft.*—Magic and witchcraft are not sharply distinguished by the Hehe. The methods of the one are similar to the methods of the other, the difference being merely in the purposes to which each is put. Magic is used either for finding out certain facts by divination, such as the nature and causes of illness, or for accomplishing certain ends such as curing illness or increasing the yield of maize. Correspondingly, there are diviners and practitioners of native medicine. But since all diviners are also practitioners, there are only two types of magician: the simple practitioner who can only supply the medicines necessary for the purpose in view; and the practitioner who is also a diviner, and who can discover the nature and cause of the trouble, such as witchcraft or ancestral wrath, and also supply the necessary medicine. No magic is considered efficacious without the proper medicine.

The three principal uses of medicine are for socially approved
purposes, such as curing illness; for purposes to which society
is morally indifferent, such as procuring a wife, killing an adul-
terer or catching a thief; and for purposes which are socially
condemned, such as causing loss, injury or death. Medicine used
for a purpose belonging to the latter category is classified as witch-
craft and its practitioner as a warlock. But while it is socially
condemned, witchcraft tends to preserve relative social status, as
no man would dare aspire above his fellows for fear of jealousy. It
also acts both as a prop for authority (many headmen have medi-
cines at their command for dealing with rivals and conspirators)
and as a threat to it. Whether it is good or bad, its basis is in
belief, and if it is to be eradicated, scientific concepts of causation
must successfully replace it in the minds of the tribesmen.

4. European Influences

The Administration.—Modern administration has brought several
benefits to the Hehe—peace, settled government, an effective
legal system and such benefits of European rule as educational
and medical services. It is still the most powerful single force
reacting on Hehe social life. The administrative system, however,
has certain defects which may affect its future development.
While it gives security and freedom to the people, it still allows
some room for corrupt practices and does not guarantee the posi-
tion of the headmen, who are necessary but who rule very largely
at the will of the chief. There is no internal constitutional check
on the chief’s power. He is supported by the government, and is
protected from rebellion and passive resistance from below. His
responsibility and that of his subordinates is upwards, not down-
wards, and there is no adequate expression of public opinion
from below. There seems, therefore, to be a need for sufficient
control over tribal institutions to ensure that abuses are checked
and causes for dissatisfaction removed; and for the continuous
evolution of tribal institutions in such a way that effective ex-
pression can be given to the wishes of the tribe upon matters of
internal policy. As for the latter, the only features which readily
suggest themselves for possible utilization are the apparent
democracy of the courts, which might be adapted to the political
sphere; and the annual gathering which takes place at the chief’s
headquarters under the presidency of the District Officer, which
might be used for registering and acting upon tribal opinion.

Another important feature of the future administration of the
Hehe pertains to the administration of Iringa township, which has problems of its own. It has a native population of about 2,500, comprising members of several different tribes, but is incorporated into the tribe and governed by the sub-chief. The interplay of several factors—such as the competition introduced into native social organization by Mohammedanism, the presence of a large foreign element, the heterogeneity of the tribal elements represented, and the differentiation of economic interests between town and country—seems to point to the advisability of separating tribal from township administration.

So far as supervising the legal institutions is concerned, there is a question of efficiency of method. The European administrative officer examines court records, hears complaints regarding delays or refusals to hear cases, and judges appeals. The records examined give a clear and honest view of the limitations and defects of the work of native judges, but they give no indication of outstanding cases or those which are refused a hearing. Some method of dealing with this problem seems necessary.

Another problem is that while it is recognized that supervision of native authorities is necessary, it cannot be effective unless the administrative officer is given an opportunity to study the natives and gain their confidence. The two necessary requirements are, therefore, an effective mode of communication between him and the people, and a longer period of duty in a locality to make possible a thorough study of native institutions.

**Taxation.**—The hut- and poll-tax accounts for approximately 31 per cent. of the average annual cash income of a tribesman, and is paid from wages or from the sale of property or produce. In terms of the former, the tribesman has to work for at least one month to pay it; in terms of the latter, he has to sell about 7 1/2 per cent. of his annual produce or surrender the equivalent of 10 per cent. of the value of his cattle. Thus the tax is well within the capacity of the tribe to pay.

The plural wives' tax was interpreted by the Hehe as a tax on the women themselves, not on the men for each wife they have in excess of the first, and its effect was that polygynists passed it on to their wives. The authorities accepted this position and considered the women responsible for the payment of the tax. An extension was to tax widows and unmarried women, too, since these would be encouraged not to marry if they remained untaxed. That this first attempt to impose a graduated form of
taxation on the Hehe should thus be misunderstood seems to indicate that they are not yet able to understand the principle, and a graduated tax based on cultivated acreage, house size or cattle would only have the effect of discouraging the possession of these forms of wealth. The conclusion is that a simple tax would be better understood by the tribe, would cause less difficulty within the tribe and would be easier to collect.

_European Law._—The Hehe have only a hazy idea of the principles and procedure of European law. Their commonest reaction to trial by European procedure is fear. They do not fear deliberate injustice, but they fear being misunderstood; and the strangeness of the surroundings and the mechanism of court procedure make them feel at a disadvantage. This probably accounts for the fact that the Hehe mostly confess and plead guilty to the crimes of which they are accused.

The field of punishment provides the most effective illustration of the interaction between native and European legal concepts. Capital punishment can hardly act as a deterrent to murder, which, among the Hehe, is mostly a crime of passion. Moreover, the Hehe murderer often commits suicide immediately after his crime to escape the consequences sanctioned by custom. Imprisonment is much feared but imposes little shame on the offender’s family, and once the sentence is served, the released prisoner resumes his ordinary place in the tribe. A fine is perhaps the most effective form of punishment, as it has a basis in native conceptions of justice. As we have seen, the Hehe did not distinguish between civil and criminal offences: both types of offence were liable to punishment by compensation. Fining has this common element with compensation: that it involves a loss of property on the part of the offender. As the former compensations were paid in part by the offender’s relatives, a fine is now reinforced by the social attitudes which formerly condemned the offender who was liable to pay compensation.

_Recreation._—The old ancestor-worship of the Hehe tends to succumb easily to both Christianity and Mohammedanism. Adoption of either of these religions means, for one thing, the abolition of the localized basis of the old religious bonds and the establishment of territorially wider religious and social bonds. New self-conscious communities develop which may possibly affect loyalties and therefore the political structure. The disappearance of tribal belief in ancestors is likely to weaken the
religious sanctions for the powers of the chiefs. The force of the older beliefs is largely lost, and many tribal observations have been neglected.

With regard to family life, Christianity makes the marriage bond more enduring, discourages divorce and prohibits polygyny. The effect is to raise the status of women and to emphasize the bonds within the elementary family. One result is that the disappearance of polygyny will create problems of its own; for instance, the treatment of the surplus women. Mohammedanism does not impose on the Hehe any entirely foreign social concepts. Many points of doctrine are known but neglected, particularly if they conflict with Hehe custom, and in any case few Hehe are conversant with a large proportion of them. Neither religion necessarily means the loss of belief in witchcraft.

*Education.*—The first schools for Hehe children were established by the Italian Consolata Fathers soon after they began operations in the territory in 1896. Both the government and the Berlin Lutheran Mission followed suit with schools of their own, the most important part of educational progress coming after World War I. Reading and writing, religious instruction, English, hygiene, crafts such as carpentering and smithing and a little history and geography constituted the first lessons given to the Hehe, who came to look upon education as a desirable end in itself. Even scientific agriculture was not popular with them except when its study led to direct gains; for example, when it was concerned with saleable crops. The standard of education offered was not very high, and there was a definite handicap in the fact that nowhere in the tribe was instruction given in the tribal language. While education brings literacy, it might tend to weaken native political institutions, although on the other hand it might increase their efficiency.

*European Settlement.*—By the end of 1933, 139 European settlers and their families had established themselves on 233,910 acres of Hehe land and had engaged in various branches of farming. The principal crops grown by them were tea, coffee, heavy tobacco, wheat and almonds; some were trying sheep and cattle farming. The main effect of this settlement was that the Hehe were afforded the opportunity to find employment near to their homes. As previously noted, the Hehe would rather content themselves with less money than break their connection with their local social life in search of wages in distant localities. In
addition, settlement brings a ready market for their surplus cattle and produce, and the prices obtained for these are maintained at a level higher than what would otherwise have existed. Indirectly the most general effect of European settlement on the Hehe is an improvement in their general standard of living. In the house, for instance, shuttered windows are replacing the tiny holes which used to serve as ventilators, wooden beds are becoming common, carpentered chairs are also gaining entry into Hehe houses and clothes are always increasing in quantity and quality. Contact with Europeans has tended to accelerate the spread of these innovations through the tribe, and even though occasional clashes occur, the Hehe would be likely to regret very much the withdrawal of European settlers from their midst.

5. Conclusions of the Hehe Experiment

From this experiment several advantages have been derived, both for anthropology and for the task of administration. The direct use of anthropology to administrators has been fairly closely defined, and has been the major factor imposing a limit to the actual information recorded in the monograph. Furthermore, the administrator has discovered several fields in which anthropological information has actually helped him to perform his task with greater certainty that serious mistakes are being avoided. He has also been able to institute certain changes in tribal administration with advantage: registration of marriages and divorces was introduced to stabilize marriage; the position of the headman was given more recognition by the administrator and has therefore become much more secure; certain use was made of local loyalties for the purpose of amalgamating different tribes under a common administrative system; headmen’s courts have been given a definite place in the legal system; some insight has been gained by the administrator into native law; and, finally, knowledge of the economic organization of the tribe has been of assistance in preventing the adoption of measures which would have had little chance of success. These examples show how much use can be made by the administrator of information which, while he normally has little spare time to collect it, can be obtained more easily and with scientific accuracy by the anthropologist.

The experiment also enabled the collaborators to decide that the best method for the presentation of the results is by organizing
information so that it gives as clearly as possible a systematic account of tribal life within the limits imposed by the requirements of the administrator, but without reference to the problems which gave rise to these requirements. Of course the validity of this can be decided only after several similar experiments have been undertaken in other parts of the world; such experiments are therefore strongly urged. For these, the major suggestions which would be offered as a result of this experiment are, firstly, that there should be a clear demarcation of functions between anthropologist and administrator, each of whom must be given the final say in his own field; secondly, it would be advantageous if each had some preliminary knowledge of the other's task; thirdly, that sufficient time should be given to the project, preferably not less than eighteen months. Incidentally, the individuals chosen should be temperamentally suited to each other.

The plea for further experiments of this kind is made not only because the conclusions drawn from this one need to be tested for different times and places; it also derives from the need to obtain results and conclusions which are of wider validity than those from a single tribe or area. Such conclusions can be the only basis for an effective formulation of the policy of a central government. The area under its jurisdiction may be extensive and subject to varying conditions, so that a study of all the local variations is essential before a valid formulation of policy can be attempted. This would seem to necessitate, in a wider context, the formation of something like a central clearing house for anthropological information, which would have the functions of pooling the results of local research and formulating wider generalizations based on these; of supplying relevant information to administrators concerned with particular localities; and of formulating its own questions to field-workers. The collaborators in this experiment feel that the existence of some such institution would have materially added to the value of their own results.

A final point is that the use which the administrator is able to make of anthropological knowledge does not mark the final limit to the utility of applied anthropology. Missionaries, employers of native labour, teachers, doctors and others who have to deal with native peoples have their particular problems which require knowledge of particular fields of culture. The extent of their requirements can be determined only by a systematic attempt to discover it.
6. The Traditional Culture of Malaita

*The Solomon Islands.*—Dr. Ian Hogbin’s work, *Experiments in Civilization*, is a study of the processes of culture contact in a community on the northern end of Malaita in the Solomon Islands. These islands were first sighted by the Spaniard Mendana in 1568, but were subsequently lost for two centuries before the Frenchman Bougainville rediscovered them in 1768. Thereafter contacts with Europeans became more frequent—there were dealings such as the purchase of fresh supplies for whaling and trading ships and the exchange of such articles as hatchets, muskets and ammunition for turtle shell, bêche-de-mer and sandalwood. But relations between Europeans and natives were never entirely friendly. There are records of many acts of treachery and murder on both sides, and in the latter half of the nineteenth century the deplorable practice of “blackbirding” flourished, only to be finally checked some years after the establishment of British rule. While the missions took several decades in the latter half of the nineteenth century to evangelize the natives, by the turn of the century Europeans had established working relations with them. Government was established, giving commercial interests and the missions the measure of safety and protection which each desired for the advancement of their own interests. These agencies are each responsible for some of the cultural changes which have taken place.

*Local Organization.*—The social organization of north Malaita rests largely upon two principles: kinship and residence. The primary local unit is the district. While the people live in isolated homesteads, the country is divided into local districts the residents of which tend to unite in distinct social groups for the achievement of common ends. There is no centralized political authority, but members of districts combine under their own leaders for communal undertakings such as the preparation of new planting grounds or the taking of revenge on offenders who belong to other groups. They refer to themselves by the name of their district. Membership is determined by ancestry, and a person may live in any district in which any one of his ancestors has lived and in which he participates in the offering of common sacrifices to ancestral spirits. As ancestors are reckoned either through males or through males and females, a person normally has a wide range of choice of a district in which to live. A man
commonly resides in the district in which his father has lived. Marriage is patrilocal, although a man may sometimes go to live in his wife's district if he can show relevant ancestry. Every district thus comes to contain only persons who are related. As it is customary for relatives to be prepared to assist one another in times of need, this customary norm strengthens the two principles of kinship and residence. Ties on the father's side tend to be stronger than on the mother's side. Frequent social relations tend to emphasize kinship ties much more within the district than outside it, and the local district tends to become the most effective unit of social organization. In some ways it may be considered similar to a clan, but as the clan is by definition unilateral and exogamous, and as the district is neither, it cannot be regarded as a localized clan.

Kinship.—The kinship system is built upon an extensive classificatory system. All the father's brothers and all relatives standing in that relationship to the child such as the father's father's brother's sons, are addressed by the term maka, "father". Similarly the mother's sisters, true and classificatory, are called thainaka, "mother". The father's sisters and mother's brothers are called koko'o, the term used for grandparents. Parallel cousins are classified with brothers and sisters, but cross-cousins are referred to as ndi'i. The natives, however, recognize four degrees of kinship—the "true", the "second", the "near" and the "distant"—associated respectively with decreasing degrees of intimacy.

Kinship organization provides the basis upon which much of the force of interpersonal relationships is built. The parents have most of the responsibility for the upbringing of their children. A few weeks before the birth the mother builds for herself and the baby a small hut in the bush, where she later gives birth to the child without any assistance whatsoever. She nurses it all by herself, and after three months returns to the homestead. The father now sees the child for the first time, and is the first to share the care of it with her. Next after him come his mother and then his wife's sisters, ready to offer assistance in the nursing. As the child gradually learns to recognize more of its kin, so it also learns to expect care, protection and food from them, and to behave towards them in the appropriate manner. It is taught to show generosity towards its playmates and to have respect for the property of others. The natives stress that parental affection alone can ensure filial obedience, and whipping is very rare. When
other classes of kin, such as the father’s brothers, his sisters and
the mother’s brothers, and also more distant kin such as cousins,
come to be recognized, the child is encouraged to employ the
appropriate kinship terms towards them and to receive food from
them. In this way, their relationship not only to the child but
also to one another is emphasized.

The child, however, cannot remain for ever at the receiving
end. After puberty he begins to learn also to give. Now he pays
visits to relatives in other districts, and may stay a few days to
help with the gardens. From older men he learns, in the company
of his age mates, of the heroic deeds of his ancestors, and to be
jealous of insults offered to his district. He learns to be proficient
with his club and bow and arrow, and learns also the dances and
the religious rites and beliefs of his people. By early manhood the
obligations of kinship are firmly impressed upon him. He has to
assist in large-scale operations, such as planting, housebuilding,
the preparation of feasts and sometimes raiding expeditions to
exact vengeance. While he devotes much of his time to helping
relatives, however, his parents are not forgotten. He continues to
stay near them and assist them, as they were responsible for his
early upbringing; and in any case they still control the family’s
supply of material wealth upon which he must ultimately rely
when it comes to considering bride-price.

Marriage.—Marriage itself may not occur till a man is twenty-
five years old, or even later. The desire for sexual gratification is
partly a motive, but a man also desires to have children, the
prestige of the married state, the assistance of his wife in gardening,
and a home where he can have a meal without putting himself
under an obligation to others. As it is impossible for a young man
to accumulate all the valuables required for handing over to the
bride’s relatives, he has to rely upon his elders—a fact which,
since the age of marriage is so late, not only helps to uphold
traditional authority, but also emphasizes the importance of
obtaining the parents’ approval in regard to choice. Three
separate presentations of valuables are necessary, extending over
a few months, before the bride can be finally taken over as a wife.
The valuables, passing almost wholly from the bridegroom to the
bride’s father and relatives, impose upon the husband a duty to
treat his wife well, for if she deserts him he cannot claim the valu-
ables back and his relatives will not bother to seek a new wife for
him. On the other hand, the wife has to be on her best behaviour;
for if she is sent back to her father on account of her bad behaviour or laziness, he has to return all the presents. This is emphasized by the bride’s father in a formal speech before she goes away to live with her husband. The dissolution of marriage is extremely rare, and in any case there is no machinery for it.

In their new home the husband and wife set out early to build up their economic position. They begin to cultivate new land with the assistance of relatives, to raise a number of pigs of their own, and in time will learn to confide in and cherish one another. A separate house has to be built for the wife, where the man may have his meals and sleep with his wife. Adultery is extremely rare, the penalty for a man being death, if he is found guilty. Each spouse is now in touch with a wider circle of affinal kin, and has to behave to each class of relatives in the appropriate way. Mutual respect and helpfulness, perhaps some restraint, now come to mark relations between affinal relatives.

The obligations to be helpful to others and to be generous with food are important. There are always gardening tasks to be performed, housebuilding to be done, feasts to be prepared or even raiding expeditions to be executed. A person who consistently shirks his obligations will learn his lesson in due course. Hogbin quotes the illuminating case of a man who was always making excuses when others were housebuilding. When his house fell into disrepair, no one would help him build a new one and he was living in a leaky hovel. Laziness is condemned and the hard worker is praised. If kinship obligations are not fulfilled, the group may become divided. This is not only undesirable, it is also dangerous. Sorcerers rarely dare to bewitch a member of a strongly united group for fear of reprisals. Reciprocity ensures the preservation of kinship ties and the unity of the group.

*Economics and Leadership.*—Kinship also has a part to play in the choice of a new leader. The people of Malaita are not subject to any central political authority. Each district leader (*ngwane-inoto*) is chosen by virtue of his wealth. The position is not hereditary, but may change hands as often as any prospective leader is successful in a competitive display and distribution of wealth and food, for it is in this way that he gains his political supporters. Leadership is open to all on an equal basis.

Anyone who had ambitions of becoming a *ngwane-inoto* would begin by cultivating larger gardens, raising more pigs and
accumulating more *tafuli*e\(^1\) in readiness for the appropriate ceremonies. In these tasks relatives are always ready to help, but there is a native saying that “he who wishes to become a *ngwane-inoto* must have a roof capable of providing shelter for many beds”. Thus he must make the necessary preparations beforehand, for the assistance of relatives can be secured only at the cost of a heavy drain on resources. When he is ready he makes a public announcement that he intends to make an offering to the spirits—a privilege which only the really wealthy can afford. This is equivalent to publicly declaring his intention some day to become a *ngwane-inoto*.

On the appointed day a large feast is prepared, at which several pigs are killed and several thousand taro are prepared. The task of supplying the items of food falls mainly upon the aspirant, though his relatives may assist by contributing a few pigs and taro. The actual preparations are carried out by himself and his closest relatives. To his relatives who have donated pigs and taro he distributes *tafuli*e in appreciation of their assistance. The kidneys of the pigs are handed over to the priest, who makes a sacrifice and offers a prayer to the spirits; the remainder of the feast is distributed among all those present. The feast is followed by a dance in which nearly all the men take part, deriving the greatest enjoyment from it, not only because they please the ancestors, but also because by it they have an opportunity to show themselves off to those present. Old grudges are laid aside, and it is because of the enjoyment and the peace associated with feasts that their minds now become attracted to the giver of the feast as an acceptable successor to the position of *ngwane-inoto*.

These ostentatious feasts are a reflection of hard work. And in a community where leadership depends upon economic success and is open equally to all, the contenders for the position of leadership are subject to a highly competitive process of selection involving a heavy drain on resources. It is not only competitive as between contenders for the same position in the same district. Ultimately it must also become one between districts, and this is the way in which the relative status of different districts is determined. The person who has the most relatives, or who is able to marry the most wives, or who has the largest following, is the person who secures most assistance, and is therefore likely to

\(^1\) These are strings about a fathom long of small red shell discs which, among other things, form part of the bride-price paid at marriage.
be first to the top. The series of competitive feasts has to be kept up all the time in order to ensure that one is not outdone by others. In this way pressure is brought to bear upon the leader. He maintains order, upholds the reputation of the local district and sees to its protection, and for these reasons receives the practical support of the people. He is also the principal organizer of the series of distributions of food necessary at the death of a priest before the spirits may once more be propitiated. He has here an important function in maintaining the religious institutions of the society.

In the matter of maintaining order, however, the leader is seldom called upon to intervene. Only in sudden or serious quarrels is he required to conciliate. In these days when the people cannot take matters into their own hands as they were once able to do—for example, when they could take vengeance on a sorcerer—the ngwane-inoto has to manage as best he can to please both the people and the administration; for if he incurs the displeasure of the people, they are free to leave him and support another ngwane-inoto. The position is therefore not an entirely secure one. The occupant must continually show economic prowess and must always consider the wishes of his people. Furthermore, as he does not hold the position by birthright, it is a goal for upward mobility demanding from him the utmost efficiency and judiciousness.

Crime and Punishment.—In view of the limitations on the power of the ngwane-inoto to settle disputes or punish crimes, one of the commonest ways of dealing with crime is retaliation by magic. Almost everyone in the community knows at least one system of magic for making a chosen person suffer, either by inflicting disease or by causing his fences to rot so that pigs may break in and destroy his crop. Any offence may incite a magician to perform magic against an offender. For instance, Hogbin quotes the case of a man who admitted having inflicted illness upon three neighbours for “failure to treat his wife with proper respect, handing over bad fish at the market in return for excellent taro, and giving an unpalatable joint of pork at a feast”.

Every system of magic consists of a universal formula of one rite accompanied by a spell. The rite is performed in complete secrecy, and may only be passed on from one person to another either by inheritance or by actual purchase. No attempt is ever made to discover whose magic is responsible in any particular

1 Hogbin (5), p. 83.
case of illness, and in any case this would be difficult, as magic is always secretly performed. The social significance of this weapon, however, is that, while we know it to be totally ineffective, it does provide the society with a safety valve for anger, by which one may relieve one's feelings without actually causing harm to anyone.

Death, in contradistinction to other misfortunes, is always considered to be produced by sorcerers, and the community must avenge it by killing the sorcerer when a man of importance has died. Nobody claims to know how sorcery is carried out, but popular report has it that a spirit familiar is called up from the spirit world by a spell and is given food remains from the intended victim's table to eat. The victim will immediately become ill and, if the ancestors fail to protect him, will surely die in a very short time. As this is a grave menace to the community, it deserves the most drastic method of retaliation. A formal "inquest" is held to determine the sorcerer responsible. In this a specialist invokes the spirits by a standard rite and, being then possessed by them, is led to the house of the culprit. The identity having thus been established, the next thing is to exact vengeance, which then becomes a choice between raiding the sorcerer's settlement and killing him (although this is seldom done when his group is more powerful) or exacting compensation. Deaths after an illness are always attributed to sorcery, but accidental deaths through drowning or homicide are also attributed to it if suspicions of sorcery are well enough grounded. These suspicions often form the only guide in the so-called "inquest", so that what was already public opinion is merely confirmed by the "inquest", which gives justification for the killing of the sorcerer.

Sexual offences are also seriously regarded. As the natives abhor the premarital unchastity of women, a woman who has been involved in a scandal would find it extremely difficult to find a husband, and her relatives therefore do their best to avoid this difficulty. The seducer of a young woman is almost always sought out to be killed. When a young man cannot be killed because his relatives assert their intention to protect him, compensation is accepted instead. Where the daughter of a ngwane-inoto is concerned, however, the seducer is always sought out to be killed, as no amount of compensation is considered sufficient to repair the damaged reputation of her district. Similarly, where a married woman is concerned, the adulterer must be killed. The
only exception which Hogbin was able to record was a case where a son of a ngwane-inoto was the adulterer; but here an unusually large compensation of twenty tafuli'ae and several pigs was accepted reluctantly. Apart from these social barriers to illicit sexual intercourse, there is also a widely accepted belief that sexual intercourse is injurious to health. Young men, too, are warned that young women who solicit them may be looking for a father for the child they have already conceived. Taken together, these forces constitute a powerful deterrent to promiscuity.

The legal system is a matter of each person taking action on his own behalf when the occasion demands. But as the assistance of relatives in all major quarrels is always involved, the system often leads to a prolonged vendetta, even long after the original cause of the trouble has been forgotten. In committing a wrong or in avenging a death, the natives often act from impulse without a full appreciation of the consequences. Thus while punishment is only partly a deterrent to crime, the native people cannot be said to be in constant fear of punishment. What the natives are concerned about is to secure redress of an exact equivalent of the wrong they have suffered. In this there is a significant difference of attitude from that involved in the principles of British law.

Religion.—The Malaita religious system, in many ways the driving force of the whole culture, is a local version of ancestor worship. The theory behind it is simply that the spirits of the dead have an influence on ordinary human affairs, and that to ensure their intervention, either for good or for ill, they must be propitiated in the appropriate manner. Every dead man is associated with three spirits: the akalo, which can influence human affairs; the ano-na, that invisible ghost which sometimes frightens people in dark places; and the mango-na, which after death passes on to the spirit land. The akalo stays near the sacred burial grove, where it is said to know the affairs and intentions of all men. A man always worships only a selected number of his ancestors' akalo, but may change his allegiance if he is consistently unlucky. The akalo are supposed to have the powers of protection against illness and misfortune; of neutralizing the ill-effects of magic; of conferring benefit upon the labours of mankind; and even of causing illness or death if they have been treated carelessly or if they are displeased. This they may do in cases of illicit intercourse on the part of a woman, of the murder of a
relative or even of encroachment on the domain traditionally associated with the opposite sex. Spirits may also be propitiated to ensure success in war. As the priest is the only one in the community who knows the ritual procedure to secure the intervention of the spirits, his position is extremely important. So is that of the ngwane-inoto, who is responsible for enabling the priest to reach the position where he can perform his functions. The priest occupies his position by birthright, and passes it on to his son when he dies.

7. European Contacts in Malaita

Depopulation.—One of the first manifest effects of European contact was depopulation. Many theories have been put forward to explain it; for example, that of Professor Roberts, who holds that it was merely the continuation of a process which had begun prior to contact, resulting from a rotting culture in which “there was a general decline, an indefinable malaise in the stock itself”. Quite apart from the difficulty of showing that a “rotting culture” causes a decline in population, it has yet to be proved that depopulation had set in before European contact—a point on which evidence is lacking.

Another theory, that of Litton Forbes, medical officer in Fiji in 1874, claims that destroying the native culture brings dullness and monotony into native life in place of the old colourful exuberance. The will to survive is choked, so to speak, and a general pessimism sets in and causes the population to wither away like one suffering from a wasting disease. This theory, too, is highly questionable. It would lead to the expectation that even in Malaita today the heathens would be actually happier and less subject to death than the Christians, which is simply not true. Still another theory is that there has been a decline in birth-rates caused by practices such as abortion and contraception, by gonorrhoea and by the absence of men of marriageable age on plantations.

None of these theories is supported by field investigation. The only acceptable explanation seems to be that depopulation in Melanesia is caused by introduced diseases. Native health having already been undermined by such old complaints as yaws, hookworm and malaria, the natives are highly susceptible to introduced diseases such as gonorrhoea, tuberculosis, dysentery, leprosy, smallpox and measles. The obvious way to curb the falling population is through medical attention and an improvement in

---

1 Roberts, S. H., Population Problems of the Pacific.
native diet, which is often sadly lacking in quality and balance. There is much to commend the suggestions made by some writers who have emphasized the "psychological factor", and advocated the stimulation of native interest in substitute activities such as pursuing wild game instead of human heads. Such courses are likely to contribute to better adjustment but not to increasing the population.

The Administration. The system of government consists of the Resident Commissioner of the British Solomon Islands Protectorate, assisted by a District Officer on each of the principal islands, who in turn is assisted by headmen each in charge of a number of districts. In the districts themselves are, of course, the ngvane-inoto, who still exercise such of their traditional authority as may be recognized by the people, but who are not officially employed and receive no salary. The Resident Commissioner is responsible to the High Commissioner for the Western Pacific in Fiji. The legal code administered is in theory that of England, except in the case of certain matters specifically dealt with by local regulations, such as those prohibiting the supply of ammunition and intoxicating liquors to natives, and those regulating their engagement and employment by Europeans. Capital offences are always dealt with by the Resident Commissioner or a Judicial Commissioner, but other offences are dealt with mainly by the District Officer. There is also a body of native police for the execution of the law.

Ngvane-inoto nowadays still settle minor disputes between their followers, but where these are beyond their powers, they are referred to the headman, who, it is clearly recognized, has the machinery of government behind him and may be instrumental in the imprisonment of wrongdoers. The headman has to be familiar with judicial procedure, and actually tries the cases reported to him, always leaning heavily upon traditional law. When the case is a serious one, however, he refers it to the District Officer. Those which he hears are settled on the basis of traditional practice, sometimes with reference to the opinions of bystanders, and often involve the payment of one or more tafuli'a as compensation. These cases cover such matters as breach of the traditional law of land tenure, wife-beating, slander and the distribution of bride-price. In addition, the headman organizes

1 The administrative position of the Solomon Islands has been radically altered since Hogbin's visit (cf. Section 1).
any labour required for the maintenance of the government road which runs around the island, and on occasion inspects the various settlements to see that they are kept clean and free from pigs.

So far as cases dealt with by the District Officer are concerned, the most important have to do with the relations of natives with foreigners; for example, the leasing of land by Europeans. Of those that are purely native, the most serious are concerned with adulterers who, in native eyes, have always deserved the death penalty. In one case in which a native had murdered his wife’s lover his action received so much approval in native eyes that he was sentenced to only two years’ imprisonment. Where polygamy is involved, however, there is a conflict of principles between the missions and the administration, the latter preferring to leave polygamists alone. When a polygamist is a Christian, however, the administration interferes, considering the offender to be an adulterer. Apart from these offences, perhaps the most important is failure to pay the head-tax of about five shillings per annum, the penalty for which is imprisonment. The head-tax has the effect of more or less forcing the natives to work in European plantations for at least some of their time.

Between native and European law, however, there is perhaps no case of conflict greater than that found in their attitudes towards sorcery, for while native law required the death penalty for this offence, British law ignores it altogether.¹ The basis of the attitude of the Administration is easy to define: Evidence from an “inquest” is unacceptable in a court of law, and since rites are performed in complete secrecy, it is impossible to obtain evidence on which to convict, unless perjury is to be encouraged. In any case, sorcery is known to science to be totally ineffective and, since sorcerer’s practices are harmless, why bother to punish them? Moreover, would it not be contradictory to declare that sorcery is ineffective and also to punish those who practise it? Perhaps, after all, the solution of this difficulty lies ultimately in teaching the people the real causes of disease and in the meantime leaving sorcerers alone.

The reaction of natives to European administration is interesting. They certainly make no bones about the fact that it is alien. That it often demands a course of action different from what custom would have dictated is keenly felt, and often, too, the

¹ Administrations in other dependent areas have treated sorcery as a punishable offence.
native wonders whether a "legitimate" course of action would ultimately entail imprisonment. That offences such as adultery are not more severely punished is regretted; but that the sorcerer should escape altogether both the traditional penalty of death and the European prison is simply incomprehensible. Again, the natives do not understand the facts about the head-tax; they consider it a complete waste of money. Europeans have enough money already—why should they demand more from the poor native? Imprisonment, too, is quite misunderstood. A person returning from prison does not feel at all ashamed, probably because some acts for which a term of imprisonment is imposed are ones to which they are morally indifferent. That they should be compelled to work without pay, however, is much disliked. The older folk also regret that nowadays they cannot fight in order to maintain the honour of their districts. They complain that the ngwane-inoto and the leading men have been robbed of their traditional authority because of the modern system of punishment, which no longer requires the offender to depend upon them for assistance or protection; and that they are therefore losing their control. Some of the younger men, however, consider it a relief that having to carry weapons to one's gardens and so on is no longer a necessity. Disputes are now confined to individual persons and are settled quietly by the headmen, who are regarded as a definite advantage, instead of being fought out between groups. One of the effects of the administration has been to break down the social barriers between groups, thus conducing to a greater measure of unity.

Commerce.—Commercial interests in the Solomon Islands are not directly concerned with native well-being, and even though it is often argued that the only way to improved standards for natives lies in their working for Europeans for part of their lives, any concern which European plantation owners may feel for native welfare can only be their concern as private individuals and not as a class.

Native youths leave home at about the age of eighteen for an initial contract of two years, though this may be renewed for periods of one year at a time if they stay with the same employer. They may be away for a period of at least four years altogether; and while some of them who are "old hands", well-known and trusted on the plantations, may take their wives with them, most of them postpone marriage until their final return. The minimum
wage was about £1 per month in addition to their keep, clothing, blankets, mosquito-nets, tobacco and soap. The working week was fifty hours. Work may consist of cutting copra, acting as ships' deckhands and engine-boys, and working as house servants and government employees. Where housing is supplied, it has to conform to the standards laid down by government regulation. Most of the earnings are used to buy trade goods such as axes, knives, clothing and tobacco, but usually some is reserved for the head-tax. Some of the goods and some of the money left is distributed to relatives, the hope always being that kinship ties may be emphasized, and that the giver may in future be able to reap the reward of a relative’s assistance in garden work or in arranging a feast or a marriage.

The period of absence has caused some hardship in the case of youths from islands like San Cristobal and Guadalcanal, where sexual morality is lax and youths feel sexual desire more than do those from islands where a rigorous sexual code is maintained. In one case a youth aged less than eighteen years was sentenced to seven years’ imprisonment for “unnatural behaviour”. It is hardly appropriate that the remedy should be sought in regulations rather than in alleviating the conditions which gave rise to the defect in the first place. It is also of interest to note that, as an effect of contact with youths with loose morals, the sexual code on Malaita itself is becoming lax, much to the dissatisfaction of older men.

Direct contact with Europeans is reduced to a minimum, partly because the Europeans wish to maintain and enhance “white prestige”. The result is an almost complete lack of understanding between the two races. There are therefore cases of strained relations, and there are regulations safeguarding members of both races from unfair treatment or even maltreatment by the other.

Since the natives receive only a very small amount of money, the range and quantity of goods they can buy is strictly limited. While diet, cooking utensils and even architecture remain largely unaffected by the new economic contact, steel tools and clothing have invaded the countryside. What is more, the traditional repositories of power and authority are being quickly subjected to the eroding influence of money. Youths now owe their first economic allegiance to money, and their assistance has been largely alienated from their elders. The former situation in which
elders directed economic activity is now largely gone, because of the new types of economic activity. Youths are more in demand for plantation labour, and are therefore often the only source of money for the whole community. They are able to boast of money and knowledge; and, especially in Christian communities where changes have already taken place in the form that bride-price may take, actually snap their fingers at their elders whose only safeguard often lies in the fact that the heathens will not sell tafuli’ae for cash nor women for other articles than tafuli’ae and pigs. Nevertheless, the new forces are strong, and will eventually be too much even for those elders who are still able to exert their authority. Already the term ara’i, once used as a term of respect to elders, has been degraded to a term of mild abuse.

In heathen areas money is distributed to relatives in much the same way as food, tafuli’ae and even labour were formerly shared. In Christian communities, where money has already made itself felt as a source of strength, this is not the case. Men will cling to their money much more than they will to their tafuli’ae and other valuables. On the one hand, natives still think of the possibility of future need for help from relatives, and accordingly distribute their earnings to their kinsfolk; but when they cannot be bothered, it is simply a case of “what is mine is mine”. Malaita is fortunate, however, in that men of influence have not used their positions to secure money for their personal ends. The only acceptable explanation for this seems to lie in the fact that they rule at the will of those they govern.

The Missions.—As the missions did not begin effective work until the end of the nineteenth century, almost half of the population were still heathens at the time of Hogbin’s investigation. It was therefore possible to investigate the effects of Christianity by direct comparison with heathen communities.

Briefly, the “religious invasion” took the form of sending out missionaries to establish posts along the coast. There is a main church building at these centres, but each homestead also has its own little church where prayers are led by the heads of households every evening, Sundays being reserved for common services at the main churches. It is at these churches that Holy Communion is celebrated at intervals of two or three months, taro and coconut cream being used instead of bread and wine.

Christianity was accepted by the natives for several reasons. There were labourers in Queensland who, in their isolated, some-
times lonely, condition, found no other alternative but to accept it when it was offered. Then there are, of course, such factors as the promise of eternal life; the possibility of going to Queensland to train as a mission teacher; the fact that Christianity is the religion of the more powerful white man; the fact that the sacrifices required by the native religion would no longer be necessary; the attraction of literacy, which could only be acquired from a mission school; and even the mere desire to join because other relatives have done so. In spite of these inducements, there are still young men who express a revulsion from Christianity and are building up greater tenacity to the old faith.

From a study of the body of doctrine which the natives have accepted as the essence of Christian teaching, it is clear that in spite of the infinite patience shown in the translation of the Bible into the native language, the natives’ picture is much oversimplified and is characterized by interpretations in terms of native religious concepts. As a result, much native Christianity is but the native religion adapted to Christian forms. The primary reason would appear to be that there are so many close parallels between the two bodies of doctrine. The heathens believe that a wrongdoer will have his life endangered by the *akalo* withdrawing their *mamanaa*,¹ which was his only protection. Failure to obey God similarly involves withdrawal of His *mamanaa* from the Christian, and in either case the subject is open to suffer illness or misfortune as punishment. Both Christians and heathens believe that good men will be rewarded and sinners punished in the present life, but the Christians believe further that these rewards and punishment will be continued after death. Health and success are the reward of virtue, and illness and death the punishment for vice in this life; the Christians believe that in addition there is the promise of Heaven for the godly and Hell for the ungodly. Ideas of virtue and vice are similar in both the Christian and the heathen doctrines. God punishes much the same type of offences as do the *akalo*—irregular sexual unions, neglect of ceremonies and even laziness. For the Christian the rules of conduct are embodied mainly in the Ten Commandments. The Christian ideas of confession and the offering of common prayers asking forgiveness are paralleled in the native ceremonies of sacrifice in which the priest asks the *akalo* not to withdraw their *mamanaa* from the offender. Even such refinements as the Christian belief

¹ The Malaita equivalent of *mana*. 
that a person who partakes of Communion without first confessing his sin will be choked by the "wine" are not entirely without parallel in the native religion, in which it is held, for instance, that a woman who fails to confess her adultery will find difficulties in childbirth. So many are these parallels that it is difficult to find specific cases of conflict except perhaps on isolated issues such as polygamy; but even here the natives are able to argue that except for deacons the Bible does not forbid polygamy. It will be appreciated, therefore, that the two systems are much in agreement, and as the European legal code supports both on many points, the three systems tend to reinforce one another.

Conflicts connected with religion do nevertheless appear, but in other aspects of the culture. Thus while doctrine never leads to inter-denominational quarrels, the natives find it convenient when quarrelling with members of other denominations to insult their beliefs, and in the past warfare has often followed. The mission schools have hardly promoted the preservation of parental control. Children pick up leisurely ways at school, where for the first time an opportunity is afforded for them to congregate in large numbers, and they boast of their knowledge in answering the rebukes of their elders. As fighting has been stopped, they are now free to wander anywhere, even to find favour elsewhere when their own parents are angry with them. The older folk look upon the situation with dismay, but to stop a child from going to school is considered a sin. While there is more contact with children from other homesteads, too, there is more time to talk about sexual matters, and young boys become inquisitive on this score. The late choir practices attended by both boys and girls and religious celebrations in the larger religious centres afford opportunities for liaisons, so that in practice Christianity actually tends to break down the traditional sexual code. What is clear is that these influences are much less marked in heathen areas.

A more serious case of conflict arose in connection with bride-price, which was forbidden by certain native preachers, with the approval of some European missionaries. This was done for various reasons, not least among which was the argument that human beings should not be bought and sold like pigs. This, of course, is a misunderstanding, since the transfer of valuables not only imposes a duty on both partners to have due respect for each other, for the bond between them, and for the solemn recognition thereof by their relatives, but also creates and discharges economic
obligations between relatives on each side. Formerly, moreover, single men had to keep on their best behaviour to ensure that the requisite *tafuli'e* for their marriage would be forthcoming from their elders. Abolition of the payment of bride-price, therefore, constituted a definite attack not only on the marriage relation itself but also on traditional authority. In recent years missionaries have tended to tolerate bride-price, but the damage to traditional standards has already been done.

The traditional feasts are now forbidden by one missionary denomination, the reasons being that feasts ministered to vanity and caused ill-feeling through rivalry; that the desire to outdo one another in the presentations is in any case un-Christian; and that feasts were associated with sacrifices to spirits. One of the effects in the communities concerned is that no one can now rise to the position of *ngwane-inoto*.

So far as sorcery is concerned, belief in its efficacy continues under the surface even among Christians. One important effect of its superficial abandonment is that reprisals are no longer necessary, God being assumed to take care of the matter. But the loss of faith in magic against misfortune is causing an increase in thieving in Christian areas; there is no protection for the orchard-owner or gardener, all protective magical spells having been abandoned.

*Social Life Today.*—Today the web of kinship has lost part of its former importance. While its structural characteristics, even in relation to local organization, have hardly changed, some of the demands formerly made upon it, as when a death had to be avenged, are no longer required. Wayfarers may still expect hospitality from relatives everywhere, and when a really big undertaking is launched the assistance of relatives can still be counted upon, but few activities now demand the co-operation of the whole district. As *ngwane-inoto* have disappeared in many districts, the social barriers between these districts are breaking down, and they are today hardly any more than the structure in terms of which land rights are determined.

Economic organization has been affected by steel tools and clothing no less than by money itself. The need for the latter not only necessitates a period of absence on a plantation for all able-bodied young men, but also gives them the means of being partly independent of the control of elders. The latter are saved from complete subordination only by the fact that the valuables they
possess can only rarely be bought with money. While in the past the elders gave protection to the younger men in dealings with other groups, offered sacrifices to the ancestors and controlled all magical rites and spells, the position nowadays is rendered peculiar by the fact that while the young continue to be dependent for sacrifices and for magical rites, they are no longer dependent for protection from other groups. Furthermore, even if the elders still boast their possession of tafuli’æ, the young can now boast possession of money. The abolition of feasts has led to the weakening of the power of the ngwane-inoto. These men have been stripped of their power both by the missions and by the administration; as the native machinery for the scrutiny of petty crime has disappeared with them, petty thieving and disorderliness have increased, and the former standards requiring pre-marital chastity are tending to be neglected. The major difficulty is not that more crime is committed but that the people have lost their traditional machinery of government and self-determination.

Finally, as the native religious dogma needed only slight modifications to meet the demands of Christianity, no major conflicts arise in this sphere. But Christianity has failed to provide any real substitute for the old feasts, which were a means to industry and which reinforced the traditional political structure much more effectively than Christianity supports the European administration today. As Christianity has thrived on the native ways of thinking, much of its hold must be attributed to the active part played by the natives themselves in adapting it to those of their needs which were formerly met by their heathen religion. When their sophistication increases, this situation may undergo further changes; but at least these can now be regulated through the accumulation of scientific knowledge of human society.
CHAPTER XIX

CULTURE CONTACT: TRENDS AND POLICIES

I. Emergent Development

The principle that institutions and other cultural forms are always changed in the process of diffusion from one culture to another is amply demonstrated in culture-contact situations. Political forms, except so far as they are imposed by physical force or economic pressures, become modified to accord with traditional patterns of political organization, or if not so modified are not accepted. In Samoa, for example, the traditional emphasis on local village autonomy has been a stumbling-block in the development of administrative relationships between local units and the central government. In the acceptance of Christianity, again, elements of indigenous magico-religious belief and practice frequently continue to exist side by side with the introduced religion, either surreptitiously¹ or with the approval or encouragement of the Church. Even games such as cricket or football are usually drastically altered both in form and function (cf. pp. 544–46).

That this kind of adaptation of European cultural forms to the indigenous context should be tolerated and even encouraged has, as we have seen, been increasingly recognized in the fields of native administration, missionary work and education. It minimizes the disruptive effects of attempts to impose purely European ways upon non-European peoples. It has therefore been advocated as a necessary feature of a period of "transition", but few have stopped to ask explicitly the question: "Transition to what?" The implicit answer has usually been: "To the kind of society which we know as Western civilization, with its specific type of technology, social organization and value system."

The obstacles to progressive development have been seen as primarily economic, as indeed they are. The technical and economic backwardness of the areas with which we are concerned does not permit of adequate development of education and other

¹ See Hunter (2), Chapters VIII, XIII and XVI.
public services. The prevalence of malnutrition, poverty, ill-health and high mortality rates are not only obstacles to progress and influences conducive to the spread of subversive movements. They are in themselves evils repugnant to the conscience of humanity. They constitute a challenge to civilized nations to better the miserable living conditions of the vast majority of the world's inhabitants. In recent years, therefore, many large-scale schemes, such as the Colonial Development and Welfare Act, the Colombo Plan and Point Four of the Truman Doctrine, have been devised to mitigate the evils of which we have been speaking. Such schemes have been developed to bring the knowledge of the physical and biological sciences to bear upon the material problems of backward areas, on the implicit assumption that if only rapid improvements in material welfare could be achieved, and if only sufficient capital could be injected into backward economies, all would come right in the end. Attention was devoted to the building of factories, roads, dams and other public works, and to grandiose schemes of agricultural development such as the late lamented ground-nuts scheme. Little or no attention was devoted to the new social context in which such innovations were expected to operate, to the human realities of the situation.¹ Engineers, dietitians, entomologists and agricultural experts went to work with a will to the sound of a fanfare of humanitarian trumpets and the battle-cry "Economic Development". The still small voice of the anthropologist was barely heard. It is not surprising that in many cases such well-intentioned schemes have fallen far short of the objectives which it was hoped they would achieve.

As an example of this, the Colombo Plan lays great emphasis on the introduction of new capital into economically backward areas on the principle that "the traditional means by which the vicious circle of lack of savings and lack of development has been broken is by injections of foreign investment". But this is true to only a limited extent. In Malaya, for example, there has in the past been a considerable amount of private foreign investment which has promoted the development of resources and raised the level of consumption. But because of the influence of social factors it has promoted saving to only a limited degree. "Despite the heavy injections of foreign capital, mainly British, into Malaya for over half a century, the mass of the people such as the

¹ Cf. Firth (19).
Indian rubber-tapper, the Chinese tin-mining coolie or timber-cutter, the Malay rice grower or fisherman, have contributed little from savings towards financing the economic development of the country. In most cases their margins have been too small. But in any event, their patterns of using income have been different. The first call on surpluses is commonly for jewellery for the womenfolk, to serve as a semi-liquid reserve of capital, easily realizable in time of need, or for ceremonial expenditure on weddings and funerals, to attract social prestige rather than economic return.\textsuperscript{1}

The ignoring of social factors is also apparent in planning for the use of labour power. The establishment of factories and other large industrial institutions at specific places must mean the migration to those places of large numbers of labourers who have previously led a settled village existence. Social bonds must be severed or weakened, new polyglot communities will grow up, and migrant labourers will be forced to conform to conditions and schedules of work to which, because of their cultural background, they are not psychologically adapted.\textsuperscript{2} We have already referred to the disruptive effects produced by a similar uprooting of labourers from village life under private enterprise and unplanned colonialism. The results in well-intentioned schemes of large-scale economic development are likely to be no less harmful unless social planning, based on an appreciation of the human realities of the situation, goes hand in hand with economic planning.\textsuperscript{3}

\textsuperscript{1} Ibid., p. 5.  \textsuperscript{2} Ibid., p. 4.  \textsuperscript{3} For social planning of the kind suggested to be effective, more is needed than a knowledge of social welfare work and schemes of community development in civilized societies. Conditions are different, and what will work well enough in Manchester or London may be quite ineffective in Africa or Malaysia. Speaking of urbanized individuals in under-developed areas, Mr. T. R. Batten writes: "Such people cut themselves off from all their former day-to-day relationships and enter a chaotic social environment in which none of their small community values, attitudes and sanctions necessarily apply. However, they do not remain completely disorganized for long. Usually and quite rapidly they develop spontaneously some sort of group life, inadequate though it may be, both at their place of work and in the neighbourhood in which they live. The groups thus formed are small and quite informal, but as growing-points for social reorganization they are very important. Until recently comparatively few technological innovators and social workers realized this. They were engaged in planning for people rather than with them. They thought of people either as aggregates of individuals or as members of formal organizations, and they rarely attached importance to their membership in small, informal groups. Social agencies worked mainly to attract and influence people as individuals, and had little influence except on the isolates or near-isolates who joined their programmes in search of friends they had failed to find for themselves. Similarly, industrial managements aimed to organize individual workmen for maximum production in the most streamlined and efficient way possible—as management saw it—without much regard for the informal relationships the workmen had established among themselves. By acting in this way, they tended continually to weaken and disrupt informal organization and thus to hinder social growth and adaptation" (Batten (1), pp. 29–30).
Finally, the ignoring of social conditions "on the spot" in plans thought out behind desks in London or New York is apparent in the whole conception of "technical assistance". For large-scale economic development not only a large body of unskilled labourers is required; there must also be technical experts and organizers to plan and direct their work. In view of the educational backwardness of the areas concerned, these must come in the first instance from abroad until such time as a sufficient number of members of the indigenous population have been trained to undertake the necessary tasks. But there is a too-ready assumption that the technological skills and equipment of European civilization can profitably be applied in social contexts to which they are quite unsuited. As Dr. Cyril Belshaw states the position:

The increasing awareness of the importance of technique and of technological training still needs continual reappraisal. United Nations and other agencies still seem to be "discovering" that it is often inappropriate to talk of advanced techniques, even in medicine, when the people concerned do not have the educational background or capital resources to enable them to obtain, maintain and use the suggested equipment. The most valuable technical expert is usually the man with a sound theoretical training, and sufficient practical ability to be able to leave all his gadgets behind him and start working out the remedies in the villages with his brain, his bare hands, the enthusiasm of the people, and the resources on the spot or near at hand. Such techniques are likely to be taught and transmitted easily from villager to villager, they may obviate delays and indebtedness, and... may provide an initial impetus which enables future capital savings, and sets the community on a dynamic path. The point here is that an entrepreneur needs technical knowledge, but this, at an early stage, is more valuable if it is inventive rather than merely the application of taught alien methods.1

One reason for the slowness to appreciate how drastically the techniques of Western civilization need to be modified in their application elsewhere has been the basic assumption that things must be done in a hurry. This is, of course, a major premise of our culture. Actually indigenous populations often refuse to be hurried, and a more effective way of getting results is to tolerate delays so that reforms, as it were, emerge from the communities themselves with European agents acting mainly as catalysts. Effective and perhaps slow development by the people themselves, rather than the hasty imposition of new ways, should

be the goal. Dealing with schemes of community development in Nova Scotia and Puerto Rico, Batten writes:

In both cases the basic steps have been the same: first, to stimulate people by encouraging them to study and discuss their needs; second, to encourage them to define specific wants which they can meet by working together on practical projects within the community; and third, to service the community with whatever technical skills and "know-how" it may then require to carry out successfully the projects it has decided on. In this kind of development, social adaptation and technological change go hand in hand, but always the process of change is more important than its material product. This makes for slow and seemingly formless work. In Puerto Rico, we are told, months of talking may go by with nothing visible to show, but it is the theory of the Puerto Rican agency that these "interminable" months are not a waste of time, but, on the contrary, the very web and texture of community development. It is during these months that the people move from their old habits of thought and custom, explore their needs and their environment, develop understanding of their neighbours and orientate themselves to work together for change. These things take time, but it may be that time is a price that we must pay if we value social well-being as much as material development.¹

As a corollary to this, he writes of training:

The training of good social-development workers in this sense involves far more than instruction and practice in working with groups. The trainees must learn to value "process" more than any specific material result, and to go on valuing it in spite of the criticism of superficial observers that no results are being achieved or that "progress" is too slow.²

Though the communities referred to here differ from those involved in culture contact situations, the principles stated are nevertheless applicable.

The introduction of European technology and economic institutions to non-European peoples should be preceded by an anthropological study of each area.³ Such studies have revealed that social change in the communities under review is not always in the direction of abandoning indigenous cultural forms in favour of those of European civilization. There is, indeed, a fallacy implied in the term "detribalization", the assumption that indigenous cultural forms simply disappear, to be replaced in due course by those of Western civilization. Sometimes, it is true, indigenous cultures disappear altogether, as with many groups of

¹ Batten (1), p. 29 (italics ours). ² Ibid., pp. 30–31. ³ The latter point is important, since the reception of economic innovations differs from one community to another, according to the cultural situation. For example, co-operative societies have been a success in some areas but not in others.
Australian aborigines. Such communities may be correctly described as detribalized. But in many, if not most, cases the process is more akin to that taking place in certain New Guinea societies, as described by Raymond Firth: "The people are not simply casting out their native heritage. They are abandoning one kind of native life, which they have cherished, in order to try and build another more in tune with their wants, as swiftly as possible, with the notion that formal abandonment in itself is part of means to that end."\(^1\)

I propose to use for this process the term **emergent development**, which may occur in any aspect of a culture in change. In economics, for example, it is seen in the spontaneous development, often very successful, of new types of economic enterprise based partly upon indigenous forms of economic and social organization, but designed to cope with the new conditions involved in adaptation to the world economy. In the field of political organization it is reflected in such revolutionary or quasi-revolutionary movements as the Mau Mau in Kenya and Masinga Rule in the Solomon Islands (p. 741). In the religious sphere it is reflected in the development of new Christian sects (for example, native churches in Africa and the Ratana and Ringatu sects among the Maori) and, even more spectacularly, in the wide variety of "adjustment cults" to be considered in the next section. It is not implied, of course, that such processes of emergent development are necessarily conducive to more efficient economic adjustment or to more satisfactory forms of social organization. But they are vitally significant realities in many situations of culture contact. They must be taken into account and, wherever possible, helped to develop along constructive lines.

An example from New Guinea of emergent development in the economic field may be cited. This is the Toaripi Co-operative Societies’ Association which, in the early 'fifties, purchased a schooner of European type, with a cargo, for £\(\text{8,500}\)—an extremely large sum of money for New Guinea, which is economically one of the most backward areas in the world. One incident connected with this organization gives a vivid impression of its essentially communal character, based upon indigenous values and forms of organization. Professor Firth describes it as follows:

Another even more striking display of civic pride with an economic base took place near Port Moresby one Sunday morning. The occasion

\(^1\) Firth (20), p. 815.
was a meeting of expatriate members of the Toaripi Association. They wished to make a further contribution towards the cost of the schooner mentioned earlier. About two hundred people, mostly men, assembled in a clear space among the coconut palms, which had had garlands placed on their trunks. Some mats and chairs, a table covered with a clean cloth, and flowers stuck in two bottles had all been arranged by the people for the reception of the government co-operative officer, a European, who was to preside at the gathering. Proceedings began with a hymn and a prayer... the hymn, "A little ship was on the sea" had been informally but appropriately adopted as the co-operative song of the Toaripi. After speeches giving news of the vessel which was about to be sailed down from Brisbane by a Toaripi crew, with a European administrator as master, contributions were handed in. The men were assembled by villages, came up as their names were called, took their contributions from an organizer who had collected them previously, and presented them formally. All gifts were in bank-notes, some men giving as much as five pounds, and one man even eleven pounds. The total collected was £136. At the end a further sum of over ten pounds was handed in, in silver. This was to provide pocket money for the crew, and it was unanimously agreed that this should be sent to them by telegram.

The public character of this presentation, its formal, almost ritual atmosphere, and the organization involved, all show the serious committal to community purpose which marks so many of the large-scale economic enterprises of the New Guinea people, even when they are operating in a money economy. In fact, one can go a step further in interpretation, and describe a number of these enterprises as having a strong symbolic content. This means that their object is not merely economic gain, but an expression of community prestige.\(^1\)

Although Firth adds that some similar enterprises in the Western Pacific have been less successful from the purely economic point of view, his vivid description and astute analysis of the Toaripi incident highlight the potential value of the commingling of economic with social goals and activities. The essentially personal and collective character of economic activities is preserved and gives to them a stimulus over and above the profit motive. Even if they are not typical, the achievements of the Toaripi Association illustrate an important principle of emergent development, namely that new forms of economic activity which take place in traditional or semi-traditional ways are likely to have far more appeal than those which are simply accepted from or imposed by an alien culture.\(^2\) And furthermore they tend to

\(^1\) Ibid., pp. 812–14.
\(^2\) Little (4) institutes some interesting contrasts between the Western Pacific and West Africa in this regard.
preserve many of the non-material satisfactions inherent in most forms of primitive economic activity.

The success of economic development in backward areas turns very largely upon the part played in it by native entrepreneurs—those who lead and organize economic enterprises within the framework of an expanding economy. The last point requires emphasis. There is plenty of enterprise in primitive economic systems and much organizational direction is required. But this is directed along traditional lines and, while it preserves a working economy, it does not allow for economic expansion—which is what is needed if standards of living are to be raised.

Now, the emergence of native entrepreneurs is a comparatively recent phenomenon. For various reasons, leadership in the economic field has rested almost entirely with Europeans, or sometimes with other immigrant groups such as Chinese or Indians. And it has usually been assumed that if members of the indigenous population were to “succeed” they could only do so by adopting European attitudes and values. They must turn their backs on their own communities, since communal obligations would force them to distribute much of their profits, and so undermine their economic incentives; they must instead keep their profits for personal consumption or for reinvestment; and they must adopt different attitudes towards work and leisure, particularly by devoting more time to “work” and less to the time-consuming activities of ceremonial, ritual, dancing and other forms of indigenous social activity.

Recent studies, notably by Dr. Cyril Belshaw, lead us to question these assumptions and certainly to deny that they are of universal applicability. Men who are apparently successful “individualists” do not break away completely from the standards of their communities. Even when they go so far as to emigrate they still maintain many of the more “personal” traditional values which make the impersonal relationship of the market only one facet of the total situation. Others again derive pleasure and prestige from distributing their gains among their kinsfolk. This is itself an important economic incentive which may be more effective than the individual desire to acquire a radio-set, bicycle or motor-car. Indeed, in communities where “conspicuous consumption” is condemned or narrowly canalized by traditional patterns, the ownership by an individual of too many of the good things of life may incur strong negative sanctions—ostracism,
ridicule and even sorcery. Finally, the successful entrepreneur is not a single-minded "go-getter", but is also a leader in political, ceremonial and religious activities; and prestige derived from this source is an important sanction for his leadership in the purely economic field. Very often he is motivated as much by a desire to render public service, to raise the standards of his people, as by the incentive of private profit. As Dr. Belshaw summarizes the position: "It seems necessary to demonstrate that success in commerce and production need not necessarily be based on Western precepts of organization."

2. Adjustment Cults

In the previous section we have referred to some of the potentialities of emergent development in the economic sphere. But we must stress again the fact that the process of emergent development is not always constructive. It must be remembered that it arises in the culture contact situation in which primitive peoples find themselves in an inferior position—economically, politically and socially. While still cherishing the most fundamental values of their cultures, they wish to achieve economic parity and freedom from alien domination which, however well-intentioned, is usually resented. The possible ways of doing this rationally and realistically are not always present, or if present are not appreciated. Therefore they tend to seek other avenues for the expression of their aspirations, avenues which provide psychological satisfactions but offer little or no promise of real improvement. Emergent development therefore finds its most common, most spectacular and most revealing manifestation in a wide variety of adjustment cults. These have arisen independently in many parts of the world, and in certain cases have spread like wildfire from one community to another. We may refer briefly to some of them.

An early example of an adjustment cult occurred among the Xhosa people of South Africa in 1856–57. This is described by Professor Monica Wilson as follows:

The Xhosa first showed their opposition to Europeans and their culture by fighting. There were a series of "Kafir Wars". In 1856–57 came the cattle killing. Nongqwase, a girl of 15 or 16, reported to her uncle (a diviner) visions of men who told her that people must con-

Belshaw (1), p. 159.

Also referred to as nativistic revivals, prophet cults, messianic movements and cargo cults.
sume their corn, cease to plant, and kill their cattle, and then, on a
certain day the ancestors would rise armed with guns and spears, and
with the help of a whirlwind, Europeans would be swept into the sea.
At the same time kraals would be full of cattle, and store-huts piled
high with grain. Several other women and girls in different parts of
the country reported similar visions. The people were also urged to
destroy any material of sorcery they possessed. Many Xhosa, and a
few Thembu, killed their cattle, and refrained from planting. When
the day first named passed without anything unusual happening
excuses were made—the ancestors were waiting for those who had not
yet killed. Several times the day was deferred. Eventually vast numbers
died from starvation, and others, weak and emaciated, entered the
Colony in search of food and work.¹

The cattle killing of the Xhosa was a prelude to a recurring
series of similar prophecies, which fortunately had less disastrous
consequences, and to the development of a large number of
"separatist" African churches, many of which allowed native
customs (such as circumcision and polygamy) which were con-
demned by churches under European control. The only one of
these sects to come into conflict with the authorities was the
"Israelites", a group led by John Msikinya, a dismissed Methodist
preacher, and Enoch Mgijima. About 1909 the former visited
America and returned to South Africa claiming to be "Bishop"
of an American negro sect, and subsequently organized a move-
ment based on the model of the Israelite patriarchs, claiming that
the New Testament was a fiction of the white man's and that
Africans would be liberated by Jehovah just as the earlier Israel-
ites had been. When Halley's Comet appeared they held noctu-
rnal services, and Mgijima claimed that the comet was a sign
that Jehovah was angry with the people for turning from their
old religion.

After the death of Msikinya the sect split, and the faction led
by Mgijima was "discommunicated" from the American parent
church but continued to flourish. From 1918 to 1920 its members
met annually at a place called Bullhoek to celebrate their "pass-
over". In the last of these years they failed to disperse and re-
mained on for many months, claiming that it was the wish of
Jehovah that they should do so. The end of the world was near,
and they insisted on remaining at the place of God's choosing to
prepare for it. After many fruitless attempts to persuade them to
disperse a large force of police was sent, but the Israelites claimed

¹Hunter (2), p. 561.
that Jehovah had told them to resist. They charged the police, and in the fight 163 Israelites were killed and 125 wounded.

The survivors among the rioters were subsequently tried and convicted of sedition. Some of the evidence given at the trial is illuminating. One native witness reported a vision of Mgiejima in which he saw a battle between two white governments which were later crushed and destroyed by a baboon, the latter being held to symbolize African natives. Another told how Mgiejima had preached that the hour of the black man was approaching, and that the rifles of the police would fire water instead of bullets.¹

A wide variety of adjustment cults arose among Indian tribes of the United States during the nineteenth century, the most famous of which were of the "Ghost Dance" type. One example from the western United States may be cited.

A revivalist prophet, Smohalla, born between 1815 and 1820, began his career by associating with a Roman Catholic mission. Thereafter he achieved fame as a medicine-man and a warrior. After one fight, in which he was seriously wounded, he was left for dead on the battlefield. But he revived and made his way to the Columbia River, where he got into a boat and drifted downstream until he was picked up by some white men. After recovering, he embarked on a series of wanderings which took him as far south as the Mexican border and thence northwards through Arizona and Nevada. On his way he began to preach a new doctrine, claiming that after his body had died he had visited the spirit world from which he had returned to preach by divine command. Naturally, when he came to tribes among whom the story of his death in battle was known, his claim was accepted as valid. He further enhanced his reputation by foretelling eclipses, which he did by using an almanack and gaining additional information from white men. He prophesied that the old Indian way of life would return and that the white man would withdraw from the land. He initiated aseries of ceremonies in which elements

¹ It is interesting to note that in the second and third decades of this century several movements arose in South Africa which sought to improve native conditions by political action and through trade unions (see Hunter (2), pp. 565–73). The significance of these for our present subject is that the trade-union movement made practically no headway in Pondoland, where it was swamped by a native sect known as the "Wellingtonites", who preached that Africans would be released from European domination by American aeroplanes or by magical means. This indicates how these different types of movement—political, religious and industrial—are in one sense alternative expressions of the same aspirations—the desire for better material conditions and freedom from European domination.
of Christian ritual were combined with those of Indian cultures. A description of one of these by a contemporary observer runs as follows:

Smohalla invited me to participate in what he considered a great ceremonial service within the larger house. His house was built with a framework of stout logs placed upright in the ground, and roofed over with brush, or with canvas in rainy weather. The sides consisted of bark and rush matting. It was about seventy-five feet long, by about twenty-five feet wide. Singing and drumming had been going on for some time when I arrived. The air resounded with the voices of hundreds of Indians, male and female, and the banging of drums. Within, the room was dimly lighted. Smoke curled from a fire on the floor at the farther end, and pervaded the atmosphere. The ceiling was hung with hundreds of salmon, split and drying in the smoke.

The scene was a strange one. On either side of the room was a row of twelve women, standing erect, with arms crossed and hands extended, with finger-tips at the shoulders. They kept time to the drums and the voices by balancing on the balls of their feet and tapping with their heels on the floor, while they chanted with varying pitch and time. The excitement and persistent repetition wore them out, and I heard that others than Smohalla had seen visions in their trances, but I saw none who would admit it or explain anything of it. I fancied they feared their own action, and that real death might come to them in this simulated death.

Those on the right hand were dressed in garments of a red colour with an attempt at uniformity. Those on the left wore costumes of white buckskin, said to be very ancient ceremonial costumes, with red and blue trimmings. All wore large round silver plates, or such other glittering ornaments as they possessed. A canvas covered the floor, and on it knelt the men and boys in lines of seven. Each seven, as a rule, had shirts of the same colour. The tallest were in front, the size diminishing regularly to the rear. Children and ancient hags filled in any spare space. In front on a mattress knelt Smohalla, his left hand covering his heart. On his right was the boy bell-ringer in similar posture.1

The character of other Amerindian adjustment cults varied considerably. For example, in one movement, initiated by the Paiute prophet Wovoka who was born in 1856, friendship and not hostility towards the white man was enjoined. Wovoka claimed that he had been told by God to instruct the people to live at peace with the white man and with one another, and his influence did in fact bring peace to tribes which had previously been constantly at war. Other virtues such as hard work, honesty and truthfulness were also enjoined. By observing these rules and

1 Cited in Goldenweiser (3), p. 263.
by performing dances, the people would at last be reunited with their friends in the other world, and there would be no more death or sickness or old age.

In the twentieth century the largest number of adjustment cults has arisen in Melanesia. The first of these to be described was the Vailala Madness which broke out in the Gulf of Papua after World War I. This movement involved a kind of mass hysteria, in which numbers of natives were affected by giddiness and reeled about the villages. So infectious was it that almost the whole population of a village might be affected at one time. The leaders of the movement poured forth utterances in “Djaman” (“German”), which were in fact a mixture of nonsense syllables and pidgin English. Sometimes these were incomprehensible, but sometimes the leaders gave intelligible utterance to prophesies and injunctions. The central theme of the former was that the ancestors would soon return to the gulf in a ship, bringing with them a cargo of good things. The leaders of the movement communed with them by means of flag-poles, down which messages were transmitted to the base where they were received by those who had ears to hear—an obvious adaptation of the idea of a wireless mast. Elaborate preparations were made to receive the ancestors, and offerings of food for them were placed in special houses under the control of the leaders.

The moral injunctions given by the prophets of the movement were that the old ceremonial customs were to be abandoned, and the bull-roarer and masks connected with them were to be placed in the men’s house and burned. There were also injunctions against such immoral acts as theft and adultery.

The Vailala Madness began in 1919, and in its intense form lasted about three years. It was observed towards the end of this phase by the late F. E. Williams. It swept through many communities, though some resisted. The intense emotional expressions which marked its earlier phases gradually waned over a period of about twelve years. At the end of this period, Williams again visited the area, and made some extremely interesting observations on the character of the leaders and on how the happenings of twelve years earlier appeared to the natives in retrospect. As regards the former the interesting feature was that while some of the prophets of the movement were definitely mentally deranged (as evidenced by symptoms of mental abnormality before and after the madness), others were calculating schemers
who profited from the credulity of their followers by fining them for offences against the moral code of the movement and by appropriating the offerings made to the ancestors. One such was a man called Ua Halai, who "arranged" his own resurrection from the dead. One morning he complained of feeling ill and prophesied that he would die. But he also gave instructions that when his body was laid out in the usual way it was not to be approached nor was any grave to be dug. By midday he was "dead" and his instructions were followed. At noon on the third day afterwards (a significant indication of mission influence), he came back to life and began to speak in "Djaman", claiming that he had visited the land of the dead and issuing the usual moral injunctions. It is fairly obvious that Ua Halai's "resurrection" was a carefully planned hoax in which he was probably abetted by other leaders of the movement. Williams's conclusion concerning leadership in the Vailala Madness was that it started with the genuinely felt delusions of unstable personalities, and that subsequently certain scheming and mentally normal individuals exploited it to their own advantage.

It is also interesting to note how the Vailala Madness was viewed in retrospect by informants twelve years after its peak period had passed. Some were frankly sceptical, but many held that the miracles which had been prophesied had actually taken place. In one case this belief was not without foundation. One of the leaders, who had acquired a book called *Love and the Aeroplane*, had prophesied that an aeroplane would come, and this was triumphantly vindicated shortly afterwards when Captain Hurley's plane, the first ever seen in New Guinea, flew over the area. But in most cases the beliefs in miraculous happenings had developed spontaneously, beliefs that the ground shook and trees swayed, that flowers sprang up in a day, and that the dead returned by night—the imprints of their European boots and bicycle tracks could be seen on the beach in the morning. Many claimed to have seen the "phantom ship" (though apparently no one had ever had a clear view) in which the ancestors had actually returned. These observations show how firmly held and emotionally generated beliefs in the truth of prophecy do not necessarily disappear when the predicted events fail to occur. In the minds of many of the people concerned, prophecy had been transmuted into myth within a decade.

The invasion of the islands of Melanesia by the Japanese during
World War II brought extensive disorganization to native communities, and this has been reflected in a number of adjustment cults which have arisen in various parts of Melanesia during and since the war. New Guinea, many parts of which were devastated, has been the scene of many cults on the general pattern of the Vailala Madness. But perhaps the most interesting example is the movement in the Solomon Islands known as Masinga\(^1\) Rule. This probably originated in the Solomon Island Labour Corps on Guadalcanal during 1943, and subsequently spread to other islands of the group. Its outstanding feature was its high degree of organization. The two native leaders who founded it set up an elaborate hierarchy of “chiefs”, including officials with special functions such as “strife chiefs” who drilled members of the movement, “farmer chiefs” who superintended the gardens, and “custom chiefs” who tried offences in specially constituted Masinga Rule courts. The offences involved were transgressions of the rules of the movement, such as disobedience, non-payment of Masinga Rule taxes and breaches of those native customs which were recognized by the movement and which were actually set down in a written code of behaviour. Though the traditional pattern of settlement in the islands had been one of small isolated villages, many natives congregated along the coast and set up Masinga Rule towns, which were patterned partly on the model villages which had been advocated for years by the administration and partly on American army camps which had been established on the islands during the war. The leaders of the movement promised their followers economic benefits and improved social services, such as schools, communal farms and increased wages for plantation labour.

In spite of all this organization and formulation of reasonable objectives, the movement was more than merely a political and economic one. It involved a new variation on the theme of the “cargo cult”. During the war, Solomon Island natives had come into contact with American troops and had been impressed by their wealth and generosity. Furthermore, the Americans had lent a sympathetic ear to the grievances, real and imagined, of which the natives complained. Because of this there arose the belief that there were two varieties of white men, British and

\(^1\) The etymology of this word is dubious. It has been variously held to be a corruption of “mercy”, “marching” or “Marxian”, or alternatively to be related to a word in one of the native dialects meaning “brother”.
Americans. Both were wealthy, but while the Americans were generous with their possessions, the British refused to disgorge.\(^1\)

After the departure of American troops the belief arose that on a given day, to be revealed by the leaders of Masinga Rule, they would return in their ships and unload on the beaches tons of cargo—food, tobacco, candy, tools and, indeed, all the good things which they possessed. These would be distributed among adherents of Masinga Rule, while non-adherents would be evicted from their gardens and driven back into the bush. Members of the movement actually built along the coast large warehouses in which the cargoes to be brought by the Americans would be stored.

The attitude of the Administration to these events changed as the movement developed. It had started as a secret movement, but by 1946 the leaders felt strong enough to come out into the open. The Administration was disturbed by certain acts of civil disobedience, in the form of refusals to carry out government orders, and also by punishments inflicted on recalcitrant members of the organization. But they did recognize that Masinga Rule was at least a symptom of political consciousness among a people who had for years been passive and reluctant to accept reforms. They therefore sought to canalize the new political and economic drives which had been unleashed into constructive channels, and were assured by the leaders of co-operation in this. But the instructions issued to the followers of the movement were not in accord with these promises, and in 1947 an expedition of armed constabulary arrested over a hundred of the leaders of Masinga Rule. They were tried and sentenced to various periods of imprisonment. On June 8th, 1950 (the King’s birthday), they were released on licence and returned quietly to their homes. As a mass movement, Masinga Rule had disintegrated, though at the date of writing occasional activities of members of the organization continue to be reported.

To summarize, adjustment cults display certain common characteristics which, though not all of them are invariably present, occur with sufficient frequency to be significant:

In the first place, they all depend upon a belief in the prophetic

---

\(^1\) The implications of this belief become more significant when we remember that in the traditional political system prestige was founded essentially on the lavish distribution of wealth (Chapter XVIII, Section 6).
or magical powers of certain individuals and in some form of miraculous realization of the aspirations of the people.

In the second place, they obviously have a tremendous emotional appeal, usually manifested in wild enthusiasm, and this enthusiasm once generated is apt to capture the imagination of whole communities and to spread from one community to another. For this reason it is incorrect to compare them with such phenomena as revivalist movements or prophecies of the Second Coming among ourselves, which are usually limited in their appeal to small segments of the population. Adjustment cults are essentially the product of culture-contact situations, and not merely the differentiation of sectarian groups within a single culture which, for all practical purposes, goes on as though they did not exist.

In the third place, adjustment cults, particularly in their "ecstatic" phases, are transitory—few of them have lasted for more than a few years. This is a necessary consequence of the fact that they depend upon prophecies of miraculous developments. When these do not eventuate the movements fade away, though the events prophesied may be remembered as myths. In this respect adjustment cults contrast with purely secular movements towards political independence or economic betterment; for example, through trade unions. Such movements may disintegrate as a result of individual rivalries or factional disputes, but since the goals which they posit are realistic and are not necessarily assumed to be attainable in the immediate future, they are not doomed to a short existence.

In the fourth place, adjustment cults always represent a commingling of elements from native and from European culture, particularly Christian beliefs and ritual. For this reason the term "nativistic revival" is inadequate and misleading. Only rarely have they envisaged a complete return to traditional ways, while many of them have explicitly and firmly repudiated certain elements of traditional culture. On the other hand, they draw upon European religious beliefs and ritual, because this constitutes what may loosely be called "the white man's magic", which is felt to give him the political and technological superiority which he possesses and the capacity to cope with the new problems which the culture-contact situation has produced. It should be noted, too, how dramatically the white man's material equipment—guns, ships, aeroplanes and the good things of life—feature in
prophetic visions. Adjustment cults emphatically do not envisage a "return to the primitive".

In the fifth place, adjustment cults always involve a series of moral injunctions, often of a constructive kind—for example, hard work, sexual morality, abstention from fighting and other social virtues. This is another consequence of culture-contact situations in which traditional values and moral standards are weakened. In the absence of a generally agreed system of values difficulties and tensions arise between old and young, between men and women, between chiefs and commoners and between the educated and illiterate sections of the community. We may put forward the postulate that all human communities have a need for integration within the framework of an accepted value system, and that the moral injunctions (including the insistence on unity and loyalty) connected with adjustment cults reflect an unconscious desire to achieve this.

Finally, adjustment cults often entail a considerable amount of organization and the output of great energy. Apart from such activities as dancing and ceremonial, many practical steps are taken. In the New Guinea cargo cults, natives living on the coast have built wharves to receive the ships, while those inland have constructed airstrips. Most of this effort is of course misdirected, for the ships and aeroplanes will never come. But its existence does negate the assumption that native communities are incapable of spontaneous administrative organization and planned economic effort. The degree of organization in Masinga Rule was a surprise to everybody, and suggests conclusions which will be stated in the next section.

3. Assumptions of Policy and the New Imperialism

The formulation of any policy for the progressive development of backward areas implies two sets of assumptions—firstly that certain objectives are more worth while than others, and secondly that these objectives are attainable through the adoption of measures stated in the policy.1 In Section 1 we questioned the policy assumptions implied in the term "detribalization", and we saw that native cultures, with some exceptions, do not simply under-

1 Some of the assumptions which may guide policy in specific phases of administration are admirably discussed in Belshaw (3), Chapter VII, and in Hall, Hans and Lauwerys (1). We are here concerned with the broadest of all policy issues—the future relationship between the agencies of European civilization and the indigenous cultures which they influence.
go a process of progressive disintegration, followed by the complete adoption of the European way of life. Nor, on the other hand, can it be said that in all respects the native “clings to his old ways”. The predominant tendency seems to be for primitive communities, after an initial phase of disorganization and maladjustment, to develop new forms of organization in which European elements are combined with indigenous ones in an attempt to build a new way of life which will overcome the frustrations produced by culture contact. The mobilization of concerted community effort in adjustment cults provides the most dramatic example of this, and even if this effort is largely misdirected and founded on illusory beliefs, it does suggest that the reintegration and progressive development of native communities can be most effectively motivated through ideals and values existing or arising in those communities themselves.

With unconscious ethnocentrism, we are inclined to ask why this should be so. To us the inherent superiority of our own culture is so self-evident that it is amazing that, once we have got rid of “primitive conservatism” and “savage superstition”, it should not be apparent to our unenlightened brethren. One reason is, of course, that other peoples feel the same way about their cultures, even though their urge to proselytize is not the same as ours. Within the framework of our civilization, the Jews, the Irish and the French Canadians provide examples of the way in which cultural groups cling to what is their own in the face of stresses and pressures which would sometimes suggest that cultural surrender was the most rational course to follow. This is because every human culture provides for its members certain satisfactions, embodied in its “cultural standard of living” (Piddington (8), pp. 40–43); alien ways of life do not appear to offer adequate substitutes except in specific fields, for example, technical efficiency. Sometimes the satisfactions provided may be illusory, as in the miraculous blessings prophesied by the leaders of adjustment cults. But often they are demonstrably real.

Among the real satisfactions provided by most primitive cultures are those arising from the closely knit character of the group. The ramifications of interpersonal rights and obligations provide a greater measure of psychological security and a well-integrated

1 Raum (3) criticizes the too-ready use of such abstract concepts as this, and proceeds to describe in detail some of the forces at work in African societies which produce resistance to change.
attitude towards life. The universal need for association\(^1\) finds fuller and more harmonious expression than among ourselves. In economics, in political organization, and indeed in all phases of primitive life, human relations are generally more personal and provide motivations which are more conducive both to the solidarity of the group and to the psychological integrity of the individual (Appendix D).

If this view be accepted we see the preservation (or more correctly the progressive development) of indigenous institutions in a new light. They come to be valued not merely as a means of tiding native communities over a period of “transition”, but as something worth while in their own right. Even in the face of such pressing problems as the raising of standards of living and the improvement of native health, we reach the same conclusion as Dr. Cyril Belshaw: “No European value should be imposed upon a native society simply because it is a European value. As a corollary to this, if a value, or mode of behaviour, is considered of sufficient worth, for medical or other reasons, to be impressed upon the native people, but if it conflicts with their own values so much that it is rejected, then there is a *prima facie* case for its withdrawal and reconsideration.”\(^2\)

This contrasts with certain generally accepted, though usually implicit, assumptions of policy: That material development (including the inculcation of European attitudes and values in the economic sphere) is the primary objective, from which all good things will flow in due course; that the “communal” character of inter-personal relations in primitive societies is a bar to progress; and that in regard to forms of organization and value systems, the best thing for primitive peoples to do is to approximate to our way of life as thoroughly and as quickly as possible.

This constellation of attitudes, and the policies stemming from it, might be called the *New Imperialism*, an imperialism of ideas and values which is no less arrogant because it is internationally and altruistically conceived. In the old days of colonial expansion the dominant motives were economic gain, national prestige and strategic advantage. These were justified by missionary zeal (p. 658, n.1) and imposed on subject peoples by physical force. Nowadays the objectives of policy are more humanitarian and,

---

\(^1\) Ashley-Montagu (3) has argued that this need is deeply rooted in the biological constitution of the human organism.

\(^2\) Belshaw (3), pp. 75–76.
largely because of international developments, we find it necessary to coax or bribe the benighted heathen into accepting them. But the fundamental social philosophy is much the same, and is summed up in the verses of the reformer in *The Belle of New York*:

Our virtues continue to strike us  
As qualities magnificent to see.  
Of course you can never be like us,  
But be as like us as you’re able to be.

This is, of course, only a reflection of the well-nigh universal human assumption, mentioned previously, that one’s own culture is the best. But since not all human groups can be correct, the study of different human societies impels us to stand outside our culture and to evaluate it comparatively in relation to other ways of life. The judgments which we reach cannot in the nature of the case be objective, and must depend to a large extent on idiosyncratic attitudes and values. Nobody would deny the technical superiority of modern civilization or the alleviation of human misery which it can bring to humanity at large. We are proud of our technological and scientific achievements, but we rarely stop to consider the price which we pay for them in terms of mental maladjustment, nervous strain and psychosomatic illness (Appendix D).

One often hears non-European peoples described as “care-free”. Though this is an exaggeration, it has important implications, one of them being that in situations of culture contact we should try to get the best of both worlds for the peoples involved in them. This means that we should aim at material progress without the loss of what is worth while in non-European cultures, and that progress should if necessary be “soft-pedalled” in the interest of the wider objective. This of course will be regarded as heresy by the High Priests of Economic Development and the New Imperialism. But it is vitally important for the peoples concerned and potentially for ourselves. Through a deeper appreciation of non-European forms of interpersonal relationships and value systems we may come to adopt a different attitude towards our own. That this is needed is suggested by certain striking, if superficial, analogies with primitive society:

In many primitive cultures, bodily mutilations are inflicted on individuals to mark their social status. Again, many primitive peoples carry out mimetic ceremonies to express dominant values
in their cultures; thus certain dances of the Australian aborigines depict the hunting of animals, reflecting the socio-economic importance of this pursuit, while the Maori haka (war dance) gives dramatic expression to the values of a warlike people. We can find broad parallels with these primitive usages in our own civilization. The gastric ulcer is the status mark of the energetic business executive; the New York subway at rush hours is a mimetic expression of some of our most fundamental values.

4. Bibliographical Commentary

On acculturation in its more general sense and on the terminological issues raised in Chapter XVII, see Herskovits (5), Beals (2) and, for a briefer statement, Herskovits (4), Chapter 31.

There is no general work on culture contact throughout the world, though an excellent summary of its effects (with useful references) is contained in Firth (16), Chapter III. References, selected from the vast number of ethnographic monographs on culture contact, have been given in Volume I, p. 30. To these may be added Geddes, W. R. (1), Hogbin (11), Leighton and Kluckhohn (1) and Little (5).

The fact that there exists no major work on culture contact in general is understandable. In the first place, writers have confined themselves to special topics and areas with which they were familiar; this was justified by the enormous complexity of the problems involved and the ease with which information from one area may be misinterpreted by those whose experience is confined to another. In the second place many, if not most, studies of culture contact have been preoccupied with practical problems of a local or regional character, and have paid little attention to wider comparative material. Though justified by scientific caution and practical considerations, this limitation of treatment has been unfortunate, because a body of principles of wide applicability is emerging from the spate of local and regional studies. These principles may be derived from one body of material and then be found to be applicable, perhaps with modification, elsewhere.¹

¹ An example of this is the principle which we have termed emergent development. So far as the present writer is concerned, recognition of this principle was derived mainly from recent works on Melanesia (particularly those of Firth and Belshaw) and from some direct knowledge of contemporary Maori society. That it is applicable to a field with which the present writer is not familiar—that of culture contact in America—is suggested by the following comment on restrictive and exploitative policies in dealing with Amerindian populations: "Despite a prolonged intensive program of
In fact it might be contended that the time is ripe for a new anthropological science—which might be termed "contact ethnology"—to cover acculturation (including culture contact), race relations and the study of some of the types of community referred to in Chapter XX, Section 1.

Another difficulty in recommending references on culture-contact situations lies in the often rapid processes of change taking place in them. From the student's point of view, some of the best of them are "out of date". This is because, during the period between the wars, anthropologists and others became increasingly interested in culture contact, and set about reducing their observations and experiences to a body of general principles which would be widely accepted. Consequently works published at this time provide not only empirical material on particular tribes and areas, but also an indication of the bearing of this material on wider principles which are taken for granted in more recent works. Thus Mair (3) is a most valuable work which may profitably be read today, provided it is remembered that the whole political situation in Buganda has changed radically since it was written. In consulting references, the reader should note the date of publication and make mental reservations accordingly.

The clearest statement of political influences in Africa and of issues of administrative policy so far as this affects native peoples is contained in Mair (4), which is, however, subject to the caution given in the preceding paragraph. A more recent statement, but with a less specifically anthropological orientation, is contained in MacInnes (1), while Belshaw (3) discusses administrative policies with special reference to Melanesia. Valuable summaries of the part played by anthropologists in relation to the governmental agencies of various nations are contained in Macgregor (1), Kennard and Macgregor (1), Held (1) and Forde (6). Métraux (1) deals with anthropology in relation to the United Nations.

this kind we find that the populations, in many cases, retain their way of life and, given the opportunity, that way of life is brought into dominance again" (John Collier, cited by B. W. Aginsky in A.A., Vol. 50, p. 306). It should be added that no special originality is claimed for the concept of emergent development. It has been implicit in the writings of many anthropologists, particularly those who have been accused of wanting to keep non-European peoples in an anthropological zoo; and it corresponds to what has been referred to as "reaction" (Redfield, Linton and Herskovits (1), summarized in Beals (2), p. 630) and "new forces of spontaneous African reintegration and reaction" (Malinowski (11)). But we do insist that it has received inadequate emphasis, both in theoretical discussions and in the formulation of practical policies.
Economic influences are discussed in Firth (16, 19 and 20). Reference should also be made to the relevant sections of the ethnographic monographs recommended above.

There is no general anthropological work on missionary influences; though Smith (1), Westermann (1) and Young (1 and 2) discuss some of the important ethical and practical issues involved. Graham and Piddington (1) deals briefly with certain specific problems and provides additional references.

A valuable summary of the present position of education in the areas with which we are concerned is contained in Hall, Hans and Lauwerys (1). Essays in this work which may be specially recommended are Batten (1), Little (4) and Raum (3).

In regard to adjustment cults, in addition to the works cited in Section 2 above, reference may be made to the brief but penetrating analysis contained in Firth (16), pp. 110-13; also to Belshaw (2 to 4), Williams (2 and 3) and Allan (1). For the South Pacific, valuable bibliographical references are contained in Leeson (1).

There is a great deal of regional material on culture-contact situations or special aspects of them. Africa provides most material, particularly in Hailey (1), in the journal Africa and in other publications of the International African Institute. On South Africa, an area of special interest, see Hunter (2), Hellman (1) and Schapera (6). On Oceania, see Keesing (2 to 7), Elkin (4), Belshaw (4) and Stanner (3). On culture contact in the Americas, see Collier (1).

Certain theoretical issues relating to culture contact not mentioned in the preceding chapters are discussed in Malinowski (11) and Gluckman (3).
CHAPTER XX

THE STUDY OF MORE COMPLEX SOCIETIES

I. Types of Human Society

It has become clear that human beings live and have lived together in societies under a wide variety of cultural arrangements. We have so far been concerned almost exclusively with those which may be called "primitive"\(^1\) (though we have occasionally instituted comparisons between such societies and our own) and with the effects produced in them by culture contact. But social anthropologists have in recent years devoted their attention increasingly to more complex societies of different types. Though it is impossible to draw precise distinctions between these types, we must attempt some sort of classification, however rough.

In the first place there are what have been termed **folk cultures**. For this very valuable concept we are indebted to Professor Robert Redfield, who has carried out extensive studies of Mexican folk societies. These have distinctive cultures of their own, consisting of a blend of indigenous and Spanish-American forms.

Redfield differentiates folk cultures from modern urban civilizations according to the contrasting criteria shown in the table on p. 753.

It will be seen that the characteristics of folk cultures are similar to those which we have seen to be manifested in primitive cultures, and indeed the terms have sometimes been used synonymously. But there is at least one important difference between the two. Communities having primitive cultures are, under pre-European conditions, relatively self-contained, and are often not significantly related to outside groups. Folk societies, on the other hand are, as it were, appendages of wider urban civilizations. They live in a condition of **cultural symbiosis**\(^2\) with city-dwellers

---

\(^1\) Cf. Vol. I, p. 5.

\(^2\) The term cultural or social symbiosis refers to a situation in which two or more human groups live together in close interdependence yet display, in certain respects, different cultural features and maintain different values. The position of Maori and Pakeha (p. 754, n.2) in New Zealand is a good example. The two groups send repre-
belonging to the same wider society. Professor Fei's study of the Chinese village of Kaihsienkung provides a good illustration of this principle. Here we find social relations very largely organized on a basis of kinship, a religion founded on ancestor-worship which plays an important part in the integration of kinship units, and a system of land tenure in many ways comparable with those which we reviewed in Vol. I, Chapter VIII. On the other hand, there exist in this village a co-operative silk factory and a school. Some of the community are literate and have commercial relations with neighbouring Chinese urban populations. Even in other cases where members of folk societies rarely visit the cities, they have been extensively influenced by the culture of urban civilizations; for example, in the wide variety of Spanish-American forms manifested in Latin-American folk cultures.¹

How, then, does a folk society differ from primitive communities in situations of culture contact, such as those discussed in the preceding chapters? Both are under the influence of more "advanced" civilizations, but the mechanisms by which, and the rate at which, cultural forms diffuse to them are different.¹ Firstly, folk cultures have assimilated items of culture from the dominant civilizations more spontaneously, and often without the compulsive administrative, economic, missionary and educational influences described in Chapter XVII. Secondly, the process of diffusion has been slower, and therefore less fraught with maladjustment and tensions. Foster summarizes the position of Latin-American folk cultures in this regard as follows: "Time to simmer is an essential part of this concept of folk culture, time to integrate diffused traits and complexes into the folk fabric, to rework them and to make them harmonious with the functional whole".²

Folk cultures are associated with isolated rural communities culturally linked with urban civilizations. But it often happens that

¹See Foster (1), pp. 164-68.
²Ibid., p. 164.
substantial numbers of members of such communities emigrate to neighbouring cities. In such cases, they often take much of their culture with them. For example, Dr. Oscar Lewis reports a study

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristics of Folk Cultures</th>
<th>Characteristics of Urban Cultures</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Small, isolated, nearly self-sufficient communities.</td>
<td>Large aggregations of human beings in constant touch with and dependent on other groups; for example, on the countryside for food.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homogeneous in race and custom.</td>
<td>Often comprise heterogeneous racial elements; differentiation of customary usages; for example, in religion, recreation and etiquette.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Component human units interdependent, with close face-to-face inter-personal relationships.</td>
<td>A high degree of individuality and impersonal relationships; for example, in business and industry.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Simple technology and little division of labour, except according to sex.</td>
<td>Complex technology with extensive division of economic functions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kinship is an important organizing factor in human relations.</td>
<td>Kinship relatively unimportant except for the individual family—and even this tends to be less stable and less effective in organizing behaviour.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religion pre-eminently important as a social sanction and as a means of expressing community sentiments.</td>
<td>Religion relatively unimportant—mechanisms of social control tend to be secular.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change tends to be slow.</td>
<td>Rapid change, socially approved in such concepts as &quot;fashion&quot; and &quot;progress&quot;.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1 "The anomalous situation symbolic of urban life consists in the presence of close physical proximity coupled with vast social distances between men. This has profoundly altered the basis of human association and has subjected the traits of human nature as moulded by simpler social organizations to severe strain" (Louis Wirth, quoted in Beals (1), p. 5).
of families which had emigrated from the Mexican village of Tepoztlán to Mexico City. His findings are summarized by Foster¹ as follows:

Far from finding a breakdown of former values, he finds that to a surprising degree Tepoztlán continues in the city. Families remain strong, he writes, and there is little evidence of disintegration, of abandoned mothers and children, and no more separation or divorce than in the village. Nor is there a significant cleavage in values and general outlook on life between the younger city-bred generation and the older country generation. Religious life is at least as vigorous as in Tepoztlán, though the forms are more Catholic and less Indian. . . . It is difficult, of course, to tell to what extent the preservation of country values is a defence mechanism against the problems of the city which will rapidly disappear when a city-oriented outlook on life is achieved, but Lewis finds that families long established in Mexico City maintain the same country ties as those recently arrived.

Much the same might be said of the urban Maori. The vast majority of the Maori population (about 80 per cent.) today live in rural districts of New Zealand, where much of their traditional culture is preserved. But during the past decade or so there has been extensive migration to the towns and cities, particularly Auckland. It is too early to make any firm predictions, but so far there is little evidence that the urban Maori is becoming assimilated, either racially or culturally. Intermarriage with Pakehas² is not frequent, and though some cultural forms (particularly certain ceremonial observances) are tending to fall into disuse, the fundamental Maori attitudes and values remain much as they were in the country, or, for the matter of that, as they were when Captain Cook discovered New Zealand. The urban Maori live very much to themselves and by their own standards.³

In conclusion, we must revert to Redfield's characterization

¹ Foster (1), pp. 169-70.
² Pakeha is the current term for New Zealanders of European extraction; it is preferable to the term "European", which is incorrect and conveys unpleasant overtones from the contexts in which it is used in South Africa.
³ It must be emphasized that this is only partially due to the mild degree of social discrimination (there is no legal discrimination) against Maoris which exists in New Zealand. The differentiation of the two ethnic groups is a two-sided affair. Maoris are happiest among other Maoris, and Pakehas find it difficult to be accepted in Maori society. There is of course much contact, on the whole of a harmonious kind, in industry, in sport and in the armed services. But as regards typically Maori activities, Pakehas are not welcome except at a very superficial level. Only gradually can Pakehas become accepted, and then only when they have learned to take for granted such Maori characteristics as unpunctuality and those acrimonious altercations—essentially an assertion of mana—which characterize Maori gatherings, which provide a valuable psychological catharsis and which in many ways act as an integrating force by emphasizing the social importance of individuals, groups and traditional standards.
of folk cultures to point out that his formulation represents an ideal type. The differences between folk cultures and urban cultures are relative, while many folk cultures lack one or more of the characteristics specified. For example, we have implied that the way of life of the contemporary Maori can be regarded as an example of a folk culture. It is true that kinship is important, that tribal solidarity is strong, that social relations are highly personal in character and that many of the beliefs and practices connected with illness and death are such as we would expect to find in a folk culture. But, as we have seen, this is offset by a larger measure of participation in the common culture of New Zealand. With increasing numbers of Maoris gaining higher education and joining the professions and skilled occupations, it is clear that the approximation to Redfield’s ideal type is not close.

Just as folk cultures may exhibit some of the features of “urban” communities, so the converse is also true. As Herskovits points out, there are in West Africa urban communities with populations as high as 350,000 having an “urban” type of economic system, yet here human relationships are as personal as in any folk culture, while religion is “the focal aspect of the culture”.¹

Another field to which social anthropologists have devoted some attention is found in the modern rural communities which form part of the predominantly urban civilizations of Europe, Britain and America. They differ from folk cultures (which are also predominantly rural) in their very much closer integration with the urban civilizations to which they are attached. It is true that they display to some extent (when contrasted with cities like London or New York) certain features which we have seen to characterize folk cultures and even primitive societies: human relations are more personal, there is less division of labour and religion is usually more significant. An example of one such group is the Irish rural community studied by Arensberg and Kimball.² This community exhibits many features in common with folk cultures and primitive societies; for example, a highly organized system of kinship and marriage by which social relationships are ordered. But the community has contacts with the wider civilization, and is significantly affected by regular emigration of many of its members, a situation which is not common in folk cultures and primitive societies.

In highly industrialized countries rural communities form a

² Arensberg and Kimball (1).
continuum with urban populations. The material possessions of the wealthy American rancher do not differ markedly from those of his counterpart in the city; class structure permeates city and country alike—in England the “county” are acceptable in London “society”; and finally there are often extensive personal contacts between countrymen and city dwellers. The difference between folk cultures and rural communities in modern industrialized nations is one of degree, but it has important social implications.

In many civilized countries there exist enclave communities which follow in many respects a way of life different from that of the dominant population from whom they are thus to some extent isolated. They are sometimes said to possess sub-cultures (see below, p. 759), and most of them may also be referred to as ethnic groups. In this context the term “ethnic” blurs the distinction between race and culture. Enclave communities or ethnic groups may differ from the dominant population in racial origin, in culture or in both. An example of an ethnic group which differs from the dominant population essentially in their racial origin is provided by the negroes in Cardiff studied by Dr. Kenneth Little.¹ On the other hand, the physical characteristics of the human beings who make up enclave communities or ethnic groups may not differ significantly from those of the dominant majority, the main differentiation being cultural, as in the case of the French Canadians or the Doukhobors of British Columbia studied by Professor Hawthorn and his colleagues.² Finally, the differences may be both racial and cultural, as in the Maori section of the population of a New Zealand town among whom Professor and Mrs. Ernest Beaglehole carried out their research.³

The two terms we have been discussing—ethnic groups and enclave communities—can generally be used synonymously, but it is sometimes useful to distinguish between them; the former implies measure of homogeneity in race or culture or both, whereas the latter does not. For example, Dr. S. F. Collins has studied a community of immigrants in a northern English seaport town.⁴ The only thing which the members of this community have in common is the Mohammedan religion. They include Moslems from Arabia, Pakistan and Somaliland. They are thus heterogeneous in both racial and cultural origin. Because of their

¹ Little (3).
² Hawthorn (1).
³ Beaglehole and Beaglehole (1).
⁴ Collins (1).
common religion and their relative social isolation from the English majority, they could better be described as an enclave community than as an ethnic group.

The isolation of enclave communities and ethnic groups may be due to one or more of several factors: racial discrimination or territorial segregation may exist, as in the native communities of South Africa; the fact that they are often underprivileged may force them to congregate in slum areas where rents are low; and, finally, they may wish to preserve to a large extent their own values and way of life. The latter is a dominant motive in the case of the Doukhobors and is a powerful factor in present-day Maori communities.

The social, and usually territorial, isolation of the types of community we have been considering means that the methods used by the social anthropologist in studying them need not differ greatly from those which he employs in isolated primitive communities. A complication arises from the fact that the former communities are significantly influenced both directly and indirectly by the dominant urban civilization in the midst of which they live: there may be a significant amount of intermarriage; members of the community may be influenced by mass media such as newspapers, films and radio; the cultural minority may find it necessary to seek employment within the framework of the dominant economic system to which their own attitudes and values may not be well adjusted; and conflicts may arise over religious and ethical issues, conflicts which are very acute in the case of the Doukhobors.

The external contacts of which we have been speaking and which to a greater or lesser extent offset the isolation of minority communities make necessary a digression on the general question: What do we mean when we speak of "a society" or "a culture"? Or, to put the matter concretely: What do I mean when I speak of the culture to which I belong? Is it the culture of Auckland city, of New Zealand, of the British Commonwealth, of Euro-American civilization or of a world civilization having a common material equipment and technology?\(^1\)

Two extreme answers have been returned to the question we have posed. One consists of adopting a simple psychological

---

\(^1\) The last alternative is not so fantastic as would appear. When I switch on the radio I derive information and enjoyment from the same kind of source as the listener in Chicago, Moscow or Calcutta.
conception of culture as something pertaining essentially to the individual. In terms of our concrete illustration I could on this view only speak of the culture to which I belong as the culture of Ralph Piddington, even though I may share certain ideas, values and behaviour patterns with other human beings. At the other extreme is the answer given by Professor Lowie in commenting on Malinowski’s work in the Trobriand Islands:

In defiance of the dogma that any one culture forms a closed system, we must insist that such a culture is invariably an artificial unit segregated for purposes of expediency. Social tradition varies demonstrably from village to village, even from family to family. Are we to treat as the bearers of such a closed system the chief’s family in Omarakana, his village, the district of Kiriwina, the Island of Boyowa, the Trobriand archipelago, the North Massim province, New Guinea, or perchance Melanesia? The attempt to adhere rigorously to any one of these demarcations precipitates absurdities. There is only one natural unit for the ethnologist—the culture of all humanity at all periods and in all places.¹

From the point of view of actual research neither of these answers will serve. The first makes nonsense of the work of sociologists and social anthropologists who are interested in the regularities of behaviour within human communities, while Lowie’s plea for omniscience defines a goal which is clearly unattainable. On the other hand, we cannot circumscribe culture or society in territorial terms or on the basis of homogeneity of types of behaviour, since this homogeneity is, as Lowie points out, always relative. The best answer is in operational terms—to regard a society as a group whose culture can conveniently and effectively be studied by one or more investigators in an actual research project. From this point of view the groups we are considering may be regarded as “societies” having distinctive cultures, in spite of their contacts, often extensive, with the wider civilization to which they are linked.

1. Modern Urban Civilizations

The point which has just been made has important implications when we come to consider the application of anthropological techniques to modern urban civilization. No essential theoretical difficulty is involved, since the basic principles of cultural organization such as the foundation of culture in human needs, the aggregation of human groups in institutions and the interrelatedness

¹ Lowie (2), pp. 235–36.
of aspects of culture apply in all human communities. But from the operational point of view modern civilizations display differences from primitive societies which are theoretically important and enormously increase the difficulties which the field-worker has to face. We may review the more important of these difficulties in turn.

First of all there is the matter of size. The anthropologist working in a primitive society is often able to get to know all or practically all of the members of the community, which may not exceed a few hundred individuals. But this is clearly impossible in studying a modern city, the population of which may run to hundreds of thousands or even millions. However, difficulties arising from size are not in themselves necessarily insuperable—after all, the Ibo people studied by Dr. Meek numbered approximately twice the present population of New Zealand. Granted relative cultural homogeneity throughout the population, and taking due precautions to ensure proper sampling—that is, to make certain that the small segment which it is possible to study is really representative—magnitude of population is not an insuperable obstacle.

But the point is that our modern society is not homogeneous. Consider, for example, local organization. There are many kinds of territorial concentrations of our populations—cities, suburbs, country towns, satellite towns and all sorts of peripheral or outlying settlements; for example, lumber camps and overseas communities of European or American origin. Within and often cutting across these territorial aggregations there are more or less coherent and homogeneous groups which are often said to possess sub-cultures.¹ We have touched on some of these in speaking of folk cultures, ethnic groups and enclave communities. There are also the very significant differences in cultural behaviour and values between the several social classes, as well as certain religious sects and occupational groupings whose ways of life differ sufficiently from those of the majority to justify us in saying that they possess sub-cultures.

It is, then, complexity rather than size which constitutes the greatest difficulty in applying the techniques of social anthropology

¹ "The term 'sub-culture' refers to 'cultural variants displayed by certain segments of the population'. (The authors are indebted to Dr. Conrad A. Arensberg for this phrasing.) Sub-cultures are distinguished not by one or two isolated traits—they constitute relatively cohesive cultural systems. They are worlds within the larger world of our national culture" (Komarovsky and Sargent (1), p. 143).
to the study of modern urban communities. Ours is a highly **differentiated society**, and before going further we must clarify what we mean by differentiation in this connection.

In primitive communities the number of component social groups is small. In our own society, on the other hand, they proliferate to an extraordinary extent. We are already familiar with the numerous religious sects in our community, a situation which is again complicated by the existence of those who do not belong to any religious denomination or, if they do so nominally, do not take part in religious activities. In politics, it is true, modern democracies are often run on the two-party system, but even here there are differentiations between right and left wings as well as splinter groups. Because of our highly developed technology and complicated economic system, there is an enormous differentiation in regard to occupation. Even in a country like New Zealand, the economy of which is mainly based on primary production and only slightly on manufactures, there are over 900 occupations for males listed in the official census. These include such obscure callings as fellmonger, holder-up, burler, flockmaker, clicker, slabby, beaterman and brass boy. On the other hand, in a highly industrialized country such as Britain a still wider variety of different occupations is to be found. In the B.B.C. feature "What's my Line?" the following occupations have featured: sagger maker's bottom knocker, miner's knee-pad maker, pepper-pot perforator, frog gatherer, knitting needle knobber, cask sneller, teapot handler, bottom stopper fixer and sausage skin washer.

In the field of voluntary associations the differentiation of social groups is even more marked in our community. For example, societies existing in London include the following: societies of Friendship with Bulgaria, of Friends of Foreigners in Distress, of the Inner Light, of Retreat Conductors, of Marine Artists, of Analytical Psychology, as well as societies for the Protection of Animals in North Africa, for Proclaiming Britain in Israel, for Individual Freedom, for the Promotion of New Music, for Spreading the Knowledge of True Prayer, and for the Overseas Settlement of British Women.

The differentiation of voluntary associations also brings out the heterogeneity of the ethical values of our society, exemplified in a letter contributed to a British newspaper in 1947. It had been reported that certain scientists were conducting experiments to
determine the effect of hunger on the speed of movement of snails. The letter ran as follows:

In your issue of April 20, you report that scientists are trying to find out how fast a hungry snail crawls.

The British Snail-watching Society was founded to promote interest in and appreciation of the snail and it has met with an immense response.

If hunger is being induced in these experimental snails by any inhumane methods or if the snails are not properly rewarded for their labours, I warn the scientists that they will have to answer for their conduct to the organized snail-lovers of this country.

Clearly the views of the British Snail-watching Society would not be endorsed by either biologists or gardeners.

In the field of individual recreations there is also wide variety. A contemporary magazine publishes a "pen-friends' section" in which individuals are invited to state their hobbies and amusements with a view to corresponding with pen-friends having similar interests. In recent issues the subjects in which various writers claimed interest included:

Birds' Eggs and Foreign Coins.
Football and Budgerigar-breeding.
Old methods of Bee-keeping and Primitive Medicine.
God's Plans and the Christmas Card League.
Police Work and Plaster Casting.
Circus Affairs and Sociology.
Travel, Strip Films, Oriental Antiques and Amateur Vaudeville Productions.
Fishing, Natural History, Boogie-Woogie and Sociology.
Mining and Clairvoyance.
Ju-jitsu, Hypnotism, Psychology and Art.
Jazz and Swing Records and Aircraft Recognition.
mixed Farming, Opera and Cycling.
Footwear, Orthopaedics and Tribal Customs.
Occultism, Ghosts and Snakes.
Railways and Classical Music.
Bagpipe-playing and Marine Engineering.
British Colonial Stamps and Experimental Medicine.
Photography and Collecting Beer-bottle Labels.

The differentiation of social groups in our society is correlated with differentiation of the social personality of the individual; that is to say, the place which he occupies in the social structure. If, for example, all lawyers were Presbyterians, golf players and supporters of the Labour Party, our society would not be so
complex; but in fact individuals vary enormously from one another in the range and character of social groups to which they belong. This can be well demonstrated to classes of students by asking them to write (anonymously, because some of the information required is of a personal character) on a card their sex, father's occupation, own intended occupation, religion, favourite outdoor recreation (summer and winter), favourite indoor recreation and the political party which they support.

To illustrate the sort of conclusions which emerge, we may summarize the results for the male members of a small class in one such experiment. For the sake of simplicity of presentation the answers have been coded—for example, in the case of religion, "A" stands for Church of England, "B" for Roman Catholic and so on. Again, in regard to political party supported, "A" stands for National, "B" for Labour and "C" for those who replied "none". The results were as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Students</th>
<th>Father's Occupation</th>
<th>Own Intended Occupation</th>
<th>Religion</th>
<th>Favourite Outdoor Recreation (summer)</th>
<th>Favourite Outdoor Recreation (winter)</th>
<th>Favourite Indoor Recreation</th>
<th>Political Party Supported</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>J</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>J</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>J</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>J</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>K</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>L</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>J</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>H</td>
<td>H</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>H</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It will be seen that no two students have exactly the same social personality, even over the limited range of social affiliations covered by the questions. If a wider range of social activities had been explored, the extent of social differentiation would have been even more apparent. The results are specially significant because the group was a relatively homogeneous one—university students of much the same age, working for an Arts degree, of whom a large proportion intended to become teachers (code letter "J"). Finally, it is important to note that not one of the
students intended to take up his father’s occupation, indicating how social differentiation exists even within the individual family.

Contrast the above results with the social personality of a typical Australian aboriginal male. He belongs to one local group whose members stand to him in definite kinship relations. All the males, for example, are members of his patrilineal clan. He carries out the same economic activities as all the other men, is initiated by the same rites, attends the same totemic ceremonies, holds the same religious beliefs and participates in the same recreational activities. It is true that he is involved in a more elaborate and complex set of kinship relations than the individual in our society, but the general character of these relations is the same for all members of the tribe. Clearly a society so little differentiated, and involving simple types of social personality, is much easier to study than our own. Concretely, when you have defined the economic activities of a male aborigine, you have defined those of all the fellow-members of his tribe of the same age. But this is emphatically not true of modern civilization.

Another difficulty in the anthropological study of modern society is that a very great deal of our culture is embodied in written form. People are influenced by the books, magazines and newspapers which they read, but it is much harder to define how and to what extent this influence is exerted than when we can observe people actually influencing one another in face-to-face relations. It also means that the anthropologist is forced to read widely if he wishes to obtain some idea of the range of cultural ideas and values in the community he is studying.1 Closely related to this are the difficulties arising from the existence of mass media. We do not know how far people are influenced by radio, films and newspapers, but that this influence is very significant in our society cannot be denied.

Our society is further complicated by the part played in it by elaborate number systems. In the field of economics, for example, Professor Raymond Firth was able to give an adequate quantitative account of the economics of Malay fishermen without burdening his text with masses of figures, and Dr. W. R. Geddes was able to do the same thing with the economic system of the Land

---

1 Such reading must include magazines, newspapers (yellow and otherwise) and trashy novels, as well as "sex" and "horror" books. It is a problem how far such works, when compared with "literature", influence the community in which they occur and reflect its values.
Dayaks. In our society, however, the quantitative aspect of our economic system constitutes a full-time employment for a modern economist.

Our technology, like our economic system, is highly complicated. Whereas an anthropologist can fairly easily grasp the principles involved in, let us say, house-building or canoe-making among a primitive people, the same does not apply when he comes to the highly elaborate techniques of manufacture in modern civilization.

A further complication arises from the fact that the external contacts and influences which we mentioned in Section 1 are very much more significant in urban society. Through the mass media of which we have spoken we are influenced by other communities and by other nations, though to what extent it is very difficult for the field-worker to assess. Even within nations themselves there is much movement and mutual social contact between cities, while a wide range of governmental influences are brought to bear on the whole community from a single centre.

Finally the danger of personal bias in studying our own society is greater than among alien cultures. We are forced to study human beings who hold opinions on political, ethical and religious issues with which we may be in agreement or disagreement; and a conscious effort must be made to prevent this from influencing our interpretations.

Having pointed out the major difficulties involved in the study of modern urban communities, we must now stress the fact that they are largely offset by certain advantages which accrue to the field-worker when he is studying a modern city as against a primitive community. In the first place, he has a preliminary knowledge of the language, which greatly eases the problem of communication. In the second place, participant observation is much easier and indeed is largely imposed on the ethnographer by circumstances. In the third place, it is easier to enter the "private worlds" of informants. We may find it difficult to appreciate fully the spirit in which the native is afraid of evil spirits or of the machinations of sorcerers, because we do not believe in such things. On the other hand, it is perfectly easy for us to appreciate modern man's very similar attitudes of anxiety.

1 Firth (13) and Geddes, W. R. (1).

2 It should be noted, however, that the dangers of participant observation to which we referred in Chapter XIV, Section 11, are also accentuated, particularly the danger of loss of objectivity.
SOME PROBLEMS OF METHOD

concerning bacteria. In the fourth place, the investigator can draw upon the accumulated knowledge of the community he is studying through the documents which earlier generations have left behind. This makes possible comparisons between the life of the community at one point of time and very much later. For example, the Lynds prepared an account of Middletown in 1890 culled from newspapers, books and other documents, which they compared with their own observations made in 1925. In the fifth place, the anthropologist studying modern communities can draw upon experts in other fields. In an isolated primitive community he must study by himself the economic system, the legal system and the psychological development of the individual. In urban societies he may and often does consult with specialists such as economists, lawyers and psychologists regarding points on which he may be in doubt. We shall return to this point in Section 4.

3. Some Problems of Method

We have reviewed some of the new types of society to which anthropologists are devoting their attention. We must emphasize that we have not been concerned with drawing clear-cut distinctions between these types, for the simple reason that it would be impossible to do so. They shade off into each other, and what we said of folk cultures is true of other types, too—many differ from the ideal type in certain important respects, and it is therefore often difficult to decide whether a given society belongs to one category or another. Our object has therefore not been to establish a typology of societies but to indicate in very general terms some of the more important differences between them. We may now turn to a more detailed consideration of the methodological implications, in terms of actual field-work, of these differences.

As we have said, in the case of folk cultures, rural communities, enclave communities and some ethnic groups, no major methodological difficulties are involved. The traditional field methods of the social anthropologist therefore require little modification. Such communities are usually to some extent isolated, territorially or socially; they are relatively undifferentiated; and though external contacts and the influence of mass media may be more significant than in the anthropologist’s traditional field, they need not unduly perplex the research worker. All this means that most of these communities can be effectively studied by one or two investigators.
But it is quite otherwise with urban communities, for reasons which will be apparent from the preceding section. In this field team-work becomes essential. Thus in their original work on Middletown, the Lynds acknowledged the collaboration of three field assistants, making a team of five in all. In subsequent projects, very much larger numbers of collaborators have been employed. This is necessary to ensure the "coverage", so far as knowledge of informants is concerned, which the field-worker in a primitive society acquires through individual personal contacts. In the study of Yankee City, Warner and his large team of collaborators compiled 17,000 "social personality cards" embodying information obtained in interviews by different investigators.¹

An important implication of this is that, since anthropologists must live, urban research costs money. Probably the U.S.A. is the only country wealthy enough to afford such research on an adequate scale, which explains in part why the major contributions in this field have come from that country.

The size and heterogeneity of urban communities means that in his research operations the field anthropologist must attach more importance to statistical data than when he is dealing with smaller and simpler types of society. At the outset, for example, he should pay attention to sampling to ensure that the community he selects will be as representative as possible of communities of comparable size in terms of national averages for occupational level, distribution of social classes, industrialization, degree of social integration and so on.² Where the community is atypical in any significant respect the fact should be clearly indicated, and this is usually made possible only by the employment of statistical techniques. Finally, during the research and in the process of analysing results, statistical information is important at many points. For example, Warner and his associates made extensive use of such techniques in elaborating the American class system.³

¹ Warner and Lunt (1), pp. 70–72.
² See Warner and Lunt (1), Chapter I. In this connection we must be specially cautious concerning what Bennett and Wolff call the fallacy of the microcosm. "This concerns the use of single communities or tribes as representative units for larger entities; national cultures, culture areas and the like. The concept of culture has grown up in the atmosphere of small communal units; its extension to larger social units which lack face-to-face patterns of social relations has been done by simply making existing face-to-face units stand for the larger and socially different whole" (Bennett and Wolff 1, p. 340). But the dangers of the fallacy of the microcosm can be exaggerated, and in any case the procedure criticized by Bennett and Wolff is likely to lead to more fruitful results than masses of dehumanized "cases" and to fewer misinterpretations than subjective impressions of "national character".
³ See Warner, Meeker and Eells (1).
A word of warning is, however, necessary on the dangers of undue preoccupation with statistics. It is true that they are important and that they give to the field record a more "sciency" look than the conventional qualitative observations of the traditional anthropological monographs. But they must not be allowed to swamp such observations, which are in many ways more significant.

A difficulty in integrating the two types of data—qualitative and quantitative—arises from the fact that the anthropologist usually lacks the mathematical training necessary to carry out the requisite statistical operations; for these he must rely on the statistician, whose interest is often focused more on mathematical quantities and formulæ than on the realities of human behaviour. Consider, for example, the American class system. This comprises a hierarchy of six classes—Upper Upper, Lower Upper, Upper Middle, Lower Middle, Upper Lower and Lower Lower.¹ These can be differentiated and individuals accurately placed within them on the basis of a statistical treatment of such characteristics as occupation, source of income, house type and dwelling area from which the Index of Status Characteristics is derived.² But although a quantitative scale can thus be elaborated, the American class system does not constitute a continuum in terms of social values. The criteria of differentiation vary from one level to another. The LL are differentiated from the UL on aesthetic and moral grounds. The stereotype of members of the LL is that they are dirty, lazy, immoral and generally anti-social, as distinct from the "poor but hard-working" people of the UL class. At the other extreme, theUU are differentiated from the LU not by wealth but by their "aristocratic" descent; in fact, the LU have on the average more money than the UU, but it is "too new". At other points in the class system economic position and ability to manipulate status symbols are the criteria of differentiation. These important facts might have been obscured if the purely statistical analysis had not been illuminated by qualitative observations on what Americans think and feel about those above and below them in the class system.

¹ These are conveniently abbreviated by using initial letters only. The UU class, comprising the "old families", is absent in many American communities.

² Warner, Meeker and Eells, op. cit., Part III; also Warner (3), pp. 9-15. There is also another method of measuring social class known as the technique of Evaluated Participation.
4. The Interdisciplinary Approach

Perhaps the respect in which traditional anthropological techniques require most drastic modification when applied to urban societies lies in the need for the interdisciplinary approach. This may take the form of interdisciplinary team-work, such as has been carried out among primitive peoples also (p. 572). Or it may consist merely of ad hoc consultations between anthropologists and representatives of other social science disciplines, particularly sociology and psychology. The anthropologist must realize that he is handling new kinds of material, and should profit from the experience of those who have been studying material of this kind for many years. In terms of quantity, the knowledge of modern society so far contributed by anthropology is small indeed compared with that originating in such fields as sociology, economics, social psychology, history and political science. Conversely, anthropologists, as a professional group, have devoted only a minute proportion of their effort to the study of modern society, compared with their work on primitive communities and culture contact.

One difficulty in assimilating and employing fruitfully the findings of other disciplines lies in the fact that the latter are not homogeneous in theoretical outlook. Just as there are "schools" of anthropology, such as evolutionists, diffusionists, structuralists and functionalists, so in the other social sciences there exist equally acute disagreements as to what it is important to study and how the task should be undertaken. Unlike the physical and biological sciences, the social sciences in general lack coherent and generally agreed bodies of theory within the framework of which research can be carried out.

Consider, for example, sociology, which is perhaps the most important cognate discipline for the anthropologist in the field with which we are concerned.\(^1\) Though much can be learned from sociology, its limitations and lack of coherence must be recog-

\(^1\) See Beals (1), pp. 1–3, and Bennett and Wolff (1). The latter is a particularly valuable contribution which reviews professional, as well as purely intellectual, differences between anthropologists and sociologists. Furthermore, it contains answers to a questionnaire in which the two groups were asked to criticize each other at the level of personal co-operation in teaching and research. The results are illuminating. In particular they show that anthropologists (particularly those who muddle up skulls and potsherds with social anthropology) are open to many criticisms by sociologists complementary to the comments on sociology which we shall offer in the following paragraphs.
nized; also the very important respects in which the approach of sociologists to problems of human behaviour differs from that of anthropologists.

In the first place, sociology has suffered from the influence of its classical phase, when it concentrated on broad principles of social philosophy rather than on empirical research. This phase has been well described by Warner:

In a previous generation, the sociologists, in common with the anthropologists, when faced with the task of understanding society, took refuge in the formulation of broad, untested general theories which presumably accounted for everything about the nature of man, his society, and its institutions. Theoretical system-makers constructed their sociological empires and fought their rival empire-builders for survival and dominance. Illustrations, well-tailored for their purpose, served for evidence, the relaxed comfort of the armchair for the rigour of field study, and philosophical and broad general theories which could not be tested, often for sound method.¹

As a reaction to this, sociologists have devoted themselves increasingly to the empirical study of real human behaviour in society. But they have traditionally been concerned almost exclusively with Western civilizations.² Furthermore, with the exception of a comparatively few "community studies", their interests, determined by their original philosophical orientation, have been concentrated on large units of population such as nations and regions, rather than on "communities". They were therefore faced by the methodological difficulties outlined in the preceding sections. They had too much on their plate. They could now swallow it all at once, so they started to nibble indiscriminately round the edges. Without any co-ordinated plan and with little coherent theory, they attacked such limited phases of social behaviour as juvenile delinquency, industrial relations, marriage and divorce or child welfare. Few of them realized, and none could delineate, the integral character of our culture and the complicated interrelationships of its several aspects. They were far too preoccupied with particular social problems. They tended to consider the aspects of social life which they studied as closed systems, isolated from the wider context of human relations within which they existed.

One reason for the piecemeal character of much sociological research has been its preoccupation with short-term practical

objectives. Partly because of the humanitarian interests of sociologists themselves and partly because research funds were more readily available from governmental agencies and charitable organizations, research was devoted mainly to immediate welfare problems.\(^1\) Often this produced the sort of superficial observations referred to in Chapter XIV, Section 1, and at best only a part of the real sociological problem was investigated. Consider, for example, juvenile delinquency. From the point of view of human welfare, it is obvious that this should be reduced as far as possible and that scientific knowledge should be mobilized for this purpose. But it must be the right kind of scientific knowledge, covering all the relevant facts and not merely those which manifestly cause trouble in the body politic. Concretely, you cannot answer the question: "What makes bad boys bad?" until you have first asked and returned a tentative answer to the question: "What makes good boys good?" The latter, of course, is the question which the anthropologist, with his theory of law and social conformity (Vol. 1, p. 319), would ask at the outset. Yet a sociologist who proposed to embark on a study of juvenile delinquency by doing field-work in a Sunday-school would not be favourably considered by most of those responsible for allocating funds for sociological research.

Finally, an important difference between the work of the sociologist and that of the anthropologist lies in the greater attention paid by the former to statistics, a subject to which we have already referred. When studying such problems as crime, divorce or unemployment, the sociologist seeks statistics covering a large number of cases, sometimes on a nation-wide or even international basis. The manipulation of masses of impersonal figures is apt to receive more attention than intensive investigation in the field.\(^2\) Very broadly, the sociologist is concerned with learning a few facts about a number of people, whereas the anthropologist seeks to discover a large number of facts about a few people standing in close interrelationship to each other. This is why social anthropology has been referred to as "micro-sociology".

Like sociology, psychology is also of vital importance to the anthropologist studying modern civilizations. And here, too, the situation is complicated by the existence of divergent schools and

---

\(^1\) This is truer of Great Britain than of the U.S.A., where the position of sociology as a respectable academic discipline has been longer established.

\(^2\) Cf. Bennett and Wolff, _op. cit._, p. 337.
interests. Social psychology, individual psychology, abnormal psychology (psychiatry) and industrial psychology all possess concepts and techniques of potential value in anthropological field research. But the focus of interest of the psychologist differs from that of the social anthropologist. The difference is sometimes oversimplified by saying that the former is interested in the individual and the latter in the group. Actually, as Professor Firth points out, the focus of the psychologist's interest lies in experiences, which may be shared by a number of individuals. Thus when the social psychologist speaks of race prejudice in South Africa, he is thinking not of any individual South African, but of a common attitude of Europeans towards members of other races. Similarly the psychiatrist, though he deals seriatim with a number of patients, speaks of "anxiety" not in regard to any individual anxiety state but in terms of an experience common to many individuals.

The essential difference between the psychologist and the social anthropologist lies in the fact that the former is interested in experiences occurring within a context of social activities and institutions which he largely takes for granted, whereas the latter is concerned primarily with the institutions themselves. The psychiatrist dealing with an anxiety state may not be much interested in whether it was precipitated by an air-raid or a domestic crisis, particularly as its genesis may have lain in some earlier experience remote from the precipitating event. For the anthropologist, on the other hand, warfare and the family are distinct institutions in modern society, each to be examined and analysed according to its peculiar structure and function. He is interested in the experiences of individuals or groups only so far as these affect the institutions with which he is concerned; for example, by leading to a collapse of morale in a country at war or by affecting the stability of marriage and the family. What was said of the relation of social anthropology to geography (Chapter XII, Section 3) can, mutatis mutandis, be said of its relation to psychology. There is an area of common interest, but each discipline has a field of study peculiar to itself. It is important to recognize this because of the naïve attempts which have been made to explain complex social phenomena in simple psychological terms (Chapter XVI, Section 8).

The relation of the social anthropologist to the economist and the political scientist is less close than to the sociologist and
psychologist. Research interests converge at fewer points. However, the anthropologist can profit greatly from a knowledge of the wider national, and even international, framework of economic and political institutions within which his community exists, and in certain fields of investigation such knowledge is essential.

The position of the historian vis à vis the anthropologist is somewhat different from that of the specialists we have mentioned. Unlike them, he does not isolate theoretically any particular field. The position of historians is in one very important respect similar to that of anthropologists and different from that of the representatives of the specialist social science disciplines. Thus when Professor Pollard points out that of the four questions when? where? how? and why? the latter is "the most profound of historical questions"; he is insisting upon the pre-eminent importance of a study which, in the field of anthropology, would be called "functional". So do the editors of the twelve volumes of *The Political History of England* when they state that "the life of a nation is complex, and its conditions at any given time cannot be understood without taking into account the various forces acting upon it". Finally, Professor Clark, writing of the various human activities which historians must study, refers to the importance of their interrelationship, and "the danger which besets the limited or superficial historian, of thinking that any one of these subjects can be adequately treated as a self-contained whole by itself. Economic history, military history, the history of science, each of these branches is often rendered almost unintelligible by specialists who ignore their interaction."

The theoretical approach of the historian to the phenomena of human culture, then, does not differ fundamentally from that of the anthropologist, though his interests and techniques may be different. These techniques can be of great help to the anthropologist in dealing with documentary evidence, and the historian can also provide valuable insights derived from a knowledge of the wider historical background of the community studied.

But it must not be forgotten that the interests of historians differ in certain important respects from those of anthropologists.

---

1 Pollard, A. F., *Factors in Modern History*, p. 29.
Broadly speaking, they are more interested in processes of social change than in processes of social stability. The anthropologist, on the other hand, must be interested in both, with perhaps a major emphasis on the processes of social stability. He must ask the question: "What makes this culture work as it does?" before he asks how it has changed in the past, how it is changing in the present or how it is likely to change in the future.

We have stressed the importance of the interdisciplinary approach, and some of the ways in which the social anthropologist can profit from it when he comes to study modern civilizations. But on this score a word of warning is necessary. The term "interdisciplinary research" appears to possess an almost magical potency in many contemporary discussions, and undoubtedly much has been achieved, and more will be achieved, along this line. But the tendency has its dangers. In the first place, attempts to reach agreement on the meaning of such terms as "value", "personality" or "society" may actually be harmful, because it may be more profitable for each discipline to use such terms in its own way, corresponding to its own set of operations. Thus in other scientific fields the symbol "O" may mean zero, female or oxygen; yet we cannot imagine a mathematician, a geneticist and a chemist solemnly sitting down to reach a "minimum definition" of its meaning.

To illustrate this point we may refer to the brilliant discussion of the concept of value by Professor Clyde Kluckhohn. He insists that the term "value" refers not merely to an object which is desired (cathected) but to one which the subject feels it right to desire.¹ As a social anthropologist, interested primarily in the conformity of human behaviour to culturally approved norms, I find this view thoroughly acceptable. As a psychologist, I would question it. For example, I would regard the ways in which a rich man might cathect a house in the country, salvation through good works, political advancement or a glamorous film-

¹ Kluckhohn (3), p. 397. He illustrates his point as follows: "To say, following certain contemporary usage, 'Eating spinach is a value for Smith', because Smith likes spinach or prefers spinach to broccoli is to confuse the desired with the desirable. This practice both negates one of the few constant differentia of value (that of approval-disapproval) and makes the category value so broad as to be useless. It is much more convenient to separate 'value' and 'preference', restricting 'preference' to those selections which are neutral (i.e. do not require justification or reference to sanctions) from the point of view of the individual and/or the culture. Of course, if Smith justified his preference for spinach in rational or pseudo-rational terms of vitamins, mineral content and the like, it then becomes by definition one of his values. If, however, he simply says, 'I just like spinach better than broccoli', it remains a mere preference."
star as constituting co-existing or alternative values within a single motivational system. If I were an economist, I might find it convenient to disregard subjective states altogether and consider merely whether individuals or groups are, in purely behavioural terms, able and ready to produce the necessary hard cash.

In the second place, there is danger that the interdisciplinary approach, if pressed too far, may lead to the conceptual framework of one discipline becoming blurred by undue attention to another. It has been observed in interdisciplinary research that the same social event, as observed by different kinds of social scientists, will be recorded in very different ways. A psychologist, sociologist and anthropologist will record different features of the event. An approach to a common conceptual framework may well mean the loss of much of the specific contribution which each discipline has to make.

This brings us to a final question. What is the specific contribution of the anthropologist to interdisciplinary studies of modern communities? We said earlier that, quantitatively, his contribution has so far been slight. But it is nevertheless of fundamental importance, and though the principles which we shall restate may appear obvious to those who have read these volumes, they are very often ignored in research in the other social sciences and in planning for human welfare.

In the first place, we insist on a hierarchy of human needs—primary, derived and integrative—as the dynamic basis of culture, all of them being important determinants of human behaviour. Other disciplines are apt to stress one need or group of needs at the expense of others. The economist is preoccupied with material needs, including the need for food; the psychologist is apt to stress sex, or the "will to power", because these are the great trouble-makers in the psyche of modern man; and the political scientist, being primarily concerned with the need for political control, sometimes tends to think of human beings as mere cogs in a vast governmental machine—and the practical outcome of this is apt to be bureaucracy.

In the second place, the anthropologist stresses the fact that all aspects of culture must be studied, that all are important and that each is related to every other. For example, we do not limit our studies to inter-personal or inter-group social relations, as the sociologist or social psychologist is apt to do. We insist on the
importance of physical environment (Chapter XII) and material equipment (Chapter XIII), but we do not over-emphasize these as geographers and town planners sometimes do.\footnote{An interesting controversy involving this principle is now in progress in New Zealand. In an effort to alleviate the bad housing conditions of Maoris in the cities, the government is taking steps to provide numbers of Maori families with state-financed houses of the same size and design as those provided for Pakehas. But Maori families reproduce at a much more rapid rate than Pakehas, and are more ready to give hospitality to numerous kinsfolk. Consequently their houses soon become overcrowded. The suggestion has been put forward by a medical man, Dr. B. S. Rose, that special types of state houses should be designed to meet the special needs of Maori families. But this admirable proposal has met with opposition from those who believe that if you only provide satisfactory material amenities, sociological problems will somehow sort themselves out.}

Finally, the anthropologist emphasizes the integral character of human communities, and the various ways in which their members combine and recombine in a series of interrelated institutions. This process is far more complex in modern civilizations than in primitive societies, but the principle at issue is the same. It is the human institution, the "concrete isolate" of culture, as Malinowski called it, which is the fundamental unit of study rather than \textit{ad hoc} abstractions from the network of human social behaviour such as "crime", "mental maladjustment" and "inter-group tensions". These can be fully understood only in the wider context of human institutions within which they are embedded.

5. Social Anthropology and Modern Life

We are now in a position to add something to what was said on this subject at the end of Volume I. Social anthropology, though its subject-matter sometimes seems remote from the social issues of modern life, can help us both directly and indirectly in dealing with the problems of contemporary human communities. We cannot wisely guide the destiny of such communities, including our own, unless we know something of the way in which their members are united in social structures and something of the totality of dynamic forces which maintain or change these structures. We have seen, for example, how important is this principle in connection with the promotion of material and social welfare in underdeveloped areas. As regards our own society, the specific researches of anthropologists have not as yet proceeded far enough to enable them to make many firm predictions and recommendations, but some significant conclusions have already emerged. For example, Professor Warner and his associates have analysed various facets of modern life in terms of the American
system of social classes. They have shown how much industrial unrest derives from the phenomenon of "blocked mobility" and how the existence of class differences in attitudes and values in the school system militates against the optimum development of the educational potentialities of underprivileged children. Anthropologists, together with other social scientists, have been concerned in making recommendations on such diverse social problems as soil conservation projects, human relations in industry, the position of the aged in modern society and the relocation and rehabilitation of Japanese American civilians interned in the U.S.A. during World War II. Finally, anthropologists have begun to collaborate with medical men in the study of a whole range of problems relating to health and disease in modern society, particularly the social determinants of mental illness and psychosomatic diseases.

Anthropological studies, then, can be expected to have a direct and increasingly significant bearing on the social problems of modern civilizations. But it may be contended that their most important contribution will be indirect. There is a saying current among American social scientists which runs as follows: "Sociologists don't like our modern world, so they try to reform it; anthropologists don't like it either, so they try to get away from it." This aphorism evokes the wholehearted concurrence of the present writer. But it may involve an anomaly. In the course of their work, anthropologists are constantly forced to take account of the principle of cultural relativity, and to recognize the harmonious social integration and the healthy psychological adaptation of the individual found in most of the communities which they study. They sometimes feel constrained to point out the implications of all this for the sick society of our modern world. In doing this they may in the long run do more than any other social scientists to attain the sociologists' goal.

6. Bibliographical Commentary

On the general problems involved in differentiating the various types of society reviewed in this chapter, see Redfield (2 and 3), Beals (t) and Foster (t).

1 This theory has been criticized on the ground that it oversimplifies American social structure and is not applicable without modification to many communities in the U.S.A. (See, for example, Kluckhohn, F. (1).) But in broad outline it will hold, and reveals to us the fundamental anomaly in American society—the co-existence of the ideal of equality and the hard realities of social class.

2 See Warner (3), pp. 79-93.

3 Kluckhohn, C. (4), Chapter VII.

4 Warner, Havighurst and Loeb (t).

5 Caudill (t),
As examples of field studies of the types of community discussed in Section 1, see Redfield (1, 2 and 4), Fei (1), Embree (1), Arensberg and Kimball (1), Little (3), Beaglehole and Beaglehole (1), Hawthorn (1) and Collins (1 and 2).

On contemporary American urban life see Lynd and Lynd (1 and 2) and the various works by Warner and his associates cited in the Bibliography. A valuable summary of the latter contributions is contained in Warner (3).

On the general implications of anthropology for the study of modern problems, see Linton (2) and C. Kluckhohn (4). The latter book has been criticized on the ground that it is over-optimistic as to what anthropologists can contribute, and, more significantly, as to the amount of attention which is likely to be paid to what they say. However, Vogt (1) suggests that, in the U.S.A. at least, anthropology is having an increasing influence on the public consciousness. On more specific fields, see Caudill (1), Chapple (1) and Richardson (1)
APPENDIX A

AN ETHNOGRAPHIC DOCUMENT

The following text\(^1\) is quoted to illustrate certain points in regard to methods of field-work. Firstly, it is an example of the sort of documentation by the citation of real cases which is necessary to give force and an impression of life to reports of field-work; secondly, it provides an example of deviant opinions of various individuals and groups within the society and shifts of attitudes towards a social event; and, thirdly, it illustrates how the ethnographer should distinguish between the different kinds of information which he presents—what he has seen, what has been told to him, and his own interpretations.

Dr. Hogbin is speaking of adultery with the wife of a kokwal (headman) in Woge:

Youths receive special instruction regarding the consequences to be expected if they interfere with the wife of a kokwal. This is given during the period of seclusion which follows initiation, when the older men teach them a certain amount of tribal lore.

The one case of adultery with a kokwal’s wife which occurred while I was on the island took place in Gol village, on the other side of the island from Dap. The husband, Kawang, is a man almost as powerful as Marigum, while the adulterer, Kajug, is the half-brother of the kokwal of the other clan in the same village. The couple were not satisfied with an intrigue, but ran off into the bush together and remained there in hiding.

Kawang at once sent his brother Sangani around the island to tell every kokwal what had happened and to request that the pair be refused shelter. Sangani was my best informant from that side of the island, and when he reached Dap gave me a full account of the reaction of the Gol villagers generally to the adultery. Some of the older men had only with difficulty been prevented from murdering Kajug. According to Sangani, even Kajug’s fellow-clansmen were against him, and his brother, the kokwal, had declared publicly that both offenders deserved to die. Such sentiments may have been expressed, but my personal opinion is that, to use Waru’s expression, one of his “insides” was sorry for Kajug. The two kokwals of Gol appear to be great friends, but as they are in some ways rivals, in his heart Kajug’s brother may well have been secretly elated. When I made this suggestion to Waru and

\(^1\) From Hogbin (7), pp. 246–47.
Jaua they admitted the possibility, but added that, although Kajug’s clan would never take part in an expedition to kill him, they would equally make no attempt to shield him from the consequences of such a grave offence. I am not at all sure, however, that this would have been the case.

Dap buzzed with the topic for a few days, and everybody said that he would not help the couple in any way. Considerable stress was laid upon the fact that Kajug and Kawang were from the same village, an aspect of the situation which appeared to aggravate their disapproval.

After a month in the bush the pair turned up in Falala village, where one of the woman’s sisters lives. Here they remained for the night, but in the morning one of the kokwals beat the gong and ordered them to leave. Kajug fled into the bush again, while a group of persons took the woman back to Gol. Kawang at first ignored her existence, and when on the following day she went with his other wife to the garden he sent her back home and told her to remain there until he gave her permission to leave. That evening she attempted to help in the preparation of the meal, but as soon as she picked up a platter Kawang dashed it from her hand.

Next day, while the villagers were away at work, Kajug reappeared and persuaded her to run away with him again. They kept to the hills for a couple of weeks, sleeping in a cave and eating wild yams, and then came down to the bush behind Bariat where Kajug’s sister, who is married to Kaiaf, lived. Here they built a small shack and, assisted by Kaiaf till he went away, made a garden. While they were waiting for their own taro to ripen, they depended upon Kaiaf’s family.

After a time Kajug began to appear in public once more, and I used sometimes to see him in Bariat. He was treated in an ordinary manner except that he shared very little in the regular village life. No one ever assisted him in his garden, for example, and he never took part in any communal village tasks. On the occasion of a festival during which fighting was taboo, he had the effrontery to return for a few days to Gol. He took great care to keep out of Kawang’s way, but everyone was astonished at his boldness.

The Dap people said that they would never permit him to come inside their village and remain as he did in Bariat, and in fact he never went there. If he had done so Marigum would certainly have chased him away, but I doubt whether anyone else would really have bothered. The reason that he was not ordered out of Bariat was that Fandum and the other kokwal, Kauni, are both too young as yet to be impressive. Still it must be noted that the house he built was more than a mile away from the village and that he made visits to it only occasionally.

After a time the determination of this couple won them a certain amount of sympathy from persons of their own age. One man said that
Kawang had not been married to the woman long, and as she had no children he ought to let her go and forget the marriage. In all probability this will eventually happen, and the couple will move right into Bariat. But if they have any misfortunes these will inevitably be attributed to Kawang’s black magic.
APPENDIX B

THE RATIONALIZATIONS OF YUARI

1. Conditions of Work

The following material is intended primarily to illustrate and elaborate some of the points made in Chapters XIV and XV. The first point is the necessity for the field-worker to state the conditions under which his research was carried out. To exemplify in general terms the kind of information required, I now do this, though very briefly, for my own field-work among the Karadjeri.

(a) Period of Field-work.—Two trips were made to the Karadjeri, namely May to October 1930 and May to September 1931. About two months of the latter period were spent conducting psychological tests at mission-stations to the north, so that the total effective period of ethnographic field-work was approximately nine months.

(b) General Conditions of Work.—During most of my stay I resided at the telegraph station at Lagrange Bay, though I made trips to various parts of Karadjeri territory to witness ceremonies and one to Wollal (about 125 miles down the coast) to attend an initiation. On this trip I accompanied the party of the malulu. Apart from one or two hunts and fishing expeditions, I did not participate in economic life. It should be mentioned, however, that most of the aborigines around Lagrange Bay were living near the feeding station for old and invalid natives who drew basic rations provided by the government. Indigenous economic activities (apart from rather casual hunting, fishing and collecting) were therefore of less importance than in a completely self-supporting community.

Apart from attendance at two circumcision ceremonies and a number of midedi feasts and increase ceremonies, most of my information was obtained by interview. My principal informants were Yuari and, secondarily, his brother Nirmbdi. As I did not keep a diary, I am unable to say what proportion of my interview information was obtained from Yuari, but I would say about three-quarters. This especially limited my studies of the relation between the kinship system and marriage, because, as we shall see, Yuari consistently denied that there was any such thing. On one occasion when I was trying to get information on kinship from another informant, Yuari came up to us

1 Students may find it helpful to re-read Vol. I, Chapter III, Section 10, in order to understand this Appendix.
and violently accused the other of telling me a pack of lies. But Yuari’s intransigence was not the only reason for my failure to obtain worthwhile information on kinship—my conceptual approach to this subject was inadequate because I was looking for a consistent “system”, instead of studying the way in which the Karadjeri used kinship relationships to organize human reproduction and various socio-economic activities. When I came across cases of marriages which did not conform to any pattern of prescribed marriages between kin but which nevertheless did not excite public disapproval, I dismissed them as unworthy of the attention of a student of kinship structure. I concluded that the Karadjeri system was in a state of “chaos”. I did not look for a system of alternative marriages such as was subsequently described by Dr. Phyllis Kaberry.  

(c) Language.—I never mastered, or seriously attempted to master, the Karadjeri language. Most of my informants spoke the local contact vernacular, a crude version of “pidgin” English. I acquired a reasonable vocabulary of Karadjeri words, and towards the end of my stay was rarely conscious of difficulties in communication. Perhaps the command of the language which I could have acquired during the period at my disposal would not have justified the expenditure of time, and I think that at a superficial level my information was reliable. But such key-words as bugari, rai and yardanggal are “untranslatable” and correspond to specific Karadjeri concepts which could be understood only in their linguistic and cultural context. Consequently I cannot claim more than a hazy knowledge of the thought processes of my informants.

(d) Relations with Informants and Attitude towards the Culture.—I established good relations with Yuari and about six other Karadjeri, and our farewell ngambal (ceremonial embrace) was an emotional affair on both sides. I cannot define specifically their attitudes towards me—I suspect that they considered me rather naïve, as indeed I was. For my part, I acquired an admiration for Karadjeri culture, which on the whole I consider a more satisfactory system for organizing interpersonal relations than European civilization. But because of my youth, and even more because of the “cultural distance” between us, I never achieved with the Karadjeri that degree of “affective assimilation” which I now experience in the company of Maoris.

The serious defects of my field-work in terms of several of the principles laid down in Chapters XIV and XV will be apparent. At the same time, I was able to obtain from observation (supplemented by interviews) a fairly substantial body of information on initiation

---

1 Kaberry (1), p. 115. Of 1,112 marriages recorded by her among a group of Kimberley tribes, 702 were regular, 249 alternate and 161 wrong. In one tribe less than half the marriages were regular, while almost a quarter were wrong. Clearly no rigid system could express the reality of this situation.
ceremonies and increase ritual; and from Yuari I obtained a full, though I fear biased, account of mythology. Finally, my intimate association with Yuari enabled me to collect the material set forth below, which indicates how the study of deviant personalities can cast light on the wider cultural framework. I shall use the "ethnographic present", describing things as they were in 1930–31, although Yuari is now dead and the Karadjeri tribe, according to Professor J. B. Birdsell, is but a dwindling handful of human beings. I was glad to hear from him that they still remember me.

2. The Rationalizations of Yuari

Yuari's father, Mirin, a native of one of the inland hordes, married a woman of the Whistler's Creek group, a coastal horde. He preferred life among the coastal folk to the more arduous existence of a desert native, and so made his home among his wife's people, where his children, including Yuari, were brought up. The father himself appears to have been a man of some personality, being constantly involved in fights concerning women, either as adulterer or cuckold. This family environment may possibly have tended to curtail the respect for tribal codes of the young Yuari. Another factor was probably his early association with white settlers, which enabled him to avoid the painful ordeal of circumcision, only to return at a later date to a position of authority among the coastal people. For his authority he was indebted to his KAGA who passed on his profound knowledge of mythology to Yuari, together with his duties as custodian of the pirmal for the Lagrange Bay district.

The most remarkable feature of Yuari's character is an overt superficial insistence upon tribal codes of morality, designed to cover up his inner contempt for them. For example, before the tribe reached its present condition of cultural disruption, the death of any important individual was believed to be due to sorcery. In these circumstances an "inquest" was held to discover the guilty man (always a member of another horde) after which an avenging expedition was sent to kill him. One form of inquest consisted of a visit to the grave of the deceased by a number of his fellow-countrymen. A hole made by an insect in the ground near by was found, and its direction from the grave was believed to point towards the territory of the guilty horde. It was believed that the murderer had visited the corpse through this hole, so a stick was inserted in the hole and smelt by all present. Someone then named the murderer, and everybody present agreed that they could detect his smell upon the stick. Yuari admitted to me privately that he had several times attended such inquests, but when smelling the stick he had never been able to detect any special odour. Nevertheless, he had always expressed complete agreement with the generally accepted theory as to the identity of the murderer. He has
always insisted upon tribal obligations where it suited him to conform and ignored them when it did not. He once caught Binbin cohabiting with one of his wives. Binbin retired in confusion without completing coition, and was subsequently forced by Yuari to cede to him (temporarily) both of his own wives. As usual, Yuari managed to obtain the best of the transaction.

Growing old, Yuari became dissatisfied with his matrimonial state. His first wife was dead and his second was a complete invalid (she died during 1930). The only available woman was Yeni, but there was an objection to the match which would have been enough to deter any orthodox aborigine from attempting marriage. Yeni belonged to the same marriage section as Yuari, and stood in relation of kami telwel (classificatory son’s daughter) to him. Yuari, however, decided to flout the marriage regulations, a course which he would probably never have dared to take in pre-European times. Actually the marriage provoked great disapproval, and is still quoted as one of the scandals of the tribe.

The reactions of Yuari to this position were illuminating. It cannot be denied that socially it was an extremely embarrassing one. Yuari himself had always expressed deep respect for tribal tradition, and yet found himself generally regarded as a violator of it. In face of this conflict, he produced a series of extraordinarily ingenious rationalizations. His general justification for his action was that the marriage prohibitions have no bugari sanction and are therefore not binding. This view he supported by the following arguments:

1. He claimed that blackfellows should be free to marry like the white man; that is, without the restrictions imposed by the native kinship system. The white man, he argued, prohibits marriage within the individual family but allows marriage with more distant kin, and the Karadjeri rule is the same.

2. He drew attention to the contradictions in the Karadjeri kinship system, and used its inconsistencies as evidence that it was not ija bugari (“true bugari law”). He claimed to have asked everywhere what is the bugari myth by which the kinship system was established, and never to have received a satisfactory answer. Certainly he was right to the extent that it is extremely difficult to obtain from natives any bugari justification for the kinship system beyond the bald statement that the kinship system and its associated usages are all bugari.

3. Yuari points out that in many bugari myths the moieties and their associated totems are not exogamous; for example, crow men marry crow women, wallaby men marry wallaby women and so on. This anomaly is usually taken for granted by the natives, but was seized upon by Yuari as a bugari justification for irregular marriages.

4. There is a bugari myth which concerns a lizard-woman called Kulakwikwi who lived with two of her KAGA. This is a relationship
which precludes marriage or sexual intercourse. Kulakwikwi used to
sing a song asking her KAGA to have intercourse with her. At first
they refused, but eventually yielded to her entreaties. Yuari asserted
that this myth provides a justification for a union with a jalangga
(sister’s daughter) and therefore for irregular marriage in general.

Now the Kulakwikwi myth, according to another Karadjeri inform-
ant, represents a bugari sanction for the anomalous arrangement of the
marriage sections among the tribes around the De Grey River.\(^1\) If we
consider the arrangement devised by the natives of the De Grey region
to facilitate intermarriage, the implications of this will become clearer.
Whereas the Kariera sections are arranged:\(^2\)

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Banaka} & = \text{Burung}, \\
\text{Karimera} & = \text{Palyeri}
\end{align*}
\]

the Nyamal have the sections arranged as follows:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Banaka} & = \text{Karimera}, \\
\text{Burong} & = \text{Padjeri}
\end{align*}
\]

Marriages between the two tribes are then arranged by regarding a
given section in the one tribe as equivalent to a certain section in the
other. The equivalence of sections between the Kariera and Nyamal
... is:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nyamal</th>
<th>Kariera</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Banaka is equivalent to Palyeri</td>
<td>Burung</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burong</td>
<td>Karimera</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Karimera</td>
<td>Burung</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Padjeri</td>
<td>Banaka(^3)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Remembering that, neglecting dialectal variations, the Karadjeri
have the same arrangement of sections as the Kariera, it is obvious
that a Karadjeri individual marrying someone from the Nyamal tribe
would have to marry into a section which would be incorrect if he had
married another Karajerid individual. Thus a Karadjeri Burung man
would marry a Nyamal Padjeri woman; that is to say, a woman be-
longing to the section which in his own tribe would include his jalangga.
This usage is sanctioned by the Kulakwikwi myth.

5. Yuari, as well as quoting the Kulakwikwi myth in support of
irregular marriages, also asserted, as evidence that there was no such
thing as a kinship system, that when he visited the De Grey River
region as a youth, Padjeri men called him YAGU. This is quite under-

\(^1\) Radcliffe-Brown (2), p. 36.
\(^2\) On the interpretation of diagrams of this type, see Vol. 1, p. 79.
\(^3\) Radcliffe-Brown, loc. cit.
standable, since they are the only Nyamal men who could marry the sister of a Karadjeri Burung man such as Yuari.

6. A significant aspect of Yuari’s attempt at self-justification was his acceptance of the white man’s theory of sexual paternity and his denial of the orthodox totemic belief. He claimed that he had never had a dream before his children were born, and that they were made by his semen. The immediately obvious reason for this affirmation was Yuari’s prolonged association with white settlers. This was probably one of the conditions of the development of his present attitude, since the possibility of sexual paternity was admitted by other partially Europeanized natives. But there exist considerable differences between the attitudes of these men and that of Yuari. Firstly, they professed the two beliefs at the same time, and did not seem to recognize any contradiction. They gave the impression that they were not particularly interested in the problem. The father has his totemic dream and his semen makes the body of the child, and that is all there is to it. Yuari, on the other hand, affirmed one belief and denied the other. Secondly, their somewhat casual attitude towards the whole problem lacked the tendentious and dogmatic character of Yuari’s strictures on the subject. Thirdly, their attitude was not associated with the elaborate criticisms of the kinship system which Yuari used to support his contentions. This was due partly to their lack of interest in the theoretical aspects of the problem and partly to their inability to meet his arguments, for he possessed a wide knowledge of tribal lore and an extraordinary capacity to formulate it convincingly. His critics agreed that from the point of view of practical morality his conduct in marrying Yeni was scandalous. But they had neither the knowledge nor the dialectic ability to refute his theoretical justification of it, nor were they very much interested in doing so.

In Chapter XIV we made the point that even inaccurate information derived from a deviant individual may cast valuable light on the culture concerned, and indeed on human culture in general. The case of Yuari exemplifies this. Apart from its psychological interest as illustrating Yuari’s ingenuity, it brings to light several important principles. It shows the importance of myth as a charter for traditional behaviour. This has been established for other communities by positive correlation, but Yuari’s case shows how an ingenious wrongdoer may appeal to mythological tradition for justification. His active manipulation of the mythology of which he is master depends upon the premises that whatever is sanctioned by myth has a binding force, and conversely that what is not prohibited in the mythology is ipso facto permissible.

Another interesting feature of the case of Yuari is its bearing on the problem of the “ignorance of physiological paternity”, which will be discussed with reference to comparative material in the next section.
3. The Cultural Function of Beliefs Relating to Paternity

The fact that Australian aborigines and the Trobriand Islanders are not aware of the causal link between sexual intercourse and childbirth has played in ethnological theory a part quite out of proportion to its significance. In the pursuit of evolutionary speculation, its real significance has been overlooked. Fortunately the Australian material has been placed in its correct perspective by Professor Ashley-Montagu who demonstrates its irrelevance to theories of origin as well as the absurdity of using it as evidence of inferior intelligence. It only remains to add a few remarks suggested by the Karadjeri material.

The first of these is the term employed for the phenomenon itself. The term "sexual" paternity might be preferable to the more common expression "physiological" paternity. The latter obscures the problem of precisely what type of knowledge is absent in the communities concerned. As Malinowski points out in the publication cited, it is as absurd to expect the Trobrianders to possess "embryological information" connected with "physiological paternity" as it is to expect them to know something of Relativity. But it is not "embryological information" which is so conspicuously lacking in the Trobriands and in Australia. What strikes us is the absence of some sort of belief, comparable with that which exists in the vast majority of human communities, in some causal relation between sexual intercourse and childbirth. Such beliefs are often far from scientific. For example, the Tikopia are aware of a causal relation, but their theories are inaccurate in many respects and coloured by magico-religious beliefs. They hold that a single act of intercourse is insufficient to produce a child. Similar beliefs have been recorded from New Guinea. In our own community the process of fertilization has been known for less than a century. The case of the medieval Duchess of Gloucester who claimed a two years' pregnancy illustrates the limitations of knowledge even in a relatively advanced culture.

Ashley-Montagu has pointed out that under primitive conditions the circumstances which would tend to produce a set of inferences establishing the sequence of coitus, pregnancy and childbirth do not exist. But he goes too far when he states that "it is extremely unlikely that any of these things (including the relation of sexual intercourse to childbirth) could possibly have been understood by primitive man".4

2 Ashley-Montagu (1).
3 This indicates the error of regarding the absence of the belief as essentially a "primitive" characteristic.
4 Firth (8), pp. 479–92.
5 Williams, P. E., Man, Vol. XXXIII, No. 128.
6 Man, 1932, No. 65.
7 Ashley-Montagu, op. cit., p. 322.
Some understanding of the relationship is possessed by most primitive communities,¹ and even those who lack it live side by side by others who do not. The neighbours of the Trobrianders, the Dobuans, have some knowledge of the relationship, as have certain tribes of Australian aborigines.²

In the vast majority of human communities, then, there exists some knowledge of a causal link between sexual intercourse and childbirth. But this knowledge is in many respects limited, superficial, garbled and imbued with extraneous beliefs of a magico-religious character. It is, as Firth points out,³ the product of social interest rather than of scientific curiosity. This suggests that the belief may be correlated with mental processes other than those of systematic observation and inference. It is possible that the facts that husbands and wives constantly have intercourse with one another and that wives from time to time produce children form the basis of such beliefs, quite apart from the observation of any given pregnancy or pregnancies. We know that intercourse between husband and wife is often held to influence social events—to encourage or diminish fertility in nature, to affect fishing, hunting or war. And the common anatomical centre of the two activities with which we are concerned would favour a postulation of a relationship between them. In this way the belief would be correlated, not with passive observation nor yet with active scientific curiosity, but with a practical social interest in possible factors affecting the important occurrence of birth. The belief would thus resemble a number of other formulations, mostly inaccurate, of factors conducing to fecundity or sterility, formulations which form the basis of treatments for barrenness.⁴ We might regard recognition of sexual paternity as a lucky guess rather than as the outcome of a series of inferences. The most important thing is to free ourselves from the preconceptions of our own society with its strongly patrilineal tendency, its advanced level of scientific knowledge and its specific evaluation of sex in relation to family life.

In studying communities which have no knowledge of the relationship concerned, we must seek a positive statement of the dynamic beliefs surrounding the physical and social facts of parenthood, and correlate these with the dominant institutions of the people concerned. A brief comparative study will make this clear.

Among the matrilineal Trobriand Islands the relation of a man to his mother’s brother is embodied in the various “rules governing descent, inheritance, succession in rank, chiefship, hereditary offices and magic—in every regulation, in fact, concerning trans-

² For example, the Murngin (see Warner (1), pp. 23–24).
³ Firth (8), p. 479.
⁴ Cf. the Tikopia belief connected with the influence of the coconut (Firth, *loc. cit.*).
mission by kinship. Social position is handed on in the mother-line from a man to his sister’s children.”\(^1\) The father is, in discussions of kinship, explicitly described as a “stranger” or “outsider”. This does not mean that the relation between a father and his children is not important. On the contrary, there exists between them a very real bond, derived from two sources. One is their common attachment to the woman who is at the same time the wife of the man and the mother of the children. The other is the fact that the father shares with the mother the early care of the children, and thereby establishes a close tie of personal affection, a tie which is clearly recognized by the natives.

This personal and spontaneous affection forms a part of our own social life, but here it is functionally correlated with, and reinforced by, two important groups of social traditions. The first of these groups consists of the rules governing descent, succession and inheritance. The second group includes a more or less clear appreciation of the biological continuity between father and child.

In regard to the former group of traditions, we have seen that in the Trobriand Islands sociological continuity is vested in the maternal line; that is, it passes on from a man to his sister’s children. Similarly, conceptions of physical continuity are integrated into the matrilineal system on the positive side by an affirmation of physical continuity between mother and child, and on the negative side by the lack of any cultural recognition of the father’s rôle in procreation. The suggestion that the father plays any part in procreation is denied by the natives, a variety of arguments being used to refute it. And, what is more significant still, such denials are made with considerable heat, from which we may infer not only that the Trobriander is ignorant of the rôle which the father plays in procreation but also that he resents any such suggestion. He asserts a complex magico-religious theory of procreation, involving a belief in reincarnation and therefore correlated with his ideas concerning life after death.\(^2\)

The essential thing about this magico-religious theory of conception by reincarnation is the complete exclusion of the father from the native ideology of reproduction. On the other hand, it affirms the continuity of the matrilineal line, firstly by placing all responsibility for the physical origin of the child upon the mother, and secondly by insisting that every child born into a certain clan or sub-clan represents a re-incarnation of a deceased member of the same matrilineal group. Thus both on the physical and on the spiritual side it is seen to be functionally correlated with the matrilineal social organization.

In Australia we find a greater conflict in the evidence, which has been reviewed by Ashley-Montagu. He establishes the general absence

---

\(^1\) Malinowski (4), Chapter I, Section 1.  
\(^2\) Malinowski, op. cit., Chapter VII.
of the belief throughout Australia, but there is evidence of its existence among certain tribes, nor can such examples be dismissed as resulting from "recent importations". To do so is to obscure the real scientific problem. Thus, for the Murngin, Warner states that the old men are fully aware of the relation between sexual intercourse and childbirth. But the really significant fact is that Warner is able to give a full statement of the sociology of the father-child relationship without once mentioning any knowledge of sexual paternity. The implication is clear. Although the old men among the Murngin know of the causal relation between sexual intercourse and procreation, this knowledge is culturally of little or no significance.

The Karadjeri material confirms this as a general statement of the place of the belief in the social life of the tribes who hold it. The Karadjeri, as we have seen, are divided into patrilineal moieties, the totems being divided between these moieties. Every individual possesses one or more totems, which are associated with particular districts. Marriage is in the vast majority of cases patrilocal and membership of the local group is patrilineal.

Before a child is born its father dreams that he sees it as a "spirit-child" (yardanggal) in association with his own totem, the scene of the dream being located in the territory of his own local group. In the dream the yardanggal enters the body of the man's wife, who becomes pregnant. In pre-European times the man and woman would be living in the horde territory of the man, but an interesting variant occurred in the case of an informant whose wife had been living in Broome (about 100 miles distant) at the time when she became aware of her pregnancy. This man stated that in his dream he saw the yardanggal in his own horde territory in the orthodox manner. He picked it up and took it to Broome, where it slipped from his grasp and entered his wife.

The essential features of this theory of conception are as follows:

1. The fact that it is the father of the child who dreams of it establishes the important "principle of legitimacy". The term "father" is used in the sociological sense, and refers to the man who is socially regarded as the husband of the child's mother. The belief thus provides a magico-religious sanction for the institution of the family.

2. The totemic nature of the dream ensures the patrilineal descent of the totem. This is related not only to the totemic taboos but also to the performance of ritual for the increase of the totemic species.

---

1 Cf. Oceania, Vol. 2, pp. 375-76. Unfortunately the evidence is insufficient to make possible a description of the nature of the association. It is uncertain whether the yardanggal is merely seen together with the totem or whether, in native thought, the two are in some way identified. The way in which mythical ancestors are identified with the totems suggests the latter view.

3. The insistence upon the fact that the scene of the dream must be laid in the father's horde territory is related to the patrilineal local organization, which is a very general feature of Australian culture. This in turn is correlated with economic organization.

4. The terminology associated with the theory is of interest. The Karadjeri word for totem is bugari, a word which also means "dream", and in addition refers to the mythological "dream times" when the world was created. Thus the belief not only links the individual to his horde territory, but it also binds him to the mythological bugari ancestors who once lived there. The significance of this belief can be appreciated only if one understands the high emotional value which bugari traditions have for the Karadjeri native. Any custom or belief which has a mythological sanction in this long-past epoch possesses a binding force upon present-day society, a force which is very much in evidence during ceremonies connected with initiation. The bugari tradition in turn reinforces the principle of patrilineal totemism with its associated local increase rites.

The orthodox Karadjeri theory of conception is thus related to other aspects of the culture. This theory was probably universally held by the Karadjeri before the advent of Europeans. But the white man has told the natives of his belief in sexual paternity, a view which is now admitted by many of them. This has probably been due largely to the influence of Yuari, who, as we saw, has adopted the European theory of conception in its entirety. He denies the totemic theory of procreation, and contends that children are made from the male semen injected into the female during coitus. We have already reviewed the factors producing this attitude. What interests us here is the casual attitude of those orthodox natives who admit the physical rôle of the father in procreation, compared with Yuari's dogmatic insistence that the white man's theory is the only correct one.

Yuari's attitude is correlated with his attempt to rationalize his own defiance of tribal morality, and the question arises how a denial of the totemic theory of conception tends to justify an irregular marriage. The answer is to be found in the functional relations of this belief to other aspects of Karadjeri culture. To recapitulate briefly the various features of Karadjeri totemism, it involves:

1. The division of the society into patrilineal moieties.
2. A parallel division of nature into totems belonging to one or other of these moieties.
3. An increase ritual associated with local totem centres.
4. The association of these centres with specific horde territories and with predominantly patrilocal marriage and patrilineal descent of membership of the local group.

1 Piddington (2).
5. The mythological charter for the organization of the tribe into patrilineal moieties and for the division of the totems between these.

Yuari does not deny this system in toto. He asserts that conception is due to sexual intercourse and that patrilineal descent of the totem is automatic—a man belongs to a certain totemic group because his father belongs to it. This belief runs counter to the orthodox interpretation in that it makes descent a personal matter; that is, between an individual father and an individual child. In the orthodox theory the individual father-child relationship is integrated with the mythological origins of totemism in the distant past, the standing evidence of this in totemic increase centres and the traditional division of the tribe into patrilineal moieties. This links a child not only to its father but also to its local group, to the mythical ancestors of this group and to other members of its patrilineal moiety. The rules of classificatory exogamy are related to this dichotomy. For this reason Yuari’s denial of the spiritual and social basis of the moiety system tends to justify his marriage with a woman of his moiety. The belief in procreation by sexual intercourse possesses none of the wider integrative functions of the totemic theory. Intercourse may take place anywhere, and is therefore devoid of local implications. It possesses no mythological background, and therefore fails to establish a direct relationship between the child and the bugari ancestors. For this reason it cannot establish the bond between contemporary human beings which is derived from their common relation to the local centres on the one hand and to the mythological ancestors on the other.

To understand the difference between primitive procreative beliefs and our own it is essential to abandon purely formal definitions of beliefs, and to see them in the context of primitive kinship. In primitive society the term “kinship” covers two groups of phenomena. In the first place, there are sentimental bonds, rights and obligations which form the core of the social institution of the family. Secondly, there exist wider extensions of kinship ties, morphologically patterned upon the first group. These are institutionalized in the various forms of the classificatory system of relationship, as well as in clan and moiety exogamy. In these, regulations such as the prohibition of incest which govern behaviour within the family are extended to wider groups of kin. This extension is based largely on terminology, but is also embodied in magico-religious beliefs, in ritual and in mythology. These provide a justification on the dogmatic side for the existing social structure. Now this type of justification for their kinship organization is provided for the Karadjeri by their beliefs concerning conception. By these the individual is bound not only to his own father but also to the other members of his wider kinship group. This function cannot,
in Karadjeri society, be served by the belief in sexual paternity, because this belief, not being integrated with the aboriginal social structure with its extended groupings based on kinship, does not possess the cultural force necessary to establish the wider bonds of kinship.

This is apt to be obscured by the traditions of our own society, where the belief in sexual paternity forms part of the system of ideas and practices whereby sociological continuity is established between a father and his offspring. This is obvious enough within the individual family, where it is reflected in the expression "child of his loins". The wider extensions of kinship are not so important in our own society. Even where they do play a part—for example, in succession to title and inheritance—they are of a "vertical" rather than of a "lateral" character, and in any case depend upon a number of individual sexual relations (institutionalized in marriage) between individual mothers and fathers.

This stress upon the sexual relations of father and mother within the individual family does not occur in Karadjeri society. Sex is the subject of numerous social evaluations, but the form of these is different from those existing in our own society. For example, the Karadjeri conform to Malinowski's description of Trobriand morality in this respect: "Sex as such is not tabooed. That is to say, the sexual act, provided that it is carried out in private and within certain sociological limits, is not regarded as reprehensible, even when it is not sanctioned by the bond of marriage." This contrasts with our own moral view that sex can only be sanctioned by the bond of marriage and is under all other circumstances ethically wrong. The functional relation of this belief to our emphasis on sexual paternity is obvious.

In Karadjeri society there exist two major groups of restrictions upon indiscriminate sexual activity. The first of these includes the taboos connected with the prohibition of incest and with exogamy, while the second comprises a set of rules safeguarding a husband's rights over the sexual life of his wife. The nature of the latter is extremely significant. They consist, broadly speaking, of a prohibition of extra-marital relations with a married woman without her husband's consent, and provide redress for him if such relations take place. He is in any case entitled to presents in return, or to intercourse with the borrower's own wife if he has one. But subject to restrictions based on kinship, a husband may allow another man to have intercourse with his wife, and is under certain circumstances expected to do so. Moreover, even if another man has intercourse with his wife without his consent, there is no obligation upon him to seek redress unless he desires to do so.

Thus both in Karadjeri society and in our own a man has certain definite rights over the sexual life of his wife. But whereas in the

1 Malinowski (4), p. 381.
former culture, from the moral point of view of society at large, such rights are conceived as alienable, in our own society the general prohibition against extra-marital sexual intercourse makes them, in effect, inalienable. From this it can be seen that in the context of Karadjeri culture the sexual act could never by itself provide a sanction for patrilineal sociological continuity, since a woman’s sexual relations are both ideally and actually by no means confined to intercourse with her husband. Or, to put the matter more concretely, the large amount of extra-marital intercourse which does in fact take place, either officially in the institution of wife-lending or furtively in the form of secret intrigues, precludes the establishment of the necessarily exclusive bond between father and child on the basis of the sexual act.

This analysis reveals the cultural significance of the totemic theory of conception on the one hand and of the belief in sexual paternity on the other. The latter theory, introduced by Europeans, does not necessarily conflict with the totemic belief, and is therefore held side by side with it by the more sophisticated natives. But it does not in any way reinforce the patrilineal principle (as it does in our own society), owing to the very different conception of sexuality, and the corresponding differences both in moral outlook and in actual behaviour. The indifference with which the whole problem is treated by the sophisticated but orthodox natives depends upon the irrelevance of sexual paternity in Karadjeri culture. Sexual intercourse means as little to the Karadjeri in relation to procreation as dreams do to us. But sexual paternity if asserted instead of, not side by side with, the totemic theory tends to undermine the entire social organization and to take away the magico-religious charter for such traditions as exogamy.

The above analysis shows that the most significant ethnographic problem of beliefs concerning conception is not merely to say whether a knowledge of sexual paternity exists or not; or to decide whether the belief, if it occurs, has been taken over from another native community or from Europeans; or to define the extent of actual knowledge concerning the facts of sex; or to split hairs about what is meant by statements about "flesh", "body", "spirit" and the like. Such statements may mean nothing. The real task is to define the dynamic function of belief in determining conduct and securing social integration; and to describe how procreative beliefs fit in with systems of family life, with wider schemes of social organization and with economic, political and magico-religious institutions. In the Trobriands it is not the curious phenomenon of "ignorance of physiological paternity" which is important, but the positive beliefs which validate matri-lineal institutions. It is because of these that the natives object to the suggestion of sexual paternity. In Australia the existence of the belief is irrelevant. The patrilineal organization is supported by other mechan-
isms. The belief in sexual paternity becomes important only when it is used, as by Yuari, to justify a particular line of social behaviour. This it does on a cultural scale among ourselves, and our greatest practical difficulty is to free ourselves from the preconceptions imposed in this way.

One implication of this is that we should be cautious in making such statements as that “a belief in physiological paternity co-exists with magico-religious ideas”. Co-existence is a matter secondary to relevance. In the Australian tribes where such sets of beliefs “co-exist”, those which concern the physical aspect of conception are sociologically of an entirely different character from our own.

We may mention in conclusion a subject which we have been unable to pursue here, namely the wider problem of “physiological” beliefs and evaluations as a whole. In our own society the knowledge of sexual paternity and the “embryological information” of the more sophisticated are merely a part of a very much wider scheme of culturally defined physiological relationships within the family: the sum total of physical relations between husband and wife; pregnancy, childbirth and lactation; the caressing and spanking of children; the nutrition of the family as a whole by the co-operative efforts of husband and wife; and even speech, which by differences in meaning, tone and emotional implication may produce significant physical reactions and set up or destroy profoundly important physical relationships. In the last analysis, all social relations have a physiological basis, though in some institutions, notably the family, this is more direct, conspicuous and emotionally significant than in others. In the family there exist vitally important physiological relationships of the kind described. Some of these are universal and some of them vary in their interpretation and evaluation from one culture to another. Our object should be to discern how such necessary and universally recognized physical relations as those between husband and wife and between mother and children influence family life, and how they are culturally elaborated, interpreted, evaluated and supplemented by other socially prescribed or spontaneously developed physiological relationships. Here is a rich field for comparative study, for the exploration of which the present section may offer some suggestions.
APPENDIX C

SYNCHRONIC AND DIACHRONIC STUDIES

The terms "synchronic" and "diachronic" are widely current in anthropological literature and have appeared several times in this volume. We must therefore devote some attention to clarifying their meanings and implications.

Very briefly, the term synchronic refers to studies of how a culture functions at a given point of time. But in a sense "a given point of time" is a fiction. All cultures change, slowly or rapidly. No culture is absolutely static. But, on the other hand, no culture changes radically overnight or, for the matter of that, over a year or two, barring such unusual events as revolutions, foreign invasions, earthquakes or decimating epidemics. In actual research we may be dealing with relatively static societies, such as untouched primitive communities, or with societies in which change is fairly rapid; for example, our own. But we can always distinguish periods over which no significant or observable change has taken place. Synchronic studies are limited to such periods. We must add a point which we have made several times, namely that synchronic studies, if they are to be scientific, must be based on a conception of the totality of interrelated phenomena which make up a culture. For various reasons, we usually isolate a specific segment of cultural activity for study, but in any case we are concerned with interrelationships and not with lists of traits (Vol. 1, pp. 23–24).

In the latter respect diachronic studies are or should be of precisely the same kind, but they are concerned with periods in the life of a society which have witnessed significant changes in its major institutions. But it must be emphasized that in such studies we are not concerned merely with change and the reasons for change—we must be equally concerned with features of the culture which have not changed and with the reasons for their stability (p. 773).

At this point it may be asked: Why use the neologism "diachronic" when the simple term "historical" would serve as well? There are two important reasons. Firstly, the term "historical" is often used by anthropologists to refer to fragmentary information from the past which is puerile compared with the work of modern historians. Secondly, history itself is not limited to diachronic studies. For example, historians may write on such subjects as life on an English manor

1 See Piddington (5), pp. 341–50.
in the thirteenth century or the London of Shakespeare's time. These are synchronic studies. Other historical accounts are both synchronic and diachronic. For example, Dicey in his study of law and opinion in England\(^1\) sets out the changes in the functional relationship between legal enactments in various fields and public opinion in a specified country over a stated period of time. In so far as he distinguishes three periods, he is presenting three distinct but interrelated synchronic accounts, which, describing as they do successive social phases within the one geographical province and with reference to the manifold forces—economic, political and religious—which were operative, give us a picture of change in dynamic and contextual terms.

To summarize, both synchronic and diachronic studies are concerned with cultural interrelationships, the former dealing with these interrelationships under relatively static conditions and the latter being concerned with their development over a period of significant change.

Diachronic studies, in the sense in which we have used the term, must be distinguished from what might be called **comparative retrospective studies**. For example, in their classic work *Middletown*, the Lynds institute comparisons between Middletown 1925 and Middletown 1890. In certain cases they touch upon the forces which have produced change, but for the most part they are content merely to draw comparisons. Consider, for example, two of their observations: (a) in 1890 more houses in Middletown had "spare rooms" than in 1925; (b) in 1890 more people had their elderly parents living with them than in 1925. The Lynds clearly recognize the relationship between the two observations,\(^2\) but only at the level of comparative retrospective study. To produce a diachronic interpretation it would be necessary to ask why the changes occurred. Did people in Middletown choose smaller houses for simple reasons of economy, and then find that they had no space to spare for their parents? Or was the choice determined by a desire not to be burdened with the aged? Or were both of these factors, and perhaps others, operative together?

The point is that comparative retrospective studies do not differ from any other comparative studies. Any two communities can be compared, at least in certain respects. At the level of analysis of the example we have given, one might equally well compare Middletown 1890 with Birmingham 1925, or Middletown 1925 with Birmingham 1890, provided the necessary evidence were available. Any such comparative studies are valuable scientifically, but they are not diachronic. The fact that the population of Middletown 1925 is largely composed of the biological descendants of Middletown 1890 is irrelevant to the social scientist.

\(^1\) Dicey, A. V., *Lectures on the Relation between Law and Public Opinion in England during the Nineteenth Century*.

On the other hand, the later work of the Lynds\textsuperscript{1} has a different emphasis, largely because more evidence was available from their own intensive investigations. Here they trace the progress of the depression in Middletown, the impact of economic forces and the New Deal on Middletown society, and the final reassertion of the fundamental values of Middletown when the economic storm had passed. Their statements on the cultural interrelationships involved in these changes, and on the underlying persistence of the basic themes of Middletown culture, constitute a diachronic study.

Our discussion of comparative retrospective studies leads us to consider a slogan which crops up with tiresome regularity in anthropological literature, to the effect that “you cannot understand the present without knowing something about the past”. In the sense in which it is intended, this is completely misleading. If it were true we should have to tear up practically all the ethnographic writing produced over the past fifty years, and teachers of social anthropology would be hard put to it to find material on which to lecture.

In studying a contemporary community, what really matters is not what actually happened in the past but what people believe to have happened. And this can be discovered by questioning and observation. Consider, for example, Warner’s discussion of popular American beliefs about Abraham Lincoln.\textsuperscript{2} He shows how Lincoln represents symbolically certain American beliefs and values—including the dogma that it is possible and desirable to rise from humble beginnings to the highest position in the land. He also shows that popular conceptions of Lincoln are not in accord with historical fact. When he was elected President, Lincoln was a lawyer with wealthy friends and good family connections. The observation of the discrepancy illustrates the important principle that even a literate community can distort historical facts to accord with its fundamental attitudes and values. But the real biographical facts about Lincoln have nothing to do with the understanding of contemporary American society. From this point of view it does not matter in the least whether Lincoln was in fact a “rail-splitter”, a lawyer or, for the matter of that, a gambling-house proprietor. What matters is what the American people believe and feel about him, and the way in which this affects present-day American social organization.

The only grain of truth in the statement we have criticized lies in the fact that any comparative studies, and particularly their theoretical implications, may provide insights in the investigation of a contemporary society. Thus, in analysing the place of the Lincoln myth in modern America, Warner may have been helped by his knowledge of American history. But it appears certain that he owed far more to his knowledge

\textsuperscript{1} Lynd and Lynd (2).
\textsuperscript{2} See Warner (3), especially pp. 224–28.
of the function of myth in human society, based upon his anthropological training and his own earlier field-work among the Murngin.

To conclude, any scientifically valid study—synchronic, comparative or diachronic—is justified in its own right. It may also, under appropriate circumstances, provide valuable insights and useful leads in other anthropological investigations. But the statement we have criticized will not stand. One might as well say that "you cannot understand contemporary American society without knowing something about the Murngin".
APPENDIX D

THE CAREFREE PRIMITIVE

Since European observers first began to pay attention to primitive societies, there has been a constant tendency to compare the condition of their lives with our own. Usually such comparisons were flattering to ourselves, primitive peoples being held to live in a state of brutish barbarism not far removed from an animal existence. But there was also a contrary tendency to build up an idyllic picture of primitive life, summed up in the term "carefree". According to this view, primitive peoples have an easy and untroubled existence, living on the bounty of nature and conforming in their social relations to the standards of the "noble savage". (Vol. I, p. 393).

As we know, this represents a distortion. On the material side, most primitive peoples lead a precarious existence. Malnutrition is common, standards of health are low, and the expectation of life is short in communities in which effective medical techniques are rudimentary or non-existent. At a low level of technological development and organization natural catastrophes such as floods, hurricanes and droughts are a more serious menace than in our own highly developed civilization. On the social side life is usually far from idyllic, and customary usages often impose unnecessary suffering, frustration and unhappiness on individual human beings.

But in one important respect the conception of the carefree primitive is not altogether wide of the mark. Primitive peoples generally are relatively free from the specific emotional tensions, conflicts and anxieties which in modern society produce mental illness and somatic disorders on a large and apparently increasing scale. The reasons for this are complex and call for further research, but some of them are clearly important:

In the first place, there is in primitive society generally a homogeneity of values which tends to minimize moral conflicts (cf. p. 623, also Vol. I, pp. 187–88).

In the second place, the position of the individual in the social structure is more clearly and consistently defined. For example,

1 The importance of this for mental adjustment is indicated by the following quotation: "Man is a tribal or group creature with a long period of development and dependent for his very existence upon the aid, support and encouragement of other men. He lives his life so much in contact with men, and in such concern about their expectations of him, that perhaps the greatest threat of all is his doubt in his ability to
where initiation ceremonies exist, the individual is expected to behave as a child before, and as an adult after, his initiation; this may be contrasted with the uncertainties regarding behaviour which, in our own society, underlie many of the psychological problems of adolescence. Similarly, the position of the individual in the rank structure is clearly defined, or, if it is changed, this change takes place according to institutionalized procedures which leave the individual in no doubt as to where he stands. This contrasts with the uncertainties of the upward mobile individual in a modern class system.

In the third place, the ramifications of social relations, particularly those based on kinship, mean that in primitive society the individual is less exclusively dependent for affection and psychological security on the individual family. As we know, emotional maladjustments arising on this score are among the common causes of mental illness in our society. Psychologically, the modern family is probably the most unhealthy variety of this institution yet devised by mankind.

In the fourth place, the tempo of life is smoother and easier in primitive society. The fact that it is geared to a seasonal rhythm of effort (p. 465) probably means that it makes fewer artificial and exhausting demands on the human organism. The influence of the “rush of modern life” on the genesis of mental maladjustment needs detailed investigation.

The statements that mental maladjustment is less common in primitive societies, and that the factors we have mentioned are in part responsible for this situation, need some qualification in view of the lack of detailed evidence. Firstly, there is hardly any reliable statistical information, and even where such exists it has been suggested that an apparently higher incidence of mental illness may be due to greater attention being paid to the problems involved and to better diagnosis; secondly, it appears that primitive societies vary considerably among themselves in regard to the extent to which their members manifest psychological maladjustments, while different cultures seem to foster different types of mental disorder; thirdly, the situation is still further complicated by the fact that some societies recognize and institutionalize abnormal reactions, such as trance states and bodily tremors, usually as manifestations of supernatural forces, benign or malignant. Just how far this affects the real or apparent incidence of abnormal behaviour it is impossible to say. In spite of the above reservations, however, the conclusion of Professor Ralph Beals is probably correct: live the life of a man. He is threatened by those very forces in society upon which he is dependent for nourishment and life” (Wolff, Wolff and Hare, cited in Caudill (1), p. 791). Clearly, the threat referred to is less acute when relations between men are clearly and consistently defined by culture than when they are largely the product of adventitious interactions of “personalities”, as in our own society.
"I believe there are few cultures which have a higher incidence of bad mental health than Western civilization."

We have said that in regard to the psychological manifestations of neurosis and psychosis, some caution is necessary. But when we come to psychosomatic or multiple stress disorders we are on surer ground because their aetiology and symptomatology are only in part psychological. Diagnosis is more reliable and less affected by adventitious psychocultural forces as yet imperfectly understood.

In this field certain observations of two medical men, Professor Sir Stanley Davidson and Dr. B. S. Rose, are of considerable interest. In 1953 Professor L. S. P. Davidson made a tour of Africa lasting for three and a half months. He visited South Africa, Rhodesia, East Africa and the Sudan, and made a study of medical services and of the differential incidence of various diseases and disorders among Africans as compared with Europeans. As a medical man he was primarily concerned with purely medical problems, but his observations so far as they concern us are summarized as follows:

"Psychosomatic Disorders.—If it be accepted that such diseases exist, then duodenal ulcer, thyrotoxicosis, and rheumatoid arthritis are the best-known examples. All three diseases are extremely common in Europeans and very rare in Africans. This finding may be correlated with observations which, I am told, were made during the war—namely, that African soldiers under stress suffered from hysteria and not from the anxiety neuroses so common in Indians and Europeans under stress, which are believed to be the underlying cause of the so-called psychosomatic diseases. . . .

"I have been told by doctors who have practised in America and by European and Indian doctors who have practised in India that diseases which are rare in Africans now living in Africa are also rare in Africans and Indian peasants living under poor conditions in America and India but that when Africans and Indians become successful and adopt European customs, eat the same kind of food, and are submitted to the emotional strains of modern civilization, the incidence of vascular, gastro-intestinal and endocrine diseases among them shows a remarkable increase. If these observations are true they suggest that environmental factors rather than racial factors are largely concerned in the etiology of these diseases.

"Environmental factors, such as bad housing, nutritional deficiency or infection, do not appear to play an essential part in the causation of those diseases which are rarer in Africans than in Europeans, since Africans are worse housed, worse fed and suffer from infectious diseases, especially tropical diseases and helminthic infestations, much more often than Europeans living in the same district.

1 Beals in Tax (1), p. 337.
"Two other causes may be responsible for the high incidence of certain diseases in Europeans—namely (a) the excessive consumption of calories or the excessive intake of some particular food such as fat or protein; or (b) an excessive or uncontrolled production of emotional stimuli due to the competition and stress of modern life. It is also possible that both causes are concerned in the aetiology of certain diseases, since emotional stimuli by affecting adversely the balanced production of hormones may lead to alterations in processes vitally concerned with the metabolism of food."1

Pursuing the question whether the relatively low incidence of psychosomatic disorders among Africans was due to racial or to environmental factors, Professor Davidson in 1954 visited the Southern States of the U.S.A. He summarizes his observations as follows:

"When I previously visited South Carolina and Georgia thirty-two years ago, the economic, social and educational state of the vast majority of coloured people was exceedingly poor. Malnutrition was rampant, housing conditions were usually deplorable, and the daily wage was often as low as 50–75 cents. Two world wars, and the industrialization of the Southern States which has resulted from them, have led to a revolution in the living conditions of the Negro.

"Alike in the factory and in the field he receives the same rate of pay as his white neighbour (perhaps 6–12 dollars a day). A Negro woman doing domestic work is paid 6 dollars a day. Negro boys and girls go to well-constructed primary and secondary schools and many proceed thereafter to college. The average coloured family lives in a house which, though the general standard has greatly improved, would still be considered unsatisfactory by white people of the same economic class; but with less to pay in rent and taxes for his house the Negro may have more money than a white workman, on the same weekly wage, to spend on food, drink, tobacco, motor-cars and other luxuries. . . .

"In one generation the material prosperity of the American Negro has been transformed; and at the same time malnutrition and deficiency diseases (such as pellagra) have virtually disappeared, malaria has been eradicated, and many diseases such as enteric fever and dysentery, which are associated with bad hygienic conditions, have been greatly reduced. On the other hand, material prosperity does seem to have been bought at a considerable price; for everyone with whom I discussed this matter told me that the psychosomatic and metabolic diseases have much increased among the Negro population of the United States. Dr. V. P. Sydenstricker, professor of medicine in the University of Georgia, informed me that whereas at the beginning of his professional career forty years ago these diseases were rare among Negroes, they are now very common. Several distinguished physicians

told me, indeed, that Negroes are now developing malignant hypertension and the collagen disorders more severely and at an earlier age than white people.

"The evidence before us leaves little doubt that the origin of many diseases is closely related to the working and living conditions and eating habits of Western civilization. The relative importance of metabolic and emotional factors in the aetiology of these diseases remains to be ascertained. We are also left with the question whether people who have once enjoyed the material pleasures of modern times will ever be willing to return to a simple agrarian life."  

This communication elicited a further letter from Dr. B. S. Rose, of the Queen Elizabeth Hospital for Rheumatic Diseases at Rotorua, New Zealand, who refers to his own observations on rheumatoid arthritis:

"In the Queen Elizabeth Hospital for Rheumatic Diseases, which is situated in a district with a large Maori population, we see very few Maori patients with rheumatoid arthritis. In the past year I have seen only three, and it may be significant that all of them were either married to Pakehas, or had a history of previous neisserian infection, or both. The rarity of rheumatoid arthritis, and of other diseases commonly called 'psychosomatic', amongst Maoris (in the areas away from the two largest cities in the North Island of New Zealand) is confirmed by several general practitioners with whom I have spoken, so that I am not inclined to think that my experience, based on hospital cases, is unrepresentative.

"Hitherto it has not been easy to decide whether to attribute this great difference in incidence to genetic or to environmental factors. Now, in the light of Professor Davidson's observations, it would appear that environmental factors would be a more likely explanation than a genetically determined racial immunity.

"He raises the question of the relative importance of metabolic and emotional factors in the aetiology of these disorders. Here one is on very uncertain ground, but emotional factors would appear to be frequently operative in initiating the abnormal metabolic processes involved. Our experience of rheumatoid arthritis in patients here accords very well with that of Professor Hartfall, who found associated emotional disturbance in 68 per cent. of his series. According to Halliday, one of the hallmarks of diseases of emotional origin is a tendency for the peak incidence to shift to an earlier age-group, and for the severity to increase, with continual failure of adaptation to environmental pressure. The observations of the distinguished physicians mentioned in Professor Davidson's letter could therefore be interpreted as supporting an emotional aetiology.

---

"The Maori population is not as yet reacting with the same type of emotional disturbance, possibly because their culture is less competitive and because they are less exposed to 'social isolation', especially when compared with Pakeha immigrants. This does not mean that the Maoris are immune from emotional disturbance, but only that it takes different forms. The present risk is that, in freeing themselves from the danger of 'psychosomatic' death following infringement of a taboo, they may become more liable to peptic ulcers and to rheumatoid arthritis.

"As it has taken less than forty years for this change to occur in the United States of America, it is of some importance to public-health administrators to know how to prevent a parallel change elsewhere without sacrificing a high material living standard. In this respect it has been shown by Le Corbusier that it is not by any means necessary for a materially advanced culture either to cut itself off from the basic rhythms of nature or to split itself up into a disintegrated state of individual social isolation, as is the present trend. These last remarks apply to the development of 'developed' areas, but in dealing with 'undeveloped' areas they might do worse than consult the UNESCO handbook, Cultural Patterns and Technical Change. Consultation with a cultural anthropologist before initiating any major changes, such as housing schemes in new factory areas, could prevent major social disintegration, even if the Corbusian dream remains long unrealized."

The implications of the above observations, in terms of the comparative evaluation of cultures, go far beyond the purely medical data. Since the psychosomatic disorders referred to are largely the result of emotional disturbances and tensions produced by our way of life, it follows that such disturbances and tensions must exist to some degree in many individuals who do not respond to them in a clinically discernible way. The clinical data are but the dramatic and overt manifestation of the psychological malaise which is inherent in our way of life and which produces an amount of human unhappiness which it is impossible to assess.

Are we, then, faced with the choices implied in Professor Davidson's second communication: between a high standard of living and a "simple agrarian life"; between mental unrest and psychosomatic illness on the one hand and equally distressing physical disorders on the other; and between peace of mind and the benefits, especially medical benefits, provided by modern science and technology? That these apparent dilemmas can be satisfactorily resolved is suggested in Dr. Rose's contribution. And in the opinion of the present writer, trends in the adjustment of the Maori people today provides one example of how this can be achieved.

2 The Lancet, June 18th, 1955, pp. 1274–75.
BIBLIOGRAPHY

Note.—The system of numeration and citation adopted here is explained in Vol. 1, p. 422, and this Bibliography is designed to be used together with that volume.


—— (2) "New Zealand Anthropology To-day", Journal of the Polynesian Society, Vol. XLVI (1937).


—— (2) "Acculturation" in Kroeber (3).


—— (3) Island Administration in the South-west Pacific (1950).
Benedict, R. (2) Patterns of Culture (1934).
Bennett, J. W., and Wolff, K. H. (1) "Toward Communication between Sociology and Anthropology" in Thomas (1).
Buck, P. H. (Te Rangi Hiroa) (1) Samoan Material Culture (1930).

(2) The Evolution of Maori Clothing (1926).
Caudill, W. (1) "Applied Anthropology in Medicine" in Kroebel (3).

Chapple, E. D. (1) "Applied Anthropology in Industry" in Kroebel (3).


Cumberland, K. B. (1) The Geographer’s Point of View (1946).


(2) A Navaho Autobiography (1947).


Ford, C. S. (1) Smoke from Their Fires (1941).


—— (2) Nine Dayak Nights (1957).


BIBLIOGRAPHY


(5) *Acculturation* (1938).


(2) *The Psychological Frontiers of Society* (1945).

Keesing, F. M. (4) *Social Anthropology in Polynesia* (1953).

(5) *The South Seas in the Modern World* (1941).

(6) *Native Peoples of the Pacific World* (1945).


Klineberg, O. (1) “Recent Studies of National Character” in Sargent and Smith (1).


Komarovsky, M., and Sargent, S. S. (1) "Research into Subcultural Influences upon Personality" in Sargent and Smith (1).

Kroeber, A. L. (2) "History of Anthropological Thought" in Thomas (1).


(2) Children of the People (1948).

Lewis, O. (1) "Controls and Experiments in Field Work" in Kroeber (3).

— (2) Life in a Mexican Village: Tepoztlán Restudied (1951).

Linton, R. (1) "Problems of Status Personality" in Sargent and Smith (1).


— (3) Culture and Mental Disorders (1956).

Little, K. L. (3) Negroes in Britain (1948).

— (4) "From Tribalism to Modern Society" in the Year Book of Education, 1954.


Lynd, R. S., and H. M. (1) Middletown, A Study in Contemporary American Culture (1929).


Macgregor, G. (1) "Anthropology in Government: United States" in Thomas (1).

MacInnes, C. M. (ed.) (1) Principles and Methods of Colonial Administration (1950).

Malinowski, B. (11) The Dynamics of Culture Change (1945).


Murphy, G. (1) “The Relationships of Culture and Personality” in Sargent and Smith (1).


Paul, B. (1) “Interview Techniques and Field Relationships” in Kroeber (3).


(8) “Malinowski’s Theory of Needs” in Firth (21).


(2) *The Folk Culture of Yucatan* (1941).


Richardson, F. L. W. (Jr.)
Schapera, I.

(1) "Anthropology and Human Relations in Business and Industry" in Thomas (1).
(1) Culture and Personality (1949).


(6) Western Civilization and the Natives of South Africa (1934).

(1) "Changing Man’s Habitat" in Thomas (1), pp. 31–43.
(1) Influences of Geographical Environment (1911).

(2) Sun Chief, the Autobiography of a Hopi Indian (1942).


(3) The South Seas in Transition (1953).


(1) “Environmentalism and Possibilism” in Taylor (1).

(2) "Geography in the Nineteenth Century", ibid.


(1) Geography in the Twentieth Century (1951).


(1) "Anthropology in the Public Consciousness" in Thomas (1).


(1) Who shall be Educated? (1944).
Warner, W. L.  
——  
(2) *Democracy in Jonesville* (1949).

Warner, W. L., and Lunt, P. S.  
(1) *The Social Life of a Modern Community* (1941).

Warner, Meeker and Eells  
(1) *Social Class in America* (1949).

Watson, J. M.  

Westermann, D.  
(1) *Becoming a Kwoma* (1941).
(2) *The Vailala Madness and the Destruction of Ceremonies in the Gulf Division* (1923).

Whiting, J.  

Williams, F. E.  
——
INDEX

Acculturation: 647–52; see also Culture contact
Adjustment cults: 732, 735–44
America: adjustment cults in, 737–9
Anthropogeographic: 446
Anthropologists: and administration, 649–51, 686–8
Anxiety: 623 n. 2
Apollonian and Dionysian culture patterns: 600
Arensberg, C. M. and Kimball, S. T., on an Irish community: 755
Art: primitive, 516–20
Ashley-Montagu, M. F.: on paternity in Australia, 787, 789–90; on racial differences, 598 n. 2
Assumptions, cultural: in relation to values, 599 n. 1
Azande: field-work among, 528

Base line: 654
Basic or modal personality: 608
 Bateson, G.: on eidos and ethos, 603–4
Batten, T. R.: on social development, 729 n. 3, 731
Beaglehole, E. and P.: on a Maori community, 756; on Maori character structure, 622; on Maori war neuroses, 624
Beals, R.: on mental health, 801–2
Belshaw, C.: on assumptions of policy, 744 n. 1; on native entrepreneurs, 734–5; on technical development, 730; on the imposition of European values, 746
Benedict, R.: comparisons by, 625–30; on patterns of culture, 599–603
Bennett, J. W. and Wolf, K. H.: on anthropology and sociology, 768 n. 1; on the concept of culture, 766 n. 2
Biographies: see Personal documents
Birth: see Childbirth
Blocked mobility: 776
Boas, F.: on Kwakiutl marriage, 625 n. 2
Bowen, E. S. (pseudonym): on field-work, 528 n. 2
Bridgman, P. W.: on the operational approach to theory, 641 n. 2
Buck, P. H. (Te Rangi Hiroa): on division of food in Samoa, 557; on Maori craftsmanship, 505, 507; on technology, 487 n. 2, 508
Buwayma: relation of form to social institutions, 490–7
Cargo cults: see Adjustment cults
Census: 576
Change, social or cultural: 653
Check lists, in field-work: 557–9
Childbirth: critical review of records of, 587–94
Child training: significance of, 608, 618–19
Childe, V. G.: on early diffusion of civilization, 478–9
Children: study of in the field, 552; see also Child training
Chota Nagpur Plateau: seasonal cycle, 468
Climate: 462–70
Clothing: in relation to environment, 462–3
Cohen, A. K.: on functional and logical integration, 624
Collins, S. F.: on enclave communities in Britain, 756–7
Colombo Plan: 649, 728
Comparative series: in museum arrangement, 511–13
Competition: see Co-operation
Configurations: cultural, 599–606
Conflict: personality, 623
Co-operation and competition: 604–6
Counter-theme: see Theme
Cricket: significance in English culture, 544–6
Cultural efflorescence: 507
Cultural inter-relationships: and material culture, 487, 521–31; importance in field-work, 529–30, 593–4
Cultural standard of living: 745
Cultural symbiosis: see Symbiosis
Cultural value orientations: 611–13; see also Values
Culture: and personality, 597–646; definitions of, Preface, Section 3; technology as an aspect of, 487–9
Culture contact: 647–748; use of term, 653
Cumberland, K. B.: on environmentalism, 449

Davidson, L. S. P.: on psychosomatic disorders in Africa and the Southern U.S.A., 802–4
Demography: 478–82
Depopulation: in Malaita, 717–18
Descartes, R.: on the principle of cultural relativity, 601–2 n. 1
"Detrubalization": fallacy implied by, 731

Diachronic: see Synchronic

Differentiated society: characteristics of, 760–4
Diffusion: 651–2; and independent development, 484, 507–11; Malinowski on, 545; relation of to environment, 474–8

Dionysian: see Apollonian

Direct Rule: 658; among the Hehe, 690

Documentation: importance of in field records, 575–6

Documents and records: 567–71

Economic activities: relation of to seasonal cycle, 467–70

Economic development: 728

Economic influences: in culture contact situations, 655–6, 664–70

Economics: Hehe, 698–701; in Malaita, 712–14, 720–2

Education: native, 680–4

Eidos: 603

Emergent development: 727–35, 748 n. 1

Enclave communities: 756–7

Enculturation: 652

Environment: see Geographical environment

Environmental determinism: see Environmentalism

Environmentalism: 446

Ethnic groups: 756–7

Ethnographic dynamite: 551, 578

Ethnographic present: 685

Ethnography: see Field-work

Ethos: 603

European residents: relations of field-worker with, 559–61

Evaluad participation: 767 n. 2

Evans-Pritchard, E. E.: on difficulties of field-work, 528, 550; on the socio-geographical adjustment of the Nuer, 452–5

Evolutionary series: 509–10

Explicit values: see Values

Fei, H. T.: on a Chinese village, 752

Field-work: 525–96, 778–86; as human situation, 543–4, 564; influence of on ethnographers, 546–7; initial contacts, 550–3; in studies of culture and personality, 642–4; period of, 561–3; psychological strains and tensions in, 559; training for, 594–5

Fiji: houses in, 497–501

Firth, R.: follow-up study in Tikopia, 574; on Colombo Plan, 728–9; on geographical environment, 506; on history and anthropology, 647 n. 1; on Malay fishermen, 763; on material culture, 523; on patriarchy in Tikopia, 788; on social change in New Guinea, 732–4; on social structure and social organization, 611; on technology and economics, 484 n. 1; on values, 611

Folk cultures: 751–5

Follow-up studies: 574–5

Food supply: relation to population, 478–81

Forde, C. D.: on man in relation to environment, 450, 462, 463

Foster, G. M.: on folk cultures, 752

Frazer, J. G.: on religion and magic, 597 n. 2

Freud, S.: see Psycho-analysis

Frohm, E.: 607, 645

Functional penetration: see Participant observation

Geddes, A.: on seasonal cycle, 464–5

Geddes, P.: on relation between man and environment, 448, 451

Geddes, W. R.: on child-rearing and adult character, 622; on Land Dayak economics, 763–4

Genealogies: collection of in the field, 542, 552–3

Geographical determinism: see Environmentalism

Geographical environment: 443–82; and Maori clothing, 505–6; influences of on human culture, 455–8

Geographical series: in museum arrangement, 512–13

Gorer, G.: on Russian character, 622

Green, A. W.: on personality conflict, 623

Groves, W. C.: 683 n. 1

Habitations: in relation to environment, 462–4; study of in field-work, 531, 558; see also Houses

Hallowell, A. I.: on subject-matter of anthropology, 598

Harrison, H. S.: on inventiveness and evolutionary series, 509; on museums, 513
INDEX

Hawthorn, H.: on the Doukhobors, 756
Hehe: culture contact among, 686–708
Herskovits, M.: on primitive art, 520; on urban communities, 755
History: and anthropology, 647 n. 1, 772–3, 796–9
Hogbin, H. I.: excerpt from field record of, 778–80; on culture contact in Malaita, 709–26; on questions in field-work, 534; on shifts and deviations in public opinion, 535
Houses: Fijian, significance of, 497–501; see also Habitations
Human relations area files: 558
Hutt, A. McD. B.: and the Hehe experiment, 686
Implicit values: see Values
Imponderabilia of social life: 544–6
Index of status characteristics: 767
Indirect rule: 659–64
Informants: incentives of, 555–6; reliability of, 534–5
Initial contacts: in field-work, 550–3
Initiation ceremonies: misinterpretation of, 628–30
Interdisciplinary studies: 572–3, 641, 768–75
Interviews in field-work, 542, 553–5
Inventiveness: 484–7
Kaberry, P.: on Australian aboriginal marriages, 782 n. 1; on Australian aboriginal women, 610
Kaishienkung: as folk culture, 752; equation of calendars in, 477
Karadjeri: conditions of field-work among, 781–3; paternity among, 790–5
Kardiner, A.: on the individual and society, 607–9
Kimball, S. T.: see Arensberg and Kimball
Kinship: Hehe, 692–7; in Malaita, 710–12
Klineberg, O.: on race differences, 598 n. 2
Kluckhohn, C.: 641; on personal documents in field-work, 560–70; on values, 773 n. 1; see also Kroeber and Kluckhohn, Leighton and Kluckhohn
Kluckhohn, C. and Mowrer, O. H.: on culture and personality, 613–14; on impersonal environment, 620–1
Kluckhohn, F.: 641; on cultural value orientations, 611–13; on relation of man to nature, 456–7
Kroeber, A. L.: on culture and personality, 641
Kroeber, A. L. and Kluckhohn, C.: on definitions of culture, Preface, Section 3
Land Dayaks: 622
Land tenure: and culture contact, 658–9, 669–70; Hehe, 698
Language: and field-work, 552, 564–7; as cultural influence, 621–2
Law: Hehe, 697–8; in Malaita, 714–16
Leadership: in Malaita, 712–14; see also Political organization
Leighton, D. and Kluckhohn, C.: field-work on Navaho, 644; on Navaho values, 599 n. 1; on psychological interpretations, 619
Lewis, O.: follow-up study, 574; on urbanization of Mexican villages, 753–4
Li An-Che: on Zuni, 626, 628 n. 3
Linton, R.: on basic personality, 608; on child training, 619; on functionalism, 624
Little, K.: on child-rearing and adult character, 622–3; on mass-observation, 527 n. 1; on negroes in Cardiff, 756
Local organization: in Malaita, 709–10
Lowie, R. H.: on culture patterns, 627 n. 5; on delimitation of cultures, 758; on use of language in field-work, 567 n. 1
Lynd, R. S. and H. M.: on Middletown, 575; 765, 797
Mair, L. P.: on culture contact in Africa, 749
Malaita: culture contact in, 709–26
Malinowski, B.: on attitudes towards sex, 793; on cricket, 545; on "cultural monadology", 602; on doctrines in Trobriand land tenure, 642–3; on language, 621; on paternity, 787–90; on "traits", 530; on Trobriand bwayma, 494–5; period of field research, 561–2
Man: biological adaptation of, 443–5
Maori: as example of cultural symbiosis, 751 n. 2; attitude towards craftsmanship, 519 n. 1; clothing, 501–7; housing conditions, 775 n. 1; incidence of war neuroses, 623–4; psychosomatic disorders among, 804–5; seasonal cycle, 469; type of culture, 755; urbanization of, 754
Marett, R. R.: on primitive religion, 680
Masinga rule: 741–2
Mass education: 683
Mass-observation: 527
Material culture: 483–523; significance of, 483–4, 521–3; study of in field-work, 554, 557
Mead, M.: on competition and co-operation, 604–6; on interpretation of educational processes, 604–5; on Manua, 617 n. 1; on sex-temperament, 692–40; on use of language in field-work, 566–7
INDEX

Meek, C. K.: on the Ibo, 759
Melanesia: adjustment cults in, 739–42
Mental maladjustment: 747, 800–5; see also Anxiety, conflict, personality
Messianic movements: see Adjustment cults
Metaphorical imperative: 621
Micro-sociology: 648, 770
Missionaries: and anthropologists, 650 n. 1; 670–1; influence of, 655–7, 670–80; in Malaita, 722–5
Mnemonic aids: in field-work, 557–9
Modal personality: see Basic personality
Mowrer, O. H.: see Kluckhohn and Mowrer
Mumford, W. B. and Jackson, R.: on native education in the Gold Coast, 680–1
Museums: 511–16

Nadel, S. F.: on psychological differences, 598 n. 2; on sex-temperament, 633; on theory, Preface, Section 2
Nativistic revivals: see Adjustment cults
Natural resources: 458–62
Needs: and inventiveness, 485–6
New Imperialism: 746
Nuer: environmental adaptation of, 452–5; field-work among, 528, 550
Nupe: calendar of, 467, 471

Oeser, O. A.: and participant observation, 548
Operational approach to culture and personality: 640–5
Opler, M.: 641; on theme and counter-theme, 609–11

Participant observation: 528, 547–50, 551–2
Paternity: beliefs concerning, 787–95
Patterns of culture: 624–5; see also Benedict, R., configurations, values
Paul, B.: on husband-wife team in field, 549 n. 1; on identification with groups in field-work, 549 n. 2; on informants, 598; on initial contacts, 550 n. 1
Personal bias: in field-work, 529, 546–7, 764
Personal documents: in field-work, 569–70, 642
Personality: causes of conflict, 623; components and determinants of, 613–14, 618–24; significance of cultural factors in determining, 601, 618
Policy, assumptions of: 744–7
Political organization: Hehe, 688–92
Population: trends resulting from culture contact, 480; see also Demography, de-population
Possibilist geographers: interpretations of, 447–8
Powell, H. A.: follow-up study, 574
Prepotent cultural responses: 603, 630–2
Principle of cultural relativity: 601
Problemstellung: importance in field-work, 529, 595
Projective tests: see Tests, projective
Prophet cults: see Adjustment cults
Psycho-analysis: application to problems of culture, 607–8, 619
Psychology and anthropology: 546 n. 1, 597–9, 770–1
Publication: of ethnographic records, 575–9
Quantitative data and statistical information: 576–7, 766–7

Race relations: 654–5
Radcliffe-Brown, A. R.: on gratifications, 611; on marriages in Western Australia, 785; on psychology, 597; on social norms, 596
Ratzel, F.: on influence of environment, 446
Raum, O.: on Chaga childbirth, 584–7; on change in Africa, 745 n. 1
Redfield, R.: on folk cultures, 751–5; follow-up study, 574
Relativity, cultural: see Principle of cultural relativity
Religion: in Malaita, 716–17
Religion and magic: Hehe, 701–3
Rimrock project: 573
Rites de passage: 489
Rivers, W. H. R.: on Toda childbirth, 579–84
Roberts, S. H.: on depopulation, 717
Rorschach test: 570
Rose, B. S.: on Maori housing, 775 n. 1; on psychosomatic disorders among the Maori, 804–5
Rural communities: 755–6; see also Folk cultures
Sapir, E.: pioneering work on culture and personality, 599 n. 2
Sears, P. B.: on use of natural resources, 481
Seasonal cycle: 464–70
Seasonal variation: 462–70
Semple, E. C.: on the influence of environment, 446–7
Sex-temperament: 632–40
Shapera, I.: on sex and marital relations among the Kxatla, 675
Sheldon, R. C.: on operations and theory, 641 n. 2
Smith, E. W.: on missionary policy, 675
INDEX

Social activities: adaptation of to seasonal cycle, 468-70
Social symbiosis: see Symbiosis
Solomon Islands: see Malaita, Masinga rule
South Africa: adjustment cults in, 735-7
Spengler, O.: historical interpretations, 599
Stanley, H. M.: 658 n. 1
Stanner, W. E. H.: on merbok exchanges, 460-1
Statistical information: see Quantitative data
Status personality: 554, 614 n. 1
Stereotype: 556 n. 2
Stranger value: 550
Sub-cultures: 756-7, 759
Symbiosis, social or cultural: 751-2
Synchronic and diachronic studies: 796-9
Synoptic tables, as technique of fieldwork: 539-42

Tallensi: seasonal cycle of, 476
Team work: 571-4, 766
Technology: and inventiveness, 484-7, 507-10; see also Material culture
Tests, projective: 570, 642, 644
Thematic Apperception tests: 570
Theme and counter-theme: 609-11, 643
Theory: in social science, Preface, Sections 2 and 3, 525-7
Tikopia, seasonal cycle: Diagram facing p. 474
Topography: 470-8
Trade, primitive: anthropological interpretation of, 459-62, 477-8
Transculturation: 652
Trobiand Islands: cricket in, 545; paternity in, 787-9; seasonal cycle, 472-3; see also Bwayma

Urban life, urbanization: 753 n. 1, 754, 755, 758-67
Vailala madness: 739-40
Value orientations: in relation to geographical environment, 456-7
Values: 773; explicit and implicit, 544; importance of linguistic fluency in studying, 567; problems relating to, 598-9; relation to assumptions, 599 n. 1
War: psychological conflicts in, 629-4
Warner, W. L.: on Abraham Lincoln, 798; on absolute logics, 603 n. 3; on American society, 775-6; on Murngin paternity, 790; on sociological method, 769
Warner and Lunt: on the operational approach to social science, 641 n. 2; on types of social structure, 603 n. 1; on Yankee City, 766
Warner, Meeker and Eells: on social class in America, 766-7
Wedgwood, C.: on magic, 678 n. 1
Williams, F. E.: on the Vailala madness, 739-40
Wilson, M.: on adjustment cults in South Africa, 735-7
Wirth, L.: on urban life, 753 n. 1
Wissler, C.: on diffusion, 475; on Eskimo ecology, 479
Wolf, K. H.: see Bennett and Wolf
Wolff, Wolff and Hare: on group life, 800 n. 1

Zero point: 653-4
Zuckerman, S.: on primate behaviour, 444
"A book that is shut is but a block"

CENTRAL ARCHAEOLOGICAL LIBRARY

GOVT. OF INDIA
Department of Archaeology
NEW DELHI.

Please help us to keep the book clean and moving.