STUDIES IN INTER-GROUP RELATIONS

by

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The work submitted consists of three volumes:

(a) **West African City; a study of tribal life in Freetown**, published for the International African Institute by Oxford University Press in 1957; reprinted 1960.


(c) the present volume, containing:

   (i) a commentary upon the various articles and books submitted, and their relation to one another.


   (vii) "Role Congruence and Social Differentiation under Urban Conditions" a paper presented in June 1962 to the Pan American Union Conference on Social Structure, Stratification and Mobility; appearing in the Proceedings of the Conference which are due to be published in June, 1964.

Commentary

In July 1954 I graduated at this University with the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the Faculty of Science. For that degree I submitted a thesis, a slightly shortened version which was afterwards published under the title The Coloured Quarter: Negro Immigrants in an English City by Jonathan Cape, London, in 1955. The work I am now submitting grows out of the interests that were generated in the writing of this first study.

The Coloured Quarter paid special attention to the adaptation of immigrants from West Africa and the attitudes which underlay their migration. West African City follows this interest back one or two steps. It examines factors in the socio-economic conditions prevailing in the West African coastal hinterland and the ways in which they have occasioned rural-urban migration. In Chapter VI relations between Europeans, Levantines, Creoles and tribal Africans are examined. In Chapter VII-X relations between Africans of different tribes in Freetown are discussed, particularly in connection with the development of new social institutions. Throughout the study inter-group relations are considered in specific historical and social contexts.

The recent history of contact between different races and tribes in Africa is also in large measure the history of changes within African societies brought about by the influences of the world policy and the world market. In this respect one topic that has been of interest to me is the part played by new religious movements, and the extent to which they reflect relations between social groups. The first of the papers included here, "African Prophets" is concerned with the political element in the popular appeal of prophet leaders; the second describes a more sophisticated movement studied in Sierra Leone. The third paper provides a general review of research on racial relations in Africa South of the Sahara (excluding Southern Rhodesia and the Republic of South Africa); it reports no new material but is included here because there have hitherto been hardly any attempts to analyze the varied data about African race relations in sociological terms.
The Coloured Quarter concentrated largely upon immigrant settlement and did not attempt any general analysis of British attitudes or behaviour towards the immigrants. White and Coloured carries my treatment of intergroup relations forward a step by focusing explicitly on British behaviour. At the time when my work on this topic was being conducted, psychological explanations of racial friction were particularly fashionable and were often carried to inappropriate lengths. In reaction against these views, my book argues that patterns of social distance in Britain are part of an inheritance of customary behaviour. The chief contribution of the book is probably its elaboration of a sociological explanation of the forms and degrees of distance British people maintain in respect of coloured immigrants. The analysis in the book is systematized and refined somewhat in the fourth paper included here, which discusses some of the more general problems of social distance studies and reflects my growing interest in the study of interpersonal relations in terms of roles and relationships.

This interest is evident in the text of the next two papers. The essay on "The Restructuring of Social Relationships" which, though published after, was written before the article on Social Distance, represents an attempt to re-analyze some of my Freetown material in these other terms. In West African City I focused on social systems and sub-systems, institutions, and other collective phenomena. I did not pay the attention I now would to patterns of interpersonal conduct. This essay is a first attempt, using the concept of person rather than role, to work out some of the implications of shifting from a 'system' to an 'actor' frame of reference. The next paper on 'role congruence' marks a more systematic exploitation of the role concept both in its application to intergroup relations in African towns and in its implications for studies of similar phenomena in more industrialized milieux. The argument subsumes racial and class differences in a more abstract formulation about role congruence which also draws attention to the way industrialization segregates social domains.
and in some respects exacerbates problems of intergroup relations.

The final paper is a foretaste of the study of police-public relations on which I have recently been engaged. The first phase of this work has entailed research into the policeman's role and into certain aspects of police organization which affect police-public contacts. A volume entitled *The Policeman in the Community* based upon this first phase, is to be published by Tavistock Publications, London, in May 1964. This study of police-public relations was undertaken with the object of pursuing my interest in role analysis and in order to see how far these relations were affected by the sorts of factors that had been identified as important in cases of inter-racial contact. The paper in this volume was an address to a lay audience but it is included because, apart from its theoretical relation to my other work, it touches particularly upon the part played by racial differences in police work in the United States.

Other papers by the author which are not submitted but bear upon the topics under discussion include:

"Sociology and Race Relations", *Race*, vol. 1, no. 1, November 1959, pp. 3-14.


ROLE CONCERNENCE AND SOCIAL DIFFERENTIATION UNDER URBAN CONDITIONS

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The reformulation of some existing material about social class in terms of role congruence may possibly provide a new insight into the nature of class differences in different kinds of society (1). This paper attempts such a reformulation and explores the influences upon role definition that make for the observance of social distance on a class basis. It is argued that such an approach has the merit of enabling the research worker to study two aspects of the topic that have been seriously neglected in recent studies of stratification. Considerations of social class are much more relevant to behaviour in some kinds of social situation than in others. Their relevance also varies among societies at different stages of economic development. The use of the concept of role congruence facilitates a closer examination of these sources of variation than has been usual hitherto.

There are two chief kinds of role congruence. Firstly, congruence of content. A man who does not assume a certain role because it would interfere - or be thought to interfere - with the obligations of one of his existing roles, is trying to avoid incongruence. Sometimes compatibility is obtained by convention; thus a minister in a Scottish church would avoid public association with a brewery or distillery. Sometimes it is brought about by more formal regulation: a Catholic priest is not allowed to assume the roles of husband and father. This is not a question of the respect in which the roles are held but of possibly incompatible obligations.

Secondly, congruence in the prestige of roles. A surgeon could live in a slum neighbourhood and send his children to the local school without his
performance as a surgeon being affected, though there might be other consequences of his doing so. In this case there is no incongruence of content, but there is a discrepancy in prestige. Sometimes these two kinds of incongruence are associated. In a military organization the relative seniority of soldiers in the military hierarchy has to be duplicated in other institutions in which they participate. If officers and men were members of the same masonic lodge and a private was senior to his officer in the lodge this might make it difficult for the officer to preserve the appropriate distance in military matters. The content and prestige of roles are closely associated and it is not always helpful to separate them in studying congruence.

Social Differentiation

The variety and complexity of forms of social differentiation in different societies is so bewildering that to try and develop a typology of stratification by examining empirical evidence is not always the most helpful way of starting. Let us see if we can begin from the other end by accepting the ‘rabble hypothesis’ - the idea of a society as just a mob of individuals with no roles or socially significant attributes. Into this model we introduce a division of labour. Immediately a social structure based upon economic relations is created. We could formulate a lengthy list of propositions about the implications for the people of this change, but for our purposes we can concentrate upon two: firstly that the division of labour creates roles of different prestige, and secondly that it gives rise to patterns of interaction.

The prestige of roles is only one factor in social differentiation. In a small community in which everyone knows everyone else, they will
evaluate each other only partly on a basis of the roles they hold. They will also take account of how well someone performs his roles (i.e., the factor of esteem) and they will carry this so far that they take account of the most informal roles, praising a man for being a "nice chap" in purely sociable relations. In such circumstances it is possible to evaluate the individual and to assess his social standing in the community. But in the city or in the nation as a whole it is impossible to make any accurate assessment of individuals: people meet one another in a few roles only and know too little about one another. Within the national society it is possible to assess the generalized social status of individuals but assessments are imprecise and apt to fluctuate. To an increasing extent people do not try to evaluate individuals, but only the prestige of those roles they occupy that are relevant to the business on hand. As geographical and social mobility increase, people know less about those with whom they interact and others have more and more opportunity to pass themselves off as being more worthy than they really are. The extent to which individuals can have a generalized social status outside the local community is therefore a function of the availability of information about members of the society.

The division of labour causes people to interact frequently with their colleagues and keeps them separate from others. From this springs the pressure for role congruence, both of content and prestige. People who are involved in a superior-subordinate relationship at work avoid entering into other relationships that would upset the operation of the first one. They also, for a variety of reasons, tend to associate with people whose social status is similar to their own. This is the point at which, in the terms of our model, society differentiates itself from the
economy. No longer are peoples' social relations completely determined by their productive roles, for the division of labour has to take account of prestige stemming from other sources. Recent studies of industrial relations have provided many examples of this. They have shown that many difficulties can arise within an industrial plant if people who occupy prestigious roles outside the plant are made to work under people who have a lowly place in the outside community, or if situations arise in which low-status individuals originate activity for high-status people. A division of labour that is rational from the economic point of view takes no account of the pressures to role congruence that come from the individual's desire to maintain his self-esteem and protect his status-set but all our conceptions of social organization and social stratification assume that there is such a pressure.

We have covertly introduced a second factor into our model already, that of a sphere of leisure or sociable relations independent of the productive process. Strictly speaking we should list its various implications and relate them to other aspects of the division of labour as yet unmentioned, but we must not take this procedure too seriously. If the notion of so simple a model draws attention to the factors underlying social differentiation it has served its purpose.

But there is a third factor which cannot be omitted from even the simplest model of this kind; that of sex. If some of the individuals are males and others females, we can expect families and this is fundamental to any system of social stratification. The family is the unit of social class in the sense that it is during childhood that people first learn the symbols of class membership, like manners, speech and taste, and from their parents
that they derive certain social inequalities. But the family is the unit of class in that its members are identified with one another in the eyes of other people. A man is vulnerable both socially and emotionally through his dependents. If his son can work only in a despised occupation, the father suffers in self-esteem and from the judgements of others, while if his wife cannot master the right airs and graces his own position may be affected. In a society in which class is an important reference group, class differences cannot be tolerated within the family, and if they develop the family splits. The roles of members of a family have to be congruent with one another in both content and prestige, but only so long as there is some more inclusive system of social differentiation that decides in what directions the congruence shall run.

At this point it is desirable to leave our abstract considerations and turn to case material.

**Social differentiation in African towns**

In the towns of Africa South of the Sahara there is a fairly clear recognition, within the African population, of differences in the prestige of roles held by Africans. Yet it is doubtful if the acknowledgement of prestige differences is sufficient to constitute a system of social class; the general consensus of opinion among students of African towns is that social classes, in the Western sense, do not exist there (2).

One reason for these doubts is the tolerance of what appear to Westerners as role incongruities within the urban household. Kenneth Little writes: "although spending most of his leisure time in the company of other wealthy and well-educated Africans a member of the elite is quite likely to have one or more illiterate relatives living permanently in his household" (3).
This is not just a matter of harbouring an aged grandmother; what in terms of the Westerner's view of the social system appears as incongruity can appear even between the members of the household most closely identified with one another: husband and wife. Relatively few wives are educated to the same standard as their husbands. Indeed, according to Little, husbands may prefer this as there is less likelihood of marital discord when the wife is quite illiterate. She is less expensive to maintain than her sister who has had a few years at school and acquired new aspirations. The illiterate wife makes few demands on her husband's attention, and is less likely to object to the introduction of additional women into the household (4).

Writing of East Africa, J.E. Goldthorpe gives his opinion that the Ganda would see nothing strange in a doctor having a brother working as a clerk or a sister married to a carpenter (5) and he quotes a similar observation regarding Nigeria: "The Minister has a 'sister' selling cassava in the market; the successful doctor has a 'brother' working as a Public Works Department labourer" (6). Goldthorpe goes on to observe, as others have done, that one of the chief personal problems of educated Africans is the avalanche of poor relations who descent on them as soon as they get their first salaried job. Kinship ties take priority over the embryonic forces making for stratification.

Stratification in colonial Africa was primarily of an ethnic character and the pressure was for roles to be congruent in the first place along ethnic lines. Europeans working there tended to form separate communities because their reference groups were located in their countries of origin. They and their wives did not want their family life to suffer because of overseas employment; they were concerned that their children should get an
education comparable to that of their age-mates in Europe and they liked to withdraw into social clubs of their fellow countrymen where they no longer had to worry about maintaining European prestige in the face of the African majority. Initially racial and class differences often coincided but with the growth of an African middle class and the diversification of the class structure of the European group, the maintenance of social discrimination on racial instead of class lines provoked much resentment on the part of the educated Africans \(^{(7)}\).

The African household can bring together persons occupying roles far apart in prestige terms because other identifications are more important. In the pre-independence situation in West Africa, at least, it was more important for an African to identify himself as an African in opposition to Europeans and Lebanese, than to underline distinctions which set him apart from other Africans. Again, there were many situations in which an African who stood high in class terms, sought the approval of illiterate and semi-literate members of his tribe in order to win political support. In the struggle for power in the independent nations tribal sentiment was cultivated for personal ends. In some areas, such as south-western Nigeria, kin groups retained and perhaps even increased their importance in the changing circumstances because of their ownership of land and control over elections \(^{(6)}\). An ambitious man would cultivate relationships with kinsfolk rather than with men of his own social status. This suggests that it was most important for roles to be congruent in respect of racial group, tribe, lineage and class in descending order. The pressures to congruence along racial lines maybe said to be of higher order than the class pressures because where the two are in conflict it is the former that take precedence.

J. Clyde Mitchell has described a similar situation in the towns of Northern Rhodesia where group membership is sharply delineated. He writes:
"in certain situations Africans ignore either class differences or tribal differences (or both) and in other situations these differences become significant... In their opposition to Europeans, Africans ignore both their 'class' and tribal differences". (9)

The opposition between European and Africans is such that in a situation the Africans define as involving racial loyalties all divisions within the African population are ignored, but once the Europeans are off-stage and oppositions arise between Africans - as in a trade union - these are readily identified with tribal differences (10).

Mitchell's discussion of this question is particularly valuable because he emphasizes a point which, though it seems obvious once one has recognized it, is nevertheless often overlooked because of the tendency of much modern sociology - especially in the United States - to assume that the psychological determinants are the critical ones. His claim is that the pressures to congruence along racial, tribal and class lines are separate principles operating in different situations. He continues the passage quoted above with the words:

"Inside a tribal association such as those found in Southern Rhodesia I would expect opposition to be phrased in terms of 'class' differences. I would expect the dissention in a teacher's or clerk's association to be phrased in terms of tribalism. The same people who stand together in one situation may be bitterly opposed in another".

Mitchell argues that it is impossible to generalize about the operation of these principles without reference to the specific social situation in which the interaction takes place. Behaviour is governed by situational norms and by the prestige of particular roles, not by the generalized social status of the individual for this is rarely related to any particular situation.
Important though this observation is, it stands in need of qualification because social situations are not separate and independent of each other. There is usually some carry-over or 'feedback' from one to the next. Even if at one point of time the forces of black versus white, tribe versus tribe, and class versus class are so neatly balanced that the situational norms remain the same, this is unlikely to continue for any long period. Two forces in the African case upset the short run equilibrium and change the pattern of role congruence. In the first place, the pressure of the black-white division cannot long remain at its present level of tension. In West Africa it has never in recent times been so strong as in Rhodesia but the change has nevertheless been perceptible. In the early 1950s there was, for example, little differentiation of urban neighbourhoods by function or standard of housing; new concrete houses and rickety shacks stood side by side and Africans saw nothing incongruous about this. More recently a clearer land use pattern has been emerging and housing has been built for Africans of higher income in more outlying neighbourhoods. This association of class differentiation in housing and the weakening of political opposition along racial lines cannot be pure coincidence (11).

In the second place, new norms develop in the urban environment which supersede the older ones. Just as class differences cannot easily be contained within the industrial family, so racial and tribal distinctions cannot be maintained in the rural tribal family. Cross-tribal marriages occur, just as cross-class marriages occur in the West, but in both cases congruence has to be maintained after the marriage. This is made easier in the African towns by the growth of an urban culture over-riding variations in tribal custom (12). Within the urban proletariat stratification develops as Africans pattern their behavior on new models (which are largely of European
derivation), at the same time joining savings clubs so that they have financial reserves of their own and are not dependent on their kinsfolk to the same extent. By setting new standards of behavior for themselves these groups are creating embryonic classes amongst the previously undifferentiated proletariat (13).

This question of how norms of conduct for one kind of situation are harmonized with those for others to make a general pattern demands more extended discussion.

**Discontinuities in social differentiation**

According to the Marxist view of class, the ever-increasing development of economic relations soon renders racial and tribal distinctions of minor significance. Class differences based upon the means of production become more important and all ties between classes are stripped away until only two classes remain. The struggle between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat becomes ever more clearcut until only the cash-nexus links them together. In the terms of the present discussion, this theory states that in the long run the only kinds of role congruence that retain significance are those within these two classes, and that if a class grouping is to be transformed from a class-in-itself to a class-for-itself its members must be conscious of its part in this process.

The Marxist prediction has not been fulfilled in Western Europe because state intervention and technological change have deprived the ownership of the means of production of the significance it had in Marx's day. There has been a tendency for roles in certain spheres of social life to display an increasing tendency to congruence on class lines but the movement is towards a uniform scale of social differentiation based upon shared material values and not to the polarization of opposed groups with distinctive value systems.

The criteria for social differentiation or for the ascription of class
membership vary even within industrial countries. In Great Britain very many factors are taken into account, but for our purposes they fall into two categories: criteria of background, such as parentage, education, accent, manner, friends, etc., and criteria of achievement, such as income, occupation, housing and material possessions. The symbols of achievement can be obtained in one generation but those of background usually require two. In former generations "class" was identified strongly with the criteria of background and indeed this remains important today for a man who has had an outstandingly successful career and been made a member of the House of Lords will still not be acceptable in some social circles and would not be admitted into one of the more exclusive clubs. But at all times there has been a process whereby a bad background could be offset by wealth: rich men could obtain upper class wives while poor men of good family found it advantageous to marry the daughters of rich merchants. The sociological importance of this lies in the means whereby different criteria of social differentiation are set off against one another on a single scale.

In the African examples racial differences were represented as completely distinct from class differences and as appearing relevant in quite other sorts of situations. In Great Britain, where the coloured population is only three-quarters of one per cent of the total population, there is very little pressure to divide on racial lines. The major status distinctions are those of class, so that any new symbol distinguishing people tends to be translated into class values. This seems to be one of the most important factors underlying the pattern of race relations in Britain, for though little outright hostility is shown towards coloured immigrants, Britons do not enter into social relations with them in the way they might were they not coloured. This situation led Kenneth Little, who was the first to study it systematically,
to formulate a theory of what he terms 'colour-class-consciousness'.

He wrote:

'skin colour has a definite significance for many English people, a darker complexion making a person socially less acceptable ... though many of the individuals concerned may lack personal prejudice, they feel that their social reputation will be jeopardized if they are known to have coloured friends or acquaintances. To introduce a Negro into their social circle would cause embarrassment ... "Colour" has the same socially inferior connotations as English spoken ungrammatically, or without the "correct" accent, or of wearing a muffler instead of a collar and tie'. (14)

According to this theory, the deference paid to someone is a function of his perceived social status and that depends upon his costume, manner, speech, possessions, etc. In evaluating a stranger a man unconsciously gives him points for these various attributes; he subtracts points for a dark skin because, being deviant and having various unfavourable associations, this is negatively valued in respect of prestige.

Support for such an interpretation is provided by an analysis of the rents paid by coloured students in London. Other things being equal, an English landlady prefers an English lodger with a social background similar or slightly superior to her own; if a landlady takes in a coloured student she fears unconsciously that the neighbours may believe she does so only because she has not alternative; and that she cannot get a white lodger because the room she offers is of poor quality. Her reputation in the neighbourhood will therefore suffer. However, if a coloured student pays a higher rent it may be worth while to accept him. This difference between the market value and what the coloured student has to pay is referred to by the student as the 'colour tax'. 'From the point of view of the landlady', the investigator writes, 'colour tax represents compensation
for possible loss of social prestige; from that of an observer, it is an
undesigned and unintended consequence of a social structure whose system of
values includes the premise that association with coloureds is synonymous
with "low class" and generally disreputable behavior. (15) The colour tax
measures in money the prestige difference between a white and a coloured
complexion in confirmation of the colour-class-consciousness theory.
Further confirmation can be seen in the use of class symbols by coloured
people who unconsciously appreciate this (16) but the evidence is not
conclusive (17) and African students in Britain are now more inclined to
wear national costume and thus to dissociate themselves from the British
class system.

However the example does suggest very strongly that, in a relatively
homogenous society, colour differences can be expressed in the common
denominator of class and the major pattern of role congruence be based upon
class norms.

In the United States social differentiation is also based on
achievement and background but the criteria of background to which significance
is attached are not the same. Outside certain restricted circles, parentage,
education and accent count for little, but national origin is often critical.
 Differences of ethnic background are presumably evaluated in class terms
though with a lower level of consensus. The national groups listed in
Bogardus-type social distance tests constitute a ranking in prestige as well
as distance, except for the tendency of people to rate their own group
closer and more prestigeful than others would. As America becomes less
heterogenous in culture, presumably ethnic background is coming to have a
cash value, like colour in Britain, even if there are a few situations in
which it can be observed (18). Certainly it might be worth examining patterns of social alignment in the United States in the light of an hypothesis that the higher order pressure to role congruence along ethnic lines is being broken down with the growth of ties between members of different ethnic groups; and that the breakdown is facilitated by the expression of ethnic characteristics in terms of the lower order pressure to congruence along class lines.

Studies of social relations in African towns furnish evidence which also tends to support the view advanced here. One of the most generally reported phenomena is that as tribal groups mingle in the towns, differences originally conceived as tribal and qualitative are increasingly translated into quantitative differences in prestige. The groups with the highest levels of education, the greatest reputation as warriors, or, in some towns, the highest reputation for Islamic orthodoxy are more highly regarded than others. Thus differences of kind are translated into differences of degree.

Role Differentiation in Urban Society: the sphere of work

The West European village of the first half of the twentieth century may be taken as an example of a society in which the gross social differences found in African cities have been eliminated. In such a community people interact with one another in many different roles and this makes for a tight network of relationships. Because people are known in a variety of roles, and their individuality is appreciated, they are not, as individuals, identified strongly with any particular role. To an outsider the status differences between the squirearchy, the tradesmen, and the farm laborers are one of the most striking features of the society, but the members of it only rarely think in terms of 'class'. When there is an election, a wage
dispute, or an employment grievance, 'class' comes to the fore, but most of the
time peoples' perceptions of others are contained within interpersonal
relationships like farmer-herdsman, parent-teacher, housewife-tradesman, etc.
The patterns of role congruence in such a case are most complex but the
generalized order of social status for the community as a whole is usually
represented in all its institutions, so that the squire may also be the church
warden, his wife the president of the Women's Institute, and so on.

The lower level of personal acquaintance and contact in the city
permits individuals to assume roles that would be incompatible in the
village. Members of one household are not identified with each other to the
same extent. The city-dweller meets many people in an impersonal fashion as
a role-player and not as an individual. His occupational role comes increasingly
to determine the other roles he will play, but the network of social relation-
ships is much looser so that the requirements of role congruence in respect of
content are less restrictive. Economic growth has led to ever larger-scale
production and hence to the spread of urban centres. This in turn has
entailed an ever-increasing separation of work and leisure, both geographically
and socially. Geographically, the advent of the low-priced motor car has
made it possible for people to reside in one-class suburbs many miles from
their place of work and to live in ignorance of the life led by people in
neighbourhoods of a different class. Socially, it has meant that people can
follow norms of conduct in their business relations which are quite different
from those obtaining in their residential sphere. A new form of heterogeneity
is introduced which contrasts as sharply with the European village as their's
differs from the African city.

In the impersonal atmosphere of the city, congruence of prestige becomes
more important. The lack of personal acquaintance, the preponderance of secondary contacts, the stress on material values, personal achievement and the ever-rising level of aspiration, cause people to become more identified with their major roles. Not only do others see them in this way but individuals identify their self and their role. This contributes to the increasing concern with the prestige of roles and with symbols of prestige. However, people cannot be allowed to regard their social status as secure. In competitive conditions an industry cannot afford to be organized on any but rational economic principles: the technologically best qualified men must be promoted, and then obeyed, irrespective of their class background. The big industrial concerns therefore seek to use the rewards of prestige to have their employees behave the way they wish and to prevent considerations of prestige based upon non-industrial values from interfering with their organization.

Once again, the analysis of situations in which differences of prestige result in social distance can be aided by our studies in Britain of the varying significance of a dark skin colour. To separate the elements involved in contact situations it is helpful to think of them as constructed of relations between three parties: ego, or the actor; alter, or the man with whom he enters into relationship; and onlooker, a member of ego's group who appraises his conduct and may cause him to be rewarded or punished for it. The colour-class-consciousness theory referred to earlier relates to ego's apprehensions about onlooker's assessment of alter, but other variables that may induce distance are ego's fear that alter does not understand the norms of the relationship, lack of explicit means for communicating expectations of alter's behavior and lack of sanctions for bringing any deviations of his to an end (19). Two further variables are relevant to our present topic.
Firstly, the more ego feels vulnerable to criticism or challenge the more he will be inclined to avoid deviant behavior. When two people are thrown into a competitive relationship they become aware of characteristics of the other which can be used in jockeying for position. There is a standing temptation to draw attention to a rival's negative attributes - such as skin colour - to gain a competitive advantage. When the old role-definitions are eroded and people are no longer so certain how they stand in relation to one another they seize on new means of differentiating themselves and of warding off their rivals. The increasing mobility and competitiveness associated with economic development would thus appear to underly the tendency in Brazil to emphasize racial characteristics as criteria of social status more strongly than before\(^{(20)}\).

Secondly, the extent to which ego will be willing to be identified with a stranger will also depend upon ego's role. If he is a clergyman or policeman he may be seen talking to a member of an outgroup and people will think the association legitimized by ego's occupational role. Men's roles usually allow more freedom in this respect than women's ones.

A variety of studies in both Britain and the United States have reported cases of whites who were willing to associate with Negroes in the work situation but not in the neighbourhood in which they live\(^{(21)}\). In the work situation there is a relatively formal organization of roles and individuals' activities are circumscribed by their roles. For a man to associate with a fellow worker who happens to be a member of an out-group is not regarded as unorthodox behavior. People assume that in approaching the out-grouper, the man is acting out his role and not that he is expressing his personal preferences. Thus formal organization isolates role relationships from the ideas about role congruence that prevail outside the establishment. It protects ego from unfavourable interpretations on onlooker's part. The special character of
bureaucracy organization lies in this use of formal organization to try and exclude norms incompatible with the organization's ends. But in the more informal social structure of residential neighbourhoods pressure to congruence is greater and the incidence of discrimination therefore higher.

It is not only in formal organizations that roles are clearly defined. Professional relationships exemplify a similar case in which congruence of roles is over-ridden by the norms of a well understood relationship. The crucial factor so far as onlooker's judgements are concerned is whether behavior is ascribed to the role or to the actor. What appears to be an illustration of this can be found in a study of the Philadelphia police force. White police officers had no objection to working with Negro officers on many tasks but they were reluctant to partner with them in squad cars (22). Police officers were allowed to choose their own companions for this kind of patrol and the colleagues of a man who partnered a Negro would wonder why he had chosen to depart from the usual pattern. The other examples reported in the sociological literature of difficulties arising from role incongruence can all be seen as cases where the role definition is inadequate to protect the individual from onlooker's misapprehension or from injury to his own self esteem. Difficulties over incongruence appear to be more frequent in the United States than in Europe where roles tend to be defined more formally.

Role Definition in Urban Society: the sphere of leisure

In the cities there is a tendency for people of comparable social status to segregate themselves in particular neighbourhoods. It would be misleading to see this as simply a response to the stress laid upon prestige symbols by the mass media, for both material and symbolic incentives enter in. People enjoy the greater comfort more expensive facilities provide, but they are also attracted by them as indicators of success in social competition; indeed some
goods are deliberately designed to serve as status symbols. It would appear that mass consumption industrial economics are now so geared to the production of goods for which the income elasticity of demand is high - houses, automobiles, clothing, foreign travel and leisure facilities, etc. - and to the need to maintain a high rate of obsolescence in these sectors, that material and symbolic satisfactions must coincide. After all, if a particular product is held up by advertisers as especially desirable, people are more likely to enjoy it once they possess it because of the conditioning effect of the sales technique.

On the other hand, there are limits to the range of goods that can be presented in this fashion and while it may be temporarily be possible to sell relatively useless items to the monied set just because they are exclusive, there will be little market for such things among other income groups who have to allocate their expenditure between competing attractions. This sort of economy therefore depends not only on the demand for scarce goods but upon the creation of further demands for new scarcities when the original goals have been attained.

With increased social mobility the possession of prestige symbols becomes more important as a measure of individuals' social status. While this is partly a matter of possession and consumption patterns, social contacts can be even more important. A man is known by the company he keeps. Control over social associations becomes important in conditions of competitive social mobility. Hence the exclusiveness of golf clubs and similar associations featured in the literature of Babbitry. Hence, too, the phenomenon of snobbery, which is centered upon the desire of the upward mobile person on the one hand to gain the acceptance of people on the social level he is trying to enter (and which forces him to accept their values without criticism) and on the other hand his need either to break off his associations at lower levels or to repel other climbers who are trying to establish themselves in a higher position.
It is no coincidence that these pressures to congruence on prestige lines are felt more strongly in the sphere of leisure. In his journey to the city and his work there a suburbanite is involved in well-defined relationships - as motorist to petrol pump attendant, customer to waitress, employee to colleagues and seniors in a big organization, etc. - which give him little scope for social self-expression. The leisure sphere is now pre-eminently the one in which industrial man can make his personal choices and project his social self. But if it is the sphere in which he has greater freedom it is also one in which the protecting cloak of formal organization is absent. The way in which he spends his money serves as an indicator to others of his reference group so that the much-bruited interest of top executives in their juniors' style of life is a concern not only for their social acceptability but also a curiosity about the kind of people they are trying to make themselves.

In considering the prestige attached to different styles of urban living it is advisable to specify the audience whose judgement is in question. Some people are obviously impelled to obtain a house in the "right" neighbourhood to make their leisure roles seem congruent with their work roles in the eyes of their associates at work. These people may not need the approval of their neighbours and be under no pressure to conform to their ideas of appropriate behaviour. It is easy to exaggerate suburban conformity and - as David Riesman has suggested - to confuse the uniformity that springs from shared values with the different phenomenon of conformity (23). Conformity may sometimes be the price of acceptance, but many and perhaps more important pressures to role congruence stem from the subordinate's vulnerability through his dependents. When the children of two families continually play together, the parents are obliged to be on friendly terms; then when they start dating other adolescents it
becomes even more important to live amongst people who could be tolerated as relatives by marriage. Where city life permits anonymity and the country privacy, suburbia is apt to involve its residents in more intimate social ties, so it is here that the common denominator of class evaluations should be most in evidence.

People’s social status in the leisure sphere is increasingly determined by what goes on in the work sector. If a man is promoted and obtains a higher income the residential community must be able to adjust to this; its organisational structure has to be flexible because its ability to enforce criteria or impose sanctions of its own is so limited. In the same way the woman’s status becomes increasingly dependent upon her husband’s. As two English writers have observed ‘the man’s status is the status of his job, the woman’s the status of her home’ (24). A man meets other men of varied class at work but a woman is tied to the neighbourhood and her role allows her much less liberty of association. Because of increased social and geographical mobility and because of the large size of the community, her contacts are determined more by her husband’s role and she becomes committed to prestige symbols more strongly than her husband. He wins satisfaction from his work-mates’ approval of the work he performs but she is denied this. The measure of how well she is doing compared with other wives in the locality tends to be the appearance of her house and children. The middle-class woman becomes ambitious for her husband’s success partly because she no longer has any career pattern before herself and partly because her own social status is dependent upon his achievement. Should she want to go back to work it may be difficult for her to find a post congruent with her husband’s social status.
The relations between occupation, social status, and housing pose some important questions for research. It would be useful to know more about the circumstances in which people move to a better house. Probably many such moves follow the 'spiralist' pattern of promotion in large concerns: when a man is promoted he is transferred to another district so that an upward progression requires a whole series of geographical moves. This pattern is itself a recognition of the need for role congruence: the man is transferred on promotion so that his old associations will not interfere with his new role. But if this kind of mobility be neglected, in which occupations is the pressure to congruence strongest? People who need to maintain a clientele in a relatively poor district, like a doctor, politician, bookkeeper and some tradesmen, cannot capitalize upon their success and move out of the neighbourhood without losing the support on which it was based. On the other hand people holding positions of trust, like lawyers and bank cashiers, must conform to class expectations and live in an appropriate neighbourhood. If these roles are congruent in respect of prestige there is little chance of incongruence of content for class categories to some extent generalize community notions about the probity of individuals. There must, however, be variations in this pattern which could be measured by the proportion of income, at various income levels, which people of different occupations spend on housing, and which would illuminate the question of role congruence. It would be interesting to know whether people in occupations that cover a wide prestige range and permit considerable mobility - like business - need to acquire more expensive housing to demonstrate their success, and to discover how far the pressure comes from the wife rather than the husband.

Conclusion

The first three topics assigned for discussion in this session, i.e. class in relation to urban institutions, economic specialization and formal
organization (bureaucracy) can be viewed from many standpoints. But this examination in terms of role congruence seems to have certain merits in showing how they are related to each other.

In the first place, such an approach helps the student see social class as a form of alignment that calls forth the appropriate kind of behavior only when oppositions of a higher order are not relevant to the issue in question. It also draws attention to the way in which higher order oppositions are reduced by being translated into the values of the next lower order.

In the second place, it helps isolate one facet of "class" that is found under all forms of stratification. The concept of class is used in varying senses and each usage has its justifications. In the present paper no attempt has been made to define it narrowly because the phenomena of class seem themselves to vary at different stages of economic growth. The many usages do seem however to have one feature in common in that they employ the concept of class to denote discontinuities in a system of social stratification; instead of everyone's being spread out evenly along a common scale, separate categories appear with distinctive characteristics. Under the conditions of factory production prevailing in Marx's day there was major status gap associated with ownership of the means of production. But instead of this gap's growing, later changes have placed more and more stress upon the possession of technological skills. The discontinuities of the employment market have been broken down because they hindered technical advance. New status gaps and discontinuities have grown up in other spheres.

In the third place, the demands of technological improvement have increasingly determined the pattern of relations within the work group and separated it from exogenous pressures that could interfere with an
economically rational division of labour. This has entailed very much greater separation of work and leisure and the burden of adjustment to technological change has been thrown heavily on to the leisure sphere. So instead of growth of class conflict in the work sphere based upon ownership of the means of production, Western Europe and Northern America have seen growing association between class tension and life styles outside work. In this system one of the chief discontinuities is that stemming from people's tendency to settle in districts inhabited by persons much like themselves. Urban, and more particularly suburban life therefore tends to segregate status groups and this affects the women and children - who usually have no position in the work sphere - more than the men. The pressures toward role congruence that complement social mobility help us to understand why urban life should take this course, and why it is, for example, that in many industrial countries class tensions associated with educational opportunity are now becoming so acute.
NOTES

1. In this paper I have preferred the expression "role congruence" to G.C. Homans' "status congruence" as it facilitates distinctions between incompatibilities in the content as well as in the prestige of roles, and drawn attention more to the structural implications of such incompatibilities. I use role to refer to a set of privileges and obligations; roles are ranked on a scale of prestige; individual performance of roles is evaluated in esteem. T.H. Marshall uses 'status' to cover 'all behaviour which society expects of a person in his capacity as occupant of the position, and also all appropriate reciprocal behaviour of others towards him .... status in this extended sense, like legal status, is not necessarily connected with stratification. Only when it refers to a position in the social hierarchy or to membership of a social stratum do we call it "social status".

(Sociology at the Cross Roads, 1965, p. 186) This distinction between 'status' and 'social status' seems very useful, as is Marshall's differentiation between 'social status' and 'standing' in a local community. Accordingly, I use 'social status' to denote a summary evaluation of a particular individual's claims to deference in respect of all his roles, but I would emphasize my belief that if a writer's meaning is clear, agreement over definitions is of secondary importance.


5. in Southall (ed.), Social Change in Modern Africa, 151.

6. Sylvia Leith-Ross in INCIDI, Record of the 29th Session, 'Development of a middle class in tropical and sub-tropical countries'. Brussels, 1956, 181-2. Inverted commas are used by the author because the relatives in question may be classificatory brothers and sisters.

7. A Latin American parallel can be seen in the way the families of Americans working in Venezuelan oil fields sometimes segregate themselves.


10. Mitchell, op. cit., 34. Cf. the way the proposal to form a separate trade union for salaried staff at the mines was interpreted as Nyasa tribal separatism; A.L. Epstein, Politics in an Urban African Community, Manchester, 1957, pp. 235-40.
11. Michael Banton, West African City, London, 1957, 83-6 and plates IIIa and b regarding social groupings and housing in Freetown. A similar juxtaposition of well-built houses and shanty buildings on adjacent plots can be observed in parts of Rio de Janeiro where there is no higher order opposition comparable to that of race in Africa. Presumably, the explanation lies in different cultural values.

12. note Epstein's discussion of norms implicit in the judgements of urban courts; these are composed of representatives from many tribes.


17. My colleague Mr. Anthony H. Richmond rejects the theory, maintaining that the coloured man has no place in the British social system. See his "Sociologies and Psychological Explanations of Racial Prejudice: some light on the controversy from recent researches in Britain". Pacific Sociological Review, 4, (1961), 63-8.


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COME from a policeman's paradise. Just before moving into my house in the country, some twelve miles south of Edinburgh, Scotland, I got into conversation with the village bobby. I asked him how much crime there was in the locality, and he said there was very little. But only a month previously, he said, he had got a nice case. He had caught a youth from outside the community catching wild birds with bird lime and confining them in cages below regulation size, so he had charged him with five offenses under the Wild Birds' Protection Act. I reflected that if this was what constituted a "nice case" in those parts, then I had found the right place to live!

Crime is usually lower in country districts, so what of the cities? Edinburgh, where I work, has a population of nearly half a million. Though the incidence of theft is high, even by American standards, there are few crimes of violence. Last year there was not one case of murder; there was one of attempted murder, two of culpable homicide, twenty-nine of assault and none of rape. An average American city of the same size would have about thirty cases of murder and non-negligent manslaughter.

In discussions of law enforcement it would seem to me profitable to start with an analysis of situations such as those in which the incidence of crime, social conflict and maladjustment is low, so that we can better understand what is missing in situations of tension. I shall try to do this, and I shall go on to describe what seems to me, as a sociologist, the principal features of the patrol officer's role. This leads naturally into a review of the determinants of police-public relations. Only then, I think, can we consider how racial and cultural differences affect police work. We need to look at these matters not in all their ramifications as political and social issues, but as circumstances which affect police work, and we cannot do that until we have made clear our view of what the policeman's role in society is or ought to be. Police officers have been too busy getting on with their job to philosophize about it at any length. I am going to try and do it for them and because my experience is so limited I may make many mistakes, but I hope to convince you that to study adequately the subject of our conference we need at some point to analyze the patrolman's role in a homogeneous society and then see what happens when homogeneity gives way to heterogeneity.

CONSENSUS

In the Scottish village I spoke about, the social organization works smoothly. The policeman's job is to oil the machinery, not to provide the motive power of law enforcement. The policeman, like the law itself, is only one of the agents of social control. Village societies are highly integrated because everyone is so dependent upon everyone else. If there is only one
A Policeman ... is a kind of professional citizen, administering the moral standards defined and accepted by his community. ... He earns public cooperation and esteem by the manner in which he exercises good judgment in performing his duties, and the foundation of his good judgment is an awareness of the public point of view. ... He is a Defender of the Peace more than an Enforcer of the Law, possessing authority as well as power. ... His authority gives him the willing obedience of the public, thus including the moral element, while his power compels obedience that is not necessarily rightful. ... He will suppress his personal feelings in desegregation troubles to identify with his Department if it is committed to professional policing and has a morality of its own. ... His role should be based upon the moral authority of his office rather than its legal powers, particularly in districts of racial and cultural differences.

Authority

doctor, everyone has to go to him and he has to attend everybody. If there are only two grocers you may feel obliged to patronize the one who attends the same church as yourself. Even if you don’t like the nearby farmer you cannot show your dislike because if he catches your son in his orchard he might make things very unpleasant for you. In such circumstances no one can afford to get out of line. People are dependent, morally, socially and economically, on their neighbors’ good opinion and the sanction of gossip is a powerful one.

There are two chief comments to make on this sort of society. Firstly, such societies are usually small ones in which nearly everyone knows everyone else. Integration is facilitated by the small scale, homogeneity and stability of the population. Secondly, this kind of social order is not just a matter of economics and social organization; like any other kind of society it has moral qualities. In the village society, more than elsewhere, the rich recognize responsibilities to the poor and people know that if disaster befalls them they can turn to their neighbors for assistance. Thus girls and boys grow up attuned to the social order, accepting their place in it and believing the distribution of rewards to be reasonably just. No man tries to be an island, sufficient unto himself; no one wants to be. People who live together like this are agreed in what they consider right and what wrong, so that we can say the highly integrated village society is characterized by a high level of consensus or agreement on fundamental values. These moral judgments pervade social life and do not stop short when business relations are in question. In these circumstances the policeman obtains public cooperation, and enjoys public esteem because he enforces standards accepted by the community. This gives his role considerable moral authority and sets him apart from the crowd socially, much as does the role of minister of religion. It is partly responsible for the view—shared by police and public alike—that in Britain policemen should not carry guns.

We can agree that life in a small highly integrated society has many attractions, but most of us would also regard economic progress as desirable and the two just do not go together. In the traditional kind of society the various social institutions are so inter-related that an alteration in one affects all the others and it is difficult to introduce changes. In an economically developing society, however, people and resources have to be moved around. Individuals have to pursue their private benefit and to fight the community controls that put a brake on change. Some people receive great rewards, greater than their moral deserts; others, who are scarcely less worthy, are much less fortunate. In these circumstances there is less feeling that the social order is a just one, and less agreement upon moral standards. No social changes are without their costs, and one of the costs of economic development is a decline in social integration. One index of this is the crime rate. Last year the number of indictable offenses known to the police in Britain rose by 8½ per cent over the previous year. In the United States the crime rate for last year was 10 per cent above the average rate for the previous three years.

Do we conclude that the crime figures will go on forever upwards? I have not studied this question properly but I believe they will not. The activities of professional criminals may well extend and the juvenile problem may get worse while other offenses which are linked with poor living conditions, such as drunkenness and wife-assault, will decline. As the community adjusts to new conditions and people come to see the
evil of particular practices a new consensus can arise. The example is perhaps of only marginal relevance but I might cite the instance that in Sweden if Johansson invites Karlsson to a party and gives him liquor, then Karlsson is subsequently arrested for drunken operating and Johansson in part in the matter is discovered, the Registrar of Motor Vehicles may well suspend Johansson's license to drive as well as Karlsson's. Swedes accept this because they are now sufficiently aware of the dangers of drink at the wheel. There may come a time, even in individualistic America, when public consensus on these matters is high enough to allow the authorities to take such drastic steps.

In contrasting village society with the big industrial nation I have inevitably exaggerated. Even in the small scale, stable society consensus is never perfect but it is relatively high. A greater danger, however, would be to underestimate the level of consensus that exists even in the biggest and most rapidly changing society. We notice the areas in which moral controls are absent and where the police have to crack down, but we overlook the range of basic issues, such as ideas of duty to kinsfolk and neighbors, where popular morality remains powerful. I shall maintain that this popular morality is of central importance to our discussions here.

THE POLICEMAN'S ROLE

In both the United States and Great Britain the patrol officer is left very considerable discretion as to the enforcement of the law. It will be agreed that nothing is more important to police-public relations or to police efficiency generally than that the individual police officer should have good judgment in handling people. Where does he get this judgment? Firstly, I think, we must stress the role of the courts which throw out prosecutions they think unnecessary even though there has been a violation, and serve as judges not only of the public but of the arresting officers. A police officer can, in the long run, go only as far as the courts will let him and the courts are a good expression of the consensus of responsible opinion. A police officer who lacks a sense of judgment will probably come to grief in the courts one day. Secondly, and rather more important, is the influence of the police officer's private life. Out of uniform he is subject to exactly the same controls as any other citizen. He mixes with other citizens on an equal footing and soon hears what they think about the police. The resulting awareness of the public's point of view is the foundation of the officer's sense of judgement. Many times I have heard an officer discussing his treatment of an offender say to me, "I know that if I were in his place I should feel so-and-so . . ." In a military-style police where the officers live in barracks and do not mingle with the public this kind of understanding must be greatly reduced. The supervisory officers with whom I have talked confirm this conclusion, for they speak of their difficulties with enthusiastic young officers who have insufficient sense of how the public reacts to police controls. By and large it seems that the older an officer is, the better his sense of judgement. This must be because in his private life he has been more thoroughly absorbed into the community and understands it better. We should remember too, that even on duty the police officer's powers are often merely those of the private citizen and that he is personally responsible for any wrongful arrest or error. The policeman, as we in the West understand his role, is a kind of professional citizen. He cannot be a good policeman if he is not a good citizen with an understanding of his fellows. And if we try to determine the rights and duties of a citizen we find that the law only takes us part of the way, for what constitutes citizenship is defined more by the common understandings of the community than by written regulation.

POLICE-PUBLIC RELATIONS

I turn now to the question of police-public relations, in the first place from the standpoint of the policeman. Many policemen believe that there will always be friction between police and public because members of the public instinctively resent the power which the policeman has over them. I do not deny that in dealing with certain types of criminal or in a tough urban neighborhood there may be justification for the view of policemen and public as adversaries, but I must say that it does not accord with conditions in the forces that I have visited. The point is important, for if you believe that police and public must be antagonists, and other citizens always resent police powers, then, if you are logical, the view you take of police-public relations will be fundamentally different from mine.

My reasons for rejecting the adversary conception can be expressed in three inter-connected arguments. Firstly, if one analyzes the number and character of contacts the policeman has with members of the public during his tour of duty one finds that he spends very little time chasing criminals or locking people up. A great deal of time is spent helping citizens in distress, whether it be escorting a mother who is rushing a badly bleeding child to a hospital, notifying a parent that his or her child has been killed in a motor accident, or just getting a cat out of a tree. When an officer answers a call it is the complainant he meets and not the violator. Usually the complainant emphasizes the moral wrong that he or she has suffered and not the legal wrong, if any. The complainant says that someone else has done wrong and in explaining what it was and why it was wrong, he or she inevitably emphasizes what in the circumstances would be right or moral conduct. Consider a trivial but representative case. I remember going with a car to a woman who complained of a boy's behavior. This boy had a bad home and was emotionally disturbed but he had been friendly with her son and she had allowed him to come to the house and had been very considerate towards him. But the boy had behaved badly and in the end she had to forbid him the house and tell her son to avoid him. The boy had responded by making anonymous threats over the phone, by breaking the garage windows with his BB-gun and by insulting her in public. She could stand it no longer and wanted the boy to be checked. Notice the following features of the case: The woman sought to justify her own actions in the matter; she was complaining that the boy's conduct was morally inexcusable; she did not know whether or not it constituted a legal offense and never spoke about legal remedies; she wanted the police to put pressure on the boy and his parents so that he would behave better, not that they should take him to court. This, I think, is typical. By complaining of the boy's bad behavior the woman is implicitly reaff
firming the accepted view of how boys ought to behave. When the policeman answers a call as often as not it is this reference to how someone ought to have behaved that he hears first. He is reminded what morality expects at the same time as he is told of an offense. Secondly, it is inadequate and at times misleading to describe a policeman's job as law enforcement. We know that every policeman ignores some violations but pursues certain others at times more vigorously than a strict interpretation of the law allows. A policeman's activities are governed much more by popular morality than they are by the letter of the law; most often morality and the law coincide, but when they do not, it is usually morality that wins. In Britain we recognize this with an admirable five-word formula for police work. We say that the policeman's job is "to keep the Queen's peace." One can see the interplay of law and morality in many sorts of cases as by good an example as any is that of matrimonial disputes. To enforce the letter of the law of assault is impracticable. Police action on these calls, both in the U.S. and Scotland, often ignores the law and what the officer does depends upon his judgments of the moral claims of the parties and the extent to which they acknowledge the moral claims of the officer.

Popular morality, of course, changes. A generation ago a policeman could correct a troublesome juvenile by giving him a good cuff on the head, or he could clear up a case of wife-assault by giving the offender a taste of his own medicine. Public opinion used to support such sanctions because it thought them appropriate. Now it no longer does so. But a policeman's moral authority is still such that he can keep a lot of cases out of court by speaking to offenders and impressing them with the error of their ways. He can do this because his office possesses authority as well as power. It is useful to make a distinction between these concepts. Webster defines authority as "legal or rightful power." Power, we see, is not necessarily rightful, but authority includes a moral element. If someone has power over you he can force you to do his will, but if he has authority over you, you accept his right to command you and you obey him voluntarily. Members of the public may resent police power but not police authority because authority is conferred on the policeman by the community. If he has the authority to command obedience it is because people consider it morally right that he should. Policemen do not always act from authority; sometimes they simply exert the power conferred on them; in dealing with some individuals they have no alternative. All I seek to demonstrate is the importance of moral consensus to the everyday activity of the policeman.

Another way of making this point is to instance the patrolman's personal involvement in some of the cases he deals with. Locking up drunks soon becomes a routine but personal distress rarely loses its power to move a man's heart. I have noticed how, in the event of a bad case, say, a father maltreating his daughter, even a hardened patrolman feels moral indignation over the man's conduct. Everyone here will know, too, of occasions on which a policeman has dipped into his own pocket to help the children of someone he has locked up. He is involved in these cases as a man as well as an agent of the law. Sometimes officers allow their personal feelings to lead them astray but this does not mean that their superiors should prescribe exactly what they must do in every circumstance. The answer, I feel, is to develop new techniques of training in how to understand and handle people. If the patrol officers were better selected and better trained their supervisors could depend on them more and public relations would be improved.

My third reason for disagreeing with the adversary view of police-public contacts is that even criminals recognize the moral authority—as opposed to the power—of the police when it does not interfere with their plans. You have probably heard more stories than I of criminals who have borne no grudge against the arresting officer even when this might have been expected; of criminals who are outraged when others infringe standards they think should be enforced, or of cases like the hardened criminal who complained to an officer that his son was getting into bad ways. "I don't want him to grow up like me," he said. "It's too late for me to change now, but he's got a chance to lead a better life." I suspect also that the criminals' partial admission of the moral claims of the policeman underlies the viciousness with which they have treated convicted former policemen in some American penitentiaries.

When we discuss police-public relations we should, above all, beware of taking at face value some of the things members of the public say. Nearly everyone grumbles, but their complaints are often attempts to make their violations seem excusable, to still their own consciences; implicitly, many of these grousers are a recognition of the policeman's authority even if expressed in a backhanded sort of way. When people complain that Patrolman No. 999 was rude, they are saying that he falls short of their notion of how a policeman should behave, and if the public sets a high standard in this respect the police should be the last to complain.

The police officer seeks to control the subject for his own ends; he cuts short the complainant who starts on an irrelevant story and keeps the conversation to official business. It is as well to remember, also, that the subject seeks to control the officer's behavior. In a Scottish rural community a man does not like to inform on his neighbors; he has to live with them. So instead of telling the constable that so-and-so is committing a particular offense, he may suggest that the officer take a walk up a certain lane on Friday evening. In this way he controls the officer's behavior by seeing that action is taken but that no one can blame him for it. Similarly I have heard of people going to much trouble to communicate with a particular officer who is temporarily out of the district, because they know him and trust him. The key element here is that you feel safe with the man whose reactions you can predict. You will say more to the man you know to be discreet and unlikely to cause you embarrassment. The policeman who wields moral authority responds in a predictable fashion, in the manner that is socially approved. The policeman whose reactions are uncertain is the man who relies on his individual powers, unconcerned whether the subject will think he is exercising them rightfully or not. It is impossible for members of the public to have confidence in this kind of officer.

Perhaps I might add that while I have seen a lot of police work in American forces that is as good as anything in Britain, or, I believe, anywhere else in the
world, I have the impression that in the United States it is less easy to be sure how a police officer is going to react in given circumstances. I do not think this is just because I am an outsider, for Americans tell me the same thing. We know from studies of race relations that if members of a minority suffer discrimination only in one instance out of a thousand it has a quite disproportionate effect on their morale. When discrimination is unpredictable it can always occur the next time; what happened to my friend could happen to me tomorrow. It affects people's attitudes and behavior far more seriously than the statistical incidence of cases would suggest. It is the same with policemen. The subject who has once been treated badly by a policeman is on the alert ever after lest his experience be repeated. This can apply with particular relevance to the attitudes towards the police held by racial minorities. But in making comparisons of this kind we must recognize that it is much easier for the British policeman to be predictable because in our highly integrated society there is greater consensus about the right way to respond to given situations. The moral authority of the police officer depends upon the level of social integration and moral unity of the community and one cannot compare the work of British and American policemen without recognizing these differences in the context which they have to operate.

SITUATIONS OF RACIAL CONTACT

This brings me at last to the question of how the policeman's work is affected by racial differences. Yet let me say at the outset that we cannot fruitfully discuss this topic without making certain assumptions. Police-men cannot deal satisfactorily with minority problems unless they have the support of the courts, unless their force has enough men for the job and is properly led. An officer should always be able to depend to some extent on the authority of his uniform or his badge. He should not have to establish his personal authority by proving that he individually is a good guy before he can get on with his job, though I fear that in some communities the latter is indeed the case. But if these conditions are met, then it would seem to me that the only racial problems a department should have to worry about are those within the department itself. If dealing with members of the public they have only to observe high standards of professional police work and they will automatically have dealt with the race issue, for professional policing demands respect for all citizens and due consideration for the circumstances of every individual. I am not saying that we should ignore community differences and treat everyone alike. The Jew will not thank you for saying, "let's forget all the centuries of anti-Semitic persecutions and just treat one another as individuals." People belong to communities whose history is reflected in the outlook of the present generation. One must understand that history if one is to understand the people.

But let me try to outline what seems to be three of the chief problems in this area. The first is that of the police department which has to assist in carrying through a desegregation order that is resisted by powerful groups in the community. Others are qualified to discuss this problem and I am not, but I would like to suggest that the root of the difficulty lies in the conflict between law and popular morality, or, to be more exact, between federal law and a liberal morality on the one hand, with traditional morality on the other, probably supported by state or local laws. When the police officer is no longer enforcing laws that are popularly recognized as just, then his position changes. He can no longer claim moral authority; he must rely purely on his powers and be prepared for a burst of unpopularity until the community reconciles itself to the new order and vests it with moral approval. The experience of the Little Rock Police Department suggests that this is not so difficult and that the department which is committed to professional policing has a morality of its own which will carry it through such troubles and outweigh the personal feelings of the men. Speaking of the events there in August 1959, one observer remarked, "Whatever Chief Smith, or anyone else on the force may have thought about the Negroes or school integration didn't matter so much as what was getting to be their pride in the force . . . in fact, the vast majority of them were ardent segregationists."

The second case is the one I want to discuss at greatest length so it may be as well if I summarize my argument. I have maintained that very many of the patrolman's actions derive from his moral involvement in the community rather than his legal powers and obligations. The patrolman shares the moral standards of his community and it endows him with authority because he does so; he is a defender of the peace rather than an enforcer of the law. If you accept this argument I would like you to consider what follows logically from it where you have someone policing a community with which he feels no personal identification. What, for example, if you have a white officer on duty in a Negro section of a southern town?

At the time of World War I a Captain of detectives in a southern town told a writer on police matters, "in this town there are three classes of homicide. If a nigger kills a white man, that's murder. If a white man kills a nigger that's justifiable homicide. If a nigger kills a nigger, that's one less nigger." Something of this attitude towards crimes between Negroes remains in many parts of the South. It is not the fault of the police. If what I have been told is true the courts in many towns will give a Negro convicted of assaulting another Negro a sentence only a fraction of that which would have been given had the parties been white. If the courts take this view it is hard for the police officer not to follow suit.

My six weeks acquaintance with police work in the South was all too brief for me to speak with confidence, but at no time did I get the impression that white officers felt the same moral involvement in the colored areas as they did in the white. An officer who came across a Negro woman who had been badly beaten by her lover showed none of the moral indignation he might have felt had they both been ordinary whites. In the eyes of the whites, these beatings and stabbings were just customs of the colored sections, like shooting craps.

Many departments now employ Negro officers to police Negro neighborhoods, especially in the evening. Of the six departments employing Negro police which I have visited, heard about, or read about, in each one the Negro police have the reputation of being stricter

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with Negro offenders than white policemen would be. White officers in fact sometimes take pleasure in saying that Negroes wanted their own police but that now that they have them they regret it. Why is this? White officers say that their Negro colleagues can afford to be tougher because there is no threat of a Negro's bringing a civil rights suit against them, but I think you will agree that the matter is more complicated than that.

A Negro officer in one southern city put it to me like this. Before the introduction of Negro police, he said, Negro citizens were not getting proper protection. Negro bullies were allowed, by white officers, to get away with all sorts of offenses against other Negroes in return for the information they supplied. Often, too, he said, Negro violators were able to satisfy white officers by telling them a tale no Negro would have believed. Now, he said, the Negro neighborhoods were better policed. It was not true that Negro officers were too tough; they were no tougher than white officers were with whites who had committed similar crimes. Nor was it true that Negro citizens hated their own police—it was only the criminals and the people who wanted to curry favor with the whites who said this. White officers in the past had arrested drunks but they had never worried about drunken men who were neglecting their wives and children. Negro officers, on the other hand, were concerned with the moral issues and they had many times proceeded against people for this sort of offense and been instrumental in reforming them. He himself had subsequently been thanked by the very people he had proceeded against on such grounds. The white officer would not be so concerned with trying to reform a Negro offender because it was beneath his dignity and he would think the task too difficult anyway. This view of the matter is in line with the argument I advanced earlier. What the Negro officer is maintaining is that the Negro officer belongs in the Negro community and quite apart from the extra understanding he has, he feels a moral involvement with its people. He claims moral authority as a policeman where the white officer relies upon legal power because—rightly or wrongly—he rarely sees Negroes as subscribing to the moral norms acknowledged in his community.

The Negro officer whose views I quote over-simplified some of the issues though I believe him to have been right on the main ones. Traditional Negro attitudes towards the white man have a wider hold in the South than an educated Negro leader may like to admit. Many Negroes do take orders more easily from a white officer. When Negro police were first introduced into the city in question Negro toughs boasted that no Negro police were going to arrest them. As a result the first Negro officers had to win respect in the Negro lower-class neighborhoods by the strength of their arms. They had also to charge many Negroes with idling and loitering to disperse the crowds on the corners where so many of the fights originated. However, fourteen years after Negro police were introduced in this city one Negro patrolman had still made no fewer than 1,125 cases between January 1st and August 5th of this year and some of his colleagues had totals almost as impressive. This supports the contention that some Negro officers are remarkably hard-working but it is far from disproving the statement that Negro officers are particularly severe upon Negro offenders.

While we are on this topic I think I should refer to the fears that have been widely expressed about the trouble that would result if Negro officers were to arrest whites. In northeastern states, so far as I can discover, there is rarely trouble and the Negro officer’s authority as a policeman is not questioned. In the South Negro officers are sometimes allowed to arrest white offenders and sometimes required to call a white officer to make the arrest. Dr. Elliott M. Dudnick has collected information on this point. My very limited experience would suggest, however, that there is less restriction on the arresting power of Negro officers than his table indicates. Some forces, I suspect, have thought it judicious to report that Negro policemen do not arrest whites whereas in fact they do so if necessary and receive the support of their departments. This matter has not turned out to be so troublesome as was anticipated. I have myself been with Negro officers to investigate a family dispute in a ramshackle poor white dwelling house inhabited by people who looked to me like real hillbillies, and who had certainly been drinking, but I could detect nothing that suggested they resented having Negro officers attend the call.

I do not wish to imply that the recruitment of police officers from amongst a racial or cultural minority will solve all a police chief’s problems in this area, but I do think that if you see the patrolman’s job as defined by the authority the community confers upon it, then you cannot expect someone from another group to perform the job so conscientiously or to receive the same degree of cooperation. However, what is important is not the officer’s color but his willingness to sympathize with the people he protects. A white officer could police a Negro quarter just as well as even a hard-working Negro officer, but he would have to be an exceptional man.

The third kind of problem which I want to bring up is that of desegregation within police departments. Again, I am hampered by lack of personal acquaintance with the difficulties, but there is some interesting data which I think bears upon this point in a book about the Philadelphia Police Department published in 1957. Most of the white officers who completed the questionnaire said they had no objection to working with Negro officers on many tasks but they were reluctant to partner them in patrol cars. They mostly justified this by saying they could not tolerate a Negro’s smell, or by some similar remark which does not sound very convincing to the outsider. I suspect that a truer interpretation would be that white officers were allowed some choice in their companions for this form of duty and that the colleagues of the man who partnered a Negro would wonder why he had chosen to depart from the usual pattern. He would appear a deviant and people would wonder why he rejected his colleagues of a similar race. The officer might have no personal objection to accompanying a Negro but nevertheless fear that doing so would compromise him in the eyes of his colleagues. This interpretation is in line with the remarks of some police officers in the South who had considerable respect for their Negro officers but would

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not have liked to ride with them. As one said to me, it would have hurt his pride.

There are other possible angles, for example, the fact that, working side by side a colleague for eight hours a day, an officer in a patrol car sees more of his partner than he does even of his wife, and it is vital that he find a congenial companion. But still I think the example helps us see that resistance to association with members of a minority does not necessarily spring from a man’s personal attitudes, or his ignorance about the people in question—as some of the more popular discussions of prejudice imply. The example reminds us that people may be influenced chiefly by what their associates might think. Desegregation could be so successful in the U. S. Army, I believe, because whites and Negroes were contained within the same organization and the whites did not have to look over their shoulders to find out how other whites were interpreting their part in the matter. In a police force the task is more difficult but it does help to ascertain whether one has to deal with a situation in which the resistance stems from individual attitudes or from social conventions which make association with people of another race appear low class or deviant behavior.

On this score, too, it would seem to me that in police forces of the South which have a separate Negro section the Negro officers can be merged into the organization not by focusing on race but by concentrating upon professional standards of police work and upon the common responsibilities of everyone in the department. But on this, I suspect, I am again preaching to the converted. However, I would add that if I were a police administrator looking for weaknesses in my organization the first place I would look would be amongst any officers coming from a minority group. Organizational defects are more likely to show up where you have racial differences as an additional barrier to communication. In one force I visited the Negro officers worked hard, they paraded more smartly at roll call than anyone else, their morale was high and their white colleagues did not try to disparage their capabilities. Why should one city be so successful? There can surely be little doubt that the answers lies in the quality of leadership the department has received. If in another department the white officers say the Negro officers are lazy and only want the job because of the advantage the uniform gives them with the womenfolk, this may be an expression of prejudice. It may be a truthful account of the situation. But, it may also be a sign that the morale of the department is not as high as it might be.

CONCLUSION

Earlier I expressed an opinion that we have a long way to go in developing better techniques for training officers in human relations. The formal writings on this subject often strike me as saying no more than every intelligent nineteen-year-old should have discovered for himself. Everyday situations are so varied, and so much depends upon delicate nuances of vocal tone, gesture, dress, demeanor, etc., that text books can rarely do them justice. Research has shown that to lecture a group of adults about the character of minority groups does not necessarily lead to any improvement in their attitudes towards them. I would suggest that when dealing with recruits (older men are a different problem) it is desirable for the instructor to deal with the effect of minority groups upon police work by a freer method of discussion than he would normally use. What we should try to do first of all is to help people develop a greater insight into their own feelings and an understanding of them. When people have this insight into the pressures upon them they have more control over the situations in which they are caught up. This makes for better judgement and better policing.

Finally I should emphasize that my argument relates to patrol officers and their dealings with the ordinary public; it does not cover the special position of detectives or of dealings with professional criminals. The detective has to be a law officer where the patrolman is still primarily a peace officer serving a popular morality that is recognized by policemen and subject alike. I was interested to hear in one American city which was replacing two-man cars with one-man cars that a major argument for this practice was that the officer who is by himself has to treat a prisoner with more tact and less force; he has to handle him in such a way that the man accepts the policeman’s authority. I am sure that you will agree that for a police officer to use force where persuasion would be sufficient is one of the easiest ways to alienate the public, so this development is of general interest. Of course it can operate only if communications are such that additional cars can always be dispatched to a dangerous call, but whether or not the practice spreads, it does indicate an attempt in a city with relatively low social integration and a high crime rate, to base the policeman’s role upon the moral authority of his office rather than its legal powers. I would be the first to agree that any such policy must be adapted to local circumstances. But, the move in this direction by police administrators does make me feel that the opinion I have expressed may not be altogether mistaken, and I am sure that if there are good arguments for this policy in ordinary police work it has a special relevance to law enforcement in districts of racial and cultural contact.

I AI TO MEET IN ROCHESTER, N. Y.

The 48th Annual Conference of the International Association for Identification will be held July 14, to 18 in Rochester, New York, with delegates from all parts of the United States, Canada, Mexico, Brazil and other countries in attendance.

Presiding will be Captain James E. Devery of the Chicago, Illinois, Police Department. Other IAI officers for 1962-63 include First Vice President Walter G. Hoetzer, Identification Officer, Police Department, Utica, N. Y.; Second Vice President C. Lester Trotter, FBI, Washington, D. C.; Third Vice President Ronald P. Hanson, Officer in Charge, Identification Branch, Royal Canadian Mounted Police Headquarters, Ottawa, Ontario; Fourth Vice President Fred Ryder, Firearms Examiner, Texas Department of Public Safety, Austin, Texas, and Fifth Vice President Russell C. Griffing, Chief Identification Officer, Police Department, Kansas City, Missouri.
SOCIAL DISTANCE: A NEW APPRECIATION

Michael Banton

Recent research in inter-group relations shows a growing interest in the way behaviour is regulated by the social context within which it occurs. As this tendency may encourage new studies of social distance, a re-evaluation of the concept may be worth attempting. The study of the determinants of conduct requires first of all some means of classifying particular items of behaviour, so that the student of inter-group relations has to start by differentiating discriminatory and non-discriminatory behaviour. But such 'either-or' distinctions are of relatively little assistance. The value of the concept of social distance lies in the way it enables the research worker to evaluate the extent of discrimination and to conceptualize it as a continuum. It compels him to analyse inter-group relations in a manner equally applicable to intra-group relations, fastening upon a general characteristic of social life instead of upon the circumstantial and at times distracting features of group conflict. This use of the concept, which was implicit in R. E. Park's remark 'Everyone, it seems, is capable of getting on with everyone else, provided each preserves his proper distance,' has, however, been overlaid in the course of time by certain other connotations which need to be distinguished from it.

The Development of the Bogardus scale

In 1925 Emory S. Bogardus published a first account of a social distance scale he had devised, at the suggestion of Park, for measuring and comparing attitudes towards national and racial groups. This test has been administered to a large panel of American subjects in 1926, 1946, and in 1956, revealing a basic consistency in dispositions towards stranger groups with a number of comprehensible variations over the thirty-year period.

In calculating Racial Distance Quotients for ascertaining the rank order of stranger groups, a crucial problem for Bogardus was to establish a series of questions bearing upon a single variable and evaluating it in such a way that the answers to the questions could be compared quantitatively. Thus, after further research, Bogardus
published in 1933 a revised scale based upon assent to the following seven statements:

1. Would marry
2. Would have as regular friends
3. Would work beside in an office
4. Would have several families in my neighbourhood
5. Would have merely as speaking acquaintances
6. Would have live outside my neighbourhood
7. Would have live outside my country

A panel of judges had rated 60 statements about degrees of social distance and the above seven had emerged as those most nearly equidistant from each other. Therefore, so it was claimed, it was legitimate to calculate the average distance observed in respect of each group. The revised scale was used in the enquiries of 1946 and 1956. In each test subjects have been presented with a chart divided into columns for ticking off degrees of distance. This procedure has been criticized by later investigators, who have randomized the entire range of questions so that subjects have to consider each one separately. However, in a recent review of work on this topic Bogardus reports that a research worker who compared the results obtained from the use of both procedures found that randomization did not significantly affect the results in terms of the mean social distance values, nor affect the reliability of the scale.3

However, the Bogardus test has been criticized on graver issues. In a brief but penetrating discussion Krech and Crutchfield maintain that the test is influenced by factors other than attitudes. ‘Social distance is a complex quality, related in the most intimate way to the ego standards of the individual, his conceptions of prestige in the eyes of the group, etc. Even though a man may hate the English and place them in an extreme negative position on an attitude scale of the Thurstone or Likert type, he might not reject them as residents in his own street.’ They conclude that ‘the scale as it now stands seems to include two different types of reactions of the individual: (1) his relative willingness or unwillingness to be exposed to the object, (2) his relative willingness or unwillingness to be identified with the object.’ In another review Mozell Hill drew attention to Park’s original conception of social distance as a means whereby a group maintains its identity. He pointed also to results he and others had obtained which suggested that ‘the technique is not a true scale at all’ because in some circumstances people will accept
Social Distance: A New Appreciation

strangers in what according to the Bogardus scale are near distances while rejecting them in more distant ones. Hill concluded that more stress must be laid upon configurations of group behaviour but he failed to see any way of using the existing test to this end.5

Sources of Distance

Responses to the Bogardus test indicate how people think they would behave in certain circumstances. When the test was first formulated many social scientists thought it was possible to account for behaviour in terms of the attitudes of individuals and that social distance was governed by their image of the stranger group. Thus Bogardus has defined social distance as ‘the degree of sympathetic understanding that functions between person and person, between person and group, and between group and group. Sympathy refers to feeling reactions of a favourably responsive type, and understanding involves that knowledge of a person which also leads to favourably responsive behaviour.’6 This definition implies a psychologicistic view of the factors regulating behaviour. We are nowadays more alive to the importance of non-psychological factors and to the impossibility of accounting for everything in psychological terms. A study of the data cited in Bogardus’ recent review demonstrates beyond question that distance may spring from a variety of sources, not all of them social.

Four forms of social distance seem to be of particular significance:

(i) social distance as an outcome of people’s negative attitudes deriving from unfavourable information about, or experience of, members of another group. This has been the dominant view in studies on this topic.

(ii) social distance may equally well, however, be a characteristic of certain types of social relation, notably those between a superordinate and a subordinate, a senior and a junior, and between people of comparable social standing but potentially conflicting obligations. Unwillingness to be identified with a stranger is one variety of this form of distance, for the unwillingness exists with reference to particular relationships; few people mind being associated with a stranger in the relationship of superordinate to subordinate.?

(iii) distance may reflect a relative lack of common interests or experiences. Many occupations have their technical language, and small communities their special pursuits. Such groups have, in
effect, their distinctive cultures; there may be no adequate place in them for people who cannot participate in group activities although they are of comparable social standing and group members are not unfavourably disposed towards them. A special variety of this cultural distance occurs in schools in which middle class teachers have charge of working class children and do not share the same values.

(iv) social distance may equally well be caused by a self-interest springing not from an individual’s personality but forced upon him by his social position. Two people of similar occupation and outlook, each of amiable disposition, may be rivals. Each may avoid the other in an attempt to convey to the public an impression that he is superior to the other.

This classification may be inadequate, and there may well be other sources of social distance, but it is necessary to emphasize that not all distance is social. If a man avoids his colleague because of temperamental incompatibility, this is a purely individual variation. Similarly, some seniors behave with greater familiarity than others towards their juniors. In so far as this reflects differences in the way people may interpret the same role, within permitted limits, this is not a form of social distance. However, if it should transpire that those seniors who are most vulnerable to criticism from their peers are constrained to observe greater or lesser distance towards juniors then a social influence can be discerned.

The different causes of social distance may supplement each other. Strongly unfavourable attitudes towards a minority are often found in a situation in which members of the minority are confined to inferior positions. The association between membership of the minority and low rank is such as to give rise to distinctively racial status as in the situations regarded as exemplifying ‘colour-caste.’ Not infrequently, however, two factors pull in opposite directions. Charles S. Johnson states ‘There are situations within the legal and institutional structure separating the races in the South which permit a considerable degree of personal intimacy between whites and Negroes; but that intimacy is permissible only when both parties know what can and cannot be done and the appropriate social distances prescribed by racial etiquette are maintained.’ Difficulty often arises over what he terms the taboo against interracial dining and drinking. ‘A Negro school-teacher was entertaining a group of white school visitors when mealtime arrived. No other facilities
Social Distance: A New Appreciation

being available he offered them dinner. They ate willingly enough and to prove their friendship insisted that he get a small table and eat in the same room." Friendship and custom pulled in opposite directions and the degree of distance actually observed was a compromise between the two.

As the distance observed in particular cases is a compound of different and perhaps conflicting components it is unprofitable to define it in inclusive terms. Each form of distance must be defined in its own terms, for it is an analytical construct which does not have to reflect the full variety of inter-personal distance as an empirical phenomenon. It would seem more fruitful to analyse the various factors independently and to try to devise scales for each of them.

Attitudes and Relationships

The normal method of presenting the results of social distance tests is to isolate the attitudinal element; the seven degrees of distance are used only to enable the investigator to assess the potency of subjects' attitudes (see Figure 1). These degrees of distance each embody a relationship in which the subject might conceivably associate with members of the groups in question, but the standard procedure takes no account of the social implications of the relationships. It is chiefly directed to the calculation of distance quotients for different groups. Thus in reporting the results of his 1946 and 1956 enquiries Bogardus lists only the quotients and gives no data on the various relationships.

It is equally legitimate to isolate the relationship element in social distance as the one of principal interest and to treat the stranger groups as varying only in their relevance to the way subjects prefer to avoid contact with them in certain kinds of relationship (see Figure 2). This brings out explicitly the implications of the different relationships in respect of varied stranger groups. So far as I am aware no one has attempted to analyse social distance data in this way.

A comparison of the two figures shows as clearly as anything can do that there are at least two important constituents of social distance as it is normally considered. The procedure used in Figure 1 gives a relatively accurate representation of social distance when the attitude component is dominant, and that for Figure 2 when the relationship component is in the ascendant. Both have complementary weaknesses but both are equally legitimate.
Michael Banton

Fig. 1.
Social Distance as Reflecting Attitudes towards Strangers.

Fig. 2.
Social Distance as Reflecting the Implications of Relationships with Strangers.

Note: Once the claim of uni-dimensionality for the Bogardus scale be rejected, the data are more appropriately represented by histograms.
Social Distance: A New Appreciation

This re-examination of the relationship component brings out a number of important points that previous practice has tended to obscure. In the first place, the extent to which distance is observed is determined not only by the group being tested but also by the characteristics of the stranger groups. Bogardus’ panel of judges assessed the degrees of distance implicit in a number of possible relationships without reference to any particular group. But relationships which are equidistant in respect of the general and abstract category ‘stranger’ may not hold for any particular group whatever, as behaviour towards someone regarded as belonging to a stranger category is in part a response to the peculiar characteristics assumed to define his particular category. This is evident in any case from the fact that the curves in Figure 1 are not straight, but it is emphasised by some of the responses given in Table 1. This table is based upon Bogardus’ first enquiry, as the book which describes it is one of the very few publications on social distance which presents the data in a manner which permits re-analysis. From this table it will be seen, for example, that the distance between relationships 6 and 7 for the Japanese is roughly equal to that between 4 and 7 for Koreans. The nationalities included in this table have been selected so as to call attention to variations of this kind so they are not properly representative of the results Bogardus has obtained. But among these variations two anomalies are of particular interest: the relatively great acceptance of Mexicans as fellow-workers and rejection of German Jews as clubmates. Bogardus describes the Mexican as a labourer who does not compete with Americans or displace them from anything that they value highly. His docile manner excites no antagonism.10 This, however, is not an altogether satisfactory explanation as the statement indicates acceptance ‘to employment in my occupation.’ The entries for German Jews in columns 1 and 2 are erroneous11 but dips in the curves may be noted for English and Americans on columns 4 and 5 and Mexicans on 5 and 6.12 (Compare, also Table II, Western Matrilineal, column 4.)

This phenomenon is in any case within the range of everyday experience. Some people may object to their kinsfolk marrying a Catholic on the grounds that the children will be exposed to Catholic doctrines at an impressionable age, but have no objection to association with a Catholic in any other relationship. Someone else may accept a Negro as a close friend but not wish to have him as a
neighbour because of the fear—justified or not—that this might affect property values. The same group of people when indicating the distance they would severally observe in respect of two stranger groups might list the relationships in different orders of avoidance so that in a diagram like those of Figures 1 or 2 the two curves would overlap.

**TABLE 1.**

Reactions of 1725 Americans to 15 nationalities

<table>
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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Relative by Marriage</th>
<th>Clubmate</th>
<th>Neighbour</th>
<th>Workmate</th>
<th>Fellow-citizen</th>
<th>Visitor</th>
<th>Exiled-reversed</th>
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<td>98</td>
<td>96</td>
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<tr>
<td>Armenians</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jews, German</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bulgarians</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mexicans</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japanese</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>98</td>
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<tr>
<td>Filipinos</td>
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<td>15</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Koreans</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Adapted from Emory S. Bogardus; *Immigration and Race Attitudes*, p. 25.

In the second place, a re-examination underlines the importance of group variations within the sample. Bogardus gives tables showing that the social distance preferences of Negroes and Jews are radically different from those of the bulk of the sample. It is therefore meaningless to add together these contradictory preferences to arrive at a national pattern. In Table I, for example, the high place accorded to Englishmen is clearly associated with the fact that 772 of the sample were of English descent and a further 508 of Scots, Irish or Welsh descent. Bogardus referred to the antipathy of some American subjects towards the English, but added that many Americans were viewed with marked antipathy by other Americans. The study of the distance people indicate in respect of their own nationalities is likely to prove rewarding in drawing out hitherto neglected factors.
Social Distance: A New Appreciation

A Rhodesian Study

A recent investigation by J. Clyde Mitchell is of the greatest interest both for its methodological virtues and because inter-tribal relations in urban areas provide an admirable field for the study of categorical relationships. When the results are available in full, Mitchell's data should permit better than any others the analysis of the separate influences of distance as deriving from the subjects' group and from images of the stranger groups.

With the aid of his African research assistants, Mitchell drew up seven statements which they thought would correspond most closely to Bogardus'. They were:

1. Would admit him to near kinship by marriage.
2. Would share a meal with him.
3. Would work together with him.
4. Would allow to live nearby in my village.
5. Would allow to settle in my tribal area.
6. Would allow as a visitor only in my tribal area.
7. Would exclude from my tribal area.

Twenty-one tribal groups were selected. Each of the statements was formulated as a question for each tribe, giving 147 questions in all. The test was then administered to 329 African scholars at a local secondary school. Only a preliminary account of the results of this study is available as yet, but according to Mitchell they show that the order of statements they employed needs revision. The correct order of the statements listed above is 1, 5, 4, 2, 3, 6, 7.

The most striking feature of this result is the original misplacing of statement 5. There is a parallel here with one of Hill's results. He found, when administering the test to adolescents in all-Negro communities in Oklahoma, that affirmative responses to the statements that they would (i) be willing to marry a white person, (ii) have no objection to inviting a white person into one of their social clubs, (iii) be willing to attend school with white children, (iv) be willing to have a white person living in their town, ran as follows: 8 per cent., 61 per cent., 78 per cent., 38 per cent. Admission of whites to residence in their town had, for adolescents in an all-Negro community, much the same significance as admission of stranger tribesmen to settlement in their territory had for Rhodesian Africans. Mitchell's results suggest that the Africans regarded the extension of hospitality to a stranger as a customary duty of relatively little
significance compared with the major step of allowing a stranger to occupy their tribal land permanently and to introduce a possibly disharmonious note into local affairs. (One can only assume that statement no. 5 suggested this more strongly than no. 4 which logically should imply it even more definitely.) Hill's data suggest a similar reaction. This kind of result is of the utmost value because it draws attention to the inaccuracy of the sort of assumption every investigator makes and rarely questions. Often investigators unconsciously tailor their interpretations to preserve their assumptions; techniques which expose them as clearly as this are invaluable.

TABLE 2.
Percentage of Northern Matrilineal Respondents accepting Africans of other groups of tribes in given relationships

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Relative by Marriage</th>
<th>Fellow settler on tribal land</th>
<th>Neighbour</th>
<th>Share a meal with</th>
<th>Workmate</th>
<th>Visitor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Own group</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northern Patrilineal</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eastern Matrilineal</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southern Patrilineal</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central Matrilineal</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bilateral</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western Matrilineal</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Complete strangers</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>...</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Mitchell shows in his paper that the responses to different tribes fall into a clear pattern. To the extent that two tribes come from the same region and have similar forms of social organisation, they observe less distance in respect of each other. A third factor is that of prestige. Less distance is shown towards the former warrior tribes of high renown; more is shown towards tribes whose men-folk will accept employment as night soil men, or other occupations of low prestige. The ranking of tribes in this way suggests new questions to the anthropological field worker.

From Table 2 it will be seen that the rank order of relationships of distance maintained by the Northern Matrilineal group is different from that of the total sample. Is this conclusion in accordance with observable differences in this group's interpersonal relations with other groups? It would be of the greatest interest to have this test
Social Distance: A New Appreciation

followed up and to locate the source of a puzzling discrepancy. It will also be noticed that respondents failed to indicate complete acceptance of members of their own group. If there are good reasons for this, should responses to subjects' own group represent too and other responses be scaled up accordingly? Again, Mitchell has employed a novel means of weighting responses to different statements; if this were applied to earlier studies of social distance would it dissolve any of their anomalies?

Situational Responses

When the rank order of relationships expressing distance between one group and another has been established, it is necessary to develop a more highly differentiated technique to explain the variations which take place from one situation to another. One possible method would be to elaborate a typology of situations. The typological approach, however, is difficult to apply to social situations as they vary so greatly, and two which appear similar outwardly may be construed in a very different manner by the people who are parties to them. Arguments as to whether a particular situation belongs in one type or another are difficult to settle but the outcome may be crucial to the conclusions of the enquiry.

Several interesting attempts have been made to approach this problem from other angles. Rogler chose four inter-group situations that occur in Puerto Rico and by analysis deduced that little racial distance was to be expected in (a) situations perceived as secular and impersonal, (b) in leisure time situations amongst the lower classes. On the other hand the exclusion of Negroes was to be expected, (c) in upper-class leisure-time situations and (d) in the top levels of secular achievement, as in such circumstances a dark colour had connotations of low prestige.15 Biesanz and Smith, contrasting the very different patterns of race relations in the adjacent territories of Panama and the Canal Zone, attempted a structural-functional analysis of the two social systems. The differences were shown to be related to opposed normative patterns: the higher level of racial distance was associated with greater technological rationality; greater differentiation of occupational roles; higher evaluation of the ethics of 'earning one’s way'; a more stable central government; a more impersonal form of administration, and certain other factors.16 Reitzes compared the willingness of the same group of workers to accept Negroes in two contexts. As members of an all-white Civic
Michael Banton

Club the men refused to admit Negroes to the neighbourhood in which they lived, but as members of a union strongly opposed to racial discrimination they supported non-segregation and racial equality in the work situation. A series of interviews demonstrated that these apparently contradictory practices were accepted by the great majority of the sample. The extent of social distance could thus be related to the definition of the situation provided to the individual by deliberately organized collectivities. Kohn studied unpatterned situations in which there was no collectivity to provide a definition, and found that the confused individual would accept a cue from any other participant, but that where contradictory expectations were expressed an individual would first attempt to resolve the conflict by assigning one definition a higher priority than the other. Winder asked some subjects in Chicago to comment on a series of fabricated 'news items'; he found that a disposition to avoid contact with Negroes in certain relationships was related to status differences among the respondents and to the extent to which Negroes had moved into the neighbourhood, but he did not analyse the differences between these situations and those in which less distance was indicated.

The analysis of selected case studies using Rogler's approach produces generalisations holding only within the culture in question. To elaborate a satisfactory culture-free method for the analysis of social situations is more difficult. The present writer has suggested elsewhere that it is possible to consider very many situations in terms of the relationships between three parties: ego, the actor whose position is taken as a starting point; alter, the man towards whom his behaviour is directed; and the onlooker, a member of ego's group who appraises his conduct and who may cause ego to be rewarded or punished for it. In this way it is possible to take account of the way entrance into a particular relationship with a stranger has different implications for people of different occupations and social standing, and to meet Krech and Crutchfield's criticism. Six hypotheses have been put forward: two springing from ego's image of alter, two from ego's relationship with the onlooker, and two deriving from the nature of the social relationship with alter into which ego might enter. They are that: ego will observe greater social distance towards alter

1. the more alter is thought to be unaware of the norms governing social relations in ego’s group.
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2. the more alter's group is of low prestige.
3. the less public justification ego's social role gives him for associating with socially inferior persons.
4. the more ego feels vulnerable to criticism or challenge from members of his own group.
5. the more the relationship in question is regulated by implicit modes of communication.
6. the weaker are the sanctions for bringing the stranger into line if he behaves inappropriately.

Conclusion

The Bogardus test, modified in various ways, has been used in many studies of attitudes towards stranger groups, but its potentialities for the study of the different situations and relationships in which distance is observed have not yet been exploited. A review of recent work indicates that progress would be facilitated by enquiries along two lines:

(i) Only rarely have investigators published their data in a manner such that any anomalies in the ranking of relationships are apparent or that permits the re-analysis of the material from the standpoint of the relationships involved. The Bogardus test is one of the simplest to administer and for this kind of analysis it is not necessary to try to ensure that the scale items are equidistant. Further experimentation is called for in its application to the study of relations between social classes and occupational groups, in the specification of relationships more closely spaced than Bogardus' seven, and in the use of other methods of eliciting responses, such as the presentation of anecdotes for comment.

(ii) The hypotheses suggested by recent studies of the effect upon the definition of the situation of social status and residential differences, group membership, normative patterns implicit in the social system, the perception of relationships, etc., cannot yet be formulated in terms that would permit their testing by existing versions of social distance tests. They could, however, be refined by observation, by use in discussion groups, or by phenomenological analysis, and would complement research of the type outlined in the preceding paragraph.

Social Sciences Research Centre,
University of Edinburgh.
Michael Banton


3 Emory S. Bogardus: Social Distance, Los Angeles, 1959, pp. 93-4.


5 Morrell Hill: 'Some Problems of Social Distance in Intergroup Relations,' in Muzafer Sherif and M. O. Wilson (Eds.): Group Relations at the Crossroads, New York, 1953.

6 Bogardus, op. cit. p. 7.

7 The customary distinction between 'vertical' and 'horizontal' distance is misconceived. A book-maker is likely to refrain from trying to strike up an acquaintance with a police officer who, but for his occupation, would have been a possible friend, because the latter's office obliges him to avoid associations that might appear compromising. The book-maker may similarly refrain from approaching a wealthy surgeon because the latter's social position gives him rights to deference from incumbents of socially inferior statuses. In either case the relationship is structured by the rights and obligations of the parties. The study of 'vertical' distance represents a different way of viewing the relative position of different roles.


9 The 1946 results are given in his article 'Changes in Racial Distance,' Int. J. Opinion and Attitude Research, vol. 1, 1947, No. 4, pp. 55-62; and the 1956 data, side by side with the earlier results, in his Social Distance, op. cit.

10 Immigration and Race Attitudes, Boston, 1928, p. 20.

11 The acceptance of German Jews by other Jews (Bogardus' Table IV) is sufficient to produce acceptance of 9.7 and 10.0 in the first two columns. In a personal communication Professor Bogardus has stated that these are the correct figures.

12 The nationalities in Table I are listed in the order of their Racial Distance Quotients as calculated by Bogardus. This method seems to give undue weight to acceptances in the first two relationships. If a straight-forward average were used, Italians, Hungarians and Americans would move up the table, and Bulgarians and Japanese down.

13 Ibid., p. 15.


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20 'Sociology and Race Relations,' Race, vol. 1, 1959, pp. 3-14. This article does not consider the observance of distance towards socially superior persons; for this purpose the second and third hypotheses would need to be formulated in more general terms.
from Social Change in Modern Africa
ed. Aidan Southall, O. U. P. 1961
IV. THE RESTRUCTURING OF SOCIAL RELATIONSHIPS

MICHAEL BANTON

The elaboration of a conceptual framework for studying social change is perhaps the most important—and certainly one of the most difficult—of the tasks confronting contemporary social anthropology. It is not easy to study social change using a functionalist model of society because once some of its component parts have been modified it is no longer the same society. Other approaches starting from variant models of the social system are open to the same objection in differing degrees. The major alternative to this tradition in social theory is that which starts instead from the study of behaviour and explores the operation of institutional and large-scale social influences only in so far as this is necessary to the explanation of problems presented by the behaviour of particular human beings. Progress in this latter approach has been impeded by doubts as to the relative spheres of psychology and sociology which in recent years have been very largely resolved. Without going into all the issues this raises or referring to the considerable literature upon it that has accumulated, it nevertheless seems worth attempting a very rough sketch of a conceptual framework for the study of changes in behavioural patterns and considering in this light certain problems arising from the modification of norms of conduct.

Social anthropologists have chiefly concerned themselves with that aspect of behaviour which can be related to the rights and obligations of parties to structured relationships. The central concept in a structural analysis of this kind is that of the ‘person’. By a ‘person’ jurists mean ‘a human being (natural person) or a body corporate (artificial person) having rights and duties recognized by the law’. The sociologist may legitimately extend this usage slightly, for he is concerned with custom as well as law and many norms that cannot be enforced by the courts are nevertheless most effectively upheld by the informal sanctions of
public disapproval. In this manner society may be conceptualized as a network of persons. In passing from one situation to another a man becomes a different social person. At one moment he may be landlord, at the next, employer. However, his legal and customary obligations as employer vary from one category of employees to another and different behaviour is expected of him in informal situations from formal ones.

Three particularly important principles by which rights and obligations are allocated to members of societies are descent, social stratification, and contract. All three are probably present to some degree in every society. Tribal societies rely heavily upon descent as a means by which people are linked together in the pursuit of common ends. Social stratification is most important in societies divided into ‘estates’, whether these be of the variety found in Europe in late medieval and early modern times, or the modern version exemplified in the multi-racial societies of eastern and southern Africa. Estates frequently have their own systems of private law, or the differential position of their members may be recognized in the administration of a law which, formally, makes no distinctions. The courts take cognizance of the fact that a light sentence passed upon someone of high rank may be a far more severe punishment than a heavy sentence upon someone more lowly placed. Personal ties founded upon descent and social stratification rarely conflict with each other because all members of a particular kin-group usually belong to the same estate or stratum. Conflict is however frequent, and indeed inevitable, between these ties and the obligations entered upon by contract, for contractual arrangements are needed only where the status system is inadequate to the demands made upon it. Modern industrial organization requires the flexibility provided by a system of free contract; in societies just embarking upon industrialization people are presented with the choice between loyalty to their traditional values and the opportunity of improving their standard of living at the cost of social readjustment. If they choose the latter, then the principle of contract gains significance not only in commercial transactions, but as a means of allocating rights and obligations throughout the social structure.
SOURCES OF NEW NORMS

A relationship is structured by the rights and obligations of the parties to it. Social change occurs when, and only when, new norms develop as to these rights and obligations, for until new ideas gain general acceptance and become norms any infraction of the existing code will call forth sanctions and result in a reinforcement of the traditional pattern. No society is ever in perfect equilibrium. Norms of conduct in a particular relationship may remain unchanged over long periods but modifications in other relationships are bound to affect them in some degree. The emergence of new norms may be the outcome of changes in the physical or social environments, or perhaps of tensions within the society. But these norms can never be entirely new. If they are to have meaning, they must have some relation to people's experience of the world. Thus new social institutions can arise only from the re-shuffling of elements already in existence.

In most African urban societies, new expectations and patterns of behaviour are taken over from the European way of life. This process is not one of straightforward imitation. In the first place only certain European practices are emulated while others are ignored. In some regions the copying of European practices is so noticeable that this element of selection is overlooked, but it is always present. In the second place, though Africans may aspire to goals of a European character they may not have the means to achieve them, or they may be denied them by acts of European policy. Thus in certain respects the Central African situation appears to be one in which the acquisition of European skills by Africans is favoured only so long as the estate-like system of racial stratification is not disrupted. However, change may be halted or deflected only at a cost, and the cost may after a while be more than people are willing to bear. The African traditionalist who abjures the white man and his works may not be able to restrain his sons from seeking employment in the mine fields. The benefits to employers of rigid stratification may after a time be outweighed by its disadvantages.

The rate of change is as a rule more rapid in work relationships
than in the family. An African immigrant from the rural areas may adjust himself to work in a large industrial plant in a relatively short space of time. He accepts his employers' definition of the norms of the employee-employer relationship. But these norms are not imposed upon him, for he can always withdraw from the relationship if he wishes and it usually happens that employers have to alter their European-type expectations in certain respects to accommodate the customary practices of their workers. Domestic relations—and in particular the husband's and wife's expectations of one another—show much greater resistance to change. For whereas a new role as worker in an industrial concern can be added on to a man's other roles without having many immediate effects upon his relations with his fellows, changes in domestic norms react upon a wide range of relationships. The norms governing relations between members of a community are multifarious and at this stage it would probably be fruitless to try and pinpoint them. But a great deal can be learned from the study of situations (such as those brought before urban courts) in which old and new norms are in conflict. It would also be illuminating to investigate differences in the norms of, say, the marital relationship between country dwellers, unskilled urban labourers, and educated Africans, tracing the effects of changes in style of life.

NEW INSTITUTIONS

Existing research material provides little systematic information upon the working out of social change within particular relationships, but some understanding of the emergence and spread of new norms may be gained from the study of new institutions. Voluntary associations are of particular interest in this respect, for the new norms are frequently rendered explicit in the association's constitution or activities, and are taught to novices as the distinguishing characteristics of the organization.

The casualty rate among urban voluntary associations is high, and even if they survive the first critical years they frequently fail to achieve their ambitious objectives. Nevertheless this trial-and-error social engineering brings into the open forms of change not
easily detected, and it is of significance in pointing the trend of African social development. The enthusiasm for the founding of such bodies and the writing of constitutions is reminiscent of G. K. Chesterton’s observation that ‘It is the fashion to talk of institutions as cold and cramping things. The truth is that when people are in exceptionally high spirits, really wild with freedom and invention, they always must, and they always do, create institutions. When men are weary they fall into anarchy; but while they are gay and vigorous they invariably make rules. . . .’

In young people’s associations in different parts of the world and in different historical periods these rules are often of a negative character, like fines for certain offences, for thus the members’ desire to symbolize their unity in distinctive customs is most easily met. But the rules which are written into the constitution are less important than those which successful associations decree by the establishment of conventions.

Young men’s associations in many different parts of Africa have shown a consistent pattern of development: at first their formal organization is very simple and the imprint of European institutions is very evident, but quite rapidly the structure differentiates and the associations acquire characteristics of their own. Comparing those on the Copperbelt of Northern Rhodesia with those in Freetown, the apparent imitation of European ways is most noticeable in the Rhodesian mbeni of the post-1918 period, which Professor J. Clyde Mitchell describes as ‘a sort of pantomime of the social structure of the local European community’. Kalela, its successor, broke away from this to become a representation of the way of life of the upper levels of African society.¹ The Freetown dancing societies of the 1930’s resembled Kalela in many respects though their organization and activities were more differentiated and the European borrowings less important.² The new Temne companies of the 1940’s marked a further step in the same direction. The élite societies now have a highly developed system of offices so that forty-five to fifty members of a total not exceeding ninety may have some title-bearing office. The wide range from which these are borrowed—compared with the earlier

¹ Mitchell, 1956.
² Banton, 1957, pp. 164 ff.
adoption of military ranks—gives a good indication of the eclecticism of their founders. The principal title, Sultan, is of Islamic provenance. His female opposite number, Mammy Queen, pays silent homage to Queen Victoria; Pa Kumrabai is a traditional Temne official whose role as the outsider with emergency powers in time of crisis has been adapted to give members an extraordinary court of appeal when in dispute with the Sultan; Judge, Doctor, Manager, Commissioner, Sister, Nurse, Leader, Conductor, Provoc, Reporter, and Bailiff are titles of European derivation but borrowed from different institutions and with an understanding of their incumbents’ duties.

The activities of the companies and the style of life of their members show that in some spheres Islamic or tribal values are endorsed in preference to European ones. The dancers are usually from among the younger members; the men wear European-style shoes and trousers, a coloured open-neck shirt and perhaps a trilby. The older and more respected members dance only on special occasions: they wear the slippers, long gowns, and tarbooshes characteristic of Muslims. Tribal norms of obligation to kinsfolk, customary ideas of etiquette, etc., are upheld. Those who seek esteem refrain from alcoholic liquors, but smoking—though light by European standards—is not disapproved of and the younger men show off their cigarettes. Children are given tribal Christian names. Where European practices are adopted, this is frequently for display; their rejection in respect of religion, dress, names, etc., is the more noteworthy in that Creole acceptance of them has been virtually complete. (The Creoles of Sierra Leone are the descendants of Africans liberated from the slave vessels in the last century; having little distinctive culture of their own they readily adopted British values and institutions and helped spread them amongst the tribal peoples.) The success of Islam is particularly interesting in this respect. Apart from the Kru and Bassa headmen (who supported independent Christian Churches) all the fourteen tribal headmen, and all the subordinate officials and important company officers that I met, professed themselves Muslims. The growth of Islam appears to be due in

The Restructuring of Social Relationships

part to its providing a common cultural foundation for an African grouping opposed to the Europeans and the compromising Creoles.

Within the company a different standard of behaviour is required of the member than in most relations between young tribal immigrants. Members have to help one another, especially by moral and pecuniary support upon bereavement. Fighting and quarrelling are forbidden and all disputes must be arbitrated within the company. When attending meetings, members are expected to be smartly dressed. The men are enjoined to show respect to the women members. Great concern is shown for discipline, though company officials sometimes have difficulty in getting their authority acknowledged. Some associations make greater demands upon their members than others and they are respected accordingly. In one case this difference in standards was found within an association. A young Limba leader in creating a society for his fellow-tribesmen divided it into two sections: one was fairly exclusive and designed to appeal to the more self-respecting and ambitious youths, the other a more casual arrangement to provide entertainment on holidays which would draw in the less settled immigrant labourers. Thus at different levels members of these associations take on distinctive rights and obligations; in this sense new statuses or new social persons are created.

The desire of the young Temne to raise tribal standards which found expression in the companies has also been an important political factor. Some four years after the establishment of the first company the post of tribal headman fell vacant. This office had previously been held by illiterate greybeards who were out of touch with the young men. Determined to put an end to the inefficiency and corruption of the old system, the young men nominated the school teacher who had founded the company, and they secured his election. He utilized his position as none of his illiterate predecessors had been able to do, and soon became one of the most important figures in the city. In 1957 he entered the House of Representatives and was immediately appointed Minister of Works and Housing. This exemplifies how the young
men's influence has increased and with it the significance of the norms they try to propagate and enforce through the companies. Companies appoint their officers according to their own ideas of suitability in which traditional and modernist values are blended. To some extent they can confer prestige outside their membership, for to be known as an important company official heightens a man's standing in other situations, while older men may solicit the support of these groups for political or personal ends. The plethora of offices and the various requirements of members may therefore be seen as an attempt to translate new norms into structured relationships. This importance is the greater because in the urban situation criteria of rank and norms of conduct are confused.

In several respects the companies take over functions which in tribal society are performed by the lineage. Members help one another, honour each other's dead and provide support in times of difficulty. The company creates new ranks and statuses in lieu of the old ones (deriving from position in descent groups of varying prestige) that are no longer viable. The resemblance is not due to any intrinsic significance in descent organization but to its use in certain kinds of society for allocating rights and obligations. In urban life new institutions have to be created to perform the same functions, though in accordance with different criteria.

SYMBOLS OF STATUS

When a new status is created and a class of persons arise who observe distinctive rights and obligations, some outward sign is often adopted by which they can distinguish themselves. Secret societies have their signs and most associations their badges. Priests, like soldiers, wear a uniform, and missions often require their converts to adopt a different dress, for the individuals' commitment to a new code requires some outward and visible sign. The Freetown companies lack any special means of identifying their members except for the insistence upon cleanliness and smart clothing which is a means of distinguishing social strata in the general tribal population. Social strata are among the most important of the new urban classes of persons, and it is instructive
to examine status symbols in this light. When an immigrant adopts the style of clothing distinctive of educated Africans this is construed as a claim on his part to be treated as an educated man: that he is prepared to observe the obligations of members of this class and expects in return their rights. In assuming the symbols which denote this status he is implicitly contracting to perform its duties. Of course, his claim may not succeed and his use of these symbols of higher status be regarded as illegitimate, but the issue may not have to be faced openly because in urban areas symbols of status are always changing. Whenever a new class of persons emerges they try to differentiate themselves from the class from which they came by the adoption of particular symbols; expensive possessions may be particularly effective for this purpose if members of the new class have a higher income, but if other people succeed in buying similar articles then the former class will seek new ways of symbolizing their distinctiveness.

The significance in African culture of items borrowed from the European way of life would appear to be less evident in the Central African situation than it is in the West. Godfrey Wilson maintained that 'Africans cannot but wish to gain the respect . . . of the Europeans, whose general social superiority is always before them'.4 Clyde Mitchell argues similarly that 'the prestige system in urban areas uses “civilization” or “the European way of life” as a standard or scale'.5 He does not suggest that the Africans cultivate any distinctive values of their own, as might be anticipated—especially in view of the political tension. In defence of this presentation it might be held that the observance of traditional norms contributes to a man’s esteem but is irrelevant to his prestige. He may be esteemed as a very competent boss boy but his position on the scale of prestige is that of his occupation and all boss boys rank alike.6 Similarly, he may be esteemed for his individual qualities but be allocated a position on the prestige scale according as he approximates to the ideal of a black European. It may be doubted, however, whether the association between prestige and Europeanization is not more apparent than real. To be highly regarded, an African needs to be educated and

to draw a salary large enough for him to purchase fine clothing and other objects of prestige—as Mitchell says. But this is not because education and fine clothing are European. It is because of the significance Africans have placed upon them. In being transferred from one culture to another the items borrowed undergo a subtle transformation. The same artefact may be a symbol in two cultures, but it cannot symbolize exactly the same things in them both because the two worlds of experience differ.

Two distinctive problems may be confused in discussion of this kind; why some things are borrowed rather than others; and why individuals strive after particular prestige symbols. The second problem is a psychological one and is to be explained in terms of motivations; the 'reference group' concept is only one step on the way. An African may seek a European qualification to demonstrate his abilities to Europeans or to Africans or both; or he may wish to convince his fellows that he is fitted to be their leader because he can fight Europeans with their own weapons. Once a group has adopted new norms the question of where they come from is irrelevant to the explanation of individual attempts to live up to them—just as a London woman's desire to dress according to fashion is not affected by whether the fashions come from Paris or Rome.

Which cultural features are borrowed depends upon the degree and nature of the contact. Initially, it often appears as if the subordinate group seeks to discover the secret of their conquerors' power and copies the artefacts and customs that appear to them most closely associated with this power. Even so, this is not pure imitation; these things are copied because of what they signify in African experience. At a much later stage when colonies are seeking independence there is an avoidance of European practices and a revival of traditional lore and customs. In the intermediate stages, two aspects of institutional change deserve attention. In the first place, the acceptance of new values imported by Europeans, especially those relating to material progress, entails the disruption of the old order. People move to the towns, seek education and technical skills, etc. These changes entail the restructuring of one social relationship after another.
If education is to be respected, the schoolmaster must be recognized as possessing special rights and obligations and be accorded prestige. Traditional criteria of authority, rank, and duty must give way to demands deriving from radically new expectations. In the second place, however, when rearranging their system of relations Africans may come back to European culture to borrow certain items as patterns for their new institutions, or as means of differentiation: a large motor-car becomes a better symbol of high status than a bevy of wives. European titles are taken over by the companies where there are no African titles that have the connotations they desire. In these cases cultural borrowing is a consequence, not a cause, of the restructuring of relationships. Frequently, the adoption of European ways appears to be no more than play-acting on the Africans' part or a satire upon European life as they see it. Yet the early stages of the borrowing process are bound to appear like this, for in them the Africans are experimenting with the European customs in question, getting the feel of them, and making them into something of their own. The representations of minor European ceremonials like the conduct of meetings,\(^7\) also serve as a form of socialization by training Africans in skills which may be of use to them in the newly emerging forms of social organization.

These reflections are prompted by the study of voluntary associations, but if they are valid they should be more widely applicable. The restructuring of relations involved in family parasitism and the growing independence of women can be treated as a response to changed material circumstances, but this is only a beginning. The action of young educated men in resisting the importunities of kinsmen, and of women in asserting their independence, cannot be explained as simply responses to their material interests (though Marxists would argue that they are conditioned by their membership in a particular class and that the class so responds). They reject certain of their traditional obligations, thereby losing rights associated with them. They claim certain new rights and have to recognize new obligations in consequence. European activities may entail changes in the

\(^7\) Cf. Valdo Pons's paper in this volume.
African social structure but the mere presence of Europeans or other groups can accelerate change by demonstrating alternative social arrangements. Western expressions of economic individualism and women's rights may be echoed and utilized in establishing new customary relations, but they have no force of their own.

CONCLUSION

This essay has been exploratory and tentative in character. It stems from dissatisfaction with social theories starting from concepts of 'society' and 'group', which, apart from other weaknesses, provide no suitable framework for the detailed study of social change. The possibility has been indicated of an alternative approach starting from the concept of the person, and viewing social relations in terms of a network of rights and obligations. From this standpoint, social change occurs only when new norms arise as to the rights and obligations of a relationship. These norms can never be entirely new as they have to be fashioned out of ideas and practices with which the participants are familiar. While Africans often appear to imitate European ways, their cultural borrowing is in fact selective and the items taken over acquire a different significance in African culture.

Voluntary associations are of interest in showing how in the urban situation new standards of obligation and new relationships are established once satisfactory forms of organization are discovered. In a West African city like Freetown rights and obligations are increasingly allocated upon a contractual basis instead of being ascribed by the traditional kinship structure: a young man may acquire the benefits of company membership by the contract of membership. Anyone who can fulfil the obligations of a higher position in the system of stratification can claim the rights of this status, and in his assuming the symbols which are held to denote the status, he is implicitly contracting to perform its duties.
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African Prophets

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African Prophets

Considerable attention has in recent years been paid to new religious movements in Africa and their possible political significance. There has been a tendency to stress the extent to which such movements may serve as vehicles for the expression of political protest and to neglect the question of religious appeal. In fact, much of the evidence fits more closely Max Weber’s conclusion that ‘however incisive the social influences, economically and politically determined, may have been upon a religious ethic in a particular case, it receives its stamp primarily from religious sources, and, first of all, from the content of its annunciation and promise’. Proceeding from an examination of one of the more instructive cases, this essay will explore some of the interrelations between political and religious factors in the growth of prophetic cults.

Kimbangu: the African Saviour

On 18 March 1921, a Mukongo named Simon Kimbangu was, so he said, ‘touched by the grace of God’. He claimed an ability to cure the sick and raise the dead. Disposed either to believe such claims or to give them a trial, people came flocking to him. Some were cured and so his fame spread. Simon Kimbangu had been a catechist of the English Baptist Mission in the Belgian Congo and was, according to reliable accounts, a diligent and enthusiastic student of the Bible. He read his Bible and preached it to his followers, presenting himself as a messenger of God.

The news that the despised blacks now had a prophet of their own swept over the land like a tidal wave. As economic conditions at the time were unfavourable, the people were even more willing to listen than they might otherwise have been. At first they believed that Kimbangu had put himself at the head of a Protestant movement, so they massed in the Protestant churches both in the Belgian Congo and in French Equatorial Africa. Then the tide turned and the churches were emptied. Everyone rallied to the prophet. One Protestant

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hospital which had been badly overcrowded emptied completely. Even Catholic churches lost their congregations. Natives employed by local firms left their jobs to take part in pilgrimages to Kimbangu’s village, Nkamba, which his adherents renamed Jerusalem.

The colonial administration was quickly informed of these developments and was soon under pressure from commercial interests to take repressive action. But the local administrator was not convinced that this was any more than a religious movement. There seemed no good grounds for arresting the prophet or for interfering with the religious liberties of the people. On 11 May he went to see Kimbangu, but the latter refused to talk with him, saying that God had commanded them to sing, dance and read the Bible without interruption for ten days and ten nights. That he was able to ignore the administrator’s advances contributed considerably to Kimbangu’s prestige. ‘We have found the God of the blacks’, the Africans said and came to him in ever greater numbers, until he may have had some 10,000 followers. To help him with his burgeoning movement, Kimbangu selected a group of apostles from among his adherents and sent them out to preach the word. The demand for leaders was so great, and Kimbangu’s control so weak that soon many self-appointed prophets built up local followings. The movement started to acquire a nationalistic and anti-European aspect, so, after attempting to mediate through one of the missions, the Government decided to intervene. On 26 June, Kimbangu was arrested in Nkamba but later that day he escaped and went into hiding. To have evaded the Belgian soldiery increased his reputation further. More and more workers fled from their employment on the railway and in European enterprises; the economic life of the whole region was seriously disorganised.

Accounts differ as to how Kimbangu was eventually caught. According to one version he was betrayed by the African catechist of a Catholic mission. According to some African informants, Kimbangu returned voluntarily to Nkamba emulating the surrender of Jesus to the Temple. At all events, he was arrested on either 14 or 15 September 1921, and brought to trial immediately. The movement had not been responsible for any violation of the peace; nor had it been directly responsible for the death of any person. The judgment of the court on 16 October did not hold him guilty of any specific offence, but decided that in as much as Kimbangu had disturbed the native population, had spread false religious notions among the natives and instigated them against the established powers, had posed as the saviour of the blacks, and had created a state of affairs in which anti-white sentiment was rapidly increasing, he should be sentenced to death and his eleven principal followers to life imprisonment. Appeals were made to the King on Kimbangu’s behalf. The local colonists submitted a petition urging his immediate execution. However, in the following month his sentence was remitted to life imprisonment and Kimbangu was banished to Elizabethville gaol in Katanga.
At the trial one of the defendants, according to a newspaper account, had the impudence to question the judge himself and ask him why the Africans were forbidden to have their God, their prophet and their Bible, seeing that the whites had theirs. The judge was so indignant at such a question that he suspended the sitting. This incident demonstrates very well the way the Kimbangist movement must have developed. Kimbangu himself was a relatively modest man with no delusions of grandeur but his followers wanted him to be something more and his lieutenants doubtless helped build up myths of his near-divinity. The people frankly regarded Kimbangu as their Jesus and awaited his second coming which was to usher in the millennium. The movement had to go underground before any central organisation or agreed doctrine had been established. Minor prophets maintained clandestine followings in many parts of the lower Congo, preaching a mixture of evangelical Christianity, millenarian hope and traditional belief. At times Kimbangist beliefs found legal expression in new cult movements such as the Mission des Noirs, which borrowed heavily from the Salvation Army and in whose creed Kimbangu becomes the ‘Saviour and King of the Blacks’, a part of the person of Christ. ‘God’, they say, ‘has not wished that we should hear his word without our being tested. He has sent us Simon Kimbangu who is for us the Moses of the Jews, the Christ of the strangers, and the Mohammed of the Arabs’.

Notice that Kimbangu was at liberty as a prophet only from 18 March to 14 September—a period of less than six months, half of which he had to spend in hiding. Notice that he spent the remaining thirty years of his life in Elizabethville gaol, where he worked as a cook, completely out of contact with his followers and doing nothing further to support the image of himself as a national or religious leader. Yet, despite this, his fame extended. The Belgian authorities had, from 1921 well into the 1950s, to exile from their home districts appreciable numbers of religious enthusiasts many of whom were identified in some degree with Kimbangu.

At the end of 1958 about 60,000 people belonged to this illegal organisation by then known as the ‘Church of Jesus Christ on Earth according to Simon Kimbangu’. After the riots of January 1959, many people abandoned the Catholic and Protestant churches for the Kimbangists whose numbers rose to about 100,000. Then in December of that year, less than six months before the Congo became independent, the Belgians lifted their ban on the movement. It is interesting to note in passing that during the riots many people believed that Kimbangu had returned in the flesh. Once legalised, the church had Kimbangu’s remains brought to Leopoldville and re-interred in April 1960, at a ceremony patronised by leading political figures—for Kimbangism was playing an open political role allied to Abako, the Bakongo nationalist party.

During the time it was proscribed the Kimbangist movement seems
to have split: on the one hand there were many local cults which venerated the prophet’s name but which were under the control of their own leaders; on the other hand, a group led by Kimbangu’s sons and mother began, in the latter half of the 1950s, to organise a church on more orthodox lines and to seek European approval. The latter group, the ‘Church of Jesus Christ on Earth according to Simon Kimbangu’, led by the third of the prophet’s sons, resembles the Protestant churches in belief and practice except that its members believe Kimbangu to have been the messenger of Jesus Christ sent to the blacks, and that one day he will return again. The prophet’s charisma has been routinised, the element of political protest has been shed and though the beliefs of the members vary greatly the theology disseminated by the leading group resembles that of the Protestant missions in everything except the view of their founder. He, be it noted, is not claimed as the equal of Christ but is said to be the other comforter whom Christ said he would send later.6

Some other Movements

No other African movement reflects quite so well as Kimbangism the way political sentiment may receive expression in religious guise, but there have been a host of comparable movements which have shown similar features. The Amicalist movement in the neighbouring French Congo is a case in point. Its founder, André Matswa, was brought back from Paris to Brazzaville to stand trial for irregularities in the conduct of a society formed to aid Africans in distress but which was acquiring a political character. He was banished and later died in a prison in 1942. Many followers refused to believe that he was dead and his name was put up, successfully, for election to the legislative assembly in 1947. A popular view was that ‘the whites may perhaps have killed him, but he has risen again, and one day he will return to power and majesty to drive away the whites and their black troops’. Though the movement had started as a secular one, its leader had become Jéssus Matswa and a messiah in the minds of his fellow tribesmen. Andersson, in his admirable book on messianic movements in the lower Congo, shows that they date back to the early 18th century and that they have been both numerous and influential. Van Wing adds the names of more such cults to the list, such as Mvungism, Tonsi, Les Dieudonné and Tokism; it is clear that the roll call for the lower Congo is lengthy but by no means complete.

Further inland and over the Rhodesian border, the Watch Tower movement, known as Kitawala, has been very active among some tribes and appears to have had political content at times. In Northern Rhodesia in the middle 1950s there was alarm over what was known as the ‘Alice Movement’. Two years previously a Bemba woman, Alice Lenshina Mulenga, had a revelation from the Almighty, who
instructed her to preach. She reported her vision to the local Presbyterian mission and, without any encouragement from them, started baptising, laying hands on the sick, and exhorting Africans to lead a life according to biblical teaching. She, too, has been a modest leader, in no way anti-European, but the movement has been identified in the eyes of many whites and Africans, with the nationalist cause. Mission schools have in some places been emptied as a result of the attraction she has for her fellow Africans. Earlier this century an independent church founded by a Nyasaland African, John Chilembwe, brought him into increasing opposition to the Europeans and resulted in the rising of 1915; this particular revolt and its antecedents have been the subject of an especially detailed analysis. In other parts of the continent, in the Union of South Africa, Uganda, Ivory Coast, Nigeria, etc., independent churches have attracted the attention of scholars because of the light they throw upon racial and cultural contacts. Though each of these movements has its own character, it is remarkable how some features are recapitulated and how many common themes serve to unite them.

It has been pointed out by many commentators that movements of this kind serve as a medium for the expression of social protest, both the inarticulate protest of people subject to a new order they cannot understand or master, and the more clear cut opposition of peoples prevented from expressing themselves in direct political action. On these lines it has been claimed that there is an association between the large-scale messianic movements of the Kimbangu type, which can spread like a bush fire, and the relative oppressiveness of a colonial social order in which the gulf between Africans and Europeans seems unbridgeable. This general thesis obviously contains an important element of truth but it is subject to many limitations. The extent to which any religious movement expresses protest varies from time to time and one cannot easily be compared with another. To take a crucial example, it has been demonstrated that the Kikuyu independent schools in Kenya—which had links with independent churches—did not produce any higher proportion of Mau Mau adherents than those under mission management. At times it is impossible to demonstrate that the element of protest is of any significance at all.

Very soon the student of these movements is brought face to face with the problem that faces anyone concerned with the sociology of religion: the explanation of faith. At first there was little pressure to treat prophet movements or Cargo cults as religious phenomena meriting the same respect as the observer might accord a group representing a major world religion. But this is no longer the case. The problem has been pointed up in the case of Kimbangism by Jules Chomé, a European lawyer of left-wing tendencies, whose book, La Passion de Simon Kimbangu, is written so as to emphasise the similarities between the life of Kimbangu and that of Jesus: curing the
sick, appointing disciples, running foul of the established religious authorities, becoming a nuisance to the colonial administration, being betrayed, arrested, tried and condemned. The author claims, in effect, that the one story is as credible as the other.

A similar lesson is taught by a very different volume, the study *East African Rebels*, by F. B. Welborn, a Protestant chaplain at the University College of East Africa. Other writers have been inclined to draw attention to ways in which separatist movements embody elements of traditional practice, to show for example, how a prophet may play a part similar to that of the diviner in traditional custom, and in this way they have implied that the new movements remain partly pagan and therefore less worthy. Welborn, however, is prepared to recognise that much which Westerners regard as belonging to Christian practice is pagan in origin and that a more serious attempt will have to be made to separate what are necessary requirements of faith from what are only elements of Western culture. To take a rather different illustration, it is probable that most people of any religion would find it strange to participate in a service planned according to their own faith but arranged for deaf and dumb people. To strip away the cultural idiom of religious expression and concentrate upon the core of belief would be quite impossible for most believers. Building upon the work of earlier missionary authors, Welborn is able to go beyond them and face up to the argument of East African independent churches that female circumcision and polygamy are simply African customs and no more opposed to Christian belief than male circumcision or the toleration of involuntary spinsterhood. The evaluation of the ethic of these movements from a theological standpoint must be an agonising task; but independently of this there is a need for sociological examination. The African peasant leaves no personal documents about how the new changes affect him and the best evidence available about the social and psychological concomitants of change is often that implicit in the new institutions characteristic of the situation. The range of institutional innovation is not so very great and religious organisations are in many ways as important an indicator of change as the new voluntary associations or political institutions.

*Kimbangu’s Relation to the Social Order*

A striking feature of many new cults is that religious leaders who by conventional standards were undistinguished figures and whose period of activity was so very short, should have been judged so important by their contemporaries and by later generations. Kimbangu, who played the role of prophet for six months out of a life of about sixty-two years, is regarded as the messiah of his people, the door through which the black race may enter heaven. According to others, the Kingdom will come when André Matswa returns to judge the missions. Of Chilembwe, we are told, ‘many Africans deny that he
is dead. To the simple, he is a liberator who will come again'. To the enlightened he is a hero. The important thing about these leaders seems not to be what they were but what they symbolised.

There is a parallel here with the legend of the honourable robber as it developed in Europe in early modern times. One of the best examples of this legend is the figure of Robin Hood. Nothing certain is known about him but there is no reason for thinking that as an outlaw he will have been a particularly estimable sort of person. He was popularly believed to have robbed the rich to give to the poor and, like the highwaymen of a later age, evoked wide sympathy amongst the ordinary folk; indeed Robin Hood has been called the people's ideal, as King Arthur is that of the upper classes. Is it too far fetched to wonder if Hood represented the old English values denied by the Norman occupation, or if the legend asserts the legitimacy of the old order in opposition to the new one of the invading power? Certainly there is an element of this in Kimbangu's success: he remains a historical figure rather than a legend, but what he symbolised seems to have been more important than any charisma he may have possessed. A French writer has concluded that the African messiah is in the first place the man who can bring back the lands where there will be no more servitude. The promised land will come from the ancestors; the land in which, in Bakongo territory, the crowned chief holds sway as the defender of its integrity and the intermediary between the men of the lineage and the community of ancestors.

The issue is not a simple one, for Kimbangu did not stand for a return to pre-colonial beliefs, but for a mixture of some of those beliefs with biblical doctrines. Father Van Wing states that very early in his prophetic career, Kimbangu promulgated three laws: the destruction of fetishes; the abandonment of the erotic ngoma dances; the banning of polygamy. Then, later on, three more. When interviewed late in life, Kimbangu denied responsibility for the first two of the second edicts, namely, that the people should not pay tax or plant any more manioc, and perhaps they are to be attributed to the growing power of his new lieutenants. The last law was that they should clean the graveyards and paths leading to them, for the ancestors were going to return the moment the whites had left the country. They would bring everything the heart could desire and the people would live with them in abundance and peace. By the perfect cleaning of the graveyards and the paths, the people could show the ancestors that they were anxious to have them back.

While considerable evidence has been assembled about elements in the thought of the prophetic leaders there is little information on their actual teaching or on the important question of the beliefs and motivations of their followers. The popular understanding of the new doctrines was probably much less radical and it should be noted
that many Protestant missionaries found much good in the movements, seeing in them traces of Christian revival. For many of Kimbangu’s followers, his movement must have represented a return to a purified practice of the ancestral cult supplemented by lessons learned from the white man’s Bible. In traditional life, the ancestral cult was the source and sanction of morality in dealings between kinsfolk and the epitome of all that was good in human life. But, while each clan had its own ancestors responsible just for their own descendants, the Kimbangists held their ancestors in common.14

Why should they have destroyed the fetishes? This was Kimbangu’s first command and it was obeyed with startling fidelity for many miles by people who had never met the prophet. Van Wing’s view is that the ancestral cult was inadequate to protect the Bakongo from witchcraft accusations even from fellow clansmen and that the minkisi fetishes were a supplementary defence that frequently turned upon themselves and only increased people’s anxieties. Kimbangu banished the fetishes which the population themselves were periodically apt to discard as ineffective, and in their place he put baptism. In this way, according to Van Wing, he split clans into the elect and the damned; his adherents thought in terms of ‘us, the saved, good people’ and ‘the others, the damned, witches, whites’.

Most authorities are convinced that the fear of witchcraft was a potent factor in the spread of the prophetic movements. In pre-colonial times the Bakongo had protected themselves with various devices for detecting witches, who could then be subjected to ordeal by poison. But the administration had outlawed these practices leaving the people defenceless against their worst enemies. The leaders were afraid that their clans and nation would die out; from their point of view the colonial laws against the smelling out of witches were but a subtle policy of genocide. When, in 1935, the Salvation Army started preaching in the Congo, two ideas got about. First, that the ‘S’ in the ‘AS’ on their collars signified ‘Simon’ and they were the emissaries of Kimbangu himself. Second, anyone who shook hands with a Salvation Army man or stood beneath their banner, and survived, was innocent of witchcraft. The fantastic crowds that flocked to Salvation Army meetings were convincing testimony to the concern with witchcraft anxieties.

In discussing traditional beliefs it is necessary to emphasise how greatly the social context of traditional African religion differs from that of the post-Reformation West. Traditional religion was not a separate category of thought. It penetrated every aspect of everyday life and could only with difficulty be considered apart from the mundane round. The distinctions between politics and religion, between the sphere of government and of the individual conscience—which Westerners take for granted—are in fact relatively late developments. One consequence of this involvement of traditional religion in all aspects of social life is what has been called its ‘totalitarian’ character:
because it is so little differentiated, the ideas of causality which it supports cannot be tested or disproved within this universe of meaning. The first step necessary to the introduction of secular political activity is therefore a change in popular cosmology.

The Colonial Situation

In the colonial situations that have thrown up the more politically inclined prophetic movements, a similar pattern of subordination has obtained equally in the Africans' relations with European administrators, merchants and missionaries. These aspects of European power are easily identified with one another. The Congolese said that in the crisis of the early 1930s all companies except three were forced to leave the country; the only ones to survive were the State, the Catholic Church, and the Protestant Mission. Yet the identification of the three does not depend so much upon African perceptions as on the logic of the situation itself, in particular upon the ties of common interest which forced state, merchants, and missions to co-ordinate their policies. Only in the latest phases of colonial rule have cross-cutting ties developed such that the missions have sided with their African congregations against the Government or the African bourgeoisie has lined up with expatriate firms.

In the early phases, opposition to any one of the European institutions rapidly became opposition to the others, frequently in spite of the attempts of the original leader to confine the struggle to the initial area of disagreement. This is clearly shown in Kimbangu's case. When he was asked if they should stop worshipping with the Europeans, Kimbangu answered them with an allegory:

We are like wives to our Whites ... for they have come here and have given us the Gospel; they suffered many hardships in order to come to us; they have bought us for a great price, and so they are wedded to us. If we leave them, they will be sorely afflicted. Therefore, you should not break away from your Whites.

He also warned them to give to Caesar the things that were Caesar's, and to pay their taxes. Kimbangu's effort to confine the conflict to the question of increased ecclesiastical flexibility was in vain. Popular discontent over the changes that had occurred in recent years could find no outlet and was easily displaced into the prophet's movement. A group of radically minded Africans seem to have used Kimbangu's doctrines and works for their own ends so that the movement was given an anti-European character and propaganda for the establishment of a native church was disseminated. When they found that this sort of appeal was well received, Kimbangu's lieutenants probably responded to what the people wanted. Then with the arrest of the prophet and the vicious reaction of the whites culminating in the unmerited sentence, the movement was bound to become more nationalistic.
Andersson suggests that the climate of native opinion at the time of the arrest is reflected in a newspaper interview with an African who said:

Our messenger from God is now a prisoner, but he won't stay long in your hands, for if he doesn't himself decide to leave we will seize him ourselves... you had Jesus who was sold for forty [sic] pieces of silver by one of his brothers; he was killed, but he went to heaven just the same and though he is no longer here, you've made a pope and priests; he has been replaced millions of times. Well, it's the same here. If Kibango goes we'll have others to take his place.

It does not seem unreasonable to claim that in such an atmosphere Africans were led, as Chomé claims, to identify the realisation of the religious ideal with the termination of their political and economic subordination.\textsuperscript{17} Certainly, local groups of Kimbanguist persuasion demonstrated clearly anti-Government and anti-European sentiment on many occasions in the 1920s. But recently this has not been the case. Several observers have suggested that even though some of these religious movements represent a rejection of white superordination more clearly than other popular institutions, the members themselves are extremely well disposed towards any European who approaches them on an equal footing; indeed, they often seem more friendly than comparable groups.\textsuperscript{18}

If opposition to European rule is to find institutional expression under a paternalist colonial order, it is more likely to appear in the ecclesiastical sphere than any other. It is easier to organise a charismatic movement centering upon the revelations of a single leader, than a bureaucratic political party acting on majority decisions. It is also more difficult for a colonial regime to feel justified in suppressing a movement which seems basically to belong in the sphere of their subjects’ private concerns. Yet there seem to be more fundamental factors on the cultural and intellectual planes which explain the priority of changes in the religious sphere. Religious beliefs provide an answer to the question all people ask: ‘how did we get this way’? For colonial peoples this can be an acute problem: why should the Europeans be so powerful? What had they done to deserve the machines and other goods that outclassed anything the Africans had ever conceived of? Because, in traditional African belief the spirit world is usually regarded as controlling human fortune, it was logical for the Africans to suspect that the secret of the white man’s power lay in his religion. They had received their messiah. If only the Africans were to have theirs too, they would soon be on an equal footing with the whites. Then again, Africans at this stage cannot adopt the impersonal scientific conception of causality because their way of life does not support such a conception in the way that an industrial culture does. The new ideas that would lead people in this direction had themselves to be simple at first: the believer’s interpretation of his
Bible served admirably as a means of encouraging the spread and development of new conceptions of the universe.

It would seem, therefore, that these prophetic movements, based though they were on a personal faith, had the paradoxical effect of playing a secularising part in the development of African thought. They helped break the old cosmology by answering it in terms of a new religion some of which was not difficult for the villager to grasp. They assisted the first step in the politicisation of local groupings by presenting religion as a personal affair separate from the things that belonged to Caesar, and in this way differentiating the political sphere as an independent realm of activity. New religious movements have been most important—as Hodgkin concluded in his pioneering chapter— in the spread of many new ideas, not least the realisation that new ways could be found of combining against the colonialists. In regions where the administrators, merchants and missions were aligned, the colonial power perceived prophetic cults as posing a threat to their dominance but they were rarely more than momentarily alarmed by them and when independence came it was the fruit of secular struggle. It has been argued that both the messianic movements and the independent churches of the South African type transcend village and tribal particularism, providing a broader basis for political action, but the evidence for such a conclusion is slender; many of the African movements have remained either predominantly of a single tribe or have been side-tracked once secular politics have emerged.

**Rural and Urban Prophetic Groups**

Max Weber held that the cults of the dominant social groups tend to emphasise being rather than becoming: because the rich man wishes to be assured that he deserves his good fortune, his religious institutions are inclined to stress the present world and their members' rights and responsibilities in it. The cults of subordinate groups help their members come to terms with their position by developing a theodicy of suffering; they rehearse the vanities of this world and the rewards of the next. This formulation seems inapplicable to traditional African beliefs but it is very relevant to an examination of the new movements. The Kimbangist movement started looking towards a time of justice in this world; the people reacted against racial subordination and sought earthly improvement. Yet it is doubtful how articulate such ideas ever became except in some statements of Simon-Pierre Mpadi of the 'Mission des Noirs'. The notion that the social status system of this world will be reversed in the next emerges much more clearly in the independent churches of South Africa and the urban areas of the West Coast. In West Africa their supporters are almost all from the lower classes and in some places are mostly lapsed members of orthodox churches. Their moral code is usually crudely puritanical, reviving many of the prohibitions of Leviticus, and their doctrine stresses the need for salvation. These churches seem
to emphasise heavenly recompense on account not of racial but of class subordination, rather like Methodism in early nineteenth-century England. They reject the existing social order not in favour of some other, but because any human arrangements are transient: the only legitimate order is that of heaven. In strict logic the doctrine of such sects is that, without Grace, man is inescapably evil so that political action is of no avail. In practice, their members are probably as much or as little involved in politics as other people of the same socio-economic level.

In South Africa the form taken by the independent churches is greatly influenced by the pattern of racial discrimination dictated by the whites. But—as Weber emphasised in the passage quoted at the beginning of this essay—that is not to say that the motivation of the individuals who join these churches is consciously or unconsciously political. Sundkler states explicitly 'the politically awake and active, if still subscribing to “Christianity” at all, are found in other Churches, and not among “the Native Separatists”.' In South Africa, political opposition to the whites is sufficiently self-conscious to dispense with any ecclesiastical cloak. It is also important to recognise that all religious institutions, and especially these new ones, serve many functions and that little systematic information is available on the part played by independent churches within the African community. Apparently the South African urban churches appeal more to women than men, offer appreciable material assistance to members in distress, and possibly serve as a channel of upward social mobility. Then Dr. Jean Rouch of the Musée de l’Homme has made a remarkable film called *les maîtres fous*, in which he shows how immigrant workers from the Upper Volta who are not fully adjusted to life in urban Accra, go out at the weekends to a centre where they enter into possession states; this apparently helps their adjustment the rest of the time. These psychological functions—even though rarely so striking as in the cult Rouch discovered—are probably important for many adherents of the African movements, as they also seem to be for members of some of the more demonstrative European and American sects.

Equally it is necessary to give separate attention to the use of religious forms and media by secular movements. Mau Mau utilised hymns and crypto-creeds to build up mass support and to provide an unexceptionable cover for political activity. In a somewhat different fashion, the National Church of Nigeria and the Cameroons—with its prayers to the God of Africa, its hymns to freedom and its litany beseeching deliverance from imperialism—has functioned, to borrow Hodgkin’s words, as ‘a kind of ecclesiastical instrument of radical nationalism in eastern Nigeria’. Unless the new African Governments exercise rigid control over all forms of political expression, it is improbable that this utilisation of religious forms will be
much developed; it is more likely that religious imagery will be employed to bolster the claims of the political party in power.

Conclusion

This essay has suggested that while prophetic movements in Africa may undoubtedly serve political functions these are not so immediate as some writers have implied; that there are important circumstantial variations between the different movements which make it impossible to consider them as manifestations of a single type; and that other sociological aspects of the movements have been neglected. They cannot be adequately understood if the student does not at some point view them as popular attempts to come to terms with new and troubling situations: to provide moral justifications for the new kind of life that is demanded. The importance attributed to the leaders may derive less from any charismatic authority than from the values they symbolise in the context of the social order. In so far as these prophetic movements reflect racial sentiment this is incidental and temporary. Observers have often underestimated the extent to which a protesting people — be they Nigerian or Congolese — can be opposed to British or Belgian rule without being against the British or Belgian people. Yet the difficulty of adjusting to a rapidly changing scene full of contradictory elements often precipitates moments of unexpected violence. The African prophetic movements have served as important agents in differentiating the spheres of religion and politics; in freeing the religious element in Christianity from its association with colonial subordination; and in diffusing new ideas through the countryside. But, though they may at first reassert the old order, the likely course of development, once secular political activity has been established, will follow the lines of national or class pressures. In the later stages these prophetic cults may indeed not be stimuli to political activity but substitutes or sublimations of it.

References

3. Efraim Andersson, Messianic Popular Movements in the Lower Congo, Studia Ethnographica Upsaliensia XIV, Upsala, 1958, p. 66. This contains the most complete and authoritative study available of Kimbanguism, and the writer has drawn upon it at many points. The following more recent publications should also be consulted in addition to Chomé’s: Charles-André Gili, Kimbangu, fondateur d’Église, Brussels, 1960; Paul Raymaeckers, ‘L’Église de Jesus Christ sur terre par le prophète Simon Kimbangu’ in Zaire, XIII, 1959, pp. 677–756; J. Van Wing, ‘Le Kibangisme vu par un témoin’, Zaire, XII, p. 563–618. The last four works are summarised in Harold W. Felderbru’s ‘Kimbanguism: Prophetic Christianity in the Congo’, Practical Anthropology, 9, 1962, pp. 157–178.


9 Shepperson and Price, op. cit., p. 415.

10 Yrjö Hirn, Goda Vildar och Adla Rövare, Helsingfors, 1941. E. J. Hobsbawm refers to the parallel in his Primitive Rebels, Manchester, 1959, but does not develop it.


12 Van Wing op. cit., p. 572. Note the striking similarity with Cargo cult beliefs.

13 Köbben, op. cit., p. 137. The authority for this statement is uncertain. Georges Balandier in Sociologie Actuelle de l’Afrique Noire, Paris, 1953, p. 469, states this was the practice of a Matswanist church led by Nganga E.

14 Andersson, op. cit. p. 61.

15 Ibid., pp. 235–8.

16 Choma, op. cit., p. 98.

17 Choma, op. cit., p. 98.


22 Sundkler, op. cit., p. 305.


In South Africa independent Bantu churches have proliferated as a reaction to the segregation in the European churches and the colour bar in all spheres of social life.\(^1\) In southern Nigeria, where resentment of British rule has often reached an intensity greater than in any other colony, many separatist churches have been established out of the desire for independence from European leadership.\(^2\) My purpose here is to draw attention to a new phenomenon: the successful missionary activity of a Nigerian separatist church in Sierra Leone—long the stronghold of the Church Missionary Society, where European ideals have gained most ready acceptance and orthodox Christianity its most apparent success.\(^3\)

The church in question was founded by a Nigerian who was “called to the Evangelistic way on 17th May, 1925. Spiritually ordained and uplifted for the establishment of a sect of the people which shall be called ‘The Church of the Lord’.”\(^4\) He is now described as “His Grace, The Most Revd. Prophet Dr. —, Psy.D., Primate and Founder, Superintendent-General of the Church of the Lord”; he holds “the honorary Degree of Psychic Doctorate conferred upon him by the Spiritualists’ National Union, London, on 6th October, 1948.” From Ogere and Ibadan in 1940, his church has spread, establishing itself in Abeokuta, Elegbata, Sapele, Lagos and Kaduna (Nigeria); it is active in Sierra Leone and Liberia and is now trying to obtain a foothold in the Gold Coast. A list of “Our Men of Note” in 1950 mentioned, apart from the Primate, two Bishops, two Apostles, three Prophets and three Matrons (all wives of the Primate).

The Apostle of the See of Sierra Leone came from Nigeria to Freetown in 1947, where he preached and prayed unaffectedly in the streets. Acquiring a reputation for remarkable prophecies, he gathered

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\(^4\) Parrinder says this body seceded from another “Aladura” (‘prayer’) separatist church, *op. cit.*, p. 123. Cf. also pp. 119-122.
a group of ardent supporters: they opened first a solidly built chapel and then in 1952 a large church on the outskirts of the city which was dedicated by the visiting Primate. The Church of the Lord has attracted members mainly from among the already Christianized peoples: many Creoles attended in the early years and they still constitute the majority of the church’s members, but I was told that many had since fallen away and came only when they wished to be prayed for. The church has gained many members from among the Kru and Bassa tribes, among whom also no religion other than Christianity is practised. Some of the Temne, a partly Muslim partly pagan tribe who have turned a deaf ear to all orthodox Christian missionaries, for a time showed interest, but this has not been maintained. Within Sierra Leone, the Freetown church has sent missionaries up into the interior where it has six small groups at work, most of which are in the charge of an Acting Prophet: three Mende missionaries work among members of their own, partly Christianized, people. A West Indian (assimilated to Creole) has a congregation in the labour compounds of the mines in Temne country; he has some fifty converts, many won by his praying and fasting for them when sick, but they come mostly from among the Mende—"the Temne," he says, "are hard to convert," thus echoing the experience of orthodox missionaries for over a hundred years.

Sunday service in the new Freetown church begins a few minutes after 10 a.m. and lasts from three to four hours. The congregation remove their shoes at the door; the women all wear white dresses with red sashes and sit on the left-hand side of the church; some of the men wear white cassocks and they sit to the right. The chancel is raised a little above the nave and on a platform enclosed by brass rails is the altar with chairs on either side, and behind it a large window with panes of stained glass in several colours. In the centre of the altar is a brass candlestick holding seven candles. Music is provided by an ancient harmonium. The choir enter to a processional hymn and then another is sung as an introit with the congregation kneeling. A psalm follows. Before beginning the Forgiveness prayer the Prophet may ring a large handbell for dramatic effect (he may later use this bell to join in with the music). During this prayer the Prophet and his acolytes prostrate themselves completely, the former repeating the "seal" word "ajuba" at appropriate moments. The Thanksgiving prayer next expresses gratitude that they have for a

1 Descendants of the original Negro settlers and Africans liberated in Sierra Leone during the suppression of the slave trade. The Creoles have no tribal culture or tongue, and orthodox Christian churches under African ministers have long been among their most important social institutions. See A. T. Porter, "Religious Affiliation in Freetown, Sierra Leone," *Africa*, vol. XXIII (1953), No. 1.

2 They originate in Liberia but have a settlement of some 8,000 in Freetown.

3 This essay is based on material collected during a visit to Sierra Leone to undertake research into another sphere, which was carried out with the aid of a grant from the Nuffield Foundation. As I had little time for the study of religious institutions this essay makes no claim to completeness.
week avoided the punishments visited upon other people, who lie
racked with fever in hospital tossing from one side of the bed to the
other, have been cast into prison, or are suffering some other horrible
fate. These prayers are recited very rapidly but distinctly in the
language of Cranmer's prayer book and it is noteworthy that the
Creole patois, which is the lingua franca of Freetown, is never heard.
The first few hymns are chosen from the Hymnal Companion to the
Book of Common Prayer but, after as it were having done obeisance to
things European, the service becomes more African in character:
hymns are of the Moody and Sankey variety and are sung with gusto.
The drummers who have previously been but little in evidence take
command of the rhythm and the congregation swing their arms and
bodies to their beat, dancing a little in their pews. The Prophet then
calls for anyone who has seen visions during the past week to come
forward and relate them; they will be interpreted later on. On one of the
two occasions I was present the sermon was preached by a Nigerian
student from the local university college. He argued that the Church
of the Lord was their own church, unlike those churches in which
the Africans were always "assistant this and assistant that," but
never in charge. It was a true African interpretation of Christianity
and—paradoxically—they should send missionaries to spread their
church in Europe, Asia and America. The congregation should show
their faith by loving kindness to one another, and he quoted several
instances of "aladura" people standing out against corruption—the
besetting sin of West Africa to-day.

After the sermon those who wished to give thanks for any blessing
they had received came up to the front of the church: together they
jumped seven times, prostrated themselves seven times and seven
times shouted "Hallelujah, Hosanna, Hurrah!" Then the Prophet's
assistant, a well-educated Nigerian with the rank of Acting Prophet,
appealed for subscriptions to buy an organ and for various fittings
which the new church still lacked. The collection was taken by the
sidesmen. Then he went on to deliver messages ("The voice of
God said unto me...") to many members of the congregation: a
man was to receive promotion, a woman to guard against thieves,
another against sickness, etc. He assumed that I was an official and
promised me promotion, though I was to be careful I did not fall ill.
Next the Prophet interpreted visions: a lady elder, who had said
that during the Thanksgiving prayer she had seen a vision of two
altars surrounded by angels, was told that the two altars were those
of heaven and earth and that the vision indicated that God was close
to them. He then went on to announce further messages for people.
I was the first European to have visited their church and especial
blessings were called down upon me. I was told that I "love the

1 When I visited the church the Apostle of the See was absent in the Gold Coast. The Minister-
in-Charge was a Kruman, also an Acting Prophet, whom I have referred to in the text as "The
Prophet" to avoid confusion.
black" and mixed freely and equally with them, that I had been Africanized and would die in Africa. My parents were said to be religious people and though I thought of myself as only a minor official I should go far, be loved by my staff and obtain great power. I was also to receive good news from home. Shortly afterwards the service concluded.

At a special service and rally held in the church for one of the congregational societies a Muslim acted as chairman. He mentioned his different faith but pointed out that they all worshipped God and that there was no cause for antagonism between them—a view to which the audience heartily assented. Probably many would feel they had more in common with an African Muslim than with a European Christian. This meeting was less formal than the Sunday morning service: the Prophet came down from the chancel waving his wand and shouted "Halleloo!" to the congregation who chorused back "Halleloo!" A brass plate for the offering was placed on a chair and the Prophet called upon different groups among the congregation: a member of each group would strike up a short song or hymn of about two lines, the rhythm of which would be taken up by the drums; pewfuls of women would rise and dance chanting down the aisle to drop their pennies in the plate, meanwhile the Prophet and his acolytes twirled round and round and danced in their white robes. All sorts of groups were called upon, sections of the Ladies’ Praying Union, the Kru Circle, "Mr. So-and-So, family and well-wishers," so that some people came up as many as twelve times, perhaps taking twopence from the plate and dropping a threepenny-bit so that they could dance up twice again. Taking the collection in this way occupied one hour five minutes, but was greatly enjoyed.

The chapel in the middle of the city has been built on a plot adjoining the Prophet’s house. It occupies an important place in the life of the more devoted church members, being the centre for religious virtuosity and ecstatic worship. Daily services are held, so I was told, at 5 and 9 a.m., noon, 3, 6, and 9 p.m. The evening service is conducted on similar lines to that on Sundays but there is less formality and more drumming and singing. Consecrated water may be administered to those present. Church leaders say that these services keep members from seeking their entertainment at the cinema, at dances, or on the streets.

Next to the chapel are two enclosures for prayer, called "mercy grounds"; these are screened off by mats, are open to the sky and have a clean sanded floor permitting the person praying to prostrate himself and roll about. Candles may also be set in the sand. When I visited the chapel I was asked if I would like them to pray for me, the Prophet remarking that they had learned the power of prayer and had been able to help many people through it. After removing my shoes, I was led into the Prophet’s own praying enclosure and he and
two women stood round me; the Prophet held a metal wand believed to aid him in divination and the women held wooden crosses. They each recited a different prayer rapidly and simultaneously three times followed by three amens, three blessings and three more amens. The Prophet asked his assistants if they had received any visions: one woman said it had been revealed unto her that the next week I should receive a letter which would give me great pleasure and that I should have many children of which the majority would be female; I was soon to go away but might be promoted on my return. The Prophet himself announced that it had been revealed unto him that an officer was shortly to come out with whom I should have an important and personally beneficial conversation. The first woman then added that it had been further revealed that I had nearly died from sickness but the Lord had saved me; I was likely to fall ill again, beginning in the chest, and should be very careful. On each of these occasions the speakers said that I should particularly read certain psalms before going to bed; the numbers of these psalms were recited much too quickly for anyone to remember but I noticed with resignation that Psalm cxix was mentioned twice.

It is possible that there have been some slight changes of emphasis in transferring this church from the politically charged atmosphere of Nigeria to the more slowly pulsing Sierra Leone. The Nigerian students from the college who attend the church are among the more politically minded of their fellows and some of them fasted throughout Coronation week, abstaining from all salt and eating only fruit after sundown; this fast was carried out to aid the attainment of self-government for Nigeria in 1956. The great majority of the Freetown supporters are women and it appears as if they are drawn to the church because of the emotional satisfaction they gain from its freer ritual rather than as affording release for sentiment of a political character.1 But it may prove a sensitive thermometer showing the warmth of popular feeling in political matters. Some of the educated classes make fun of the Church of the Lord, but it draws members from among them also, whilst among illiterates it is not regarded as out of the ordinary. The congregation received a European as a worshipper with evident pleasure and there were no signs of suspicion or embarrassment. Europeans in Sierra Leone who are practising Christians and attend public worship are often popular on this account and the warmth of my reception tells its own story.

The Bible is held in great veneration and the enquirer is referred to it for justification (or "supports") of the church's practices. He who asks why the Holy Spirit should "cause the possessed ones sometimes to be ripped of part of their wearing apparels or cause

1 Cf. George Shepperson, "Ethiopianism and African Nationalism," Phylon, Vol. XIV (1953), No. 1. It may be noted that the trade union leader upon whom a subsequent commission of enquiry placed all the blame for the riots of February 1933 was a "Cross-bearer" in the Church of the Lord.
them to act unconsciously or cause them to shiver or make jerky and spasmodic movements of part of their bodies,” is referred to I Samuel xix. 24; Acts ii. 1-21. And so on. Many practices are said to be the result of commandments in the Bible, mostly in the Old Testament; members are prohibited from smoking, strong drink, the eating of blood, or the flesh of dogs, rodents, snakes and pigs. Women must not uncover their heads in the house of worship, and during menstruation may not enter (Lev. xv. 19) but remain at the doors of the church. Ministers of the church leave their hair uncut (Lev. xix. 27; Judges xiii. 3). “Dead bodies are not allowed in our Church as corpses are rank filth before God. There is no forgiveness in the grave . . . (Ezekiel xliii. 7 and 9; Lev. xvi. 1).” “We make no use of medical aid beside the Holy Water (Isaiah xliv)—hence the reference in the Thanksgiving prayer to the torments of those who lie in hospital. Members of the Ladies Praying Union take an oath of temperance, sobriety and chastity and have a most detailed programme for “sectional struggles” and prayer meetings. Provision is made for them to be escorted by the Ministers to the beach once every quarter for evening prayers; possibly such occasional outdoor ceremonies will become more popular and varied as they have done in Nigeria. One special feature of this church is the use of “seal words” revealed to prophets when in ecstasy—such as “Arrabballahhubbab Ajjubbab”—which have a special potency. The removal of shoes before entering upon holy ground is justified by biblical references, but it makes dancing much easier and there is perhaps a trace of Islamic influence. The church exhibits syncretic tendencies which may very well increase: some members cross themselves as the Catholics do, and at the benediction many members kneel with arms outstretched and hands open to catch the blessing from heaven, like the Muslims when reciting the first sura of the Koran. The Church of the Lord may also have been impelled to surpass the Muslim practice of praying five times a day, and in one of their Almanacs is the passage “Jesus (Adore His Holy Name) was born by poor earthly parents” which is surely in imitation of “Muhammed (On Whose Name Be Peace). . .” Islam permits a man four wives; the Church of the Lord permits him three, in order that he may at all times be able to satisfy his natural desires.

The services and practices of the Church of the Lord exhibit a degree of ritualism blended with free expression which clearly suits the congregation. Within the church, the ministers lay more emphasis upon morality than upon the articles of faith and I did not notice

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1 Strict modesty is maintained during any displays of possession.
2 A Muslim in Tenne country told me he was much impressed when he saw that the missionary-prophet removed his shoes and prostrated himself when praying, and called upon the One God for aid in all that he did.
3 There is a widely and firmly held belief in this part of Africa that it is injurious for a woman to have intercourse while she is pregnant or during the long period under which she suckles her child.
any of the salvationist doctrines that might have been expected. The church is undoubtedly a moral force in the lives of its members: they support one another in prayer and their lapses from rectitude are liable to be published in somebody's vision. In this way some of the social mechanisms of the African village are recreated in the town. The church also claims that "the Holy Spirit now procures immediate and permanent healing of diseases, especially the long-ranging and ever fatal disease of witchcraft, the treatment of which European medical specialists are still ignorant of." The organizational hierarchy is very complex, providing a multitude of offices and titles and giving members the opportunity of exercising leadership and winning status. The manner of worship offers a socially approved outlet for the energetic emotionalism that is often frustrated in the town. Members could not be expected to absorb doctrinal instruction very rapidly even if the ministers competent to give it, and thus there is perhaps a tendency towards Arianism. The name of Jesus is constantly invoked. Intellectual obstacles are avoided by resort to direct emotional experience, but visions are interpreted by the prophets on Biblical lines. If the prophecies are all like those delivered to me, there is every chance that members may think them validated by after events.

The catechism of separatist churches may have its analogy in the tactics which Islam has used in its rapid advance to the West African coast. The Muslim convert is drawn in gradually, he is not expected to understand the tenets of Islam but only to observe its outward practices; there is no sharp break between his old life and his new one, and as pagan beliefs come to appear more and more impossible to the town-dweller so he becomes more attached to the alternative religion. The Church of the Lord is close to the people and knows what it can expect of them; though it requires of its members belief in what it stands for, it may not set up the tensions which an alien body is apt to do. The test is a practical one, and it will be interesting to see whether the church's missionaries can win over pagan peoples in the interior or whether all its support will come from relapsed members of other missions.
THREE STUDIES
IN COMPARATIVE RELIGION

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It can be said with some justice that the comparative study of religion has a long history, and that from its beginning it has been inspired by various motives. Herodotus, for example, in his account of Egyptian culture repeatedly compares Egyptian religious beliefs and customs with those of his own nation, and in one instance he equates the sexual taboo observed by the Egyptians in connection with their temples with that observed by the Greeks and then contrasts the two with the customs of most other peoples.1 Some century and a half later Euhemerus (311-298 B.C.) propounded, under the guise of a romance, the thesis that the gods of popular worship were really great kings and conquerors of long ago, who had been deified by those who had benefited from or been astounded by their deeds.2 These essays in comparative study were clearly inspired each by a different motive. Herodotus sought thereby, rather naively, to render an alien religion intelligible to his own people, whereas Euhemerus was surely an exponent of the rationalist tendency of his time, when men had but lately seen and wondered at the daimonic genius of Alexander the Great.

The early Christians were acutely aware of the challenge which other religions constituted to the exclusive claims of their own, and they met it in various ways. One obvious line of defence was ready at hand in the Hebrew sacred scriptures, which they now claimed as their own. The locus classicus was Isaiah xlv. 14 sq. It took the form of an effective exploitation of the basic absurdity of idolatry; but it was rather of the nature of a tour de force, and it ignored the obvious fact that none but the most simple-minded equated the image with the deity it was meant to represent. A truer revelation of what the early Christians really felt about the pagan gods is to be found in the theory that they were the angels which had revolted against God and gained dominion over men.3 Such a view shows more insight into

1 II, 64.
Contemporary Africa presents a magnificent laboratory for the student of human relations. There can scarcely be any other part of the world that offers a better opportunity for studying the factors which regulate relations between groups of contrasting culture when the group membership of individuals is evident at a glance. The analogy of a laboratory is more than a mere figure of speech, for Europeans and Africans (to consider first the two principal groups) are associated in varying proportions in different territories: 1 in Northern Rhodesia there is 1 European in every 32 of the population, in Angola 1 in 41, in Kenya 1 in 120, in Uganda 1 in 500, in Nigeria 1 in 2,000. Different territories illustrate different distributions of political power between racial and other groups, different systems of education, different patterns of employment, different religions. The variety is at first overpowering, but it gives the student an opportunity to control many of the variables which bear upon his problem and thus to isolate those with which he is most concerned. Then there are also important questions regarding relations with intermediary racial groups (Cape Coloureds, Sierra Leone Creoles) and with minorities who stand largely outside the political struggle (Indians, Levantines, Arabs) which present possibilities for critical comparison within the same territory that is often more valuable than comparison between territories. No less important are the opportunities to study patterns of behaviour associated with the growing social differentiation of the African population. At the same time, inquiries in the new urban centres into relations between Africans of different tribes can be particularly valuable as they exemplify categoric relations between groups of similar cultural background, outward appearance, and social status.

Compared with these opportunities the amount of research hitherto undertaken is pitifully small. For this two chief reasons may be advanced. In the first place, relations between persons of different race in Africa are much more than just racial relations—they are almost always also relations between people of different income levels, education, cultural background, access to political power, and economic interest. As these differences normally outweigh considerations of race, it has seemed premature to try and isolate any specifically racial factor. In the second place, an interest in the scientific study of inter-group relations has grown up only in recent years. The variety of circumstantial factors and the lack of good comparative material is still such that the student is induced to attempt a full description (often in part historical) of the position in a particular territory. If the scientific investigation of these

1. See Table of Populations of the States and Territories of Africa South of the Sahara on page 214.
problems is to progress it must diverge from the particular, descriptive and historical mode of inquiry and develop an abstract theoretical system which will help explain the inter-relations between the factors which make up any particular situation. The need for such a system is widely recognized but it cannot be devised to order; until greater progress has been made in this respect it will remain risky to attempt to abstract features of interracial behaviour from their context with any hope of ultimate justification. Nevertheless, sufficient progress has been made in the social sciences in recent years to permit an analysis in more objective terms than the earlier literature, which was largely restricted to the analysis of the distribution of resources among racial groups and to the discussion of problems immediately relevant to public policy.

RACE AS A STATUS SYMBOL

In most parts of Africa people respond differently to someone of another race because his appearance is taken to signify that he belongs to another social category and is therefore to be treated in the manner appropriate to that category. Race is thus interpreted as a symbol of a person's rights and obligations, that is, of his status. But systems of status based on race seem in general to be highly unstable over the course of more than a generation or two, so that it is advisable first to consider in general terms some of the factors affecting the equation of status with race.

The contacts with which we are chiefly concerned have mostly come about by Europeans invading and assuming authority over African territories. In these circumstances the superiority of the immigrant over the native race, and the distinction between the two, is unquestioned in every sphere of social life. Thus race is an unequivocal symbol of social status. But society abhors a vacuum, and the intrusion of Europeans triggers off a series of changes which make for a filling in of the gap between the groups and, later, for interchange between them. Some of the Africans adopt European ways, and they may well be encouraged to do so as there is a pressing need for interpreters, clerks, policemen, catechists, etc. if European skill is to be most effectively deployed. Some Europeans take native women as concubines, or a group that is biologically intermediate may spring up by immigration. Reactions to this situation depend upon whether the European group is a small one of administrators responsible to an imperial government and other temporary residents, or whether there is an appreciable population of European settlers. In the former case, immigration has been controlled and the European population, for a time at least, has consisted of skilled persons brought in to perform duties which could not be discharged by locally born people. This has facilitated the maintenance of a system of racial statuses. By keeping the gulf between the races fairly marked and preserving white prestige, a relatively small group of people has been able to exercise close control. In territories where proportionately larger numbers of European pioneers have settled, the circumstances have been otherwise. As pioneers, these immigrants have been a much more mixed group; they have been less subject to outside control; and their economic interest has often been in conflict with that of the native peoples. In these circumstances the gap between the two races is less marked from the beginning and would soon be reduced further if the immigrant race did not use
its political power to reinforce the criteria of race as a means of demarcating the groups.

In the long run the differences between the colonial administrator and the settler kinds of society are considerable. Where there is only a small European population Africans are trained to take over an increasing range of ancillary functions; a minority then acquire qualifications comparable with those of Europeans and the equation of racial with economic and cultural distinctions is challenged. In certain situations race is no longer a reliable symbol of status but, because both the Europeans and the illiterate Africans tend for a time to rely upon it as a guide, considerable irritation is provoked. It is at this stage that the different groups within the African population become aware that many Europeans regard all Africans as falling into one fundamental category; only then do the Africans perceive their situation in racial terms. It is, however, dangerous to build upon the notion of race consciousness in the African situation: the African élite soon decide that their political subordination is the key element in the situation and focus their attack upon this. In many circumstances it would be more accurate to speak of both European and African groups as being politically conscious but expressing themselves in the idiom of race because this is closer to the experiences of everyday life. The course of events in the newly independent territories certainly suggests that the function of race as a status symbol is changed more dramatically by the breaking of its association with political status than by changes in its other associations.

When a former colonial dependency becomes independent the basis of race relations is changed. The status claims of European immigrants derive from their potential contribution as evaluated by the native race. Race does not indicate a status relevant to all spheres of social life, but symbolizes a cultural difference which is of social significance in a limited range of situations. Yet recent history shows that while many colonial populations have been able to unite in expelling the imperial power, once this has been achieved they are troubled by internal divisions which may be identified with ethnic differences of a lesser order. The definition of racial problems may then shift to include these.

In the settler type of society the European group attempts to frustrate any changes within the native population that might disturb stratification along racial lines. Skin colour acquires tremendous emotional significance as a guarantee of the social order. But it would appear that even rigid forms of stratification cannot contain the forces generated by interaction between the groups, and that the effect of such policies is at best to delay the filling in of the gap between the races.

In practice, many colonial territories have shown both administrative and settler tendencies which have conflicted with each other. Influential groups of European settlers have sought to maintain strict racial distinctions while Africans have utilized the colonial connexion to try and increase their control over the political life of the country. As either side has gained a yard or two in the struggle so the significance of race as a status symbol has shifted. A vital factor here has been the influence of the Crown or the metropolitan Republic: all sections of the colonial society have acknowledged the overriding authority of the imperial government; the Europeans because it provided the justification and reason for their presence; the Africans, at times with touching affection, because they saw it as the ultimate guardian of their interests.
Racial friction in colonial Africa has been associated much more closely with urban areas and centres of wage-earning employment than with the country districts. The effect of economic development is to diversify both groups and to make the system of stratification much more flexible. The diversification of the African group is the greater in extent and the more significant for the study of race relations for it is the African intellectual élite which more than any other group has forced the system of racial stratification to be modified.

The emergence of such an élite is affected both by the level of economic development and by the policy of the colonial power. It has been strongest when, as in British West Africa, it could be based on the leadership of educated Africans who were members of the liberal professions—lawyers, doctors in private practice, etc.—and thus not dependent upon the colonial administration for their livelihood. The emergence of a group of Africans within the administrative service who possessed qualifications of this order posed a difficult problem \[11\]. If the administration gave them the same salary as expatriates from the imperial country who required an extra financial inducement to serve overseas, this was to introduce great inequalities of income within the African population and impose a taxation burden that was certain to increase: if, on the other hand, it fixed their salaries at a lower point, the administration laid itself open to charges of discrimination on grounds of race. Governmental policies might also tend either to separate this group from the mass of their fellows or to give them common political interests. Some writers \[27\] have emphasized the ‘spiritual confusion’ of the educated African; others \[26\] while pointing out that ‘in his private life he is an African; in public a European’ do not find that this duality gives rise to any serious psychological strains.

A clear-cut example of the position of an African élite isolated from the tribal population is provided by the Creoles of Freetown. Though they acted as agents of British expansion, the British scorned them for imitating white practices. More recently they have been under pressure from the numerically preponderant tribal people as they have never identified themselves with tribal interests nor, with one or two exceptions, did they try to offer tribal people political leadership in the days when it was still possible for them to do so \[25, 5\].

Contributors to a symposium on African élites in 1956 gave very different accounts of the élite in different territories. In the Portuguese provinces there were no élites agitating for political independence. Africans who measured up to the requirements for assimilated status—and these were by no means stringent—were pictured as an energetic minority working for the assimilation of their fellows and giving evidence of the missionary spirit of the colonial power. Africans might on occasion complain against a particular person but they never complained against the white community as a whole or about the Portuguese administration \[33\]. The intellectual élite in the Congo consisted of medical and agricultural assistants, clerks, ministers and priests, plus a few prospective graduates. It was noted that they were then reacting against the notion of cultural assimilation and trying to re-evaluate their traditional heritage. These groups had the opportunity of voicing their views

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1. The figures in brackets refer to the bibliography on page 212.
in various consultative councils, but the native rural district councils were the exclusive preserve of the traditional leaders [7]. A later writer underlines the significance of this development, pointing out how, under the influence of African intellectuals in France and notably those of the Présence Africaine group, the Congolese elite began to react against the European assumption that Africans were in a process of development from an inferior to a superior stage, and to think instead in terms of the contact between two civilizations [44]. In the early 1950's an intellectual élite in British East Africa, composed of graduates of Makerere College, was also becoming established. Its members were still very conscious of the differences between themselves and the tribal population and were not very active in political organizations [15]. It has been generally observed that when young colonials pursue advanced studies in the metropolitan country they become more conscious of the subordination of their homeland and of the attractive elements in its traditional culture. This experience makes them much more conscious of racial and cultural differences.

A contributor to the 1956 symposium dealing with the position in Senegal stated that an intellectual élite based on the liberal professions had emerged before the war when it followed a policy of assimilation. After the war its numbers increased, competition with Europeans was intensified, and the group came to express an intense reaction against colonialism, drawing heavily upon Marxist theories and constructing a Negro mystique of the kind associated with Présence Africaine. Until just before the time of writing, members of this élite had remained aloof from the local political parties which gave them little opportunity for pressing the policies they favoured [31]. In Ghana the intellectual élite had by this time become a ruling class as the suffrage was restricted to literates. The conflict between this group and the Europeans was described as a bid by the former to oust the latter not only as wielders of political power but as a standard-setting group in the social sphere. Hence the African élite, particularly the politicians, aspired to bigger cars, more expensive clothing, and larger houses than the Europeans possessed [8].

The intellectual élite has often had to bear the brunt of European resistance to change which threatened the established social pattern. They have responded by concentrating upon moves towards a change in political relations. Thus an investigation in Uganda showed that young people there were in general radically opposed to any form of multiracialism in government, a characteristic which tended to be an expression of their better education, occupation and income; the more educated were far more opposed to non-African participation than were the less educated; and the better a man's job, especially if he were self-employed or in the very highest income group, the more clearly was he opposed to minority representation [18]. These results could probably have been confirmed at an earlier stage of West African experience where it was often affirmed by Africans that they had nothing against Europeans as people, but everything against them as rulers of their country. An experimental study in India has shown that attitudes towards the British became very much more favourable after independence and parallels for this might be found in Africa; certainly a very recent study dealing with Nigeria [41] concludes that mutual confidence between Europeans and Africans there is now greater than ever before.

In territories where a rapid growth in demand for skilled artisans, clerks,
foremen, and others whose status is intermediate between those of the ordinary African and the colonial administrator, could not be met from the African population or from intermediary groups, Europeans have been introduced for this purpose [4, 30]. One East African study [45, 47] shows some of the consequences of such a development: the solidarity of the European community is seriously threatened and the image of 'the European' presented to other groups is modified. The very considerable increase in the European proportion of the total population of many colonies after the war suggests that the diversification of the European racial group has been general. It has been said that antipathy towards Africans is strongest among the lower ranking classes of Europeans and that these resent the university-trained African's claim to a higher status [26]. Where, as in Kenya, there has been a stronger settler influence, European immigrants have been accepted without the occupational overlap between the groups being increased to any appreciable extent. It has been argued that in such circumstances the practice of racial segregation creates vested interests distorting the normal lines of economic interest. Thus European taxpayers in Kenya demanded economies in the administration but did not wish more posts to be filled by Indians—though that would have been a considerable economy—because the taxpayers had themselves propounded the race theory and were committed to it. The play of interests in this situation has been delicately analysed by Mary Parker [37].

In countries where racial segregation is more systematically developed, the contradiction between such practices and prescriptions of economic policy become increasingly apparent the greater the degree of industrialization. The productivity of enterprises is dependent upon increasing the productivity of African labour and that, in turn, requires the stabilization of the labour force in urban centres. If African workers are to have any incentive to work hard and save a proportion of their earnings, they must have a stake in the life of the town, a chance of improving their position, and some opportunity to press their views on matters of communal concern. The resulting conflict between economic pressures and the desire of a white minority to maintain their commanding position has been most clearly demonstrated in a study concerned particularly with Southern Rhodesia [17] but the principles are of more general applicability. The long-term economic interest of the society demands the expansion of the consumer market among Africans; it requires the optimum use of human resources and therefore entails the promotion of able Africans and the introduction of equal pay for equal work. Rigid social stratification along racial lines will be steadily eroded unless force is used to preserve it; in either event economic advance entails increased friction attaching to race as a symbol of status.

CULTURAL DIFFERENCES

The structure of relations between Europeans and Africans is influenced and tends to be maintained by the cultural assumptions of the members of the two groups and by their attitudes as individuals. It has been pointed out that in the colonial situation Europeans are relatively isolated from the institutions which have sanctioned the courses of conduct they value. Considerable will-power is required to maintain them in the face of what seem the laxer standards of those round about. The social institutions of European communities in the
colonies are thus of crucial importance in preserving their identity as a group and the individuals' sense of integrity. This would appear to be one of the factors responsible for their exclusiveness. The European thinks it only natural that he should keep his club for himself and his fellows, as a place where he can relax without any of the awkwardness which would arise if he admitted people who did not share these assumptions. This self-segregation on the part of Europeans has been bitterly resented because their circle has a wider significance in representing the social apex of the entire society. The successful African professional or business man has felt that he has made this grade and has been affronted over his exclusion in a way that he would never have been over rejection by Indian or Lebanese circles. Thus in colonies with a growing native elite the question of racial discrimination in club membership has acquired a significance out of all proportion to the real desires of the parties to obtain or avoid one another's company [5].

A consideration of the role of European women bears upon the same point. In the early years of many colonies the Europeans were an all-male group and, on the West Coast at least, they mixed fairly freely in African social life. When with the improvement of communications and medical services they brought their wives out, they withdrew into their own community [5, 14]. The women met Africans in very few roles other than those of servants and obtained a narrower view of them than their men did; for them the adjective 'African' came to symbolize lower material and moral standards, and an encircling majority with whom they themselves had no direct relationships such as to give a sense of purpose to their residence there. This, together with the influence of sexual jealousy, may be responsible for the very general observation that European women express stronger prejudice towards Africans than men do. Among settler populations the women's role of bringing up children and transmitting the cultural heritage increases their resistance to contact with Africans on an equal footing because their influence—especially through the possibility of intermarriage—is seen as a threat to the purity of that heritage [14].

There has been relatively little research into the way cultural factors condition relations between Europeans and Africans. One study [5] emphasized in the first place the European notion of work as a moral obligation, coupled with the central significance of a man's vocation in deciding his social position and prospects. With this was contrasted the African conception of the 'big man' as someone who had dependents to work for him. This observation is reinforced by the complaints of settlers and officials in other parts of the continent about the difficulty of getting Africans to undertake paid employment. In the second place, the European assumes that progress is possible and desirable. In a tribal culture based on subsistence farming, surpluses cannot readily be converted into capital; a premium is placed on tradition and a man is pleased to take his ancestors as models without considering the possibility of his improving upon them. In the third place, the European is used to a highly complex form of social organization in which very many relationships are of an impersonal character. The African is used to standing in personal relation to all the people with whom he regularly comes into contact, so it takes time for him to appreciate so different a set of social arrangements. Africans may feel the impersonal manner of Europeans as a form of rejection. Thus a writer on the Congo refers to a departmental head who did not tell his African colleagues that his father had died; they learned
the news from another source and commented, 'You see, he only regards us as workers, not as people' [44].

A Belgian missionary has demonstrated the significance of such cultural differences for relations between employer and employee [10]. He holds that an examination of tribal law in the Congo reveals contracts to be regarded differently from contracts in European law. An employer and a worker who accepts his offer enter into partnership; the employer is regarded as a somewhat special kind of clan chief and therefore has the chiefly functions of benefactor, guardian and protector. Thus the African worker at first regards the European employer as bound by obligations which the latter does not recognize; when he fails to observe them the African is embittered. The European, on the other hand, regards the African's expectations as evidence of his allegedly childlike nature.

THE STRUCTURE OF CHARACTERISTIC SOCIAL RELATIONSHIPS

In one of the major contributions to research in this field, Cyril Sofer maintains that while friction arises in part from cultural differences between the racial groups, it stems also, and perhaps more importantly, from the structure of the characteristic social relationships which exist between the groups [46]. He starts from observations of the behaviour at work of Europeans, Asians and Africans in Uganda, and shows how this is influenced by the structure of social life outside the employment situation in the racially stratified total society. The influence, however, is reciprocal, in that patterns of interracial behaviour established at work can spread into other situations.

Asked whether they prefer to work under a European or an Asian, Africans show a clear preference for the European. The European, among other things is more interested in keeping Africans at a distance than keeping them subordinate. He owes his racial community an obligation to behave in a dignified and restrained manner. He has a prestige which induces an African to respond more easily and more graciously to his orders. An African is bound by an elaborately deferential etiquette in his interaction with a European. The European does not offer a reciprocal deference in return but he has implicit obligations towards the African to afford him leadership, protection and behavioural models. These obligations provide the justification for his presence in the country and are surrounded by a complex set of official and unofficial sanctions within the European community. The Africans, however, believe that the Europeans do not have African interests at heart, and they are most suspicious of any change proposed by them.

Greatest friction arises between Africans and Asians. As the Asian has less prestige than the European, the African is slower to respond to his orders and it is necessary for him to be more vehement to achieve the same result. Squeezed between temporarily immigrant Europeans and the rising African mass, the Asian is anxious to show the European that he is superior to Africans and to disassociate himself from them. The African, on the other hand, knows that the power of an Asian supervisor is closely circumscribed by that of the European. He can challenge any order of his in the security that the European will arbitrate between them. Furthermore, the Asian group readily becomes a scapegoat for African discontents.

Sofer's work also shows how each group's position in the social system is
reflected in, and supported by, its view of the society as a whole, of the other groups, and of itself. Thus the European views the system as harnessing European leadership to help Africans attain higher living standards and a greater measure of political autonomy. He thinks of the Asian as hard-working and clever at business, but crafty and devoted exclusively to the pursuit of material wealth. The African he perceives as ignorant, childlike, suspicious and unco-operative. In this way, a social system that in the long run is unstable develops, reinforcing mechanisms which tend to perpetuate existing practices and give the system a temporary equilibrium. A rough correlation between race, education and wealth remains. Europeans meet Africans at work usually in subordinate capacities and mix relatively little with them out of work hours though the comparison to bear in mind here is the extent to which, in a West European or American industrial society, a relatively rich man mingles with clerks and labourers.

A similar conclusion is reached by another sociologist writing from Uganda [16]. The author discusses legal differentiations and shows that in East Africa there are no laws which prevent, or even seriously hamper, informal social relations; while in recent years the exclusion of non-Europeans from the more expensive hotels and other discriminatory practices have been broken down. Informal interracial social life is, however, severely limited by the lack of common interests. Some Europeans, especially Christians of an evangelical inclination, entertain Africans, but, owing to their different housing, income and style of life, Africans do not often invite Europeans home. Both Africans and Europeans are inclined to display hostility towards Indians, mostly only in verbal form, though there are few Europeans who meet Indians socially unless they have business associations. Relations between people of different race are therefore largely, but not entirely, confined to situations in which people of one race are in a superior position and people of another race in an inferior position.

Governmental policy may affect the structure of characteristic relations by bringing members of different groups together in one kind of relationship and by minimizing contact in others. One such policy deserves notice here. When land was allocated to European farmers in Kenya, separate zones were established for the races. In Tanganyika, however, the entire country was regarded as native land. For Europeans, farm blocks of reasonable size were selected within the tribal areas in consultation with the chiefs. This interpenetration of racial settlement lessened the opposition between the races and may have contributed to the relative absence of racial friction in Tanganyika [16].

The patterns of deference behaviour on which Sofer comments have also been described for Swaziland. There every European male expects an African to greet him as Nkosi (chief) or Baa (master), and every European woman as Nkosazana (princess), or, if she be long married, Nkosikasi (queen) [23]. When a subordinate refrains from according one of these conventional titles, this is regarded as a repudiation of the customary status and therefore as a serious offence. There is very little material on such patterns, their variation between sections of the population and their changes over time.
European minorities in tropical Africa are subject to considerable social and psychological pressures. This leads to the emphasizing of communal solidarity. Thus a Central African newspaper has been quoted as deploring the readiness of social anthropologists to live in native villages, continuing: 'We do not ask sociologists to be Tories. They can be Communists if they like, but they should behave like responsible Europeans...'. It also leads them to identify race with culture and to believe that their own way of life can only be maintained by people of the same skin colour: the pressure upholding this belief is far stronger than the authority of scientific evidence to the contrary. Where the political struggle is most severe this belief gives rise to an authentic racist ideology, which, though not systematized in any literary form, is evident in such statements as that of a former Prime Minister of the Central African Federation: 'Africans, until they are very much advanced, are all liars.' It is also evident in the heavily paternalist attitude which has led paternalist employers to treat Africans, and to refer to them, as cattle. However, it would appear that these pressures are the more coercive because the Europeans are living in a society different from that in which they grew up. An immigrant can never internalize the values of his new culture so effectively as those of the culture of his birth. Thus it has been observed that second generation colonials, whose claim to membership of the society cannot be questioned, are frequently more favourably disposed towards the natives than are their parents, though no experimental study has been carried out in the region under review. Indians, and other intermediary groups, are inclined to avoid racist arguments; they have suffered from Europeans using them against themselves.

Two studies of European minorities merit attention. One [29] deals with the conquest and settlement of Rhodesia, revealing very clearly the forces responsible for the climate of opinion in the white community, but it is chiefly concerned with Southern Rhodesia and this territory is being covered by another contributor to this series. The other [30] is a preliminary report on the European population of Dakar. The author underlines the consequences of the diversification of both major racial groups, leading on the one hand to a concern with maintaining 'white prestige' which is largely responsible for the disapproval of interracial marriage. This opposition is justified by a 'shame-faced racialism' which people insist is the outcome of experience and not of any pre-conceptions. He emphasizes the importance of numerical relations; this accords with the position in rural areas where educated African civil servants often find that they can associate freely with European colleagues on a small station but are kept at a distance on a larger one [15]. Except for the African elite, European contact with Dakar Africans is very largely restricted to contacts at work, which is in line with Sofer's aphorism 'race relations stop at half past four'. An American anthropologist has attempted a brief comparison of the extent of racial discrimination under the different systems of colonial administration in West Africa in the 1940's [6]. But while the legal rights of Africans under the different systems have been compared, reliable data on differences in day-to-day conduct are unavailable.

A notable contribution to the study of the colonial situation and the

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unconscious motivations of the parties involved is to be found in a psycho-analytic study based on observations in Madagascar [28]. This constitutes a commentary from a particular standpoint on almost the whole range of factors discussed here; it offers the reader a new insight into the position rather than any concrete results. The author’s argument is not easily summarized. He maintains that traditional tribal society conditions its members to a feeling of dependence upon one another; when they are confronted with people, like adult Europeans, having the independent personality associated with a competitive society, they have difficulty in adapting to the situation. At first they are apt to see in the European the master, the protector and the scapegoat. The Europeans who go out to the colonies are apt to be such as have inferiority feelings disposing them to aggressiveness and the domination of others, and when the institutional supports of social life in Europe are removed these tendencies become sharper. The European does not understand the native peoples’ expectations of the relationship thus created or is inclined to distort what he does know in order to preserve the image of the native as someone on to whom he can project his own repressions. Their own predicament prevents the Europeans from weaning the native group from their dependence and consequently there comes a time when the latter feel harshly rejected; their dependence then turns to a sharp animosity and may result in armed uprising. As so many of these tensions are present in the triangular relationship between Prospero, Caliban and Miranda, the European’s conception of his position of domination has been well named the ‘Prospero complex’.

AFRICAN ATTITUDES

One of the few studies to describe European-African relations in a rural district also casts light upon the position of Swaziland, one of the British-administered High Commission territories [23]. Swaziland is politically an island bounded on all sides by the Union of South Africa on which it is economically dependent as providing employment for migrant labour. Stereotypes similar to those found in other regions are reported. Thus the whites think of the Swazi as ‘just like children’, able to imitate but not to reason for themselves, happy, stupid, ignorant of any notion of gratitude, etc., while at the same time there are preconceptions showing a mixture of envy and patronage. The Swazi also hold distorted ideas about the whites. They say that all Europeans look alike (this is a widely reported characteristic of interracial contact). By comparison with themselves, they see Europeans as more skilful but less kind, more powerful but less generous; their skill and power is described as something almost fortuitous—part of the white man and his heritage—not as the culmination of years of experiment by rational methods that the Swazi could themselves employ. Swazi parents frighten children with stories of the white bogeyman. The stories they tell emphasize European greed, and lack of manners and hospitality.

Colour, says Hilda Kuper, is a uniform that cannot be discarded. Some whites are proficient in Swazi culture and identify themselves more with the Swazi than with the whites but they are still described as Europeans. They can, if they wish, still enjoy the legal privileges of their colour group and, as soon as they move from the familiar surroundings, are treated by other people as white. Similarly Swazi may be educated, well dressed, practising Christians,
admitted to the homes of some Europeans, but still denied the legal privileges, economic benefits and reciprocal courtesies of the white group. Interracial marriage is condemned from both sides so that Europeans married to or living with Swazi women have little contact with other whites. It is clear, therefore, that were it not for the exercise of political domination by the ruling minority, race would lose much of its significance as a status symbol.

The Swaziland study is concerned with relations in an area from which labour migrants go to the employment centres of the Union of South Africa, and has little to say of the effect of returned migrants upon race relations. Another study which concentrates upon the whole process of labour migration [42] shows how the absence of the men and the attachment to urban patterns of living have a disintegrative effect upon tribal life. This study, also, refrains from considering the effect of migration upon the development of African racial attitudes, and more recent work—which might be expected to show this effect more clearly—is lacking.

Labour migration is also an important feature of African life in the Central African territories. Research in Northern Rhodesia [49] draws attention to the fact that, in some circumstances, industrial employment does not appear to affect the retention by Africans of their tribal identity, nor their adherence to tribal chiefs. The returned worker resumes tribal ways because his claims to land are bound up with the whole nexus of relationships that form tribal society. He is content to recognize the authority of his traditional rulers, and if he is ambitious of political power, he seeks this within the traditional system. In such circumstances, Africans will cling to their rights in land and the tribal institutions that go with them. Most Africans say that they would prefer to stay in the reserves if they could earn sufficient money there, for this environment offers them a psychological security absent from urban life where social control is relatively slight. Where cash cropping is feasible, rural emigration is therefore reduced, but in most parts of Rhodesia (though not Nyasaland) cash cropping is made difficult for several reasons, chief among them being the inadequacy of transport facilities and the fact that the land closest to the industrial market is taken up by European farmers.

Two consequences of this situation merit attention. In the first place, Africans have seen recent political changes as threatening traditional rights in land, and the chiefs, as trustees for the land, have been forced to oppose the proposals for federation. Resistance has taken the form of refusal to observe agricultural, fishing and game regulations, so that recalcitrant chiefs have been deposed. In the second place, recent rises in African wages have forced employers to reconsider the advantages of a stable labour force. To bring this about, further changes will be necessary in order to encourage Africans to make their homes in the towns. In day-to-day intercourse with Europeans they are constantly reminded of how they are looked upon as inferior and all too commonly regarded with contempt. The discrepancy between African and European wages when related to the skills and productivity of the two categories remains striking and breeds discontent. As late as 1952 African wages in Southern Rhodesia were still on the average less than 7 per cent of those of Europeans and a similar discrepancy existed in Northern Rhodesia [50, 20].

A distinctive approach of considerable value in the study of race relations is that which seizes upon the observation of actual behaviour in social situations and seeks to explain it by taking account of the way the situation is structured both by large-scale socio-economic factors and small-scale ones such as the
obligations of particular relationships. This approach has been particularly fruitful in analysing the problem of ‘tribalism’ which has puzzled a number of commentators. While urban relations are often taken as evidence of the decline of tribalism, developments in some spheres point to a heightening of the sense of tribal identity and even in the towns tribal affiliation remains important in some circumstances. J. Clyde Mitchell has shown that two phenomena are often confused under the label ‘tribalism’: tribal structure, as a total system of relationships in the rural area, and tribalism, as a category of interaction within a wider urban system [32]. Tribal allegiance has a different situational relevance in the two contexts. Where Africans find themselves associated with fellow tribesmen in opposition to other groups they express their unity in tribal terms; this occurs both in rural and urban areas. But where they find themselves associated with other Africans of different tribes in opposition to Europeans, they express their unity in racial terms and ignore the tribal differences. The same principle applies with class differences: where people are grouped on class lines they regard racial and tribal differences as irrelevant. However, it sometimes happens that tribal and class lines coincide, with the result that the interests of a socio-economic category are expressed as if they were those of a tribal group [12]. Racial friction is more frequent in industrial areas because it is there that social groupings more frequently form along racial lines and not because of the disposition of the parties as individuals, though psychological forces frequently reinforce the opposition. This analysis has been supplemented by a similar one concerned with the growth of industrial and political organization in an African urban community originally administered along tribal lines [12].

When African groups are continuously lined up in opposition to whites, a form of social demarcation becomes reinforced by a variety of psychological processes, leading members of each bloc to regard the other with great suspicion and to interpret ostensibly benevolent behaviour in terms of such preconceptions. One account of the clash of different assumptions in the classroom of a Uganda secondary school [34] underlines the prevalence in East Africa of the belief that Europeans are cannibals, the preservation of traditional beliefs about causation independently of the acceptance of scientific explanations, and the African schoolboys’ suspicion that they might not be getting a completely genuine European education. The belief that Europeans are holding back from dependent peoples the last and most vital secret of their power is widespread; it is found in Melanesian cargo cults and the idea that the Europeans have removed the first page from the Bible they give to natives; similar evidence has been reported from Africa, like the story of the Belgian priest in the Congo who lost his breviary and discovered that a newly ordained African had borrowed it to compare it page by page with his own [44].

Essays written by African schoolchildren frequently reveal an ambivalence between emulation of the white man in certain specific connexions and a violent rejection of anything seeming to imply political subordination. One detailed study from Northern Rhodesia [39] found that boys identified themselves with Europeans more strongly than girls, and that they were more favourably disposed towards the whites. This was attributed to the greater contact African men have with Europeans in the course of their work. Because of the employment situation European culture has been in large measure transferred directly to African men, to the almost complete exclusion of African women. Though there is evidence that some tribes valued a light
skin colour before European influence spread [2], the colonial order has in general enshrined white values and encouraged their dissemination.

In the development of African attitudes towards Europeans, the second world war had a tremendous impact throughout the colonies, quite apart from the stimulus it gave to economic development. African soldiers were taught to have no regard for the racial status of enemy Europeans. African soldiers had seen Europeans defeated in battle and as prisoners-of-war; they had seen other lands, come to appreciate that very many Europeans were of a very different kind from colonial administrators, and some had gone with white prostitutes. Such experiences removed much of the strangeness about the figure of the European and emphasized the common humanity of all races. A short study of developments in the Congo [44], while referring to this, also brings out very clearly a point which is fully in accordance with observations from elsewhere: that African demands upon the colonial administration have arisen out of the experiences of everyday life and have been very little influenced by more general considerations. In the Congo, as elsewhere, much of the fuel for nationalist fires has been supplied by discrimination in the salaries paid to the different races, by the contrast between the standard of living of the Africans and the Europeans, and by the incivility of the latter in their dealings with Africans. One political reaction to the feeling that they are scorned by Europeans which has been reported from several regions, but which has received little attention in academic writings, is the African claim that the Europeans who come to the colonies represent only the lower classes of their native country. This has been described as a feature of native racialism [28] but it would seem more justified to regard it as a belief that enables the subject group to retain its self-respect by denying that the aliens' criticism has any force.

RELIGIOUS MOVEMENTS

Religious institutions frequently provide an outlet of the expression of sentiments that are of a secular character. Thus it has been suggested that the success of Islam in West Africa is in part due to its presentation as an African religion providing a cultural foundation for an African grouping on a wider basis than that of tribal membership and standing in opposition to the Europeans [5]. In the early years of this century British writers sometimes saw African Muslims as more militant than pagans in their opposition to European influence. But it is doubtful if this proposition would find support today; nor does it appear that Christian groups are more apt to be nationalistic than pagan ones [11].

Relations between European missionaries and their African congregations are affected considerably by the balance of political power. A Protestant speaker commenting on his tour of mission stations has remarked: 'In a few areas the social segregation of the Africans seemed to be conditioned largely by the social segregation and discrimination of government officials of the country. Settlers in some areas had passed on their colour-bar relations to the missionary groups and the two white groups reinforced one another by their acts of discrimination. Some of the missionaries seemed to have brought their prejudices with them to Africa. Their self-appointed superior roles were supported by a paternalism which had been established by their missionary predecessors' [38]. Catholic and Anglo-Catholic missionaries have tended to
lead a more primitive existence closer to their converts [35] but they have been certainly no less disposed to paternalism. However, missionaries mix more freely with Africans than do most other whites in their territories, and when the Africans have effectively challenged colonial rule the missions have been obliged to demonstrate their independence of the administration and of white authority. In any case, the interests of the administration and the missions conflict on a number of points. As the Swaziland study shows, the administration works through traditional leaders and maintains existing customs. The missions work through individual converts drawn from any stratum; they judge by reference to independent criteria and support their members in refusing to conform to customs they consider repugnant [23]. But any open break between the two is usually delayed because the missions are dependent upon support from the administration and the latter values the social services provided by the missions.

It is widely held that independent African churches serve as an institutional means of expressing nationalist, and occasionally anti-European, sentiment. Their churches have frequently seceded from a mission church: they have African ministers, a more colourful form of service, and make more concessions to such practices as polygyny. Some of these churches seem to be largely of secular inspiration, like the National Church of Nigeria and the Cameroons which has functioned as a kind of ecclesiastical instrument of radical nationalism in eastern Nigeria [19]. In the messianic movements that have been so influential in the Congo [1, 3] it is more difficult to differentiate sacred and secular elements or to isolate the different social functions which the movements serve. Georges Balandier has argued with much justice that they transfer to the spiritual and ecclesiastical plane opposition to European authority in general. On this plane the reconstruction of African communities under African leadership can be effected: a process which is particularly liable to occur under an authoritarian colonial system where 'religion is the only field within which emancipation is possible' [3]. These movements frequently give expression to strong animosity against Europeans [1] and might be said to awaken racial consciousness amongst the illiterate masses. This view of messianic movements as a forerunner of political nationalism is reinforced both by Efraim Andersson's argument in his admirably documented survey that they are by no means the product of Protestant missionary work [1] and by more recent evidence of their role in the Leopoldville riots of January 1959 [22]. The religious factor also enters at several points into the analysis of the Mau Mau rising in Kenya. A psychiatrist has claimed that the Africans who hated the Europeans most intensely were those who had accepted Christianity but later found that white and supposedly Christian people had after all an exclusive group religion like the one the Kikuyu used to have themselves [9]. In Kenyatta's work separatist churches are presented as part of the nationalist movement [21]. The Mau Mau organization utilized many religious forms of expression and they seem to have played an essential role in building up mass support [24].

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1. The comparative evidence on the role of 'Ethiopianism' has been reviewed at the conclusion of an analysis of the Nyasaland rising of 1915 [43].

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CONCLUSION

Recent developments in Africa prove the desirability of drawing a sharp distinction between those studies of race relations which seek to answer questions of public policy and those which concentrate upon scientific problems concerning inter-group relations. The foundation for studies of the latter kind has been laid by sociologists, psychologists and others working in America and Europe. Many fields of research, such as those dealing with the psychology of prejudice, social distance, normative influences upon industrial productivity, etc., could benefit if relevant findings were to be further tested in African contexts. Psychologists have recently elaborated procedures for attitude testing in Africa which could be used for inquiries into racial relations, but their results are not yet available [36, 41]. Sociologists and social anthropologists have provided illuminating analyses of conduct in situations of racial contact but more attention to general theoretical issues might assist them in pointing out which questions most require investigation and in organizing the diffuse experience which they acquire as parties to interracial relations.

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Populations of the states and territories of Africa South of the Sahara*.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Africans (date)</th>
<th>Europeans (date)</th>
<th>Others</th>
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<td>103,419 (1954)</td>
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<td>2,576,000 (1957)</td>
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<td>46,989</td>
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* 1955 and earlier figures are taken from ILO African Labour Survey, 1958.
1. Includes Asians.
2. Figures for different racial groups not available. There were 25,200 Europeans in French Equatorial Africa in 1956.
3. Includes Levantines.
4. Includes 1,960 Levantines.
5. Total population; includes 4,538 French and 2,148 others (1951).
6. Includes Levantines.
7. Includes assimilated Africans.
NEW SOCIETY 7 MAY 1964

CONCEPTS

ROLE

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Sociology often suffers from conceptual inflation. A new idea is launched and very quickly scholars with varying interests seize upon it, modify it, and then try it out on their material to see if it is in any way better than their existing concepts. This is, in part, a reflection of intellectual fashion; but mostly it is a very healthy way of ensuring that the original idea is fully exploited. The snag is that the concept gets used in so many senses that its fiduciary value slumps, until its place in the intellectual currency can be gradually re-established. The notion of role is an excellent example of this cycle. "Role" has great appeal as a concept of interest to sociologists, sociologists and anthropologists, one which is applicable to the analysis of any kind of conscious behaviour. Few concepts have such general potential for interpretation and so many confusing variations in use.

There have been two chief traditions of approach. One starts from role as a dramatic concept emphasizing the selection and interpretation of parts by a single performer.

All the world's a stage
And all the men and women merely players:
They have their exits and their entrances;
And one man in his time plays many parts.

This is the approach which was developed by G. H. Mead, Moreno and Newcomb and is now being presented by the only remaining vestigations of American social psychologists. The other is a line of thought which sees roles as linked by relationships which in turn are defined by the privileges and obligations of the parties. A role is in this sense a pattern of expected behaviour reinforced by sanctions which limit the individual's freedom of expression. This tradition has its source in Russian jurisprudence and stretches down through 18th century philosophical writings on society via Maine and Linton to end up enshrined in Parsons' Social System (1952). This is the view of social anthropology which emphasizes roles as constituents of a structure.

The relation between these two approaches was obscured by the anthropologist Ralph Linton who in two influential books publicized the notion of role as simply the mirror image of the concept of status. Among jurists the essential use of "status" has been to indicate membership in a class of people and it has always had a double meaning: denoting a set of privileges and obligations, and ranking some sets as more desirable and prestigious than others. Linton diverged from this usage. In his 1936 The Study of Man he spoke of a status as "a collection of rights and duties": when an individual put those rights and duties into effect he was performing the role. Thus "status and role" became almost synonymous and organizing the attitudes and behaviour of the individual so that these will be congruous with those of the other individuals whom he has to deal with. Nine years later in The Cultural Background of Personality, Linton shifted the emphasis slightly. He wrote:

The term role will be used to designate the sum total of the culture patterns associated with a particular status. It thus includes the attitudes, values and behaviour ascribed by the society to any and all persons occupying this status.

Having originally used the concept to refer to the pattern of behaviour and to the perception of individuals Linton shifted to a view of roles as defined by shared norms and as interrelated in a system. Unfortunately he did not draw attention to the differences between these elements as criteria.

Subsequent writers have often used different names for the same things. Thus what Linton and Newcomb define as a role, Kingsley Davis terms a status. What Davis defines as a role, Newcomb calls role behaviour and Sarbin role enactment. However, certain basic ideas seem to be common to all role theorists: that behaviour can be related to a position in a social structure, that actual behaviour can be related to the individual's own standards (role cognitions), or to other people's ideas about what he should do (should roles). A psychological approach will concentrate upon how these ideas are held by individuals. The structural approach traces the way the sharing of norms and expectations creates networks of social privileges and obligations.

PHYSICAL AND SOCIAL

Many roles are associated with physical differences between people, of sex, age, race, etc., but it is important to appreciate that physical distinctions are never translated directly into social distinctions. In some societies features that have little significance in the natural order, like skin colour, are of critical importance in social relations. In the southern states of the US "white" and "Negro" are sociological concepts of white appearance but Negro ancestry may be punished for claiming the privileges of a white man. In most societies a man who dresses, speaks and behaves like a woman will be treated like one. Again, when people see a man fail to acknowledge an obligation of courtesy towards a woman, their censure of him does not depend upon his being a man physiologically, or upon her being physically fully female. If people present themselves as playing roles of this kind they are conceded a moral right to be accepted as such as long as they fill their part of the bargain. Humankind society would be impossible otherwise. The comparative study of cultures suggests indeed that physical differences are often insufficient as a basis for moral judgment and that they need to be exaggerated. The work roles of men and women are frequently segregated in a way that cannot be explained in terms of physical constitution, but in tribal and peasant societies it may be considered mystically dangerous for a man to sit on the woman's side of the fire, while if a woman handles her husband's weapons she is liable to pollute them and weaken their power. It would seem that in some circumstances if male and female roles are kept distinct then men and women can cooperate more efficiently.

The recognition that natural differences always appear in cultural clothing is no schoolroom exercise, but a principle relevant to the study of many problems that are not usually analyzed in terms of roles. Talcott Parsons, for example, has shown that when someone claims to be sick he has to play a well defined role. Not everyone who is physically unwell claims this role; not everyone who says he is sick can assume it. When someone is admitted to the role of invalid he is exempted from his normal obligations in proportion to the nature and severity of his illness. This exemption may have to be certified by a doctor. The patient then has a legitimate claim upon other people to help him, though he still has certain obligations. He must seek technically competent help and cooperate with those who are trying to cure him. Parsons goes further than this and argues, like Samuel Butler in Erewhon, that since people in Western societies expect one another to accept personal notions of health and sickness as sociologically useful to regard sickness as a form of deviant behaviour. Subsequent studies of drug users, gang members and other people conventionally labeled deviants have emphasized a similar point: the deviant is the person who accepts, or is believed to accept, the privileges and obligations that define a deviant role. Objectively analyzed, his behaviour can be differentiated from non-deviants in no other way.

With economic growth, social organization becomes increasingly complex: roles become more numerous and interrelated. Big industrial concern cannot afford to be dependent upon the health, goodwill or memory of particular individuals, so a formal organization has to be elaborated such that if someone is sick or has been dismissed, a substitute can consult the files and take over his job with the minimum of difficulty. In a bureaucracy people perceive one another as acting only in the capacity given them by the organization. Their conduct is attributed to their roles rather than to their personal likes and dislikes; they are not judged by their associations in the way they may be in their leisure time. Statistical studies in both Britain and the United States have reported instances of whites willing to associate with Negroes at work but not in the neighbourhood in which they live.

BEING DISAGREEABLE

Formal organization circumscribes a man's activity, but it also shapes his self-esteem judgments of others. In analyzing someone's behaviour it is always useful to think of the roles he plays as separate from him as an individual and to ask how far any particular line of conduct is forced upon him by the structure of relations in which his roles are involved. Some people are given jobs that permit many people to make claims upon them for their services. They may be someone in such a position to meet all these claims and the only way he can keep them down to a manageable level is by being disagreeable when people ask for help. In many situations "cuddles" are not a man's role but a person's role rather than of his disposition. From this observation flows one of the golden rules of human relations: when re-
proving someone criticize the behaviour rather than the individual. All formal systems in some certain roles have to be kept apart lest they contaminate one another. An important official may not perform menial tasks lest he defile his office. An examiner should not be familiar with the candidate he examines nor a customs officer put himself under an obligation to a merchant with an import business. But with increased social complexity it becomes difficult to prevent people occupying roles with mutually conflicting interests. For instance, in the United States some university scientists working in the newer technologies have had to argue with patrons on their discoveries and, while retaining their university positions, to acquire interests in companies exploiting their work. Sometimes these firms sell equipment to the university for the professor to conduct further research. Sometimes the scientist is appointed as an adviser to the Federal Government on the development of his discovery for the defense. This is the case. In this way he may be involved in three-way conflicts of interests between his relations with the university, the government and his firm. Because there are so few specialists at this technical level such conflicts are unavoidable. Instead of trying to outlaw them, procedures are agreed whereby the conflicts will be brought into the open and resolved by reference to stated criteria. Role conflicts could make life miserable for Pooh-bah, the Lord High Everything Else, but they are a matter of concern to society as well as to the individual: when they are not properly regulated the individual is apt to exploit them for the benefit of his private purse.

This structural approach to the study of roles needs to be developed further, but it has a serious weakness. It is a point at which Talcott Parsons' social theory has been subject to mounting criticism and one at which the anthropological use of the concept is particularly vulnerable. Clearly the extent to which people can agree upon the privileges and obligations of a role varies. Sometimes consensus is high, sometimes it is low. The level of agreement on the definition of a role is something that has to be established empirically: it cannot be taken for granted. Parsons suggests that role consensus is positively related to social stability and the participation of the relationship, but there have been few concrete studies of role consensus. (But see B. J. Biddle et al., Studies in the Role of the Public School Teacher, Columbia, Missouri, 1961 and N. Gross et al., Explorations in Role Analysis, New York, 1958.)

It would be dangerous to assume that high role consensus always promotes efficiency. When a team of men is exposed to dangerous hazards it is essential that each member shall know just what he has to do in an emergency and just what his colleagues will do, but it is wise to argue from critical situations like this to routine circumstances. The detailed specification of tasks entails a network of bureaucratic rules and reduces the parties' commitment to their jobs. The rules can never fit every circumstance and cannot be kept completely up to date, people can always utilize the rule book to defeat the ends it was supposed to serve. This is what happens when people 'work to rule'. Together with other evidence it suggests that people work best when there is a measure of disensus, encouraging the growth of new ideas and the expression of human individuality.

The question of consensus is also relevant to the hierarchical ordering of roles on the scale of prestige. In the simpler societies many roles are ascribed to people in accordance with fixed characteristics of sex, age and hereditary rank. With technological advance, important roles are increasingly left open to competition so that people achieve their occupational roles. Because they hope to climb higher or are afraid of demotion, people may well be anxious about others' judgments of their role performance. As in Biddle's Kansas teacher study they may well believe others to be more observant of than they actually are. Would it not be best if people's expectations were made more explicit? Again the answer must be conditional: a certain level of anxiety promotes effort. Disagreement over prestige ratings enables people to bolster their self respect and encourages change. The circumstances in which consensus as to the content or the prestige of roles has positive value have yet to be investigated empirically.

**ROLES AND THE SELF**

When there is a sudden blaze of light, people blink their eyes without thinking about it; they react directly to the physical stimulus. When people are faced with a social situation their response is not a reflex action. They place an interpretation upon what they see and define the situation. They do not react to the situation as it really is but to their interpretation, for in W. I. Thomas' famous words, "if men define situations as real they are real in their consequences". This is the essence of the theory of society as symbolic interaction which lies on the frontiers of sociology and social psychology. Frequently, a man in cloistered isolation not only has ideas about the people he sees but also an idea about himself. He knows that the moment he enters the situation the others will study him and interpret his actions. He may be afraid, let us say, of being thought a busybody, so if he does intervene he may stage manage the event in such a way that others will interpret his action in the way he wishes.

Much social behaviour is motivated by the actor's concern about his reputation. What others will think of him affects the actor. The self is a product of man's ability to see himself as he thinks others see him and of his concern for this image. Self consciousness rises with social complexity, and becomes important to the successful management of everyday situations. The man who can evoke a cooperative response from a wide range of personality types commands a skill with a rising market value.

In many social relationships there is scope for people to convey alternative ideas about their "selves". Costume, of course, is one of the most obvious means of doing this. People associate certain kinds of personality with particular styles of dress—as the expression blue-stocking illustrates. There seems to be a general assumption that a woman who wears a severely tailored costume of moderate hue is a practical and correct sort of person, likely to get on with the job, whereas a woman who wears gay dresses of a daring cut is likely to be continually concerned to emphasize her femininity. Similar notions exist for men—in fact there are distinctive images of the appropriate costume for a whole range of occupations and people manipulate the symbols to present the kind of self they favour.

To a certain extent an individual's personality is fixed and he chooses roles that will permit him to express himself. But it is equally true that human personality is plastic within limits and that the roles a man assumes may influence his attitudes and his personality. For instance, let us imagine a school where one teacher is a strict disciplinarian and is unpopular among the pupils as a result. One pupil—who shares this view of the teacher—goes on to become a teacher himself and returns to a post in the same school. Will his view of the unpopular teacher be the same now that he, too, is a teacher? The odds are all against it. It is the fact that this person will make it easier for the new teacher to maintain discipline in his own class. Even if he disagrees with the other man's ideas he is included to extend the point of view of providing an image against which he can support his own practice the more favourably. The new teacher is apt to find that he is under pressure from the pupils and that he has to look to his colleagues for support. If he does not show solidarity with them when they require it, they can make life unpleasant for him. In these and other ways his new role may come to determine the attitudes he displays. After 20 years his whole manner and appearance may betray the nature of his occupation to the perceptive observer. These aspects of role behaviour are now being studied in a way that was previously left to social psychologists but they have long been apparent to novelists and poets who utilize the same dramatic perspective onto social life. Years ago W. H. Auden wondered what

**Influence occupation**

*Has on human vision*

*On his behavior*

*Do all the clerks for instance*

*Pigeon-hole creation*

*Brokers see the Ding-an-sich as Real Estate*