

Knowledge and Tradition

Notes and Queries on Anthropology

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Culture Heroes

The cult of a *hero* or *heroes* may be a central feature of some social group, clan, or tribe. All information, historic or mythological, should be collected. The hero may have led the people to its present habitation, or have introduced new arts or crafts. His spirit may be reincarnated in successive rulers (*v.* Divine Kings) ; he may be Lord of the Dead, or worshipped as a god. Often the alleged number of generations between the hero and his descendants is known. It is common for the birth and death of the hero to be miraculous, as well as some of his exploits.

The ceremony of *investiture of chiefs* may be important. A chief may not have authority until the correct rites are performed. There may be special sacred objects—spears, drums, stools, thrones, insignia, or regalia—whose possession is necessary for a reigning chief. The position and authority of a chief frequently rest on religious sanctions (*v.* Political Systems).

Other forms of ritual which may be essential to social structure are those of peace-making, and ceremonial exchange of feasts (potlatch) between different communities.

Knowledge and Tradition

Among pre-literate peoples the traditional knowledge which is an essential part of every culture is of necessity handed down orally from generation to generation. Much of this is practical knowledge based on observation and experience, but myth, magic, and supernatural beliefs are also preserved and may be mingled with the empirical knowledge. Specialized knowledge, kept in the hands of experts, must be distinguished from knowledge that is general. It is important to investigate the methods by which knowledge is passed on, e.g. by special instruction (*v.* Initiation) ; by apprenticeship ; by parent to child in the family setting (*v.* Family).

Methods of Recording and Communication

All methods of recording and communication other than speech should be noted (*v.* Gesture, Sign language, Signals). It should be discovered what methods are employed to send messages or summon people to a gathering. In sending messages are sticks notched, knots tied on string, marks made on wood, bark or stone ? Symbolic objects may be used, the meaning of which may be traditional. Are records of events ever kept in a similar way, carved on stone or wood ? Are pictures painted or carved on rocks as a record of events ? Is any kind of picture-writing used either as a record or a form of communication ? If so are the pictographs conventionalized ? Is any form of syllabary or alphabet used ? Is there any record of the invention of the system or the source from which it was borrowed, or the person who introduced it ?

Is there any method of recording numerals ? Is there any kind of printing by stamps, blocks, or type ? Are there owner's marks on tools, weapons, or other objects, maker's marks, brands on cattle, or marks cut out on the bark of trees, set up on posts, or carved on rocks as land marks or to mark boundaries (*v.* Taboo Signs).

Reckoning and Measurement

Methods of counting and reckoning should be recorded as they are actually practised.

Modes of Reckoning. Many peoples reckon by simply grouping the objects to be counted ; and display little interest in accuracy in large numbers. When the question of number is complicated by that of value, as in all forms of exchange, the procedure may be difficult either for Europeans to follow, or for the people themselves to explain. Note therefore all words for numerals, including compound numerals, such as “ five-two ” for seven ; for numerical order (“ first ”, “ second ”, “ third ”, etc.) ; for arithmetical processes, and also all words and phrases for particular groups of objects, such as “ handful ”, “ dozen ”, “ score ” ; all gestures and other unspoken aids to reckoning, and all written *figures* for numerals and values. Some of these are self-explanatory, such as the outspread fingers for five, the word “ man ” for twenty. Of large numbers, note whether they are used precisely, or merely to express multitude. Record the people’s own explanation of all descriptive numerals and processes, and how such arose. Note in what order the fingers and toes, or other parts of the body, are counted, and whether these are true numerals or merely a tally. If any kind of counters, counting-boards, or tallies are in use, obtain specimens, and learn how to use them. Note what the dimensions are, and whether they are equal, and supplement your observations by setting simple arithmetical problems.

Measures and Weights are means for comparing the size and weight of an object with accepted and accessible standards. Such *measures* and *weights* are often natural objects of uniform size or gravity, or parts of the human body, or customary kinds of effort, such as lifting or pacing, or objects specially made for the purpose, i.e. Ashanti gold weights (v. Medium of Exchange). Multiples and mutual relations result partly from the system of numeration, partly from experience of the number of times that one standard or unit is measured by another. Sometimes the same seeds, pebbles or other objects are used both as *counters* and as *weights*.

Measures of Distance commonly employed are the breadth or length of finger or thumb or fingernail ; or the span either from thumb to little finger-tip or to forefinger-tip ; from top of middle finger to elbow (cubit, ell), or over outstretched arms from finger-tip to finger-tip (fathom) ; or various kinds of pace, the length of a spear, or other implement, or customary lengths of cord or chain, spear-cast, bowshot, or a day’s journey.

Measures of Surface are expressed in terms of such units as the area of an ox-hide, mat, or cloak ; or of the day’s ploughing of a yoke of oxen, or of the land which can be sown with a given measure of seed. Note the shape of the land unit ; in particular what the dimensions are, and whether they are equal or different, and what account the people give of each of them. How is land measurement actually performed ? How are the areas calculated and boundaries adjusted ?

Measures of Capacity include the hollow of the hand, the handful or armful, the load of a man, beast, wagon or boat ; the content of an egg, gourd, or other natural object ; or of some manufactured object in common use, like a basket. Note all measures used specially for grain, beverages, or any other commodity.

Measures of Weight are often seeds of plants ; and for large quantities the customary load of a man or beast or wagon. What measures, if any, are reserved for particular commodities ? Obtain examples of apparatus for weighing. Sometimes a standard of weight is formed by a measure of capacity filled with a particular commodity, such as water or grain.

Measures of Time are commonly derived either from some kind of human endurance or (for longer periods) from the observation of sun, moon, or stars. Note what subdivisions of the day are in use, and how they are estimated ; is there a standard subdivision irrespective of the seasons, or are the periods longer or shorter according to the seasonal daylight ? How is the night-time measured ? Are any instruments such as *sundials*, *sand-glasses*, used to measure time ? Are any time-tables or calendars in use ? If so, what account do the people give of their origin ? Obtain specimens of all such devices, and learn to set and use them (v. Seasons, Calendar and Weather).

Measures of Value. Familiar examples of currency are natural products, such as salt, fruit, grain, seeds, fish, shells, stones, drugs, timber, and even livestock, and wholly or partly manufactured products such as tea, sugar, spirits, dried fish, worked stones, hides, skins, feathers, domestic utensils, charms and spells, beads, personal ornaments. It should be noted how such articles are measured, whether roughly or precisely, and whether conventionally marked, stamped or moulded, either officially or privately, to show their value. If the currency consists of tokens or articles not domestically usable, they may be either natural products, such as cowries ; or manufactured articles, such as mats, imitation spear-heads, hatchets, hoes, knives, lumps or bars of metal of special forms. Note whether there are higher and lower values for money, and how they are arrived at. It may be by size ; by multiplication, as in strings of beads or teeth, belts, bundles of feathers, shells ; by intrinsic value, due to skill, labour, or difficulty in manufacture or production ; or to rarity or antiquity, as with some kinds of beads ; or by convention and custom. Sometimes the articles used for money are obtained by trade and imported, e.g. wampum beads, Venetian and Aggry beads, or cowries.

General Questions. Note, in all cases, what degree of accuracy is observed by the people themselves ; whether artificial standards of length, capacity or weight are in use ; whether such standards agree together ? What is thought of persons who use inaccurate measures or weights ? Whether any authority is responsible for testing measures and weights, or generally maintaining standards. Record all multiples, customary “ tables ” of comparing larger and smaller measures and weights.

Cosmology, Seasons, Weather and Calendar

All methods of estimating time should be recorded, whether there are named divisions of the day and night, months and seasons, whether the year is divided into lunar months and whether this reckoning is corrected with reference to the solar year. All knowledge and myths concerning the sun and moon should be recorded. The planets and constellations may be recognized and named, and the rising and setting noted and correlated with seasons and prevalent winds. It may be that only experts have such knowledge. The attitude of the people to the normal procession of the seasons, as well as eclipses, storms and catastrophic natural phenomena, should be noted and all ritual and myth connected with such events should be recorded. Weeks, or recurrent periods of definite numbers of days, may fix the occurrence of markets or other activities.

A clear and reasonably precise statement of the annual climatic cycle should be made, taking special note of native nomenclature and theories, especially in so far as it may affect economic and other activities. A weather diary recording the occurrences, intensity and duration of rain, frosts, strong sunshine, fogs, mists, etc., is of great value, and should be accompanied by statements of native views of the normality of particular conditions and the effects they are believed to have on plant growth, etc. An attempt should be made to draw up a comprehensive calendar of seasonal changes in the natural environment and of the sequence and duration of associated human activities. These should be set out together on a calendar diagram, the degree of correlation between them investigated, and inquiry directed to native

views concerning relations between them. The native concepts of time and the criteria of time-lapse should be carefully considered in this connection.

It should be noted how personal age is reckoned, the birth of a child may be associated with some event or natural phenomenon and the years counted from then. The selection of particular natural and other phenomena, e.g. moon phases, star risings, horizon position of rising sun, etc., for calendar purposes should be related to the general physical and social conditions. It may be found that periods nominally defined in terms of particular physical conditions are not in practice closely restricted to their duration but correspond to phases of activity related somewhat loosely to those conditions. The mythology associated with such phenomena should be recorded as well as the role of rain-makers and other experts.

Geography and Topography

The investigator having gained knowledge of the geography of the area under observation (v. Technique) should note all native names for the types of land and geographical features and the history and myths associated with any of them. Any methods used to record geographical positions, routes and landmarks should be noted. All knowledge of the sea, its tides and currents should be noted.

Vegetation

All knowledge regarding natural vegetation and cultivated plants should be observed as well as knowledge of types of soil. The uses made of wild and cultivated plants for food, medicine, industry (timber fibre, textiles, dyes, etc.), art and ritual should be recorded (v. Economics). Knowledge and myths regarding growth, fertilization and germination with accompanying ritual should be observed (v. Ritual and Belief).

The character, distribution and seasonal changes of natural and cultivated vegetation and their cultural significance should all be reviewed. This may be based on counts over sample areas. Information about the density and height of trees and the frequency of useful species is often of great use. Pressed specimens including leaves, flowers and fruits of plants of economic and ritual importance will permit of their later identification and may have significance for comparative studies over wider areas. Notes should be made of the abundance of such plants and the conditions under which they flourish. Besides the existence of flora utilized by the native, the presence or absence of insects and other pests should be noted. All nature knowledge and belief on the subjects should be recorded. The methods adopted by the natives for protection against these and the mythology connected with them should be investigated (v. Totemism).

Man and the Animal Kingdom

The origin of man or of some of the human characteristics is usually recorded in myth. It should be noted whether such myths of origin apply to mankind or only to the tribe of the informants. It may be that people recognize physical differences (traditional or real) between themselves and neighbouring tribes ; these should be recorded, as well as their observation of the differences between themselves and Europeans and other aliens, together with their explanation of such phenomena.

All traditional and practical knowledge of human anatomy and physiology should be recorded and its correlation to the treatment of disease. Any custom showing a knowledge of anatomy should be recorded, i.e. the removal of foetus from the corpse of a pregnant woman for separate burial ; all knowledge concerning blood, semen and excreta, bone-setting, obstetric manipulation, etc., should be recorded.

All knowledge and legends concerning the animal kingdom should be recorded. This will vary with the occupation and economic life of the people. Wild animals may be regarded mainly as objects of chase or as dangerous carnivora or marauding herbivora. Domesticated animals may be a source of wealth, food or prestige, or other economic value; they may be sacred or kept as pets. It should be noted whether the young of wild species are ever brought home and domesticated.

The attitude to animals generally as well as to distinct species or varieties and to individual animals should be investigated. Is there any belief in the kinship of man and animals (v. Totem.) ? Are any animals believed to have human characteristics, such as speech or the understanding of human speech, or to have benevolent or malevolent characters ? Are any or all animals believed to have souls ? What attitudes and beliefs are associated with the killing of different species of animals ? Is reproduction in animals believed to differ in any way from that of man ? Are there any (common) customs or practices indicating a knowledge of animal physiology and anatomy ?

History and Myths

It is important to note what people think of their own past, both when their accounts are mythological and when they are historical or in part historical. Among peoples with a central organization there is often an official recorder, whose duty it is to recite traditional history on state occasions, such records sometimes going back for several hundred years. People with a social organization based on unilateral kinship may remember the names of their ancestors for many generations. Some; members of the lineage may be forgotten, but if a number of genealogies are taken and events are traced back to an ancestral hero or person noted in the traditional history some idea of the lapse of time since its happening may be formed. It is usual to allow 25 years as an average for a generation, but with the classificatory system this may prove misleading and careful checking is necessary. Reported events may be purely mythological or they may refer to migrations, conquests, or to the invention or introduction of arts or customs.

Sometimes such events may occur in the histories of neighbouring tribes and migrations and conquests can actually be traced. Sometimes reference may be made to the arrival of some historically known foreigner, or to an eclipse, or some other datable natural phenomenon. Monuments or other memorial structures, cairns, earthwork paintings or sculptures on rocks, designs cut on turf, etc., may be made in honour of some person or some event. It may be possible to discover the relative date of such a monument by reference to the number of generations of certain living persons to that of those who made the monument or in whose honour it was made. Legends are frequently told of persons who may be historical. The fact that such legends may relate to miraculous events does not necessarily indicate that the heroes of them are not historical.

Myth. Sacred tales or *myths* play a very important part in the social and magico-religious life of peoples, and they come into play when rite, ceremony, or a social or moral rule demands justification, warrant of antiquity, reality, sanctity. *Myths of origin* cannot be dispassionate history since they are made to fulfil a certain sociological function, to glorify a particular group, or to justify an anomalous status. Myth though retrospective is an ever-present, live actuality ; it is neither a fictitious story, nor an account of a dead past, but is alive in that its precedent, its law, its moral, still rule the social life of the people. In many types of magic there is a story, myth of magic, which tells, not of magical origins, but when and where that particular magical formula entered the possession of man, how it became the property of a local group, how it passed from one to another. It justifies the sociological

claims of the wielder, shapes the ritual, and vouches for the truth of the belief. Myths of love, of death, stories of the loss of immortality, of the passing of the Golden Age, of the banishment from Paradise, myths of incest and sorcery, play with the very elements which enter into the artistic, forms of tragedy, of lyric, and of romantic narrative. Myth as a statement of primeval reality which still lives in present-day life, and as a justification by precedent, supplies a retrospective pattern of moral values, sociological order, and magical belief. It is therefore neither a mere narrative, nor a form of science, nor a branch of art or history, nor an explanatory tale. It has the function of strengthening tradition, which it endows with a greater value and prestige by tracing it back to a higher, better, and more supernatural reality of initial events. Myth is therefore an indispensable ingredient of all cultures. The heavenly bodies and fabulous animals may occur in myths. Myth and ritual are closely related : it should be noted if any objects related to heroes, masks, or effigies of heroes, legendary or fabulous animals, are represented in ritual or dramatic performances. Mythological or legendary persons and animals may be represented in art in the designs on ceremonial objects and those for ordinary use

Stories, Sayings and Songs

The repetition of stories, proverbs and traditional sayings may be an integral element of culture, corresponding among illiterate peoples to literature among the literate. It should be noted how much the art is cultivated, whether stories are told to children as much for their education as amusement, whether children are taught to recite stories or sayings with the traditional intonation.

In some cultures there are professional story-tellers. It should be noted when and where they practise their art, what is their status, and the remuneration they receive. It should be noted whether stories with special themes are considered appropriate for definite occasions, seasonal festivities, weddings, etc. Stories may be related at any informal gathering by anyone gifted to do so. It should be noted whether the general content and themes vary when such gatherings are of persons of both sexes and of men and of women only. Are there special stories told to children ? Are such stories mainly amusing, frightening, or admonitory ? Do the people themselves classify stories as histories, i.e. stories of heroes, famous deeds and wonders, legendary, fabulous (stories of animals, etc.), topical, moral stories and stories for amusement? Which types are considered most popular? Is there private property in songs ?

Proverbs, traditional sayings and riddles may be educational or a form of intellectual recreation.

Songs are best recorded on a recording machine, but texts should be recorded in writing (v. Music). The place of song in the life of the people should be studied. Song may be an accompaniment or an integral part of ritual of all or specific kinds ; of communal or solitary work, of war, of dancing, of recreation and of courting. It should be noted whether each class of activity has its appropriate themes, metres and tunes. Some poetry may be intoned rather than sung. Are there professional singers ? What is their status, on what occasions do they perform ? What types of songs do they sing and what is their remuneration ? Do they compose songs ? Are there solo songs, burdens, refrains, and choruses, set rules of rhythm and metre ? Are there songs specially sung by men, women or children ?

General Directions. All narratives should be written, if possible, in the native language, and with the native idioms exactly rendered, and should be read over to the narrator for correction. The name, age, sex, residence and occupation of the narrator should be recorded, and where and from whom the story was learned. Variants and fragments of stories should also be recorded ; but they should be kept separate, not pieced together, or used to “ correct” other

versions. There is sometimes a rhythm in tales, and there are often long “ runs” which are repeated ; in transcriptions, these are tedious and apt to be omitted, but they should nevertheless be indicated as they occur, otherwise the literary structure of the tale is destroyed. Tales should be listened for when people are talking at leisure among themselves. The importance of collecting the unwritten literature of a people is being increasingly recognized. An attempt should be made not merely to collect odd songs, stories or histories, but to get some general picture of the whole literary field. What literary genres or types occur, and in what proportion ? Is there epic poetry or lyric ? Is- poetry always sung ? Is there a body of history with some kind of literary form ? Are songs and stories usually traditional or impromptu ? Or are they a mixture of the two ? All stories should be studied in their social context and for their literary form as well as the content.

Material Culture

The study of all aspects of the material side of a people’s life is of great interest and importance not only from the intrinsic interests of the artefacts themselves, but for sources of invention, and questions of diffusion. Further, artefacts and techniques have great importance by virtue of their relation to the whole social organization and to religious and other ceremonial practices. The anthropologist will find that an intelligent interest in artefacts and technological processes is an excellent way of gaining the confidence of a people. The ritual aspect of material culture is of great importance. Many ritual practices have become so interwoven with technical procedure that they may be regarded as an integral part of a given technique. As such they may inhibit the development of new methods, or at least guide them along predetermined channels. Any account, therefore, of a particular occupation of a people must give full weight to both ritual and ceremonial acts on one hand, and to technical processes on the other. The attitudes of the people towards their own techniques should be noted and recorded, and their effect on the practical operations investigated.

It sometimes happens that particular plants are cultivated with much more ritual than others and some without any at all ; an endeavour should be made to discover which are so treated and why. Whereas there may be relatively little or no ritual in the building or first occupation of ordinary dwelling-houses, that of the “ men’s houses” and other ceremonial structures may have a rich and profoundly significant ritual. The same distinction applies to the construction of ordinary small canoes and the large kinds used for fishing and war, and so with other industries. Further the ritual may be confined to an implement or to its manufacture, but not to the things made by the implement.

All techniques of manufacture require expenditure of time and labour and it is important, especially from the point of view of primitive economics, to estimate this quantitatively in relation to the output of the finished article, and to the demand for it. The sources of motive power open to primitive man are his own muscular energy, animal power, and in some of the more advanced communities the forces of wind and water. The anthropologist should therefore apply himself to the following questions : How much can be produced by the technique in question ? What is the degree of complication and skill introduced in the process ? Are there any particular motions or attendant conditions which make it either psychologically or physically more suitable to men or women ? To what extent is it a specialist’s activity, i.e. what proportion of the population practise it, and what proportion of their time is devoted to it ?

Implements and appliances should be considered in relation to the above questions. For example, hoes vary considerably in size, shape, angle of blade and so on ; the shape of the hoe and the nature of the stroke employed should be correlated. Does a man use a heavy hoe requiring a long swing while a woman uses a light one requiring short quick strokes ? If so,

do men and women do different work ? Questions of this kind can be applied *mutatis mutandis* to other appliances. The full value of a study will be missed if attention is concentrated on a single instrument, or a single phase of manufacture. The best results will be obtained by a study of all phases of a particular industry or occupation. For example, a finished textile represents not only the product of a loom but of a chain of integrated processes starting with the harvesting of the cotton or the shearing of the sheep or obtaining the necessary fibre, and continuing through the various stages of cleaning, carding, spinning, weaving and dyeing. Each phase should be studied in relation to the demands of the succeeding phase, or where traded goods take the place of the earlier processes, the means of exchange should be considered.

Status of the Craftsman

In the simplest societies every individual can and does perform all the secular activities characteristic of his community, except so far as there may be artificial restraints on his so doing, and as a rule he can make any of the implements he requires ; but, even so, there are usually to be found men who are more expert than others. Thus, in some societies this expertness gives rise to special craftsmen ; or certain men may in their spare time specialize in certain crafts. Where special craftsmen are found it is necessary to make inquiries as to their status, and how they are paid. Iron-workers in Africa may form a despised or pariah class, or they may have special privileges and position. Canoe-builders, or other carpenters, may have a high social status. These craftsmen should be considered from economic, social, magical, religious, legendary and mythological points of view.

Maps, Plans, etc.

Maps and plans of the area under investigation are essential to a clear understanding to the economic and social life of a people, although accurate large scale surveys will almost certainly be beyond the capacity of the average anthropologist. What the anthropologist can and must do can be divided into two main groups, small-scale sketch maps of the whole area, and plans (large-scale maps) of small areas. All maps and plans should be provided with an indication of scale, orientation, legend, and if possible the latitude and longitude of some given point on the map.

The small-scale sketch maps should be used to indicate, within a rough topographical framework, the principal areas of settlement, communications, tribal and cultural distributions.

Traverses with a prismatic compass and cyclometer can be made on journeys through the territory and will be accurate enough for most purposes. Today many areas have been surveyed and mapped, and for all coastal areas in the world British Admiralty or U.S. Hydrographic Office charts are available. While lacking in interior topographic detail the two latter sources are of great value in determining fixed points upon which to base sketch maps, and the former may form the basis on which the anthropologist's distributions are based. A classification of the territory into types of country on the bases of rocks, soil characters, altitude, slopes, drainage and water supply, and types of vegetation will serve as a basis for the study of cultural distributions, but great care should be taken to avoid showing more than two or three distributions on one map. A map which is obscured by too much detail is worse than useless. The symbols employed should be clearly keyed. It is frequently an advantage to prepare an outline base map showing a few major features to provide a framework on which each distribution is plotted separately.

Location of hunting and agricultural land, fishing rights, etc., will probably fall into the category of sketch maps. As far as possible these distributions should be correlated with physiographic features.

Plans of village sites, houses, etc., can be used to note the inmates of every house, their social status and occupation ; the location of burial grounds, shrines or sacred places, club-houses or open spaces reserved for communal activities. They may also be of great value in noting complex large-scale activities such as big ceremonies, in which the disposition of important people and objects should be indicated. If such a survey is carried out in conjunction with the genealogical method, a sound basis for all further investigation will be formed.

Photography is an indispensable adjunct to field work. A good collection of photographs serves not only to document a descriptive account but will be found to be invaluable memoranda. With modern cameras every aspect of a technological process, a ceremony, an economic activity, etc., can be rapidly and unobtrusively photographed. Photographs of commonplace, everyday activities and events, e.g. cooking, herding cattle, collecting roots or firewood, and so forth, should be systematically collected, and will be of immense assistance when it comes to writing up the daily life of the people. Cinematographic records, especially of customs and activities that are falling into disuse, are well worth making if the investigator is in a position to do so.

For most problems of social anthropology sound records are unnecessary. They may be needed by the student of linguistic or of native music ; both these branches of research require special training, which would include training in the use of mechanical apparatus such as the phonograph.

The following data may prove useful in collating information on environmental conditions :

(1) A classification of the territory into types of country on the basis of rock and soil characters, altitudes, slopes, drainage, and water supply and vegetation. A sketch map of the territory showing the extent and distribution of these areas, which will serve as a basis for the study of cultural distributions. Traverses with a prismatic compass and cyclometer sufficiently accurate for sketch mapping of these distributions can be undertaken in the course of journeys through the territory.

(2) The extent to which the land types so determined are recognized by the people and have particular significance attached to them should be investigated. In the course of ethnographic inquiry, investigate the relation of land types to distribution of settlement, to agricultural pursuits, and to the movements of population. From these data an analysis of the occupation of group territories and of the various aspects of land utilization can be attempted, and the results embodied as far as possible in a series of sketch maps of the areas of representative portions. Particular attention should be paid to the following :

(a) Pattern, size and stability of settlements which may be distinguished as nucleated or dispersed ; factors affecting the location and stability of settlements including both physical conditions, such as water supply, soil exhaustion, and need for bush fallowing or grass burning and pressure on land, and cultural values such as mythological and religious ideas tending to impede communities from migrating.

(b) Pattern of land utilization for cultivation and/or grazing, hunting and fishing, including seasonal and annual sequences of occupation of different tracts within the territory. An attempt should be made to estimate the area exploited in one season or year, the aggregate

areas of productive land and any reserves of undeveloped territory controlled by or available to the community. These conditions must be considered in relation to both physical conditions and economic organization (v. Economics and Land Tenure).

(c) Attention should be paid to communications and the mobility of population in relation to physical conditions in which there may be marked seasonal changes, to available means of transport and to the location of productive land in relation to settlements and to the development of internal and external markets. Consideration of the maintenance of paths, roads and bridges in difficult country will involve inquiry into the organizations (e.g. age sets, corvees, etc.), developed or adapted for these purposes.

(3) Information should be sought on native criteria of distinction between soils and any differentiation between them in agricultural or other uses. Particular adaptations to soil conditions, e.g. draining, mound construction, transport, and mixing of soil should be noted and native practice and theory concerning soil fertility and exhaustion should be recorded.

(4) In connection with work on technology the character, location and associations and abundance of any rocks and minerals, e.g. pottery clay, grindstones, flint, semi-precious stones used should be investigated. It should be noted whether these are 'utilized by the native population or exploited by an alien culture.

Texts

The writing of texts, so valuable for obtaining linguistic material, gives important data, and cultural facts as well. Complete texts may be taken down from dictation by an informant who has been asked to relate some incident in his own daily life, some process in which he is interested, a story, myth, or event in family or tribal history. Such texts should be amplified by direct questioning ; they then become valuable anthropological data. Further, texts should be made of everyday speech, of children's talk, of talk between kinsfolk, fellow workers, etc. Unless the investigator has a very good knowledge of the language he should try to have every text translated at once.

The Genealogical Method

The genealogical method has proved of such value in anthropological research that it is now considered an essential technique in sociological investigation. It is commonly found that genealogical knowledge plays an important role among non-literate peoples; ancestry is often traced back several generations, and a large number of collaterals is known by name. It is clear that this knowledge has a functional value ; genealogical data are used in the regulation of marriage, inheritance of property, succession to chieftainship, etc. It seems almost a truism to state that the investigator must understand a principle which is in constant use in his own field of study. Yet such understanding is not so simple as might appear to the uninitiated ; not many people trouble to analyse the principle underlying genealogical kinship in their own culture so that it is not surprising that they should find themselves at sea in alien cultures. Before going into the technique of taking genealogies more must be said of the uses of the method.

In a small community it is often possible to take the genealogies of all the inhabitants, and this census can then form the basis not only of sociological work but also for investigation on population and migrations. The data in the genealogies will not only give the investigator the names and relationship to one another of all those whom he will meet in daily work, but will further give him information about individuals not present in the community. Such knowledge is a great asset. There are few people who are riot flattered by the personal attention that

is shown to them when greeted by their correct names ; the skilled fieldworker will use the data he has gained from a few informants to make many more personal contacts. The study of kinship, so necessary to social anthropology, can only be adequately undertaken by means of the genealogical method. When recording the daily and the ceremonial life of a group in which the genealogies have been recorded, the observer will be able to follow the grouping that habitually takes place, whether persons who associate in various activities are genealogically related, and if so, how. He will be able to discover exactly which members of the family are allowed free entry to the house, which are treated ceremonially. When any important event occurs the investigator will know who the individuals are who render assistance, etc. On the occasions of ceremonies connected with birth, marriage, and death genealogical data concerning the principal participants are invaluable. In collecting genealogies the investigator will find corroboration or new information which he may not have expected, with regard to the remarriage of widows, special marriage customs observed among chiefly families, etc., etc. Thus, both from the point of view of gaining exact information and as an actual introduction to the group with whom work is to be done, the collection of genealogical data affords a sound basis and should be begun as soon as possible.

In most places it will be found that there are certain members of the community having special genealogical knowledge who may be used as informants. The evidence of young men in genealogical matters must be accepted with caution, except for their own generation, for knowledge of this kind is acquired slowly, in most cases through the teaching of the older members of the community. While collecting the genealogies there will, of course, be much overlapping ; a family referred to in the ancestry of one man's father will appear again in that of the mother of another, and of the wife of a third, and thus ample means of corroboration and of ascertaining the trustworthiness of different witnesses is provided.

Certain precautions must, however, be taken. The natives must not be allowed to suppose that the work is actually a government census, which might be used for purposes of collecting taxes ; any idea of the kind that may get about must be contradicted, and confidence must be gained on that score. There may be specific cultural reasons that make the imparting of genealogical data a roundabout process ; the investigator must never try to override such obstacles, but should recognize them as social traits and investigate them as such ; then in a sympathetic manner he is sure to find a way of circumventing the difficulties arising from such traits.

One difficulty is the existence in some culture of taboos on names, especially on those of the dead and of certain relatives ; for this reason it may even be necessary to collect each genealogy from persons who do not themselves appear in it. Other difficulties arise from the practice of adoption and of exchanging names, while either the paucity or the plurality of personal names may also be a source of confusion. When, however, such sources of difficulty are once recognized, they become merely new instruments for understanding the social conditions of the people ; thus, when it is found that adoption exists, detailed inquiry should be made and concrete information obtained which will enable a complete study to be made of the very practice that caused the difficulty.

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