

THE PSYCHOLOGY OF SOCIAL NORMS

A GROUP OF BOOKS IN PSYCHOLOGY
UNDER THE GENERAL EDITORSHIP OF
GARDNER MURPHY
COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY

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THE PSYCHOLOGY OF SOCIAL NORMS
by Muzafer Sherif

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Harper & Brothers
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THE PSYCHOLOGY OF SOCIAL NORMS

BY
MUZAFER SHERIF

*With an Introduction
by Gardner Murphy*



HARPER & BROTHERS PUBLISHERS
NEW YORK AND LONDON

THE PSYCHOLOGY OF SOCIAL NORMS

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INTRODUCTION

IN THOSE aspects of psychology which lie closest to the biological sciences, progress appears to be reasonably rapid. There is no longer the erstwhile appalling gap between our knowledge of the anatomy and physiology of the eye and our knowledge of how we see, or between the knowledge of the physiology and chemistry of fatigue and our knowledge of why we feel tired. Not that our knowledge is complete, nor even that it is, as it stands, completely clear; but we know where we are confused, where we are ignorant, and, in general, how to proceed.

Certainly no such statement could be made regarding those aspects of psychology which lie close to the social sciences. A vast treatise on the nature of society from the hand of one who calls himself an individualist is reviled by another who calls himself a collectivist; two papers at meetings of learned societies win equally thunderous applause, though the writers use their terms in radically different ways, disagree fundamentally as to the nature of society, and agree about human nature itself not a whit except with respect to a few of the elements of anatomy and physiology which do not belong to social science at all. Progress in inductive research in sociology and social psychology is certainly very considerable, but it is a good deal like the inductive research which preceded the systematizing of a Darwin.

Positive help in laying the foundations for a clear and cogent social psychology, acceptable to informed and open-minded thinkers generally, must apparently depend upon a fortunate combination of experimental research and sober interpretations which lead to further research. If a social

psychology can be founded upon research the soundness of which no man can gainsay, and if this same research can itself point the way to the direct application of its resulting concept to the problems of everyday social life in groups both small and large, there is reason to believe that the social sciences will deeply benefit. Indeed, there is some possibility that such methods and results might lead to a social psychology capable of systematizing in some measure the concepts of all sciences which deal with the interactions of human beings.

For some years, however, it has been clear that the laboratory alone, *as conceived by the experimental psychologist of the past*, has somewhat less promise for social psychology than for the investigation of the biological aspects of human nature. The laws of color vision while looking at a sunset and while participating in a laboratory study are the same; the laws of fatigue while riding a bicycle in the open and while riding it in the laboratory experiment are the same. The factors involved, however, when a group experience a sunset together or a group participate in a bicycle race, have proved extremely difficult to handle in laboratory situations. A man brings into the laboratory not only his eyes and his muscles, but his prejudices and his aspirations; his attitude toward the experimenter and toward experimental psychology in general; his fear of not giving a desired result and his fear of disapproval. He brings into the laboratory, in short, his culture, or as much of it as he can drag through the door. The social psychology which would strip him of his culture as he enters would be no social psychology at all.

If so, then, how may a laboratory be utilized? Can we indeed dissect the entire culture as the subject sits before us in the laboratory? No. But we can concern ourselves with culture so deeply and so broadly as to see cultural problems in

the laboratory behavior of our subjects and, patiently avoiding analogies, watch the way in which the laboratory behavior of our subjects illumines the daily behavior of the world outside, raising hypotheses which in our next day of experiment we shall again test. After all, this is exactly what the astronomer does. He brings the solar system, the galaxy, the island universe into his observatory in the sense just defined. He makes crucial tests, again travels through space with his telescope and spectroscope, to see whether the laboratory findings illuminate what is beyond his experimental control. And the geologist does the same thing. He finds aspects of his work which require a visit to the laboratory of physics or of chemistry. In a sense, the earth is brought into his laboratory. He need not experiment on it as a whole; yet he can, through the eyes which the laboratory has given him, see it as a whole. The biologist too has long known this. One cannot bring the evolutionary sequence and the ancestry of man into the laboratory, but experimental genetics knows when and how to find a laboratory focus for the study of those mutations and adaptations which lie behind the origin of man.

The important thing is not simply to use a laboratory; it is not simply that groups should be experimented on under strict control; it is not simply that the work done by isolated individuals be quantitatively compared with the work done by individuals in groups. The important thing is that a problem in the world outside, a cultural situation, be carefully analyzed and an experiment framed which embodies all the essential elements of the cultural situation. If this is honestly done, and if the results are then applied without distortion to the culture which has thus been put into the crucible, progress like that shown us by the astronomer, the geologist, and the biologist, may well come within our grasp.

It is this which Dr. Sherif has undertaken to do. A rigorously controlled, highly sensitive, and accurately measurable laboratory phenomenon has been found, the study of which has proved to lead to all sorts of new insights in the sphere of social psychology—a phenomenon so representative, so simple, so solidly rooted in the behavior of men in culture that it has served as a coagulation point for a vast quantity of social psychological material. The laboratory investigation presented to our faculty here is embedded in a matrix of social science considerations, nearly to the point of being completely lost; and this is as it should be, for the details of the laboratory test have now become incidental, while the resulting implications are more and more extensively considered and parallel phenomena lucidly shown to express the same basic psychological laws. We have, in short, a highly generalized psychology applicable to social situations, yet rooted in verifiable laws which experimentalists can directly test.

In the heyday of behaviorism it was considered sufficient to put a number of persons in a room together, and to study the ways in which they influenced one another. The stimulus value of one person for another was like the mechanical value of a block of metal for a scale pan, or the value of a steam radiator of certain dimensions for the heating of a room. One thing was neglected: the fact that the block of metal or the radiator, if properly defined, will always perform the same predictable functions, whereas persons in the group situation have notoriously variable stimulus values, depending upon a wealth of background factors in the immediate and remote life histories of the individuals concerned. Lifting them from life into the laboratory left them partially but not completely stripped of important influences over which the experimentalist had no sort of control. These

studies assumed quite simply that each organism responded to the same external stimulus value, namely, the presence of other persons, without checking this hypothesis empirically and finding out what they were really responding to. Even in the simplest laboratory studies of perception, we know that the same objective situation has grossly differing stimulus values for different persons; aspects which are impressive for one are below the threshold for another.

Not the last, but the first, step in a scientific psychology of the group is the study of how the individuals perceive one another, how their sense organs, central nervous systems, and so on, are able to receive and accentuate some elements in the social scene, and totally unable to receive other elements. Not only the biological differences between men, but the past histories of different men make them capable of grasping and reacting to quite different social realities. Unless these individual differences and their relation to cultural factors are considered, the first step in the psychology of the group is a misstep which can never be retrieved. The first step, Dr. Sherif thinks, is to learn from a study of culture the basic laws which function when individuals perceive one another, selecting and accentuating various aspects of the perceptual field in accordance with laws which are partly biological and partly social.

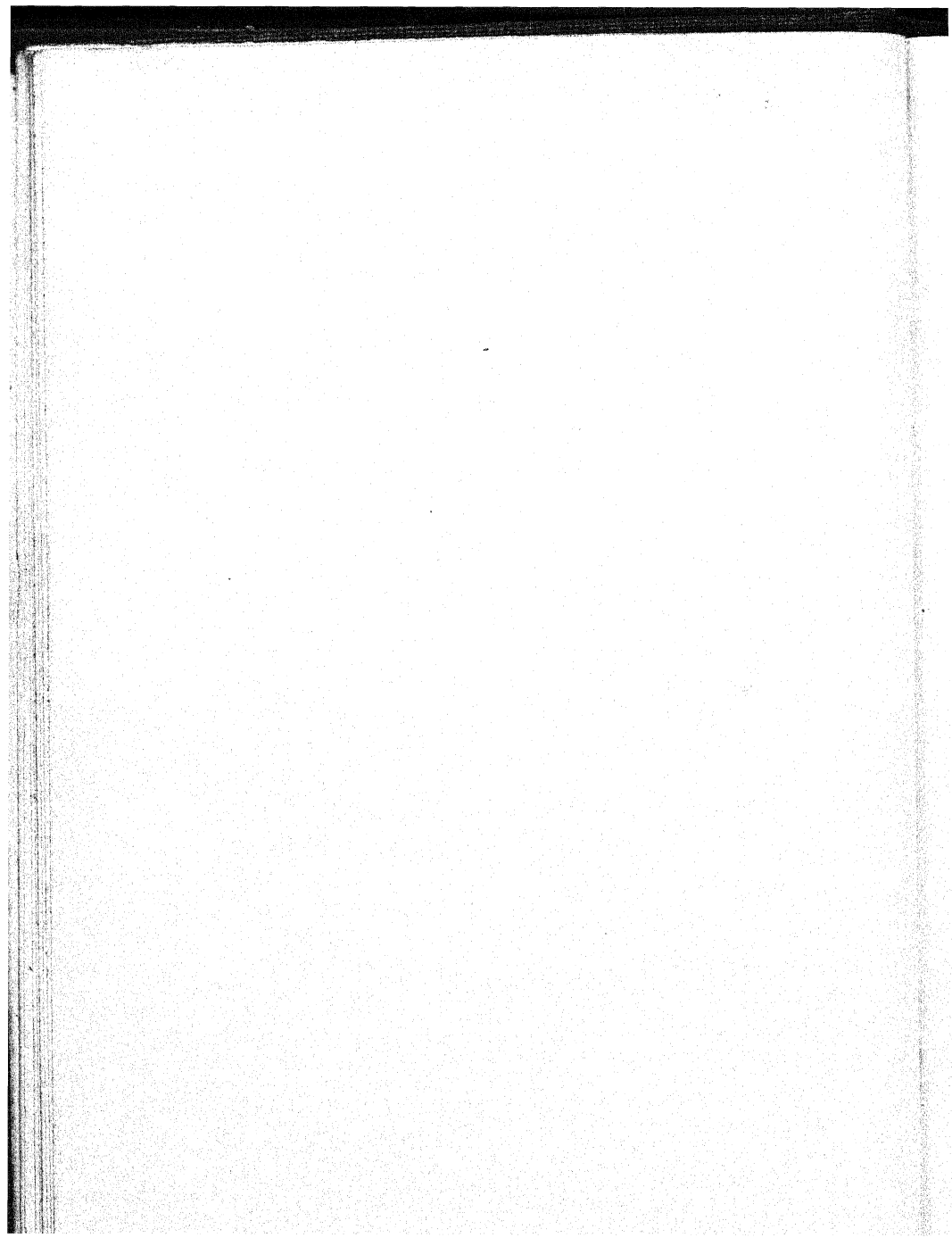
Studying systematically the psychology of perception in social situations, he comes to a point at which it is possible to test the general adequacy of his formulation. The result is an experiment, the conclusions of which lead on to a search for a systematic psychology of one broad phase of our social life, namely, response to social standards or norms.

Dr. Sherif believes, I think rightly, that this is only one of many broad perspectives which will be opened to the social psychologist who is capable of learning at the same time both

from culture and from the discipline of the laboratory. Such a social psychology begins not with the assumption that organisms in close proximity to one another have standard stimulus values for one another, but with the primordial dependence of our social responses upon the ways in which we are able to select and use the social world around us—in other words, the psychology of perception. The psychology of affectivity and of action follows, for it is integrated with this sort of psychology of perception. The result, I think, is a more adequate and realistic social psychology, and at the same time a social psychology which will make more satisfactory use of all that has been learned about the place and function of experimentation in the structure of modern science.

GARDNER MURPHY

THE PSYCHOLOGY OF SOCIAL NORMS



Chapter I

THE PROBLEM

THE first formulation of our problem will, in a sense, give a general summary of our thesis, for the formulation of any problem implies at least the direction of possible solutions, if not the solution itself. What follows in the rest of this book really constitutes the evidence, the background, on the basis of which these first statements are made.

Like other organisms, man is born with certain needs, such as the needs for nutrition, shelter, and, later, mating. This is true irrespective of the race, level of culture, religion, or social class to which an individual may belong. Like all animals, man has to eat, breathe, and mate to carry on the business of life. In social psychology, especially since the advent of McDougall and Freud, a great deal has been written to emphasize the importance of these needs and their satisfactions, as against the emphasis given by the strong intellectualistic heritage of the past.

Along with this, we note another fact. When we observe people in the search for food, shelter, or mates, we conclude that these activities run in certain prescribed channels. People do eat, mate and enjoy the security of shelter; but how and under what circumstances they will eat, mate and enjoy shelter are, to a great extent, regulated by customs, traditions, laws and social standards. This is true for every individual, living in every society we know, primitive or highly developed. If an individual does not come under this category to any important degree, he cannot be said to be a member of society.

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Of course there is no finality about customs, traditions, laws and social standards. They are not absolute. Different societies have different customs, and the customs may change in different periods—sometimes gradually, at other times abruptly. But the fact remains that wherever there exists any enduring human grouping we find a system of customs, values, laws and standards that regulate the relationship of the individuals to one another and the life activities in which they engage. As social life becomes complicated and differentiated, new situations arise, and new social groupings come into existence, e.g., new professional or religious organizations. With each new formation, a new set of regulations, customs, values, or standards arises, which reveals the characteristics of the new formation in a summary way.

In short, without any pretensions to knowledge of the origin of an institution or organization, we must, if we look at any human grouping (from a poker party to a religious or political organization), formulate a general conclusion: Among all enduring groups there must be a set of rules which regulate the place of the individual in the activities of the group, and a set of products, such as language, music, and architecture. Conversely, social customs or values—in fact, all cultural products—presuppose as a necessary condition the getting together or coming into contact of individuals in pursuit of satisfaction of their needs. Customs, values, standards and other social products—the very morphology of the social organization—constitute a complex structure, a *superstructure* that comes into existence on the basis of the activity of individual human organisms moving under the stress of basic organic needs.

But once a superstructure of social organization, customs, values and standards (or even trifles of etiquette) starts its history, *it has something very important to say about the*

operation of those very basic forces that have contributed to its rise. Of course, whatever the nature of the superstructure may be, the major needs keep on driving people into activity. But once the superstructure is there, people have to obey definite rules in their search for their goals, e.g., a shelter, or a "better" shelter. They have to put themselves under certain restrictions in their search for food—"better" food—otherwise they will be deprived of the fruit of their adventures. In the same way they have to comply with certain requirements and niceties prescribed by law, custom and etiquette in their search for better mates. Otherwise they may find themselves in an impossible situation. (This point will be elaborated in Chapter VIII.)

Since men cannot help producing rules, customs, values and other sorts of norms whenever they come together in a situation that lasts for any considerable time, an adequate psychology of the formation of norms will furnish key principles for our understanding of the major social psychological issues around which there is so much controversy today. This, precisely, is our problem. This investigation is an attempt at writing a psychology of the intricate and thorny problem of social norms. We shall consider customs, traditions, standards, rules, values, fashions, and all other criteria of conduct which are standardized as a consequence of the contact of individuals, as specific cases of "social norms."

We have said something to the effect that the social norms regulate even the activities involved in the satisfaction of the major organic needs, such as hunger and sex. Having in mind the heated discussions and endless controversies as to whether the individual shapes society or is shaped by it, we must hasten to prevent a misunderstanding. *Individual differences* are facts that no sane person can deny. The effect of any stimulus on two individuals, even on the same

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person at different times or under different conditions, may be different. Stimuli do not have absolute stimulating value. An individual organism is not like an adding machine or a typewriter, producing numbers 3 and 8, or letters M and A, every time you press those particular keys. The controversy between romantic individualists, who try more or less to reduce all social phenomena to the characteristics of the individual in isolation, and romantic social determinists, in whose systems individuals are absorbed in the social scheme, will persist as long as they approach the problem as they do. The trouble starts with the way they formulate the problem. Many of those engaged in this controversy start with a question as to how far individual psychology is adequate to explain everything about the individual, and how much is needed from social psychology or sociology to complete the picture. Both the individualists and the culture apologists begin with the idea of placing "individual psychology" in opposition to "social psychology," considering the individual heroically withstanding society or helplessly submitting to it. Thus they run in circles of their own creation. It seems to us that this dualism of "individual psychology" and "social psychology," or individual versus society, is one of the factors which makes any real advance impossible. If there is ever to be a psychology attaining scientific generality and comprehensiveness in its principles, it will furnish us with general principles that will apply equally to the individual in any situation, individual or social. The psychology of the individual is valid social psychology, and social psychology is valid individual psychology. There are not two psychologies, but one.

Throughout our study we have used many cases from the observations of investigators in the field of primitive sociology. These cases are not brought in to give information,

but only as illustrations of the point in question. Neither are they cited with any assumption whatsoever that these particular cases represent psychological phenomena having a type of universal validity which would make the study of their contexts unimportant. They are brought in solely to indicate that cases of this sort do actually occur. For our argument, it is immaterial whether the cases cited are typical only of the particular society from which the case is taken, or of only one period in that society.

Chapter II

THE LACK OF PERSPECTIVE OF THE SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGIST

COMMUNITY-CENTRISM DUE TO LACK OF PERSPECTIVE

WE HAVE chosen as our problem the investigation of the psychological basis of social norms. A great deal of theoretical and experimental literature has appeared on the subject of values, customs, fads and fashions, stereotypes and other varieties of social norms. And since social psychological problems are concrete issues of our own times, a proportionally large quantity of literature is appearing on these subjects. But, to say the least, our understanding of such problems is not proportional to the amount of literature. Two lectures on the same subject in the field may reach diametrically opposed conclusions from the same available material in hand. The complexity of the topics may be the greatest factor in producing such confusion; if so, the trouble cannot be avoided. But there is a serious methodological defect that is almost as important in bringing about such confusion.

This defect is the lack of the necessary perspective in many otherwise technically excellent studies. Because of this lack of perspective some important factors, sometimes the decisive factors in producing a result, are missed altogether. It is not surprising, therefore, that different investigators working on the same problem report conflicting results. To be sure, what is needed is definite results, tangible evidence. But results obtained without the appropriate perspective necessary for a given problem will not help us much, and

may sometimes even be detrimental to our grasp of the situation. For example, a psychologist interested in artistic expression might declare, on the basis of his exhaustive study of the performances of 988 subjects (this is a large sample, any psychologist will admit) that a certain social group has no capacity for drawing or painting. This result may be perfectly true as an isolated fact. But what is the significance of this isolated fact in building up a science of psychology? If we do not go further and find out the factors operating in producing this result, we may readily jump to the conclusion that this group innately lacks the ability to paint or draw. But if our psychologist had started to study the social and cultural setting in which these individuals live, in order to secure the necessary perspective, he would have made his elaborate approach on a much sounder foundation. It might be that, among these people, the existence of a picture or drawing is considered sinful idolatry, such things being banned altogether. There have existed, and still exist, peoples with this very taboo, e.g., peoples under the domination of the Mohammedan religion. When this factor is detected, the interpretation of the fact changes completely. Psychologists have repeatedly exhibited this grave methodological blindness.

The example given above is typical of those which are made daily. It may be appropriate to give another example actually found in current psychology, and widely influential. A social psychologist tells us that besides "social facilitation," "a certain degree of rivalry seems natural to all co-activity." Few people, especially in America, would question the truth of such a statement, because the psychologist has found this rivalry experimentally, and the statement fits into the mentality of the people who read it. But, before offering a generalization as to what is "natural," one might

take the trouble to compare his results with observed behavior in a society not based on individual competition, and report what is "natural" there. If what we want to achieve is not the social psychology of *one society*, but scientific generalized *social psychology*, based upon comprehensive scientific principles, we must know the presuppositions, the accepted norms of the experimenters and their subjects.

Or suppose the psychologist assumes that everybody must notice and use the familiar events in nature in the way we do, e.g., the passage of days and years. Yet there are people in our world who do not keep track of the years. Thus Kroeber gives us a concrete case to this effect: "The California Indian did not record the passage of long intervals of time. No one knew his own age, nor how remote one event was that happened more than half a dozen years ago."¹ If we commence our study of such a people with a study of their whole culture, and grasp the concepts they use and the classifications they possess in common, we shall have a much better basis for preparing tests to measure their intelligence, if that be our problem. Thus we shall gain insight and avoid the stupidity of including in our tests such an item as "How old are you?" which comes as an alternative item for "five-year-old intelligence" in the Stanford revision of the Binet test. The older they grow, the more difficult it will become for them to solve such a problem. Their "intelligence" will fail on test items not found in their culture, or those that have a different significance in their society.

Examples of the lack of concern for different cultural backgrounds seem the rule rather than the exception in works on social psychology. This lack of perspective may be

¹ KROEBER, A. L., *Univ. of Calif. Publ. in Archaeol. and Ethnol.*, 1917-23, vol. 13, 320.

designated the community-centrism of psychologists. Indeed, psychologists are no exception to the rule about the impress of cultural forces; their norms and their mentalities are to a large extent products of the cultural group of which they are members. Whenever they study human nature, or make comparisons between different groups of people, without first subjecting their own norms to a critical revision in order to gain the necessary perspective, they force the absolutism of their subjectivity or their community-centrism upon all the facts, even those laboriously achieved through experiment.

STANDARDIZED VARIATIONS IN PERCEPTION OF FAMILIAR OBJECTS AND EVENTS

One of the best ways of getting rid of our community-centrism to obtain the necessary perspective, is to open ourselves to the norms or standards of other cultures. This forces us to see that other norms, very different from ours, are possible even in the most fundamental psychological categories. We have our existence in a cultural atmosphere as well as in a physical atmosphere. Whether we are conscious of this fact or not, it is there.²

In the following pages we shall give concrete examples to illustrate the existence of *norms* or *frames of reference* which are different from those that are taken by western civilization to be as "natural" as air or water. To emphasize the point that such variations are not restricted to the usually accepted variations or shifts in fashions, matters of taste, or other items connected with sentiment, our examples will include some such fundamental psychological cate-

²For a keen elaboration of this point the reader may consult E. Sapir's chapter on "The Unconscious Patterning of Behavior in Society" in *The Unconscious: A Symposium*, Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., New York, 1928, 114-142.

gories as time, space, and rhythm experiences, and the perception of similarity.

A striking case of variation in the perception of similarity has been observed by Malinowski.³ From his study of the Trobriands, Malinowski reports that the idea of resemblance between parents and offspring, or between children of the same parents, is controlled by strict social norms, which controvert evidence and our expectations in two respects.

First, resemblance to the father is considered "natural, right and proper. . . . Such similarity is always assumed and affirmed to exist." But it is a great offense to hint that a child resembles its mother or any of its maternal kinsfolk. "It is a phrase of serious bad language to say, 'Thy face is thy sister's,' which is the worst combination of kinship similarity."

Second, it is a dogma with almost the strength of a taboo, that even brothers do not resemble one another, although each is said to be exactly like the father. Malinowski relates an incident illustrative of this. When he commented on the striking likeness of two brothers, "there came such a hush over all the assembly, while the brother present withdrew abruptly and the company was half-embarrassed, half-offended at this breach of custom." In another case, five sons of a chief were each said to be exactly like the father. When Malinowski "pointed out that this similarity to the father implied similarity among themselves, such a heresy was indignantly repudiated."

Here we see the influence of a taboo removing a perceptual relationship that might otherwise have been experi-

³ MALINOWSKI, B., *The Father in Primitive Psychology*, W. W. Norton & Co., Inc., New York, 1927, 87-92.

enced, and a positive norm emphasizing a similarity which might not otherwise have been noticed.

Many societies have calendars based on the careful observation of astronomical events; time localizations are made in terms of days, months and years of the calendar. The astronomical events furnish us with very convenient and stable frames of reference for a calendar. Nevertheless, we must not think that there is absolute necessity for using astronomical events as reference points for time-reckoning. Other events and objects, such as the blossoming of plants, can be used for frames of reference, as we see in the following observation from Radcliffe-Brown: "In the jungles of Andamans it is possible to recognize a distinct succession of odours during a considerable part of the year as one after another the commoner trees and lianas come into flower.

. . . The Andamanese have therefore adopted an original method of marking the different periods of the year by means of the odoriferous flowers that are in bloom at different times. *Their calendar is a calendar of scents.*"⁴ As Radcliffe-Brown explains, odors play an important rôle, connected with magic, in the life of the Andamanese. Odors or scents stand out, therefore, in their perception and function as a frame of reference for the regulating of life.

Hough describes another means of time-reckoning, used when the heavenly bodies are not observable. "The aid of fire becomes of value when it is desired to record the passage of a night, when the burning of a homogeneous, tinder-like branch, or a torch might give a fair estimate of the lapse of time when the heavenly bodies are hidden.

"Most of the Pacific Islanders burn torches of the oily nuts of the 'candle-nut' tree, *Alensites triloba*, by skewering

⁴ RADCLIFFE-BROWN, A., *The Andaman Islanders*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, England, 1922, 311 ff.

a number of the kernels on a long palm-leaf midrib and lighting the upper one. The kernels are of nearly uniform size, and burn with a clear bluish flame, consuming in about ten minutes to a fungus, which, when the nut below is ignited, must be removed by someone in attendance. The Marquesans tie bits of tapa at intervals along the torch, and thus have invented a clock."⁵

There exist peoples who have difficulty in establishing accurate calendars on account of the lack of precise and stable frames of reference, because they do not possess elaborate techniques which enable them to follow the determinism of astronomical and other natural events. "The Indian seems vaguely aware of the discrepancy between his lunar reckoning and the solar year. Many tribes have no way of correcting their year count. In the calendars which have only twelve months, the Indians may unconsciously lengthen a month when it does not tally with the event for which it was named, or they may insert another period. That the discrepancy was felt is shown by frequent reference in the literature of the Indians to discussion and quarrels about which month it is or ought to be at a given time. The arguments apparently continue in such cases until, through a comparison with the natural phenomena, matters are set right."⁶

Instead of astronomical events or natural objects, a certain periodicity of economic life may be used as the standard for time-reckoning. "Throughout the central parts of Africa, from the British and German possessions in the East to those of the French in the West, there are numerous market places where neighboring communities meet regularly to

⁵ HOUGH, WALTER, Time Keeping by Light and Fire, *Amer. Anthropol.*, 1893, vol. 6, 207.

⁶ COPE, LEONA, Calendars of the Indians North of Mexico, *Univ. of Calif. Publ. in Amer. Archaeol. and Ethnol.*, November, 1919, vol. 16, no. 4, 137.

exchange their productions. Usually every fourth day is a market day, observed with the cessation of ordinary occupations. . . . In British East Africa the Wagiriana possess a week of four days, each with its name. . . .

"With the regular market is inseparably connected the market week, the length of which varies from three to ten days. The shorter intervals of three, four, and five days reflect the simple economy of primitive life, since the market must recur with sufficient frequency to permit neighboring communities, who keep on hand no large stocks of food and necessaries, to obtain them from one another. The longer cycles of six, eight, and ten days, much less common, apparently arise by doubling the earlier periods."⁷

We likewise find a variety of standardized frames of reference in *space* experience. Some culture may standardize spatial directions in a way different from that given by the north, south, east and west standardized over a great part of the world. Thus "the Chukchee personify the 'directions of the compass,' of which they recognize twenty-two, including the Zenith and the Nadir. Of these, the Mid-day and the Dawn are the most important, and to them most of the sacrifices are made."⁸

Some pattern found in the daily life of a community may shape the prevailing concept of space: "The Dobuan concept of space is that of a large garden clearing. Just as the garden has its inland border *kaikai*, its seaward border *kunnkumwana*, and its sides *nana*, so also has space in its widest extension."⁹

In the same way that man perceives the space relationships

⁷ From WEBSTER, H., *Rest Days*, 1916, 117. By permission of The Macmillan Company, Publishers.

⁸ GOLDENWEISER, A. A., *Early Civilization*, Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., New York, 1926, 205.

⁹ FORTUNE, R. F., *Sorcerers of Dobu*, Routledge, London, 1932, 131.

around him (back, front, right, left, etc.) with his own self as the frame of reference, so a community may standardize its own locality as the center of space. According to the Zuñi, "Itiwana is the middle of the year, the point common to all the different cults, and is indeed the center of their whole ceremonial life. There is no doubt that the Zuñis themselves think of their rituals as being organized about this focal point. Their application of the term 'middle' to it is sufficient indication. The linguistic identification of concepts of time and space is characteristically Zuñian. The solstice is, therefore, the center of time, just as Zuñi itself is the center of space."¹⁰

The case of color is interesting because it shows the effect of culturally standardized grouping on color classifications. "For instance, it has been observed that colors are classified according to their similarities in quite distinct groups, without any accompanying difference in the ability to differentiate shades of color. What we call green or blue are often combined under some such term as 'gall-like color,' or yellow and green are combined into one concept, which may be 'young-leaves color.' The importance of the fact that in thought and speech these color-names convey the impression of quite different groups of sensations can hardly be over-rated."¹¹ Mead reports of some of the dwellers in Oceania: "Their color classifications are so different that they saw yellow, olive-green, blue-green, gray and lavender as variations of one color."¹² Likewise Wallis states: "Not infrequently the savage *ignores* distinctions observed by us or

¹⁰ BUNZEL, R., Introduction to Zuñi Ceremonialism, *47th Annual Report of the Bureau of American Ethnology*, 1929-30, 534.

¹¹ From BOAS, F., *The Mind of Primitive Man*, 1924, 199. By permission of The Macmillan Company, Publishers.

¹² MEAD, M., The Primitive Child, in MURCHISON, C. (ed.), *Handbook of Child Psychology*, Clark University Press, Worcester, 1933, 638.

cross-sections our distinctions. This frequently happens in color designations. The Ashantis have distinct names for the colors black, red, and white. The term *black* is also used for *any dark color*, such as blue, purple, brown, etc., while the term *red* does duty for pink, orange and yellow."¹³

If we were to construct color pyramids on the basis of these classifications, we should have pyramids quite different from the standard color pyramid found in almost any book on general psychology. By this we do not imply for a moment that the eyes of these people react differently. But these instances show the fact that culturally standardized groupings can come in as factors and influence (distort, if you wish) the basic classifications.

As a corollary to the conclusion regarding the social determination of norms, what is considered abnormal is to a large extent socially standardized.¹⁴ A man may be considered a fool or a lunatic because his ideas and behavior deviate considerably from the existing norms of his time. It may even happen that what was considered abnormal in him may contribute a great deal to the formation of perfectly respectable norms at a later period in the same society.

As any person who has observed two different cultures will readily see, we could multiply these examples indefinitely. These are not weird and exceptional cases. They are articulate examples of differences in outlook due to variations in cultural norms. Neither are they anecdotes from the fond observations of curiosity-seeking travelers. To an individual in whom is interiorized a particular set of norms about time, color resemblance, or family resemblance, how-

¹³ WALLIS, W. D., *An Introduction to Anthropology*, Harper & Brothers, New York, 1926, 421.

¹⁴ BENEDICT, R., *Anthropology and the Abnormal*, *J. Gen. Psychol.*, 1934, vol. 1, 60-64.

ever much these experiences may vary from the norms of other groups, they are as "natural" as Arabic numerals are to us. His set of norms, well incorporated in him, constitutes what is "common sense" for him. There is a community-centrism in the individuals of every culture. When, in his studies, a psychologist or sociologist imposes the norms of his own community-centrism upon the community-centrisms of other peoples, the outcome is an impossible confusion.

DISTANCE AS A CONDITION FOR NECESSARY PERSPECTIVE

In order to save ourselves from the danger of imposing our own community-centrism on other community-centrisms or on the observations made in our own community, we must be aware of the explicit or implicit influence of our own norms, which may or may not be helpful in an objective study of the situation. This means the necessity of gaining a certain "distance" from our own norms, our own absolutism. Acquisition of such distance is an essential condition for securing objectivity in social psychology and other scientific research dealing with social phenomena. The habit of making our little world the center of the universe had to be overcome before there could be a science of astronomy; the habit of making man the center of the animate world had to be overcome before there could be a science of biology. A like principle holds in psychology and the social sciences. Unless we gain "distance" from our own norms, we shall make judgments which are nothing more than a collection of normative verdicts.

CONTROVERSY OVER PRIMITIVE MENTALITY

We have seen that in other cultures different norms may be developed even in such basic psychological categories as

time, space, similarity experience, and color classifications. This brings us to the core of the controversial problem of whether the minds of primitives who have such different norms function differently from those of the peoples of western civilization.

This gives us a chance to correct a misunderstanding that may have arisen from the fact that we emphasized the diversity of norms. Social norms are not absolutes. They develop in the course of the actual relationships between individuals. They presuppose for their formation the contact of individuals striving toward the satisfaction of their needs and the realization of what they consider "I" or "We," the latter indicating the group with which "I" identifies itself. Therefore the norms may change, and do change eventually with the important changes in the structure of the situation that gave rise to those norms in the beginning. For us the differences in mentalities reveal differences in norms and illustrate the functioning of the same psychological principles, even though, from the standpoint of our present knowledge, the premises adopted by other social groups are absurd and have nothing to do with reality.

Lévy-Bruhl's designation of primitive mentality as "pre-logical," thus making a sharp dichotomy between the functioning of the mind of the primitive and that of the civilized, misses this psychological point altogether. On the basis of a mass of material borrowed from field workers in primitive sociology, Lévy-Bruhl¹⁵ tries to demonstrate that the notions of "the primitives" concerning natural and vital phenomena are mystical and magical. For example, success or failure in hunting, or disease or disaster of any sort, is not traced to the natural causes, but conceived to be the conse-

¹⁵ See, for example, Lévy-Bruhl's *Primitive Mentality* (English translation, 1923), The Macmillan Company, New York.

quences of the all-powerful forces of magic. Two animals that are linked together in the classifications of the religious scheme are considered identical by "mystic participation," so that what affects one affects the other.

As long as any mind can proceed from certain premises and reach appropriate conclusions on the basis of these premises, that mind is able to function logically. This is exactly what an average primitive person is doing. If, according to the set of norms in a primitive society, *a* and *b* are classified as identical through magic or mystic participation or any other concept they possess, then *a* can be both *a* and *b* at the same time. Therefore we should say not that the "primitive mind" works in a prelogical stage, but that it functions logically, and is true to the premises of its norms. In other words, in relation to the set of norms existing in his own society, the ordinary member of these "primitive" societies does not differ from ourselves in the functioning of his mind or the regulation of his life activities. Lévy-Bruhl's distinction between "logical" and "prelogical" is not a characterization of the general populations of primitive societies and civilized societies. His elaborate argument is an investigation of the *premises* found in the primitive societies, from the point of view of the logic and scientific principles existent in his day; and hence his investigation shows excellently the *ignorance* of primitive peoples concerning physical and biological laws, but not the nature of their mental functioning.

The remarks of Rivers in this connection are much to the point:

Let us suppose that one of their number [Melanesians], fired with a desire to understand the mental processes of other peoples, sets out to investigate the condition of these islands [British Isles]. The extreme importance of relationship in his own com-

munity will naturally lead him to decide that the best way of procedure would be to study in particular our system of relationship as a means of understanding our psychology. He would soon find that we use terms of relationship in a way which to him is hopelessly confused and inexact. In studying the connotation of such terms as uncle and aunt, he would find that we include under these two terms relationships which he distinguishes very carefully. He would even find that we often apply the term cousin not merely to persons of our own generation but to those of older and younger generations than ourselves, betraying, it would seem to him, an almost inconceivable looseness of thought, so that he is tempted to suppose that we are not subject to the law of contradiction but believe that persons may be of the same and different generations. He will return to his home and announce to his fellow-islanders that the English people, in spite of the splendor of their material culture, in many ways show signs of serious mental incapacity; and that in spite of their fine houses and towns, their trains and their ships, their talking machines and their flying machines, they are the victims of the most appalling confusions of thought. It may even be that, at a meeting of the native Philosophical Society, he propounds the view that the hyper-development of material culture has led to an atrophy of the thought processes, and suggests as a suitable title for the condition that of post-logical mentality.¹⁶

There are, of course, individual differences of temperament and intelligence and other psychological characteristics, as there are individual differences in any society; but it is not a select group, an intelligent minority, the thinkers as opposed to the men of action, who go beyond the limitation of the "prelogical" stage among the primitives; on the contrary, any "good" and "loyal" member of any primitive group has perfectly good logical mentality as long as he can draw the "right" conclusions from the premises or norms existing in

¹⁶ RIVERS, W. H. R., *Psychology and Ethnology*, Harcourt, Brace & Company, Inc., New York, 1926, 44-45.

that society and act accordingly—whatever those established premises may be, conforming or not to the physical and biological laws systematized in the present body of knowledge.

PRIMITIVE MENTALITY AND INDIVIDUAL DIFFERENCES

Yet Radin's impressive book, *Primitive Man as Philosopher*, which is certainly correct in its reaction to and wealth of valuable observations against Lévy-Bruhl's "prelogical" and "logical" designations of the functioning of the "primitive" and "civilized" mentalities, respectively, loses a great deal of its force in the development of its theme by reducing the issue to a statistical one. Radin effectively demonstrates that there exists a thinking minority among the "primitives" who are skeptical of the power of magic, who can see the contradiction in some of the established premises in their society—in short, who try to figure things out for themselves.

The primitive, too, may sometimes challenge his own norms, as some do among ourselves. We shall give one concrete and interesting case reported by Radin:¹⁷ "Among the Winnebago it is narrated that there was once a man who doubted the powers of the most feared of Winnebago deities. His was an open rebellion. 'Why,' he said, 'do you always make offerings and feasts to Disease-Giver? What benefit has he ever been to you? If I were ever to see him I would kick him off the earth. The only thing he can give you is disease.' Time passed, but in the fall of the year he saw a man coming toward him who proved to be the much slandered Disease-Giver. Disease-Giver disclosed himself and when he asked the man whether he still believed he could

¹⁷ RADIN, P., *Primitive Man as Philosopher*, D. Appleton-Century Company, Inc., New York, 1927, 375-6.

carry out his threat, the latter defiantly answered yes. Thereupon Disease-Giver pointed his deadly finger at him, straight at his heart. The man did not budge." And then we come to the complete depreciation of the god. The deity pleads with the man to die, at least for a short time, so that people will not say that he, Disease-Giver, had failed in his mission!

This is enough to suggest the skeptical position taken by many intelligent persons in a primitive society when they see the ineffectiveness of the magical practices. But against a few skeptics there are perhaps a hundred men who do not doubt, who transmit the norms they find in society from generation to generation. Are these people who constitute the usual run of loyal members or "good citizens" in any society—are they in the "prelogical" stage? Radin emphasizes the point that it is the small minority of thinkers that he is describing. How about the rest, the ordinary citizens of the community? Radin really invites attack since against a few thinkers there is a great majority of people who believe in Disease-Giver or in charms, who violate the principle of non-contradiction through not seeing that some of the norms in their society contradict others. On the basis of this majority we might properly talk of the "prelogical" stage among primitives. Yet in point of fact, the question is not a statistical one at all. The minds of the individuals in this majority are capable of functioning logically as long as they are able to draw conclusions appropriate to the premises (norms) existing in their society. And in general they do so.

DUALISM OF INDIVIDUAL VERSUS SOCIAL APPROACHES

Before closing this chapter we have to face an important question of method. We use the term "social norms" as a convenient expression to include such cultural products as

values, customs and traditions. What sort of method can we use in dealing with the psychology of such complicated matters as these?

The sensationistic psychology of the last decades could not, and would not, even approach the psychology of social norms or values, because values are meaningful. It would be a psychological heresy to deal with meanings. Titchener, especially, emphasized this view.¹⁸ Whenever a meaning popped up, which happened often because people carry on their daily life not in terms of artificial abstractions like sensations but in meaningful relationships, it had to be thrown into the psychologist's wastebasket. But the course of development proved that the material thus thrown into the wastebasket by the sensationistic psychologists up until a decade ago, was not really dead.

But let us turn to authors of other persuasions. Among the authors who have dealt with the problem of values, in addition to the philosophers, there are sociologists and psychologists of the type found in German cultural psychology (*geisteswissenschaftliche Psychologie*). Our discussion here is limited to a dichotomy made by cultural psychologists, especially Spranger. According to Spranger, there are two sorts of psychologies: natural science psychology and cultural psychology. Natural science psychology is experimental and analytical (atomistic); cultural science psychology is "intuitive" and synthetic (it deals in terms of total structures). In dealing with the subject-object relationship involved in the problem of value, natural science (experi-

¹⁸ See, for example, his latest, posthumously published, work, *Systematic Psychology: Prolegomena* (1929). Titchener concludes: "... meanings must be stripped away before his [the scientist's] work can begin, and meanings must be kept away while his work proceeds. Disinterested and impersonal, he makes himself one with the facts of nature; he moves in the domain of bare existence; and his intercourse with the facts is both observation and observance." (Pp. 69-70.)

mental) psychology can contribute nothing; you cannot get the meaningfulness of values from the summation of sensations that experimental psychology deals with. In order to handle the psychology of values we must rely on the "intuitive" (*verstehende*) approach of "cultural psychology." Thus there is a complete dualism in Spranger's "psychology." When dealing with sensations and other comparatively simple material we are permitted to use the experimental approach; but when dealing with attitudes and values we are urged to rise above this earthly level and move in the lofty realm of "intuitive" or cultural psychology. Sure enough, the genetic approach to the development of attitudes in the individual is also beneath the high level of *geisteswissenschaftliche Psychologie*.

The chief fallacy of this romantic movement lies in the fact that it identifies "sensationistic" or elementaristic psychology with the whole of experimental psychology. It is becoming more and more evident every day that experimental psychology need not necessarily be "sensationistic" in the sense of Titchener or early Külpe. To the credit of such groups as American functional psychologists and Gestalt psychologists, it is being demonstrated with more convincing evidence that experimental psychology can handle meaningful situations effectively; and this experimental, non-sensationistic type of psychology is becoming the prevalent psychology. We can profitably dispense with the dualism developed by Spranger and his predecessors and the romanticism of their approach.

This does not mean that the problem of value is not an essential one. On the contrary, the psychology of values is the very core of the whole problem of customs, traditions, standards and other cultural products that we have included under the title of social norms (see Chapter VII). The

scientific approach to this problem has to be experimental— or “observational” whenever experiment is impossible or whenever observation is the better approach because of special factors involved in the situation.

To be sure, the child does not bring with him at birth social norms or values or any other cultural product. These are standardized in the society into which he is born. He comes to interiorize these social products in himself. Hence he must be subjected to the influence of norms or standards. This is a problem of stimulation, for nothing becomes interiorized in an individual by inspiration. More specifically, this means the genetic study of how certain values or norms become a part of him. Then there is the task of the formation of norms in a group, and their persistence in the individual even when he is no longer in the group. These are our specific problems in the following chapters.

RECENT ORIENTATIONS

Already we have great beginnings toward a more effective approach to our problems in the works of Lewin and Piaget and their students. Lewin and his followers have made a lasting contribution to social psychology by introducing such concepts as “aspiration level” and “ego-level” (see pages 42, 175 ff.). In Piaget’s work we have the best fruits of the genetic approach (see pages 133, 160, 180 ff.). For instance, tracing the transition from the predominantly autistic stage to the logical stage by following the language development of the child in a natural setting, he has shown us how the child comes to realize the “point of view” of others and thus develop “communicable,” logical thinking. For, as Piaget points out, what is considered *socially* logical consists chiefly of sticking consistently to a *point of view* throughout a situation; and these *points of view* are the

socially accepted norms, which become also norms for the child through cooperation with others and through imposition on the child of definite responsibilities at the socially accepted "proper" age.

SUMMARY

Men incorporate in themselves a set of norms or standards from their social surroundings. Whether they wish to or not, whether they are conscious of the fact or not, makes no difference. The norms or standards vary from society to society. Everyone, therefore, is community-centric to some extent. The social psychologist is no exception to the general rule. This sets up an obstacle in the way of the perspective necessary in his investigation. The result is that many otherwise technically excellent studies reflect the community-centrism of their authors, and thus are nothing more than normative verdicts on the problems they touch. In order to get rid of his community-centrism, the social psychologist must acquire a certain "distance" from the norms deeply incorporated in him.

The fact that the standardized ways of regulating life activities and perceiving the world around us may vary widely from ours in certain societies, does not mean that the minds of those reared in these societies function differently from ours in any fundamental sense. The cause of these differences must first be sought in the diversity of established norms or frames of reference.

In the study of these problems the dichotomy of individual vs. social psychology is a harmful dualism. Any valid psychological principle should apply to the individual, alone, in a group, or in relation to his whole culture.

In the works of Piaget and Lewin and their students promising approaches to a solution of our problems are already apparent.

Chapter III

THE FRAME OF REFERENCE IN PSYCHOLOGICAL PHENOMENA

PSYCHOLOGIZING IN THE SOCIAL SCIENCES

WE HAVE said that our problem is the psychological basis of social norms. The label "psychological" is used in hundreds of books and periodicals in relation to many attractive human issues. Almost anybody who touches some human problem "psychologizes"—there is something fascinating about "psychologizing." But unfortunately, the label "psychological" does not make psychology. The stereotyped phrase, "psychological forces," is used to justify and explain almost anything. This is only natural. Economists and political scientists talk much of "human nature." Almost every one of these writers gives (or assumes) a picture of "human nature" that fits into his particular scheme of things.

The majority of those in academic psychology have until recently represented psychology as dependent on the minute and forced examination of the details of consciousness, and thus excluded all meaningful and concrete manifestations from the "science." As a consequence, not only was the layman disappointed when he tried to find out something about himself through psychology; investigators in the social sciences, anxious to discover the psychological basis of the phenomena with which they were dealing, also departed with a feeling of emptiness. The result was that they decided not to have anything to do with psychology. Many

sociologists, for example, have preferred to work ahead in their own field and to ignore psychology as a preoccupation aiming at special and subtle *nuances* of the individual. Their normal practice is either not to refer to psychology at all or to do their own "psychologizing." To be sure, oftentimes there is more concrete reality in the sociologist's or cultural anthropologist's psychology. For example, if you learn that Mr. John Smith is a member of a certain church and a certain business man's organization, you can usually predict his reaction to a concrete situation better than if you know his difference limen to brightness or his introspections about bright and dull pressures in his body, or his reaction-time in terms of thousandths of a second. This prediction as such is not of course scientific, even though it may have empirical value. And we not only admit, but insist, that science must make postulates and abstractions that may not mean anything to everybody. These concepts are legitimate and necessary if they develop in the long run to the point where they give us a more precise expression of the empirical observation. Psychology must offer concepts from which a social psychology can proceed.

On the other hand, "psychologizing" in the social sciences, be it sociology or cultural anthropology, is not psychology, in spite of its correct empirical descriptions and generalizations. For example, a sociologist or cultural anthropologist may show certain consistent variations in individuals due to their being reared in different cultures. But using these observations to support guesses about fundamental human mental processes is not psychology. If there is any substantial truth in such guesses, they have to be incorporated sooner or later in the main body of psychology based on experimentation or systematic observation.

SOME PSYCHOLOGICAL DATA AT THE BASIS OF OUR PROBLEM

This study is written with the conviction that there are a few persistent phenomena that have been discovered again and again in experimental psychology—and hence are not the property of this or that school—that yield themselves to extension into the problems of social psychology. We can profitably base our psychology of social norms on these basic phenomena of psychology.

Let us start very naïvely—the safest thing we can do. Everyone knows that two persons belonging to different cultures may react in diametrically opposite ways if there are different established norms relating to the situation at hand. Present freshly broiled pork chops to two hungry men. One of our hungry men is a Mohammedan whose religion tells him that anything connected with pigs is disgusting—this is an established taboo, a norm. The other person is a Christian. He will seize the chops and eat them with gusto. The first person will not only not touch the chops, he will be filled with disgust both for them and for the person who eats such filthy things. This is one example, on a highly complicated level, of a very simple psychological fact, that there is no point-to-point correlation between external stimulation and the experience aroused by it, or the subsequent behavior. Our example is a highly complicated case and may, through its complexity, appear far removed from the simple and basic psychological facts to which we have referred. It is precisely this gap that we shall try to bridge, step by step, throughout this book.

There is no point-to-point correlation between a physical stimulus and the experience and subsequent behavior it arouses; the experience and the behavior may be, to a large extent, a function of the state of the organism at that time.

Take a cardboard of uniform orange color about two feet long and one foot wide. Cover half of the cardboard with a black paper and look at the uncovered orange part steadily for some minutes, and then remove the black cover. For some time the covered part will appear a different shade of orange from the other part. The same gray may look darker or brighter according to the white or black surroundings, or the general pattern in which, or beside which, it is found. The same tone may arouse different effects when alone and when preceded or followed by other tones in a melody. Similarly, within limits, a sound is judged high or low, a weight heavy or light, not only in accordance with its absolute physical value, but also in accordance with the background of sounds or weights that precede. *or follow*

In these examples, we get these different reactions to the same stimuli without preparing ourselves consciously to get them. On the contrary, we have to force ourselves considerably to destroy these differential reactions, if we succeed at all.

But there are cases in which our anticipations and attitudes play an important part in determining our perception of the stimulus field. In these cases the external field of stimulation is not well structured. For example, different people may see different forms in indefinite ink blots or as they look at patches of clouds. On a dark night we may see all sorts of animate or inanimate forms as we walk past an old cemetery.

Psychologists usually use ambiguous figures to demonstrate the point. To take some well-known examples: In the same picture there may be hidden the outlines which permit seeing either a vase or two profiles (Fig. 1). In another picture there may be seen either a withered old woman or a smartly dressed young woman. Now in the first picture you

will see either the vase or the two profiles first, depending largely upon whether you are prepared to see the one or the other. The same thing is true for the picture containing the

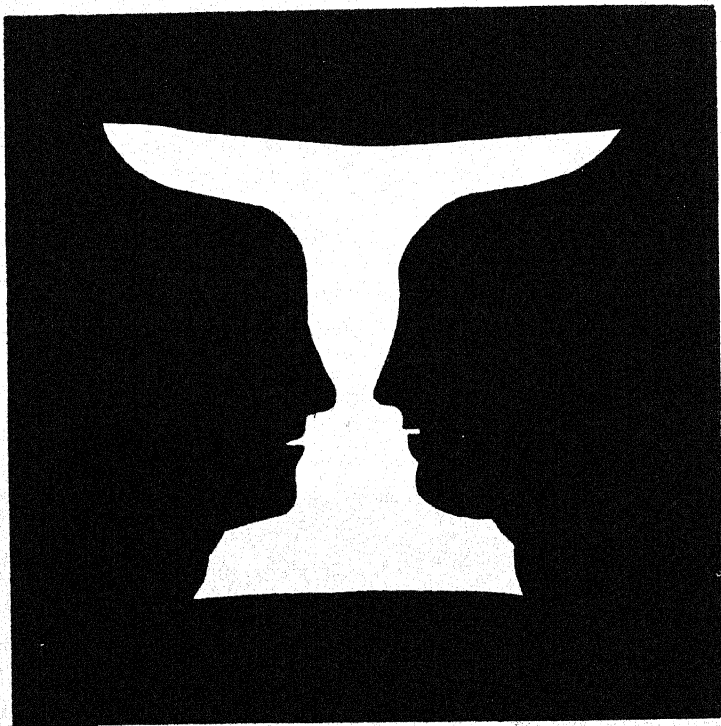


FIG. 1.—When we see a vase, the shape stands out clearly, the rest forming the background. When we see two profiles, the contours of the faces are conspicuous in the foreground, and aspects that are not relevant to the profiles recede into the background. (From E. Rubin.)

old or the young woman. Ordinarily you see one or the other; They do not mix. The one you see, vase or profiles, old woman or young woman, as the case may be, stands out with clear contour, and the rest of the picture remains in the background. These and other cases of perception suggest

that, whether external conditions are well and definitely structured or not, we ordinarily experience not confusion, but forms and shapes and other definite total structures. The above statements are very sketchy, but we shall come back to them in the next chapter. We must only say in passing that these are not arbitrary affairs; they are dependent on the lawful interplay of internal and external factors.

From these considerations we may generalize that even in the case of discrete stimuli there is no point-to-point correlation between the stimulus and what it arouses in us. Each time it stimulates it may not arouse the same effect. The effects are determined not only by the discrete physical stimulus, but by its place among other stimuli and internal conditions in us at the moment.

Now we may go one step further. Different persons may notice different characteristics of the same stimulus field. Lines and colors may be dominant for one man and ignored by another. It is not enough to have bright stars above you in order to notice and enjoy the constellations. Some do not notice the constellations that others do; and the groupings that are made vary somewhat from man to man and from culture to culture. Each culture emphasizes different aspects of the field, so that the field may take on altogether different modes of organization.

A well-known line of research may furnish us with a simple experimental demonstration of this principle. We refer to the experiments in Külpe's laboratory beginning in 1900, on the influence of *Aufgabe* (task or instruction) on perception of the stimuli presented.¹ In these experiments he briefly presented to his subjects different stimuli, such as printed syllables, about which different aspects or "dimensions"

¹ KÜLPE, O., Versuche über Abstraktion, *Bericht über den I. Kongress für experimentelle Psychologie*, 1904, 56-68.

could be reported, e.g., the *number* of letters involved, the *locations* of the colors, or the *total pattern* composed by them. Külpe found that more items were noted and more correct judgments made by the subject about that aspect of the stimuli which had been emphasized by the *Aufgabe*. The subjects noticed more fully and in more detail the aspects of the stimulus field that they had set themselves to see. Subsequently Yokoyama² and Chapman³ verified Külpe's results. All these experiments indicate that "the efficiency of report for all tasks is lower under an indefinite *Aufgabe* than under a definite instruction."

THE FRAME OF REFERENCE IN RELATION TO VARIOUS PSYCHOLOGICAL PROBLEMS

We have emphasized, perhaps one-sidedly, the implications of such cases for social psychology. What we have done up to the present point amounts only to preparing the way, so that we may introduce and develop a more fundamental concept. Experience appears to depend always upon *relations*. Immediately the question forces itself: What sort of relations? Perception, conceived as a case illustrative of experience in general, is the result of the organization of external and internal stimulating factors that come into functional relationship at a given time.⁴ Factors that come into such functional relationships are interdependent; they affect each other, and the properties of any factor are determined partly by the properties of other factors. In this sense we can say that the external and internal factors that come

² For Yokoyama, see BORING, E. G., Attribute and Sensation, *Amer. J. Psychol.*, 1924, vol. 35, 301-304.

³ CHAPMAN, D. W., Relative Effects of Determinate and Indeterminate *Aufgaben*, *Amer. J. Psychol.*, 1932, vol. 44, 163-174.

⁴ KÖHLER, W., *Gestalt Psychology*, Liveright Publishing Corporation, New York, 1929, especially chaps. v and ix.

into relationship form a functional whole. The reality of such functional wholes is amply demonstrated by experiment; for example, the brilliance of a patch of gray or the apparent temperature of an object depends within limits upon the brilliancies or temperatures to which the organism has been reacting.

This relational whole in our perceptions, judgments, and other experiences, involves definite frames of reference. These frames of reference prove to be not an arbitrary abstraction from the experience but a fundamental characteristic of every situation consisting of external and internal factors which form a functional whole. When we say "up," we mean "up" in relation to something that is below. When we say "far," we mean far in reference to something near.

The frame of reference seems to be a concept of broad importance in psychology, for facts implied in this concept reveal themselves persistently in almost every field of experimentation: in perception, judgment, psychophysics, memory and affectivity. Before extending it to our specific field, let us clarify for ourselves the implications of the concept by means of a short review of facts from various fields.

In the Sensory Field

We find facts like the following noted in any textbook on general psychology. Fill three vessels with water, one hot, one lukewarm, and one cold. Immerse one hand in hot water, the other in cold water, for a couple of minutes, and then immerse both hands in the water of medium temperature. This same medium temperature will feel cool to the hand coming from the hot water, and warm to the one coming from the cold water. In relation to cold a medium temperature is experienced as warm; in relation to hot the same temperature is experienced as cool. Stimulation by cold or

hot causes shifts, within limits, in the physiological zero or indifference point. This fact is one of the striking demonstrations of the phenomenon of "adaptation." It is due to a physiological process (studied by Adrian and others). The sense organs react to stimulation first with discharge of all the energy at their disposal at the moment. If the stimulation continues, the strength of the reaction decreases. From moment to moment, the organ thus excited reacts differently to the same objective stimulation. In this process we find a physiological basis for the differences in reactions to the same stimulus field. This rough physiological description will suffice to illustrate that the underlying processes in all our cases (and in all experience) are physiological. With this principle in mind, we may hope the physiologists will some day give us the neurological basis that underlies all our experience. But until then we have plenty of work to do on our own level of description. The physiologists' findings will not change the established relationships on our own level of work, but will teach us the neurological dynamics of our facts.

Illustrative of the principle implied in the different experiences excited by the same temperature, we have the effects produced by visual adaptation. When we come from the light into a dark room, the blackness will be intense; and when we have been in the dark for some time, our study light will appear very bright. The same medium gray will appear darker after looking at bright objects, and, conversely, the same gray will seem brighter after looking at dark objects. These are well-known cases of "successive contrast." Likewise, in cases of simultaneous contrast, a gray patch is lighter *against* a black background, and vice versa.

The French psychologist Henri studied localization on the skin over a period of years, 1892-1897. He first carried

on his experiments at the Sorbonne in 1892-1894 (under the direction of Binet) and continued them at Leipzig in 1894. The results caused him to conclude that there are certain parts of the body, such as the joints, that form a *frame of reference* for localization. Spots are localized in terms of distance from parts of the body. The errors of localization cannot be interpreted without recognizing the rôle of the reference points involved. In his own words, "Almost always the error of localization is committed in the direction of the points of reference (*points de repère*) which the subject uses in the localization of the spot touched."⁵ He further reported that when the subject used one reference point (*point de repère* or *Anhaltspunkt*⁶) within a cutaneous area, there appeared a *constancy* in the direction of errors. With the shift of reference there appears a corresponding shift in the direction of the errors of localization.

In Psychophysics

An especially striking illustration of the rôle of the frame of reference appears in a basic and much elaborated field of psychology—psychophysics, the study of the psychology of discrimination and judgment in response to stimuli which are parts of a quantitative continuum. The accumulating work on the "absolute judgment," or estimate of a single stimulus, shows that *in psychophysical judgments the use of a standard stimulus for each comparison is not needed to permit the observer to give a judgment about each stimulus in the series. After a few rounds of presentation, the observ-*

⁵ HENRI, V., Recherches sur la localisation des sensations tactiles, *Année Psychol.*, 1895, vol. 2, 168-177. "Presque toujours l'erreur de localisation est commise dans la direction des points de repère que le sujet a employés pour localiser le contact."

⁶ HENRI, V., *Über die Lokalisation des Tastempfindungen*, Reuther, Berlin, 1897, 37-38.

ers establish a scale; the position of a stimulus is judged against the background of that scale. A case reported by Wever and Zener⁷ is pertinent. Using the method of "absolute judgment" or single stimuli, they gave an observer a "light" series of weights (84, 88, 92, 96 and 100 grams); after this series had become an "established" scale for the observer, they suddenly introduced a "heavy" series (92, 96, 100, 104 and 108 grams). "The effect of the first series on the judgments of the second was quite evident for 20 or 25 presentations, i.e., for four or five rounds judgments of the 'heavy' predominated for all the stimuli; from this point on, however, the judgments showed a redistribution conforming to the second stimulus series." In other words, *when for a stimulus (e.g., 96 grams) the "light series" (84-100 grams) is the frame of reference, the stimulus is experienced as heavy, but when the same stimulus is related to a heavy series, it is experienced as light.*

In Judgment

Wells found the same general principle to be operative in an experiment in which he asked his subjects to arrange a series of pictures in order according to their preferences. He comments that "if A and B arranged 10 pieces of music in order of preference, the orders would center about each individual's own standard but if A, B, C, D, etc., arranged ten graduated weights, the orders would theoretically all center about a common standard, the objective order of heaviness."⁸

Similarly, Hollingworth found comparable effects depend-

⁷ WEVER, E. G., and ZENER, E., Method of Absolute Judgment in Psychophysics, *Psychol. Rev.*, 1928, vol. 35, no. 6, 475 ff.

⁸ WELLS, F. L., On the Variability of Individual Judgment, *Essays Philosophical and Psychological in Honor of William James, by his Colleagues at Columbia University*, Longmans, Green & Company, New York, 1908, 152.

ing upon the establishment of a medium value in the comparison of sizes. "In the experiment on sensible discrimination we become adapted to the median value of the series, tend to expect it, to assimilate all other values toward it, and to a greater or less degree to substitute it for them."⁹

In Perception

Gestalt psychologists furnish an infinite number of instances of "anchoring" (*Verankerung*). They insist on the member-character of a part within an organized structure. Thus Wertheimer demonstrated that a line is experienced as horizontal or vertical in reference to the position of other things in the field of stimulation; if the observer's visual field was objectively slanted by means of a mirror, a similarly slanted objective line tended to appear vertical, indicating that the position of an object is perceived in its relation to the whole organized field.¹⁰ Koffka has made a special issue of the notion of "member-character" and *Verankerungspunkte* (anchorage points), and the importance of the ground for the figure. He summarizes the facts and the argument on this point by saying: ". . . All this means that a definite single position exists only within a fixed spatial level. If the conditions for the formation of such a level are absent, localization is no longer possible; for just as the level grows unstable, so does the single point within it."¹¹ In discussing *ground* (in relation to *figure*) he writes:

. . . The ground has a very important function of its own; it serves as a general level (*niveau*) upon which the figure appears.

⁹ HOLLINGWORTH, H. L., *Journal of Philosophy, Psychology and Scientific Methods*, 1910, vol. 7, 468.

¹⁰ WERTHEIMER, M., *Drei Ahhandlungen zur Gestalt-theorie*, Philosophische Akademie, Erlangen, 1925, 93-99.

¹¹ KOFFKA, K., *Perception: An Introduction to Gestalt-theorie*, *Psychol. Bull.*, 1922, 570.

Now figure and ground form a structure, consequently the former cannot be independent of the latter. On the contrary, the quality of the figure must be largely determined by the general level upon which it appears. This is a universal fact, observed in such products of culture as fashion and style. The same dress which is not only smart, but nice to look at, almost a thing of beauty, may become intolerable after the mode has passed.¹²

This fact suggests directly the relationship involved in figure and ground, first studied extensively by Rubin and much emphasized by Gestalt psychologists. In the stimulus field a part is organized into the figure and stands out with definite shape or form, segregated with clear-cut boundaries or contours; the rest forms the background upon which the figure appears. The picture presented on page 30 is a good illustration of the point. When one sees in it a vase, the shape of the vase stands out with its own definite contours; when, on the other hand, two profiles facing each other are seen, the contours of the vase slip to the background and the faces pop up to the foreground, displaying the distinct contours of the profiles.

The resolution of the stimulus field into figure and ground has been shown experimentally by the present writer to hold on a simple social level as well as with figures such as presented in our example. In this experiment the subjects were seated in a room in which material spoken in a different room could be heard through a loud-speaker. Two short stories of approximately equal length and dealing with similar topics were read simultaneously. One of the stories came through the loud-speaker; the other one was read by a speaker in the same room with the subjects. After the reading the subjects were asked to write down whatever they could remember of the two stories. The result is not

¹² *Ibid.*, 566.

the confusion of the two stories coming to their ears simultaneously, but, in a great majority of cases, picking up one story and continuing to hear it in a meaningful way as a whole story to the end. These results indicate that when two meaningful materials are presented to the ears simultaneously, one meaningful unity is picked up and followed in such a way that it forms a continuous whole; the other material forms the background, perhaps a more or less disturbing one in our particular case. For our present purposes it does not matter which of the stories was picked up more often—that of the speaker or that from the loud-speaker. The results reported above were substantiated later by the experiments of G. Houghton.¹³

Nevertheless, figure and ground are not independent; each influences the properties of the other. In a public place you may be absorbed in conversation with a friend and may be directly noticing only his face and his words. But the general structure of the background, the gaiety or solemnity of the group, the quietness or noise of the background around you, will have an effect on you and your friend despite your absorption in each other. In Koffka's words, "the ground serves as a general level (niveau) upon which the figure appears."

The ground is especially important in social psychology. Studies on social facilitation (see page 69) would gain much more sense if the subtle relationship between figure and ground were taken into consideration. For example, when two people are talking in a public place, their conversation and behavior are tinged by the properties of the whole "atmosphere."

In a recent article, Lewin shows the strength of the tendency to be "anchored" to a frame of reference ("ground"),

¹³ These experiments are reported in H. Cantril and G. W. Allport's *The Psychology of Radio*, Harper & Brothers, New York, 1935, 150.

of which the most important part is the social group to which one belongs. He also shows how every action one performs has some specific "background" and is determined by that background.¹⁴

In Memory

We turn to the part played by frames of reference in memory. In remembering some past event or in localizing some past thing in memory, we make use of frames of reference. Ribot observed this before the end of the last century: ". . . We determine position in time as we determine position in space by reference to a fixed point, which, in the case of time, is the present."¹⁵ After giving an empirical example to illustrate his point, Ribot goes on to clarify the concept. "These reference points are states of consciousness which, through their intensity, are able to survive oblivion, or, through their complexity, are of a nature to sustain many relations and to augment the chances of revivification. They are not arbitrarily chosen; they obtrude upon us."¹⁶ The frames of reference in remembering may be social. Thus Ribot goes on to say: "These reference points form for each of us different series corresponding to the events that make up our life; daily occupations, domestic incidents, professional work, scientific investigations, etc., the series becoming more numerous as the life of the individual is more varied."¹⁷

Halbwachs¹⁸ extends the notion to the social field with elaborate arguments. An illustration of striking nature is reported by Bartlett. A commission of Swazi, a tribe of Zulu

¹⁴ LEWIN, K., Psycho-sociological Problems of a Minority Group, *Character and Personality*, March, 1935, vol. 3, no. 3.

¹⁵ RIBOT, T., *Diseases of Memory*, Appleton, London, 1893, 50.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 50.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 52.

¹⁸ HALBWACHS, M., *Les cadres sociaux de la mémoire*, Librairie Félix Alcan, 1925.

origin in South Africa, visited London. When the party returned, there was naturally some curiosity among the British settlers in Swaziland concerning the main points recalled by the native group of their visit to England. The one thing that remained most firmly and vividly fixed in the recollection of the Swazi chiefs was their picture of the English policeman regulating the road traffic with uplifted hand. In this connection, Bartlett raises a question which helps to clarify the implications:

Why should this simple action have made so profound an impression? Certainly not merely because it was taken as a symbol of power. Many other illustrations of power, far more striking to the European mind, had been seen and, for all practical purposes, forgotten. The Swazi greets his fellow, or his visitor, with uplifted hand. Here was the familiar gesture, warm with friendliness, in a foreign country, and at the same time arresting in its consequences. It was one of the few things they saw that fitted immediately into their own *well-established social framework* and so it produced a quick and lasting effect.¹⁹

In Affectivity

Beebe-Center reports the relativity of affective judgments in a striking case.²⁰ The observers were to judge pairs of stimuli. They were instructed to state in the case of each pair not only which stimulus was the *more pleasant* but whether each was pleasant, indifferent or unpleasant. One observer reported that both stimuli were indifferent, yet one was more pleasant than the other. A sheer case of "illogic"—the same thing, indifferent and pleasant at the same time. The experimenter investigated the case further. He found that the

¹⁹ FROM BARTLETT, F. C., *Remembering: a Study in Experimental and Social Psychology*, 1932, 248. By permission of The Macmillan Company, Publishers.

²⁰ BEEBE-CENTER, J., *Pleasantness and Unpleasantness*, D. Van Nostrand & Company, Inc., New York, 1932, 6-7.

observer had visualized a scale. The upper part represented pleasantness, the middle *part* (not the middle *point*) indifference, and the lower part unpleasantness. He placed the two stimuli in the middle within the indifference range, and so reported "indifferent." Yet within the indifference range, one stimulus was above, i.e., nearer to the pleasantness range, and accordingly was reported as pleasanter. So the "illogic" turns out to be a perfectly natural case of *member-character*. *In relation to the whole scale*, both were indifferent; *in relation to each other*, one was more pleasant. The logic is good if the frames of reference are taken into consideration. This relational effect is not restricted to a few individual cases of affectivity alone. It applies to a whole array of facts that come under "hedonic contrast" (the pleasantness and unpleasantness of a particular stimulus depends on the pleasantness and unpleasantness of other stimuli that precede it in close temporal sequence).

In Personality

Some recent investigations on the situations arousing the experience of success or failure involve the extension of the concept of frame of reference close to the level to which our problem of social norms belongs. The work of Hoppe²¹ and the more quantitative investigations of Frank²² show that the level of performance in a task is experienced as success or failure not in terms of the absolute degree of accomplishment, but in terms of the mark set by the person in establishing his level of aspiration (*Anspruchsniveau*) in that particular task. If he surpasses that level the result is the experience of success; in case this level is not reached, the

²¹ HOPPE, N. F., Erfolg und Misserfolg, *Psychol. Forschung*, 1930, 14, 1-62.

²² FRANK, J. D., Individual Differences in Certain Aspects of the Level of Aspiration, *Amer. J. Psychol.*, January, 1935, 119-128.

experience of failure follows. Here we find an experimental verification of the observation that the person who sets his standards high may consider himself a failure in spite of his achievements. The ego level reflects the general structure of his goals and aspirations, "which extend far beyond a single task and cause the aspiration level to shift up or down." Normally the aspiration level approximates the level of performance, as one knows one's past performance in the given task. But when the situation is related to the ego, so dear to every one of us, this new factor dominates the whole picture, and the aspiration level is regulated by the ego level. The ego level, involving our self-esteem, is kept high at any cost, and protected. We shall consider this more fully in Chapter IX.

CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS FOR OUR PROBLEM

From this review one general phenomenon stands out: The frame of reference is involved in many or all of the major fields of psychology: in sensory phenomena, in perception, in affectivity, in memory, etc. Perhaps it is a general psychological phenomenon. Yet in order not to make a fetish out of this concept, let us keep clearly in mind that the frame of reference does not imply any independent agent intruding into every psychological process as an outsider. The concept is used to designate some of the important factors coming into the total field of external and internal stimulation which constitutes a functional whole. In other words, the concept of frame of reference denotes some factors among other functionally related, interdependent factors, around which the whole process is organized.

Our general theme in this book is that in the course of the life history of the individual and as a consequence of his contact with the social world around him, the social norms,

customs, values, etc., become interiorized in him. These interiorized social norms enter as frames of reference among other factors in situations to which they are related, and thus dominate or modify the person's experience and subsequent behavior in concrete situations (see Chapters VIII and IX). If we look back at our illustrations borrowed from the field workers in ethnology or cultural anthropology, with the concept of frame of reference in mind, we cannot help finding in these illustrations something similar to the general phenomenon standing out in our review of some psychological facts in the present chapter. In one case scents, and in another case the torch, serve as reference points in reckoning time, while in a third culture a certain periodicity of economic life, the market day, has the same function. In one society the norms and taboos in the cultural background may emphasize similarities among certain individuals who stand in a certain relationship to one another, or may deny such similarities, and as a consequence the individuals are not thought of as standing in this relation to one another. Such established norms or standards serving as frames of reference are not rigid, unchangeable entities, nor is such a norm a fixed and unalterable peculiarity of any primitive society. Important changes in the structure of society usually determine the formation of new norms appropriate to the situation. These new norms may not eliminate the old ones right away; by inertia they may persist for a long time, and eventually disappear.

A delightful case of the formation of such a frame of reference in time localization, its persistency, and its final disappearance, is reported by Winter:²³

I had a curious experience myself illustrating this adaptability,

²³ WINTER, E., *Red Virtue*, Harcourt, Brace & Company, New York, 1923, 171.

the quickness with which new habits may be learned. My second day in the Soviet Union I was invited by an American correspondent to a party "on the sixth."

"What day of the week is that?" I asked.

"I don't know. They've abolished the week and we never think about the names of the days any more."

"You're not a Russian," I said. "You must know what day it is."

He persisted. He did not know. I thought him merely obstinate. No American could forget the names of the days of the week just because the Russians had introduced the five-day week and abolished Sunday. A month later an American friend, a visitor, asked me for tea "next Wednesday."

"What date is that?" I asked. And realized that I no longer used the names of days.

SUMMARY

Now that we have cleared the way for our specific field, we may look back and pick up some vantage points. At the basis of the differences of mentalities that determine to a large extent the way in which people belonging to different cultures look at the world, we found a great diversity of frames of reference. This gave us the necessary perspective for the psychological analysis of norms. In our review of some basic facts from different fields of experimental psychology we have noted the involvement of a frame of reference as a dominant or modifying factor in the total situation. Perhaps the two sets of facts are related, and the principle which underlies them both may be the basis of the relationship between psychological and cultural. The study of this relationship is our task in the chapters that follow.

Chapter IV

STIMULUS SITUATIONS IN SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY

NORMS FIRST EXTERNAL TO THE INDIVIDUAL

MAN is not born into the world with a set of norms. They become a part of him as he develops in a social environment. The social environment consists of people with whom he comes into contact as a baby in a family, as a playmate, as a pupil in a school, as a member of a religious group, an economic group, a social class, etc.

This is not all. An important part of the social environment is made up of furniture that the child begins to see and use from birth, of tools he grows to handle, of melodies and rhythms starting with lullabies, of proportions of buildings and streets, of sentence structure that is imposed upon him—i.e., the products that have come into existence in the course of human history.

These are some of the concrete means by which the established norms of the group become interiorized in him. The social or cultural determination of the mentality and conduct of a person is the outcome of these contacts. In psychological terms, "coming into contact" is "being stimulated."

We have repeated these truisms as a naïve confession of our basic faith in order to keep away from an everlasting controversy which goes on in social psychology. The authors who emphasize the importance of social and cultural determination of the mentality of an individual usually work on the sociological or cultural level. The writers who emphasize the rôle of the individual accuse the former of being mystical about culture, try to reduce the cultural situation to the

immediate personal surroundings, and make a great point of the primacy of the individual.

We are not sympathetic with either of the parties to this debate. As we saw in the first chapter, the individualists utterly fail, because they lack the proper perspective. Their own individualistic philosophies are largely of cultural origin; their own community-centrisms are imposed upon the facts. The cultural determinists are certainly correct in their conclusions that you cannot understand an individual without placing him in his social setting.

Yet we must, as psychologists, study individuals. The cultural determinists are working on their own level, not on a psychological level. On their level they may, perhaps, profitably study human groupings, their crystallized interests, social standards, and cultural products, without referring to the underlying psychological mechanisms. In fact, such empirical knowledge about these norms is more valuable and more real than, for example, a psychological explanation which says that a norm like "rugged individualism" consists of 5479 sensations or images. A melody that symbolizes the yearnings of a given period is as real as the separate tones that are found in it, and an epic poem is as real as the basic drives in the satisfaction of which we have to express ourselves somehow. The cultural product, be it a word with an established meaning in a standard dictionary, be it a melody or a norm about ownership, is a meaningful reality as long as it functions in human interactions.

But when we work on the psychological level we have to deal in terms of concepts that are psychological, and try to discover what sort of relationships exist among the variables implied in these concepts. Since psychology aims to study the individual in relation to his environment, taking into consideration both the properties of the organism and those of

the environment, the task of studying the psychological basis of norms becomes the study of norms as stimuli acting upon the individual from without, of the characteristic way in which the individual faces them and incorporates them in himself and also, once incorporated, of their rôle in his experience and his behavior. Hence, psychologically, norms are at first on the stimulus side in the genetic development of this or that particular person; the difficult psychological problem is to discover how he receives them and how they become a part of him so as to regulate his thinking and action.

SOME CHARACTERISTICS OF THE STIMULUS FIELD

If our approach is to be psychological, we must learn what experimental psychology has to say at this point. We must see what psychology has to say about stimulus situations in general, and extend our findings to the social field. Fundamentally our problem relates to the perception of the field of stimulation. We have already touched on this point in Chapter III.

There are cases in which the external field of social stimulation is well structured. We see definite shapes in buildings, tables, and books. We hear definite melody and rhythm in the music coming from radio, choir and orchestra. The field of stimulation is organized into definite structures, the rest forming the background on which these structures stand out with figure-character. In the organization of response to stimulation the essential principle is the *grouping* of different parts of the stimulus field.

Some sort of grouping takes place, whether or not the stimulus field itself imposes the essential conditions for grouping. There are, of course, many cases in which the field of stimulation is well structured. In such cases the special

characteristics of a grouping are determined by the factors in the external situation. The shape of a square with clear-cut lines will be perceived by everybody as a square. In this case the sharp contours of the four lines unmistakably connected with each other at their extremities are determining factors. The factors determining the structuring of the stimulus field have been recently studied,¹ and found to include among others the following: closeness (proximity), likeness, "common fate," and objective set. If there are dots at irregular intervals before you, the dots which are close together will be grouped together. But if such a spatial factor is lacking and certain of the dots are alike—say, in color or shape—these similar ones are apt to be grouped together.

In cases where such objective factors are wanting, the result is usually not a perception of chaos. Organization still takes place. But in these latter cases the internal factors play the dominant rôle in organization or grouping. These internal factors may be attitude, set, drive, emotional state, etc. Consider ambiguous figures or puzzle pictures. These pictures can be seen in different ways. But if you tell an observer one of the possibilities first, he will probably see that one and not the others.

The Rorschach tests are good examples of an indefinite, non-structured field of stimulation. These tests consist of indefinite ink blots. The subjects are asked to report whatever they see in these ink blots. Since the ink blots are irregular and complex, they are open to all sorts of interpretations, revealing certain internal factors in the subject himself. A recent study shows concretely how habitual ways of looking at things due to cultural peculiarities may cause people to see the Rorschach blots in such a way as to reveal the

¹ Especially WERTHEIMER, M., *Untersuchungen zur Lehre von der Gestalt, Psychol. Forschung*, 1923, 301-350.

peculiarities of their well-established culture products. Recently Bleuler and Bleuler gave Rorschach tests to a group of Moroccan subjects.² The important result that came out of this study, for our problem, is that the Moroccans give "such a wealth of small-detail responses" as is not usually found in European subjects. This very probably may be a reflection of the "love for beautiful detail" in the Moroccan art.

Some very good examples of the tendency to grouping and the dominance of internal factors over the external are found in the experimental work on rhythm. The essential condition in the perception of rhythm is grouping of stimuli. Usually accent is decisive in determining rhythmic patterns. But even when sounds follow one another fairly rapidly at a uniform rate without intensity or time-interval differences, we cannot help grouping them, and we experience rhythm while rhythm is objectively lacking. The rhythmic grouping of the puffs of the locomotive or the grinding sound of the train wheels is well known. These are examples of subjective rhythm.

It is possible to suggest definite rhythm to the subject before presenting the objectively uniform beats. Thus we can arouse the experience of a 2-group, 4-group or 3-group by suggestion. We can use group influence instead of direct suggestion. The author instructed groups of subjects to beat time with their hands, and speak aloud a particular prescribed grouping given to them by the experimenter, 1-2, or 1-2-3, or 1-2-3-4, as the case might be. Then an additional subject was brought into the experimental room. This additional subject was completely ignorant of the fact that the rhythm was prescribed. He was simply told to "fol-

² BLEULER, M., and BLEULER, R., Rorschach's Ink-Blot Test and Racial Psychology: Mental Peculiarities of Moroccans, *Character and Personality*, December, 1935, vol. 4, no. 2, 97-114.

low the rhythm." For a few minutes the prescribed subjects carried on the performance in the presence of the new subject. After the other subjects were sent out of the room, the subject who did not know the prescribed rhythm was told to beat time to the rhythm of the ticks coming from the machine behind the screen. In most cases the subject conformed to the grouping which had been suggested by the hand movements and oral counting-off performed by the other subjects who had just left the room. In his introspections he usually reported intensity (accent) and time-interval differences which show that he experienced subjective rhythm determined by the group influence. (It would be interesting to compare the reactions of musically naïve subjects with the reactions of musically sophisticated subjects.)

All these illustrations show that whether the external field of stimulation is well structured or not, it is organized into definite patterns. If the external field is well structured, the objective factors in the situation determine what sort of grouping will take place. If the external field is not well structured, grouping still takes place; but here internal factors such as attitude play the dominating rôle in determining or completing the grouping. This grouping is a primary experiential fact. Even if this or that pattern depends largely on past associations, it is scarcely likely that the *tendency to organize* a stimulus field is itself merely a product of association.

SOCIAL STIMULUS SITUATIONS

Without any pretensions to comprehensiveness, we may conveniently classify the social stimulus situations under four categories.³ The individual may be facing:

³These situations are not mutually exclusive. There may be found situations in which the individual is passing from one to the other, or takes part in both within a short space of time.

1. Another individual;
2. A group in which he takes part as a passive member or spectator;
3. A group involving an interaction among active individuals, such as a discussion group, a group of pickets in a strike, a jury, a parliamentary body, a mob bent upon lynching or any other form of violence.
4. Cultural products, i.e., shapes, proportions, tools, melodies, rhythms, established values—in short, all kinds of stimulus situations that are not found in a state of nature but come into existence in the historical development of societies (these will be more fully considered in Chapter VII).

With these in mind, let us now turn to social stimulus situations, emphasizing especially the rôle of the established norms interiorized in the individual as factors determining the manner of perceiving these social situations. This will give us an opportunity to place norms in relation to other major problems in the field of social psychology.

Another Individual as a Stimulus Situation

When we are introduced to a person for the first time, there is ordinarily some slight hesitation and searching; we do not know exactly what to talk about with such a person, how to start a conversation, how to behave in response to him, and how to interpret his remarks. Many of us experience some considerable embarrassment in regulating our relationships with a new acquaintance. The explanation may be that the words, movements, and remarks of a new acquaintance are, in a sense, new, *discrete*, unconnected stimuli for us; they have no setting as yet to which they may be

related. If the acquaintanceship continues for some time, there is established some sort of relationship between the two people involved. Once such a definite relationship is established, it has *a great deal to say* in determining the properties of their responses to each other's remarks and movements. As a consequence of the contacts of individuals, more or less definite "expectations" (a convenient term used by Judd⁴) of each toward the other appear. Henceforth their reactions to each other are to a large extent regulated with reference to this established "expectation." Deviations on the part of either one of them from the level of expectation may arouse joy, surprise, or disappointment in the other.

Usually, however, what sort of treatment they will expect from each other is prescribed by the customs, conventions, or other norms in the society of which they are members. Their respective positions in social, administrative, or economic life, and the possible prestige effect of each on the other, largely determine what they will expect from each other. Such social prescription may go so far as to predetermine the personal relationships even between blood relatives.

An observation by Radcliffe-Brown⁵ on the Andaman Islanders shows how far this cultural predetermination of individual relationships can go. Even the child-parent relationship is no exception. "The duties that one person owes to another are determined much less by their relation to one another by consanguinity and marriage, than by their respective ages and social status. Even within the family, which

⁴ JUDD, C. H., *The Psychology of Social Institutions*, The Macmillan Company, New York, 1926, 56-65.

⁵ RADCLIFFE-BROWN, A. R., *The Andaman Islanders*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, England, 1922, 69-70.

nevertheless is important, the duty of a child to a parent is very little different from his duty to any other person of the same age."⁶ (See also page 150.)

It is an everyday occurrence that the same remark made to us by two different individuals may not get the same response (cf. page 120 ff). The differential response is brought about by our established relationships to those individuals. In some cultures this may develop to the status of an established norm. Thus Thompson notes that in North Queensland, "When a man swears, it is not a question of what he says as much as to whom he says it."⁷

Facts of the sort mentioned above are of basic importance in that they call our attention once more to the necessity of understanding the general structure of society, its standardized norms about individual relationships and kinship. In order adequately to comprehend the reactions of one individual to another, it is not sufficient to put them together and note their immediate stimulus value for one another; their history and status as well as their present dominant attitudes must be ascertained.

The Group as a Stimulus Situation in which the Individual Is a Passive Spectator

We turn now to instances in which the individual belongs to an "audience" and apparently takes no active part himself. The individual attending a church service, a lecture, a concert, a graduation exercise, a wedding, or any ceremony arranged by others, may be considered an example. All of these occasions in which many individuals come together and respond together to an outside stimulus with some de-

⁶ *Ibid.*, 81.

⁷ THOMPSON, D. F., The Joking Relationship and Organised Obscenity in North Queensland, *Amer. Anthropol.* July, 1935, vol. 37, 465.

gree of regularity, are regulated by certain norms appropriate to the occasion. All such meetings have their own immediate "atmospheres." These atmospheres certainly have their imposing effects on the individual, demanding at least a certain degree of conformity from him. The atmosphere is, to a large extent, the product of the external field of stimulation—the general character of the meeting place, its furniture, the music played, the prescribed dress of the group, etc. This is not all. The norms, too, which regulate the general plan of the meeting, have a great deal to say in determining the reaction of the individual.

Yet, to tell the whole story, it matters whether the individual is in harmony or not with the norms which have given rise to, or regulate, the meeting. For purposes of an adequate social psychology, these inner factors must be considered. Let us consider a revival meeting of the Aimee Semple McPherson type. In such meetings it is not a rare occurrence to find individuals who represent different systems of religious norms. Individuals in the meeting may stand up when others stand and may be emotionally excited in varying degree. Nevertheless, the consistent atheist, even while standing in conformity to the general atmosphere, may feel disgust upon seeing once more a verification of his idea that religion is the "opium of the people." A good Episcopalian, accustomed to solemn liturgy and ritual, might think that religion is degraded by such outbursts. This much is enough for this category; otherwise we shall be stepping out of our main theme. But again, as we saw in Chapter II, the prediction of behavior will depend on knowledge of the whole background of the individual; the same objective situation has an utterly different personal meaning and value to the various members of the group.

The Interacting Group as the Stimulus Situation for an Active Member of the Group

In our third category the individual himself is involved in the process of interaction, i.e., he is not only influenced by the rest, but himself enters as an active factor. An enthusiastic discussion group, a lynching mob, a group of pickets during a strike, are a few examples. Everybody agrees that an individual experiences and acts differently when he is in a group and when he is alone. Even if he is the leader, he is no more an isolated self; he himself has to move in the direction of the group when it takes a definite course.

The group experiments reported in Chapter VI are a rudimentary type of interaction between individuals. For our central theme the importance of this category of stimulation lies in the fact that in such meetings or outbursts, decisions may be reached; slogans, fetishes, or symbols may arise which may be used as established norms by the group on later occasions, or by the individual in his later thinking or acting, even when alone. (See Chapters V, VI.)

Social Products as Stimulus Situations

The three categories of social stimulus situations already mentioned involve contact with people. Yet social stimulus situations are by no means exhausted by these categories. To see these forms of social stimulation, and no more, is a grave mistake committed by social psychologists who cannot go beyond the limits of momentary situations, ignoring very important factors in the background while stressing the momentary contacts of individuals. Some otherwise carefully conducted experiments on social facilitation suffer greatly through providing no place for the consideration of the background of the experimental situation.

The psychological principles which are used to explain

even the momentary situations must include those which relate to the backgrounds and social histories of the participants, as is now evident in the light of experimental evidence on sensory and perceptual phenomena.

To cite an outstanding example, the variations in behavior obtained by F. H. Allport⁸ from extensive work on the "response to social stimulation in the group" are attributed to "the sight and sound of others doing the same thing." Such an account totally ignores the psychological properties of a group situation, as we have already seen. Further objections to such a concept of social facilitation will be treated in the next chapter. In the meantime, to say simply that the variations in response in group situations as contrasted with individual situations are due to "the sight and sound of others," without paying any attention to how sights and sounds are perceived, is stopping at the point where a psychologist's main task should really start. Merely to obtain results from group influences is not psychology at all. An employer or a factory manager may often know much better empirically in what situation their employees work better or worse. Psychology comes in when the principles involved are clarified, or attempts are made in that direction.

Besides responding to the people in the environment, men in every developed society are surrounded and stimulated by the products of culture, products revealing past social behavior. These products include buildings, streets, tools, furniture, money, dress, language, number systems, science, æsthetic products like music and rhythm, established values or norms in morals, religion, and politics. From infancy on, the child grows up confronting all these. We may for pres-

⁸ ALLPORT, F. H., *Social Psychology*, Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston, 1924, 260-291.

ent purposes classify the first three categories of stimulus situations as immediate social situations, and the category of situations involving social products as "cultural."

The moment we make the above statement, two questions impose themselves upon us: (1) Are not language and values implanted in the growing child by his contact with other people, such as mother and family? Therefore do not the categories of "stimulus situations involving individuals" cover all such items as language, music and ethical norms? Does not a child first learn language and values from other people—parents, teachers, playmates, etc.? (2) We have mentioned buildings, furniture, language and values in one single series; but are they stimulus situations under the same category? These questions will be taken up in order.

Certainly a child learns words, gestures, and melodies, as well as what he is supposed to do and what things will make him a "bad boy," from his nurse, parents, teachers. In this way established norms become a part of him through the mediation of the situations involving contact with other people. But the symbols transmitted through these contacts are not generally a product of the particular individuals who transmit them; they are established and standardized products of society (of course as a consequence of the contacts of individuals again, but of individuals who lived in the distant past and are inaccessible at the moment). As such, the cultural products have a reality of their own, independent of this or that individual member of society; and this immediate reality may be verified easily by the resistance one meets when he deviates considerably from the well-established norms of his time. Thus a sentence in a particular language has a definite structure; if a person distorts the structure beyond a certain range, he will soon find out that

nobody understands what he is trying to convey, or that his mode of expression makes him ridiculous.

Experiments on the psychology of perception have definitely demonstrated that shapes of things, proportions of a figure, meanings of words and qualities of a melody are realities that must be taken on their own level. The shape of a square is a psychological reality of the order of the reality of a line or a dot. When you take the lines apart, you tear down the relationship in which they stand to each other, and the shape is destroyed. Similarly, the transposition of a melody from one key to another teaches us that the main thing about a melody is the time relationship of tones rather than the absolute properties of the separate tones. In perfect accord with the above examples, experiments on the meaning of words or sentences have proved that the perception of meaning is immediate and direct, and that we do not wait for the experience of related associations and build up the structure bit by bit. This is demonstrated by the fact that the *meaning* of a word or concept is more immediate than the separate associations that lie behind it in the past.⁹ Because of the bulk of such evidence in experimental psychology, we must conclude that melodies, rhythms, words, sentences, shapes and proportions are all realities that must be taken on their own level. A word or sentence is not simply a vocal response; it is a part of a definitely established language. How and when a particular word will be used in the sentence is determined by the structure of the language. Thus the word or the sentence used by the individual is not a natural function of the organ of speech or any other part of the organism. As Sapir says, ". . . There are, properly speaking, no organs of speech; there are only organs that are incidentally useful in the pro-

⁹ This point is elaborated in Chapter VII. (See p. 130.)

duction of speech sounds."¹⁰ In order to understand the properties of words and sentences beyond the light and sound waves which stimulate the eye or the ear, we must study them on their own level; otherwise they lose their meaning. To do this we have to study the language as a living, real institution with a history of its own.

The same argument holds also in the case of definitely established cultural values and other norms. Hence, in our study of them as stimuli coming from individuals to individuals, we must not miss their properties on their own level, but we must relate them to the general class of stimuli in the culture of which they are a part.

Now we come to the second question. In the category of cultural products as stimuli, we have mentioned furniture and values in one breath in the same series. The buildings, language, and norms fall under the same category because they are products achieved in the course of the history of a given society. In his surroundings the child sees buildings, furniture, tools, etc. As he grows, standardized norms are imposed on him in play, in regulating his behavior in eating and sleeping; even his relationships to other individuals—parents, playmates, teachers—are prescribed to a great extent. He must often go a long way before he can find stimulus situations in the state of nature, not determined or not altered by factors due to the past and present accumulation of cultural products.

The effect of social products does not stop here. Society, besides surrounding the individual with definite shapes, combinations and rhythms, which are examples of well-structured stimulus situations, implants in him definite norms about the make-up of the physical world, which play

¹⁰ SAPIR, E., *Language, an Introduction to the Study of Speech*, Harcourt, Brace & Company, Inc., New York, 1921, 7.

a great part in the formation of his attitude toward nature and what he will emphasize most in his geographical surroundings, including stars, winds, mountains, prairies, streams, etc.

Because of the increasing accumulation of products of human contact through long periods, there is a serious danger in approaching social studies by merely carrying ideas from the animal level to the human level. On the animal level the products of contacts are not accumulated through generations, or recorded in language, architecture, dress, and established norms with ever-increasing complexity. Such products as architecture and ethical norms, which surround the individual and stimulate him, all have the important common property of being accumulated developments in the course of social history.

A child comes to face some of these products directly, but some of them are implanted in him by other individuals. Such stimuli as architecture, decorations, furniture, and tools are external to individuals, being expressed in stone, wood, steel and other material. Whether he is deliberately made to face them or not, he cannot help being stimulated by some of them. In organized society a baby is born in a house or dwelling of some sort; he cannot help facing furniture and the proportions involved in them. This very fact starts forming standards of taste and right usage in him even before language starts. Furniture, streets, and buildings are well-structured perceptual situations with definite forms, sizes and proportions. The forms, sizes and proportions that deviate from the ones we are accustomed to may look funny, queer, unusually large or small to us. The streets in an oriental city, not to mention the things found in those streets, will look unbearably narrow to an American accustomed to larger proportions.

From the point of view of the question as to the manner in which an established social product comes to the individual, we may therefore classify social products as stimulus situations into two divisions:

- (1) Those which stimulate the individual directly without the mediation of other people;
- (2) Those which act through the personal mediation of other individuals.

NORMS AS STIMULI—THEIR EFFECT ON OUR OUTLOOK

A great many social products are transmitted by individuals to others around them. Many of our likes and dislikes, much of our æsthetic preferences, and the norms concerning our relationship to other individuals, or even to nature, are in this class. These established values and norms are our chief concern and will be considered at length in Chapters VII and IX. The remainder of the present chapter will be devoted to a brief examination of the rôle of established norms in shaping our tastes, our relationships to people around us, and our attitudes toward our natural surrounding.

It is common knowledge that our æsthetic tastes are partly determined by norms that prevail in our social environment. As there are norms about the fashions of our suits and dresses, there are prevalent norms in society that hold certain æsthetic products in fashion for a given time, short or long; wide variations from accepted standards are considered ugly or unpleasant. Thus to a person brought up on oriental music, which is built chiefly upon rhythm and melody, the harmony of a musical work coming from a great European orchestra is almost sheer noise.

Birkhoff, who has carefully investigated the proportions

found in several fields of æsthetic productions, offers a mathematical æsthetic formula based on a comparison of the "elements of order" with the "elements of complexity" in a work, and gives definite criteria as to what are to be considered elements of order and elements of complexity. Yet his investigation of Chinese æsthetic forms led him to conclude: "It does not seem to me that the diverse types of Eastern music are likely to admit the application of the æsthetic formula in the same way as does the music of the West."¹¹

It was observed by Rivers in the island of Eddystone¹² that if one looks at the Melanesian vocabulary "one will find that some form of the word *mate* is given as the equivalent of dead." But the word *dead* conveys a meaning quite different from that of the concept *mate*. Such direct equivalents "afford a most inadequate expression of the real conditions. . . . It is true that the word *mate* is used for a dead man, but it is also used for a person who is seriously ill and likely to die, and also often for a person who is healthy but so old that, from the native point of view, if he is not dead he ought to be." The concrete case reported by Rivers is so well described that we cannot refrain from giving it in his own words, as he concludes that: ". . . the life of primitive man is far more definitely divided into periods than that of ourselves. We have certain landmarks in our lives, as when we first go to school or university or when we begin to earn our own bread, but such periods in the life of primitive man are far more clearly separated from one another. He does not gradually grow from boyhood to manhood, but he changes from the definite status of a boy to the definite

¹¹ BIRKHOFF, G. D., *Æsthetic Measure*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass., 1933, 215.

¹² RIVERS, W. H. R., *Psychology and Ethnology*, Harcourt, Brace & Company, New York, 1926, 40-50.

status of a man by means of ceremonial which often lasts for a considerable time, it may be for years, and during the whole of this transitional period he is in a definite state or condition."¹³

Socially established norms are not limited to shaping in us a set of æsthetic standards, or even to prescribing our relationships to other individuals; they have much to do in determining our perception of nature and our attitudes toward it. Certainly trees, mountains and clouds may have definite shapes with definite contours; but to what extent these will be noticed and what sort of perceptual groupings will be structured is determined to a great extent by the norms of culture. What we shall notice in the external stimulus field, and what aspects of it will stand out, are largely a function of what we are prepared to see. The socially established norms of a given period create in us lasting expectations and a preparedness to see in the nature that surrounds us much to which another period would be totally blind.

Thus before Rousseau and the others of his school wrote of the beauty of nature, and their slogans became generally known and accepted, people noticed nature very much less. Paul Hazard has pointed out that "before the eighteenth century the French had little, if any, appreciation for the beauties of nature. To be sure, the French had always been fond of what they called '*voyages en campagne*'—journeys into the country. But, in truth, what were these trips? If one investigates the matter one will find in reality that a '*voyage en campagne*' meant simply that one traveled to some château in the provinces, where one's comfort was extremely well served, and where the company shut itself up in the rooms of the château for conversation and draw-

¹³ *Ibid.*, 48-49.

ing-room diversions, broken only by walks in the garden. No one seems to have gone into the country to enjoy the rural scene itself, or to have taken much note of the country's beauty. . . . Even so intelligent a man as Montesquieu limited his whole description (1729) of a trip from Rome to Munich to this statement: 'I made a very painful journey, half of the way in excessive heat, the other half in mortal cold, in the month of August, in the mountains of the Tyrol.' All grandeur of these mountains and the beauty of Lake Constance among them, meant to him nothing."¹⁴

Not only the prevailing attitude toward nature or toward society, but the profoundest *individual differences* between the men of any one age may arise in whole or in part from varying responses to prevailing norms. Thus in his effort to establish firmly his major types, extravert and introvert, Jung gives the following description of the introvert oriental (Indian) mind: "To the oriental, the object is imbued with life *a priori* and always tends to overwhelm him; thus he withdraws himself, in order to abstract his impressions from it."¹⁵ The observation is correct. At the same time we are inclined to say that this mentality, in so far as it characterizes oriental as against occidental minds, is the product of well-established norms, rather than a biologically inherited incurable introvert type.

The immediacy of some features of nature as stimulus situations is not enough to cause people to concentrate their attention on them. Thus we shall give an instance from a primitive society in which little attention is paid to the stars, in spite of the magnificent star-lit nights. Among some of the Northern Rhodesians,

¹⁴ Report of a lecture by Paul Hazard, *Boston Evening Transcript*, November 10, 1928.

¹⁵ JUNG, C. C., *Psychological Types*, Harcourt, Brace & Company, New York, 1926, 364.

. . . remarkably little attention is paid to the stars (intongwezli). When one thinks of the magnificently brilliant nights and their habits of sitting around the evening camp fires, one wonders that they should not have figured out constellations and formed myths of the stars. We have many times drawn their attention to the stars and tried to get their names, but without success. It is not reckoned taboo to attempt to count the stars, but any one who should try it would be laughed at as a fool. The only planet they name is Venus; but knowing that she appears as the evening and as morning star, they give her two names.¹⁶

SUMMARY

In this chapter we have tried to put the norms in their place in social psychology. We concluded that norms are first external to the individual who is new born in society. Later in life he faces them and incorporates them in himself. Thus the psychological study of norms necessitates that we place them first on the side of the stimulus situations.

The stimulus situation may or may not be well structured. In the latter cases especially, the preparedness of the individual, which represents an attitude, plays the dominating rôle in the organization of definite structures. The well-established social norms, once incorporated in the individual, play an important rôle in determining his experience and subsequent reactions toward people around him.

The social norms are not stable entities. They are products of human contact in the course of history and in our present-day world. Hence our further task is to study the psychology of the *formation of norms* and their effect on the experience and behavior of the individual, once they are found and incorporated in him. This we propose to do in the following chapters.

¹⁶ From SMITH, THE REV. E. W., *The Ila-Speaking Peoples of Northern Rhodesia*, 1920, vol. 2, 219. By permission of The Macmillan Company, Publishers.

Chapter V

THE INDIVIDUAL IN THE GROUP SITUATION

THE INDIVIDUAL IN SOCIAL CONTACTS

WE HAVE seen that norms are products of the contacts between individuals within the remote or recent history of a society. Hence we must examine the characteristics of human contact. Such contact, as we have seen, may consist merely of an individual's dealings in response to other individuals, or of an individual's behavior in group situations. The latter interactions have more bearing on our problem.

To go back and study the origins of strongly established norms, which we have "inherited" from historical accumulations rather than biologically, and to psychologize about the way they came into existence has proved not to be very fruitful. The psychology of the origin of the norms which control, for example, language or property rights, is a highly controversial matter. Those who theorize about these matters of origin may be using their data from the historical or ethnological fields in a highly selective way. They ordinarily seize upon examples that conveniently fit into their particular ideologies and ignore or forget others.

But there are at least two more fruitful lines that we can follow in our investigation of the psychology of social norms. With the development of society new situations arise. If these situations are of general importance they find expression in some sort of social organization or institution, and norms come with it. For example, the N.R.A., with its Blue Eagle and codes, was such an institution. This line of approach has the advantage of concreteness. But it is ex-

tremely difficult to take all the important factors into account; such situations are terribly complex.

The other line of approach is experimental. Here it is possible to control the situation to a considerable degree. There is, indeed, the danger of the artificiality of the laboratory atmosphere. The processes we study in the psychological laboratory may have little to do with the concrete way the norms work in actual social life. The only thing we can do is to adopt an empirical test. If the principles established on the basis of laboratory experiments can be profitably extended to the explanation of the everyday operation of norms, then our principles are valid; otherwise they are nothing but abstractions based on laboratory artifacts. We can proceed with these precautions in mind.

The fact that social norms presuppose the contact of individuals raises at once the problem of the experience and behavior of the individual in the presence of others, or in a situation involving others. After studying the psychological properties of individuals in a group situation, we shall be in a better position to go one step further and take up the formation of norms as a product of such contacts.

There are all degrees of complexity in the group situations in which the individual may find himself. These may range from the comparatively simple relationship between two individuals to the collective explosion of a crowd response in which the individual seems totally lost.

The differences in experience and behavior brought about by the influence of the group situation in which the individual is found have been experimentally studied extensively since the end of the last century. Among these studies the elaborate experiments of Moede and Allport have become classical.

A brief summary of the results obtained in some of Allport's experiments will give a concrete idea about the social "increments" and "decrements" appearing in group situations, i.e., the gain or loss in output of work resulting from the presence of others.¹ One of the experiments in the series was an association test, i.e., putting down words "as rapidly as they came to mind." In the case of a majority of subjects in this experiment there was "an increase in speed and quantity of work under group influence."

In another experiment the subjects judged, when alone and in groups, the degree of pleasantness or unpleasantness of odors ranging from putrid odors to perfumes. In the judgments given in group situations the *extreme* judgments of pleasantness or unpleasantness were avoided in general; "the unpleasant odors therefore were estimated as *less unpleasant* in the group than when judging alone; and the pleasant were estimated as *less pleasant* in the group than in the solitary judgments." This shows a leveling effect in the group situation. A similar leveling effect was obtained in the judgment of weights in the group situation. Allport describes this effect as a "basic human tendency to temper one's opinions and conduct by deference to the opinion and conduct of others."²

The same experimenter investigated the influence of groups upon thought by "having the subjects write short arguments, during five minute periods, in the group and alone." The results indicate that "two-thirds of the individuals produced a higher percentage of *best* arguments while working alone than while working in the group." From these facts, Allport concludes that "the *intellectual* or

¹ ALLPORT, F. H., *Social Psychology*, Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston, 1924, 260-285.

² *Ibid.*, 278.

implicit responses of thought are hampered rather than facilitated" in the group situation.

From such studies we can get factual data about the variations in the experience and behavior of the individual in group situations. Demonstrable differences are obtained by the comparison of the results in the individual and group situations. All in all, these studies show that the intellectual or physical activity of the individual is modified, e.g., the group may greatly increase or decrease the quantity of work done by him. In the following pages we shall go on to the study of the psychological properties of such group situations.

CROWD SITUATIONS, THEIR NEGATIVE AND POSITIVE EFFECTS

Especially important for us are the characteristics of interacting groups and crowds. On such occasions a slogan or a short-cut formula may come forth which later, even when the individual is no longer surrounded by the members of the crowd, may serve as a guide for him whenever it is invoked. Here appears an approach to the problem of the formation of norms. It is, therefore, worth our while to glance at some of the important properties of crowds. It is emphasized by sociologically inclined authors that the individual in a crowd situation is no longer his individual self; his individual experience is in the powerful grip of the occasion; his actions are no more his; he is simply a tool responding to the whims of the leader or the violence of the group. To revive the properties of the crowd situation in our minds, we may give one instance, which, in his own words, "had an important share" in the education of George Bernard Shaw. He saw a crowd of people, a genuinely "popular movement" which started with a "runaway cow."

The individual in an intense group situation acts as a

member of the group; the group situation demands conformity. Whether the individual would *like* to conform or not (if he were to weigh the different aspects of the situation and his own interests from many angles), when once he is a part of the situation, it imposes conformity on him. He is no longer "the kind of man who would take this or that into consideration before acting." Conformity permeates his emotions, his thinking, and his tempo of action, bringing group members to a common level, pulling down the sharp intellects of the more distinguished members and possibly elevating the intelligence of others in the group. All these modifications may be summed up as the *leveling* effect of the group.

Some writers on the subject have emphasized the intellectual inferiority of the crowd to the individual when alone. They have also given pathetic pictures of the demoralizing effects of crowds. They have even recommended "Prophylactics against the Mob Mind."⁸ Such admonitions are appropriate if we set ourselves to pick out only the unfortunate cases and blind ourselves altogether to the elevating effects of crowds. It is true that there are cases in which the individual commits inhuman acts under the grip of a general outburst of mob fury. On the other hand, the group may work to produce the highest deeds of morality and self-sacrifice. Not only may a man whom we know to be stingy surprise us by generous contributions in a group situation; heroism and stoical self-control are common experiences on the battlefield and in the great crises and revolutions of every era.

To give a concrete instance that can be easily verified, we

⁸ Ross, E. A., *Social Psychology*, The Macmillan Company, New York, 1908, 83-93.

may refer to the Halifax disaster following an explosion in 1917, an intensive crisis that brought people into close psychological contact. At Halifax there were many individuals, as well as whole families, who refused assistance that others might be relieved. Individual acts of the finest type were written ineffaceably upon the social memory of the inhabitants. There was the case of a child who used her teeth to release the clothes which held her mother beneath a pile of debris. A wounded girl saved a large family of children, getting them all out of a falling and burning house. A telegraph operator at the cost of his life stuck to his key, sent a warning message over the line, and stopped an incoming train in the nick of time. "The illustrations of mutual aid at Halifax would fill a volume. Not only was it evidenced in the instances of families and friends, but also in the realm of business. Cafés served lunches without charge. Drug stores gave out freely of their supplies. Firms released their clerks to swell the army of relief."⁴

Thus the effect of the crowd situation on the individual participant is not only to reduce him to the state of a beast, setting him free to destroy and give rein to his instinctive activities. There are irresponsible orgies regressing to the point of allowing the irresponsible domination of instinct. On the other hand, there are many cases in which the important popular movements in history have had definite aims to achieve under the stress of a common disaster, or of the cruelty of the conditions of life imposed upon the people, or of the rigidity of the social norms governing their lives.

A glance at Freud's *Group Psychology* is pertinent in

⁴ PRICE, S. H., *Catastrophe and Social Change*—Based upon a Sociological Study of the Halifax Disaster, in *Columbia University Studies in History, Economics and Public Law*, 1920, vol. 94, 36-57.

this connection. This will bring us nearer an understanding of the formation of social products as the result of the contact of individuals—products which are not found ready-made in the instinctive or unconscious repertory of human structure.

The crux of the position taken by Freud may be summarized in a few sentences. According to him, the main and, in fact, the only important effect the group situation brings about in the individual is to strip from him the superstructure of social norms or conscience, if the moral aspect is in question, and give free rein to the satisfaction of the libido; and the only important thing that finds expression is what is stored in the unconscious. This idea is expressed by Freud in unequivocal terms: "From our point of view we need not attribute so much importance to the appearance of new characteristics. For us it would be enough to say that in a group the individual is brought under conditions which allow him to throw off the repressions of his unconscious instincts. The apparently new characteristics which he then displays are in fact the manifestations of his unconscious, in which all that is evil in the human mind is contained as a predisposition. We can find no difficulty in understanding the disappearance of conscience or of a sense of responsibility in these circumstances."⁵ According to Freud, the basic undercurrent at the bottom of all social action and organization is the sex impulse. To express it concisely in his own words: "First, that a group is clearly held together by a power of some kind; and to what power could this fact be better ascribed than to Eros, who holds everything in the world?"⁶

⁵ FREUD, S., *Group Psychology and the Analysis of the Ego*, International Psychological Press, London, 1922, 9-10.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 40.

NORMS BECOMING COMMON PROPERTY IN CROWD SITUATIONS

This means that, according to Freud, the direction of action as well as the emotional quality attained, in a group situation, is stored in the unconscious and ready in advance.

It is true that there are group situations which are conducive merely to strong sex manifestations. But the crowds that have a lasting effect are those which achieve a social end. In these cases not only is the behavior not directed to the satisfaction of the libido, but the individual at times cannot help sacrificing himself when he is once in the grip of a powerful movement.

In some crowd situations, formulæ or slogans arise or come to be standardized, achieving the status of common property dear and sacred to every participant, which even on later occasions may move the individuals to action or become the focal point in their lives. Consider the "Liberty, Equality, Fraternity" of the French Revolution; the American Revolutionary "Life, Liberty, and the pursuit of happiness"; and the war-time phrase, "To make the world safe for democracy." Once such a slogan is raised to such status, it can be used and abused to move individuals to action; in its name a great many things can be done. Symbols, slogans, and values, when once standardized for groups, are no longer mere trifles but may have great vitality even as rigid stereotypes.

Once a group or crowd takes a definite direction and gains considerable momentum in that direction, even the leader who has first started it and uttered the slogans may not be able to stop it. Slogans have their own history, short or long, depending on the situation and the appropriateness in changing situations. The boos that MacDonald received from his old comrades in the recent British elections afford

a fitting instance. No wonder, then, that the political agitators who "know their job," if not the refinements of social psychology, make a close study of the slogans they are about to adopt.

SPECIAL PROPERTIES OF CROWD SITUATIONS

The denial of the special characteristics of the group situation and the psychological value of its special properties amounts to ignoring some well-established and basic facts of psychology. Even the mere presence of lines or dots near a line at which we are looking, influences our perception of it, sometimes considerably. A psychological group situation alters the individual's perception, and the group products that thus come to be standardized are important realities. To be sure, the basic reality at the bottom of all social and cultural realities is the individual organism. But once the superstructure rises, we cannot reverse the process; there emerges a new determinism at its own level. So, too, the determinism of chemistry is acceptable at its own level, although chemical reactions all depend upon realities at the subatomic level.

Thus Freud's *Group Psychology*, which starts excellently by breaking down the artificial dualism between individual and social psychology, turns out to be an individualistic psychology of the Eros and the storehouse of the unconscious. This one-sided thesis ignores facts established in the psychology of perception, namely, the *interdependence of individual parts*. Freud proceeds as if the *isolated* individual could serve as a clue to the group.

What happens in a group or crowd situation is not restricted to the breaking down of the moral and social norms that regulate one's daily activities, but involves the rise and the incorporation of new norms or slogans in the individual.

Thus, seeing the crowds or mobs only at the hour of turmoil and outburst, without going back to the causes that produce them and the effects that follow, again shows a lack of perspective necessary in the study of the problems of social psychology.

The immediate circumstances that give rise to a crowd situation may be important and vital. Such are the prolonged hunger and cold which may give rise to the strikes and the violence in great masses of people. Or these precipitative circumstances may be unimportant and trivial—such as a quarrel over a strip of bathing beach in the Chicago riots of 1919. Nevertheless, the basic psychological processes must ultimately be explainable by common psychological laws. Perhaps comparatively simple crowd situations will enable us to approach nearer to the basic principles, because the causes and the manifestations, as well as the effects, may be traced more easily.

A keen observation made by Charlie Chaplin in Vienna gives us much insight regarding the instantaneous organization of a crowd of short duration:

There is a psychology in the gathering of crowds. I can be walking along a thoroughfare with an occasional recognition. People just look and nudge one another, then go on their way. But occasionally an excitable wench will exclaim, "Oh, look, there's Charlie Chaplin!" and the crowd immediately takes on her excitement and gathers round until I have to make for a taxi.⁷

This simple and clear-cut case, which certainly is far from involving all the aspects of a typical mob ending in action, is important for us because it illustrates the following points: Charlie Chaplin is a personality with prestige. Because of

⁷ CHAPLIN, CHARLES, A Comedian Sees the World, *Woman's Home Companion*, October, 1933, 102.

his large audiences he was recognized and noticed by passersby in the large cities he visited. The sudden discovery of a celebrity (a true celebrity to millions of people all over the world wherever there is cinema) is an event that stands out from the rest of the ordinary run of familiar happenings on the street, the movement of traffic and the passing of unknown pedestrians. The unexpected discovery of a person of note may even arouse some sort of emotion in most people. Yet what we may do and what we may not do on the street are prescribed by certain norms. We are not supposed to look intently at a person; we are not supposed to give overt expression on the street to every surprise or sudden emotion, attracting to ourselves the attention of everyone around us. Self-respecting people do not do so. Consequently, most "people just look and nudge one another." One may very well nudge his companion to call his or her attention to something that has to be noticed. But there are those who are less firmly shut up within themselves by the boundaries set by social norms. They easily give expression to excitement when they face a situation that is out of the ordinary. The sudden appearance of Charlie Chaplin is one of these situations. Thus an excitable woman may easily break through the norms regulating our behavior on the streets. There is a momentary polarization around her exclamation, "Oh, look, there's Charlie Chaplin!" People stop to look, and those who would otherwise go on their way after nudging one another make a little crowd around the person with prestige. This feeling of his importance is the *common* element in their experience that gathers them into a momentary crowd, even though they do not know one another and will perhaps never see one another again. This situation does not involve a lasting common tie important enough to hold them together, or to lead into collective

action or the expression of slogans of enduring importance. Yet the incident is sufficient to illustrate how a common background, a common frame of reference, in some respect, may make possible the sudden precipitation of a crowd situation when one individual breaks through the norm of decorum and restraint.

In this brief survey of social situations of varying complexity, a few points stand out. (a) The *group situation* may bring about modifications in the experience and behavior of every individual in it. (b) When the performance of a task is in question, the output of the individual members may vary. (c) The individual in the group or crowd situation acts as a member of the group. His experience and behavior are determined by the nature of his membership in it. (d) The formation of crowds may depend on the relaxation of old norms, and may also result in establishing new norms.

IMPLICATIONS OF THE PSYCHOLOGY OF "ILLUSIONS" FOR THE STUDY OF OUR PROBLEM

There are established facts in psychology which define the general character of the influences involved in social situations. We refer to a general character which is not peculiar to the social field, it appears whenever the individual faces any perceptual situation whatever. The first important step in social psychology is to analyze *the way we react to a perceptual field*. Further elaborations of the psychology of thinking, feeling and acting follow when the properties of perception have been described.

Let us first consider visual perception. The properties of an object, or even a line or dot in the field of stimulation, are determined not only by the fixed characteristics of the parts of the stimulation in isolation, but to a considerable extent by its position and relationship to other objects, lines

and dots around it, and the general background against which it stands out. Let us take some familiar examples. Two lines equal in length will seem to be of different lengths if arrowheads are added at the extremities of the lines—in one case the arrowheads pointing outward, in the other inward. Or take two lines that are parallel and add slanting lines. The parallel lines persistently appear to con-

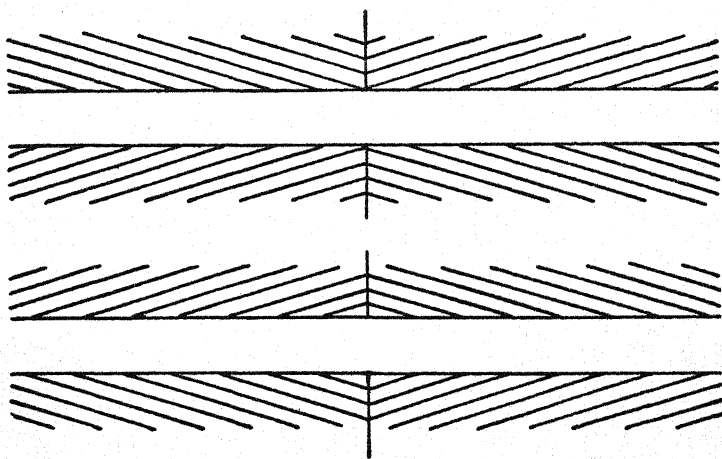


FIG. 2.—The Hering Illusion.

verge at one end, in spite of our knowledge that they are parallel. This particular example, well known as the Hering illusion, will illustrate our point. (See Fig. 2.) The two dark lines are physically parallel, and look parallel when in isolation. But when found together with the rays of lines seen in the drawing, these two lines seem to bulge, in spite of our knowledge that they are perfectly parallel. A perfectly good circle will appear to bulge this way or that if there are broken or straight lines in it or around it. Such facts can be multiplied indefinitely. Psychological reality—the way we

see, hear and feel things—may not correspond to the physics of the stimulating objects. But whatever we experience is a psychological reality. If we wish to study the psychology of any phenomenon we have to accept psychological realities without imposing our prejudices from other sources of information about the nature of the stimulus situation. We perceive objects and situations relationally; the properties of a perceived object are determined by the properties of the stimulating object as related to and modified by the properties of other stimulating agents at the time, internal and external, which come into functional relationship with it. Thus the stimulation, external and internal, of a given moment forms a functional system or unity. The properties of any part of it are determined by its relation to other parts in this unity.

If the perception of even a line is influenced by other lines around it, it is natural to expect that our perception and subsequent behavior will be modified in a fundamentally similar way when we are in a situation facing other persons in some definite relationship—one of competition, cooperation, or any familiar type of group interaction.

It is unlikely that we can have people around us in different relationships as stimulating agents and not be influenced in our experience even by their mere presence. And this is not a mechanical additive influence. The presence of arrowheads at the extremities of lines is not merely something added to our experience of the line; it affects our perception of its very length. Similarly, the presence of other persons does something more than *add to* the perceptual field. The field may be recast.

Some social psychologists who have studied the performance of individuals in group situations have made a summative issue of the influence of the group; each member

responds to one individual plus another individual, plus a third, and so on. The group influence becomes a summation of many stimuli, added or subtracted at will.

At this point we may hear the usual come-back that our remarks are aimed at a straw man, the creation of our own imagination. When a social psychologist begins his basic psychology (at the foundations of his social psychology) by drawing reflex arcs, some for simple and some additional ones for less simple phenomena, our remarks appear to be aimed not at a straw man but a man of flesh and blood.

Still we may be reading our own interpretations into the explanations of such social psychologists. The fairest course to take, therefore, for the development of our point is to give a concrete case.

F. H. Allport's experiments, which showed variations in the behavior of individuals in group situations, are among the classics of social psychology. The social stimulation that brings about the variations in group situations is described by Allport in such terms as "the sight and sound of others doing the same thing." To say this, and no more, about the psychological properties of the stimuli and the context in which they are found, is to overlook some well-established facts of the psychology of perception. We have seen in numerous illustrations that stimuli do not have absolute stimulating value. The way a stimulus affects us is modified, to say the least, by its place in relation to other stimulating agents and also by the state of the organism, in which the cultural background is ordinarily no small factor.

Disregard of these basic psychological considerations leaves the social psychologist in a hopeless situation in dealing with such problems as institutions and established human groupings, and such problems as individual vs. society. F. H. Allport has taken up these problems in his recent book,

Institutional Behavior.⁸ Throughout this volume no reader can help feeling the humane sympathies of the author. In chapter after chapter all problems are reduced to one, i.e., the problem of the one and the many. In essay after essay the problem is solved by the same method, i.e., the pointing out of what is called "the group fallacy." The procedure is simple enough. It is convincingly shown again and again that there are no such entities as institutions or nations and that the underlying substratum is the individual. True enough. But before this highly controversial sociological problem of the reality of groups, aside from the reality of individuals, can be approached, social psychologists must confront more basic, more elementary problems. As was already touched upon in Chapter IV, the basic psychological consideration in group situations is to find out how the individual experiences, perceives the group situation which he is facing, and how he feels and, subsequently, how he acts in it. Two parallel lines are *physically, geometrically*, still parallel lines, no matter what there may be in their vicinity. But *psychologically* they need not always look parallel. This psychological bulging of the physically parallel lines is a psychological reality. This "illusion," to be sure, is as deterministic an affair as any other natural phenomenon.

A social psychologist may resolve the problem of the one and the many by sending the individuals one by one out of the room in which they were in a group situation. Sure enough, after the last individual has gone out of the room, our social psychologist will point out to us the empty room and say triumphantly, "You see there is no group, when the individuals are gone." No one can deny this fact. But what our social psychologist has done is not psychology at all; he

⁸ ALLPORT, F. H., *Institutional Behavior*, University of North Carolina Press, Chapel Hill, 1933.

has given us a simple exercise in arithmetic. Of course when you take seventeen apples from seventeen apples, you have no apples left. This exercise, evidently, is not so useful for the social psychologist. His special task is altogether different: What happens to the individual when he is in the group? How does he perceive the situation? With what sort of modification does he go out of the group situation? Perhaps he may go out of it with the common slogan of the group. This slogan may determine his conduct later, when he faces the same situation, so that he reacts the same way as he would have if he were in the group situation again.

Let us take one more example. If you throw all the individuals of a nation into the ocean, there will be no nation. It is also true that all the citizens of the United States cannot act together in the same place. But every American citizen is taught, through grade and high school, the meaning of the nation in such terms as "one nation, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all"; and henceforth the "nation" is a psychological reality for the individual. The incorporation in him of such slogans, values, and stereotypes is a psychological problem. Once the values of a group are incorporated in the individual, these meaningful short cuts are immediate psychological realities to him, capable of regulating his feelings, likes and dislikes (see Chapter VII).

Until the psychology of social perception is studied, "Hope of a New Individualism," which Allport proposes, will therefore not be advanced by his analysis of institutional behavior.

This defect in approach to the group can be traced to a misconception not in social psychology as such but in the psychology of perception in general; the integration of sensory impressions is supposed to be built on summation of sensations, each of which has a fixed relation to a stimu-

lus. This amounts to giving up the psychological reality in the interests of the principle that claims a fundamental priority for elements which are supposed to be fixed both before and after they integrate to give such and such an experience. With this main line of approach, a great deal of theorizing went on, for example, to explain the "illusions." Tons of literature appeared on this topic alone. In less than twenty years at least twelve theories were advanced to explain the Müller-Lyer "illusion,"⁹ in which two equal lines appear to be of different lengths when arrowheads pointing in different directions are added to their extremities. The chief line of approach was the acceptance of the experiential identity of the perception of the main lines, regardless of the arrowheads. Psychologists tried to find out how the extraneous lines of the arrowheads could act upon the awareness of the main lines. The problem, in spite of a huge amount of elaborate experimentation, did not come near to finding an adequate theory.

Since the rise of Gestalt psychology, we have realized that when the organism is stimulated by different parts of a stimulus field, the parts fall into a functional relationship and each part influences the other parts. The result is, we repeat, that the properties of any part are determined by its membership in the total functional system.

When we extend this general principle to the social field, a new psychological approach to the problems of groups and crowds appear. When we are in a situation with other people, our experience and subsequent behavior are modified by the special social conditions around us. The social situation may develop into some form of closed system, with more or less rigid boundaries in which the experience and

⁹ See TITCHENER, E. B., *Experimental Psychology*, Vol. I, *Qualitative Experiments*, The Macmillan Company, New York, 1918, 303-329.

actions of the individual are regulated by his membership-character and his special position in the group. The special properties of his emotion and the tempo of his experiences and actions move in harmony with the tempo, emotional state and other characteristics of the group. The slogans and values that develop or become standardized in the group situation become his guides to action.

Now, coming to concrete life situations, we find norms wherever we find an organized society, primitive or complicated. These norms serve as focal points in the experience of the individual, and subsequently as guides for his actions. This need not always be a conscious function; many times it is effective without our awareness of it. We see the evidence of its effectiveness by its results, that is, in the behavior of the individual. The daily routine of everyday life is regulated to a large extent by the social norms in each society. As long as life with its many aspects is well settled and runs more or less smoothly from day to day, very few doubt the validity of the existing norms; very few challenge their authority. And the few who challenge them are considered to be doubting Thomases, eccentrics, trouble makers, or lunatics, and are reacted against with varying degrees of scorn or violence.

But when social life becomes difficult and there are stresses and tensions in the lives of many people in the community, the equilibrium of life ceases to be stable, and the air is pregnant with possibilities. Among such stresses may be widespread hunger, or unbearable living conditions due to the rigidity of norms that have come down as survivals from past generations and no longer satisfy the requirements of life, or the ruthless suppression or exploitation of one part of the population by the other. Or such stresses may be due

to the alarm aroused by a common real or imagined danger that people face together. Under these delicate conditions the strength of the norms incorporated in the individuals becomes uncertain and liable to break down. Such a delicate, unstable situation is the fertile soil for the rise of doubts concerning the existing norms, and a challenge to their authority. The doubt and the challenge which no one would listen to before, now become effective. These are times of transition from one state to another, from one norm or set of norms to another. The transition is not simply from the orderliness of one set of norms to chaos, but from one set of norms to a new set of norms, perhaps through a stage of uncertainty, confusion, and at times even violence. In such periods the principles and slogans formulated previously by a then eccentric person or group may be revived by others and propagated easily. Discussions and meetings take place; the interested active parties sharpen their principles and slogans, and endeavor to make these the guides of action for the masses as they urge the people to do their part.

As a result of the strain and stress, of the confusion and uncertainty and feeling of insecurity, there may be action and reaction, apparent stability followed by fresh instability. The outcome is the final emergence or establishment of a stable set of norms having the status of standards. The emergence and standardization of the norms is never an arbitrary process; it is as deterministic as any other lawful process in nature, the causes of which lie in the actual conditions which have given rise to the instability. Henceforth this new set of norms supplants the old ones and becomes the regulator of social life. It suffices us to remember some of the important transitions from one historical period to another in the life of any community with which one is intimately familiar.

Of course this process of the emergence and standardization of norms is not an affair of one or two days. Sometimes it may take years before the new set of norms becomes established, with dominant authority and prestige. Nor is it absolutely necessary to have the individuals involved actually in spatial proximity. There may exist a psychological community of a group of people experiencing more or less the same stress in facing the same grave situation. Individuals do not necessarily have to form actual crowds to standardize a norm or a slogan that appropriately standardizes the situation. What is to be done may be sufficient to put people into action and make a common focal point of experience out of it. That is why the modern conveniences of communication, newspaper and radio, are becoming so important in propaganda work, especially at crucial times. When the Nazis plotted the Vienna putsch in the summer of 1934, one of the first steps they took, beyond the assassination of Premier Dollfuss, was the seizure of the Austrian broadcasting station, thus reaching the people with a prefabricated message. Mr. Roosevelt is celebrated for his "fire-side chats" to the American people over the radio. An address to the joint session of the two Houses, scheduled in the evening at a time of day when most people were at home and could make use of their radios, was perhaps not delivered chiefly for the benefit of Congress but aimed to announce the "entrenched greed" of his opponents to the millions of American listeners.

EXPERIMENTAL APPROACH

The study of the process of emergence or standardization of norms in actual life situations is an extremely complicated task. There are so many variables involved that cannot be directly observed. It may, therefore, pay us in the long

run to start first with the study of the psychology of norm formation in a general way in a well-controlled laboratory situation. Yet what we shall undertake is really the study of the general psychological process involved in the formation of any norm, and not simply the explanation of the psychology of one particular norm. The test for such an approach lies in the applicability of the principle reached to the description and explanation of norms found in actual social life. Whether or not this is just one more psychological abstraction or laboratory artifact, which does not have anything to do with the true psychology of the formation of norms that are effective in everyday life, can be decided after it has met facts in the fresh and wholesome air of actualities.

All that we have said is only a general principle of orientation and not a solution of a problem. Its value lies in giving us a sounder approach to the study of specific problems in group situations.

Now we are prepared to take up the basic processes involved in the psychology of social norms.

Chapter VI

THE FORMATION OF A NORM IN A GROUP SITUATION

SITUATIONS CONDUCTIVE TO THE STANDARDIZATION OF NEW NORMS

PROCEEDING from the conclusions reached in the last chapter as to the general psychological characteristics of group responses, we can advance to study the formation of a norm in a group situation. The experiment to be reported in this chapter is essentially an extension to the social field of the general psychological principle that came out so clearly from the experiments in different fields of psychology.

In our experiments we tried to apply to the social field the concept of frame of reference as a general psychological phenomenon revealed in many experiments in diverse fields of psychology. Our experiments are reported because they definitely suggest that the frame-of-reference notion is essential in the approach to any study of norms. The point that makes us venture to postulate that the psychological phenomenon revealed in the results of our experiments is the prototype of the phenomenon involved in the formation and operation of norms in actual social life, is the fact that these experiments are based, in their very conception, on a general psychological tendency that persistently shows itself in experiments from so many different fields of psychology. The experiments to be reported in this chapter aim to justify the extension of this psychological principle to the social level.

HYPOTHESIS TO BE TESTED

We have seen that if a reference point is lacking in the external field of stimulation, it is established internally as the temporal sequence of presentation of stimuli goes on.

Accordingly we raise the problem: What will an individual do when he is placed in an objectively unstable situation in which all basis of comparison, as far as the external field of stimulation is concerned, is absent? In other words, what will he do when the external frame of reference is eliminated, in so far as the aspect in which we are interested is concerned? Will he give a hodgepodge of erratic judgments? Or will he establish a point of reference of his own? *Consistent* results in this situation may be taken as the index of a subjectively evolved frame of reference.

We must first study the tendency of the individual. We must begin with the individual in order to do away with the dualism between "individual psychology" and "social psychology." In this way we can find the differences between individual responses in the individual situation and in the group situation.

Coming to the social level we can push our problem further. What will a group of people do in the same unstable situation? Will the different individuals in the group give a hodgepodge of judgments? Or will they establish a collective frame of reference? If so, of what sort? If every person establishes a norm, will it be his own norm and different from the norms of others in the group? Or will there be established a common norm peculiar to the particular group situation and depending upon the presence of these individuals together and their influence upon one another? If they in time come to perceive the uncertain and unstable situation which they face in common in such a way as to

give it some sort of order, perceiving it as ordered by a frame of reference developed among them in the course of the experiment, and if this frame of reference is peculiar to the group, then we may say that we have at least the prototype of the psychological process involved in the formation of a norm in a group.

THE AUTOKINETIC EFFECT, ITS POSSIBILITIES FOR OUR PROBLEM

With these considerations clearly in mind, our first task has been to find objectively unstable situations that would permit themselves to be structured in several ways, depending on the character of the subjectively established reference points. From among other possible experimental situations that could be used to test our hypothesis, we chose to use the situations that are suitable to produce subjective rhythm and autokinetic effects. They meet the requirements demanded by the hypothesis. In Chapter IV we had occasion to mention briefly the bearing of subjective rhythm phenomenon on our problem (see pages 48-51).

The conditions that produce the autokinetic effect afford an excellent experimental situation to test our hypothesis. We can easily get the autokinetic effect. In complete darkness, such as is found in a closed room that is not illuminated, or on a cloudy night in the open when there are no other lights visible, a single small light seems to move, and it may appear to move erratically in all directions. If you present the point of light repeatedly to a person, he may see the light appearing at different places in the room each time, especially if he does not know the distance between himself and the light. The experimental production of the autokinetic effect is very easy and works without any excep-

tions, provided, of course, that the person does not use special devices to destroy the effect. For in a completely dark room a single point of light *cannot* be localized definitely, because there is nothing in reference to which you can locate it. The effect takes place even when the person looking at the light knows perfectly well that the light is not moving. These are facts which are not subject to controversy; anyone can easily test them for himself. In this situation not only does the stimulating light appear erratic and irregular to the subject, but at times the person himself feels insecure about his spatial bearing. This comes out in an especially striking way if he is seated in a chair without a back and is unfamiliar with the position of the experimental room in the building. Under these conditions some subjects report that they are not only confused about the location of the point of light; they are even confused about the stability of their own position.

The autokinetic effect is not a new artificial phenomenon invented by the psychologists. It is older than experimental psychology. Since it sometimes appears in the observation of the heavenly bodies, the astronomers¹ had already noticed it and offered theories to explain it.²

We have studied the influence of such social factors as *suggestion* and the *group situation* on the extent and direction of the experimental movement. The study of the extent of the experienced movement permits a quantitative study for the approach to the formation of norms. We shall therefore report on the extent of movement.

¹ For a concise history of the autokinetic effect as a scientific problem, see ADAMS, H. F., Autokinetic Sensations, *Psychol. Monog.*, no. 59, July, 1912, 32-44.

² Several theories have also been advanced by psychologists to explain the nature of the autokinetic effect. These are immaterial for our present problem. The important fact for us to remember is that the autokinetic effect is produced whenever a visual stimulus object lacks a spatial frame of reference.

PROCEDURE

We have studied the extent of the movement experienced in two situations.

1. When alone, except for the experimenter (in order to get the reaction of the individual unaffected by other experimentally introduced social factors, and thus to gain a basic notion about the perceptual process under the circumstances).

2. When the individual is in a group situation (in order to discover modifications brought about by membership in the group).

The subject was introduced into the group situation in two ways:

a. He was brought into a group situation after being experimented upon when alone. This was done to find out the influence of the group situation after he had an opportunity to react to the situation first in accordance with his own tendencies and had ordered it subjectively in his own way.

b. He was first introduced to the situation in the group, having no previous familiarity with the situation at all, and afterwards experimented upon individually. This was done to find out whether the perceptual order or norm that might be established in the group situation would continue to determine his reaction to the same situation when he faced it alone. This last point is crucial for our problem. The others lead up to it and clarify its implications.

The subjects, apparatus and procedures used will be only briefly outlined here. They are reported in full elsewhere.³

The experiments were carried on in dark rooms in the Columbia psychological laboratory. (See Fig. 3.) The sub-

³ SHERIF, M., A Study of Some Social Factors in Perception, *Arch. Psychol.*, no. 187, 1935.

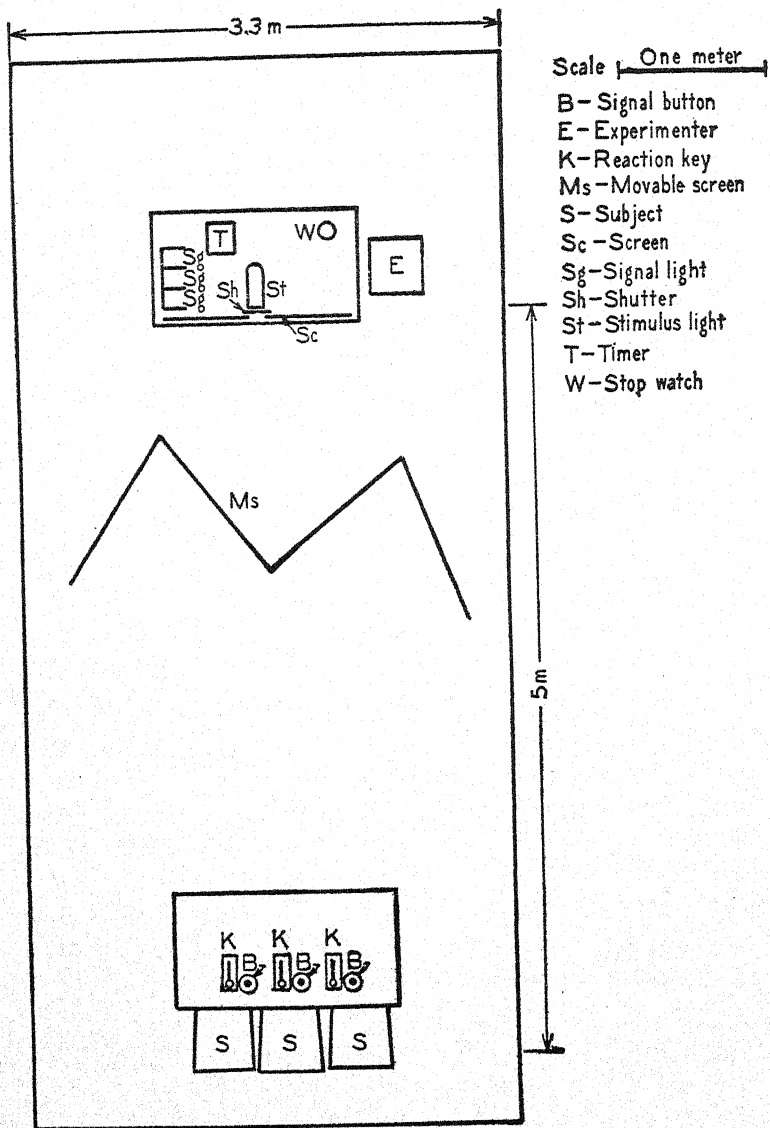


FIG. 3.—Plan of Experimental Room.

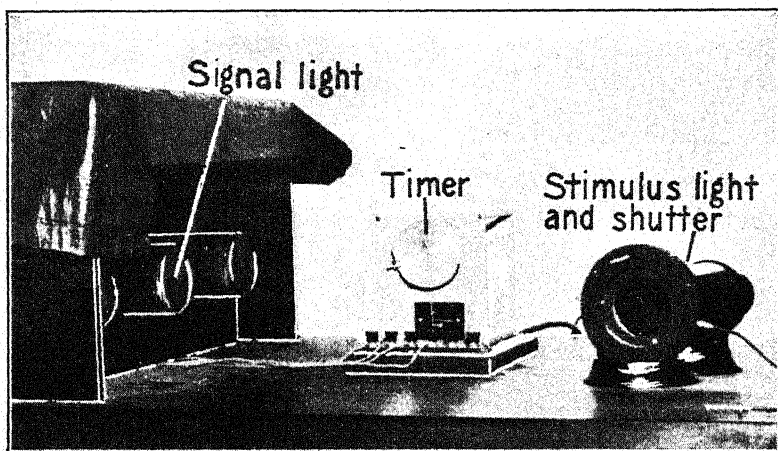
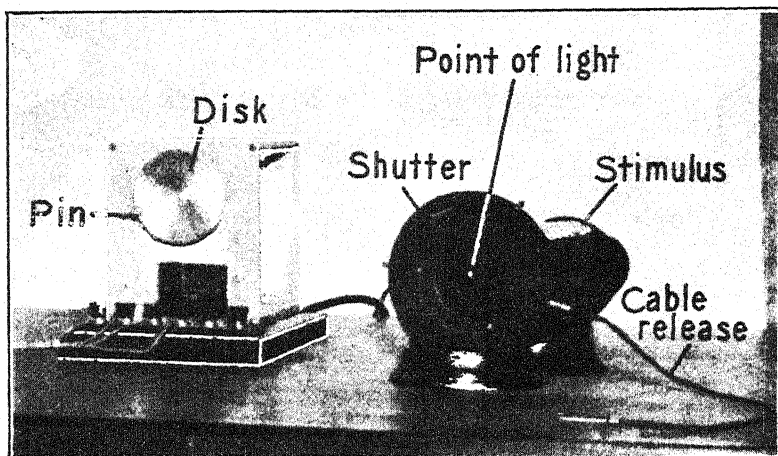
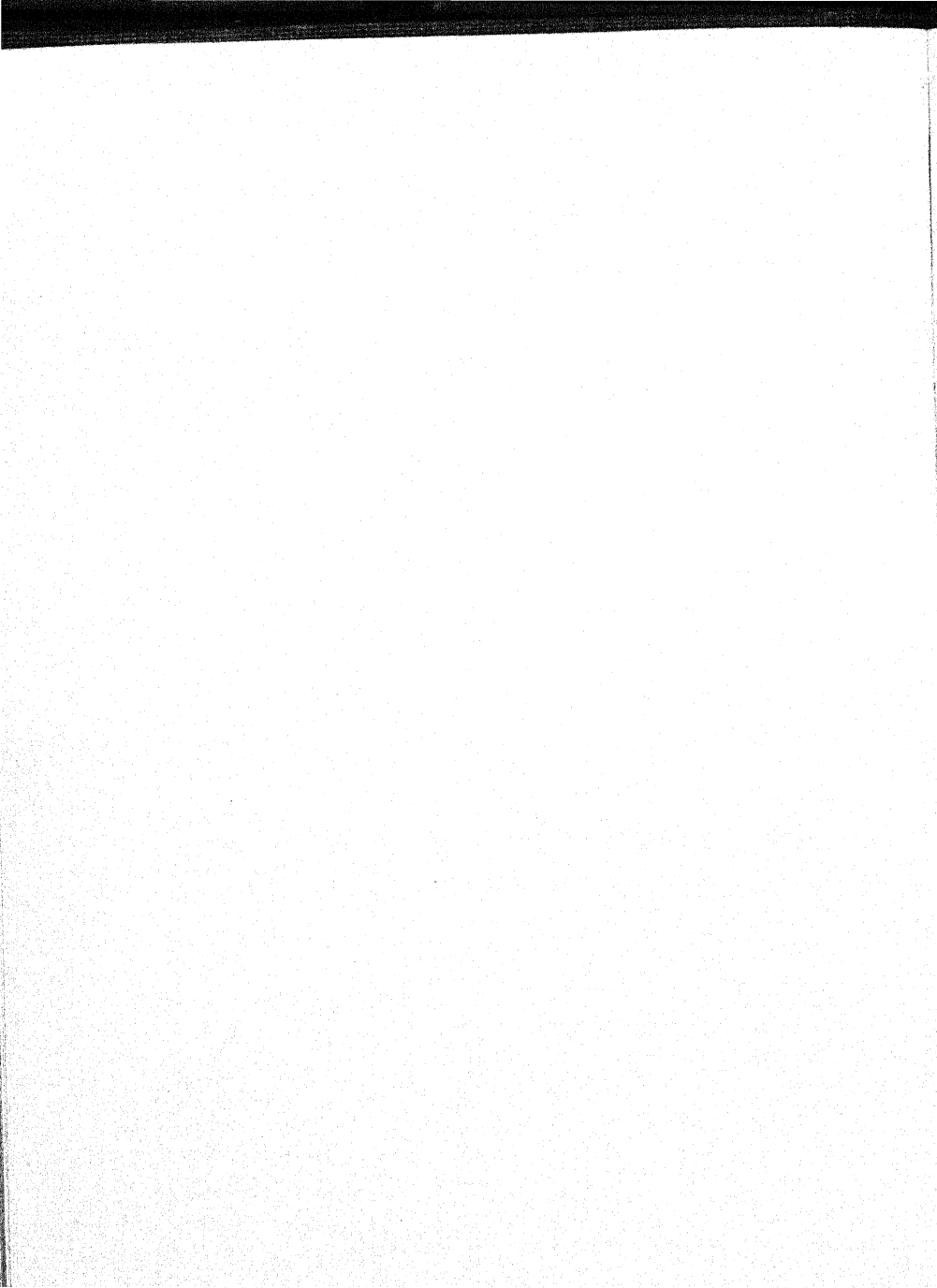


FIG. 4.—(Above) Apparatus for individual trials with screen removed. (Below) Apparatus for group experiments with screen removed.



jects were graduate and undergraduate male students at Columbia University and New York University. They were not majoring in psychology. They did not know anything about the physical stimulus set-up, or the purpose of the experiment. There were 19 subjects in the individual experiment; 40 subjects took part in the group experiments.

INDIVIDUAL EXPERIMENTS

The stimulus light was a tiny point of light seen through a small hole in a metal box. The light was exposed to the subject by the opening of a suitable shutter controlled by the experimenter. The distance between the subject and the light was five meters. The observer was seated at a table on which was a telegraph key. The following instructions were given in written form: "When the room is completely dark, I shall give you the signal *READY*, and then show you a point of light. After a short time the light will start to move. As soon as you see it move, press the key. A few seconds later the light will disappear. Then tell me the distance it moved. Try to make your estimates as accurate as possible." (See Figs. 3 and 4 for the experimental set-up.)

These instructions summarize the general procedure of the experiment. A short time after the light was exposed following the *READY* signal, the subject pressed the key; this produced a faint but audible ticking in the timing apparatus indicating that the subject had perceived the (auto-kinetic) movement. The exposure time, after the subject pressed the key to indicate that he had begun to experience the movement, was two seconds in all cases.

The light was physically stationary during the entire time and was not moved at all during any of the experiments.

After the light had disappeared, the subject reported orally the distance through which it had moved as he ex-

perceived it. The experimenter recorded each judgment as soon as it was spoken by the subject, writing each one on a separate sheet of a small paper pad. One hundred judgments were obtained from each subject. The subjects reported their estimates in inches (or fractions of inches).

The quantitative results are reported elsewhere.⁴ Here we shall present only the conclusions reached on the basis of these quantitative results, and give some important introspections that clarify these conclusions further.

The results unequivocally indicate that when individuals perceive movements which lack any other standard of comparison, *they subjectively establish a range of extent and a point (a standard or norm) within that range which is peculiar to the individual*, that may differ from the range and point (standard or norm) established by other individuals. In other words, when individuals repeatedly perceive movement which offers no objective basis for gauging the extent of movement, there develops within them, in the course of a succession of presentations, a standard (a norm or reference point). This subjectively established standard or norm serves as a reference point with which each successive experienced movement is compared and judged to be short, long, or medium—within the range peculiar to the subject.

To express the point more generally, we conclude that in the absence of an objective range or scale of stimuli and an externally given reference point or standard, each individual builds up a range of his own and an internal (subjective) reference point within that range, and each successive judgment is given within that range and in relation to that reference point. The range and reference point established by each individual are peculiar to himself when he is experimented upon alone.

⁴*Ibid.*, 24, 34-41.

In the second series of the individual experiments, it was found that once a *range*, and point of reference within that range, is established by an individual, there is a tendency to preserve these in the experiments on subsequent days. A second and third series of 100 judgments each show a median score for a given subject which is very similar to that found in the first series, but with a reduced variability.

The written introspective reports obtained from every observer at the end of the experiment further corroborate these conclusions based on the quantitative results. Introspections of the following sort, which are typical, show that the subjects first found it hard to estimate distance because of the lack of externally given reference points or standards:

"Darkness left no guide for distance."

"It was difficult to estimate the distance the light moved, because of the lack of visible neighboring objects."

"There was no fixed point from which to judge distance."

Introspections of the following sort indicate that the subjects developed standards of their own in the absence of objective ones:

"Compared with previous distance."

"Used first estimate as standard."

This reveals once more the general psychological tendency to experience things in relation to some frame of reference, as we saw in our review of related findings in various major fields of psychology.

In accordance with the idea developed in Chapter II, what we did in the group experiments was to carry this finding of experimental psychology into social psychology

and note how it operates when the individual is in a group situation.

GROUP EXPERIMENTS

On the basis of the results given, the problem which we must study in the group situation becomes self-evident. The individual experiences the external field of stimulation in relation to a frame of reference. When a frame of reference is given in the objective situation, this will usually determine in an important way the structural relationships of the experience; in such cases all other parts will be organized as determined or modified by it. But at times such an objective frame of reference is lacking—the field of stimulation is unstable, vague and not well structured. In this case the individual perceives the situation as shaped by his own internally evolved frame of reference. The questions that arise for the experiment in the group situation, then, are the following:

How will an individual who is found in the group situation perceive the stimulus field? Will there evolve in him again a range and a standard (norm) within that range that will be peculiar to him, as was the case when individuals were experimented on alone?

Or will group influences prevent him from establishing any well-defined range and reference point within that range, and thus spoil his capacity to perceive the uncertain situation in any sort of order?

Or will the individuals in the group act together to establish a range, and a reference point within that range, which are peculiar to the group?

If such a range and reference point are established, what will be the influence of such a group product on the indi-

vidual member when he subsequently faces the same stimulus situation alone?

The questions outlined above represent more or less pure cases. There are, of course, other possibilities that lie between these pure cases.

With these questions we face directly the psychological basis of social norms. We must admit that we have reduced the process to a very simple form. But the first fundamental psychological problem is the way an individual perceives a stimulus situation. The behavior follows upon this perception rather than upon the bald physical presence of the stimulus. There is no direct and simple correlation between the stimulus and the subsequent behavior, especially on the level of behavior with which we are dealing. A simple perceptual situation is the first requirement for experimental analysis of the problem.

We purposely chose a stimulus situation in which the external factors are unstable enough, within limits, to allow the internal factors to furnish the dominating rôle in establishing the main characteristics of organization. This enables us to say that any consistent product in the experience of the individual members of the group, differing from their experience as isolated individuals, is a function of their interaction in the group.

In Chapter IV we emphasized the fact that we do not face stimulus situations involving other people or even the world of nature around us in an indifferent way; we are charged with certain modes of readiness, certain established norms, which enter to modify our reactions. This important consideration shaped the planning of the group experiments. We studied the differences between the reactions (a) when the individuals first faced our stimulus situation in the group, and (b) when they faced the group

situation after first establishing their individual ranges and norms in the individual situation. Accordingly, twenty of the subjects began with the individual situation and were then put into groups in subsequent experimental sessions; the other twenty started with group sessions and ended with individual sessions.

This rotation technique enabled us to draw conclusions regarding the following important questions:

How much does the individual carry over from his individually established way of reacting to a later situation when facing the same stimulus in the group? How much will he be influenced by his membership in the group after once his range and norm have been established individually when alone?

How will he experience the situation when alone, after a common range and norm have been established peculiar to the group of which he is a member? In short, will the common product developed in the group serve as a determining factor when he subsequently faces the same situation *alone*?

The experimental setting was in general the same as in previous experiments. Of course, additional techniques were necessary to handle two or more members of a group at the same time. One major addition was the use of signal lights. As the subjects were new to the experimenter, he could not tell from the voice alone who was giving a judgment. So as each subject gave his judgment aloud, he pressed a push button connected with a dim signal light of a particular color by which the experimenter might know who the speaker was. (See Figs. 3 and 4.)

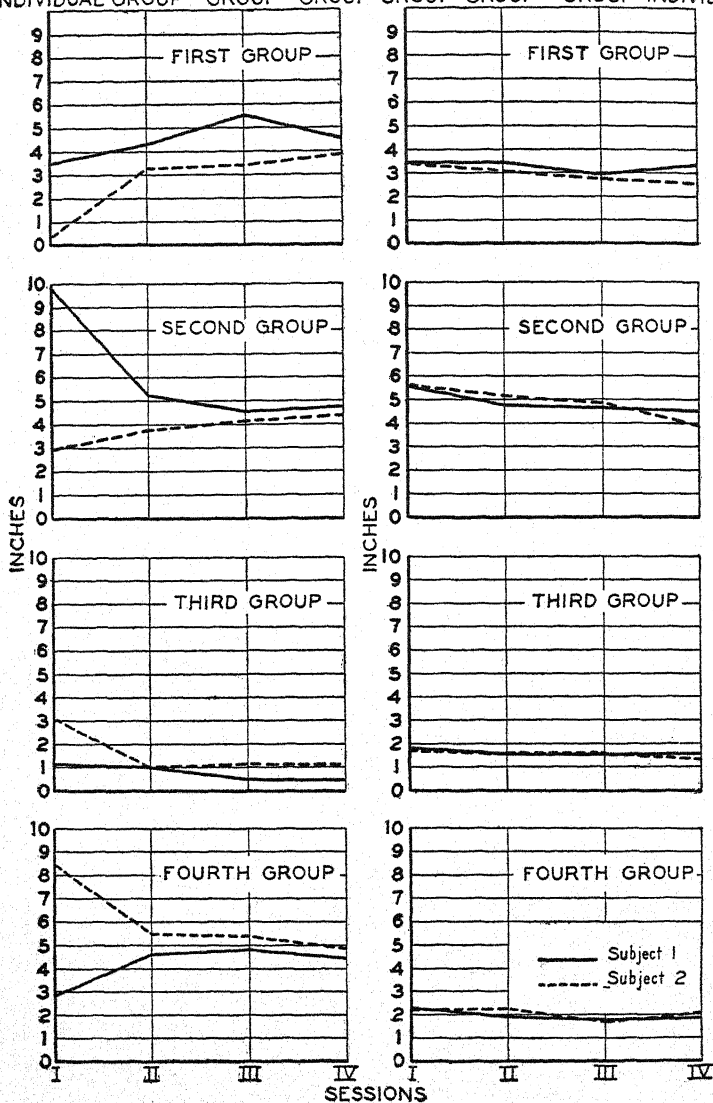
There were eight groups of two subjects each and eight groups of three subjects each. Four groups in each of the two categories started with the individual situation (one whole session for each individual), and then functioned as

groups. Four groups in each category started in group situations for the first three sessions on three different days (all subjects of the group being present), and were then broken up and studied in the individual situation.

In order to make the relation of individual members to one another as natural as possible, within the limits of the experimental setting, the subjects were left free as to the order in which they would give their judgments. In fact, they were told at the start to give their judgments in random order as they pleased. Whether the judgments of the person who utters his first have more influence than the others becomes a study in leadership, which is a further interesting problem. Perhaps such studies will give us an insight into the effect of polarization on the production of norms in a group situation. But from the examination of our results, we can say that the reporting of the judgments has a gradual cumulative effect; aside from whatever influence the first judgment may have on the second or third at a given moment, the judgments of the third individual at a given presentation are not without effect on the subsequent judgments of the first subject in the round of presentations following. Thus the production of an established group influence is largely a temporal affair and not the outcome of this or that single presentation. We shall refer to this point again later.

Besides the quantitative judgments obtained during the experiments, the subjects were asked at the end of each experimental session to write down their introspections. Questions were asked which aimed at finding whether they became conscious of the range and norm they were establishing subjectively. These questions were: "Between what maximum and minimum did the distances vary?" "What was the most frequent distance that the light moved?"

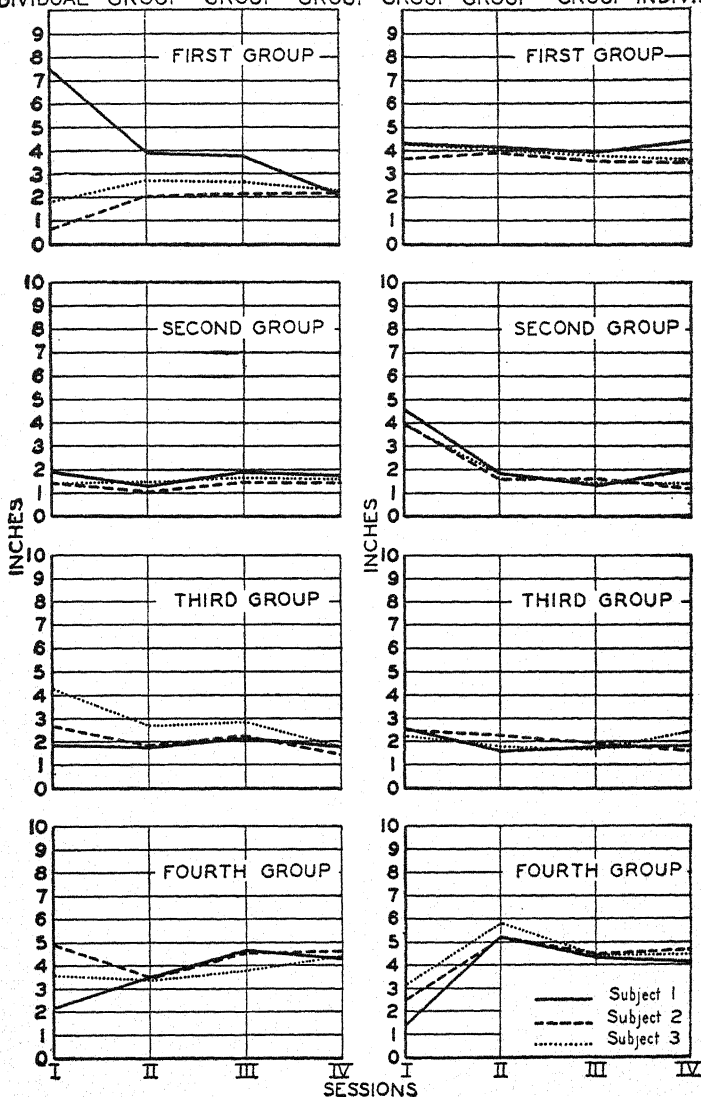
MEDIANS IN GROUPS OF TWO SUBJECTS
 STARTING WITH INDIVIDUAL STARTING WITH GROUP
 INDIVIDUAL GROUP GROUP GROUP GROUP GROUP GROUP INDIVIDUAL



FIGS. 5 AND 6.—Where individual sessions came first (1), divergent norms were of the subjects' norms in the subsequent group sessions (II, III, IV). (See left-hand the convergence of norms was apparent from the first session, and remained

MEDIANS IN GROUPS OF THREE SUBJECTS

STARTING WITH INDIVIDUAL STARTING WITH GROUP
 INDIVIDUAL GROUP GROUP GROUP GROUP GROUP GROUP INDIVIDUAL



established, giving rise to "funnel-shaped" figures as a result of the convergence graphs in both figures.) Where the group sessions preceded the individual ones, throughout, including the (final) individual sessions. (See right-hand graphs in

Certain facts stand out clearly from our results. We may summarize these facts in a few paragraphs.

When an individual faces this stimulus situation, which is unstable and not structured in itself, he establishes a range and norm (a reference point) within that range. The range and norm that are developed in each individual are peculiar to that individual. They may vary from the ranges and norms developed in other individuals in different degrees, revealing consistent and stable individual differences. The causes of these individual differences are difficult problems in themselves, the understanding of which may prove to be basic to a satisfactory understanding of our problem. But for the time being it may be worth while to work on our main theme.

When the individual, in whom a range and a norm within that range are first developed in the individual situation, is put into a group situation, together with other individuals who also come into the situation with their own ranges and norms established in their own individual sessions, the ranges and norms tend to converge. But the convergence is not so close as when they first work in the group situation, having less opportunity to set up stable individual norms. (See left-hand graphs, Figs. 5 and 6.)

When individuals face the same unstable, unstructured situation as members of a group for the first time, a range and a norm (standard) within that range are established, which are peculiar to the group. If, for the group, there is a rise or fall in the norms established in successive sessions, it is a group effect; the norms of the individual members rise and fall toward a common norm in each session. To this the objection may be raised that one subject may lead, and be uninfluenced by other members of the group; the group norm is simply the leader's norm. To this the only possible

empirical reply is that in our experiments the leaders were constantly observed to be influenced by their followers—if not at the moment, then later in the series and in subsequent series. Even if the objection has occasional force, the statement regarding group norms is in general true. Even if the group norm gravitates toward a dominating person, the leader represents a polarization in the situation, having a definite relationship toward others which he cannot change at will. If the leader changes his norm after the group norm is *settled* he may *cease thereupon to be followed*, as occurred several times strikingly in our experiments. In general, such cases of complete polarization are, however, exceptional. (See right-hand graphs, Figs. 5 and 6.)

The fact that the norm thus established is peculiar to the group suggests that there is a factual psychological basis in the contentions of social psychologists and sociologists who maintain that new and supra-individual qualities arise in the group situations. This is in harmony with the facts developed in the psychology of perception presented in the third and, especially, the fifth chapters.

When a member of a group faces the same situation subsequently *alone*, after once the range and norm of his group have been established, he perceives the situation in terms of the range and norm that he brings from the group situation. This psychological fact is important in that it gives a psychological approach to the understanding of the "social products" that weighed so heavily in the discussion of the problem of the stimulus situation in Chapter IV.

DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

The experiments, then, constitute a study of the formation of a norm in a simple laboratory situation. They show in a simple way the basic psychological process involved in the

establishment of social norms. They are an extension into the social field of a general psychological phenomenon that we found in perception and in many other psychological fields, namely, that our experience is organized around or modified by frames of reference participating as factors in any given stimulus situation.

On the basis of this general principle considered in relation to our experimental results, we shall venture to generalize. The psychological basis of the established social norms, such as stereotypes, fashions, conventions, customs and values, is the formation of common frames of reference as a product of the contact of individuals. Once such frames of reference are established and incorporated in the individual, they enter as important factors to determine or modify his reactions to the situations that he will face later—social, and even non-social, at times, especially if the stimulus field is not well structured.

Of course this is a very general statement. It gives us only the broad basic principle with which we can approach any specific social norm. In each instance we have to take into consideration particular factors that participate in its production. We have also lumped stereotypes, fashions, conventions, customs and values together, without considering the distinguishing mark of each one of them. We brought them together because of a basic psychological characteristic that they all have in common, namely, that they all serve as frames of reference in their proper realms. Some are more firmly established, surviving many generations; some are temporary, with varying lengths of duration, from one season to a few years. Though all are related to the broad principle that we have reached, each one of these types of norms, its mode of origin and its effectiveness while it exists,

is a specific problem in itself. We shall touch upon some of these more specifically in subsequent chapters.

Our experiments merely show the formation of a specific frame of reference in a group situation. Our experimental situation, we must say, does not represent a pressing social situation such as is found in the reality of everyday life with its intense hunger, sex, and ego factors. It is simply one unstable, unstructured situation that is new for the subjects participating in the experiments. They have no set norms of reaction to it. The situation, therefore, is plastic enough to be structured by the effect of experimentally introduced social factors such as suggestion, prestige, and other group influences.

In this situation, within certain limits, there is no "right" or "wrong" judgment. One subject demonstrated this spontaneously during the experiment, in spite of the fact that he was not supposed to talk: "If you tell me once how much I am mistaken, all my judgments will be better." Not being sure about the correctness of his judgments, the subject feels uneasy. This we know from the introspective reports. In the individual situation, the individual structures the unstructured situation by furnishing his own peculiar range and reference point. In the group situation the members of the group tend to structure the situation by converging toward a common norm in their judgments. If in the beginning of the experimental session they start with divergent judgments, in the course of the experiment they come together, the divergent one feeling uncertain and even insecure in the deviating position of his judgments. This convergence is not brought about instantly by the direct influence of one or two judgments of the other members of the group. It exhibits a temporal pattern. The following introspection of a member of one of the groups, written in

answer to the question, "Were you influenced by the judgments of the other persons during the experiments?" illustrates our point clearly. This subject wrote, "Yes, but not on the same observation. My judgment in each case was already made, and I did not change to whatever the other person said. But on subsequent observations my judgments were adjusted to their judgments. After a number of observations, the previous agreement or lack of it influenced me in adjusting my own perspective."

Despite the above case, every individual need not be aware of the fact that he is being influenced in the group situation, or that he and the other members are converging toward a common norm. In fact, the majority of the subjects reported not only that their minds were made up as to the judgment they were going to give before the others spoke, but that they were not influenced by the others in the group. This fact is in harmony with many observations in the psychology of perception; we know that the general setting in which a stimulus is found influences its properties, and that unless we take a critical and analytic attitude toward the situation we need not be aware that its properties are largely determined by its surroundings. As we have seen before, this is the general principle underlying the psychology of "illusions."

It must be said that in our experimental setting the subjects are not moved by a common interest or drive such as is found in a group that faces a common danger, such as starvation or the cruel authority of a tyrant. In these vital situations there is a certain gap that has to be filled. Until this gap is properly filled, the instability of the situation continues. If the norms and slogans that arise under the stress of a tense and uncertain situation that requires a solution do not meet the situation adequately, the instability is

not removed, and new norms and new slogans are likely to arise until the tension is removed. For example, in a hungry mass of people searching for food, a leader or a small party may standardize certain norms or slogans as guides to an outlook upon the situation and as guides to action. If these norms do not lead to the satisfaction of hunger, other leaders or interested parties may spring up and standardize other norms or slogans. This (dialectic) dynamic process moves on and on until the appropriate norms or slogans are reached that meet the situation best. For example, many in America who were enthusiastically motivated into action during the World War by the slogan, "A war to end war!" are totally deaf to such a slogan after seeing the results of the last war.

In spite of laboratory simplicity and lack of vital motivational factors, our experimental setting possesses certain important characteristics of actual group situations.

CRITICAL, UNSTABLE SITUATIONS AND THE RISE OF SLOGANS

In the routine of orderly periodical meetings, there are certain well-established norms and values that govern the order and even the details of the occasion. But the situation is altogether different in the case of meetings in which new norms, new values, and new slogans arise or become standardized. Under the stress of the situation there has been a breakdown of the authority of the old norms. The breakdown of the old norms must bring about instability and uncertainty in the individuals in the situation; this plastic, unstable situation is the atmosphere for the rise or standardization of new norms. The slogans that are used by the leaders as guides to action may lead to group violence of all sorts. But after the formative period is over, the slogans thus

used may become the starting point for a new order and a new stability.

Crises, such as famine, floods, drought, and panic, are striking examples of social situations that are unstable, uncertain, and urgently require a solution. On such occasions an appropriate slogan that gives a solution may acquire tremendous authority in the experience and action of the individuals.

The importance of crises as conducive to new social products has been emphasized by some well-known sociologists. Thus Thomas writes:

A study of society on the psychological side involves, therefore, an examination of the crises of incidents in group-life which interrupt the flow of habit and give rise to changed conditions of consciousness and practice. Prominent among the crises of this nature are famine, pestilence, defeat in battle, floods and drought, or in general sudden and catastrophic occurrences which are new or not adequately provided against; and in the process of gaining control again after the disturbance are seen invention, cooperation, sympathy, association in larger numbers and on a different basis, resort to special individuals who have or claim to have special power in emergencies either as leaders or as medicine men.

And again:

The mediation of crises of this nature leads, on the one hand, to the development of morality, religion, custom, myth, invention, art; and, on the other hand, to medicine man, priest, lawgiver, judge, physician, artist, philosopher, teacher and investigator.⁵

Our experimental setting is unstable and uncertain within limits, for no definite right or wrong judgment regarding the situation is possible. When a group of individuals face

⁵ THOMAS, W. I., *The Province of Social Psychology*, *Amer. J. Sociol.*, 1904-1905, 446-447.

it together and speak their judgments aloud, the result is a decrease in confusion and uncertainty. There is a tendency to converge toward a common norm and to experience the situation as regulated and ordered by this norm. The group must be right. "There's safety in numbers." In short, when a group of individuals faces a new, unstable situation and has no previously established interests or opinions regarding the situation, the result is not chaos; a common norm arises and the situation is structured in relation to the common norm. Once the common norm is established, later the separate individuals keep on perceiving it in terms of the frame of reference which was once the norm of the group.

We shall close this chapter by giving a concrete example of the way in which our basic psychological principle is used in everyday politics. The propaganda technique used by politicians working through daily newspapers illustrates one of the major points developed in this chapter. For a politician who has certain vested interests to protect and certain opinions to propagate, it pays to start with a non-committal "liberal" attitude. This may help to keep the established attitudes of his readers, which may be hostile to his attitudes, in a quiescent state and thus help to make their first reaction neutral at least. This is preparing an *unstructured field*, so that one's own slogans or opinions may be more effective. The veteran politician Hearst gives us a good example of this technique.

In discussing the 1936 presidential election, Hearst writes: "I do not know what party I will support, and I cannot know until the platforms are adopted, and the candidates are nominated."⁶

So he does not seem to know. But one paragraph later, it

⁶ HEARST, W. R., editorial in the *New York Journal*, Thursday, August 29, 1935, no. 17, 544.

is evident that he knows as definitely as anyone can know anything. He anchors his certainty to certain well-established values in the society he is addressing:

"I will say, however, that I think there should be a Jeffersonian Democratic party in the field.

"I think definitely that the historic Democratic party of Jefferson, of Madison, of Monroe, of Jackson, of Cleveland, should nominate candidates who are recognized Democrats, and adopt a platform of sound democratic principles.

"I think, too, that this regular Democratic party should get out an injunction to prevent the Socialist party from using its name."⁷

Experienced newspaper politicians know how to begin by giving a tribute to the intelligence and individuality of their readers. This helps to give the readers the impression that the "correct" idea or "proper" attitude that is being suggested is in the direction of their own free choice. For example, let us consider Hearst's *New York American*. Wherever the space is available, at the top of each page, there is the caption in heavy print: "A Paper for People Who Think." This cliché appears even at the top of the pages which contain not a single line of material other than advertisement. This is exactly what the hard-boiled advertising man does, as James Rorty, an experienced advertising man himself, shows with many examples in his excellent book, *Our Master's Voice*. The chief secret in advertising is to impose your merchandise as the reader's own free choice, as if it were something without which one cannot get along.⁸

⁷ *Ibid.*

⁸ RORTY, JAMES, *Our Master's Voice*, The John Day Company, Inc., New York, 1934.

Chapter VII

SOCIAL VALUES

WE SAW that social norms constitute an important class of stimulus situations in social psychology. The social values are examples *par excellence* of social norms. In fact, one may question whether there is any established norm that does not express a social value. The glory of the flag, the value of a diamond, the sweetness of home, the sanctity of property, and the sacredness of the Constitution express some of the everyday instances of socially established values. It is self-evident that the flag is to be honored; that diamonds are valuable; that the "home" is sweet; that there is sanctity in private property; and that the Constitution is sacred. All these imply evaluations, "value-judgments"; and evaluations involve *affective* properties, indicating personal attachments once they are established in the individual. We call such norms as are exemplified in these instances *social values*. Like any other common norm, social values come into existence as a consequence of the contact of individuals or groups of individuals. In their turn, social values which have been so standardized as to reach the status of the common property of the group, may form or even standardize common attitudes, likes and dislikes, aversions, and preferences in the individual members of the group.

In this chapter our main task will be an attempt to sketch the value-attitude relationship. The established social values being first on the stimulus side which the individual faces in the course of his genetic development, attitude is the resulting psychological process in the individual. The question

of value-attitude relationships is such a complex one involving so many considerations that, in spite of our intention to restrict it to a straightforward sketch of the essentials, we fear that several concepts will creep in here and there that are in themselves controversial.

THE PROBLEM OF VALUE

Until recently, the problem of value has usually been treated in the spirit of philosophical controversy. A few decades ago sociologists recognized its importance for their field. Psychologists, even social psychologists, have been slow to awaken to it as a strictly scientific problem.

Value involves a subject-object relationship. Several analyses of the subject-object relationship have been proposed, ranging from the notion of the absolute and independent reality of values to the most relativistic theories. Only a few of the philosophical discussions concern us here, since in social psychology we are interested in values only in so far as they are products of human contact and constitute stimulus situations for the individual, having some effect on his experience and behavior. Nevertheless, those few conceptions that can give us broad insight are important in that they point to a convergence of the philosophical and psychological approaches to the problem of value. Philosophers, psychologists and sociologists, in general, have had a tendency to build up their own concepts, giving little or no attention to what their colleagues in other fields have been doing on the same problem. If the concept of value with which they are dealing reveals anything in common, a convergence combining philosophy, sociology and psychology may be fruitful in the development of a general theory of value.

No one disputes the fact that values are *experienced*. The difficulty at the start lies in the relation of experienced value

to the object to which it is related. Do values have an independent existence? Are the values inherent in objects or in anything that is external to us? In more specific form, the problem, for our purposes, is the dependence or independence of values of the persons who experience them.

Perry's¹ treatment of the subject may well serve as a starting point in our effort to find an answer. He defines his problem as "interest-value relationship." "Interest" is used as a general term to include all affective components implied in value-experiences, such as desire, "will," purpose, feeling. The question is therefore put in the following form: "The value of any object is now considered to lie in its relation to interest, but how shall we conceive this relation?"² According to his analysis,

There are four possible relations of value to interest:

1. Value may be, in its essential nature, quite irrelevant to interest.
2. Value may be held to be that character of an object which qualifies it to be an end; in other words, that which implies, evokes or regulates interest.
3. Value may be assigned to the objects of certain duly qualified interests.
4. Finally, there is the simple and more comprehensive view that value in the generic sense attaches promiscuously to all objects of all interests.³

After successively eliminating the first three as unacceptable, Perry accepts the last possibility. In fact, this is the only one that is psychologically acceptable, because, psychologically, relationships must allow themselves to be expressed in a stimulus-organism scheme. The fourth conception meets

¹ PERRY, R. B., *General Theory of Value*, Longmans, Green & Company, New York, 1926, 27.

² *Ibid.*, 52.

³ *Ibid.*, 27.

this requirement. We know that the same color or book that is liked today may not be liked, or may be liked less, on a different day or in a different connection. Further, we know that objects do not possess physical properties that will arouse the same affective tone every time they are presented to the same individual. On the other hand, under normal conditions, the same wave length of light will arouse approximately the same experienced quality of color, e.g., red, every time the organism is stimulated by it. There are variations, but the objective stimulus holds these within definite limits. But the experienced value of the flag is not inherent in the physics of the cloth that makes the flag, nor is the value of the diamond in the stone itself. To go to an even simpler level for an example, a green object is seldom experienced as red or blue, but green may be a liked or a disliked color, depending on circumstances. We accept Perry's statement that "that which is an object of interest is *eo ipso* invested with value."⁴ This is a relativistic theory and makes value relative to human experience. Other authors, such as Prall,⁵ Dewey,⁶ and Urban,⁷ are *essentially* in harmony with this notion of value. After noting this much in common in psychological analysis, we cannot follow the philosophical, æsthetic (Prall), and ethical (Urban) implications of these authors. From this broad background we must proceed to our own specific task in social psychology.

It seems, then, that a value-judgment may be experienced in relation to anything whatever that arouses in us interest or desire or any other affectively toned experience. Fulfill-

⁴ *Ibid.*, 115.

⁵ PRALL, DAVID W., A Study in the Theory of Value, *Univ. of Calif. Publ. in Philol.*, 1918, vol. 3, no. 2, 179-290.

⁶ DEWEY, JOHN, The Meaning of Value, *Jour. Philol.*, vol. 22, 126-133; also other writings.

⁷ URBAN, W. M., *Fundamentals of Ethics*, Henry Holt and Company, Inc., New York, 1930. See especially definition on 16-17.

ment of the action that is required by any situation involving an affective tension brings about satisfaction, and the failure of such fulfillment brings dissatisfaction. Consequently, things that are valuable for us to start with are things that satisfy our basic human needs, such as food, mates, and shelter. Psychologically, food is valuable to one in proportion to the degree of his hunger. When a man eats a large meal and is satisfied, food is not an immediate value for him until he is hungry again; if it remains a value, this is only because hunger is foreseen as a future basis for a future satisfaction. In the state of satiation one can look indifferently at things that seemed very desirable in a state of tension.

Besides things that satisfy our basic needs, there are other things that we value, such as our flag, our honor, or any other cherished symbol. These attachments are learned. Their value does not lie in giving direct physiological satisfaction. They are socially standardized values. Such values shape in us attitudes that are more or less permanent, demanding certain lasting attachments and loyalties. They anchor us at definite spots. We have, consequently, stability and continuity in our likes and dislikes. I may be indifferent to a particular food after consuming some of it; I may even dislike it after reaching a state of satiation. But the flag is to be honored, no matter what my momentary state may be. I feel certain responsibilities toward my group, whether personally I am on good terms with this or that individual member or not.

Social values furnish the individual with a set of affectively toned fixations. These fixations are what we call *social attitudes*. Social attitudes, once formed in the individual, serve as frames of reference in the situations into which they enter, determining to an important degree the preferences or likes and dislikes of the individual.

SOME FACTS FROM THE PSYCHOLOGY OF AFFECTIVITY

In the course of the discussion we have made some general statements, the factual basis of which has to be tested specifically in the light of the experimental data. The general statements that concern us here are two:

1. We have asserted that value or affective quality is not necessarily inherent in the valued object and that value may attach to almost any object. For example, when we talk about the value of the flag, value is not inherent in the cloth of the flag.

2. We have said that social values shape attitudes in individuals, and that these attitudes serve as standards (frames of reference) in the preferences of the individual. This is really nothing but extending to the psychology of attitudes the frame-of-reference notion which we saw in so many psychological phenomena. Analogy is dangerous; we must discover whether we have facts on hand to support the extension of this relativistic notion to the level of judgments of value.

It would be useless for us to raise here the controversial questions as to the nature of affective tone, whether it is a distinct *element* in experience (Wundt, Titchener), or an attribute of experiential phenomena (Ziehen, Stumpf);⁸ or to discuss whether the thalamic theory⁹ is physiologically adequate or not. These are important problems in themselves, but at the level of social psychology the facts of immediate affective experience will be sufficient.

⁸ BLEEBE-CENTER, J., *Pleasantness and Unpleasantness*, D. Van Nostrand & Company, Inc., New York, 1932, 394 ff.

⁹ For a convenient statement of facts on which the thalamic theory is based, see W. B. Cannon, *Neural Organization of Emotional Expression*, in Martin L. Reymert (ed.), *Feelings and Emotions*, Clark University Press, Worcester, 1928, 257-269.

In order to experience anything we have to be stimulated. The available facts indicate that any experience may be affectively tinged, and that an affective quality may thus be attributed to the corresponding stimulating agent. Thus Beebe-Center, after comprehensively reviewing the available material, concludes: "A wealth of experimental evidence shows that pleasantness or unpleasantness may be ascribed by observers to any conscious configuration whatever."¹⁰ Moreover, the affective quality of a stimulus may be voluntarily reversed, e.g., the liking for a color may be voluntarily changed to dislike. In the experiments of Washburn and Grose, a voluntary change in hedonic value was brought about in all but 6.3 per cent of trials.¹¹ To go one step further, by taking a special attitude, affective quality may be inhibited. Thus, under the "critical perceptive attitude" it is reported that affective experience does not occur. "Experience simply develops as a perceptual pattern, sharply divided into a clear focus and an obscure background."¹²

A frame of reference was found to be involved in affective phenomena as well as in the other phenomena reviewed in Chapter III. Thus, experiences involving affective judgments are subject to the same relational influences as perceptions. "For instance, a color which in many situations would be moderately pleasant can be made very pleasant by grouping it with a number of less pleasant colors, and this color will then again be perceived as very pleasant, even as much as two days later, provided at that time it is recognized as belonging to the group of less pleasant colors."¹³ On the basis

¹⁰ BEEBE-CENTER, J., *op. cit.*, 399.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 265.

¹² WELLS, E. F., The Effect of Attitude upon Feeling, *Amer. J. Psychol.*, 1930, vol. 42, 573-580.

¹³ BEEBE-CENTER, J., Pleasantness and Unpleasantness, in E. G. Boring, H. S. Langfeld, H. P. Weld and Collaborators, *Psychology*, John Wiley and Sons, Inc., New York, 385.

of a multitude of experimental facts, Beebe-Center comes to the conclusion that "relativity of judgment is not a phenomenon of pleasantness and unpleasantness only. It seems to apply to all judgments."¹⁴

Another related fact of importance is the scale of affective judgments. Basic affective judgments can be arranged on an algebraic scale ranging from the pleasant or liked pole to the unpleasant or disliked pole. The middle range represents affective indifference. Thus the ordering of judgments in relation to one another in the absence of formal standards holds in the affective field as well as in other psychological fields. After facing a situation possessing several items and lacking a definite standard, the relatively liked ones will be experienced as absolutely liked, and relatively disliked ones will be experienced as absolutely disliked.

The implications of this fact in the field of social psychology are important. Our social surroundings furnish us with a range of values, which seems to us, the loyal members, to be absolute; our daily likes and dislikes are regulated accordingly.

Moreover, some standards are appropriate in one situation and not in another; and one person may become a standard in one situation (law, medicine) and not in another (science, religion). One standard is thus dependent on another; and none can claim to be final and absolute.

FRAMES OF REFERENCE IN EVERYDAY PERSONAL EVALUATIONS

The dependence of the affective quality of any stimulus upon the general situation of which it is a part and on the whole background to which it is related is not a laboratory artifact. In everyday life the remarks and behavior of others affect us differently, depending on the person; some are re-

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 385.

ceived in a friendly way, some negatively, depending on the established relationships among individuals. The same statement made by two different people with whom an individual is in different affective relationships arouses quite unlike experiences and responses. We develop characteristic personal attachments or revulsions, of a more or less lasting sort, in relation to other people and situations. We may designate these "personal fixations" or "stereotypes." This fact has been demonstrated in several experimental studies in social psychology.

Indeed, these personal fixations (individual attitudes) furnish us a good factual basis through which we can approach the group fixations (social values) and psychological state of readiness they bring about (social attitudes). Rice, Zillig, and others have experimentally demonstrated the rôle played by stereotyped attachments in definitely orienting our judgments in this or that direction.

Rice¹⁵ presented newspaper pictures to his subjects and asked them to connect each picture with a label chosen from a set of labels representing well-established stereotypes in American society. He found wide displacements. For example, a Soviet envoy was sometimes labeled a United States Senator because of his collar and Van Dyke beard. Zillig,¹⁶ a German school teacher, first ascertained who among the pupils were considered favorites, and who were most disliked by their classmates. She deliberately instructed the former to do the "wrong thing." In a short gymnastic period she asked the pupils to lift their right hands, but, as instructed in advance, the favorite pupils did the wrong thing. However, not they, but the disliked ones were reported by

¹⁵ RICE, S. A., A Source of Error in Judging Human Character, *J. Person. Res.*, 1926, vol. 5, 267-276.

¹⁶ ZILLIG, M., Einstellung und Aussage, *Zsch. f. Psychol.*, 1928, vol. 106, 58-106.

the other pupils to have made the wrong movement. Farnsworth and Beaumont¹⁷ presented to their subjects pictures from the works of "unknown" painters, with a paragraph of praise or devaluation attached to each. These paragraphs affected the rankings.

The results of an experimental study by the author will conveniently illustrate the main point in this connection.¹⁸ The subjects ranked sixteen authors in the order of personal preference. This procedure utilized in general the affective scale ranging from the most-liked pole to the most-disliked pole. After an interval of one month the same subjects were asked to evaluate sixteen passages all taken from the same author. But each passage was ascribed to one of the authors evaluated a month before. In these evaluations the influence of relative liking or disliking for the authors was evident. Authors rated high tended to push up the rating of the passages attributed to them. Conversely, authors rated low tended to pull down the ratings of passages attributed to them. The original affective value of the passages was undifferentiated; that this was the case was proved by the fact that those subjects who covered the names of the authors or deliberately ignored them while evaluating the passages, gave almost zero correlations between their evaluations of the authors and of the passages. Not the intrinsic merits of the passages but the familiar or unfamiliar frame of reference explained the findings.

In this study we found a clear-cut case of how a change in affective attachment will cause a reversal in evaluating anything connected with it. During the interval between author evaluation and passage evaluation one of the subjects

¹⁷ FARNSWORTH, P. R., and BEAUMONT, H., Suggestion in Pictures, *J. Gen. Psychol.*, 1929, vol. 2, 362-366.

¹⁸ SHERIF, M., An Experimental Study of Stereotypes, *J. Abn. & Soc. Psychol.*, January-March, 1935, vol. 29, 370-375.

made a study of Mark Twain in connection with one of his courses in the college. In his first evaluation he had rated this author very high, but as a result of his study he came to the conclusion that he was "no good." He rated the passage ascribed to this particular author the lowest of all. In his introspective report he stated that because of his study during the month he was definitely prejudiced against the passage from Mark Twain. Only one subject in the present study suspected that the names under the passages were not those of the real authors. Consequently, in her case, the magic of the authors' names did not work. She took a cautious, or, one may say, a negativistic stand, arranging the passages in her own way.

SOCIAL FIXATIONS

The study just described suggests how established personal attachments developed in the course of one's lifetime influence one's judgments in evaluating situations. Because of their established likes or dislikes, different individuals rated the authors differently on an affective scale. This in turn caused them to arrange literary passages on a scale that more or less corresponded to it. Their teachers in literature courses, their reading of literary criticism, and other social factors, may indeed have played a large part in producing these differences in established personal preferences; nevertheless, such fixations are personal, allowing a very wide range of individual variation. Despite a rather similar general background, one man likes Hardy, for example, and considers him the greatest of all modern authors, while another considers him merely dry and depressing.

There are fixations, on the other hand, that are standardized for the group, and as such demand respect and attach-

ment from *all* members of the group. Humanity, the sanctity of human life, personal honor, express values that demand respect and consideration from everyone in the group, no matter who he is. Such values are not the product of individual preferences acquired during the lifetime of this or that individual. They are products of the contact of the members of a group. They are standardized and become common property within the group.

It is true that a social value may begin in the mind of an individual member. But before it can command respect and attachment from every member, it has to be standardized—in a critical group situation, or as an outcome of the resolution of a crisis, or by the sheer power or prestige of the person who imposes it. Of course, if a value is imposed on a group of people through sheer brute power and demands *conformity* from them on that basis alone, the tension is not really resolved. The unsettled state continues either until the removal of the oppressing power and the emergence of other values appropriate to the situation, or until the imposed value has been firmly incorporated in the people.

Once a value is standardized and becomes the common property of a group—for example, the love for native land—it acquires objective reality. Genetically speaking, it is first external to the new-born baby who, as his development goes on, becomes a member of the group. Biologically he is the baby of a family, which in turn is a member of a group. Psychologically he grows to become a member both of a family and of a wider group. He picks up a set of social values from the social atmosphere that surrounds him and interiorizes them in himself. These interiorized values are the *social* in him. They produce lasting social attitudes. This is what saves him from being unstable in his relations toward

people and toward institutions. He may prefer apple pie today and pumpkin pie tomorrow, but he has to love his family and friends all the time—tired or fresh, sober or drunk—otherwise he gets all sorts of corrective measures from the group. The value of friendship has to be upheld even though it may sometimes be against his interests; otherwise he will not have any more friends. When he dies, the social values do not die. Other members of the group carry on the social values that are common to them. Even though values are not inflexible entities, some values, which are firmly established, continue their existence through many generations of individuals.

We have repeated these common-sense ideas to emphasize an important fact. This fact is that a social value is first external to the individual. Being external to the individual, it has for each individual who first confronts it, an objective reality. The individual comes to perceive this reality through a meaningful sentence, such as "Stealing is a sin," or through a concrete example of the behavior of parents, teachers, playmates, etc. We come to realize acutely the reality of social values when we violate them and thereupon find ourselves in an embarrassing situation, or punished in varying degree according to the nature of the offense; and no less so when we find internal conflict, a war within ourselves.

To summarize: Established social values are standardized fixations which the individual incorporates in himself and which henceforth have a great deal to do with regulating his likes and dislikes, his closeness to or remoteness from other individuals, and his activities in satisfying his basic needs. This is, to a great extent, the social in him.

The idea of the social reality of values and their demand for recognition from the individual members of a group is

emphasized by several sociologists.¹⁹ Social life may put the stamp of "right" or "wrong" on almost anything—or any object—or even on a method of reckoning time or space. Not only convenience and utility, but morality may attach to a routine element in man's daily round of tasks. A case reported by Radcliffe-Brown will illustrate the point:

There is a right way and a wrong way to set about making such a thing as a bow. We should explain this by saying that the right way will give a good serviceable weapon, whereas the wrong way will give an inferior or useless one. The Andaman Islander tends to look at the matter from a different angle; the right way is right because it is the one that has been followed from time immemorial, and any other way is wrong, is contrary to custom, to law. Law, for the Andaman Islander, means that there is an order of the universe, characterized by absolute uniformity; this order was established once for all in the time of his ancestors, and is not to be interfered with, the results of any such interference being evil, ranging from merely minor ills such as disappointment or discomfort to great calamities. The law of compensation is absolute. Any deviation from law or custom will inevitably bring its results, and any evil that befalls must be the result of some lack of observance. The legends reveal to our analysis a conception of the Universe as a moral order.²⁰

In short, not only a system of standards for *perceiving*, but a system of *values*, once it is established, gives a system of anchors around which all social relationships are organized. Radcliffe-Brown expresses this in relation to the An-

¹⁹ For example: DURKHEIM, E., Les jugements de valeur et les jugements de réalité, *Revue de métaphysique et de morale*, 1911, vol. 19, 437-453; BOUGLÉ, C., *The Evolution of Values*, trans. by H. S. Sellars, Henry Holt and Company, Inc., especially 3-37; THOMAS, W. I., and ZNANIECKI, F., *The Polish Peasant in Europe and America*, Richard G. Badger, Boston, 1918, vol. 1, 1-86, especially 21, 22, 27, 28 and 73.

²⁰ RADCLIFFE-BROWN, A., *The Andaman Islanders*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, England, 1922, 399-400.

damanese: "This system of social values, or rather this system of sentiments [attitudes] that we find expressed in the legends, is an essential part of the life of the Andamanese; without it they could not have organized their social life the way they have."²¹

The fact that social life may stamp the property of value on almost anything is convincingly shown by Lowie in a historically important realm of values, religion. His analysis is important for us because of the wealth of factual material at his command.

In other words, as soon as a psychological position is assumed, it becomes clear that the most divergent objects, nay, the very negation of what is ordinarily felt to be the objective of religious devotion, can become invested with religious value, that is, can evoke responses psychologically indistinguishable from those evoked by universally acknowledged religious objects.²²

THE VALUE-ATTITUDE RELATIONSHIP IN SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGICAL RESEARCH

Our emphasis on the reality of values does not spring from a romantic tenderness toward cultural determinism. Our chief concern is the clarification of a method of approach closely connected with the main points developed in Chapter IV. It will be agreed that an individual member shares at least some of the values of his group. But in order to incorporate them in him, he first has to face them. Psychologically the value must be stated as a problem of stimulation to start with. For each of us, established social values are first of all stimuli; at the beginning of the genetic development of the individual, they are external. Through learning they become the central vehicles of our affective life. Their in-

²¹ *Ibid.*, 399.

²² LOWIE, R. H., *Primitive Religion*, Boni and Liveright, New York, 1924, 324; see also 162-163.

corporation in us constitutes the development of social attitudes within us toward the objects, acts and situations that are thus affectively charged. It is evident that not all attitudes are social. Those attitudes are social that are related to social values. This brings us to the main problem of this chapter, i.e., the relationship of attitude to value.

It is evident from the preceding that values, however expressed (in statements like "thou shalt" or "thou shalt not," in legend, in myth or personal act), are the *affectively charged stimuli that cause the formation of social attitudes*. This statement is akin essentially to the position taken by such sociologists as Thomas,²³ Thomas and Znaniecki,²⁴ Faris,²⁵ and Bogardus.²⁶ More unequivocally stated: established social values are first on the *stimulus side* as regards the new-born infant; an attitude expresses the psychological set or preparedness that results from the incorporation in the individual of an established value. When a value is incorporated in the individual and thus a state of readiness formed in regard to certain related objects or situations, we may say that value is the content of the attitude.

TWO MAJOR LINES OF RESEARCH

What we have done up to this point amounts to a clarification for ourselves of the concepts of social value and attitude, and of their relationship. This permits an approach to specific and concrete value-attitude studies. But before the

²³ THOMAS, W. I., The Configuration of Personality, in *The Unconscious: A Symposium*, Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., New York, 1928, specifically 143-144.

²⁴ THOMAS, W. I., and ZNANIECKI, F., *The Polish Peasant in Europe and America*, Richard G. Badger, Boston, 1918, vol. 1, 1-86, especially 22 ff.

²⁵ FARIS, E., Attitudes and Behavior, *Amer. J. Sociol.*, 1928, vol. 34, 271-281, especially 278; also his Concept of Social Attitudes, in K. Young (ed.), *Social Attitude*, Henry Holt & Company, Inc., New York, 1931, especially 10.

²⁶ BOGARDUS, E. S., *Immigration and Race Attitudes*, D. C. Heath & Co., New York, 1928, especially 13.

latter can become wholly effective, two general types of research, in our opinion, must first be thoroughly pursued:

1. The study of the incorporation of social values in the individual; in other words, the accurate analysis of the way in which attitudes are formed. This involves studies of perception, learning, thinking, etc., on the psychological side, as well as consideration of individual differences due to age, sex, temperament, etc., and also sociological consideration of the general structure of society, the economic class that the individual belongs to, his broad social background, and the critical social situations of which he is part.

2. The rôle of values in the life of the individual, once they are incorporated in him. This will be our task in the next two chapters.

How the individual first faces a value-judgment or an act or situation involving a value (the perceptual problem) and how it is organized in him and becomes a part of him (the learning problem) are highly important and difficult problems about which we have a few scattered fragments of evidence. These are not problems of social psychology alone; for any completely satisfactory psychology of these matters and their extension to the field of social psychology we must wait for a more complete psychology of perception and learning.

Nevertheless, some important facts are already available which have a direct bearing on our main theme. Whatever direction studies on learning may take, we know empirically that the values of an adult member of any group belong to the realm of *meaningful* experiences and therefore that the experimental psychology of meaning will be helpful in this connection. In the light of the experimental data, how are these value-judgments of a situation grasped? Is there first

a total direct grasp of the meaning, and regulation of his reaction to the situation on the basis of his immediate perception, or must he first revive specific images connected with the value-judgment in question, meaning being the product of these images? The weight of evidence²⁷ shows that awareness of the meaning of a word or statement is direct and precedes specific contents or images aroused, and that direct awareness is "more constant and enduring than specific content." Such facts lead one to accept the reality of meaning apart from specific contents (sensory and imaginal), and also lead one to emphasize the importance of the influence of the general meaning-awareness on the specific items embraced by a general term.

Moreover, since the child incorporates social values in him as he grows in a social environment (parents, playmates, teachers, etc.), and value fixations take place over a long period of his life, genetic studies give us most valuable facts concerning the first attitudes and the organization of these attitudes in the personality. We already have valuable contributions in the works of Piaget and Lewin. Thus Lewin writes:

Objects are not neutral to the child, but have an immediate psychological effect on its behavior; many things *attract* the child to eating, others to climbing, to grasping, to manipulations, to making, to raging at them, etc. These imperative environmental

²⁷ Experiments by Moore, Ogden, Tolman and Cantril are in this group:

MOORE, T. V., Temporal Relations of Meaning and Imagery, *Psychol. Rev.*, 1915, vol. 22, 177-225; also his Meaning and Imagery, *Psychol. Rev.*, 1917, vol. 24, 318-322.

OGDEN, R. M., Some Experiments on the Consciousness of Meaning, *Titchener Comm. Vol.*, Wilson, Worcester, 1917.

TOLMAN, E. C., More Concerning the Temporal Relations of Meaning Imagery, *Psychol. Rev.*, 1917, vol. 24, 114-138.

CANTRIL, H., General and Specific Attitudes, *Psychol. Monog.*, 1932, vol. 192, 1-107.

facts—we shall call them valences (*Aufforderungscharaktere*)—determine the direction of the behavior.²⁸

For the infant of a few weeks or months the valences depend essentially on his *own* needs and their momentary condition. If he does not want a food he cannot be moved by psychological means to eat it. He simply spits it out.²⁹

The possibility of direct influence is correlated with increasing psychological reality for the child of social facts, especially of the power of others. Many objects in the environment, many modes of conduct, and many goals acquire a positive or a negative valence or the properties of a barrier, not directly from the needs of the child himself, but through another person. This "*induction*" may be brought about by an expressed prohibition or command. More important, however, is the effect of example, i.e., of that which the child sees characterized by the behavior of adults as positive or negative for them. Even the very young child usually has a very fine sensitivity to social evaluations and forces.³⁰

Piaget's studies of the development of moral judgment in the child are particularly important in this connection. In his work developmental transitions are clearly brought out. Children at different age levels are asked what they consider unfair. They comment upon the violation of forbidden rules, upon cases of inequality, and upon social injustices generally. The results obtained show that younger children simply think that things forbidden by grown-ups are bad. At this stage, rules imposed by grown-ups are regarded as "sacred and untouchable, emanating from adults and lasting forever." Thus the child's morals are heteronomous—imposed by others. But as he develops mentally to grasp the reciprocal

²⁸ LEWIN, K., Environmental Forces in Child Behavior and Development, in C. Murchison (ed.), *A Handbook of Child Psychology*, Clark University Press, Worcester, 1931, 101.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 116.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 116.

relations between individuals, he begins to realize why things are good or bad "independent of the external pressure." As Piaget says, "Apart from our relations to other people, there can be no moral necessity." To achieve conscious realization of the moral values connected with equality and justice, one has to develop mentally to the point of separating himself from other persons and things around him, and to see individuals in their reciprocal relationships, with the responsibilities that arise from these relationships.

Piaget studied the developmental transition in the moral judgment of the individual. In one study, the results of which we shall give presently, he used two groups of children. The ages of the younger group ranged from 6 to 8; those of the older group from 9 to 12. The children were asked what kinds of behavior they considered "unfair" or wrong. For the younger children those acts are considered unfair, or wrong, which were forbidden by the parents. At these ages (6-8) they rather infrequently noted acts of inequality as unfair (27 per cent of the total were so considered). In order to notice the inequality of treatment that takes place among individuals, one must be able to realize their reciprocal relations, or responsibilities. At these ages (6-8), Piaget finds that acts of social injustice are not reported as unfair by the Swiss children whom he studied. In order to perceive an act as unjust, one must reach the stage of mental development where one can realize mutual obligations and responsibilities of persons.

In contrast with the younger group, the older group reported very few forbidden acts to be unfair (only 7 per cent), but considered 73 per cent of the cases of inequality to be unfair, as against 27 per cent so regarded by the younger group. The older children also noted as unfair a few cases of social injustice arising from lack of equity. The following

table³¹ from Piaget gives a concise summary of the results:

Age	Forbidden	Games ^a	Inequality	Social Injustice
6-8	64%	9%	27%	
9-12	7%	9%	73%	11%

^a Violation of game rules; not discussed here.

We have quoted the findings from Piaget to give an illustration of the progressive interiorization of values in the case of an especially important type of social norms. Such studies, in our opinion, are among the most substantial contributions to social psychology, and prove the rich possibilities of the genetic method.

THE EXPERIMENTAL FORMATION OF ATTITUDES

During the last decade several experimental studies have been undertaken to find to what extent and in what ways established attitudes can be changed by experimentally introduced propaganda material.³² Most of the investigators have found various degrees of shift, but among them are those who have obtained no change in attitudes.³³ It seems to us that before we can reach any clear ideas on the basis of this type of approach we must find out first the degree of importance and the strength of the fixations which manifest

³¹ PIAGET, J., *The Moral Judgment of the Child*, Kegan Paul, London, 1932, 312.

³² The following are outstanding examples:

RICE, S. A., *Quantitative Method in Politics*, Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., New York, 1928.

LUND, F. H., *The Psychology of Belief*, *J. Abn. & Soc. Psychol.*, 1925, vol. 20, 63-68, 174-196.

THURSTONE, L. L., *The Measurement of Change in Social Attitudes*, *J. Abn. & Soc. Psychol.*, 1931, vol. 2, 230-235.

CHEN, W.-K., *The Influence of Oral Propaganda Material upon Students' Attitudes*, *Arch. Psychol.*, no. 150, 5-43.

³³ YOUNG, D., *Some Effects of a Course in American Race Problems on the Race Prejudice of 450 Undergraduates at the University of Pennsylvania*, *J. Abn. & Soc. Psychol.*, 1927, vol. 22, 335-342.

themselves in the specific attitudes in question. Even this is not enough. We have to take into consideration also the place of the specific problem in the current life of the community at the time of the investigation. For example, in studying the attitude of a group in America toward the Germans, the very fact of the time of the investigation—whether carried on in 1919, 1925, or 1936—will make a difference in the effectiveness of experimental propaganda. An approach to the basic psychological processes will give us more insight into the development and the shifts of attitudes, if we first choose a stimulus to which our subjects have no positive or negative attachment, and then present it to our subjects with a strong positive or negative stamp of value. This will amount to production of a new attitude. After this is done, we can carry on contrary propaganda on the same subject. If we can make our setting natural, this technique may furnish us valuable insight for the understanding of the formation and developmental course of attitudes.

Already we find a beginning in the ingenious experiment of Annis and Meier.³⁴ For their stimulus object they selected "a person who would be entirely unknown to the subjects at the beginning of the experiment" (the stimulus object had neither positive nor negative value for the subjects). Accordingly they chose Mr. W. Morris Hughes, the Prime Minister of Australia from 1915 to 1923. They "planted" favorable and unfavorable editorials about Mr. Hughes in a campus daily. The results are conclusive. In the words of the authors, "98% of the subjects reading the favorable editorials became favorably biased towards the person selected as the propaganda object, and 86% of the subjects reading the unfavorable editorials became adversely biased." Here we see

³⁴ ANNIS, A. D., and MEIER, N. C., The Induction of Opinion through Suggestion by Means of "Planted Content," *J. Soc. Psychol.*, 1934, vol 5, 65-81.

the ease with which an attitude can be formed if the field of stimulation is not affectively charged at the outset. It would clarify the situation further if the authors had investigated the characteristics of the few persons who were neither positively nor negatively biased. From this point we can go on to study the effect of propaganda on topics to which the subjects are attached with different degrees of intensity.

In a recent experiment we have been studying the formation of attitudes by a similar "planting" technique, using the autokinetic technique briefly described in Chapter VI. We have seen in this situation that the individual evolves a reference point for himself if alone, or a common reference point with others if in a group. In the present experiment the problem was to find out whether the subjects would conform to a predetermined norm (reference point) because of the influence of the other member in the situation, and whether they would continue to react to the situation in conformity with the predetermined norm after it was once established in them.

Before the experiment in the group situation, the experimenter had a special session with one of the subjects. The experimenter told him to distribute his judgments around one definite number of inches (e.g., 5), and not to go below 2 or above 8, in this particular case. Thus this subject would give a *predetermined* range and *predetermined* norm within that range. The aim of the experiment was to find out how far this predetermined range and norm would influence the range and norm of the other subject who was entirely unaware of the predetermination. The range and norm were varied for seven groups in this particular experiment.

The results thus far obtained are striking. The "naïve" subjects conform to the predetermined range and norm with

only slight degrees of deviation. A few subjects report at the end of the experiment that they resent the uniformity of judgments of the "other fellow" in successive presentations, and therefore try to make their judgments deviate from his. This produces some deviation, but not much, from conformity to the predetermined norm; in spite of their resentment, they do not actually go in general beyond the limits of the predetermined range.

After the group session the naïve subject is experimented upon alone the following day. The conformity found in the individual session following the group session approaches, in general, the predetermined norm *more* closely than when the subject was in the group situation. Yet in the introspections obtained after the experiment is over, the subjects write that they were more independent in their judgments in the individual situation. The results obtained in these individual sessions are full of implications for social psychology.

It seems to us that the psychological process embodied in these facts may be basic to the daily phenomena of suggestion and the formation of attitudes on that basis. It is not a rare occurrence in everyday life to react negatively or hesitatingly to suggestion on some topic raised by some acquaintance while in his presence. Perhaps there is a disinclination to accept suggestions readily unless there is some strong prestige or pressing demand. Perhaps to appear easily yielding is not so pleasant for an "ego." Still, we may fall back upon our friend's opinion later of our own accord, not being in a position to reach any certainty about the matter. We may be doing this through free choice and feel "independent," as there is no demand upon our ego at the moment; perhaps, too, we are inwardly proud of our display of open-mindedness.

ADVANTAGE OF STARTING WITH ESTABLISHED VALUES RATHER THAN WITH ITEMS IN INDIVIDUAL RESPONSE

Before we close this chapter, we should like to take up a point closely connected with Chapter II, i.e., the necessity of appropriate perspective in the study of the attitude-value relationship. The analysis has shown that social attitudes that are common in the members of a group are more or less established psychological processes that are formed on the basis of standardized values; the values toward persons and things do not necessarily arise from personal experiences with these persons and ideas.

Values are products of the contact of individuals who have a temporary place in the history of the group, but they cease to be the private property of this or that individual, once they are formed. As standardized fixations, values are sociological realities. Of course, in spite of their inertia, they are subject to change and replacement after the conditions that give rise to them cease to exist. Now, for the understanding of social attitudes and their organization in a person, is a psychological analysis, by introspective or other methods, adequate? Or shall we first start with the study of the social values of the group, and then take up the characteristics of the attitudes of particular individuals? This is not a hair-splitting pedantic question of the kind as to whether the hen or the egg was first, as we shall presently see; the orientation of research depends on a clear answer.

An attitude denotes a psychological process, a more or less lasting state of readiness that determines whether the individual will react affectively in a positive or a negative way in relation to an object or situation stamped with a value-judgment. Once an attitude is established in an individual, it has a stable affective character. Social values are not fabri-

cated at will and dismissed at the caprice of an individual. Neither are they generated in him by heredity or maturation. He gets them from his environment, and some of them at least are imposed upon him. Social values are seldom isolated items. They have their place and their relation to other values in a culture pattern. When we say, therefore, that we must begin with the study of established values in order to understand the social attitudes and their organization in the psychological structure of the individual, we are simply saying that we must *place the individual first in a social milieu* with its established structure, institutions and values. This is simply a repetition of the idea that the facts of individual psychology must be seen in proper *perspective* if they are to be meaningful to us in their concrete relationships. This has no bearing on the question of the importance of individual differences, since all individuals come within the general principle, and reveal their individuality not by defying cultural influences but by their mode of assimilating them.

There are a good many observational and experimental facts that impose on us the necessity of starting with the study of social values if we are to get a satisfactory understanding of the attitudes of the individual, and save ourselves from a piecemeal approach to the person, centered only in the futile intricacies of his introspections.

Suppose you know that a person is a good Catholic or a good Marxist. You can predict in an empirical way a hundred things about him—what sort of people he would like for associates, what sort of books he would prefer, and what sort of race prejudices he would have or lack. Of course you would not know whether he would prefer broiled fish or fried fish, blondes or brunettes. On the other hand, if you

learn first that he prefers broiled fish, or brunettes, or that his handwriting has a certain slant, or that he is subject to temperamental outbursts, you will not be able to predict what his basic loyalties are. He can be a Protestant or a Catholic, a conservative or a radical. There are some attitudes that permit prediction, and these can be approached if we know prevailing values.

Some striking facts concerning attitudes toward other races or groups make it almost imperative to begin with the established values of the group if we wish an adequate study of the attitudes formed in the individual. In social life we find not only values (positive and negative) ready-made for us, but also more or less well-defined classifications of objects and persons which permit us to apply the values without hesitation. The place of a member of the group or a foreigner and his distance from the group is prescribed by these classifications to a large extent. (These classifications do not always agree with the scientifically acceptable classifications of the time; for example, "Aryan" is not a race in anthropology, but the concept may serve a political purpose, as used in Nazi Germany now.) If we do not know these social classifications and limit ourselves to the attitudes expressed in questionnaires, or even in the behavior of individuals, we shall often have an altogether distorted picture of the facts. For example, the actual physical appearance of an individual is not as important as where his "group" is placed by the norms of "social distance" held by the person who is evaluating him. In America, conversation with a man may change when one discovers that he is one-eighth Negro. Faris writes: "Moreover, in the United States, prejudice against mulattoes means always prejudice against black people. In South Africa and Brazil, where mulattoes are not

classed with black people, the outcome would be very different owing to the different group attitude."³⁵

During the Christmas vacation of 1931, a Hindu who was a research scholar of Sanskrit at Harvard University, traveled in the South. His skin was somewhat dark. Whenever he took a seat in the train with white people, he was immediately asked to leave and to move to the car where he belonged. He would explain that he was not a Negro, but a Hindu. Each time that he succeeded in making this clear, he was allowed to travel in the coach with white people. This same thing happened in hotels. He could stay at the hotels for white people when he explained that he was not a Negro. Social classifications are more important in determining the reaction one will get than the immediate sensory facts.

The fact that social values precede us (unless it is a period of transition or revolution) and that we find them ready-made, to be incorporated in us as formulæ in our genetic development, has come out clearly in genetic studies. Thus Lasker³⁶ found that the development of racial prejudices in children was not so much a matter of building up sentiments on the basis of concrete contact with the members of the race in question, but rather a matter of adopting the established values of the group. As Horowitz's material shows,³⁷ the child's attitude toward the Negro is *the result not of contact with Negroes but of contact with the prevailing attitude toward Negroes.*

In fact, as long as they strongly prevail in our social at-

³⁵ FARIS, E., The Concept of Social Attitudes, *J. Appl. Sociol.*, 1935, vol. 9, no. 6, 404-409.

³⁶ LASKER, B., *Race Attitudes in Children*, Henry Holt & Company, Inc., New York, 1929.

³⁷ HOROWITZ, E. L., The Development of Attitude toward the Negro, *Arch. Psychol.*, 1936, no. 194.

mosphere, the established prejudices are incorporated in us in the form of evidence-proof formulæ that render us more or less deaf to additional information. Thus in a recent study of the attitudes of a group of southern students, Bolton³⁸ concludes:

The very low correlation coefficients between the Attitude Scale and the intelligence and knowledge tests shows that neither intelligence nor knowledge of the social problems of the race has been an important factor in determining the attitudes of these students towards the social rights of the Negro. They seem to be determined by a cultural pattern of social organization which is accepted by the individual members in the group.

This fact, that race prejudice is a standardized part of the culture pattern, ordinarily not subject to great individual variations, has clearly come out in the factual results of the studies of Allport and Katz.³⁹ On the basis of their extensive investigations they conclude:

One of the most interesting findings of the Reaction Study in this field was the fact that the order in which the groups were excluded (which may serve as a rough measure of "social distance") was remarkably uniform throughout the entire student body. Whether we took engineering students, Liberal Arts students, Fine Arts students, or graduate students, men or women, fraternity members or neutrals, the relative aversion attached to these racial and group stereotypes was everywhere the same.⁴⁰

Though there are individual differences, these may be seen as variations over a range which is sharply contrasted with the range of groups having different social backgrounds.

³⁸ BOLTON, E. B., Effect of Knowledge upon Attitude towards the Negro. *J. Soc. Psychol.*, 1935, vol. 2, no. 1, 88.

³⁹ ALLPORT, F. H. and KATZ, D., *Students' Attitudes*, Craftsman Press, Syracuse, New York, 1931.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 349.

We conclude that the established values are social data, and as such belong to the field of sociology. Their meaning must be taken on their own level, if we want to keep them undistorted. Starting with social values for an adequate understanding of attitudes gives us the proper perspective. As social values represent lasting affective fixations, these will give us the general orientations. And general orientations are important in that they determine or modify the properties of the specific items which may enter as parts of a psychological phenomenon.

But this is merely a beginning. Of course there are individual differences. The individuals in a group do not incorporate in themselves in the same way and at the same tempo the values of their group. And the persons who have interiorized in themselves the same social values are not attached to them with the same intensity, the same emotional manifestations, etc. Even though the social values of all the members of the group reveal at least a minimum amount in common, their varying ages, intelligence, and temperaments cause differences in their suggestibility, desire to conform, mode of manifesting affective responses, etc., thus bringing about all sorts of shadings that are peculiar to the individuals. When once the social psychologist has gained his perspective by studying the social structure and social values of the group, he has to go further and take the individual *nuances* into account.

In summary, for an attitude-value investigation in social psychology, we must begin with more comprehensive social structures and go step by step to more specific ones in our psychological analysis.

Chapter VIII

BASIC NEEDS AND SOCIAL VALUES

SOCIAL REGULATION OF THE WAYS OF SATISFYING NEEDS

HUMAN beings, like all other organisms, have to satisfy their basic needs if they are to carry on the important business of life. But when we consider the ways in which people of different cultures eat, drink, find shelter, mate and care for children, extraordinary differences appear. We do not simply eat; we eat certain things, in certain ways, at certain places, and more or less at certain times, all prescribed within limits for a given established group. We do not simply mate, but mate according to prescribed customs; some mates and some ways of choosing mates that are naturally possible are barred and certain others are left for us. The same is true in establishing a shelter and in all other vital activities.

In short, the social standardization which we saw in the case of perceptual patterning (Chapters II and IV) is also found in the regulating of vital activities. In this chapter we shall give some concrete cases of standardization in such fundamental human relations as ownership, sex, kinship, parental care, and expression of self in cooperative and competitive ways. As a measure of caution we shall report these cases directly from authors who are either field workers in primitive sociology or in close contact with them. Also, to avoid reading outside interpretations into their reports, it may be wise to quote such cases verbatim as far as possible.

These cases are selected to illustrate the point that norms which are different from those that are, or rather were (because everything seems to be in a fluid state now), preva-

lent in western culture, may be the respectable norms in other social structures.¹ We have chosen intentionally examples which constitute elementary knowledge for those working in the field of primitive sociology. Our reason for this is the realization that for the most part social psychologists have tried to elaborate their work independently of the well-established facts collected in primitive sociology, with the consequence that several historically important social psychologies are grossly lacking in perspective (cf. Chapter II), so that their accounts of the social psychology of man are nothing more than the pictures of men shaped in competitive individualistic bourgeois society. The social psychologies of Ross² and F. H. Allport³ are examples.

Food

According to the general run of textbooks on psychology, one might conclude that because there is a "hunger drive" a man will eat whatever food is in sight, after the fashion of the cat and the fish. It is asserted that men will differ in some of the preparatory reactions of attaining food but not in the reaction of eating. This is grossly misleading. Established norms may standardize definite relationships between men and the animals and plants about them, thus stamping a positive or negative value on them. Rivers reports from Melanesia that "In Mota there are many persons, perhaps as many as half the population, who are not permitted by

¹ The rich literature giving such standardized variations is scattered in the field studies of primitive sociologists or ethnologists. A good many pertinent cases convenient for the psychologist will be found in Klineberg's Chapter XIV on the "Fundamental Drives" in *Race Differences*, Harper & Brothers, New York, 1935, 255-277. An excellent discussion of the social regulation of the instinctive activities is given in Part IV ("Instinct and Culture") of Malinowski's *Sex and Repression in Savage Society*. In fact, the whole book is a great help in orienting oneself in this difficult problem.

² Ross, E. A., *Social Psychology*, The Macmillan Company, New York, 1908.

³ ALLPORT, F. H., *Social Psychology*, Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston, 1924.

custom to eat the flesh of certain animals nor to eat certain fruits, nor to touch certain trees. The ground for prohibition in most cases is that the person is believed to be the animal or fruit in question, his mother having received an influence from an animal or plant of that kind before his birth."⁴

Property

Those who have been brought up in individualistic societies take it for granted that acquisitiveness is a strong human instinct. It is felt to be so because their society has so molded them. A glance at the notions of ownership in various societies leads us to believe that lust for ownership of property may be emphasized or minimized by social norms. To the members of a society in which a person's accumulated wealth is an index of value and greatness, the members of a group which minimize the value of ownership will appear abnormally lacking in this human instinct of acquisitiveness. We may cite a few illustrations of societies in which individual ownership is neither a great virtue nor the basis of a powerful drive. "In the Chepana tribe, the men, women and children went out every morning to hunt and search for food. It was a man's duty to provide food. The food was divided equally amongst all those present by the old men. A man had special duties towards his wife's parents if they were sick and unable to hunt. Here we see a communism *which gives no preference to any relation, and apparently treats equally all the members of the local group.*"⁵

In his study of the Eddystone Islanders, Rivers writes:

Here it is a striking fact that, side by side with the existence

⁴ RIVERS, W. H. R., *The History of Melanesian Society*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, England, 1924, vol. 1, 151.

⁵ MALINOWSKI, B., *The Family Among the Australian Aborigines*, London University Press, 1913, 284.

of individual marriage in a most definite form, there still exists a large degree of community ownership of land. No piece of garden-ground on the island can be said to be the property of an individual, but land is free for the use of any of the group of persons who call one another *taviti*. . . . Communal ownership in land may thus be said still to exist on this island, though the land is not common to a social group which can be regarded as a clan, but belongs to a group of persons brought into relationship with one another by kinship, i.e., by being able to trace genealogical relationship with one another. Other kinds of property in this island are largely owned by individuals, though even here there are indications of a wider ownership.⁶

Cooperativeness and Competitiveness

Many people, especially in the United States, take it for granted that without individual competition directed toward personal gain and glory you cannot have a stable community of free people, because individual competition, for reasons that can be easily traced, seems so natural. Yet a glance at the competitive and cooperative habits of the individuals of some primitive societies will convince us that sentiments of cooperativeness and competitiveness, sentiments of individualism and collectivism, are, to a great extent, the product of the incorporation in our personalities of socially established norms. This is a major point that we shall take up in the next chapter when we deal with the formation of the ego. From many observations now available in the field of primitive sociology we shall give a few cases that look unnatural to a person in whom competitiveness in every phase of life has become "second nature."

Margaret Mead and collaborators recently studied "cooperative and competitive habits" in thirteen different primi-

⁶ RIVERS, W. H. R., *op. cit.*, vol. 2, 147.

tive societies.⁷ Among the Zuñi, "in the economic as well as the ceremonial field the aggressive, competitive, non-cooperative individual is regarded as the aberrant type."⁸ As a consequence of this, "Until lately, the strong-willed and culturally aberrant individual in Zuñi was faced with the danger of being accused of sorcery. Thus, N., one of the best examples of a dominant personality type in Zuñi, was hanged by the thumbs as a witch until he confessed."⁹ Among the Samoans certain aspects of culture work against the development of competitive personalities. "The circumstance that each village, and almost every family line, has more titles than it ever uses in a generation, gives to this fixed pattern an expansiveness, a sense of spaciousness, and mutes competition."¹⁰

The following observation shows how a cooperative society may manage to provide variations in the status of the individual member:

Another strength lies in the continuing redefinition of the cooperative situation, so that no individual plays continuously a fixed rôle, except the high chief, and his rôle is so hedged about with etiquette, procedure and lack of any real executive authority, with the final right to remove his title from him which is vested in the group, that he is not likely to overstep his bounds. But most individuals play a series of parts of differing importance in a series of differently organized activities; a man's attention is focussed upon his behavior in relation to a situation, as host, as

⁷ MEAD, MARGARET, and collaborators, *Studies in Cooperative and Competitive Habits in Selected Primitive Cultures*, Being Part of a Report to the Psychological Sub-committee of the Committee on Personality and Culture, Social Science Research Council, New York, 1935 (unpublished).

⁸ GOLDMAN, IRVING, *Competitive and Cooperative Habits among the Zuñi Indians of New Mexico*, 3. (This is one of the studies in the group mentioned above.)

⁹ *Ibid.*, 56.

¹⁰ MEAD, MARGARET, *Competitive and Cooperative Habits Among the Samoans* (one of the studies in the series), 10.

guest, as *matai*, as member of council, as a fisherman beneath the *tautai*, as a member of a war party in which his rôle is determined by his division membership in the village, as a giver of *toga* and a receiver of *oloa*, as a giver of *oloa* and receiver of *toga*, as the heir in his patrilineal line, as the *tamafafine*, the cross-cousin with a veto, in his mother's family, as the ranking member of one group, the man of lowest rank in the next group he enters, as the chief to whom a young man kneels as he gives a message at noon time, and as the father of a daughter upon whom the same young man, who must now be received courteously, calls in the evening; that such a man does not develop a fixed response to others which is definitely dominance or submission, leadership or discipleship, authoritarian insistence or meek compliance, exhibitionism or refusal to play any public part; the multiplicity and contrast between his rôles prevents that sort of integrated personality from developing.¹¹

In another connection, Mead states that those who suffer most among the Arapesh are those who are violent and aggressive.¹²

Sex

Similarly, a glance at the regulation of sex behavior in some societies points to the fact that the norms that exist today in Europe and America are not the original revelations of human nature, but are products of culture. "There are innumerable forms of courtship and marriage, seasons of love-making are different, types of winning and wooing vary with each culture."¹³ A concrete illustration will give us an idea as to how the respected ways of regulating the sex life may vary from culture to culture.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 26-27.

¹² MEAD, MARGARET, *Sex and Temperament in Three Primitive Societies*, William Morrow & Co., New York, 1935, 145.

¹³ MALINOWSKI, B., *Sex and Repression in Savage Society*, Harcourt, Brace & Company, Inc., New York, 1927, 194.

The most striking feature of the regulations of Eddystone Island concerning sexual matters is the contrast between the great freedom before marriage and the great strictness afterward. Soon after puberty defloration of a more or less ceremonial character takes place; and this is followed by a period in which the girl is at the service of any man on payment of a fee to her parents. Once married, however, the rule is absolutely strict, though no doubt it is sometimes broken, that neither man nor woman may seek other partners.

. . . The defloration takes place at no very definite interval after puberty; and it is clear that at present and in recent times it may be dispensed with, and a woman remain a virgin till marriage; but this is probably very exceptional and almost certainly unknown in the past. The matter is often arranged before menstruation has begun, and in such a case the man will give a ring to the parents of the girl to bind the transaction. Sometimes the girl has a voice in the decision, and the man chosen is one to whom she has taken a fancy. The regular fee for defloration is ten rings paid by the man to the parents of the girl. . . . This payment entitles the man to intercourse for twenty nights; but if the girl is found not to be intact, the man will demand to have the rings returned and will only give the one mbokalo (arm ring) which he would have paid in the ordinary way.

The defloration must take place at night and in the bush. . . . It seemed to lie entirely at the discretion of the man whether he should act alone or with friends, and the fee was the same in all cases. . . . In such a case one man would go alone into the bush, and on his return to the house another would take his place. This continues every night for twenty nights, and then the girl is usually free for the custom . . . according to which any man may visit her for two nights in succession on payment of one . . . arm ring. On these occasions intercourse takes place at night and in the bush. Never in any circumstance should intercourse before marriage take place in a house; and there is some reason to think that if this did happen it would be regarded as

equivalent to marriage, and the man would feel compelled to pay the marriage price. On the other hand, it was said that the pair might go to an unoccupied house. The rules about the time of day appeared to be less strict. It seemed clear that intercourse in the daylight was not absolutely forbidden, but there was evidently the greatest reluctance to perform it. It is evidently taboo for anyone after puberty to see the genital organs of one of the opposite sex; this applies also after marriage, and it is probable that the objection to intercourse in the daytime is connected with this taboo.¹⁴

Kinship

The kinship constellations in which we are found are so well organized in us that our prescribed attachment to parents and relatives seems to us fore-ordained and natural. Yet the study of different kinship constellations in different societies will awaken us to the fact that the affective distance between ourselves and other people is prescribed by the social structure. We have already touched on this point in Chapter IV, where we noted that our more or less lasting contact with other persons results in the establishment of some sort of definite relationship; we know what to expect from others, and others expect certain attitudes from us toward them. We also saw that these relationships are often prescribed for us by social norms; in these instances we have scarcely any free choice to experiment before we decide how to act toward a person. Thus Lowie states, ". . . a native may be at a complete loss how to treat a stranger who falls outside the established rubrics."¹⁵

Even the reciprocal parent-offspring sentiments may be socially prescribed. The most intimate human ties, such

¹⁴ RIVERS, W. H. R., *Psychology and Ethnology*, Kegan Paul, London, 1926, 71-72.

¹⁵ LOWIE, R. H., *Primitive Society*, Boni and Liveright, New York, 1925, 80.

as are found in the family, are not "natural" or inborn, but formed on the basis of socially established kinship constellations.

Parental Care

For parents to consent to the selling or killing of their children suggests brutality or insanity. Yet there are cases in which such acts may be standardized to the status of normal practice in a community. A case observed by Rivers on the Island of Mota in Melanesia will suffice:

. . . In this island a newly born infant becomes the child of the man who pays the chief helper or midwife at the birth. The sister of the father settles who shall be the midwife, so that the father usually has priority of information on this point and, as he will usually be on the spot, he has thus two advantages in the contest for being the first to claim his child, but if he had not the necessary money or if he is away, it may happen and frequently does happen, that another may step in before him and become the "father" of the child. Two definite instances may be given. My informant, John Pantutun, before his wife had given him a family, wished very much for offspring. He heard that the wife of a man named Matthew had just had a child and he knew that Matthew had no money, so he ran to his village, heard who had assisted at the birth, paid this woman the necessary money and became the father of the child. Plenty of other people were said to have wanted the child and John ascribed his success to his swift running which enabled him to reach the village earlier than anyone else.¹⁶

Even infanticide may be standardized to become a normal practice under given conditions. "A Tipokian family is usually limited to four children, any in excess of this number being killed by burying them alive in the house or just outside it; occasionally five or six may be kept alive but never

¹⁶ RIVERS, W. H. R., *History of Melanesian Society*, vol. 1, 50.

more. If the first four children are all girls, one or more of these may be killed in the hope that succeeding children may be boys, in which case the lives of the boys would be spared."¹⁷

We must limit our examples to a minimum since our task is not to bring together field observations, but to look for a psychological basis for variations. Malinowski's generalization about kinship and other human ties in the community gives a sound orientation toward the social psychology of these relationships. He states: "It must be realized that at the time when our European child starts to find its way in our complex social relations, the Melanesian girl or boy also begins to grasp the principle of kinship which is the main foundation of the social order. These principles cut across the intimacy of family life and rearrange for the child the social world which up to now consisted for him of the extended circles of family, further family, neighbors and village community."¹⁸

From the cases cited, we draw no conclusions beyond stressing the plasticity of human nature as to the acceptance of norms, within limits, and the many possibilities in the regulation of instinctive activities. To make our meaning clear, we must explicitly exclude reference to any further implications about human nature that might be assumed in this connection.

Our next task is to go further and try to understand the psychological factors that come into play in the production of these standardized variations. It would be a mistake to say that the cases mentioned represent "human nature" more truly than do the cases that may be derived from any other

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 313.

¹⁸ MALINOWSKI, B., *Sex and Repression in Savage Society*, Harcourt, Brace & Company, Inc., New York, 1927, 47.

culture, primitive or highly developed. The fact that primitive peoples do not have such an elaborate accumulation of cultural superstructure as civilized societies does not mean that they are closer to the "original human nature." The question of origin in cultural products is very complex, and a linear scale of social development is being abandoned more and more in the light of evidence.

The only reason for reporting these observations is to show that different varieties of behavior may be standardized as normal. Happenings of the types described do sometimes take place in Europe and America; in fact, it is not difficult to find such happenings appearing as aberrant cases in the reports of the daily papers. But the newspaper reader regards them as abnormal, horrid or strange, as indeed they are, in relation to European and American norms. The important difference that has to be carefully noted is that the ethnological cases we have cited are parts of the socially approved normal practice in their respective societies. Our own behavior is similarly aberrant when seen from the viewpoint of other norms. The realization of the lesson embodied in our cases makes us more cautious about drawing any rash conclusions about human nature such as are commonly advanced by many interested people at the present time.

The present chapter, up to this point, is concerned with sociological facts. But this is merely our starting point, and not our social psychology. It is at this point that we must go further into the investigation of the social psychology of these standardized variations in sentiment and behavior, with due acknowledgment to the ethnologist for his valuable contribution.

Chapter IX

BASIC NEEDS AND SOCIAL VALUES (*Continued*)

THE NAÏVE SETTING FOR OUR PROBLEM

THE problem we next face is a very difficult one: it involves the ego. "Ego" has been such a controversial problem; it has aroused so much fuss. Since the problem is so difficult, the best start we can make is to restate it naively and empirically, before going into any psychological conceptualization. This empirical description will offer a secure place to come back to if we get lost in the dubious paths of psychological conceptualization. It is not a rare occurrence that in psychology we get lost in our own systematizations; but as we have to make at least a minimum of adaptation to reality in order to carry on the business of living—and this minimum degree is not a small amount—we can and usually do resort to common sense in our dealings with a world which depends so much on social contacts. Here we cannot afford to err much. This may be the reason why novelists and playwrights are, from an empirical point of view, still the best psychologists.

Every human grouping having some duration, whether in the most primitive, most simple society or in the most highly developed and differentiated society, possesses some set of norms or customs that express organized relationships in the structure of society. Such a set of norms regulates, to a large extent, the economic and social activities of the individual members in their quest for the satisfaction of their needs. We venture to repeat this self-evident fact in order to use it at the outset of the present argument. We had to

take both structure (biological drives in this case) and superstructure (institutions and customs) in their interrelationship because, though structure is the basic reality, superstructure is a reality as long as it survives.

The established norms within a society require conformity from the members or would-be members (children) that live in its atmosphere. The conformity is imposed either through the objective external properties of cultural products, such as the specially standardized proportions and forms of furniture, utensils, clothing, language, houses, etc., that present themselves every day, or through the demands, scolding, example, teaching, cooperation, correction or punishment of parents, teachers, playmates, equals, superiors, legal institutions, and group situations.

Infants are not at first required to conform to rules and regulations of their own accord. As they grow up the customs and traditions are imposed more severely, until the "proper" norms are incorporated in the individual. In the adult the social norms are so well incorporated that he conforms not only in response to the force of parent or police, but frequently of his own accord. There are times when he does not steal, even though he might steal to his advantage, because consciously or unconsciously the norm, "Thou shalt not steal," is effective within him. There are times when he does not commit adultery, because "Thou shalt not commit adultery" has become a part of him. It will hurt *him* to steal; it will injure *his* self-respect to commit adultery. It will be below *his* dignity to do anything that is not *honorable*. Telling a lie will hurt *his* conscience.

Of course, there are times when he yields to "temptation"—temptation as defined in his group and in situations where it is culturally defined. Of course, too, there are individual

differences; different individuals have different thresholds for a breakdown under the stress of temptation. We are not talking about a generalized "prototype" sort of man.

After yielding to temptation, an individual may repent, because something in *himself* is hurt. He may feel the necessity of confessing to a priest or to a dear friend, because he feels something restless in *him* which forces him to find some release. Some stronger individual may not confess, but he may still have a sense of guilt in *himself*, because he has done something he should not have done. Many an individual will have a *conflict* within *himself* before or after committing an act.

Now we put the question: What is this *self* (this ego) in him that was referred to in all these situations by a pronoun? We must know something about the psychology of this self in order to approach the psychology of the social regulation of instinctive activities for it is involved as an important factor in such regulation.

STAGES IN EGO FORMATION

We are not concerned with the philosophical history or philosophical implications of the ego. We are concerned with the ego because it is empirically seen to be involved in the regulation of instinctive activities.

As one reads the psychological discussions of the ego, one becomes more and more convinced that psychologically we confront a genetic problem. As one notes the facts connected with the genetic development of the ego, one is gratified to find a general trend of agreement running through the observations from the 1880's to present-day studies. This is surprising, in view of the almost mystic halo that might seem to surround the ego at first sight.

Preyer's observations on the development of the ego give us a concrete factual start:

Before the child is in a condition to recognize as belonging to him the parts of his body that he can feel and see, he must have had a great number of experiences, which are for the most part associated with *painful feelings*. How little is gained for the development of the notion of the "I" by means of the first movements of the hands, which the infant early carries to his mouth, and which must give him, when he sucks them, a different feeling from that given by sucking the finger of another person, or other suitable objects, appears from the fact that, e.g., my child for months tugged at his fingers as if he wanted to pull them off, and struck his own head with his hand by way of experiment. At the close of the first year he had a fancy for striking hard substances against his teeth, and made a regular play of gnashing the teeth. When on the four hundred and ninth day he stood up straight in bed, holding on to the railing of it with his hands, *he bit himself on his bare arm*, and that the upper arm, so that he immediately cried out with pain. The marks of the incisors were to be seen long afterward. The child did not a second time bite himself in the arm, but only bit his fingers, and inadvertently his tongue.¹

How little he understands, even after the first year of his life has passed, the difference between the parts of his own body and foreign objects is shown also in some strange experiments that the child conducted quite independently. He sits by me at the table and strikes very often and rapidly with his hands successive blows upon the table, at first gently, then hard; then, with the right hand alone, hard; next, suddenly strikes himself with the same hand on the mouth; then he holds his hand to his mouth for a while, strikes the table again with the right hand, and then all of a sudden strikes his own head (above the ear). The whole performance gave exactly the impression of his having for the

¹PREYER, W., *The Development of the Intellect*, Appleton, New York, 1889, 189.

first time noticed that it is one thing to strike oneself, one's own hard head, and another thing to strike a foreign hard object (forty-first week.)²

Another important factor is the *perception of a change produced by one's own activity* in all sorts of familiar objects that can be taken hold of in the neighborhood; and the most remarkable day, from a psycho-genetic point of view, in any case an extremely significant day in the life of the infant, is the one in which he first experiences the *connection of a movement executed by himself with a sense-impression following upon it.*³

55th week—The child looks for a long time attentively at a person eating, and follows with his gaze every movement; grasps at the person's face, and then, after *striking himself on the head*, fixes his gaze on his own hands. He is fond of playing with the fingers of persons in the family, and delights in the bendings and extensions, evidently comparing them with those of his own fingers.⁴

For the behavior of the child towards his image in the glass shows unmistakably the gradual growth of the consciousness of self out of a condition in which objective and subjective changes are not yet distinguished from each other.⁵

In the light of current studies of the ego, Preyer's observations seem to be basically correct. This does not mean, of course, that every child will pass through the same experiences and that the ego will appear at the same age as in Preyer's child. For reasons that we shall consider in a moment, the specific incidents in each case, the general surroundings, the status and class of the family, may function in such a way that the segregation of the ego from the environment is accelerated or retarded. But the fundamental observation about the trend of development is sound. The

² *Ibid.*, 190-191.

³ *Ibid.*, 191-192.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 195.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 196.

infant does not at first separate what is self from what is not; this is achieved in the course of his developmental history.

A little later (1895), J. M. Baldwin reached the same conclusions. His general formulation is along the following lines:

The *ego* and the *alter* are thus born together.⁶

This we may call the *subjective* stage in the growth of the self-notion. It rapidly assimilates to itself all the other elements by which the child's own body differs in his experience from other active bodies—the passive inner series of pains, pleasures, strains, etc. The self suffers as well as acts. [It is] set over against lifeless things, and against other bodies which act, indeed, but whose actions do not contribute to his own sense of actuation or suffering.⁷

This conclusion is especially important for our present theme.

In the recent work of Piaget and his collaborators extending over a period of years, one finds invaluable information on the development of the ego. Piaget has systematically developed the implications of his findings in the ethical and social fields. On the basis of the rich factual material at his command, he concludes that "the younger the child, the less sense he has of his own ego."⁸ Still lacking the formation of an ego, "the child does not distinguish between external and internal, subjective and objective."⁹

This undifferentiated state found at the outset is impor-

⁶ From BALDWIN, J. M., *Mental Development*, 1895, 338. By permission of The Macmillan Company, Publishers.

⁷ *Ibid.* (1911 ed.), 320.

⁸ PIAGET, JEAN, *Moral Judgment of the Child*, Kegan Paul, London, 1932, 86.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 86; see also *Judgment and Reasoning in the Child*, Harcourt, Brace & Company, Inc., New York, 1928, 197; and *Child's Conception of Physical Causality*, Harcourt, Brace & Company, New York, 1930, 130.

tant in understanding the systematic extension of theory that Piaget has achieved. The infant psychologically first floats "about in an undifferentiated absolute."¹⁰ In this undifferentiated absolute there are no psychological boundaries between one's own body and other objects, between reality and phantasy or wish, between subjective and objective. Thus a distinct ego experience is the "result of a gradual and progressive dissociation, and not of a primitive intuition."¹¹ The dominant principle that regulates the orientation of this initial "undifferentiated absolute" is the satisfaction of the momentary needs or wishes as they arise. Accordingly, one reacts differently to the same objects around one as one's needs or wishes change. Toward the object or person the infant may give a positive reaction now, but may react negatively a little later. From the point of view of the adult, such behavior is characterized by contradictions. This is at the core of childish inconsistency. This "inconsistency"—a characterization given by adult logic—is consistent in that it follows (or is regulated by) the variations in arising needs or wishes. In other words, child mentality and behavior are governed by the "pleasure principle," to use a term borrowed by Piaget from psychoanalysis. This is the stage of pure autism, and autism "knows of no adaptation to reality, because pleasure is its only spring of action"; it "deforms and refashions the world to its liking."¹²

On account of the resistances that he meets in the external world, the individual has to make adaptations to reality. This means that he has to make distinctions between what is himself and what is not, what is wish and what is reality.

¹⁰ PIAGET, J., *The Child's Conception of Physical Causality*, Harcourt, Brace & Company, Inc., New York, 1930, 128.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 128.

¹² PIAGET, J., *Judgment and Reasoning in the Child*, Harcourt, Brace & Company, Inc., New York, 1928, 244-246.

With this dawns logical consistency, which develops gradually through the stages of "egocentrism" and logical thinking. In the egocentric stage the child acts and talks as if he were the center of reference in the whole world; hence there is not much logical consistency, which is achieved only through sticking step by step to some well-established premise. In this process the undifferentiated absolute breaks down; the realization of reciprocal relations among other people and ourselves evolves. For the realization of reciprocal relations one has to grasp that there are other points of view besides one's own absolutism. In order to grasp this, the child must be able to separate himself from the external world.

For our purposes it is not important at present to follow the facts through the "egocentric" and "logical" stages, or to discuss the controversy as to the exact ages covered by these stages.¹⁸ The main fact that we draw from Piaget in the present connection is that child mentality starts with an undifferentiated absolute dominated by autism, which is governed chiefly by the satisfaction of momentary needs or wishes; and that as the child meets external resistances he adapts himself to reality gradually. *In this process the ego develops.* The ego is therefore not an unanalyzable entity. We shall try to characterize it and its contents as we go along. But our task is not to write a psychology of the ego, and we shall mainly emphasize those points that are related

¹⁸ The very fact that the highest coefficient of egocentrism is not above .60 (the case of Ad., age 4) shows that in the egocentric stage adaptation to reality coexists with egocentrism. In view of this fact, it is difficult to understand the validity of the objections to Piaget's interpretations on the ground that some of the little child's reactions are free from egocentrism. It may be that the critics are attacking a Piaget of their own invention and not the Piaget who reported the findings. (See, for example, the list of the coefficients of egocentrism given on p. 257 in *Judgment and Reasoning in the Child*.)

to our problem through the fact that the ego is involved in the regulation and satisfaction of basic needs.

Susan Isaacs, approaching child psychology psychoanalytically, criticizes Piaget for overemphasizing the rôle of social factors in development,¹⁴ and objects to the distinctions he draws between egocentric and logical (adapted) stages, which seem to be too sharply contrasted in his systematic presentation. She also takes issue with his age-placements as they relate to the duration of egocentrism and to the appearance of adapted (logical) behavior.¹⁵ Her corrections may prove to be valuable factual contributions to child psychology. But these additions to the knowledge of child psychology do not have an immediate effect on our present problem. Our concern, for the time being, is with the general characteristics of ego development, with the question whether the ego is a primitive perception, or a form of experience appearing in the course of contacts with the external world. The exact age locations, though essential for child psychology and developmental social psychology, make no difference for the present discussion. Isaacs' results substantiate the general conclusions reached by the investigators whom we have just reviewed.

She also finds that "much of the child's earliest interest in the physical objects is certainly derivative, and draws its impetus from early infantile wishes and fears in relation to its parents; and . . . the first value which the physical world has for the child is as a canvas upon which to project his personal wishes and anxieties, and his first form of interest in it, is one of dramatic representation."¹⁶ "To him, his wishes, desires or urges, call them what we will, together

¹⁴ ISAACS, S., *Intellectual Growth in Young Children*, Harcourt, Brace & Company, Inc., New York, 1930, especially 79 ff.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 82-93.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 101.

with their outcome in emotions, are the one reality."¹⁷ There is as yet no differentiated ego. True to the psychoanalytic conception that "mental life *is* dramatic,"¹⁸ Isaacs gives a vivid picture of early child mentality in which the ego is not yet formed. "In the same way, things 'inside' himself literally mean to the child inside *his body*. And when the child takes the parents into himself to act as a controlling agent, it seems to him that they are thereafter inside his actual body. They become identified with internal body processes such as intestinal movements, stomach pains, breathing, and so on; and even with the actual body substances, for example, fæces and urine."¹⁹ With the frustrations of the child's instincts (resistance of the external world, including parents and other persons) starts the "appreciation of the external world."²⁰

Lewin, in his own terminology, gives a similar account of the ego, tracing the development from the "undifferentiated absolute." "Analogously to this relatively slight delimitation among the various inner psychological systems, the functional firmness of the boundary between his own person and the psychological environment is also in general less with the child than with the adult. This is expressed, for example, by the fact that the 'I' or self is only gradually formed, perhaps in the second or third year."²¹ And the "slighter firmness of the boundary" between self and environment has a direct bearing upon the slighter separation of real from unreal strata.

Before closing our brief survey, a recent study of the "lo-

¹⁷ ISAACS, S., *Social Development in Young Children*, George Routledge & Sons, London, 1933, 286.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 210.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 295.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 288.

²¹ LEWIN, K., in Carl Murchison (ed.), *The Handbook of Child Psychology*, Clark Univ. Press, Worcester, Mass., 1931, 121.

calization" of the ego is very much to the point.²² In this interesting study the problem was to find at what point in the body each individual subject located the "self." The subjects were small children and college students. Horowitz varied his procedure of investigation to suit the ages of the subjects. The results show that the different subjects located themselves in different parts of their bodies, such as head, face, brain, eyes, heart, genitals, chest. In many cases the localization was variable and plainly arbitrary; it was not a true clue to the *nature* of the ego. From the facts collected, Horowitz concludes that "the localization of the self as is reported in the literature quoted, in the responses on our questionnaire, in informal discussion, in the investigation of children, is not the basic phenomenon one might hope for to ease an analysis of the structure of the self and personality. The more or less stable and constant association of the self-concept with the particular body regions, functions, or external objects or conditions serves chiefly as a reference point for the individual as a whole in the situation."

With even such a brief survey, it becomes evident that the experience of the self is not given immediately at birth, but is formed in the course of development. Even one's own body is not experienced *as his* at the outset of life. Biologically one's own body with its different parts—head, arms, legs, etc.—constitutes a single organism, but psychologically my feet, hands, etc., are not mine first, but *become mine* as a result of my experience in the course of my genetic development.

A CHARACTERIZATION OF THE DEVELOPING EGO

Ego formation, then, starts with the facing of external reality. The child meets resistances in his surroundings. In

²² HOROWITZ, EUGENE, Spatial Localization of the Self, *J. Soc. Psychol.*, 1935, vol. 6, 379-387.

adapting to external reality he has to distinguish between himself and external things. Now what do these resistances consist of? They are the resistances of inanimate objects around him, and the oppositions and hindrances offered by other people, such as parents and nurses.²³

But are even the objects around him devoid of social meaning? Most of the objects around him—chairs, tables, walls, pictures on the walls, etc.—are social products. They are found in certain standardized proportions and forms; and different cultures have different proportions and forms. This is important: these objects represent definite perceptual relationships. They have an effect in shaping his taste for forms and proportions. Consequently, when later the child is surrounded by other proportions representing a different culture, he may find these new objects queer or repugnant.

In addition to protecting the child from dangers and taking care of his basic biological needs, how do the parents and others around him influence him? They will develop in him the means of communication (language and gesture); they will put limitations on what he can do; they will tell him what a good or a bad boy is like, what is proper and what is not proper. All these conform to socially prescribed norms. From the earliest times the child grows up in an atmosphere heavily charged with socially established values. The child is fully immersed in them; he need not be immersed in baptismal water to develop into a good Baptist, for example. He is told that he is Johnny, and Johnny is this or that, that he is a boy, and boys do this and not that.

In short, beginning with his body, what he includes in "I" are the things, meanings and qualities related to him as

²³ LEWIN, K., *Dynamic Theory of Personality*, McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., New York, 1935, 175.

"mine" or "me," so that the "I" connections grow numerous and complicated. A complex formation takes place around the "I," and this has relations with many different things, including his own body as a whole, the different parts of his body, his clothes, the people around him, including his parents and others who are close, and inanimate objects around him. Thus this formation (sentiment) around the "I" consists of a complex system of relations.

And, as we shall see later, social values—the socially standardized relations—constitute no small part of the ego. Even to take the most obvious and visible content included in "I," namely, one's own body, there are norms attached to it; what part of the body one may expose and what part not, and when; what one has to do with it when meeting a certain person or appearing in a certain group; what parts of one's body one can treat so as to make them appear more desirable, and in what ways one may properly do this, as a child, as a woman, as a man. Carrying the burden of our egos, we find ourselves nearly always in situations that impose definitely prescribed demands on us. In the household, in school, in business, in the office, in the meeting, and even in a love situation, we stand in more or less definitely socially prescribed relationships to other individuals and to the whole situation. To a large extent our status, what we are in this situation, and how *we* shall *feel* and *act*, are prescribed by social values. (We have no desire to minimize the rôle of the unique properties of each specific situation.) Even what a husband and wife may expect from each other, their privileges and duties, vary from one culture to another (and the objective variation in responses is less important than the social adaptation and interpretation). With these variations the ego of a wife in a given culture may be injured by a given act of the husband, while that of a wife in a different

culture may not look upon such an act as an ego problem at all and so does not get hurt. Individual differences enter here, but it is not difficult to find examples in which these standardized ego involvements stand out strikingly despite the range of individual variations within one culture.

This complex formation or sentiment revolving around the "I" notion becomes a very important part of the whole psychological make-up of the adult. This system of relationships around the "I" in the constitution of which the *values* form no small part, determines goals to be attained, and regulates to a large extent our likes and dislikes in the social sphere.²⁴ It comes in as a factor in the regulation and modification of instinctive strivings. Formed in the course of contact with external reality, while "floating in an undifferentiated" autism which is moved primarily by the momentary needs and wishes, the ego may be referred to as a "system or complex of systems, a functional part region within [the] psychological totality."²⁵ Not every experience is a part of this system evolved around the core "I." As the facts reviewed in our short survey of its formation lead us to believe, the ego system segregates itself from the rest of the psychological totality with more or less firm boundaries. The boundaries are not rigid entities; the "boundaries of the ego are variable,"²⁶ and they "will vary from case to case."²⁷ They shrink and expand with the specific requirements of the actual situation, with the specific established relationships that are aroused at the moment. At times of exhaustion, or drunkenness, or the complete dominance of lust or hunger, the boundaries of the self may be smashed under

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 175.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 56.

²⁶ KOFFKA, K., *Principles of Gestalt Psychology*, Harcourt, Brace & Company, Inc., New York, 1935, especially 333.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 321.

the stress of strong biological impulses, and the result is a regression toward the absolute autism that we saw in children. Of course this is not the autism of a helpless child, but the autism of a grown-up "making a fool of himself" to others who have not thus regressed; or it is the autism of a person living in a self-made world of pure phantasy used as an escape from reality (a lunatic dreamer), or a reckless person who gets what he wants because he is powerful.

This brings us close to the important contribution of psychoanalysis, to the basic truth that one cannot help finding in the dramatic conceptualizations of Freud and his followers. Especially impressive is the systematic development presented by Freud in *The Ego and the Id*. In genetic development the child starts with the undifferentiated *id*, consisting of instinctive strivings that are set for gratification. (The question whether sexual impulses are the main constituents of the *id* does not concern us here; indeed, in the development of our problem we need not take sides as to the number and classification of drives or instincts.) In this undifferentiated state the child is dominated by the "pleasure principle" unchecked by other internal factors. In consequence of the frustrations that the child meets from the external world, the ego develops. The super-ego is later differentiated from the ego under the influence of the environment.²⁸ The super-ego criticizes and checks the domination of the impulses coming from the *id*. The super-ego is derived from parents and others in authority around the child;²⁹ it reacts to the instinctive demands with an "inflexible or very nearly inflexible code—religion, ethics, superstition, good manners."³⁰ What is this code with its ethics

²⁸ For example, JONES, E., *Int. J. Psychoanalysis*, 1926, vol. 7, 304.

²⁹ FREUD, S., *The Ego and the Id*, L. and V. Woolf, London, 1927, 49.

³⁰ EDER, M. D., *Int. J. Psychoanalysis*, 1929, vol. 10, 251.

and good manners, etc., if not a set of socially established values?

With respect to structure, the super-ego may be likened to the ego which we characterized as a complex sentiment around the notion "I," of which social values constitute no small part. We shall continue to use the term ego in this sense. The psychoanalysts themselves are not always sure in certain cases which one to choose of the two, ego or super-ego, as appears in the quotation from Jones (see footnote 32 on page 170).

Once formed, the ego (this includes the super-ego of the psychoanalysts) clearly displays affective properties. Objects and individuals move us most deeply and arouse in us the strongest reverberations when, besides satisfying the basic needs, they are identified or at least closely linked with our ego. Things and persons are felt with greater warmth, the more intimately they are incorporated into the core of the ego. The main constituents of the ego, social values, are affectively charged fixations.

The affective property of the ego is expressed in Freud's notion of secondary narcissism.³¹ A keen psychoanalyst, James Glover, has expressed this with clear insight:

When thwarted libido, withdrawn from incestuous love-objects, installs in the self the composite image of these objects, so that henceforth a differentiated part of the self is invested with libido formerly attached to supreme love-objects (an image which exercises the prerogatives of observation, criticism, approval, and punishment formerly exploited by its real precursors) then the libido is effectively divided against itself, for the narcissistic recompense for renounced object gratifications so obtained can only be maintained by inhibition, and this inhibition is maintained with the help of affective sanctions as strong or even stronger

³¹ JONES, E., *Int. J. Psychoanalysis*, 1926, vol. 7, 307.

than these disciplinary self-preservative activities. Just as a threat to survival mobilizes the painful affect of fear, so an infringement of the ego-ideal loosens the secondary narcissism found in the cathexis of the introjected parental image and occasions the painful tension of guilt, etc.³²

The feeling of guilt caused by violation of the values well incorporated in the ego may be taken as an index of the strong affective properties which the ego displays. The psychoanalysts have furnished us with valuable material indicating the effects of the sense of guilt. The symptoms of self-corrective behavior that come about to ease the sense of guilt may find expression in various ways. We may cite, as an illustration, one pathological case connected with the sense of guilt.³³ "In the case-history of a young patient the manifestations of his acutely conscious sense of guilt played a conspicuous part. When he indulged in the slightest luxury or pleasure he immediately experienced an inner command to be wretched, exhausted and thoroughly ill. He was unable to do any work; his illness had cost him several years that should have been directed to study." In this case it is interesting to note that his "father is a clergyman in a small town. He (the father) belongs to a religious sect that professes a strict moral code, and is narrow and bigoted in his

³² GLOVER, J., *Int. J. Psychoanalysis*, 1926, vol. 7, 418.

Similarly, E. Jones states: "The replacement of object-cathexis by identification brings about a profound change in the libidinal situation. The image thus incorporated into the (super) ego serves itself as an object to the libidinal impulses proceeding from the *id*, so that more of them are directed towards the ego as a whole than previously; this constitutes what Freud terms secondary narcissism. Along with this goes a desexualization of the impulses, a kind of sublimation, and this important process gives rise to interesting problems."—*Int. J. Psychoanalysis*, 1926, vol. 7, 307.

Freud also writes: "The super-ego is, however, not merely a deposit left by the earliest object-choices of the *id*; it also represents an energetic reaction-formation against those choices."—*The Ego and the Id*, 44.

³³ FENICHEL, OTTO, The Clinical Aspect of the Need for Punishment, *Int. J. Psychoanalysis*, 1928, vol. 9, 49.

beliefs, although in other respects he is peaceable and easy to get on with." The prohibitions of the mother "concerned not only what related to sex but everything that was at all worldly."

INVOLVEMENT OF THE EGO AS A FACTOR IN THE ACTIVITY MOTIVATED BY BASIC NEEDS

The adult member of a group does not give in to every stimulus in the satisfaction of his needs or desires; the general orientations of his behavior are not regulated by changes in his momentary needs. When desires and wishes do not fit into the demands of the ego they are usually checked or modified. The term "ego" might allow one to slip easily into the vicious habit of endowing the self with a sentimental, fetishistic halo. We must, therefore, be explicit. The ego is not a fixed entity. It is made up of relationships that are formed in the course of one's genetic development, centering in the experience of "I," itself a direct product of contact with reality. There are such different things, such different persons, such different situations linked with "I," "me," or "mine," that each special case has to be studied in its concrete relationships and seen in its place in the make-up of the ego. The ego varies with the varying relationships of members of the many social classes of humanity. The ego reflects membership in professional groups, a family; it varies with a man's place as colleague, as teacher, as student, as employer, as employee. In each case what will elate, what will hurt, what will be taken for granted is determined by one's own special place in the situation. A few examples will clarify our description.

It is an everyday experience in many social situations that we receive different treatment as male or female. This is especially true in societies where a leisure class serves as a

model for the rest of the population. Modes of behavior toward us will be taken as compliment or as insult, or as something to be taken for granted, depending merely on whether one is male or female. The attitudes of others toward us, and our attitudes toward ourselves as man or woman, are to a large extent prescribed by social standards and relationships.

In the young child approximately up to three years of age there appears "little evidence of any recognition of such [sex] differences." Children use the term "bad boy" indiscriminately to both sexes as a term of opprobrium. But after the age of three is reached, there is in general "no misapplication of the words boy or girl."³⁴ With psychological identification of ourselves as boy or girl, and, later, as man or woman, we incorporate into ourselves the qualities that are considered to go with male or female characteristics in our particular society, and we feel and react with "appropriate" male or female characteristics. This is not denying the feelings connected with male or female physiological peculiarities; but these are surely only an elementary core in the complex experience of maleness or femaleness.

As a psychoanalyst remarks, "We experience as masculine or feminine that which at any given time or place is held to be such."³⁵ It is socially conditioned: in psychoanalytic language the "decision lies with the super-ego"—the representative of society in us. If the social custom requires that the woman's place is by the hearth, then the best cook will feel herself to be the best woman. In such a case beauty may be regarded as secondary or immodest.

In good "society" in America the proper procedure is for

³⁴ DILLON, MIRIAM, Attitudes of Children Toward their Own Bodies, *Child Devel. Mon.*, 1934, especially 165, 172, etc.

³⁵ WITTELS, FRITZ, *Int. J. Psychoanalysis*, 1933, vol. 14, 339.

the gentleman to propose to the lady; the reverse runs counter to a lady's sense of propriety. If she does propose under the stress of strong love, she does it at the cost of her "pride." This practice seems to be just so much "human nature." Perhaps there may be some biological bias in this direction. But among the Eddystone Islanders "the initiative in proposing marriage seems often to come from the women. If a girl takes a fancy to a man, she will carry off his basket and run with it to the bush, a custom evidently closely associated with that of the *tugele*, which is connected with warfare. Carrying off the basket is a definite sign of preference and, if the man is willing, he will begin negotiating with the parents of the girl."⁸⁶ Among human groups generally, the courtship pattern may depend largely on the economic relation of the sexes.

Similar to ego qualities defined in terms of sex are ego qualities that are determined by place in a family. A child develops personal attachments for mother, father and others around him; but at the start he "defines a family not by the relation of kinship which unites its members, but by the space they occupy, by the immediate point of view from which he sees them grouped around him in a house."⁸⁷ The grasp of the kinship relationships requires the experience of reciprocal relations, which he is not yet capable of comprehending. But as he grows up, the socially established relationships make him rearrange the world and persons around him. As indicated before, these socially standardized relationships "cut across the intimacy of family life and rearrange for the child the social world which up to now con-

⁸⁶ RIVERS, W. H. R., *Psychology and Ethnology*, Kegan Paul, London, 1926, 80.

⁸⁷ PIAGET, J., *Judgment and Reasoning in the Child*, Kegan Paul, London, 1928, 131.

sisted for him of the extended circles of family, further family, neighbors and village community."³⁸ The convergence of results, exemplified in this case in the conclusions reached by the child psychologist and ethnologist, is important for the social psychologist and must be duly taken into consideration in any satisfactory systematization of the common attributes of the ego.

The *name* given by the parents to the child and the place it takes in the ego development is another point of interest. Many things of importance are connected with the person's name. McDougall rightly remarks that one's name "becomes a handle by aid of which he gets hold of himself and acquires facility in thinking and speaking of himself as an agent, a striver, a desirer, a refuser." In many societies individuals must change their names as part of the ceremony when an important stage is reached in their lives. The Andamanese girl gets a new name at the time of first menstruation. This is called the "flower name."³⁹ Likewise, in one of the Melanesian groups "on marriage both man and woman change their names and assume a common name."⁴⁰ The European and American woman's change of surname at marriage marks a new attitude toward the self; the new family officially displaces the name identification with the old. Of special interest is the experience of women who go into professions and become economically and in some other ways independent, some of whom today are not changing their maiden names upon marriage. It will be very interesting to note what sort of women do and what sort do not

³⁸ MALINOWSKI, B., *Sex and Repression in Savage Society*, Harcourt, Brace & Company, Inc., New York, 1927, 47.

³⁹ RADCLIFFE-BROWN, A., *Andaman Islanders*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, England, 1922, 119.

⁴⁰ RIVERS, W. H. R., *History of Melanesian Society*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, England, 1924, vol. I, 347.

change their names. The place of the name in the developing ego has interesting research possibilities for social psychology.

We must limit ourselves to the above-mentioned cases to show the point that the ego is not a stable entity, but is made up of concrete relations centering in the changing "I" experience. But whatever changes may take place, the ego at any state or in any relationship may nevertheless be felt with much affective coloring.

THE EGO AND ITS MISPLACEMENTS

Our brief survey of ethnological observations showing variations in the social regulation of the satisfaction of basic needs, and the psychological analysis that followed it, brought out the fact that conformity to social usages (not enforced by external pressure of police or other agents) is due to the involvement of the ego, and that the ego is a genetic psychological formation in which the social values are incorporated. Once the ego is formed, it acts as a factor to check or modify behavior, in order to make it accord with socially established usages. We must now go a little further in our analysis. With a little anticipation of our result, we would say that the regulating framework in this process of checking is the *ego-level* arising in each particular situation.

The concept of *ego-level* is the contribution of Lewin's collaborators.⁴¹ These investigators have shown that the experience of success or failure in a given situation is dependent not on an absolute scale of accomplishment, but on the level of success which the ego has set up for itself. The *ego-level* "tends to be kept high at all costs," i.e., as high as it

⁴¹ HOPPE, F., Erfolg und Misserfolg, *Psychol. Forschung.*, 1930, vol. 14, 1-63; FRANK, J. D., The Influence of the Level of Performance in One Task on the Level of Aspiration in Another, *J. Exp. Psychol.*, April, 1935, vol. 18, 159-171.

can in relation to the particular issue in question. Our success or failure in a given task or situation is not attainment as measured objectively, but attainment relative to the goal set by us at the time, and is experienced as gratification or frustration of our sense of personal worth. The involvement of the ego-level consequently influences the goals of performance set by oneself in concrete situations. If we do not wish to hurt our ego by falling below our set goals or aspirations, one way to protect ourselves is to play safe and thus set them low.

Here again social norms come in and prescribe for the individual (before he has time to make his actual contacts with people and situations and thus form his personal standards), *in what situations the ego has to be involved*, and to how large an extent; whom he must consider superior and whom inferior to himself. The socially prescribed norms determining ego involvements in the individual are more or less enduring for those having a more or less definite status, as compared with the momentary involvements determined by the properties of the actual situation. As long as we are in our prescribed setting, which raises no problems for us, and carry on the business of our daily routine in conformity with what we *expect* from others and what others expect from us, there are no intense and violent involvements of the ego. To the overt conformity there corresponds an inner conformity; the ego shrinks, though it does not disappear altogether.

However, the moment the set of strong expectations—expectations prescribed by norms or otherwise—is violated, the ego becomes strongly involved and may play the dominating rôle in determining the behavior. The occasions that arouse such expansions of the ego may include such acci-

dents as an insult from a person from whom we expect pleasant treatment, or a loss inflicted on our status. Intentionally we put the last statement in a general form, because such occasions will differ with the particular status of the person in question. Each case has to be studied in its concrete relations. (We do not minimize the importance of the differences in individual sensitiveness; we shall have a word or two to say about that in the next section.)

The socially established norms of prejudice furnish us good illustrations of the point in question. White people in the southern states take for granted the presence of Negroes as cooks, as servants, as nurses in intimate contact with their babies. But the presence of a Negro in the same place, *with equal status*, is something not to be tolerated. It is then and only then that the atmosphere is contaminated and becomes unbearable. The distance is not a physical one, nor one that is felt through the immediate sense impressions. The distance is an ego-distance or social distance, since social values (positive and negative) are incorporated in the ego. When the socially stamped distance of superior from inferior is violated by the presence of an inferior as equal, the ego-level becomes involved. We may conveniently refer to such cases as instances of *ego-misplacement*.

Let us take another illustration. This took place in one of the comparatively cheap old apartment houses on Riverside Drive in New York in 1935. The incident is a conversation between two tenants, a student and a woman of the lower middle class. At the time the latter had tied the hope of prosperity, and relief from hard conditions for a large family, to the "Share the Wealth" promises of Huey Long. One morning after exchanging greetings, the woman said, with signs of horror in her face:

"Did you hear?"

"What is it?"

"It is outrageous. We have to move out of this place."

"What is the matter? What happened?"

"I heard that a Negro family has just moved into the basement. I am going to find out about it. If it is true, we are going to move out right away."

The woman's family lived on the third floor. A Negro janitor served the woman and the other tenants in the apartment house (and she complained if he ever happened to be irregular in coming). If the Negro family had actually moved into the basement of the building, she would perhaps hardly have seen them.

This instance clearly brings out the point that the disgust felt is not so much due to the actual contact as to the violation of ego-distance, which brings about a misplacement in the ego feeling.

An individual as a member of a group cannot afford to ignore his place in relation to the social situation. He cannot "get away with" saying that he does not care to notice how he stands in relation to another person or other persons in the situation. As employer or employed, as superior or inferior in office or work, etc., we find certain prescribed requirements determining our status, and we are bound to notice them. If we fail to notice them, the resistances, developing to a strength proportional to the deviation committed, will command our attention. Thus the more or less enduring standards as to when the ego will be involved are seen to be truly "established" in us. In cases of the misplacement of the ego—e.g., when we are put in a position below our status or dignity—or in cases of violations of a set standard, as when we feel that we have committed a deed vio-

lating our moral or social values, the degree of frustration, or the intensity of the conflict or sense of guilt, will probably be proportional to the degree of ego-misplacement.

As the social values do not consist only of a set of prohibitions or taboos prescribing what is bad or wrong (the negative values) but include positive values also, putting the stamp of approval or desirability on certain kinds of acts or accomplishments, the ego involvement does not appear only as a checking or inhibiting factor, but also as a positive indicator of certain lines of action and striving. Attainment along these lines brings satisfaction. We shall take this up in the next section.

THE PLACE OF VALUES IN THE MAKE-UP OF THE EGO

We have had occasion already to mention in passing that values enter, in an important way, into the formation of the ego. Because of its far-reaching implications for social psychology, the point needs to be elaborated a little further.

It is our hypothesis that the ego not only is intimately related to social values, but that *it is chiefly made up of social values* derived from parents, teachers, and others close to the child.

The fact is observed by the psychoanalysts and expressed in different ways. Thus Ernest Jones states that the "ego ideal" (super-ego) is "largely built up from social and ethical ideas implanted by the parents and other educators."⁴² Alexander likewise says that the "super-ego is made up to an important degree of parental commands and prohibitions."⁴³ What are these "social and ethical ideas," "parental commands and prohibitions"? They are nothing more or

⁴² JONES, ERNEST, *Int. J. Psychoanalysis*, 1920, vol. 1, 173.

⁴³ ALEXANDER, F., Super-ego as Organ of Adaptation, *Int. J. Psychoanalysis*, 1925, vol. 6, 127.

less than the socially established evaluative fixations—values, in short.⁴⁴

The genetic studies of the psychoanalysts bring this out. Reik,⁴⁵ for example, reports observations on his son Arthur. Through a series of easy conversations with him, Reik traced the development of the “super-ego,” the “inner voice” or “conscience.” The father asks Arthur where this “inner voice” is.

Arthur pointed to his head. “In my mind, with my brain. Like when you have said to me one day: ‘If the boy runs like that he’ll fall down,’ and I do run the next day, then the thought says, ‘Don’t run.’”

“But if you do run all the same?”

“If I go running and fall down, the voice says, ‘Didn’t I tell you you would fall down?’ Or if I am naughty to Mummy or to you, the feeling tells me, ‘You mustn’t be naughty to Mummy.’”⁴⁶

At this point in our study Piaget’s impressive work, *The Moral Judgment of the Child*,⁴⁷ is especially illuminating. The value, the collective rule, is first external to the child. In the development of his morality, his conscience, those

⁴⁴ Object *cathexis*, in psychoanalysis, appears to be almost identical with value fixation. See, for example, FREUD, S., *Group Psychology*, 48 (footnote); and JONES, ERNEST, *Int. J. Psychoanalysis*, 1926, vol. 7, 303-311. In one article in the *Int. J. Psychoanalysis* we find literally “narcissistic cathexis, or valuation.”—Harnik, J., 1924, vol. 5, 83. Freud also uses “object-choice” in *The Ego and the Id*, 40.

⁴⁵ REIK, T., *Psychoanalysis of Unconscious Sense of Guilt*, *Int. J. Psychoanalysis*, 1924, vol. 5, 449-450.

⁴⁶ It is all right to use terms figuratively only so long as the body of the phrasing we use does not run away with us. It is useful to remember that there is a danger in using such phrases as “parental figure” (Jones), or “parent representation,” person of the father, in characterizing “super-ego.” The danger lies in that we may be reading the adult mind into the child. The commands and prohibitions for the child are in terms of his age; for example, “naughty” as a stamp on behavior is a childish category. Also, the demands made on the child are peculiar to his age and “as yet less serious than those made upon adults.”

⁴⁷ PIAGET, J., *The Moral Judgment of the Child*, Kegan, Paul, London, 1932.

types of behavior are "unfair" or "bad" that are considered so by the grown-ups around him (cf. page 133 above). Morality is imposed on him from without. In short, his moral code is *heteronomous*.

As he comes to collaborate with others in concrete social situations, such as games, and as the situations require him to realize the reciprocal relationships between him and other children or adults, rules begin to become his own. In Piaget's words, ". . . before games are played in common, no rules in the proper sense can come into existence."⁴⁸ From actual situations that require cooperation of the individual members arise appropriate norms which regulate the rôle of each, such as the rules of children's games. Of course, the norms thus arising may be momentary, or may last for a short time—as long as the situation that gives rise to them lasts. Norms thus arising are not imposed from without, but are products of situations of which the individual is a part.

On the basis of such concrete results of genetic psychology Piaget⁴⁹ gives an excellent criticism of sociologists like Durkheim, who are not so much concerned with genetic development and who consequently miss the important properties of co-acting social groups in which regulating norms spontaneously arise. By missing this important contribution of child psychology, sociologists of Durkheim's type come to believe that "society [dichotomizing and contrasting it with the individual] alone stands above individuals; from it emanate all authority and prestige."⁵⁰ Such psychology leads to the conception of the child as simply a creature to be filled with the authority and values of society.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 26.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 358-359.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 356-357.

Such a sociology leads to "a defense of the methods of authority."⁵¹

With the child's collaboration with others in games and other more serious social situations, norms arising momentarily as well as those well established become an integral part of *himself*. In this process commands and norms are *interiorized* in him. With the *interiorization* of social norms or values, we have the transition from *heteronomous conduct* to *autonomous morality*. In the latter the behavior is regulated from within as well as by the sheer force from without.

With the formation of the ego, chiefly made up of the interiorized values, one feels oneself in definite relationships with others, and one acquires definite expectations as to their responses, as well as definite responsibilities toward them. So much so that "the adult, even in his most personal and private occupation, even when he is engaged on an enquiry which is incomprehensible to his fellow-beings, thinks socially, has continually in his mind's eye his collaborators or opponents, actual or eventual, or at any rate members of his own profession to whom sooner or later he will announce the result of his labors."⁵² Yet the social is so completely interiorized that if he feels that he is falling below his own standards he will feel uneasy or even unhappy because of his failure.

As we have seen, a new generation does not form new fundamental norms. The child is born into society where there are *established* norms. In fact, there is a historical accumulation of enduring standardized fixations or values, and an established social superstructure. These enduring

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 359.

⁵² PIAGET, J., *Language and Thought of the Child*, Kegan, Paul, London, 1926,

norms standardize almost all the major aspects of one's life activities. The child finds that there are approved children that he may play with, and others disapproved by his family. There are prescribed norms of success to be attained in the schools. There are good ways to spend one's time. There are proprieties and table manners. Later he finds that there are "good" types of architecture and painting, and good locations in establishing a residence. There are established norms as to who are the most desirable mates. There are established values in regard to all sorts of social contact and economic endeavor. There are values in regard to the loftiest aspirations leading to fame and the high esteem of others.

From childhood on, these social fixations or values begin to be interiorized in him, and thus set his goals within certain general bounds. In general, he regulates the activities which center in the satisfactions of his needs along the channels which have the approval of social values. If he deviates considerably he is reacted against either by the police force or by his own ego. He also incorporates in himself the values imposing responsibilities and demanding sacrifice. In some individuals, though few, this aspect may become so strong that they give little heed to the desires connected with the basic needs.

The values may differ in different societies. Different virtues may be emphasized in various cultures. The ideal man of the Middle Ages is not among the ideal-man types of today. As we saw before, in one culture the highly competitive successful man may be hailed as a hero, but in a different society such a person may be at a disadvantage. For example, in present-day American society, perhaps the greatest banker has the prestige of being the greatest man. Prize fighters and successful football players and coaches

seem to have more halo around them than scientists or artists. On the other hand, the Trobriander, for example, "wants, if he is a *man*, to achieve social distinction as a *good gardener* and a good worker in general."⁵³ Consequently the incentives that move him are different. Individual gain and wealth accumulation are not his primary values.⁵⁴

Since values incorporated in the individual are, in their major outlines, social values, it follows that the order of the hierarchy of values in the personality make-up will correspond in a significant way to that of his group or profession. This has to be taken into account before we can make a satisfactory attempt to study personality types. For this reason one cannot take seriously the typologies of those culture romanticists who write their types in the ecstasy of one particular *Kultur* (as exemplified by Spranger) and ignore genetic data and questions raised by contact with other cultures.

It is, of course, indisputable that even though a person may have secured some status, he may not be satisfied, but may do all he can to attain higher positions. There are hierarchies of positions. And some people seem to have an insatiable craving for power. In short, there are individual differences in this respect as in other respects.

Now shall we say that at the roots of the ego, which is a genetic formation, there is a "dominance drive" that is of different strength in different individuals? Or shall we accept the instincts of self-assertion and submission?⁵⁵ It seems to us that we do not have to postulate instincts or drives of domination or submission to explain observed individual

⁵³ MALINOWSKI, B., *Argonauts of the Western Pacific*, Routledge, London, 1922, 62.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 175.

⁵⁵ McDougall, W., *Outline of Psychology*, Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1923, 427.

differences. Such a drive does not have an assignable locus in the body, such as the needs for food and sex have. We cannot go into this controversial problem. Our guess is that the differences may be due to a number of factors. Among them are ability (intelligence) differences, glandular differences that are so important in determining temperament, gratifications or frustrations that take place in major needs such as sex and food, and the general bodily condition. We know from Frank's work that "there is need to make the level of aspiration (the goal set for attainment) approximate the level of performance."⁵⁶ Failure is painful. After some trials and getting the bad taste of defeat, one usually gives up grandiose schemes and approximates his goals to his ability (or in special cases he may develop delusions). There are also unfortunate people who keep on fighting like a Don Quixote. In short, individual differences in dominance are extraordinary, and seem to yield more easily to genetic explanations than to an explanation in terms of a universal and powerful instinct. An adequate psychology of these topics has bearing on the psychology of social norms. These are complicated problems themselves. We must wait for a more adequate psychology of these problems. They lie outside the scope of our study.

SUMMARY

We may now glance at the main points in a summary fashion: The ego is a genetic psychological formation in the individual. Values are the chief constituents of the ego. Among these, social values, which are socially established affective fixations, form the major (directive) part. These values are the social in man. In this sense, one may say, the

⁵⁶ FRANK, J. D., The Influence of the Level of Performance in One Task on the Level of Aspiration in Another, *J. Exp. Psychol.*, April, 1935, vol. 18, 166.

ego is the social in him. The values set the standards for the ego. As such, they regulate one's strivings for the satisfaction of the basic needs when the ego is involved in a situation. The cases in which the ego will be involved are socially prescribed. The violations of the standards of the ego and ego-misplacements are painful; they produce conflicts or feelings of guilt.

Note 1

RÔLE OF THE INDIVIDUAL IN SOCIETY

AT THE end of the chapter on the attitude-value relationship, we reached the conclusion that it is more profitable to start with the social values of the group and then take up the social attitudes of the individual. In Chapter IX, because of the fact that the social values are so important in the formation of the ego, we were led to say that the ego is the social in man. The romantic individualists are apt to extract wrong implications from these conclusions. Through mistaking the implications, some one of them may raise the oft-repeated argument: "It is mysticism to say that ego is the social in man. This is another flagrant case of the group or institutional fallacy."

To be sure, the social in the individual is not an exact replica in miniature of the whole structure-and-value system of his society. The social in him cannot extend beyond the social stimulus situations that he faces and incorporates in himself in the course of his development. In our conclusion there is nothing to imply the contrary.

What the romantic individualist cannot fairly ignore is the fact that any individual member has a more or less well-defined status in society, as a member of a social class, as a door keeper, as an employer, as minister in the cabinet, as the rector of a wealthy Episcopalian parish, or as a professor who manipulates research funds coming from the ruling members of his class. Every kind of *status* places the individual in definite relationship to other individuals, whereby his duties, responsibilities, and privileges are pre-

scribed within that particular social order. Once he is *there*, in a particular status, he has no choice, but fulfills the requirements demanded by his status. And he may (this is the general case) fulfill the requirements with the good-natured complacency typical of many a bourgeois gentleman, even with an air of originality, as if he were the first one to accomplish those things.

In discussing the complicated Kula exchange system among the Argonauts, Malinowski remarks that the individual member plays his part in the whole game without knowing the relationships of his own rôle in the whole complex affair, because he is immersed in it in the same way that he is immersed in a physical atmosphere.

Malinowski's observations lead him to a convincing and memorable conclusion: "They [the Argonauts who participate in the Kula exchange system] have no knowledge of the *total outline* of any of their social structure. They know their own motives, know the purpose of individual actions and rules which apply to them; but how, out of these, the whole collective institution shapes, this is beyond their mental range. Not even the most intelligent native has any clear idea of the Kula as a big, organized social construction, still less of its sociological functions and implications. If you were to ask him what the Kula is, he would answer by giving a few details, most likely by giving his personal experiences and subjective views on the Kula, but nothing approaching the definition just given here. Not even a partial coherent account could be obtained. For the integral picture does not exist in his mind; he is in it, and cannot see the whole from the outside."¹

To see things "from the outside," that is, the observation

¹ MALINOWSKI, B., *Argonauts of the Western Pacific*, George Routledge and Sons, Ltd., London, 1922, 83.

of the individual's status in relation to the social structure, may be rather a sociological task. But if this be necessary in order to locate the individual in his true place, to this extent the social psychologist has to be a sociologist if he wants to make his psychology social.

Note 2

CASES IN WHICH BASIC NEEDS ARE
DOMINATING FACTORS

THROUGHOUT our study, and especially in Chapters IV, VII, VIII and IX, we tried to show the effectiveness of the established norms in the lives of individuals. This was not due to an overenthusiasm about the products of culture such as is so well manifested by many Kultur apologists or romantic culture determinists. As we said at the very beginning, historical products such as norms form a cultural superstructure, arising from the contacts of individuals driven by instinctive strivings which constitute the basic structure. Our study had for its scope the effect of this superstructure in regulating the basic activities of man. We have not gone on to study the effects of these basic phenomena, which are vital, in shaping and reshaping the superstructure. Any step in this direction demands a study of the whole question of motivation. The problem of motivation, i.e., the psychology of hunger, thirst, sex, etc., is now in a highly controversial state. Perhaps any sound orientation will come through the careful investigation of the data being furnished by the physiologists, since needs (e.g., hunger, thirst, sex) have a definite basis in physiological changes of the organs of the body. Therefore we thought it best to keep clear of the controversies going on in the field of motivation.

But whether there is a scientifically acceptable psychology of motivation or not, people keep on eating, mating and finding shelter. This much is certain. Here and there we had occasion to refer to the importance of the basic human needs.

Whenever we had to do it, we did it naïvely, as any human being who is motivated by these basic needs would empirically do. We are doing it in this note in the same naïve spirit. We add this note as a confession of the lack of treatment in our study of the rôle of basic needs which dominate so many psychological phenomena, and also as an introduction to Chapter X, which badly needs such an inclusion.

It was shown with many illustrations that those aspects of the stimulus field which we shall especially notice and emphasize and those aspects which are to pass unnoticed are determined by social norms. Facial similarity between two people may be thus emphasized, and the more evident objective resemblance between two other persons may be ignored. In all such cases we never implied anything to the effect that there are essential differences in the functioning of the sense organs of peoples belonging to different cultures.

Similarly, we pointed out with concrete examples that our activities in striving toward the satisfaction of basic needs, such as food and sex, are *regulated* by social norms. But we never said anything to imply that the basic needs are themselves social, as some enthusiastic culture apologists do, perhaps, in their careless moments. The basic needs, such as food, sex, shelter, are biological demands of the organism. They may be regulated this way or that way to conform to the established norm. But no matter what these social regulations may be, there is a minimum degree to which they must be satisfied if the organism is to live. But, which needs shall be emphasized most, and which least, may be and frequently is prescribed by social norms.

Social norms are formed in the process of contact of individuals in their strivings to satisfy their needs. However, once the superstructure is there, the members of the group satisfy their needs in certain ways and not in others; with

all these new modes and levels of satisfaction, new values, such as different forms of artistic enjoyment, come into existence. These we may call "induced" needs.

But we have not sufficiently emphasized that when the satisfaction of a basic need, such as food, is barred in a serious and lasting way, *the restless state of deprivation becomes the dominating factor*. The aspects we notice in the stimulus field are those which are connected in some way with the frustrated need, and which will ultimately lead to its satisfaction. Hence all sorts of rationalizations, daydreams, recastings of reality to conform to the end striven for.

The behavior of very young children is a frank and harmless prototype of this kind of behavior. Before the set of norms to which he belongs is firmly incorporated in the child, the stimulus value of objects and persons around him is almost wholly determined by his momentary needs. With the change of the state of the momentary need there may be a corresponding change in his reactions to identically the same objects or persons.

We see a similar type of behavior in the adult when the effectiveness of a set of norms incorporated in him is reduced, in varying degrees, under the influence of alcohol, which reduces the higher levels of psychological functioning in him, or under the overwhelming domination of a deprivation such as hunger pangs or extreme states of sexual excitement. In such states the instinctive striving becomes the dominating factor around which the whole experience and behavior are organized.

Charlie Chaplin, in *The Gold Rush*, gave us a beautiful illustration of what hunger will bring about in the way we perceive the external world. Two tramps, one little man (Charlie Chaplin) and a physical giant, join an expedition of adventurers seeking gold in the bitter winter of a northern land. The tramps do not have provisions of food. After

many adventures, they are shut in a wretched hut on the mountains, alone, with nothing to eat. After trying to eat every conceivable thing including Charlie's famous shoes, they go through lonesome hours in starvation. The starvation brings about a violent change in the appearance of the giant facing his little fellow adventurer. The fervor reaches such a pitch that he sees Charlie as a big roasted turkey.

To the thirsty and tired traveler in the desert, a mirage is a beautiful inviting lake. In the writings of playwrights and novelists we find many subtle and delicate illustrations of "distortions" of the stimulus world prompted by dominating needs or desires.

We have mentioned these cases in which basic needs are the dominant factors, because of their implications for our problem. As we shall repeat in the second section of Chapter X, men cannot eat norms, nor are the old norms serviceable if men are left with nothing to satisfy their basic needs. The times of great deprivation or denial of the satisfaction of needs for the masses of people are the unstable and critical times. As we have already noted in Chapter V, such a state represents a time of intense stress and tension in the lives of many people in the community, and the equilibrium of life is anything but stable. These are usually times of oppression in which slogans of equality and freedom find a fertile soil in which to flourish and become firmly implanted; these are times of hunger and insecurity when the slogans of "bread, land and peace" acquire magic power to move people to turn things as they are upside down, ending in a new order.

The study of such unstable situations of oppression, hunger, and insecurity and their psychological consequences demand careful attention from social psychologists and other investigators engaged in research on social phenomena, especially in our time of transition.

Chapter X

"HUMAN NATURE"

"HUMAN nature being what it is . . ."—one daily hears this absolute finality as the major proof for the necessity of continuing whatever we are doing. Naturally the conclusion that follows is a justification of things as they are.

Human nature is assumed to be individualistic, competitive, acquisitive. These are the essential earmarks of human beings in any society at any time.

That people are individualistic, competitive and acquisitive, that they have a great lust to acquire property in a society where life revolves around the axis of individual profit, nobody will deny. The dictum, "human nature being what it is," with all the inevitable conclusions, is true if it is used to describe individuals shaped in a social system such as that evolved in the United States.

On the other hand, if the dictum is meant to apply to human beings at any time or under any circumstances, and if it goes on to imply that these marks are the only possible expressions of human nature, there are concrete facts that stand against such an extension. In Chapter VIII we cited some cases to indicate that even the gratification of the basic needs may be regulated along different channels, and that what will be considered supreme values is determined differently in the hierarchy established in each society. All this points at least to a certain plasticity in the overt expression of "human nature."

In this chapter our aim is not to speculate upon human nature. No one knows what human nature, developing in

no specific cultural setting, might be. What we are led to do here is to note the implications that stand out from the material we have surveyed. In our investigation of the psychology of social norms we have avoided the drawing of practical conclusions. We might have ended the study with the preceding chapter. But it seems to us that there are a few major implications which stand out so clearly that we may venture to mention them.

On such controversial problems as the nature of the hereditary endowment of the individual, the nature of basic needs or drives, and their classification, it is not necessary for us to take sides.

But there is a psychological tendency which reveals itself in so many fields of psychology and which so powerfully regulates the functioning of the drives that it has to be reckoned with in any treatment of social psychology.

Throughout the major psychological phenomena, in judgment, perception, memory, affectivity, it has been observed that data are definable only in relation to a frame of reference. The properties of a psychological phenomenon are modified or even dominated by a frame of reference. The frame of reference expresses the functional relationship, the functional interdependence, of many describable factors appearing in a concrete situation. As we saw in Chapter IV, when the frame of reference is to play the dominating rôle, and when it will merely modify the properties of an existing psychological phenomenon, is not an arbitrary matter; it can often be predicted.

The psychological analysis of values has shown us that social values are standardized affective fixations; a major part of our likes and dislikes therefore revolves around them. The values thus serve as more or less stable frames of

reference. Consequently, in social psychological phenomena, the social values are especially important frames of reference.

The ego, which is a genetic formation, consists to an important degree of such affective fixations. This leads one to designate the ego as the social in man. Consequently, since the inner self is socially made, and bound by social ties, the individual-society dichotomy and the taking of sides on this issue as individualists or collectivists have no sound basis. Since the ego is the social in man, the individual will admit all sorts of checks upon and distortions of his own strivings aiming at the satisfaction of his own basic needs if the social values so prescribe. If there are contradictions among the social norms, he too will be a creature with curious contradictions and hypocrisies.

The ego, as the social in him, comes in as a regulating factor in the strivings which aim at the satisfaction of basic needs, and also expresses affective fixations of varying intensity upon various parts of the environment. The ego formation is really the anchoring of ourselves in a frame with more or less definite relations. As our bodies, which we experience as ourselves, are anchored in space, our individualities, which we experience as members of such and such a group or profession or party, are anchored in definite relationships to these social surroundings. This anchoring is our *status*. How can we characterize the ego formation which takes place in every individual more clearly than by saying that it consists of reaching a *status* in such and such respects?¹ The stability of our status in these many respects forms the identity of *our* persons. When this stability is ob-

¹ Lewin's remarks in this connection are very much to the point:

"The high sensitivity persons show to any change which may possibly affect their security can to some extent be due to fear of being unable to earn a living, yet this sensitivity is probably connected with something more fundamental than the fear of hunger."—*Character and Personality*, 1934, vol. 3, 175.

sured *we* are confused; when it is damaged *we* are deeply hurt; when the ties that bind us to a definite status are cut off *we* toss in a strange and hostile sea with uncertainty and distress. This will last until we anchor ourselves again. Consider other possibilities: Ordinarily our activities in the satisfaction of the basic needs are regulated by a set of values incorporated in our ego. Deviations from them in our strivings arouse restlessness, conflict, remorse, or a sense of guilt.

It is true that a man is not satisfied with every kind of status. But satisfaction does not come merely from breaking all ties. The striving is toward a new status, i.e., to be anchored at a different level.

This fact has to be taken into consideration in any account of human nature. Even if he is provided with all the things that satisfy the basic needs, a person will not be satisfied if, along with these, his ego is misplaced, or he has no status. What sorts of status are desirable, and their hierarchy, their respective importance, are to a large extent socially prescribed.

It follows from this as an important conclusion that the sort of standards of comfort and personal gain one will have, how the ego will be satisfied, whether with extreme assertion or with submission, with taking in or giving away as much as possible, will be determined by the existing values of the group of which he is a good member. In the group where individual competition and personal gain are supreme values, he will be satisfied by the distance he outruns others in the race of rugged individualists and the wealth he accumulates personally. In a social group of this sort, a person of the J. P. Morgan type will be among the great and envied heroes. In a society where the supreme values are the reverse, a person like Stakhanof will be hailed among the public heroes.

NORMS AS SURVIVALS

In the last chapters of our study, the effectiveness of the established norms has been shown. Once norms are established, they may be passed on from generation to generation and social life may run in these prescribed channels. The effect of social norms in producing certain standardized ways of looking at things and reacting to the external field of stimulation, and even in regulating one's activities in satisfying basic needs, may lead us to commit the error of overemphasizing the rôle of orthodoxy in culture. We must, therefore, turn back to reconsider the psychology of the formation of norms.

The social norms arise from actual life situations as a consequence of the contact of people with one another. Yet, once formed, such norms regulate their relationships and daily life. It follows that the established norms will be stable to the extent that they eliminate intense friction in the contact of individuals or social classes, and to the degree that they do not stand as rigid barriers in the way of the satisfaction of basic needs.

In the initial state, norms may express the actual relationships demanded by the situation and may serve to regulate the lives of the individual members in a group along cooperative lines with little friction. But, once formed, they tend to persist. Many times they outlive their usefulness. This happens when the situations that give rise to a particular set of norms disappear and, owing to such factors as growth in density of population, industrial development, closer contact and dependence on other social groups, new situations are brought about. These new situations demand their own norms.

The old norms, persisting along with the new, may be

designated *survivals*. These survivals have attracted the attention of many investigators from Tylor on (1874).² The idea of survival reminds us of the survival theory in the doctrine of evolution. In fact, it may have its strong roots in the evolutionary doctrine. The analogy is dangerous, but the study of survivals is equally important on our own level.

As early as 1913 Rivers explicitly faced the problem and established the fact of historical survivals in social development. He puts down a definite criterion for the identification of a survival: "A custom is to be regarded as a survival if its nature cannot be explained by its present utility, but only becomes intelligible through its history."³ Rivers cites several concrete illustrations of survivals, for example, among the Fiji the powers of the *vasu*, or sister's son, over his relatives and property. "Indeed in the Fiji the functions of the *vasu* have grown to such an extent that they can hardly be conducive to the welfare of the community. We might even suppose that, if they be a survival, this survival has become the seat of a malignant growth tending to destroy the society of which it has come to form part."⁴

Survivals are not obsolete peculiarities of the Fijian society alone. We find them in any society, especially in societies where a more or less segregated conservative minority is at the top and serves as an unchallenged example to be imitated and followed.

There are many things that we do in everyday social contacts, about the actual meaning of which we have no idea;

² TYLOR, E. B., *Primitive Culture*, Henry Holt and Company, Inc., New York, 1874, especially vol. I, 70-159.

³ RIVERS, W. H. R., *Survival in Sociology*, *Sociol. Rev.*, October, 1913, vol. 6, no. 4, 295.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 299.

these are likely to be survivals. In some Oriental countries the outlook of people toward nature and life have been standardized under the influence of stereotyped beliefs to the point where medical care in cases of sickness would be considered serious heresy. Such survivals are found in all aspects of social life. In 1929, under various church influences, Eugene O'Neill's *Strange Interlude* was banned as immoral by the city of Boston. But the churches are not so sensitive to institutions when they have become a part of the established social structure. At the same time that *Strange Interlude* was banned, a Boston institution, the Old Howard, was giving burlesque shows to audiences that filled the famous place to capacity, and yet this failed to arouse righteous or religious indignation. These are but a few relatively mild examples.

The concept of survival, it seems, is of practical value in deciding which norms are sound and which are abnormal for the existing conditions. If a norm and a social practice justified by it do not fit smoothly into the existing conditions, and, instead of regulating social relationships, cause harm and friction among individuals and classes of people, we may declare such a norm to be a *survival*. This may serve us as a scientific criterion as to what is to be preserved and what is to be abandoned in society. If once a norm and the social practice connected with it are shown to be survivals, the sound course to take is to eliminate their effectiveness by whatever measures may be necessary.

At present, the peoples of many countries are members of more or less sharply defined social classes, the chief of which are the employing class and the working class. From this situation there have naturally arisen different norms of work and enjoyment associated with the different standards

of living of the opposing social classes, even within the same country. These differences in the ways in which opposing classes regulate their lives inevitably bring about intense friction. This indicates that in order to eliminate such basic differences in the norms regulating the lives of human beings, the classes themselves must be eliminated.

This challenges the social scientist to a serious task. He will render a great scientific service if he can effectively study the existing norms and diagnose definitely which are in the survival category and which are not.

Once a custom or a practice is shown to be a survival, it is no more a question of opinion. Tolerance in such cases will be harmful. For example, whether a person may practice medicine or not is not at present a matter of opinion. A person simply cannot practice medicine unless he has the socially prescribed preparation in the field.

Otherwise the inertia of survivals will inflict injury upon many. For example, the belief in the divine origin of the separate species stands today as an historical survival. The teaching of such a doctrine leads many into confusion. Whether it should be eliminated or not is no longer a question of opinion. In a healthy society it has to be eliminated even if it be taught in a Sunday school with the best intentions in the world. The spirit of tolerance should prevail in harmless matters such as the preference for lemon pie instead of apple pie.

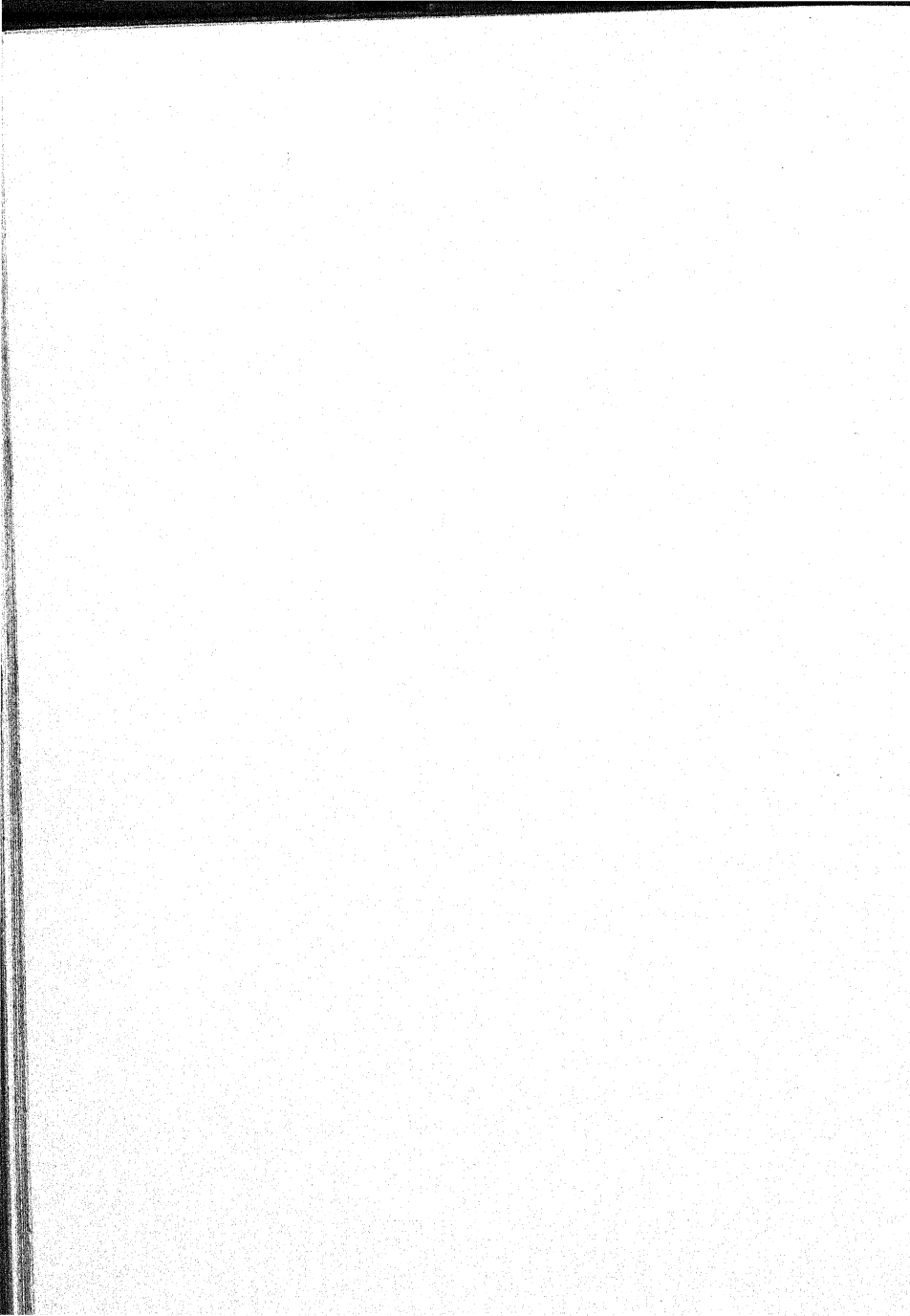
In the same way we must always remember that the set of norms or values in a society is a superstructure arising from the contact of human beings who are trying to make life more worth living. The superstructure of norms must change with the change of actual conditions. If it lags behind, terrific friction occurs between groups of people

because of the existence of such norms. Those who are at present enjoying vested interests will, of course, do their best to perpetuate norms that "sanctify" their interests. People become divided accordingly into oppressing and oppressed, exploiting and exploited groups. The person who is a member of the exploiting class is destined to oppress as his father does. He cannot help exploiting as a member of his group. In the same way a person who is a member of the exploited class has to be oppressed, or at least has to be denied the privileges and chances that his rulers enjoy. He cannot help being a victim of the position he is in; his lot is prescribed within more or less given limits. Both have to play the game in prescribed channels as enemies. This enmity is not brought about by inherent sentiments of hatred toward each other, but through their respective rôles as exploiter and exploited, which are prescribed by social norms.

People cannot eat and drink norms. The norms cannot give life, if nothing else is left in life. But friction may increase to such a pitch that the whole superstructure of norms collapses; the individual, with countless others like himself, frees himself from his prescribed rôle, crushes the rôle of the privileged one, and with this the oppressor himself. We find many illustrations of this as we look at the history of revolutions. The end result is not chaos, but the formation of a new superstructure of norms.

Perhaps a sound understanding of the rise of norms, their incorporation in the individual, and their fading away out of the picture, may help us to foresee the trend of social contacts and thus bring about the change through deliberate planning. The suffering due to a sudden collapse of the social order may be prevented. In this process the sociologist and psychologist, in cooperation with other social scien-

tists, may render a service by singling out the survivals in presentday society. But to do this they must first gain the necessary "distance" from their own rôles as members of privileged groups or groups of which they may be beneficiaries.



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