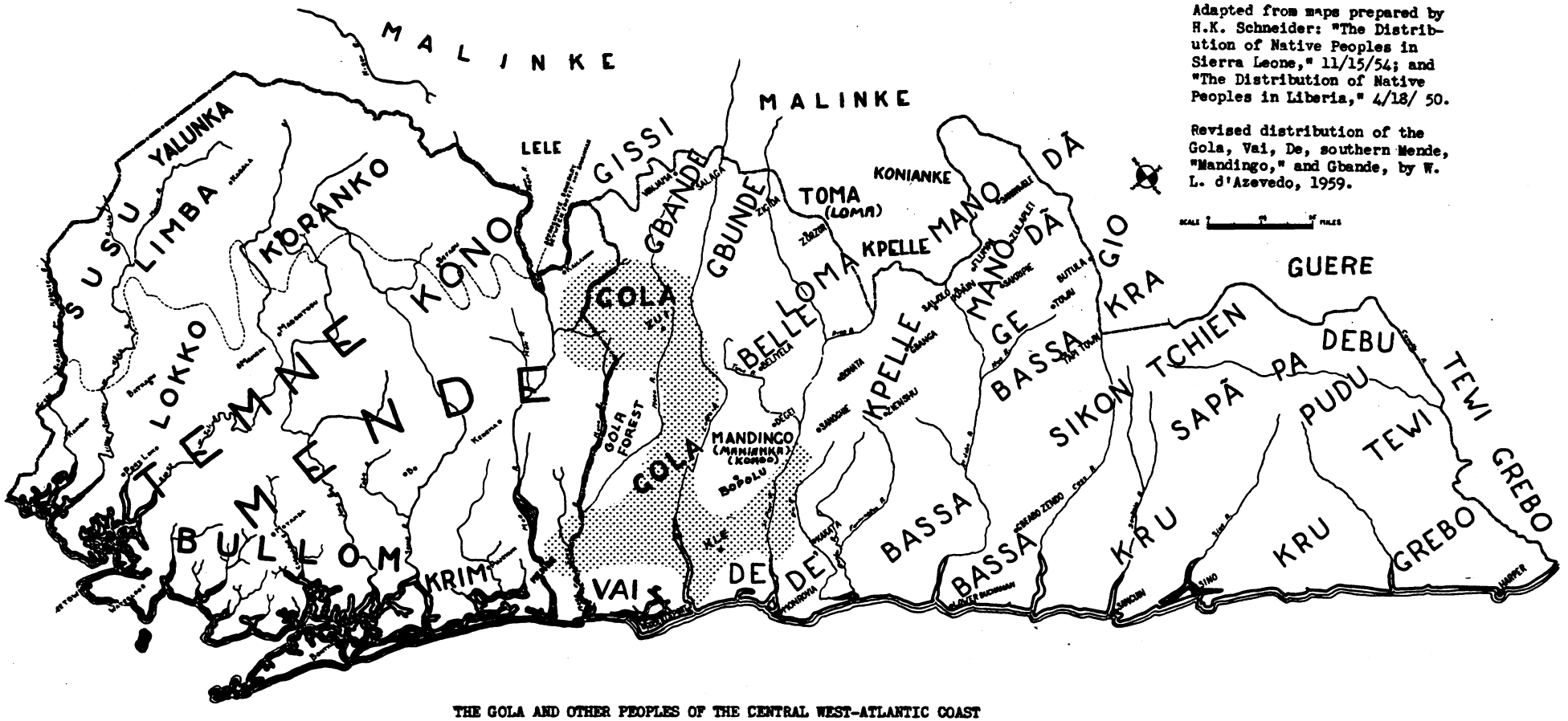

Adapted from maps prepared by H.K. Schneider: "The Distribution of Native Peoples in Sierra Leone," 11/15/54; and "The Distribution of Native Peoples in Liberia," 4/18/ 50.

Revised distribution of the Gola, Vai, De, southern Mende, "Mandingo," and Gbande, by W. L. d'Azevedo, 1959.

THE GOLA AND OTHER PEOPLES OF THE CENTRAL WEST-ATLANTIC COAST

THE SETTING OF GOLA SOCIETY AND CULTURE: SOME THEORETICAL IMPLICATIONS OF VARIATION IN TIME AND SPACE[1]

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1

The work of British and American anthropologists in Africa has been directed mainly with regard to large tribal groupings with a high degree of political centralization, extensive territorial holdings, unilateral organization of kinship, and strategic placement in situations of colonial or national development. This coincides with general European interests in Africa which have tended to be concentrated in areas where intensive population and indigenous administration provided the most effective access to resources and eventual political control. The recent history of such areas is rich in documentation, and has conditioned to a considerable degree the emergent focal concerns of Africanists. Vast intervening areas, however, presenting a multiplicity of smaller tribal entities and languages, with bilateral, optional, or "mixed" kinship systems, have been given relatively little attention.

In West Africa there has been a wide divergence in the choice of problems and approach of French, British and German ethnographers. The classical period of vigorous culture-historical generalizations has been followed by one of disinterest in regional comparative work or in systematization of the accumulating materials. The West Atlantic area of the Guinea Coast is a particularly noteworthy case. Numerous recent survey reports and incomplete ethnographies of distantly spaced peoples strengthens the conventional impression of an area of small, scattered and relatively insulated groups surrounded by the great arc of populous confederacies in Senegambia, the Western Sudan, and the Niger Delta with their rich histories and sociocultural complexity. The striking cultural homogeneity of this coastal area is almost invariably attributed to recent inter-tribal contact or to the effects of European administration. At the same time the apparent heterogeneity of social forms among all groupings of the Western Sudan and its West Atlantic periphery is also offered as evidence of recent intrusive disruption. Though these contrasts are seldom made explicit they persist as a kind of introductory flourish to many commentaries on particular groups. The valuable inferences that might be drawn from seriously considered historical and regional generalizations are seldom brought to bear in the study of specific societies.

A number of earlier Africanists were struck by the peculiar characteristics of the area inhabited by small forest tribes of Ivory Coast, Liberia, and Sierra Leone. Delafosse (1931, pp. 95-96) made extensive comment on the important interior relations of these peoples. He considered the westward movement of powerful groups like the Mandingo (Malinke) and Fulani a factor of primary importance in the delineation of the region. The conditions which prevail are attributed to the pressure of the aggressively expanding

Sudanic empires and the competition for control of trade routes to the coastal salt-pans and the major source of slaves among the forest peoples. A similar view is implicit in Seligman's (1930, p. 54) discussion of the difficulties confronting any attempt to present a regional summary. He writes:

> Politically, no part of Africa is more confused, consisting as it does of a series of enclaves stretching back from the coast, each originating in a coastal trading centre established between the fifteenth and eighteenth centuries and now belonging alternately to France and Great Britain, with a single remaining Portuguese possession and the Liberian Black Republic of liberated slaves to add to the confusion. It is necessary to emphasize these facts since they explain the origin of such terms as "Slave Coast," "Gold Coast," and renders intelligible the arbitrary division of the country by the Powers irrespective of the local ties or tribal association. These enclaves--from north to south and then westwards--are Senegal (Fr.), Gambia (Br.), Portuguese Guinea, French Guinea, Sierra Leone, Liberia, the Ivory Coast (Fr.), the Gold Coast (Br.), Dahomey (Fr.), and Nigeria (Br.), all extending inland and embedding as it were in that great portion of Africa commonly called the French Sudan.

Baumann (1948, p. 367 ff.) refers to that part of the coastal area from Senegal to the Ivory Coast as "Le cercle Atlantique de l'Ouest," and includes it as a distinctive culture circle ("cercle de civilisation") among twenty-seven such areas posited for the whole of Africa. "Ce bloc ne constitue point, il es vrai, une unité," he remarks initially, "car les différences raciales aussi que linguistiques sont fortes; mais du point de vue ethnographique, on ne puet qu'y voir une ensemble." His criteria of differentiation are essentially ecological, racial, political, and historical. Despite the apparent diversity of cultural forms "ce melange caractéristique"), he identifies these groups as the most typical in their intensive adaptation to tropical forest conditions. He believes the population to be based upon a "paléonigritique" stock relatively isolated from the presumably civilizing influences of "paléo-Méditerranéene" and "Ethiopienne" peoples who were thought to have enriched the developments in the Sudan and Niger Delta. The classic primitive types of this area were, in his opinion, represented by the groups of the western Ivory Coast--"une population primitive autochtone, presque pygmoïd," which presents some remote similarity to the peoples of the northwestern Congo region.

Three types of culture are suggested for the area--an ancient Sudanese (pre-Islamic and non-Berber), a classic primitive West Atlantic indigine (paléonigritique), and a neo-Sudanese appearing in recent centuries as a result of the coastward expansion of Islamicized and Berberized peoples. Variations in social complexity are attributed to the successive waves of Sudanese impact through trade, migration, and conquest on the simpler forest peoples, and the subsequent merging of these types to different degrees. The same assumption guides his definition of the three other major areas which comprehend the region between the Senegal and Niger rivers. As he considers this the ancient domain of West African Negro culture, certain peoples are selected out as prototypic representatives for each of the areas. Thus the Gagu of the Ivory Coast are offered as "un paradigme du

type de l'ancienne civilisation Atlantique de l'Ouest," while the Anyi and Akan tribes to the southeast are named for this role in "le cercle Atlantique de l'Est," and the Bobo for "le cercle de la Volta." The remarkable similarity of these widely spaced groups reveals itself in the gerotocratic principle underlying social organization, in the dual role of secret societies as custodians of sacred sanction and arbiters of secular authority, in agriculture, ancestor respect, religion and general world-view. Emphasis is also placed on the dominant patrilineality of rules of kinship and inheritance which Baumann states to be qualified by a characteristic bilateral orientation in many instances. His historical assumption causes him to place most matrilineal peoples of West Africa in this latter category. In his interpretation of Rattray and other sources, the Ashanti, for example, emerge as a basically patrilineal group who have had certain matrilineal orientations imposed upon them by direct influence from other centers. Nevertheless the general regularities which he lists for the "classic" groups of West Africa are convincing, and it may be said that they are widespread through the region on the local village level of organization. It is only when the distribution of more inclusive and complex political entities is considered that major regional differentiations begin to appear.

Distributions of this sort, taken together with ecological, racial-linguistic, historical and material culture evidences form the basis of Baumann's subdivision of the West African region into culture circles. The degree of social complexity ("organisation supérieure") is his major criterion, however, as explicated in his statement that "les frontières de ce cercle [West Atlantic] sont celles du cercle mandé du Nord et du cercle Atlantique de l'Est qui se différencient nettement par leurs formation de grands états" (p. 368). Thus the populous Bambara, Mandingo, Fulani, and Tukulor of the Upper Niger area represent a classic neo-Sudanese type of social organization involving highly centralized monarchies, sacred kings, filial succession, occupational and hereditary castes, extensive clientship and military organization, and a mixed economy based on trade, agriculture, and pastoralism. The heritage of these peoples is dominated by the succession of ancient empires such as Mali and Ghana, and the creation of the great commercial centers of the Western Sudan. In Baumann's view this "type" is an emergent phenomenon resulting from the vast interrelations between North African Berber (paléo-Méditerranéene), the westward-moving Arabic and "Ethiopian" peoples, and the indigenous Old Negro population of the Western Sudan. The underlying West African Negro pattern is maintained on the level of rural kinship and village organization among the mass of the population. This is revealed in the system of semi-autonomous cantons or districts in which authority rests with the descendents of the founder of important villages, and the councils of elders of dominant patrilineages (pp. 388-395).

A similar picture is presented for the Volta area in which the Mossi, Songhai, and Fulani (Puel) peoples presumably constitute a core of neo-Sudanese patterns imposed upon a base of numerous smaller tribes (p. 419). In the Niger Delta, Baumann views the development of the great forest states as essentially the result of relations between the Sudan and the converging coastal tribes given impetus at a later date by the competition over trade and the pressure of European encroachment. The Volta, West

Atlantic, and East Atlantic areas are implicitly defined as provinces within a general region whose distinctive conditions have been more or less determined by the degree and kind of influence from primary centers in the Western Sudan.

The value of Baumann's unparallelled systematization of the materials for this part of Africa should not be underestimated by any serious student. He has made full use of the resources provided by earlier scholars such as Buttikofer, Frobenius, Ratzel, Ankermann, Tauxier, Labouret, Butt-Thompson, and many others. His reference to sources of historical documentation are also extensive. Though many of his generalizations involve the highly speculative assumptions of the diffusion of race, language and cultures which were conventions of the kulturkreis approach, the broad outlines of an historically and culturally interdependent population with the area encompassed by the Senegal and Niger rivers are brought into focus by his work. His culture circles in West Africa emerge as effective sub-regional distinctions in which historical, cultural, and ecological criteria are fully operative.

The fact that an approach of this kind is not amenable to the frame of reference of modern research in Africa does not in the least minimize its importance as a source of insights and disclosures which must eventually qualify our present results. The general culture "types" which Baumann presents do conform to the distribution of features observable in this region, and his "circles" offer one of the most detailed classifications of sub-regional differentiations to date.[2] Insofar as they are also derived from historical data they also reveal the extensive interrelations and complexity of the region in time and space. Though it is the implications of this complexity and historical unity of the region which is the concern of this discussion, rather than an evaluation of any particular explanations about developments which have been posed by these earlier scholars, a word about one of the underlying assumptions of Baumann's work is in order. This was the view widely held by many European students of Africa that complex social and cultural forms had spread from North and Northwest Africa through the medium of superior "Hamitic" pastoral invaders, or by direct influence of trade and conquest from Egypt, Ethiopia, or the Mediterranean Berbers. Together with flimsy racial and linguistic generalizations, this view became the basis for interpretations which comprise what has been called the "Hamitic hypothesis." Tall, aristocratic, light-skinned pastoralists speaking "Hamitic" languages were considered the carriers and effective agents of ideas of monarchy, divine kingship, cattle-keeping, skygods, caste, military organization, preservation of corpses, and most of the traits which were earlier thought to be those of superior cultures. Wherever physical types of this kind were found in a population of Negro Africa, or wherever cultural traits of this kind were abstracted, they were attributed to migration and diffusion.

As an overriding orientation in theory, this hypothesis has been rejected and is no longer a serious issue of controversy in its own terms. Yet such explanations do not necessarily obscure many important and potentially valid ideas which resulted from the intensive compilation and evaluation of materials. There is no doubt that West Africa has for centuries represented a situation of great mobility of population, and that the most

general direction of impetus has been westward--from the great Arab migrations from the sixth to the thirteenth centuries, from the Berber conquests, and from the general pressure of expansion of Sudanic peoples coastward. Furthermore, the assumption that there were earlier direct influences from ancient Egypt, or from Carthage is not an unreasonable one in view of the enormous antiquity of the trans-Saharan trade routes, and the stimulus provided commerce by the introduction of the camel shortly after the turn of the present era.

In West Africa, nevertheless, historical materials tend more and more to confirm the greater antiquity of large Negro states and trading empires in the Western Sudan prior to any of the major movements mentioned above. The development of these monarchies and complex states can be postulated as growing out of local tribal institutions and interrelations insofar as we now have numerous studies of such cases elsewhere. But a revulsion against earlier culture-historical generalizations should not obscure the fact that an overriding assumption about independent development, local emergence, and insular processes can be as distortive as its opposite. Local adaptations seldom take place in isolation and the conditions imposed by a wider regional setting of groups may be a key to processes affecting the development of any one of its variants. The Western Sudan and its periphery represents a significantly distinctive region not only internally, but by virtue of its strategic placement in relation to the Mediterranean and Atlantic coasts. The concentration on more specific and localized ethnological research problems has tended to diminish the interests of investigators in drawing historical and regional inferences even when data have accumulated to the point where this is feasible, or where revaluation of earlier views might prove useful in theory.

The issues which Baumann and others raised concerning the distribution of rules of descent, for example, have been more ignored than challenged in recent scholarship. A striking feature of Africa is the predominance of patrilineal descent and its relatively consistent correlation with the existence of cattle. On the other hand, cattle are relatively absent in the broad "matrilineal belt" which extends from coast to coast across Central Africa where agriculture is the base of subsistence economy. Mixed agricultural and pastoral economies are found along the North African coast, a narrow belt across the Western and Central Sudan, Ethiopia and the Nile, the Lake regions, and in Southeastern Africa--all involving generally patrilineal peoples. Though ecological conditions could explain the distribution of cattle to some extent, there were inconsistencies that could not be met in this way--for example, the occurrence of cattle to some extent throughout the Guinea forest areas, and their absence in vast reaches of the southern Congo and the East Coast where conditions seem more favorable. These facts lent encouragement to the view that Hamitic, patrilineal pastoralists from the north of Africa had migrated southward into Negro Africa where they met varied adaptive conditions both in natural environment and indigenous social groupings.

Some particular problems were posed to this view, however, by the relative lack of cattle among the intensively agricultural and patrilineal peoples of the Guinea Coast, and the reported matrilineality of the

pastoral-nomadic Tuareg. Baumann attempted to resolve these inconsistencies with historical reconstructions postulating an ancient matrilineal Mediterranean Berber culture with its modern survival in the Tuareg who were said to have been isolated in the Sahara during the major Arabic impact upon the coastal Berber. Thus the Tuareg were considered to have become pastoral and nomadic (as against the agricultural ancient Berber), but had somehow remained matrilineal in the midst of patrilineal peoples of similar social and economic organization. This interpretation seems untenable now in view of the apparent recency of the Tuareg movement into the Sahara, and there are clear evidences that they have not been isolated from Arab influence but rather have adopted many features of Arab culture and social organization. Nevertheless, the larger Western Sudanic groups have not been studied adequately, and the history of the region is only beginning to take shape, so that these speculations should not be entirely set aside. In the far Western Sudan and Guinea Coast areas, the concurrence of patrilineality with predominant agricultural economies had to be explained in a similar way due to the apparent discontinuity between the Negroes of this region and those of the Central African matrilineal region. To this end Baumann and others appealed to the notion of an ancient Negro racial and cultural type presumed to have been the earliest patrilineal agriculturalists of the Western Sudan and Guinea Coast. The "matriarchal Bantu" were then said to represent the isolation of an ancient matrilineal-agricultural complex in the Southern Congo regions. A third factor was the formerly extensive Pygmoid culture of equatorial Africa which was brought to bear when explanations of these relationships in the above terms failed. With these basic culture-historical types as the models, all instances of isolated matrilineality or apparent former matrilineality in the Western Sudan and Guinea Coast were explained either by reference to influences from the Southern Congo, or from the few matrilineal "neo-Sudanese" (Tuareg, etc.) and the "ancient Mediterranean." The Ashanti, for example, were said to have emerged as a complex society when their originally patrilineal tribes had been subject to conquest by "une race dominante à matriarcat venus du Nord" who brought with them the "Libyco-Berbère" traits which produced the great states of the Niger Delta.

A number of recent specialized studies have provided a basis for revaluating these views and highlight the potentialities of systematizing existing data on a larger scope. Greenberg's (1955) reclassification of African languages is a case in point. Some of its implications for clarifying racial and culture-historical assumptions in African studies have already been discussed by Greenberg and have had considerable effect in related fields. A recent article by Livingstone (1958) points out some interesting results of the new genetic studies in Africa when these results are evaluated with reference to evidences from linguistics, history, and ecology. He quotes Greenberg to the effect that the diversity of languages in West Africa would indicate the relatively great antiquity of the Niger-Congo languages in this region and that the wider spread of similar Bantu languages to the south would indicate that they have differentiated more recently. Thus a southeastward movement of Bantu-speaking peoples from West Africa is postulated as more likely than the assumption that movement took place directly south from the Lakes region of East Africa. Though archaeological materials for West Africa are scarce, they tend to support the view of an extensive Negro microlithic hunting and gathering culture in the Sudan and on the edges of

the Sahara which succeeded an earlier and more extensive Bushmanoid distribution. The more meager evidence from the forest coastal areas indicates that a similar Negro culture may have existed there at a slightly later period.

Livingstone believes that the evidence from sickle cell gene distribution for West Africa supports the hypothesis that slash and burn agriculture did not appear among the indigenous forest Negroes until after the introduction of iron working, and that this occurred at a much later period than in the Sudan. Though agriculture of some sort may have appeared at an earlier period in all of West Africa, the evidence would suggest it was considerably less intense in the forest areas of the coast than on the Sudanic savanna. As iron working does not seem to have appeared in the Western Sudan or Nigeria until about 300 A.D. in the same period when the Empire of Ghana was founded and the camel was introduced, the forest tribes could be expected to have remained primarily microlithic hunters, fishers, and gatherers for a considerable time after that.

Livingstone's thesis is that the low sickle cell frequencies of areas of Portuguese Guinea, Eastern Liberia, Ivory Coast, and among the Babinga Pygmies of Central Africa reveal that these peoples are descendants of recent hunters who were, at the most, minimal cultivators. Where there are instances of very high frequency such as in the Timbuktu area, Sierra Leone and the Niger Delta, he postulates the recent intrusion of peoples with intensive agricultural techniques from the Sudan from whom the indigenous population learned the new methods. The southern movement of the Bantu from the general region of Nigeria he also connects with the spread of iron and intensive agriculture.

This reasoning is based upon the relationship which seems to exist between high sickle cell frequency and intensive agricultural economy. As agriculture encourages settled communities, the conditions for the breeding of the malaria mosquito are improved. This situation seems to have prevailed in the Western Sudan at an early period, producing the adaptive response which this gene represents in populations. On the other hand, tropical forests do not provide appropriate breeding places for these insects. It is only with the presence of man in sufficiently large settled groups, and with the cutting down of forests and cultivation of the soil, that these conditions appear. Therefore, in Livingstone's opinion, because intensive forest agriculture would not have come into this area until after the means to exploit forest spaces had been provided by iron implements, the relatively low frequencies of sickle cell gene among many of the peoples of the coast may be explained with reference to these ecological and socio-economic factors.

His distributional data show an interesting positive correlation between historical--both documented and traditional--evidences of migration into the coastal area, and sickle cell gene frequency. In most cases of extremely high incidence, the peoples are known to be relatively late arrivals. For the Liberian tribes, at least, the correspondence would also seem to include language. The Kwa-speaking Kru, Bassa, Grebo and other tribes have a strikingly low frequency which would tend to confirm the

conventional opinion of their tenure, as well as their own traditions of origin which claim remote antiquity of habitation. Certain Mande-speaking peoples, on the other hand, whose documented history and cultural traditions indicate relatively recent migration from the Sudan, have a very high frequency. There are other Mande-speakers, however, who have low frequencies which seem to explain their route of migration into the area, and indicates that they may have arrived at a much earlier time than other Mande speakers. Groups like the West-Atlantic-speaking Kissi, Temne and Gola are relatively high though their traditions state that they are indigenous inhabitants. It is interesting to note, however, that their frequencies range from high (Temne) to low (Gola) in accordance with their placement in relation to the large Mande-speaking tribes, so that mixture could account for the figures.

The situation which seems to emerge from this material is one of a large number of indigenous forest tribes which have been pushed into close proximity along the coastal forests by the westward movement of other larger tribes--mainly Mande-speaking peoples--from the interior savanna. Rather than extensive migration, then, it would appear that this was more a slow westward concentration of populations that maintained relatively distinctive areas of frequency--the Mande-speakers in Sierra Leone and Eastern Liberia, the West Atlantic-speaking Gola in Northwestern Liberia, and the Kwa-speakers along the coast and in southwestern Liberia. It is noteworthy that the Vai, the only high frequency group on the coast of Liberia, are Mande-speakers and are known to have migrated to their present domain from the Sudan in the fifteenth or sixteenth centuries. The situation in Liberia, then, is distinct from that of either Sierra Leone or the Niger Delta. In the former case the whole territory represents a high frequency involving extensive migrations of Mande-speakers directly to the coast and large-scale admixture with non-Mande speakers like the Temne. In the Delta the picture is the same except that the migrations involved Kwa-speaking peoples like the Akan and Ibo. These are also both areas of intensive agricultural development, whereas in Liberia and the Ivory Coast there were, until very recently, peoples who practiced extremely minimal cultivation and were primarily hunters. Insofar as these situations involve events that have occurred within the past five- to eight-hundred years at the most, their potentiality for further elucidation in terms of the accumulating data concerning the history of the Sudan is great.

This study is an excellent illustration of the use of a number of converging lines of new evidence, and its application to anthropological problems in Africa. It deals with questions which have been a matter of speculation and intensive scholarly investigation in the past, and indicates the possibility of further studies along the same lines in which special ecological factors, distribution of social forms, types of economic organization, and technology can be related in new terms to provide validation of historical relations which in many situations we must infer with less certainty. There are other lines of research which contribute directly to these perspectives. These are studies which concern themselves with the relationship between natural environment, economy, and social organization of contiguous peoples of diverse tradition and origin. Among the few recent works which attempt to put questions of this sort in terms of a more significant regional setting are those of Schapera in South Africa, Forde's (1953)

discussion of socio-ecological adaptations in West Africa, and Richard's (1953) survey of matrilineal groups among the Central Bantu.

The preceding discussion has been intended to provide a general background to the materials and broad theoretical concerns relevant to a particular situation which will be dealt with in the following pages. This situation involves the placement of a people--in this case, the Gola of Liberia--within a significant regional and macro-social setting that contributes to an understanding of their way of life. Many of the issues presented above are directly pertinent to this situation and the nature of the data, while others would require intensive additional investigation along new lines. It is the implications of Gola social structure and culture in a specific regional context, and the relation of these implications to general theory of change in anthropology which will be the concern of the following discussion.

2

The Gola, a people numbering from fifty to seventy-five thousand, inhabit an area of roughly six thousand square miles in the Western Province of Liberia. Linguistically they represent one of the West Atlantic groups of the Niger-Congo family of languages which includes, as well, such widely separated peoples as the Temne, Bullom, Dyola, Kissi, Fulani and Wolof. Together with Kissi (Gissi), however, the Gola are linguistically isolated on the northwest and northeast by the Mande-speaking Gbande, Mende, Vai, Kono, Loma, Mandingo (Malinke), Kpelle, Gio, and Mano; while to the south there are the Kwa-speaking Kru, Bassa and Grebo (Greenberg, 1955, p. 10; Westermann, 1952, p. 12). The immediate area under consideration here is that section of the Atlantic coast demarcated by the territories of the Ivory Coast, Liberia, Guinea and Sierra Leone. The particular groupings of which the Gola are a part--and to which particular reference is made below--will be called the "Poro tribes" of the Central West Atlantic region. These number about twelve tribes in Sierra Leone and Liberia which are clustered proximously around the Gola and Mende peoples. Along with scores of tropical forest and semi-savanna peoples in the more general region, they represent tribal populations ranging from ten thousand to five hundred thousand persons. For the most part these tribal units use mutually unintelligible tongues and maintain relatively distinctive variations of social organization, cultural traditions, and material equipment.

The Central West Atlantic tribes have had for centuries extensive interlocking relations in trade, intermarriage, slavery, short-lived confederacies, and through certain inter-tribal systems of relations maintained by secret societies. The alliances of war and peace never involved politically unified tribal entities, but rather particular families, kingdoms, or other relatively autonomous units which formed inter- and intra-tribal systems of varying degrees of importance and stability. This situation is reflected in the highly multilingual composition of these tribes. There is a broad bilingual belt along all common tribal boundaries and the general population of any one tribe is able to carry on minimal transactions in the languages of surrounding peoples. Certain languages are understood over

considerably larger areas and have constituted, at various periods in the past, a kind of lingua franca. The languages of aggressive and wealthy tribes such as Mende, Vai and, formerly, De, have been employed extensively by the peoples within their historical sphere of influence. In the case of the Vai, this influence continued to expand well into the present century due, in part, to their early nineteenth century invention of a script which was widely adopted among coastal peoples. On the other hand, there are languages like Kpelle which are used over considerable surrounding territory because of the vast dispersion of these people as a source of agricultural and trade slaves. Furthermore, there are languages like Mandingo which--though not widely spoken--carry with them the prestige of the powerful tribal complexes of the interior savanna region. Mandingo traders, Moslem teachers, and settlers have been infiltrating the coastal area for centuries. Their manner of dress, bearing, and frequently their language, is adopted by wealthy men and chiefs of this region as a special mark of their position. During the past one hundred years, English has become a common language for all the peoples of Sierra Leone and Liberia, while French is spoken in the wider surrounding arc of Guinea and Ivory Coast. While this would seem to simplify the linguistic situation to the extent that communicability is provided for greater expanses of the region, it has in another sense become more complex. In Western Liberia, for example, though English is spoken generally by the Gola as the language of official transaction in government courts and offices, proficiency varies to such a degree that every such interior administrative center must have its staff of local clerks and interpreters. These are usually young men of the tribe who have had some urban experience or formal education. These young men and others like them in any community are continually sought after for services of this kind for which they receive payment. Clerking and interpreting in English is, then, a profession. It provides the medium of official communication between government and hinterland peoples. The various dialects of English used by tribesmen, and the urban Liberian patois are used in dealing with urban Liberians, with strangers from distant tribes whose language is not known, and in urban market trading. But despite this usage, English has not essentially altered or replaced the complex configuration of traditional language patterns described above. The interpreters in government courts and offices are, themselves, dependent on another class of speakers. These are Gola-speaking members of the local community who happen to be especially competent in one or more languages of other tribes. They are continually in demand by official interpreters for transactions involving non-Gola or poor English speakers in the area. Thus court and other proceedings very frequently involve two interpreters or more whose inter-communication is in Gola.

English, therefore, is merely a new dominant language used for specific purposes which has been superimposed upon remnants of other languages once used in a similar way. In the courts of chiefs and village heads these older patterns are maintained. Gola is the language of all major transactions, and if English is spoken by any participant, the Chief's interpreter will translate into Gola. Yet in any major proceeding where one or more of the participants is an important individual of another tribe in the region--that is Vai, De, Kpelle, Mende, or other proximous groups--either that language will be used as a courtesy, or a third language will be employed which has been traditionally common to these particular Gola and non-Gola speakers.

Thus a Gola chief presiding in a matter involving an important Mendè person will, if he is not proficient in Mendè, suggest that Vai be spoken. Should he, himself, be involved in a matter where a De chief is presiding, and he is not proficient in that language, the De chief might suggest that all transactions be carried on in either Kpelle, Gola, or Vai. Although these are courtesies which are extended under particular circumstances they are relevant to historical conditions which once prevailed and to traditions which are actively maintained. English is seldom used in local tribal administrative or other proceedings unless one of the participants happens to be a speaker of equal or superior rank to those who are presiding. In this case the chief or other officer will submit, as a matter of courtesy, to having all statements translated into English by his interpreter. Otherwise, an indigenous native language is used and the English-speaking participant is responsible for discovering for himself the meaning of any part of the proceedings not addressed to him directly through the interpreter. This is frequently the case even when clerks are present who must make a record in English. Though English is the new dominant language and carries with it the prestige of the coastal urban Liberians, it is not considered appropriate on all occasions. In a real sense, therefore, its usage in the hinterlands has been incorporated into the patterns of multilingual tradition which have been effective over a long period of time.

Olfert Dapper (1686, p. 261), the Dutch geographer, reported that one of the features of the peoples on the Mesurado Coast which had been noted by early seventeenth century European voyagers was this very multilingual aspect of their relations. The "Quoija" (De) were at that time in full control of the coast from the Mesurado Lagoon to the Mano River, though they seem to have established a confederacy with certain coastal Vai chiefdoms which had its center in Cape Mount--one of the major depots for slave and other trade with European ships. These peoples, Dapper reports, could speak the languages of all the surrounding tribes. Among the languages listed were Temne, "Hondo," and Gola. The Temne were at that time at the peak of their power (McCulloch, 1950, p. 50) and were meeting the first advances of the Mande-speaking Susu and Mende from the Sudan, as were the Gola in their original mountain habitat northeast of the Gola forest. "Hondo" refers to the emergent confederacy of mixed tribal chiefdoms under Mandingo and other Mande-speaking adventurers which was later to become the great trading center of Bopolu.

Certain more tenuous conquest confederacies are indicated by Dapper's report which conform to the historical traditions of the Gola and other tribes in this area. The De are said to have been "dominated" at this time by great "Folgia" (apparently Kpelle) chiefdoms to which they were forced to pay tribute in the form of coastal commodities and special privileges in the slave trade on the coast where the De and Vai performed entrepreneur functions. The Kpelle, in turn, together with the Gola, are said to have been dominated by the Mende who were thrusting westward into the area which is now southeastern Sierra Leone, displacing the Temne and Gola, and extending their influence by alliance or conquest among the Kpelle. Already, segments of the Komgba Gola had begun to move westward into the lowland forests claimed by the De and put themselves under the protection of widely scattered De and Vai chiefdoms, but were not allowed to settle on the coast

itself. The picture which Dapper presents is clearly that of conditions developing from events taking place in the Western Sudan as well as those precipitated by early European commerce on the Guinea Coast.

Relations of this kind documented at so early a period help to provide a background of historical unity to the social and cultural complexity of this region. On a larger scale it has already been pointed out that we are dealing with a phenomenon characteristic of that part of West Africa comprised by the Western Sudan and what has been known as the Guinea Coast. The increasing body of documented history of the great interior empires and their impact upon the diversified peoples of the Sahara and the Atlantic Coast has been recently organized and presented by Fage (1957), Boville (1958), and others. Dike's (1956, pp. 4-9) intensive analysis of economic and political relations between the forest states of the Niger Delta and the early Sudanic empires has offered leads which have significance for the whole of the more northerly littoral. The emphasis upon European activities in West African history has tended to submerge the role of indigenous peoples and to consider European intrusion as the effective force in all major developments. The more recent evidence, however, tends to substantiate a view that European contact did not disrupt old relations or create relations of a new type, but rather it constituted a stimulus for rapid expansion and adaptive reorganization of systems which had been emerging among groups in these regions for some time prior.

The Central West Atlantic region provides a special case in point. The antiquity of the political developments cannot be established with the same direct evidence that is beginning to appear for the Niger Delta. It is clear that Sudanic-Delta trade and political relations were considerably advanced by the time of the first European voyages. There was extensive trade in kola, gold, and textiles which was part of the trans-Saharan and North African commerce. But in the more northerly forest areas of the coast there seems not to have been much basis for activity of this sort until after the opening of the coastal slave trade. Even then, the terminal caravan routes at Macenta and old Musardu in Guinea were considerably less important in general trade than the heavily traveled routes to Senegal in the north and the Niger Delta to the south. Dapper's report refers to a period at which there had already been more than a century of European contact on the Sherbro and Mesurado Coasts.[3] The population was considered too sparse and uncentralized for a profitable trade in slaves, and though pepper had become an increasing item of demand in Europe, European ships used this coast primarily as a stopping place for water and fresh foods on their way to the Bight of Benin.

Nevertheless, these contacts had been sufficient to effect some alteration in the situation. Gola, De, and Vai tradition is fairly explicit on this matter and it tends to confirm the scattered reports of early voyagers and chroniclers. The Gola claim that prior to European contacts of any kind vast regions of the interior of what is now Liberia and Sierra Leone were dense uninhabited forests. They themselves were a small isolated group in the mountains of what is now northeastern Liberia. Large game such as elephant, water buffalo, and hippopotamus were profuse and their hunting parties made extensive excursions. They also view themselves as having been at one time a great hunting people, and that this was true of most of the

early tribes of the forest. It is noteworthy in this regard that the content of Gola myth and other traditions is highly explicit about matters of hunting, fishing, and gathering, but vague and inconsistent about agriculture. Salt was a major item of interest for these more interior forest groups, and the Gola speak of the ancient trade they carried on with the coastal De and Vai for this product. A great point is made in their tradition of the fact that their occasional salt-procuring hunting parties were "never allowed to view the sea." De and Vai chieftains insisted that all transactions be made in their villages in from the coast, and told the Gola that the method of making salt was a great secret which they must protect from all strangers. This defense of the custodianship of the coastal salt pans was an important aspect of very early relations on this coast. Both the De and the Vai seemed to have profited by this placement. With the arrival of the first European vessels and the opening of a minor trade in utensils, fabrics, guns, and rum in the early sixteenth century, these two tribes became intermediaries in a still more complex set of relations. Their prosperity and their populations increased, and they were able to extend effective control over the entire strategic strip of coastland.

Prior to this, however, and apparently independent of these particular developments, the Mande-speaking peoples such as the Susu, Mende, Kono, Kpelle and others had begun their slow movements into the edge of the forest areas from the savanna plateau. These movements were due to pressures exerted by the disturbances among various sectors of the great Mandingo and Fulani populations of the Western Sudan during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. The upheavals attendant upon the establishment of the empire of Songhai and the later conquests of North African Berbers and Arabs in this period created conditions which encouraged the westward and southward migration of these peoples. European powers were just beginning to seek ways to circumvent the Ottoman control of North Africa and the lucrative Eastern Mediterranean ports as these events were taking place in the Western Sudan. When Dapper wrote of the Mesurado Coast in the late seventeenth century, this earlier situation was consolidating and had not yet received its effective impact from intensive European trade which was to reach a height in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Until then it was the more populous and wealthy kingdoms of the Bight of Benin that attracted what there was of European commerce. It was with the intensification of the slave trade and the enormous profits to be gained by the chiefdoms which controlled the coastal depots or key trade routes into the interior that the situation began to change rapidly. The early warfare and disturbances created by the pressure of new populations in the interior regions, and which had stimulated the first minor Gola migrations into the area of Cape Mount along with other small segments of interior forest tribes, was now replaced by active competition and warfare directed to the control of trade. A similar process was taking place in the adjacent areas of what is now Sierra Leone where indigenous tribes like the Temne, Bullom, and Krim were being displaced on the important routes to the sea by aggressive Mende, Kono, and Koranko peoples. As these routes were most frequently along the major rivers, the present day distribution of many of the larger tribes can be explained by their coastward expansion along these lines of control. The "Hondo" area of Western Liberia, mentioned by Dapper, very soon became the center of intensive Mandingo activity, and was actually an extension of the trade

routes from Musardu. The resulting great confederacy of Kondo (or Bopolu) in the late eighteenth century was based essentially upon a commerce involving the exchange of Western Sudanic trade products for slaves, which were, in turn, sent to the coast via De and Vai middlemen. The wars of this region became more a matter of slave-procuring than a juggling for lands or advantageous position.

The effect of this situation on the Gola will serve to illustrate the character of developments in the general region. Late in the seventeenth century they seem to have been a small and relatively homogeneous tribe organized into four patrilineal and semi-exogamous territorial units called fuwa ("land" or "country"). Each fuwa was associated with a sacred mountain in its territory from which it got its name and from which its founders were believed to have emerged in the form of certain animals that became totemic. The traditions of the Komgba Gola remaining in this homeland today state that there had once been fuwa of this kind in the area now occupied by the Mende, and they claim to make yearly pilgrimages to certain mountains there. Certain of their traditions make reference to former matrilineality in terms such as "we were ruled by women and looked to our mothers," or "the women's Sande society was first in the land and then the women turned the country over to the men and gave them Poro." But when dealing with what is considered to be the historical past and the organization of old Komgba, the features appear as described above.

The fuwa were made up of groups of ranked and landowning lineages which held certain hereditary titles. Chiefs were chosen among the elder males of the lineage but usually on the basis of succession through brothers, brother's sons, or sister's sons in order of precedence. Occasionally "kings" were chosen for the fuwa or a section of the fuwa by a council of elders of the lineages who selected him from among the possible candidates in the mythologically oldest and most sacred lineage. If the "kingship" continued after his death, succession was determined by the council in the same manner as above. Other titles having to do with secret society leadership were also the property of certain lineages, but possible candidates were selected by elders of the secret society itself--who were usually at the same time elders of the fuwa in a secular sense as well. Each fuwa had its dazo who was sacred leader of the Poro society of the men, and its mazo who presided over the affairs of the women's Sande society. These leaders met in their respective inter-fuwa councils to regulate the activities of all Gola Poro and Sande. It is said in tradition that the mazo and dazo were of equal standing in this period, but that as the Gola began to "mix with other tribes" and spread to the coast, the Poro took precedence over Sande and the mazo became the "obedient wife" of the dazo. Poro and Sande alternate in their "ownership of the country" every four and three years respectively. These alternations were coincided in all the Gola fuwa so that women were said to "own" the Gola for three years, and then "turn the people over" to the Poro for four years. In these periods each society was to hold its "bush" for initiation and training of the young. The graduation of the youth and the subsequent turning over of "ownership of the land" to the other society are ritual events of great importance among the Gola and all the "Poro tribes" today. Another function of the Poro councils was to regulate, by secret meetings and negotiation, disagreements between important

lineages or heads of fuwa. Their decisions were effective in all matters of war and alliance. The matters discussed in Poro councils were never made public, and death was the punishment for revealing any of its secret activities or ideological content. These sanctions were in particular force with reference to the mutual exclusiveness of men's and women's societies. As dazos and mazos were usually selected from lineages ranked close to that of major chiefs or kings--or often from the same lineage--secular and sacred authority were closely associated.

In the period of Mande expansion, the Gola were in direct route of the movement of these peoples. They were forced out of their former territory across the Mano River by the Mende, and they seem to have been in a state of almost continual defensive warfare from the seventeenth century on. Their old neighbors, the Kissi, were being pressed upon the borders of their fuwa, and numerous refugee migrants from interior wars passed through their lands. The resulting disruption of fuwa organization was sufficiently severe to cause neglect of farms and scarcity of food. The Komgba tradition refers to overpopulation, "mixed tribes" moving into the territory, and the depletion of wild game and forest crops. Primarily, however, the references are to schisms within the lineages and among the fuwa due to the confusing array of wars and alliances in different sectors of old Gola territory. During this time small detachments of Gola had migrated to the area of Cape Mount and established themselves under Vai and De protection. In the eighteenth century, however, this became a major movement and a steady stream of Gola sifted down through the forests near the coast. The particular forms which this movement took in relation to the general conditions that prevailed, and its illustration of a typical instance of processes taking place throughout the region, will reveal the character of the situation which eventually emerged.

The Gola speak of these early detachments which became the founding groups of their now extensive chiefdoms as "disappointed sons," or "people tired of war." Both appellations offer significant characterizations of the migrant groups and individuals. Specific genealogical traditions frequently begin with the description of an argument over inheritance or land use among the brothers of a Komgba lineage, resulting in the defection of one or more of these brothers who eventually became the founder of the village or chiefdom for which this tale has now become the myth of the founding lineage. Such a person is usually spoken of as having gathered his own immediate family together with all of their belongings and any other persons who wished to join them. Such groups were seldom large--often no more than ten or fifteen persons--and they would set off on routes taken by previous groups, or suggested by hunters who had found in some distant part of the forest a likely habitation spot. Some groups, however, were considerably larger and were led by a disgruntled chief or other important man who had set off with all who would follow him. Others were single adventurers or small parties of hunters who went out to seek their fortune in any way they could. Inevitably these groups met with refugee stragglers of their own tribe or some other, in which case the weakest group would attach itself to the strongest as "followers." The fates of these groups were various. Because the distances involved could scarcely be more than sixty or seventy-five miles, some groups made the trek in a matter of days or weeks to a site which some

hunter had found for them or which they had negotiated. Others moved in stages, founding small villages, or temporarily attaching to established settlements, then moving on all together or segmenting. The chronicles of these latter migrations contained in genealogies comprise in some cases decades or even generations in which these small groups settled and grew to sizable populations with a distinct heritage despite new attachments and long tenure, but which eventually segmented and moved on in the direction of initial plan.

Although many villages were founded in the uninhabited forests between the Mano and St. Paul Rivers by Gola and migrants of other interior tribes, the main concentration was into the periphery of areas already claimed by Kpelle, De or Vai chiefdoms. A characteristic of these frontier chiefdoms was the eagerness of their chiefs to permit migrants of whatever origin to make settlements on their lands. With the increased warfare in the interior and the aggressiveness of slaving activity, the smaller and more isolated of the chiefdoms of these preëstablished tribes welcomed population on their extensive landholdings. Such a chief would be presented with gifts of women and slaves by the incoming migrants who would be given in return a settlement site and promise of protection. The new settlers became "followers" of their new chief and were expected to pay him tribute by yielding a portion of their crops and hunted game. Also, they were bound to him in military service for the defense of the chiefdom or for whatever aggressive aims he may have had. Such chiefdoms with their numerous attached lineages soon became large heterogeneous units involving a populous original town surrounded by numerous farm villages and hamlets. As the Gola were engaged in a major tribal dispersion, they soon became a majority in many of these expanding chiefdoms, and their dependent villages began to welcome, in turn, migrants and refugees from all interior tribes. Often their villages grew to be the dominant towns of the chiefdoms and their own chiefs asserted authority over their former rulers. Very frequently this process involved a subtler transition in which the son of an old De or Vai chief, by the women who had been given to him early in the Gola migrations, were selected by him and his council of lineage elders as a successor. This was a recognition of the important cultural segment of the community and was initiated to heal breaches caused by the shifting balance of power. In other cases the ruling lineages refused to alter traditional conventions of succession which militated toward the selection of brothers, or the sons of brothers whose mothers were De or Vai women. This led to schism, defection of Gola segments to other areas, or sometimes to wars in which the Gola villages formed alliances with other distant Gola chiefdoms, or even with neighboring De or Vai chiefdoms who happened to be hostile to the old chief. These complex and temporary alliances characterized the Gola expansion in the eighteenth century, and these were some of the processes by which new lands were established as Gola chiefdoms or fuwa. By the latter part of this century their new chiefdoms had sprung up all along the Loffa River and had incorporated the older Gola settlements of interior Cape Mount and eastward to the Mano River. Populous Gola settlements on the St. Paul River and along the fringes of De territory to the east had already begun to create the condition of "Gola-ization" suggested above. In the Hondo area significant numbers of Gola groups had attached themselves to the extremely heterogeneous Mandingo confederacy. The old Komgba fuwa of the Gola homeland had split into sectors of unstable alliance with powerful Mende

and Kissi chiefdoms. To the coastward, however, it is notable that the De and Vai succeeded in preventing any Gola settlement on the littoral and jealously guarded their direct commerce with European ships and their ancient control of the local trade in salt.

The sharp increase of the European slave trade in this period had created enormous sources of wealth, and the access to gunpowder, small arms and cannon provided a basis for a new kind of warfare and unprecedented concentrations of power. The old trade routes along the St. Paul, Loffa, and Mano Rivers became the great thoroughfares of the slave traffic. Thus the areas into which the Gola had migrated were soon highly strategic in the competition which was developing between coastal and powerful interior tribes for the control of this trade. Their role in this competition was to seek control of the routes of trade to the sea. Many of the small Gola towns and chiefdoms grew to be great centers of wealth and heterogeneous population in this way. By continual processes of alliance and warfare among themselves and with chiefdoms of other tribes, they consolidated into a number of relatively stable and politically unified entities which validated the new territorial holdings. Their economy had undergone considerable alteration due to these emergent social factors and changed ecological conditions. The increase of population in the coastal forests had drastically diminished the game reserves and the continual disruption of warfare and population mobility in certain areas made farming sporadic and cursory. Hunting became a highly specialized rather than general pursuit, and many of the more powerful chiefdoms turned their interests entirely to warfare and slave-trading, relying heavily on the wealth acquired in this manner to procure staples from more isolated agricultural communities. It was in this period that the famous "Kissi money"--distinctively forged and twisted iron wires about a foot in length--became an important medium of exchange throughout this entire region. Mande cattle, slaves, and kola nuts were also used as "money" in this sense. By the time the first American Negro colonists arrived on the Mesurado coast, the Gola had established themselves as a dominant cultural and economic complex in a large section of the immediate interior. They and other tribes had begun to threaten the Vai and De hegemony and, though these peoples still controlled the coastal depots, vast stretches of their former forest domain were now occupied and claimed by aggressive Gola chiefdoms.

The development of the Liberian colony and nation on the coast during the first half of the nineteenth century merely intensified these processes. The anti-slaving activity of the colonists and British patrols weakened the De chiefdoms, and the centers of direct trade with European and American ships shifted northward to the relatively isolated coast occupied by the Vai. So committed were the now powerful forest tribes to the remnants of the slave trade that the colonists were unsuccessful in establishing any effective regular commerce with them in agricultural or other products. The attempts of the colony in league with its new De, Kpelle, and Bassa confederates to open a regular trade route to Musardu in Guinea by way of the Mandingo-led chiefdoms of Bopolu (Kondo) met with a strenuous Gola resistance. Seeing the colony as a potential threat to the trade in slaves, and fearing its growing alliance with coastal and far-interior Mande peoples, they embarked on a series of wars which almost drove the colony from the coast.

Through alliances with those De and Vai chiefdoms who were in agreement with these ends, they pushed the remaining De into a small territory immediately surrounding the settlement at Monrovia. In the interior they succeeded in gaining control of Bopolu by the same process of infiltration and incorporation mentioned earlier. The male descendants of Gola wives of Mandingo chieftains became leading forces in the merging of the Bopolu area under Gola control.

Extensive interrelations were maintained with Kpelle, Vai, Mende and other coastal chiefdoms for pursuing the last profits of the slave trade. Similar events had occurred at a slightly earlier date in Sierra Leone, where the Mende, Temne, Vai and other powerful tribes competed in advantage for the trade in that area and pressed upon the colony at Sherbro. In the last half of the nineteenth century, however, these European and American settlements had managed to establish effective control over the coast and large sections of the interior. The slave trade diminished to a trickle and was no longer a sufficient base of economic activity.

In this period the Gola made a remarkable adjustment as had the Mende and Temne before them. The slave trade throughout the interior was transformed into an agricultural slave economy. The Gola continued to purchase and make war for slaves, but now turned them to intensive development of their forest lands for agricultural products. A major source of slaves was the disrupted tribes of the eastern Kpelle, Mano, and Loma in which a few chiefdoms had emerged as despotic kingdoms which raided all the surrounding territory for this purpose. This discontinuity in the adjustment of some of the eastern forest peoples might be attributable to their distance from the coast and their inability to establish profitable commerce with the European and American settlements. The decline of the slave trade did not at the same time provide them with new economic alternatives. Furthermore, there are indications that the slave trade was continuing undiminished in the Sudan via the old routes to the north and east of Africa. While the Gola, Mende, Vai, and other coastal peoples were developing vast rice farms, cocoa and coffee plantations, these interior peoples were faced with the ravages that war and the slave trade had produced in their lands and populations. The ferment among the Susu and Malinke tribes of Guinea, in response to French consolidation of their West African gains, kept the interior situation unstable.

At the turn of the twentieth century there was a brief period of disturbance among the Gola and other coastal forest people in response to a number of pan-tribal reactions against growing colonial domination. Interior sections of the Gola united with Mende, Vai, Kpelle, Kissi, and other chiefdoms in concerted attacks upon those coastal chiefdoms of Gola, De, or Sherbro which refused to coöperate with them in resisting these controls. The brief Mende uprising of 1898, and the Gola and Kru rebellions of 1917-24, were serial expressions of these movements of tribal confederacy against government, and when they were suppressed a new period of adjustments began.

There have been great changes in the recent conditions of Gola life which, for present purposes, need not be discussed in detail. The extension of Liberian governmental authority over the Western Province during the past

thirty years has diminished the autonomy of the chiefdoms and has tended to stabilize the political and territorial situation which prevailed at the turn of the century. The effective restriction of hinterland warfare was particularly important in this regard, for the Liberian government became the conservative mediator of all major disputes.

The legislation against tribal slavery in 1931 had a temporarily catastrophic effect on the social and economic organization of many interior peoples from which they are still recovering. It disrupted Gola and Vai agricultural supremacy in this area by impoverishing the ruling lineages of the major chiefdoms whose wealth was based not so much on size of land holdings as on slaves. Slave labor had become the basis of the intensive agricultural economy of these peoples, and were in a real sense the measure of wealth and prestige. "Slave money" was the term used throughout the interior until recent times for the negotiable value of slaves with reference to the British pound sterling or Liberian currency. Thus, in the last century, the English pound was considered as "one slave money," whereas during the early part of the present century it took four pounds to make "a slave money." Slaves were, then, a medium of exchange and most important families preferred to accumulate their wealth in slaves rather than other currency or goods. This was true to so considerable an extent that it is said of many early chiefs that "if they wanted pocket-money [the term for English or Liberian currency] for tobacco from a trader they had to sell a slave first." The sudden "freeing" of the slaves created a panic among the great families of the chiefdoms and had repercussions in social relations between the members of various ranked lineages in villages and chiefdoms. But the readjustments which took place did not change the essential outlines of Gola culture or social organization.

The recent building of roads, the increase of trade and communication with urban centers, and the granting of mining and plantation concessions to foreign companies by government in the past ten years have all placed additional strains on Gola integration. A view of this situation without a perspective in time would tend to emphasize what appear to be recent disfunctional or malintegrative processes brought into play by Liberian conquest or the new national economy. It is doubtful, however, that present conditions represent demands upon Gola life of a nature or of an intensity for which they have not been well prepared.

In Gola society a degree of flexibility obtains in the interpretation and expression of social relations which may be considered a dominant aspect of their organization. It is a particularly pervasive feature discernible on all levels of sociocultural analysis that points to forces which seem to have operated in the past as well as in the present--that is, to processes of adaptation which have characterized social relations in this area historically. Gola social organization, and that of many surrounding tribal peoples, continues to demonstrate a high degree of cultural cohesiveness and effective control of its members. On the other hand there appears to be an extreme diversity of specific social arrangements within chiefdoms and tribes throughout the region. From the historical and dynamic point of view the distribution of structural variants in this situation--either locally, sectionally, tribally, or regionally--cannot be interpreted solely as

adaptations to recent conditions. Nor can the rapid change in particular systems be interpreted as a uniquely new result, or anticipated as a tendency to "change of type." It is suggested, rather, that this structural variation in space is a function of long-term adaptive processes which are geared to drastic and complex fluctuations in the socio-economic environment, and that it offers alternative systems of social action for groups who share a relatively common and stable culture.

When these general features of the region are taken together with the additional factors of spatial mobility and interspersion of populations discussed earlier above, the question might reasonably arise as to the basis upon which any of these groupings are to be studied as "a society" or "a tribe." A number of these peoples have been reported in the ethnographic literature as tribes which--after a survey ethnological study or investigation of a sample unit of the grouping--are generalized as "societies" or "cultures." Looking past this standard convention of ethnographic description and analysis of groups to the living situation, it would appear that the only concrete units would be particular local communities or chiefdoms and that assumptions about any inclusive units such as tribe or tribal complex is an illusion derived from ill-considered criteria. This is not the case, however, for despite the complexity of this region, persistent and distinctive groupings of peoples do occur which are identifiable by language, a relatively firm and commonly recognized territory, a name, a consciousness of kind, and a peculiar configuration of details in custom which are nonetheless significant marks of affiliation regardless of wider regional regularities that might override them. It is in this sense that one may speak of a Gola, Vai, De, Kpelle, Mende or any other tribe of this region.

Although the problem of defining "units" will be discussed in a following section, it is appropriate to mention here that the term "society" is meant to refer to any political entity which is relatively autonomous and whose members consider themselves as jointly owning a territory. Thus a Gola village, chiefdom, or relatively permanent alliance of chiefdoms involving a leader, council or any other administrative apparatus may, in these terms, be taken as societies--though of different scale. Furthermore, colonial or national entities such as Sierra Leone, Ivory Coast, Liberia and Guinea are societies in the widest effective scale of group political relations. To the degree which any of these societies maintain an administrative apparatus which supersedes the self-regulatory authority of any of its parts, a ruling elite with special training and privileges, and criteria for membership other than tribal or kinship it will be considered a state (Nadel, 1942, pp. 69-70). On the other hand, certain institutions, associations, or special systems of relations which have inter-societal functions will (with the exception of "secret societies") be referred to by distinctive terms.

The Central West Atlantic region may be said, then, to comprehend a large number of tribes but a much greater number of sub-tribal societies and states. There are true inter-tribal societies, as well, insofar as alliances of a political nature have in the past and do now obtain between certain villages and chiefdoms of adjacent tribes in which the duality of tribal reference is maintained by the administrative leader or council. Some of these societies are, by definition, states. Others are loose and temporary

confederacies--that is, incipient states. Incipient states may occur on a smaller scale to the extent that a village or town meets the criteria suggested above and approximates what Murdoch (1957, p. 674) has called the "minimal state."

The tribes of this region are divided into recognized sections in which dialectic variation, ecological factors, adjacency to certain other tribes, historical traditions, and minor sociocultural deviance are criteria of differentiation. The Mende, for example, are distributed in three major groupings or sections of this kind containing chiefdoms which consider themselves collectively distinguished from those of other sections (McCulloch, 1950, p. 4). The Gba-Mende constitute one of these sections to the southwest, adjacent to the Kpokpa or Tewa Gola of extreme Northwestern Liberia. To the east of these groups along the Mano River the Ko-Mende and Komgba Gola have a similar relation to one another. The Sierra Leone-Liberian border at this river has not--even to the present day--offered any effective barrier to the traditional mobility and inter-relations among these peoples. In early times the chiefdoms of these sections were frequently at war with one another, but also for long periods confederacies of various kinds contributed to interspersion and distinctive features. Today, Mende and Gola dominated chiefdoms exist on both sides of the border and represent the kind of inter-tribal societies defined above.

In the Cape Mount area of Liberia the section known as Kone was the location of the earliest Gola migrations to the coast where they established themselves in close association with the Vai. Only recently has this section been divided into two sections known as Vai Kone and Gola Kone as a result of schisms arising among the inhabitants in response to tribal territorial disputes placed before the government. To the south across the St. Paul River there are two chiefdoms which were once known as Ding Gola section. Old Ding Gola represented a number of Gola and Kpelle chiefdoms dominated by the Gola whose late eighteenth century migrants had drifted into Kpelle territory and slowly emerged as its predominant cultural and political group. During the past forty years or more the Kpelle have reasserted their cultural dominance in the area as the Gola chiefdoms declined in wealth and populations. The northern half of old Ding Gola is now known as the Kpelle Chiefdom of Fuwama, while the southern half is the Gola Todi Chiefdom or section. In Fuwama Chiefdom many sons of chiefs who formerly were known as Gola, have begun to call themselves Kpelle by appealing to such connections in either their mother's or father's patrilineages. This, incidentally, is the chiefdom in which Westermann gathered the material for his classic work Die Kpelle.

On the northern side of the St. Paul there are seven small Gola chiefdoms whose ruling lineages have been profoundly interlocked by marriage, and whose histories involve almost two centuries of warfare and periodically shifting alliances among themselves. These same chiefdoms have had extensive relations with the old Kondo or Bopolu confederacy, and also with the De chiefdoms whose ancient territory they now hold. The Liberian Government gave official recognition to the traditional unity of these chiefdoms by including them in what is called the Loffa-Gola section. To the west of Loffa-Gola, and in an extremely small area close upon Monrovia, the remnants

of the once powerful De tribe have been all but absorbed by the Gola of adjacent chiefdoms. These various sections of the Gola tribe became the basis for the Paramount Chieftainships which were set up by the Liberian government in the early part of this century. They constitute in this sense a singularly effective reinforcement of traditional groupings for national administration of the hinterlands.

The territories and descendant populations of the old autonomous chiefdoms of these sections are now referred to as "Clans" and are presided over by an elected "Clan Chief." Each village and half-town within the "Clan" has its Town Chief. Though in theory any person may offer himself as candidate for election to these offices, the candidates are almost invariably members of the lineages who traditionally filled these offices, and the election of one or another candidate is often anticipated by public announcement of choices finally agreed upon by the councils of elders. In such cases it is not unusual for the unlikely candidate to withdraw and concede the election. If the elders have not reached agreement, all candidates continue to run and party politics become intense. This is considered by the elders to be a great catastrophe for it makes public the disunity among the lineage heads on an important matter and removes the selection of a new chief from their direct control. The issues which in their view should be resolved within secret Poro councils and among the local elders become, under these conditions, matters of deep schism and dangerously frank public debate.

Paramount Chiefs are to be elected from among the Councils of Chiefs and Elders of the various "Clans" of the section subject to the approval of the Liberian President. Though party politics are also intense in these elections due to the diversity of interests of the various member "Clanships," the debates are relatively insulated from the public. Should these combined section councils not agree on a candidate, the President of Liberia is in a position to make a direct appointment. In this event party politics within the councils are directed to the task of influencing the President's decision. As the President is now also an honorary member of the Poro Society, and as the Bureau of Folkways is headed by an Assistant Secretary of the Interior who is a Gola of high position in Poro, the Office of the President becomes the locus of political discourse and pressure. These conditions are more amenable to the traditional political orientation of Gola societies than those imposed by suffrage in the local communities. During the election of a Paramount Chief, the President's Office is flooded with petitions from the various tribal parties involved and delegations representing these parties are continually traveling to Monrovia to meet with him. Excitement runs high among the elders and chiefs, and secret Poro Councils throughout the sections strive to create a degree of unanimity among the factions.

In a recent election of this kind one of the leading elders of Loffa-Gola Section expressed an attitude which is quite general: "The President is our new King. Everything goes through his hands. The sun cannot shine unless he gives the sign. If it is raining and he says the sky is clear, you agree. All of us old men and chiefs are his children. We must obey. But there are ways for children to talk around the father. He will listen if you know the proper way to come to him. We have proper ways. The President comes from native people on his mother's side. He is a member of Poro.

Some of his officers are Gola men and our sons. The President is a great king like old Sau Bosu [the famous leader of the Kondo Bopolu confederacy in the early nineteenth century]. All the chiefs must go to him, and must depend on him for their strength and power."

This peculiar Liberian adaptation of the British system of indirect rule borrowed from Sierra Leone is effective throughout the Liberian interior. There are, however, varying degrees of efficiency in its application which have to do with distance from Monrovia, roads and other communication systems, and historical factors which qualify sectional responses to Liberian authority. The example given above is drawn from a Gola section which flanks Monrovia to the north, whose earlier chiefdoms were culturally united by traditions of a common Gola origin in Komgba, of expansion and conquest into new lands, and of loose shifting confederacies among themselves and with Mandingo, Kpelle, Vai, and De chiefdoms.

The eventual validation of Liberian political supremacy by force of arms and the imposition of a remarkably flexible and adaptive hinterland administrative apparatus, represents to these peoples an unusually extensive and stable confederacy which is, nonetheless, temporary. "We have had many great kings over us and we have been joined with many different tribes . . . but our sons and grandsons seldom see the same world that we saw." To the extent that present Liberian domination is accepted as a potentially firm and lasting state of affairs, goal orientation is directed to gaining the position of greatest advantage for individuals and groups within the situation as it is. To this end Gola family heads are eager to have their male children educated in mission or government schools so that they might represent their local groups on equal footing with the urban and official Liberians. Ideally, at least one son enters government service and acts as an intermediary for local community interests through his connections.

In the old days Gola chiefs and important men gave numerous women to the colonial Liberians. The practice is continued in the present in the form of the system of "country wives" of District Administrators and urban officials. This, along with the old system of pawning and "adoption" which has its new form in "service" and "apprenticeship," has created intricate avenues of alliance and appeal to sources of power. Furthermore, Monrovia has for more than a century acted as a great center of inter-tribal cultural and social relations which are reflected in intermarriages of more distant peoples, the conscious sharing of newly recognized cultural regularities over a wider region, and the incipient development of a "pan-African" native point of view about Liberian political perspectives. This view is expressed frequently and privately by Vai, Gola, and other tribal leaders in the prediction that "someday a true native man will be President of this country, and he will be more wonderful than any of the old kings." Recent events in Ghana, Guinea, and elsewhere in Africa have given impetus to aspirations of this order. The older tribal and sectional affiliations, however, continue to function in the dream that one of their <u>own</u> "sons" will be elevated to this position.

In other sections of the interior, on the other hand, these ties with Liberian national development are not so intense. The more distant Gola

sections of Komgba and Kpo Kpa, for example, have maintained traditions of incipient disaffiliation in regard to the Liberian government. They were particularly active in the anti-government rebellions of 1890 to 1924. The alliances of these chiefdoms during this period involved brief confederacies with Mende chiefdoms of Sierra Leone, the Kissi of eastern Liberia and Guinea, and any Vai, Gola, or Gbande chiefdoms of other sections who could be persuaded to join them. After suppression of these insurrections the tribal leaders--and often whole populations--of these chiefdoms fled across the border to merge with the Gola and Mende chiefdoms in Sierra Leone. In a recent dispute between the Paramount Chief of the Komgba Gola section and a District Commissioner, the Chief journeyed on foot to Monrovia to threaten that he would remove the entire Gola population of that section to Sierra Leone ("English-side") unless the Commissioner was removed and tribal grievances settled. His petition was astutely interpreted as a plea before the President who recognized the reality of the situation by sending the old man back to his chiefdom with assurances of support. On the return journey he visited in the intervening chiefdoms boasting of his success to the local elders and chiefs, and reviewing the history of the Gola migrations from Komgba on which he placed the blame for the present plight of the people: "You Gola down here are all mixed tribes, but you chiefs and old men are my sons nevertheless, because some of your ancestors came from Komgba which is the home of all the Gola. I am father of all of you because I am chief of that section and my ancestors were your fathers or mothers. Now, because I am your father, I will tell you that you have let mixed tribes weaken you and foreigners rule you. I must tell you that before I die." A remarkable aspect of this expression of attitude and the respectful manner in which it was received, is the affirmation of "Golaness" in terms of a fiction of common origin and descent. But the Komgba Gola have been as ethnically interspersed with other peoples as any of the more coastward sections. The variants of their social structure and culture are as much a product of historical interrelations among tribes and confederacies of chiefdoms. It is this dominant myth of tribalness in relation to structural variation that provides a most significant feature of the groups in this region. Though the enumeration of sequences of historical events illustrates the conditions under which adaptations have taken place toward these developments, it is the internal changes of structure which reveal the continuity of processes.

Eisenstadt (1959, pp. 213-214) has referred to the political systems of the Mende and certain other tribes of Sierra Leone and Liberia as a type which he calls "monarchies based on associations and secret societies." He points out that though these political systems resemble the Bemba and Ashanti insofar as most political positions are vested in members of hereditary groups, there is a significant difference in the existence of secret societies of the Poro and Sande type which perform important political and administrative functions among some of the tribes of the central West Atlantic region. Party politics--as has also been noted above--tend to center in the upper levels of leadership of the secret societies and in the relation between these societies and the chiefs or kings. These chiefdoms are highly centralized with a considerable elaboration of special political and administrative apparatus, part of which is under control of the king and part under control of various associations secret or otherwise. He also notes

that in Dahomey political structure along these lines is even more complex and centralized, but that the secret societies do not seem to play as direct a political role as among the Mende and other tribes of the northern coastal area. Furthermore, their activities are not as "secret" as in the latter cases, but rather the political and more private role of this kind is played by the heads of numerous cult-groups in connection with officials of the administrative system.

The general type of politically centralized group which Eisenstadt has identified with West African examples is a significant one, and in its outlines holds for a great many groups of this region. There are, however, some important differences in distribution which are suggested in his discussion of the Dahomean instance which should qualify the construct. These differences involve primarily the kinds of secret society of cult-groups which are to be found--in the most general sense--distributed among the Mande-speaking peoples of Guinea and the Kwa-speakers of the coastal forest areas. Herskovits (1938), Bascom (1944), Hambly (1935), Tauxier (1924) and many others have reported on the kinds of secret associations and cults among these latter peoples. The emphasis to the south appears to be more on private kin-based ancestral cults or associations formed around specific ritual objects which, in the larger political groupings, take on the character of religious sects. In southern Liberia this is more the case for groups reported by Schwab (1947) and the Grebo (Johnson, 1957) than it is for the West Atlantic speakers and Mande-speakers to the north and west. Among the Grebo, Bassa, and Kru, for example, there is a great proliferation of small medicine-cults based upon oaths of secrecy and a set of ritual rules. Others are more general and non-secret ancestral associations to which both men and women belong. The widespread Kwi Society is a men's secret association which involves masked spirit-impersonators and a brief initiation of young men after the age of puberty. There was no circumcision among these tribes. Of particular interest is the existence of the sacred chief or High Priest ruler such as the Bodio of the Grebo, and the "Holy King" of the Kru (Mekeel, 1937). Although this has some resemblance to the sacredness of the village elder of the founding lineage in most tribes of this general region, the peculiar investment of all political and sacred powers in the ruler or Paramount Chief distinguishes these southern Liberian peoples from those to the north. The King, furthermore, presides over a series of age-classes for the men involving work-tasks and special military and political duties. These classes are rigidly organized associations, of which the warrior groups are the most important and influential.

Similar kinds of cults and secret societies are found among tribes to the north as well, but there are some significant differences in emphasis. In Eastern Liberia and Sierra Leone, and among the Mande groups of Guinea there is a particular profusion of professional associations which might be considered craft guilds. These involve initiation rituals, apprenticeship, secret rules, and symbols. General secret associations which are mutually exclusive for men and women also exist as a basis for training in the duties of citizenship. These are primarily for youths from the period of puberty to marriage. A special set of rituals of initiation called biri or Sembe (McCulloch, 1950, p. 92; Butt-Thompson, 1929, p. 227 ff) have the purpose of performing ceremonies of circumcision and excision for girls

and boys at puberty, and are not necessarily connected with any of the Poro or Sande secret societies. The professional associations often have considerable political and economic power, and among the complex Mande groups like the Malinke, Bambara, and Mandingo they are the effective representatives of caste specialization.

The Poro and Sande secret societies of certain Central West Atlantic tribes show similarity in many features to the cults and other associations mentioned above. Their distinctiveness, however, lies in the inclusive nature of their ritual, political, and educational functions. They constitute interdependent obligatory lifetime organizations for all men and women of the tribe. Their rituals and sanctions supersede those of any other association or institution. Internal structure is rigidly hierarchical and gerontocratic and, in the upper echelons of leadership, an intense charisma is attached to the roles. Extreme secrecy obtains between the men's and women's organizations and for both these organizations in relation to non-members. Poro has extensive power in the supervision of political and economic affairs, for ultimately its decisions must validate all matters. As the secular political administrative apparatus of any chiefdom is staffed by Poro members, and as the elders of village and chiefdom councils are also elders of Poro, the relationship between these two structures is close. In the political sphere Poro may be said to function as the secret and tradition-oriented side of the public and relatively non-tradition-oriented secular administration. Furthermore the organization of Poro exceeds the boundaries of any autonomous political unit within any tribe, and in this sense has created relations which are unique in this region.

The peoples known as "the Poro tribes" of this region cluster in an area which includes the southern half of Sierra Leone and northern sections of Liberia. They include the Lokko, Temne, Kono, Mende, Bullom, Krim, and Sherbro of Sierra Leone and, in Liberia, the Gola, Vai, De, Kpelle, Kissi (Gissi), Gbande, Belle, Loma (Toma), Mano, and Gio. Poro societies also appear in a less intensive form among sections of tribes to the southeastward such as the Ge, Sapa, and Bassa, and its occurrence seems to be correlated with the presence of circumcision practices (Schwab, 1947, pp. 278-281, 294-295). Some of the tribes on the periphery of this general grouping have an uneven distribution of Poro and Sande which would seem to indicate that these organizations have diffused outward from a center. In the northeastern parts of Temne country, for example, the Poro is unknown and secret associations show more similarity to those of the Koranko, Limba, and Susu (McCulloch, 1950, p. 69). The sections of the Gissi, Loma, and Gio tribes that extend into Guinea also tend to show a shading away from Poro type organization in favor of the more specialized ancestral and craft cults or associations maintained by the eastern Mande-speaking peoples (Viard, 1934; Paulme, 1954; Bouet, 1912). This is also true of the Bassa and Sikon tribes mentioned above whose Poro and Sande organizations are not as intensive or all-tribal, and are frequently dominated by other types of secret societies and cults where they do occur.

The core of the Poro-complex of tribes, however, is made up of a cluster of peoples for whom these secret societies function as dominant pan-tribal and inter-tribal institutions. There is considerable variation of

emphasis of particular organizational aspects of these secret societies among the tribes which corresponds to some extent with the general distributions suggested above. Little (1949; 1951) has shown that the Poro among the Mende is highly departmentalized into sub-associations which like the Humui regulate sexual conduct, or like the Njayei which is concerned with curing of disease and the propagation of agricultural fertility. Other specialized societies such as the Wunde control military training and matters of warfare. All of these are under the political and ritual leadership of Poro and Sande. These sub-societies of Poro along with many other variants appear in uneven distribution among sections of surrounding tribes. Poro, in this sense, seems to be flexible and incorporative in the degree to which new and specialized associations may be attached to it for special purposes. Little writes:

> Through their staff of hereditary officials, masked "spirits," and rituals, the secret societies canalize and embody supernatural power. Collectively, they provide an institutional structure which bears resemblance to the medieval church in Europe; but with one or two important differences. Like the medieval church, they lay down various rules of conduct, prescribe certain forms of behavior, and are the sole agency capable of remitting certain sins. On the other hand, both their control over supernatural power and their regulation of lay conduct and behavior is, to some extent, departmental and even a matter of specialization. That is to say, particular fields of cultural life and their regulation tend to fall within the exclusive province of specific societies. The combined effect, however, is a pattern of life which is influenced very largely by the secret societies. . . . It goes without saying that there is much local variation. In Mende country alone one is frequently told that the Poro is "strong" in this place and "weak" in that. Elsewhere, among the Timne for example, it is said virtually to control the chiefship in some localities; in other places its effect is negligible or entirely absent (1951, pp. 240-241).

Brown (1937; 1941) and Harley (1941) have reported the intensive specialization of the craft-guild type of secret society in relation to the Poro of the eastern Mende, Kissi, Gbande, Loma and Gio. These have wide economic and political influence for these groups who show a more complex development of trade and market systems than those closer to the coast. The Poro of the Kpelle (Westermann, 1921), Mano and Bassa tend to comprehend a large number of curing associations and specialized cults of magicians. The De whose tradition states that they received Poro from the Gola and Vai, have adapted it to the basic political structure involving sacred kings and high priests which they derived from their ethnic affinities with the Kru, Bassa, and other Kwa-speaking peoples to the south. The Vai whose recent migrations to the coast in a series of stages through what is now Malinke, Kono and Gola territory, have an extremely elaborate form of Poro organization with many ascending degrees and a multiplicity of attached sub-societies. Though sections of the Gola adjacent to these tribes have adapted some of these features to their own secret society organization, Gola Poro in general has a less departmentalized and more unitary structure. The role of Poro has been crucial in the expansion and development of Gola social organization, and its distinctive function in this regard must be

considered as basic to an understanding of present Gola conditions as well as the regional situation of which they are a part.

There has been much speculation about the origin of the Poro-type secret societies. In Liberia, the tribes surrounding the Gola attribute a classic and original form of Poro to them. The Gola, themselves, claim to be the founders of Poro and that they are responsible for its spread among other tribes of the region. In Vai tradition, both Poro and Sande are said to have been introduced to them by association with the Gola (Johnson, 1954, p. 35). The De make the same claim and point to the fact that even today their Poro must await permission to commence from the Gola dazo who brings "the fire" from Komgba to all the Gola sections and finally to the coastal De. There is interesting confirmation of these traditions in the early account of Dapper (1686, p. 270) in which the "great priestess of the woman's society" is reported to have resided in Gola country and to have administered to the main towns of the Vai and De (Qwoijas). In Sierra Leone the Mende claim to be the originators of Poro (McCulloch, 1950, p. 30) and the traditions of tribes to the north and east of them confirm this view. Butt-Thompson (1929) suggests that Poro was brought into this region by the Vai, Temne or other migrants from Fouta Djallon or elsewhere in Guinea. He believes that it may be derived from the ancient cult of Si'mo which he posits as the foundation of many important secret societies in West Africa.

Regardless of the most distant origins and diffusion of Poro, however, it would appear that the Mende and the Gola represent its oldest and most intensive occurrence in the West Atlantic region. Undoubtedly this peculiar form of secret society was derived from earlier and more general types which obtained throughout this part of West Africa. Nevertheless, the relative isolation of this particular type seems to suggest that it is a special regional adaptation of preëxisting forms and that it would be fruitless to search for evidences of diffusion of any so complex a form from distant areas. In this sense Poro is to be considered as an emergent and adaptive instrument of a number of tribal groupings, and their respective societies for whom proximous relations and common historical conditions have been especially effective.

The processes in the development of Gola Poro and secular political structure are suggested in the history of their migration and expansion. The basic changes involved seem to be those of large, landowning and kin-based units (the old fuwa of Komgba) to small village-based units with kings, extensive clientship, and administrative apparatus to meet the requirements of controlling a heterogeneous population. As has been shown above, the Poro and Sande organization of the ancient Komgba Gola were essentially directed to ritual custodianship, socialization, and expression of solidarity goals among extended patrilineal kin-groups inhabiting proximous and traditionally validated territories. The political function of these institutions was negligible in a society where a series of ranked lineages controlled all titles by virtue of a myth of seniority of line of descent from a common ancestor. The function of the Poro and Sande was to reinforce this structure by ritual sanctions and ceremony with reference to a common tradition of ideal principles and a myth of origin. The succession of offices of chiefs and secret society heads was prescribed by principles of inheritance among

clusters of lineages which were stratified among themselves by criteria of distance from a common ancestor. In such a society it was the kinship system and the ritual associations which provided the crucial institutions of social organization.

The mobile units which segmented off from these societies during the migrations were faced with highly varied conditions of adaptation and development. Some of these were sizable groups of Gola of related lineages who had moved down at different times into relatively uninhabited and isolated parts of the forests. A few continued to be reinforced over the generations by new migrants of the same lineages who came down to join them. Villages of this sort managed to maintain the essential features of organization which had obtained in Komgba. They became small chiefdoms, comprising a village and farmlands, in which the political sphere was coterminous with the resident and stratified lineages. In time such societies lost track of the actual connections of their founding lineage with the Komgba fuwa, and these connections became mythological. The important lineages were those ranked close to the senior line of the founder, and formed residence groups of patrilineal kindred within "quarters" of the village. New arrivals or strangers were discouraged unless they applied for land-use and validated their intentions by intermarriage. These became founders of attached lineages which were placed on the periphery of rank. The conservatism of isolated villages of this kind was reflected in a strong tendency to endogamy and a discouragement of any outside marriages that would involve the loss of members of the community. The exceptions to this occurred only in the families of chiefs who might exchange sons or daughters with more powerful neighboring chiefs for political reasons. Secret society organization was weak and concerned mainly with rituals of solidarity and training of the young. Villages of this sort still exist with a relative degree of autonomy within larger Gola chiefdoms. One of these is the town of Gonzipo in Kpo Chiefdom which has great prestige because of its conservatism and its ancient and mysterious origin. It is referred to as being ideally "old Gola" in its organization and its adherence to ritual requirements and gerontocratic principles. Its young men are admired for their obedience to their parents and for the fact that they will not leave home to marry. Its women are highly desirable for their "good training," but "if you marry them you must go live in the village of their father, and your children grow up to look more to her parents than your own." Villages of this kind are rare today and represent instances of development in relative isolation for many generations. Many which began in this way were soon subjected to pressures which required major alterations of structure.

In the conditions of warfare and population mobility which prevailed in the coastal areas of this region from at least the seventeenth century onward, communities were seldom isolated even in the expansive forests. As they were usually established along rivers or ancient trade routes they were soon known as stopping places for travelers. There was always the danger of attack from migrating bands and war parties. In this situation land was not so much a problem as was a sufficiently large population for defense. This was true not only of the small new communities of migrants scattered throughout the forest, but also of relatively large chiefdoms on the fringe of heavily settled tribes like the De, Vai, and Kpelle. These

communities welcomed additional members, and the elders were eager to grant land for settlement in exchange for agreements of mutual cooperation. Most chiefs who were petitioned for "protection" by a group of migrants or refugees, readily granted sites on their bountiful forest landholdings and bound the newcomers with oaths of allegiance and securities in the form of children and women from their families. An extensive network of Gola communities of this and the formerly described kind existed throughout the forest areas of Northwestern Liberia in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. As migrants from other interior tribes began to stream down to the coast, these communities were also eager to accept them as settlers, particularly if there were able men and potential warriors among them. If the community was already a large village, land would be granted nearby for the building of a village by the newcomers, who might be Gola or former members of any other tribe. This placed considerable strain on the ability of the older lineages close to the founding line to maintain control.

The traditions of most Gola chiefdoms contain extensive and detailed reference to early conditions of this kind. Some of these clusters of villages became so amorphous and heterogeneous that they deteriorated in schism and the various segments continued on to another stage of migration. In other cases the issue was resolved by conquest on the part of an adventuring warrior and his accompanying band of mixed families who would establish himself as king and start a new dynastic lineage through intermarriage with the founding families. Frequently it was the elders of such a community themselves who appealed to a powerful young warrior from their local group or from some distant chiefdom to take this position. This was a concession to the need for defense as well as a last resort in maintaining unity in a disrupted community. Even the Poro and Sande secret societies had not been sufficient means of creating solidarity in expanding heterogeneous societies of this kind. In their traditional Gola form they were geared to a political structure organized along kinship lines, and a general social organization which reflected to some degree the hierarchical and gerontocratic principles expressed in ritual and socialization procedure. Some of the early communities attempted to deal with the problem by exclusion of non-Gola or non-related peoples, as in the case of Gonzipo described above. But this was seldom successful or even possible. Others prescribed that full membership in the community could be validated only by intensive intermarriage and by second-generation participation in the socialization requirements of local Poro and Sande societies. Such prescriptions created multiple and unequal classes of citizenship for which the core lineages and their secret societies were ill-equipped institutions of social control.

Under these conditions the tendency was to develop kingships through young upstart warchiefs who were more or less expected to remain under the control of the heads of the leading lineages. In return for his effective rule over the community and insurance of its defense from the outside, the ruler was assured the support of the elders, and the secret societies, as well as the eventual prestigious placement of his own lineage among those of the founders. This latter assurance was given substance by the presentation of women from the leading lineages to be his wives, and the beginning of a subtle process of fictionalizing his genealogy by reference to supposed connections in the distant past. The political consequence of changes of this

kind was the tendency toward development of semi-bureaucratic principles of secular leadership in which kinship was effective but not decisive. Chiefs and warrior kings gathered around themselves clients in the form of warrior groups and "followers" who were directly responsible to themselves rather than to the councils of lineage elders. The problem of control of a heterogeneous community was to a considerable degree answered by the extension of a secular administrative apparatus, and the placement of newcomers as clients of the king. This led to the appearance of a clearly defined class structure among early Gola Chiefdoms involving "the owners of the land" (members of the lineages ranked close to the founding line), "freeborn" (citizens of attached lineages), "followers" (non-citizen clients of kings and other important men), and slaves. In some of the larger chiefdoms and particularly in great complex confederacies like that of Kondo under Mandingo chieftains, the "followers" of the king and his subservient chiefs are said to have exceeded the population of the landowning "freeborn" citizenry.

The effect of these developments on Poro and Sande, locally, were to modify their internal structure to some extent. The fundamental solidarity goals and functions of these secret societies required that all members of the community regardless of their status be bound in fraternal oath, instructed in their proper deportment, and oriented to the ideal principles of social organization expressed in Poro training and mythology. In essence, then, Poro and Sande militated toward increasing the traditional powers of the elders in relation to the king and his administration. Furthermore, the heterogeneity of populations tended to extend the boundaries of secret society relations beyond the local group. The inter-tribal experience of many Gola migrant groups and the complexity of their communities through intermarriage and attachments had brought an accumulating knowledge of the ritual practices and secret society forms of many surrounding peoples. Frequently these practices and forms were incorporated into local Poro and Sande structure as special rituals or new "degrees." It was also common for warriors and other young men to journey to Mende, Loma, Gissi, or Gbande country to join the special secret associations of those tribes for purposes of acquiring the powerful "medicines" of warfare for which they were renowned. This was referred to as "taking new degrees" or "buying knowledge." The interrelations of Gola Poro with the Poro and other secret societies of surrounding tribes was intensive. Not only were these inter-tribal memberships in secret societies negotiable in times of stress, but it established the basis for a ritual brotherhood among all men of the tribes involved. Thus a member of Poro from any tribe could be accepted into the Poro councils of any other tribe under appropriate conditions, whereas a non-member would be considered a "sinner" or "untrained" and excluded. Rules of warfare, trade alliances, rights of way, marriages of political expediency, and numerous other inter-tribal transactions were facilitated by this growing territorial transcendency of Poro.

The power of Poro organization was at once a threat and a potential instrument of unlimited political mastery for a monarch. As he was also an important member of local Poro, as were members of his own lineage and many of his influential warrior clients, there was always the temptation to attempt its subjugation to his ends. The conservatism and restrictive powers of the elders were often at odds with the ambitions of secular rulers.

Their extensive secret alliances through the Poros of neighboring chiefdoms constituted an effective sanction. In times of general war, however, opportunities arose for political aspirations of this kind to be advanced. In such times Poro organization was mobilized for aggression or defense and its regular ritual and socialization functions ceased for the duration. It was possible, in a continued and successful period of war, for a king so to consolidate his control over the younger men of the tribe and to surround himself so gloriously with wealth and honors that he was able to dictate his own terms to the elders and essentially seize control of local Poro. This was the case in Gola chiefdoms in proximity to Vai and De influence. These tribes--particularly the De--had developed a form of Poro in which the king was often the ritual head of the secret societies--the Ploplo Kan. As this was one of the earliest and furthest extensions of Gola migration, Gola Poro in this area tended to adopt certain features from the De. One of these features was a title and office which provided a basis of direct and equal interrelationship with De Poro and political administration. After a Gola village of any considerable size had developed in the vicinity of a De chiefdom, a request would be made to an important De Ploplo Kan for the right of a leading elder of the local Gola Poro to take his final degrees in the De secret society. If this request was granted, and the proper initiation ritual performed and fees paid, the Gola elder moved into a position of equal status with the Ploplo Kan officials of the De chiefdoms. The Gola called this office Kanda Djia ("King of the Secret Knowledge"). It took the place of the title and office once held by the Gola dazo, but as the latter had been the highest ritually sanctioned and hereditary office of the Komgba Gola Poro, these distant migrating groups had not reconstituted it. With this avenue open, many young De and Gola warchiefs of early chiefdoms were able to buy their way into Kanda Djia-ship, and thus combining ritual headship with secular rule. By passing down the title of Kanda Djia to one of his brothers or sons, and the secular kingship to another, his lineage became in effect a founding line which supplanted any which might have gone before. The remonstrances of the elders of the older lineages were to no avail if his power and wealth were sufficient to maintain his prestige with the leaders of De Poro.

Situations of this kind had repercussions in the development of an all-Gola Poro organization. The continuing tribal wars of the interior and the growth of the new Gola chiefdoms intensified the strain between Poro and expanding secular administrative functions--even where the titles and offices had been made hereditary in closely related lineages. Poro principles of organization were still essentially particularistic and ascriptive, and based upon traditional values. Whereas with the development of larger chiefdoms through war, the slave trade, and concentrations of wealth, secular leadership was relatively independent and carried with it the potential threat of usurping ritual authority. Thus, rather than being an imperfect reflection of ideal standards, secular administration was actually in competition with the traditional custodians of the secret societies--the elders--and sought to make them an instrument of secular ends. The accumulation of political power in the hands of younger kings and chiefs with their followers and clients, tended toward a non-traditional and achievement-oriented administrative structure. The use of Poro organization for political purposes was encouraged and sanctioned by the elders when these purposes

led in the direction of solidarity goals. This was always the case when the defense of the community was at stake, or when aggression against a particular enemy was agreed upon by a wider alliance of Poro leaders. But moves of personal ambition--even if they furthered the temporary interests of the local community--were resisted because of the extensive system of ritual alliances and commitments. These commitments had historical depth in the tradition of Poro development and extended far beyond the temporary limits of political expediency or individual interests.

The concept of an inter-tribal brotherhood transcending regional and linguistic differences is a vague but important aspect of Gola Poro values which has its expression in interrelations with groups on the borders of Gola territory. Still more important is the ideal of all-Gola solidarity which--though suspended briefly in times of particular hostilities--is a continuing and effective value. It functioned in the last of the wars of the Western Province when the Poro of the interior Gola united the chiefdoms under the "Kanga" oath to resist further government intervention and to bring to task those few coastal Gola chiefdoms which had refused to join them. There was also an intertribal aspect to this movement which united the chiefdoms of a number of adjacent tribes. On the other hand, when the government troops succeeded in winning a decisive victory, it was the Poro which passed the word among the chiefdoms to sue for peace and put pressure on the few recalcitrant chiefs who wanted to continue until the bitter end.

With the increasing stabilization of the new Gola chiefdoms over the past century there has also been a strengthening of the organizational bonds of Gola Poro in traditional terms. A system of dazos patterned after the office in the old Komgba fuwa has been slowly extended to the whole of Gola territory. These Poro officials rank in order of precedence according to their distance from the ancient lineages of the dazos of Komgba. All Gola Poro "bush schools" must await commencement until the dazos have "come down the line" from the interior, bringing the ritual signal to each of the major Poro towns with a sacred grove. In the Gola section where the De form of Kanda Djia-ship was introduced in the place of this office in the past, the dazo now arrives as "the father" of the Kanda Djia and is escorted by them throughout the section. His final act is to "pass the fire" to the De Poro to signalize their right to begin and to reaffirm the tradition that it was the Gola who originally gave them Poro. During his sojourn the dazo officiates at ritual events which dramatize Gola solidarity values and the ideal hierarchic system of social organization based upon lineage principles and gerontocracy. He publicly admonishes the elders for allowing the young chiefs to get out of hand, and for turning their country over to "foreigners"--a reference to government officialdom, the sale of tribal lands, and the development of foreign concessions throughout the interior. His role is entirely a ritual one and the values he expresses have little direct relation to those which are being expressed in the day-to-day activities of the chiefdoms. It is much the same role which the elders have played through the medium of the secret societies in the entire period of Gola expansion.

Though many of these features of the development of Gola social organization are peculiar to their special situation, they serve also to illustrate

processes which have been at work over a larger area. The Gola are embedded in a region where a phenomenon of rapid change and diversity of institutional structure seems to obtain to a high degree. The societies of this region have been noted frequently for the emphasis upon social mobility, and prestige, and achievement orientation. At the same time, the boundaries of variation appear to be maintained with reference to general principles of organization emerging from a common cultural orientation in the region as a whole. Thus the cultural systems seem to be homogeneous, flexible, and incorporative within groups and among proximous groups, while the social structures appear diversive and non-integrative. The asymmetry of structural arrangements of crucial institutions in these societies creates at once the necessity and provides an opportunity for manipulation, readjustment, and accommodation to a multiplicity of ends. This is a pervasive feature of all aspects of their social organization. Certain general values of the cultures seem to anticipate drastic changes in the structure of social relations. At the same time there exists a core of traditional and ideal values institutionalized in specific structures that appear to be relatively unchanging and overriding. These sets of values present alternate frames of reference which are respectively traditional and non-traditional in orientation, while the variation of social forms in space provide a multiplicity of action alternatives.

It is suggested here that the Gola are organized into societies whose basic features are common to many tribes of the region. The approach to any one of these societies or tribal groups must to some degree consider its multisocial and multicultural setting. Furthermore, this spatial situation viewed in its historical dimension provides leads to relationships and significant qualifications that might be lost in the study of these societies in isolation or as static entities. The general situation described above presents problems in theory and method which are central to the study of sociocultural change. It is to these problems that the following discussion is addressed.

3

The recognition of spatial variation of institutional forms within societies, and the variation of interdependent systems among societies in proximity, direct attention to the historical dimension of study. This relation has been made explicit in a number of recent works. Sahlins (1958, pp. ix-x) considers that the novelty of his approach to the analysis of social stratification in Polynesia lies in "the attempt to explain social differentiation within a group of genetically related cultures." The explanation of variation in forms of adaptation to special conditions enhances rather than diminishes the importance of historical processes in the analysis. "A culture is at the same time a product of its traditions, including diffusionary influences, and its adaptation to its natural habitat. The actual process of adaptation depends, to a great extent, on the previous cultural form and the outside influences upon it. One cannot have a complete understanding of the differences between two cultures without a knowledge of their previous forms as well as of their present adaptations."

Gluckman (1940), Nadel (1942), Leach (1954), and others have, on different levels of analysis, made extensive reference to long range chronology in their approach to the complexity of the peoples they have studied. In a recent article, Evans-Pritchard (1958, p. 1) writes:

> Anthropological theory often rests on a basis of studies of primitive societies for which there is little recorded history. In the case of African kingdoms, such as those of the Azande, to leave out the historical dimension is to deprive ourselves of knowledge both ascertainable and required for an understanding of political organizations which have always, to a greater or lesser extent, been transformed by European rule before anthropologists have commenced their study of them and which, furthermore, have been shaped by events which took place long before Europeans appeared on the scene. That the Azande have been expanding and, under the leadership of their Avongara ruling clan, conquering and assimilating dozens of foreign peoples, as well as taking part in a long series of dynastic wars among themselves, for 150 years before Europeans imposed their administrations is surely a fact which cannot be left out of consideration in a study of their institutions and culture.

That conditions of this kind obtain for many societies in Africa which have, nevertheless, been studied as homogeneous and insular units need not be documented here. What Evans-Pritchard writes of the Azande is also the case for peoples of vast regions of Africa. It is notable, however, that almost all of the work of British and American anthropologists in Africa during the past twenty years or so has been concerned with societies conceived of as homogeneous units in relative isolation--American Africanists have tended to orient their research in relation to the impressive body of British materials, neglecting approaches which have characterized much of our work in other field situations.

The militantly synchronic frame of the recent trend in the structural analysis of societies has directed interest away from variations of form in space and time. Norms and rules are generalized for entire peoples from observation of special features of their social organization, and typologies are constructed from highly selective instances. The classic bias of ethnology toward the study of insular and homogeneous societies seems now to have been transformed into a bias toward the study of insular and homogeneous parts of societies. Yet the fruitfulness of such work has been demonstrated in the refinement of ethnological theory, in the delineation of conceptually isolated units and part-systems for observation and analysis, and in the more precise definition of basic regularities in social relations. This trend has also been a function of the search for adequate models in the comparison of social units, and it clearly represents a reaction against the impressionism and arbitrariness of generalizations in "cultural" terms or of a pedestrian empiricism in any terms. There is always the danger, however, that the constructs of a purely logical universe and a compulsion for good housekeeping in the cosmos will obscure our view of actual human conditions. The heterogeneity of phenomena in living systems and their functional complexity tends to be lost in the sieve of selection of data for highly specialized problems.

While recognizing the contributions of such work to theory and method, it is equally important to assess its limitations from the point of view of major objectives in anthropology. To this end Eggan (1954, p. 745) has made what I believe to be one of the most unabashedly plain prescriptions to date--"we need to adopt the structural-functional approach of British social anthropology and integrate it with our traditional American interest in culture process and history." His excellent review of the mutually distinctive currents of development in American and British anthropology and the recent impact of social anthropology on American students provides a lucid introduction to his own views. Though in fundamental agreement with Radcliffe-Brown and others that the systematic comparison of a world-wide variety of instances is an ultimate objective of social anthropology (and of general anthropology, for that matter), he raises a doubt as to whether our present limited knowledge of social systems does not call for fewer premature abstractions of the universal kind, and more of the middle range level of theory. It may be more fruitful at this time to return to the use of the comparative method on a smaller scale, for "it has seemed natural to utilize regions of relatively homogeneous culture or to work within social or cultural types, and to further control the ecology and the historical factors as far as it is possible to do so" (pp. 747-748). Eggan's "method of controlled comparisons" is essentially a reaffirmation of the culture area approach in terms of more recent theoretical and methodological tools. He points out the rich results that have come from the intensive investigation of areas like the Plains, Southwest, and Middle America, and suggests that similar work elsewhere in the world would offer a basis for comparisons of a more significant order than those we are now able to make (pp. 756-759).

One of the encouraging features of Eggan's position is the non-partisan but determined defense of cultural anthropology, and his reappraisal of its vigorous development in the United States up to the Second World War. In calling for a return on a new level to "the problems American anthropologists were tackling in the 1920's and 1930's," he is directing attention not only to currently neglected regions in the Western Hemisphere where Americanists have accumulated immense resources that await revaluation, but also some of the challenges posed by earlier theory in regard to time perspective and process. In reference to the latter he quotes Boas: "If anthropology desires to establish the laws governing the growth of culture it must not confine itself to comparing the results of growth alone, but whenever such is feasible, it must compare the processes of growth, and these can be discovered by means of studies of the cultures of small geographical areas" (p. 748). It may be noted that in the same place Boas (1940, pp. 279-280) wrote: "The historical inquiry must be considered the critical test that science must require before admitting facts as evidence. By its means the comparability of the collected material must be tested, and uniformity of processes must be demanded as proof of comparability." It is difficult to imagine that this orientation can be considered more than temporarily abandoned in anthropology, and that it rather persists as a latent goal awaiting expression in new terms.

To the degree to which the concept of culture--or its equivalent--is still central to problems of change, we must agree with Eggan (1954, p. 760) that it plays as important a role today in anthropology as the concept of "ether" in nineteenth-century physics. The refinement of this concept through the now widely accepted distinction between "society" and "culture"--and the implication of the awkward adjective "sociocultural"--has been closely identified with the development of the newer structural and functional approaches. Research interest, however, has weighed heavily on the side of social structure to such an extent that it has become all but unchristian to deal directly with "culture" in its own terms. Art, religion, whole value systems, bodies of existential and technical knowledge, myth, and legend--if not totally rejected as a significant category of phenomena--are considered peripheral and perhaps even an embarrassment to the proper subject matter of the "social sciences." Culture, nevertheless, conceived of as the ordering principles which direct social relations, is raided piecemeal for inferences about the maintenance, modification, and generic relatedness of systems. The logical integration of the cultural premises behind social relations is more often assumed to be immanent in society rather than subjected to the same rigorous systematization in its own terms. This assumption, however, is seldom clear or explicit. Consequently, the concept of culture has for many students narrowed to the isolation of sets of rules or formally articulated motivations attached to specific systems of relations which happen to be focal to current problems. If the social relations under consideration are confined to a particular class of relations which are most easily structurable by the requirements of a particular theoretical model, it follows that "culture" dwindles away to a mere wisp. It becomes a superfluous concept in such a setting. Furthermore, culture defined as "rules" represents a new rationalistic skew in anthropological theory. Where Tylor viewed "culture" as the consciously rational scheme for social order as well as the whole of customary behavior among a group of human beings, there has been a recent tendency to think of "social structure" as holistic and operationally self-sufficient by virtue of its "fit" in regard to logically constructed models of the universal sort. Social relations are considered to be more "empirical" than cultural phenomena because they are observable in terms of such constructs, and because they seem somehow to be more "concrete." Yet no one really doubts that human ideas are cognitive events which actually occur in nature. Nor does anyone really doubt that rationally coherent systems of ideas are as "real" a part of the wild nature of social groups as they are of the highly domesticated nature of scientific disciplines.

Members of a society can and do express parts of their culture in terms of consciously logical systems, though a good remainder of their culture may be "irrational" or not logically integrated. Both kinds of phenomena are empirical in the sense that they exist in nature regardless of their recognition by the outside observer. If the scientific observer of human society believes, however, that the "existence" of cultural phenomena is entirely dependent upon his recognition of them, or that logical integration is his prerogative, his interests--unless he is inclined to philosophy--will gravitate to what he believes to be less chimerical aspects

of human behavior. Actual social relations do, from this point of view, appear to have a more concrete reality. They are visible acts between persons involving ideas expressed about those acts. But it is just in this assumption of greater concreteness that the danger of reification of social structure lies. If social relations are considered to be more real than something called culture, it follows that explanations concerning the operation of systems of action will be sought in the realm of reality--that is, in the relation of parts of the social system. Thus "equilibrium," "balance," and "structural consistency" all become terms that describe a tendency or condition of systems, and vaguely imply forces at work analogous to those in a machine or a chemical solution. Frequently the analogy becomes in effect identity, and the justifiable distrust of reification in cultural terms is not carried over to a critical alertness to similar potentialities inherent in the logical in-breeding of constructs about social structure.

Social structure is the observer's construct abstracted from systems of action which have an empirical existence, just as cultural patterns are constructs derived from observable systems of human cognition. Both social structural and cultural constructs are attempts to codify phenomena which are more or less systematic or explicit in nature. There are social relations which are clearly systematic--those of institutionalized activity, for example--while many others require a high degree of analytic abstraction to isolate them as structures. A similar situation obtains for cultural phenomena, and the theoretical difficulties which have been revealed in the attempt to define this part of human reality are well known. But any approach which neglects either aspect of sociocultural reality can lead eventually into the old rationalistic dilemma of functional teleology. Until such time as our understanding of the relation between symbolic behavior and social relations is sufficient to provide new and more natural concepts, the distinction between society and culture is a useful device in this regard. The question of the "primacy" of either society or culture is, I think, a barren one at this stage of our theoretical work. It may become meaningful as our increased knowledge modifies these concepts in the context of a more unified theory of behavior.

The only defense against dogma and tautology in periods of the intensive orientation of theory to particular sets of problems is the continual reference to the general goals of a scientific discipline, to do so usually reveals that the facts encompassed by the orientation have yet to be qualified by an immeasurably greater range of facts derived from other sources. I believe that these potential qualifications for social theory today have their most vital representation in the concept of culture as the patterned symbolic behavior of groups of human beings. Though the theoretical separation between culture and society involves a high level abstraction requiring considerable vigilance lest we lose sight of their absolute dependence upon one another, it is also important to recognize that both are abstractions with reference to empirical phenomena of different orders. The relatively greater accessibility of social relations to observation and structuring should not obscure the reality of culture or distort its boundaries. Culture is an abstraction derived from empirical phenomena manifested in bodies of knowledge, techniques, evaluative prescriptions, and expressive standards which are articulated in social relations and language. It also comprehends

the more generalized norms of symbolic behavior among groups of human beings which characterize their mode of thought in terms of tacit premises diffused throughout the fabric of their social life. For specific theoretical purposes it is as reasonable to speak of social action and artifacts as products of culture, as it is in other contexts to imagine that culture and artifacts are products of social relations. To argue that one or the other positions represents more than a device, or to assert that the nature of reality conforms more to one view than the other is to make the first confident step toward reification.

In an excellent discussion of the unavoidable limitations of the theory of action, Parsons and Shills (1952, pp. 40-42) write: "It would be foolish to worry about whether a certain item of action should be put into a category labeled 'culture' or 'social structure,' but one may legitimately inquire whether something may not be lost by confining the application of theoretical principles to specific actors in specific situations, particularly when one is dealing with implicit culture." The emphasis on value-orientation, institutionalized norms and role behavior in their definition of culture is made explicit as a formal logical requirement of the theory at hand. It is pointed out that the theory to some extent imposes a special limitation on the concept which removes from direct consideration important results in method and theory which have emerged from other approaches to culture (e.g. configurational):

> And by doing so it rules out some of the demonstrated benefits of the concept of culture and also rules out future developments of this concept along lines which have been shown to have been fruitful. Of course, if such a ruling out is done from purely logical considerations, one should not object to it for a priori reasons but must await empirical demonstrations that it constitutes an advance in our conceptual treatment of action. Such a demonstration is always possible, and in any event a demonstration of usefulness is the final criterion no matter how the theory is arrived at. But if the ruling out is done from what appears to be a misconstrual of the theory at hand, and if it appears that the ruling out restricts the usefulness of conceptual advances already made, then a reëxamination of the theory is in order.

The demonstrated effectiveness and vitality of Parson's theoretical contribution is to a considerable degree enhanced by the frequent interjection of disclaimers of this sort which direct attention to the purely instrumental nature of scientific theory. To the degree that the exposition of a system explicates its logical premises within a larger framework of possible alternatives, it furthers its chances of flexible application to a wide range of problems and submits itself to creative modification. Perhaps it is only through the rigors of the attempted unification of theory that "theorizing" itself comes in for discussion and placement. Nevertheless, the importance of making such matters explicit is indicated by the welter of insular terminologies and specialized relations of concepts which define approaches to sets of problems in anthropology today. Each selection of problems is somehow considered by those who select them as crucial and basic among all others. This is an a priori assumption which often succeeds in insulating the theoretical system from any cross-fertilization. Theory at

this point becomes an unwitting tool of covert philosophical attitudes, and the exponents of a particular conceptual scheme may come to believe that its logical consistency and partially demonstrated usefulness make it a virtual mirror of nature.

Mutually dependent and equally analytical concepts of culture and society are a necessary precondition to any study of change. In his analysis of a Javanese funeral, Geertz (1957, p. 33) remarks that "one of the major reasons for the inability of functional theory to cope with change lies in its failure to treat sociological and cultural processes on equal terms; almost inevitably one of the two is either ignored or is sacrificed to become but a simple reflex, a 'mirror image,' of the other." The author goes on to suggest that a more effective approach to historical materials should begin with an analytic distinction between these aspects of human behavior, and "treat them as independently variable yet mutually interdependent factors." In these terms culture and social structure will be seen to be capable of a wide range of modes of integrations with one another. "In most societies, where change is a characteristic rather than an abnormal occurrence, we shall expect to find more or less radical discontinuities between the two. . . . It is in these very discontinuities that we shall find some of the primary driving forces of change."

These remarks are fully consistent with the point of view being developed in the present discussion. Perhaps even greater emphasis might be placed on the fact that in the study of change the distinction between social system and culture is focused on problems of function and integration. The term change refers both to "internal" readjustive modifications of systems and those major alterations which have been called "changes of type." But it is also considered, here, to be continual or chronic--that is, inherent in the operation of systems.[4] A concept of intrinsic change--though methodologically unwieldy in itself--should qualify any analysis of societies in homeostatic terms. Without this qualification "function" in social structure becomes the mere description of operations. Functional "significance" in these latter terms is purely descriptive and rests upon the logical congruency of models derived from equilibrium concepts. Functional significance as meaning or explanation, however, requires a dynamic concept of change and involves problems of a different level. The terms "equilibrium" and "integration"--though often used as alternates--appear most frequently in distinctive contexts in which function is of the operational sort for the former and the meaningful and dynamic sort for the latter. Change considered as a problem of integration requires attention to content as well as form, and causal or purposive inferences tend to be sought in a broader range of behavioral phenomena than defined by social structure. Thus function becomes objective meaning, and its analysis strains toward explanation.

Though culture defined as the symbolic activity of a group is observable through social relations, this is not its only context of expression. It is also expressed directly through language. Furthermore, countless patterns of behavior are discernible in gesture, style of speech and body movement, level of affect in reference to specific social and cultural objects, and in the variations between public and private articulation. These are the phenomena which Nadel (1951, pp. 138; 142-144) has relegated to a "residual

category" of social materials. "Though institutions have their locus in the dimension of action," he writes, "they do not constitute that whole field, nor yet the whole field of recurrent and standardized action. Customs, mores, conventions, ideologies, art styles, language--all constitute parts of this category which remain outside of institutions (though they may be expressed in institutions) as idea systems which are perpetuated and developed autonomously--they belong to the field of 'all culture.'"

Granting that such material presents considerable difficulties to formulation in terms amenable to recent developments in social theory, its nature is of a kind that it cannot remain peripheral to research interests or relegated to grab-bag "residual" categories. It has been the subject matter of an accumulating body of anthropological research since the emergence of the discipline. Its dependence upon developments in psychology, philosophy, and history should no more exclude it as a central problem in anthropology than dependence upon sociology, political science, and economics should exclude the study of social structure. Without a concept of culture or its equivalent in empirical reference, anthropology has little to distinguish itself as a discipline.

5

Integration has been dealt with most effectively in the context of studies that approach the relation between social and cultural phenomena as an empirical as well as a theoretical problem. The definition of culture itself is an initial empirical problem. A holistic view of either culture or social structure cannot define the boundaries of relevant data or maintain the necessary distinction of phenomenological levels. Culture defined as the logico-meaningful, affective, and patterned content of social relations is a major step in the direction of formulating workable categories. But culture must also be thought of as broader than this and as evidencing independent expressions through other media. Concepts such as Linton's "orientations," and "interests," his distinctions between "real," "ideal," and "construct" patterns of culture, and the delineation of use, form, meaning and function as aspects of sociocultural objects, were early contributions toward refinement of cultural theory. Though the influence of a structural-functional approach was beginning to be evident in Linton's work, his concept of integration does not make full use of the differentiation he poses between society and culture. Integration is presented, rather, as "the progressive development of a more and more perfect adjustment between the various elements which compose the total culture." The "core of culture" is made up of integrated systems of interests which "give all other stable and mutually adjusted elements within the configuration their orientations and reflect actual processes of growth" (Linton, 1936, pp. 342-348). Herskovits' "focus," Opler's "themes," and Benedict's "ethos" were among similar concepts which emerged within the configurational approach to culture in an attempt to define the dynamics of integration.

In an article evaluating the use of concepts of this sort Cohen (1948, pp. 436-443) wrote that investigation "purely on the level of themes, divorced from a broader theory and conceptual scheme, is not likely to yield

more than purely descriptive fruit." He points out that integration must be considered in terms of at least two basic usages--functional and logical integration. "The first is the ordering of the various necessary activities of the members of a social system. . . . The second is the logical consistency of the maxims expressing the values and beliefs on which behavior is expected to proceed. . . . As long as we remain on the level of themes, alone, logical integration is the only kind we can talk about. . . . It is the requirement of functional integration that makes possible the full realization of logical integration. . . ." It is interesting to note in connection with these remarks that criticism of culture-configuration concepts a decade ago were in very much the same terms as that now being directed against a static formalism in the study of social structure. More recently, for example, Geertz (1957, p. 34) suggests that "a more dynamic functionalist approach" is made possible by contrasting the sorts of integration characteristic of culture and social systems respectively. He also refers to Sorokin's original and illuminating discussion of the concepts "logico-meaningful integration" and "causal-functional integration" as particularly useful in this regard. He qualifies them, however, with an additional concept which completes a system of social action in Parsonian terms: "And because these two types of integration are not identical, because the particular form one of them takes does not directly imply the form the other will take, there is an inherent incongruity and tension between the two and between both of them and a third element, the pattern of motivational integration within the individual which we usually call personality structure."

It is in reference to this latter aspect that Parsons (1952, pp. 176-177) suggests the term "pattern integration," for the extent to which a given pattern or theme of orientation is "consistently manifested in the specific evaluative attitudes of the actors throughout the social system." The dynamic implications of these interdependent concepts are made explicit: "Integration, both within an individual's value system and within the value system prevailing in a society is a compromise between the functional imperatives of the situation and the dominant value-orientation patterns of the society . . . the leading element in the real inter-individual or systemic integration is the major value-orientation dominant in the system (ethos)." Thus the institutionalization of value-orientation patterns constitutes the mechanism of integration for social systems. It is in the same sense that Levy (1952, pp. 505-541) speaks of integration as "eufunctional adaptation to a concrete structure," and proposes that certain institutionalized forms of action may be considered as "structures of integration and expression." These structures are those which are predominantly educational, motivational (e.g. religious), recreational, artistic, and affective.

The refinement of concepts appropriate to a dynamic and historical frame of reference is clearly attributable to attempts in theory to relate personality and cultural systems to social system. In these efforts the problem of integration has been a central one. In the case of some who have urged the replacement of static concepts based on physical analogy with dynamic ones, the term "equilibrium" is dismissed. Sorokin (1941, p. 710), for example, considered all concepts based on equilibrium models as merely analogous to observation of states of matter, and argues that neither the terms nor concepts derived from such analogies are amenable to the analysis

of social change. The concepts are implicitly reintroduced, nevertheless, in his "theory of limits" which takes the place of the mechanisms of control and regulation that are the usual reference points of equilibrium models. By suggesting that there is an in-built limitation to the range of possible variation in the creation of new social forms he retains the basis for constructing sufficiently analytic models. Otherwise it would be difficult to imagine how his "dynamic integration" would amount to more than another "emanationist" view of total culture. He does recognize a theoretical distinction between the kinds of "integration" implied by "the interdependence of structures" and "those qualitative aspects which make them a system of collective unity." [Similarly, Nadel (1951, p. 165) called for an abandonment of all models based on physical equilibrium--as well as the term itself--in that they present obstacles to a dynamic view of the processes involved in integration: "The striving for tensions and stimulation must be accepted, not as an accidental fluctuation within a system tending toward equilibrium, but as a dynamic component in its own right . . . an impetus toward creative action" (p. 347). Nevertheless, in his discussion of his Nuba data, he too is obliged to make note of two distinct kinds of phenomena involved in social relationships (pp. 169-183). First, there are the mechanisms operating with physical constraint and sanctions, often entrusted to selected agents of the society; and, second, there are the regulative influences of idea systems and forms of teaching. He refers to these as external and internal order respectively.

There appears to be a tendency in more recent functional theory to retain both the terms "equilibrium" and "integration" for concepts appropriate to their respective levels of reference--particularly where process and change are posed as theoretical problems. The former is used with reference to structures of power relations, coercion, and social control; the latter for factors of consensus, motivation, and normative regulation. Thus the way is left open for the development and application of analytical concepts on more than one level of sociocultural theory. A concept of dynamic integration presented as an all-inclusive process in the terms suggested by Nadel, Sorokin, Linton, and others, anticipates a unity of social theory which does not obtain. Like the distinction between society and culture, the terms equilibrium and integration refer to conditions and processes whose empirical connections are not yet clear.

The method and results of synchronic analysis in social structural studies need to be tested in terms of a broader framework of sociocultural theory. Otherwise there is the ever-present danger of which Nadel (1951, p. 243) writes in another but related context, "that the comparative method would be reduced to sterility at the precise moment when the comparison begins to make sense." The method of part-system analysis and comparison of social structure in the current trend has reached the point in its development when it is forcing recognition of its own limitations in dealing with a wider range of factors impinging from outside the boundaries of schemes. Some of these compelling factors emerge from what have been discussed above as cultural and personality systems.

It is becoming increasingly apparent that the problem of sociocultural growth and change is too deeply embedded in the orientation of anthropology

as a discipline to remain latent for long. The basic questions having to do with the development of a dynamic-diachronic approach to change seem rooted in the placement of the concept of culture. These questions have shown a remarkable degree of persistence within American anthropology, and it is here that the greatest advances have been made in a theory of culture commensurate with that of synchronic social structural theory. Murdoch (1932), White (1944), Bagby (1953), and Spiro (1954) are only a few among those who have attempted to explicate the empirical nature of culture. The problem of an epistemology and the formation of adequate constructs for the study of cultural phenomena has been an important aspect of the contribution of American anthropologists and students of related disciplines. The work of Kluckhohn and others (1951; 1952), Ladd (1957), Dunlop and others (n.d.), Albert (1956), F. Kluckhohn (1950), Bidney (1953), Redfield (1955), Hall and Trager (1953), and Talcott Parsons represents significant progress in this regard.

The interrelation of ethnology, psychology, philosophy and sociology has been an extremely fruitful one for anthropological theory in this country and may be considered as providing its most distinctive character. The interest in problems of process and integration has been maintained as a consistent theme of discourse in the discipline through its early anti-evolutionary phase, through the criticism of kulturkreis and culture area concepts, and even through the more recent reaction against configurationist and other dynamic approaches of the descriptive-integration sort. The heritage shaped by Boas and his students has been a vigorous one. The diversity of special interests and the inclusive scope of the work of Kroeber, Lowie, Sapir, Linton, Spier, Radin, Benedict, Herskovits, Mead, and Hallowell, for example, may well attract the charge of eclecticism for American anthropology. But this apparent eclecticism has as its core a dogged concern for the historical and psychological dimension of human social behavior. It has acted as a major defense for the expanded and flexible boundaries of the discipline against tendencies to collapse them before the minimal required range of its references has been determined.

It is the renewed assertion of these principles in modern theoretical terms which identifies the particular quality of the American contribution to the growing rapprochement with British social anthropology. The impact of Radcliffe-Brown on a sector of American anthropology was a large step in this direction in that it introduced an area of common sociological premises which had influenced a generation of British anthropologists. But it also served to widen the bridge of communication with other continuities in British thought which stemmed through Malinowski and Evans-Pritchard. The scope of theoretical concerns suggested in the work of Firth, Gluckman and Nadel, for example, strikes a more resonant and familiar chord within anthropology as the many-stranded tradition in this country comprehends it. On the other hand, the American orientation of Eggan, Kluckhohn, and Redfield is stated in terms which are apparently congenial to those British anthropologists who are exploring the implications of their material which lie beyond the consideration of societies as closed systems. Terms like ethos, basic value orientation, style, world view, cultural premises, and many others that have emerged from cultural anthropology are an increasingly active part of a common language.

In Africanist research there has been very little recent work of the kind which represents these currents. American students working primarily in areas where problem orientation has been preconditioned by social anthropologists tend not to develop research designs along other lines which have proved productive elsewhere. There has been little systematic concentration either by foundations or research centers on particular regions of Africa for purposes of codifying historical materials, or intensive comparisons of proximous groups. The paucity of studies which deal with world-view in particular societies or on a comparative basis is another case in point. There exists, however, a great accumulation of materials assembled by earlier scholars concerning the religions of certain peoples and the regional distribution of beliefs. But the present orientation of research leaves little room for the revaluation or development of the implications of this data. The admirably detailed descriptions and analyses of belief systems in Evans-Pritchard's Azande and Herskovits' Dahomey materials have yet to be equalled by later scholars. Equally neglected is the vast reservoir of data on material culture, art styles, folklore, and comparative psychology. A recent book by Forde and others (1954) is one of the few major contributions to our understanding of the range of African religious expression to appear in more than a decade. It contains a number of excellent presentations of the religions or general world-view of particular peoples. But like many recent compilations (e.g. African Systems of Kinship and Marriage, and African Political Systems) African Worlds refers to widely separated societies and there is no attempt to place any one of them in its significant regional historical and spatial setting.

Among the few modern Africanists who have given some balanced attention to social relations and world-view in a comparative frame, Nadel is outstanding. His earlier work in comparative psychology (1937; 1939) and his more recent comparisons of religion and witchcraft in closely associated societies (1952; 1955) demonstrate the effectiveness of this approach. An interest in cultural components and historical process in the analysis of particular societies has begun to be made explicit in a number of studies among which Gluckman's Custom and Conflict in Africa, and Rituals of Rebellion, and Bohannan's (1958) discussion of "extra-constitutional" movements among the Tiv are noteworthy examples. The recent appearance of an unusual treatment of religion in other terms by Fortes (1959) is further indication of the revival of a broader range of problems on the part of a number of leading social anthropologists who have worked in Africa.

6

The immediate effect of an explicit concept of culture has been shown above to be that of widening the scope of inquiry and providing new bases for explanation. The analysis of society in terms of the structure of particular institutions at a given point in time will reveal operationally significant correlations from which an elaborate description and a social type can be constructed. But these results will not comprehend vast ramifications of social relations which must be excluded as "unstructurable" in the terms prescribed. Comparisons derived from descriptions and types of this kind are, at best, abstractions of so high an order that empirical

validation becomes an enormous if not neglected task. It is in the middle range levels of theory that cultural facts intrude most forcefully. A synchronic closed-system approach to social structure precludes systematic recognition of the range and complexity of cultural patterning which would provide substantial qualification to particular instances of institutionalized action.

Culture pattern and social relations considered as independent but interrelated variables indicate more than a useful conceptual device in anthropological theory: they define an observable condition in nature as well. The mutual dependence aspect of these factors expressed in crucial and concrete institutions represents but one type of instance of their occurrence. Society considered as a whole involves innumerable situations and processes in which the relationship is more indirect or ostensibly independent. The approach to problems of change in cultural as well as social terms demands recognition of these facts. Change in these terms is seen as a result of multiple processes of integration involving not only the dynamic aspect of spatial relations, but a temporal sequence of effective events as well. It leads investigation directly to the question of relationship between the basic value orientation of a society and the observable variations of social structure in space and over time. The implications of variation are lost in homeostatic analysis where change must be dealt with as alterations in the arrangement of parts in a series of periodically disturbed and readjusting states of equilibrium. A truly dynamic level of analysis requires a concept of process which is both diachronic and directional. "The dynamic picture," writes Firth (1951, p. 82), "demands recognition of the possibility that the operation of a social system, how ever simple, involves continual tendencies to change. Basic relations in the system are not of a balanced order; they are often unbalanced, requiring continual readjustment in order that the system may work at all. This operates at all levels of activity in the social system . . . operates precisely because individuals are attempting, wherever they can, to remedy or utilize the asymmetry of the structural arrangements in the society as a whole." It is this tendency to "utilize" or manipulate the existing conditions of the social environment which is one of the keys to a dynamic view of change. Its reference is to the rational and motivational sphere of human behavior which Nadel (1951, pp. 343, 365, 401) suggests to be the "integration of purposes" manifested by a drive toward completion or stabilization of relations "through the medium of anticipatory motivations."

A recent and important work by Leach (1954) develops similar concepts in the analysis of a complex situation of social change. Accepting initially the distinction between two basic types of changes--those that involve internal modifications of formal structure, and those which are alterations of type--he points out that the latter kinds of "type changes" do not fundamentally alter the society which he has studied, but rather represent alternatives of formal order within that society. Furthermore, the "forces" operating to change this society in the present are considered as similar to those which have acted upon and within that society in the past. This does not mean that the future development of this society is, in any absolute sense, determined or predictable: "On the contrary I hold that individuals and groups of individuals are constantly being faced with making choices

between several possible correct alternatives. But circumstances may operate in such a way that particular kinds of choice are likely to appear more advantageous than others. This does not mean that the outsider can predict what choice will be made, but only that one may predict what choice is likely to be made given certain assumptions about the value system and rationality of the actors" (pp. 5, 227-229). The relation of choice alternatives in goal orientation to adaptive variation in action is placed, then, in a diachronic frame of reference.

It is of particular interest to American anthropologists to note how this explication functions in the theory of one of England's brilliant younger social anthropologists. Leach's disclaimer concerning the term culture (pp. 16-17) amounts merely to a reassertion of Firth's distinction between society as "social relations" and culture as "content." Virtually ignoring the vast production in recent theory and research along these same lines in this country, he writes: "As this book may be read by American as well as by English anthropologists I need to emphasize that the term culture, as I use it, is not that all-embracing category which is the subject matter of American cultural anthropology. I am a social anthropologist, and I am concerned with the social structure of Kachim society. For me the concepts of culture and society are quite distinct." In view of the subject matter of the present discussion and the general references made, it would be redundant to argue that this is an oversimplification of the American position. What is more important is that the actual theoretical frame of his analysis represents points of view which are becoming general currency regardless of terminological polemics involving the exact placement of the categories society and culture. Culture by whatever name smells as sweet, and it would appear that he stands more chance of being misconstrued by some of his colleagues at home than here. This possibility is enhanced by his admission to "a basic psychological assumption" concerning the universality of specific human cognitive processes, and his defense of anthropological "interpretations" of verbal or non-verbal symbolic actions (pp. 14-15). Most American anthropologists would find no difficulty in accepting the feasibility of such interpretations, and would moreover insist that they are unavoidable unless ruled out by the formal requirements of a tentative theoretical model.

His interesting redefinition of ritual and myth provides some direct clarification of his approach:

> The structure which is symbolized in ritual is the system of socially approved "proper" relations between individuals and groups. These relations are not formally recognized at all times. . . . Indeed I am prepared to argue that this neglect of formal structure is essential if ordinary informal social activities are to be pursued at all. Nevertheless if anarchy is to be avoided, the individuals who make up a society must from time to time be reminded, at least in symbol, of the underlying order that is supposed to guide their social activities. Ritual performances . . . momentarily make explicit what is otherwise a fiction.

It is this "fiction," with its locus in mythology and systems of belief, that American anthropologists would recognize as "ideal culture" or "ultimate

value orientation." Likewise, general patterns of technical, esthetic, and moral values are referred to in the following terms:

> In Kachin "customary procedure," the routines of clearing the ground, planting the seed, fencing the plot and weeding the growing crop are all patterned according to formal conventions and interspersed with all kinds of technically superfluous frills and decorations. It is these frills and decorations which make the performance a Kachin performance and not just a simple functional act. And so it is with every kind of technical action; there is always the element which is functionally essential, and another element which is simply the local custom, an aesthetic frill. Such aesthetic frills were referred to by Malinowski as "neutral custom," and in his scheme of functional analysis they are treated as minor irrelevancies. It seems to me, however, that it is precisely these customary frills which provide the social anthropologist with his primary data. Logically, aesthetics and ethics are identical. If we are to understand the ethical rules of a society, it is aesthetics that we must study. In origin the details of custom may be an historical accident; but for the living individuals in a society such details can never be irrelevant, they are part of the total system of interpersonal communication within the group. They are symbolic actions, representations. It is the anthropologist's task to try to discover and to translate into his own technical jargon what it is that is symbolized or represented. (p. 12)

The patterning of all these "frills" and details in terms of symbolic behavior systems within "the total system of interpersonal communication" of groups defines culture as the concept is used by many American social scientists, and as it appears in the present discussion. But Leach's recognition and explicit reference to factors which many of us would consider "cultural" must be distinguished from his own general use of the term itself. Despite his cursory acceptance of culture as content, his actual use of the term and placement of the concept is both ambiguous and more restricted than this would imply. Culture is for him the "form" and "dress" of social situations (p. 16). It really refers to the minutiae of normative procedures which qualitatively distinguish "a culture" from other cultures, and which are taken merely as traditional or accidental elaborations of basic structure. This limits the term culture to mean essentially "custom" or "practices" in the Tylorian sense, and relegates other aspects of content--such as moral rules, beliefs, knowledge, "law," and systems of ideal and esthetic value--to different categories of exposition than comprehended by the term culture. This is what he means when he states that "the structure of the situation is largely independent of its cultural form," and that the same kind of structural relationship may exist in "many different cultures and be symbolized in correspondingly different ways." It does not mean at all in the context of Leach's analysis, what the same statement would mean with reference to the concept of culture developed in the present discussion. From this latter point of view, the general approach of his work might be considered to have a predominant cultural emphasis--an allegation which he would no doubt deny. Nevertheless, the form of his exposition of the "structure" of Kachin gumsa society addresses itself initially to "ritual actions and the meanings that can be attached to them" (p. 101 ff). Social structure is dealt with in terms of the "concepts," "ideologies," or "schemes of value," which

underlie its expression in action. Thus "concepts" of territorial division, grouping, kinship and marriage relations, property, rank and class, supernaturals, political and religious office, are presented as ideal systems as if they were an integrated coherent system of ideas.

Not only does Leach consider this approach relevant and necessary to the main themes of his analysis, but that it is empirically validated by the situation he describes. "Thus described my method sounds like a scholastic device of the purest pedantry. But my claim is that Kachins and Shans actually think of their own society in this sort of way. . . . This implies that the Kachins themselves think of the difference between Shan and gumsa Kachin as being a difference of ideal, and not, as the ethnologists would have us believe, a difference of ethnic, cultural or racial type" (pp. 285-286). The placement of the term "cultural" is noteworthy, here, for it clarifies the fact that Leach is dealing systematically with an extensive category of phenomena which might be thought of as constituting important aspects of culture in the theoretical context of the present discussion, but which he presents in other terms. The general term he uses for this category of phenomena seems to be "myth" for which he has provided a unique definition (pp. 4, 13). Myths are the ideal concepts that are the "logic" or "cultural form" of "ritual expression." Myth and ritual cannot, in his view, be discussed in isolation or independently of one another, and social structure in practical situations may be thought of as consisting of "a set of ideas about the distribution of power between persons and groups of persons." The novelty of this approach to social structure is one of the outstanding features of Leach's work, and its effectiveness in dealing with a most complex problem of change is amply demonstrated. Without an understanding of his special placement of concepts, however, it would be impossible to guess how he could write in the same context that "the structure of the situation is largely independent of its cultural form" (p. 16). "Cultural form" in this last statement refers to entirely different phenomena than when he is speaking of myth as cultural form. The former involves the accumulated "welter of customs," the ethnic, racial, and linguistic facts which help to distinguish groups; while the latter involves what might in other terms be called the logic of institutionalized action. The former is "culture" and the latter is "social structure." Despite the inconsistency in the use of the term "culture," Leach's special placement of the concepts is clear.

What he has done, essentially, is to reinterpret the concept of social structure to include relevant cultural factors. Firth used the term "social organization" for this purpose. Leach, however, distinguishes "structural models" (construct) from "the structures symbolized in ritual." It is to the latter that he refers when he writes of social structure. Thus his approach is a singular but not extreme departure from the theoretical frame suggested by the culture-social relations dichotomy. With "myth" and "ritual expression" as his variables, he is really dealing with that part of culture which we might call "ideal culture" in its relation to crucial concrete institutions. Yet if, as he writes, "myth and ritual are essentially one and the same thing" (p. 264), the question arises as to how these concepts can provide sufficiently independent variables for dynamic analysis--particularly when the general problem is posed as follows:

> For my purposes it is the underlying structural pattern and not the overt cultural pattern that has real significance. I am concerned not so much with the structural interpretation of a particular culture, but with how particular structures can assume a variety of cultural interpretations, and with how different structures can be represented by the same set of cultural symbols (p. 17).

His solution to this confusing conceptual knot is accomplished by a significant modification of his concept of myth:

> So far I have tried to keep the emphasis on ritual rather than on myth--that is on actions rather than on verbal statements which are counterparts to the action, but already in a number of instances, particularly when attempting to explain the conceptual difference between gumsa and gumlao, I have had to explain by means of myth (p. 264).

He then reaffirms his basic formulation concerning the instability and lack of "equilibrium" in Kachin society. He points out that this instability is itself represented in the ritual system--that is, in the structural variability ("unstable sub-systems") of the general Kachin-Shan complex, and also in the myths which are the underlying ideal pattern or "models" of ritual systems. It is here that Leach develops his view as to the dynamic function of contradictory and inconsistent "versions" of ideal principles. The instrumentality of behavior demonstrated by individuals and competing groups within Kachin society, through "interpretations" of common ideal symbols, offers a contrast which we might state as the relation between real and ideal culture pattern. Thus myth may function as "a justification for faction and social change." These "justifications" expressed in social relations provide the meaning of the inconsistencies, and are the keys to the real forces of change which identify processes.

With this modification Leach has presented the kind of constructs which are conceptually consonant with those implied by the society and culture distinction made in the present discussion. The discrepancy lies, however, in his emphasis upon the uniquely defined concepts of ritual expression and myth, and his failure to make fully explicit the relation between myth and culture as he uses the latter term. It is never quite clear whether "myth" and "general culture" are considered--tacitly at least--as aspects of a single theoretically unified category which we would call culture, or whether what he calls "myth" is thought to be the only relevant and workable sphere of ideational phenomena. The latter would seem to be the case, and as the empirical situation of Kachin-Shan organization responds so well to a research design in these terms, it has proven to be a successful aid to investigation and analysis. The highly heterogeneous and interspersed population is an excellent base for his critical approach to simplistic statements in terms of arbitrary criteria for unit societies and cultures. In this context his use of myth as a concept denoting overriding ideal model systems which provide the principles of reference for different sectors of a single extensive structural system, demonstrates a device of enormous vitality for discovering new relationships. The situation demanded that standard ethnological interpretations of grouping and unit cultures be discarded or, at the least,

revaluated. Leach's notion of culture is most clearly highlighted at those points in his discussion where this requirement has been imposed upon his research design.

"Culture," in the sense that Leach uses the term most frequently, distinguishes groups on what he considers to be a minimal level--that is, variations in language, dress, ornamentation, and all the "customary details" of practices and belief. But it is also used irregularly and rather confusingly as an adjective for the ideational or symbolic aspects of human behavior. Rather than redefine the term, he seems to prefer that it retain this ambiguous meaning which, in effect, relegates it to a peripheral and moribund position in his scheme. A society, therefore, is frequently--if not always--multicultural; but a culture could not be thought of as multisocietal. A system of "myths" or "ideal models," however, might properly comprehend a complex aggregate of "unit cultures" whose "ritual expressions" are part of an inclusive social system (p. 17). When the term is defined in this way, the boundaries of a culture are never coterminous with society, nor is a tribe an entity that coincides with either. Leach has given ample evidence to show that this is apparently the case for the Kachin Hills, and that the standard ethnographic convention which assumes congruence of these ways of delineating units is a fiction which distorts the reality of the situation (pp. 281-284). As he points out, this is a matter of general theoretical importance which needs emphasis: "Because anthropologists, right from the beginning, have always treated the figment 'a society' as an isolate, they still have no language in which they can describe social systems which are both contemporary and adjacent--that is in actual interrelation."

Leach has made considerable headway in developing a language appropriate to the situation he has studied. The various sectors of the population have become so interspersed that political entities and territorial divisions do not coincide with ethnic groups or languages. The difference between Shan, Kachin, and variants of the area, are more susceptible to interpretation as differences in ideal reference or "myth." Any differences in minor "practices," "custom," or "cultural detail" which might still distinguish groups to some extent, may be interpreted by the observer as component parts of the overriding myths; for these, too, have become ritual actions expressive of interrelations. Consequently, on the theoretical level at least, all of what we would normally think of as social structure (including its dynamic "organizational" aspects) and culture has been reduced to that part of either category which is accessible to observation through the peculiarly selective "myth-ritual" construct. And although this has proven to be a most effective instrument for description and analysis of the Kachin Hills area, the concepts seem to be overly unique products of an instance of research, and their use in comparative work may be restricted by this fact.

7

The Central West Atlantic region which has been discussed in an earlier section above, presents a situation of another type than that defined by

Leach. Though the "Poro tribes" have been highly mobile for many centuries, and though their interrelations have been extensive and long-standing, they do represent relatively distinct entities in language, territorial placement, traditions of origin, and in emphasis on certain variant features of social organization, economy, and material inventory. To think of one's self as a Gola, a Kpelle, or a Mende is to some extent a matter of choice, but the basis of validation is intricate and far from arbitrary. It is possible, for example, for a Kpelle man or woman to "become" a Gola. The very first requirement is language competency and permanent residence in a Gola community. But it is not enough that such a person be incorporated into a system of relations through marriage, land use, and participation in village administrative councils. He must demonstrate his absolute loyalty to "Gola-ness" by applying himself diligently to learning the style of Gola behavior, by identifying with a vague but highly potent sense of Gola heritage, and by instilling this consciousness in his children. Such a person becomes, actually, a militant Gola within a group which takes the designation for granted. He is, therefore, different and the facts of his origin are not immediately forgotten.

Another important step in validating Gola-ness is for such an individual to join the Poro organization of the local Gola community. If he is already a member of Kpelle Poro, this becomes the simple procedure of paying certain fees and taking a new "degree" in Gola Poro. This new degree involves oaths and the learning of "laws" which are essentially a reaffirmation of the inter-tribal ritual brotherhood of Poro, but most important are the new "secret laws" he learns concerning the local Gola community and the mythological traditions of the Gola tribe. These latter are the secret property of the hierarchically ranked lineages of Gola villages and chiefdoms. To the extent that one has been given these secrets, one has become Gola. But it is also the business of local Poro to "keep matters straight." The new Kpelle recruit may be a descendant of Kpelle slaves of the Gola or he may be a wealthy and influential man of poor family connections. Regardless of his status in the secular community it is one of the functions of local Poro to give ritual expression to his status in terms of ideal Gola values. Limits, therefore, may be set upon the "secrets" that he can learn or upon the number of advanced "degrees" that he will be allowed to take. Within Poro his ritual role may be that of "servant," "follower," or "son" to those who actually stand in the reverse relation to him in everyday life. If he has married into an important Gola lineage, the opportunities for advancing his ritual status are greater. His affinal relatives--should they admire and trust him--can argue his case in inner Poro councils and may succeed to some extent in fictionalizing his descent so that his ritual status may be improved. This is relatively rare, however, for the conservatism of local Poro prescriptions is a function of the jealously guarded power of the leading lineage elders in any community. A good part of the "secrets" of Poro involves the knowledge of the true ritual placement of every individual of the community regardless of their secular status. This knowledge with its potential effects on the prestige of many men in important public office is an instrument of considerable control.

What the system amounts to, then, is the maintenance of "degrees of Gola-ness" with reference to ideal standards ritually expressed in the

structure of local Poro organization. And though a person may attach himself to a Gola society by intermarriage and participation in general community life, and though he may attempt to assimilate fully by shifting his allegiance to Gola traditions by submitting to the authority of local Poro, he can never become what is known ritually as "real-real Gola." His public and secret ritual statuses are kept distinct. Furthermore, his ritual status is inherited by his immediate descendants, while his secular status may not be. The conditions of intense social mobility create situations where some of the most wealthy and powerful leaders of a community have achieved their position by good fortune within their own lifetimes. The local extended family and even the lineages of such men may become prominent in the public attitude. His sons and grandsons, however, will inherit his ritual status in Poro unless they succeed in fictionalizing their descent by reckoning "through the mother's line." His daughters' children inherit the ritual statuses of their Gola fathers. Thus such a person is never known as the founder of a lineage, because every attempt is made on the part of his descendants to minimize his existence, and to attach themselves to prestigious Gola patrilineages.

A similar though more extreme situation obtains for those individuals who are non-Gola and who were never initiated into any Poro secret society in their youth. Many adult urban Liberians--and particularly government officials--have found it politically expedient to join these organizations in recent years. Exorbitant fees are charged for these initiations and such persons, regardless of their importance, make up a general class of Poro members who are considered "children" or "younger sons." The "secrets" which they are taught involve the most generalized symbols and code of ethics for ritual brotherhood in all Poro organizations. They have access to the sacred groves and to the minor councils of Poro like any member of secret societies throughout the region. A wealthy man might buy a series of advanced "degrees" which give him high status on this intertribal political level of Poro, but he can never be considered as "becoming Gola," or is his ritual status in local Poro organization altered by these acts alone. He is always a "little child" whose family were "stupid" people. His male descendants by a Gola woman are also at a disadvantage in that their mixed inheritance may at any time be brought into the open. It might be said of them in modern colloquial terms that their father's ancestors were "sinners and heathens."

To be a Gola, then, is somewhat more than accepting or being recognized as accepting a set of values: it is also something more than participation in the social relations of a Gola community. There is an aspect of the common heritage which is logically integrated as a concept of ideal Gola-ness, and this fiction is to some degree susceptible to manipulation for practical ends. But there is another aspect of being or becoming Gola which can be validated only by lineage history, by the relative "ethnic" purity of one's inheritance, and by being able to state without contradiction from one's fellow citizens that "my main line goes back to Komgba"--that is, that one's patrilineal ancestors can be traced to the point of segmentation from the ancient lineages of the Gola homeland. There are, therefore, different degrees of Gola-ness referable not only to behavior and belief, but to what may be taken as qualifying historical facts. These facts are part of

systematic bodies of knowledge over which the local elders of lineages and of Poro maintain custodianship. Furthermore, every Gola has at least a vague notion of the distribution of a people within a definite territory whom he would designate by that name, beyond which reside many peoples who are to be distinguished from them by name and territory. He will also have a notion of the diversity of subgroups within Gola territory--that is, of kinds of Gola. And though the actual relations of his local group may be more closely interwoven with adjacent groups of Vai, De, or Kpelle on the boundaries of Gola territory, there are important aspects of behavior and tradition which are continually reinforcing his identification with a whole people which he knows as Gola.

This does not mean that his loyalties in warfare, litigation, or in any of the other practical affairs of life will be directed to anything known as "the Gola people." Such loyalties involve only his kin, his village, or at the greatest extent, his chiefdom. He will join in war against any other Gola group or even become a mercenary of a non-Gola leader in war against any Gola groups with whom his local group does not happen to have an alliance. Nevertheless, a Gola from a remote section may be a stranger and even a potential enemy, but he is not so much a stranger or potentially so difficult to assimilate as a non-Gola. It is said by the Gola, for example, that there are three conditions of war which may be stated in order of preference. War among Gola is always less ruthless or destructive, and the terms of peace may be expected to follow standard codes of justice. War between Gola and neighboring non-Gola peoples who are, nevertheless, members of Poro secret societies allows for some control of the limits of hostilities, for there is a system of communication and appeal to common principles. But wars with peoples who were neither Gola or Poro are spoken of as catastrophic. It is said that such people have no "laws," and are without mercy.

The function of Gola-ness is clearly that of an ideology imbuing an extensive population with a consciousness of kind and the anticipation of relatively familiar social relations. The term tribe is useful in designating the widest group for which there is a mutual recognition of this sort among its members. In this sense it is an empirical entity rather than a construct of the observer who has plotted the distribution of regularities not necessarily perceived by those he has studied. It is, moreover, a consciously unified cultural entity bound by a concept of Gola-ness. But the actual social relations among groups and sections of this inclusive population are too tenuous, uneven and discontinuous to think of it as a society. The tribal concept articulates a set of principles which are common reference points of practical action, and to this extent it provides a force toward homogeneity in culture and social relations. As these principles are institutionalized by the Poro and Sande organizations, the latter may be said to conserve and exemplify, through their ritualized structures, an ideal Gola society. These principles have as their reference the Gola myth of a pristine social isolate in the interior homeland. Yet the political functions of Poro are essentially localized and do not constitute a continuing and effective system of authority on an all-tribal level. The widest effective group which could be considered a society in these terms would be the autonomous Gola chiefdom, or the semi-permanent confederacy

among Gola or between Gola and non-Gola chiefdoms. Thus the Gola tribe comprises a population which is coterminous with a culture and within which there are a multiplicity of societies and their sub-cultures.

These societies present considerable variation in cultural detail, just as they do in the structure of social relations and ecological adjustment. But these adaptive variations have as their conscious reference a common Gola heritage. There is also an embracing aspect of culture which may be thought of as regional. The intertribal connections of Poro, the alliances of marriage and warfare, the exchange of persons through slavery, adoption and apprenticeship, the overlapping migrations--all have served as systems of unifying relations among varied societal groups and have created numerous sub-traditions of alignment.

In the Central West Atlantic situation, the tribe is a concrete unit which must be taken into account when describing the setting or analyzing the institutions of any particular society. A tribe is a population which defines itself in this broadest sense, rather than constituting a distribution of sociocultural traits selected by an objective observer. From the latter point of view certain of the Gola sections could be thought of as more Kpelle, Mende, or Vai than Gola. My point is that despite the extreme societal and sub-cultural diversity of this region, the concept of tribalness is an overriding cultural pattern which corresponds to a population predominating in a given territory. Here, then, is a situation in which Leach's concept of "myth" might be applicable to groups that are truly adjacent and contemporary--a number of proximous tribes. But the tribal and inter-tribal ideal cultural patterns are peculiarly onerous in this case. In the Kachin Hills area, on the other hand, though the gumlao and gumsa "myths" may have emerged initially from regional tribal situations, they are today alternate ideologies which function as ideal models for a complex population which has become politically and territorially interspersed. And though one might reasonably think of the various enclaves of Central West Atlantic tribes as representing situations transitional to that described by Leach, they are nonetheless situations of another type at the present time. The widely admired cultural values of the prestigious Mandingo Moslems, for example, or of the urban Western-oriented Liberians might conceivably represent incipient "myths" of this kind which will function eventually as alternate "ideal models" of social relations along with the ancient tribal ideal symbolized in the structure and prescriptions of the secret societies. A situation might be envisioned where certain interior groupings of peoples in Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Guinea merge within a social system remotely resembling that described for the Kachin Hills area in these terms. Leach's "myth-ritual" concept would be a useful device in the analysis of a situation of this kind, and may even now offer leads to a predictive hypothesis about the course of events. Regardless of these hypothetical possibilities, the concept as defined has its main utility in situations of a particular kind, and other constructs seem to be required for situations like those now obtaining in the Central West Atlantic region.

The comparison of these diverse situations has bearing on the problem of the nature of groups and the use of the concepts culture and society.

As a social anthropologist, Leach thinks of groups in the strict sense of social groups--that is, those which are identifiable in terms of coordinated activities, or relatively continuous and precise systems of relations. In this context his "myth-ritual" concept is essential if content is to be dealt with at all in a manner appropriate to dynamic analysis. It was devised with reference to a particular field situation, and as a means of surmounting the theoretical obstacles posed by static equilibrium models of social structure. The concepts of "ideal systems" and the "ritual expressions" associated with them allow for a delineation of meaningful systems of relations (e.g. "social organization," or "ritual structure") not possible in the synchronic frame of formal structural analysis. But it seems to me that these concepts are limited in their application to comparisons of situations by the general theoretical context from which they have emerged. It has been pointed out above that what Leach ordinarily terms "culture" is a strangely crude and dated concept among his other vigorously creative distinctions. It really comprehends only what might be thought of as superficial traits of difference between groups. Into this loosely woven basket of "custom" is tossed such disparate elements as language variation, particular items of dress, ornamentation, material inventory, and incidental alterations of procedure. These are essentially the stuff of trait-lists and trait-complexes by which ethnologists have conventionally defined distinct "cultures," determined by a selection of observable regularities derived "objectively" and imposed upon the population of an area. Despite the utility of charting distributions in this way, one would agree with Leach that a culture, a society, or a tribe delineated by criteria of this sort creates an obstacle to the analysis of real situations and the dynamics of change. But as he himself has not gone beyond this point in defining a concept of culture, a culture remains for him a pure abstraction based on distributional occurrences rather than statements of meaningful relationships or pattern.

It is indeed important to distinguish aggregates of persons which are called groups merely by virtue of the observer's construct (thus, a class of objects holding certain characteristics in common) from aggregates which are called groups because persons interrelate in specific organized ways within them. The latter are concrete and empirical groups because the relationships which define their criteria for membership are recognized by the persons who make up the group as well as by persons external to it. It is, however, a matter of theoretical importance if the definition of group implies that the only "true" groups are those which manifest intensive general coactivity between all individuals involved. This is suggested in Nadel's (1951, pp. 185-186) distinction between the "ideological group" based on beliefs in a common origin, and the "quasi-group" based on "a consciously uniform culture" --both of which enter into his category of "spurious groups." It is also implied in Leach's work, and the inconsistency of the use of the term culture may be attributed to the sociological bias of social anthropology which has placed strictures on the development of a unified theory of symbolic behavior.

From the point of view of a genuine sociocultural theory the problem here is again one of making explicit the empirical nature of culture. There is no reason why we cannot speak of cultural groups as well as social groups as long as we understand them to be entities which derive their unity and characteristics from different levels of phenomena in nature. In fact, it

may be that we must do so if we are to develop a language appropriate to qualitative and dynamic analysis of integrative processes. There need be nothing "spurious" about cultural groups unless our definition of culture itself is spurious. A concrete cultural group is not a mere aggregate of persons who hold any number of characteristics in common, any more than an aggregate of persons could be considered social on the grounds of mere proximity. Unless these characteristics are a matter of mutual recognition and constitute a set of shared symbolic references--that is, a conscious and logical system--we must admit that no real cultural group exists. And though these symbolic systems are never entirely without some expression in social relations, their expression in this medium may not be active throughout the group at all times. They may be sustained in the form of traditions about relations experienced in the past, about relations in other places, about a permitted range of variation of relations, or about potentially active rights and obligations which are only expected to be carried out on occasion. Thus when a Gola of one section or social group travels as a stranger among Gola of a distant section or social group he will be participating in a system of relations already anticipated by the members of a much larger grouping which comprehends Gola culture. Despite details that may distinguish him as a special kind of Gola, both he and his hosts share bodies of knowledge about sectional variations and are able to activate structures of relationship which make him less a stranger than a visitor from another tribe.

The factor of anticipation is central to a definition of the cultural group. In quoting from an early article of Brown and Barnett (1942), Firth (1954, p. 9) states that their placement of the concepts of anticipation and obligation as basic criteria of social organization is too amorphous. The former writers suggest that anticipations represent "uniformities of relationship existing in suspension within the cultural framework--in the minds of members of a society." This seems neither amorphous nor irrelevant. In the context of the present discussion I would go a step further and suggest that the concrete cultural group is to be identified by just such criteria, and that this kind of group does not necessarily coincide with a discrete social group, a society, or any general and continuous system of social relations. It is perhaps possible to discover an empirical situation in which a tribe defined as one type of concrete cultural group is coterminous with a society defined as a complex, relatively autonomous, and politically unified social group. It may also be possible to discover an empirical situation in which a nation defined as another and more complex type of concrete cultural group is coterminous with a type of society we call a state. We might even ascend further with civilizations and their dominant social systems. But though we can find congruence of concrete cultural and social groups represented in empirical situations, it is their more general lack of congruence which provides the most fruitful leads to the basic processes of sociocultural integration and change.

Any concrete social group, on the other hand, is also a concrete cultural group insofar as it is defined by the distinctive "institutionalized" relationships of its members. But the whole of a culture is not comprehended by the dominant institutions of any society, nor is it always expressed in permanent and uninterrupted social relations. Many social

groups are occasional in that they form at specific times and places for specific purposes. Thus the potentiality for social grouping has its locus in a concrete cultural group which holds the formal system of activity in suspension during periods when its members are concerned with other tasks.

It would be difficult to imagine any proximous grouping of human beings that could be considered a mere aggregate with duration--that is, not social and cultural. Some degree of shared symbolization is bound to affect minimal social relations once there is proximity. In the extreme sense such an aggregate could be represented by persons collected together through some accident or plan unknown to them from various sections of the earth and from a wide range of conditions. The minimal social relations which would commence immediately within such a group are referable to the potentials for action within each individual derived from that part of his own sociocultural experience that denotes a generic human nature and thus a general human culture. As Spiro (1954, p. 25) has pointed out, "The ability to live with exotic people, isolated from our own society, and to participate in their 'strange' life without, literally, becoming mad, presupposes a human nature common to us and to our subjects, alike." Without the common personality factor which constitutes a human nature, there could be no human culture or cultures.

Though this level of statement is in the realm of hypotheses about universals, a theory of culture requires that assumptions about its most extenuated empirical frame of reference be made explicit. In this sense mankind represents the widest instance of a concrete cultural group, whereas the widest instances of social groups--societies--are those within which effective and relatively permanent systems of social relations can be observed. The "concretization" of the kind of social group we might call human society in general depends upon conditions which--from the point of view of human historical development--must be considered as merely potential or emergent. It is only in this sense that I would use Nadel's term "potential group"--that is, to denote a potential social group. The potential social group is not concrete, whereas the cultural group which already actually exists and which consciously anticipates it is concrete. The empirical nature of potential social groups is derived from their placement in cultural reality. Their eventual concreteness arises from their permanent or periodic expression in systems of action. In the same sense a culture as a system of symbolic meanings is empirical in that it exists in nature, but it is only concrete to the extent that an identifiable group of persons can be said to sustain it as a basis of ongoing or potential social relations.

This should not be construed as equating our approach to these different levels of phenomena. The factors of anticipatory motivation and suspended systems of action suggest that the cultural group is always larger than the social group. Excepting in the rare homogeneous isolate, the cultural group may be said to strain continually at the boundaries of reciprocity while at the same time defending its integrity through firmly established and ongoing social structures. It is this accumulative, flexible and creative aspect of culture which demands that it be approached in its own terms. Culture can be, at best, only inferred from the structure of social relations, but social structure can be reconstructed with a high degree of accuracy and

predictability through the observation of the cultural group. If it were not for this fact we would not be able to rely at all on ethnological descriptions derived from the verbal expressions of one or a number of informants, and we would totally disregard the hunches we get from our response to the subtle qualitative behavior of the persons we study. That we do rely to a considerable degree on such descriptions and hunches is an unavoidable condition of even the most rigidly "objective" ethnological work and should be made explicit in social science theory. It involves the rather basic condition of being human which, if ignored or disclaimed, can result in the most ridiculous postures about "sciencing" with human subjects.

Social groups are most precisely identified and studied in action. But in our field work we are often anticipating group activities that we have been told about in great detail. Some of these activities never actually take place during our stay, yet they may be of crucial importance for our understanding of those other activities which we have observed with our own eyes. No anthropologist could say that he has not filled in the gaps of his observation of "visible" actions with descriptions supplied him verbally by his informants and previous investigators, or that historical and psychological inferences have not conditioned his conclusions. It is incomprehensible that any social scientist would want to camouflage the fact that this is a necessary and valid part of his work.

Though it may seem that these remarks are directed at straw men, they are motivated by the belief that we have experienced a brief period of dogma in the development of anthropological science in which the denial of the basic and unavoidable conditions of sociocultural research is implicit in a number of the more schematic approaches. The bias toward purist abstractions of social structure in terms of "objectively observed" activities of social groups, and the theoretical--if not hypocritcal--exclusion of all factors from the psychological and historical dimensions, has become a matter of polemics and has obscured some of the more fundamental issues that have never really left the scene. When these issues are reintroduced they are often so restricted by the prevailing conventions and disclaimers of a theoretical trend, that they lose their force. The nature of culture, the study of sociocultural process, and the use of history in ethnology are among the problems which have suffered in this way.

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Without an adequate concept of culture or a theoretical framework capable of dealing with variation of formal structure in society, the study of sociocultural change can never advance beyond the descriptive level. The above discussion has been concerned with the placement of concepts appropriate to dynamic analysis. It has been suggested that the most promising direction of research of this kind appears to be the study of societies in their wider regional context of relations. The work of Leach in Burma has been dealt with here as a most recent and effective example of an approach in these terms. The major contribution of this work is, in my opinion, its reaffirmation (from an unexpected quarter) of dynamic concepts in anthropological theory. Its richness in detail and the analytical value of its

constructs invites evaluation and offers important leads to research in other situations.

One of the problems which is illustrated by his work, however, is that of transition in theory and the lack of a common language of cultural reference among anthropologists of different traditions. Leach has formulated his concepts with an eye to critical appraisal of equilibrium assumptions in social anthropology. At the same time he apparently disregards any of the recent developments in cultural anthropology elsewhere. His brilliant delineation and analysis of the Kachin Hills situation seems to have been a totally independent and spontaneous response to the quality of the situation itself. His basic orientation is, however, that of a social anthropologist and the limitations of his theory of sociocultural change may be in part attributed to a climate of research in which problems of process, motivation and culture have been considered peripheral if not rejected.

The question of process, as Sorokin (1937, pp. 154-161) has pointed out, in order to be meaningful must specify a unit, a time relationship, a space relationship, and a direction. Among these specifications, Leach has dealt most effectively with the spatial relationships of process--the variation and alteration of structure within the social system of the Kachin Hills Area. The emphasis is placed on time relationships which demonstrate short-term processes of this system in operation. The inferences of history, however, are not used to formulate hypotheses about the emergence and development of the system, but primarily to prove that the essential features of the system have had continuity over great time. The direction of process is only that of the to-and-fro changes of societies within the system between gumsa or gumlao type organization. From one point of view it would seem that these differences and changes in structure represent differences and changes in type. But in this case one would merely be saying that these societies tend to vacillate between one type of structure and another. The "types" of structure constitute alternatives of action within a "type" of whole social system. But the whole system does not itself seem to change in any direction, but rather endures what Radcliffe-Brown (1957, p. 87) has called "readjustment" within its form.

Thus the time and space relationships which Leach uses tend to construct a situation in which a system is shown to be in a state of equilibrium over time. As far as the whole system is concerned this is not sociocultural change so much as it is the encapsulated dynamism of a perpetual motion machine. The appeal of equilibrium models in social analysis is no less effective merely because a system has been shown to be complex, unstable, and relatively unpredictable within itself. And though the Kachin social system as a whole is treated as a heterogeneous rather than homogeneous entity, it nevertheless emerges in analysis as a stable and directionless isolate.

The units of processual analysis in Leach's work are particular structures of Kachin society, but the society as a whole is not dealt with as a unit involving inclusive historical processes of change. This creates some unclarity and contradiction in his references to "internal" and "external" factors of change. In one place he states that the ultimate "causes" of social change are nearly always found in changes in the external political

and economic environment, but that the form which any change takes is largely determined by the existing internal structure of a given system (p. 212). Elsewhere this view is given truly dynamic implications for regional study when he writes that "a society, however defined, is always, from certain points of view, itself a unit of political organization, but simultaneously it is always, from some other point of view, only a segment of a larger society. . . ." Thus the stability of any political unit "is necessarily affected by changes in the structure and power distribution within the political system of next larger scale of which the unit forms a part" (p. 229).

But these implications are for the most part suggested rather than realized in his exposition of general Kachin social change. If certain factors are said to be "external" the question which must be answered is--external to what? Are they external to any particular social unit within the Kachin Hills Area, or to the area itself? If only the sub-units of Kachin society and culture are considered it follows that the whole social system may be thought of as the "external" environment of any of its parts. In this sense a good part of the conditional factors of change may be considered as "internal" insofar as they arise within the population encompassed by Kachin society and culture. But what of the external environment of the Kachin Hills social system and culture as a whole? What is its function and in what way is it affected by its placement within a system "of next larger scale?"

There is remarkably little discussion in Leach's work of the greater social and cultural setting of the Kachin Hills Area. Political and economic relations between this area and the Burmese Government are scarcely mentioned. The effect on the cultural system of the Christian mission schools, of earlier British administration, and of the general social and intellectual life of Burma is similarly neglected. The mention of these omissions, here, is not meant to imply that for certain purposes it is not legitimate to deal with sociocultural systems as if they were "closed" and existing in isolation. But at the same time the actual situation must be made explicit. It is particularly important in the study of sociocultural dynamics that any potentially effective agency of change within or outside the system be examined for implications about process. Otherwise the inevitably limited and heuristic construct of the closed system may come to be taken as a reflection of the reality and all explanations will be sought within it. A fully developed concept of culture applied to the analysis of empirical situations offers some check on this tendency. For it is in the cultural system that the widest range of motivations and alternatives can be discerned, even where they may not be apparent or currently expressed in the social system.

Leach does not deal with goal orientation directly as part of the configuration of Kachin culture, but it is implicit in his notion of "power" and "esteem" as the basis of motivation. These concepts are the weakest in his presentation, for he does not show how they are expressed in the cultural system. It is assumed that all individuals are making choices in response to "conscious or unconscious wishes" to gain esteem through offices of power over others (p. 10). Thus the maximization of power opportunities

is the immanent "force" within all social relations, and the goal of "esteem" is sought competitively through the manipulation of normative standards. But if one is going to deal with motivation in such universalistic terms there seems to be no reason why a sex, hunger, or play "drive" should not also be included. This matter is not clarified by Leach when he states that the social anthropologist is never justified in interpreting action as "unambiguously" directed towards any one particular end. "For this reason," he writes, "I am always dissatisfied with functionalist arguments concerning 'needs' and 'goals' such as those advanced by Malinowski and Talcott Parsons, but I consider it necessary and justifiable to assume that a conscious or unconscious wish to gain power is a very general motive in human affairs."

Aside from the injustice which this statement may do to the position of either Malinowski or Parsons, it represents a highly generalized assumption which calls for considerable empirical validation in terms of actual Kachin society and culture. The particular way in which assumed motives of this kind are expressed in action, and the particular way in which a culture provides restrictions, rationalizations, and models for the realization of goals is the crux of dynamic analysis. Leach has dealt with one aspect of the logical integration of Kachin culture. He points out that the ideal structure of Kachin social relations fits together perfectly, and that every person and group has its proper place in a hierarchically ordered system. On the other hand he also shows that real Kachin societies reveal wide ranges of deviation from formal pattern and that social mobility is constant and intensive. The problem is, however, that all these variations of action are made referable to a conscious cultural configuration which is limited to two conflicting "esteem systems" which have been abstracted by Leach. It is not unique that Kachin culture should contain two such ideal patterns, or that they should represent different value-orientations. This would be true of the culture of any complex society, if not, to some extent, of all societies. What is unique is that these two patterns seem to comprise the whole of logically integrated Kachin culture.

The multiplicity of over-laying traditions implied in the historical experience of peoples in this area, and their setting in the context of larger Burma would suggest that the manifest cultural system is more complex than Leach has presented it. It is in this unexamined real cultural system of the Kachin Hills Area that important qualifications for the basic motivations and alternatives exist. It would also offer some escape from the circularity of process within a social system dealt with as a closed and "suspended" isolate. Otherwise the apparently non-directional "flux" said to be characteristic of Kachin internal social change--though demonstrating a continual process of maneuvering for power position--can contain no inferences about kinds of "esteem," or "power" for what other ends and by what other means. The desire for power and esteem which supposedly motivates individual choice in these internal rearrangements, must have a content which is expressed in the culture--that is, there must exist a content of meanings which explain the strategic variants of social relations in Kachin terms. If these modes of integration are not manifest, there will be at least a latent pattern of meanings referable to motivation and susceptible to analytic abstraction by the observer. Leach's concept of culture is too limited in categories for this purpose, though he does succeed in implying some of these

processes in his excellent chapter on myth-variants as "justifications" of faction and social change. On the whole, however, those aspects of Kachin culture which might present codifications of latent and manifest, or intermediate and ultimate value-orientation are not explored, nor are they recognizable in the relatively static alternate models of gumsa and gumlao ideal structure.

This evaluation of Leach's position in the terms of cultural analysis serves to highlight a theoretical point which is scarcely implied in his discussion and which is crucial to a theory of sociocultural change. When he states frequently that "cultural diversity" is extreme and that "culture" is changing rapidly in this area, he is making his usual reference to the details of local difference--that is, to changes in the sub-culture of local groups. On the other hand, "culture" in the sense of the interdependent ideal patterns or "myths" is treated by him as being relatively static, though it may be subject to instrumental interpretations which are used as "justifications" for practical acts. It would seem, then, that the cultural system of the Kachin Hills Area is merely flexible and susceptible to choice manipulation, while the structure of social groups involves constant changes and vacillations within a range of acceptable forms.

The implications are that there are differential rates and kinds of change obtaining between different aspects of society and culture as well as between these two levels of phenomena. The customary details of culture are subject to more rapid change than ideal patterns. Social relations which are "ritualized" expressions of ideal concepts--that is, intensively institutionalized--tend to change less rapidly than other social structures. Furthermore, ideal culture patterns override and encompass a multiplicity of subregional "cultures" which are distinguished by modifications or even basic differences in custom and social organization. If this interpretation of Leach's position is correct, the implications indicate a quite different set of initial assumptions than is often entertained by other social anthropologists.

Fortes (1953, pp. 22-23) for example, speaks for a more standard approach when he writes:

> A unit must, by definition have a boundary. A culture, certainly in most of Africa, and I venture to believe in many other areas too (as indeed Wissler long ago stressed), has no clear-cut boundaries. But a group of people bound together within a single social structure have a boundary, though not necessarily one that coincides with a physical boundary or is impenetrable. I would suggest that a culture is a unity in so far as it is tied to a bounded social structure. In this sense I would agree that the social structure is the foundation of the whole social life of any continuing society. . . . It is certainly a striking fact that the family and kinship institutions of a continuing society in Africa display remarkable persistence in the face of big changes in everyday habits, in ritual customs and beliefs, and even in the major economic and social goals.

An assumption of this kind would present serious obstacles to the study of social change, for the construct which is most essential to the analysis has been relegated to a dependent and minor position in the potential theoretical scheme. Fortes gives some passing recognition to this fact when he warns that there are, nevertheless, "important factors of autonomy in custom. . . . The part played by dispositional and psychogenetic factors in the content and action of custom is now being clarified. A house is not reducible to its foundations and custom is not reducible simply to a manifestation of social structure."

I have attempted to show in the earlier discussion that if "culture" is defined in terms of "customs" or a collection of traits and artifacts abstracted by the observer, it is certain not to have "clear-cut boundaries" or could it be said to exist at all except in the mind of its creator. In this form it is what Linton called "culture-construct." Its value is that of plotting distributions of specific features which provide the basis for scientific hypotheses about culture. But systems of "real" and "ideal" culture do exist in nature independently of heuristic constructs of this kind. It is to these empirical systems that a theory of culture must address itself in the formulation of major concepts.

Cultures defined as relatively unique systems of symbolic behavior by which groups of human beings may be distinguished from one another--both "objectively" and "subjectively"--identifies concrete units with empirical boundaries as clear-cut as societies, or language families and their dialects. The people who call themselves Gola constitute a unit of this kind, and this unit may be considered part of a wider cultural unit which comprehends those peoples of other tribes for whom the Poro system of organization has served to institutionalize a set of relatively common basic value orientations. On the smaller scale, the individual chiefdoms or other forms of society within these tribes are made up of groups of persons who share distinctive subcultures within these general culture groups. As has been indicated above, there is great diversity and change in the social structure and cultural detail of these local groups. But the ideal cultural patterns which have been logically integrated and partly institutionalized with reference to Poro type organization appear to remain relatively stable over time and unvarying in space. Thus the family, political, economic and many other institutions of these people may be said to be highly unstable but reveal themselves to be heterogeneous adaptive adjustments to common and relatively stable principles of culture. This relationship between culture and social relations would seem to be the case also for the Kachin Hills Area as described by Leach. The "ideal models" of gumsa and gumlao are complex traditions of long standing which override continual vacillations in the social structure and cultural detail of groups.

When Fortes suggests that the family and kinship institutions display a remarkable persistence as compared to great changes in everyday habits and "even in the major economic and social goals," I believe that he is neglecting the fact that certain institutions such as the family tend more than some others to be the focus of "institutionalized" forms of ideal values. This is particularly so in societies where corporate legal or political group membership is determined by kinship. But in societies such as

those of the Gola and their neighbors the secret society organizations have taken over many of the ritual and corporate functions which might belong to the kinship groups in segmentary societies. The degree of structural flexibility or potential change in kinship relations would be different in each type of society. In Gola society there is a great range of possible alternatives in family and political organization, but the structure of Poro which symbolizes ideal social arrangements is persistent and conservative. The ultimate and ideal values expressed in Poro organization and ritual are also expressed as manifest goals in the cultural system. There are many other goals of these tribal cultures which are expressed in practical day-to-day activities, however, and which may be distinguished from ideal goals in the sense that they are instrumental and intermediate orientations of achievement motivation.

It is to this latter type of goal that Fortes seems to be referring. Such goals do change rapidly and they do represent guides to alternative action in practical situations. But it must be remembered that they are incorporated into a general cultural system dominated by formal bodies of ideal precepts. Thus there are at least two levels of goal orientation which must be taken into account in the analysis of change in any society. If this distinction is not made in a structural approach "institutions" often emerge as constructs reflecting the ideal order of the society rather than the varied and highly adaptive systems that they really are. In this case Fortes' "major economic and social goals" are merely those which we might ordinarily refer to as intermediate goals. And ideal goal orientation loses its independence for dynamic analysis because it is not thought of as constituting specific systems of guiding principles which human beings in certain social groups variously interpret, but becomes imbedded in a static model construct of "institution."

It has become almost axiomatic to say that culture and social relations represent phenomena of different orders and levels of organization and that they exhibit tendencies to change at different rates and with varying degrees of independence from one another. It is also widely recognized that these differential changes are extremely complex in each sphere insofar as the component parts of each also tend to change at different rates and under the influence of different conditions. It follows, furthermore, that the general configuration of processes of change varies profoundly among human societies. An a priori assumption that one or the other kind of change is the rule for all societies in all conditions may be a function of a particular theoretical orientation, or it may arise from the nature of a highly selective sample of societies examined. An assumption of this sort may distort an understanding of dynamic process in particular institutions or societies and potentially invalidate their application in comparative taxonomy. Certainly the assumption of a greater stability in "social structure" will tend to diminish the recognition of variations in the social expression of common principles of action and concentrate attention on representative instances or statistical averages. Similarly, the assumption that any part of culture will exhibit more persistence than any other in all instances, or that changes in culture will always anticipate changes in social relations may be equally misleading.

Human beings are involved in continual processes of becoming "socialized" as well as "enculturated" within their groups. The relationship between these two levels of process does not take place in a sealed system or is it one-directional. The degree and kind of variation in sociocultural processes offer fundamental characterizations of institutions and of the specific societies in which they operate. The function of these variant forms may not be understood or even recognized without reference to evidence beyond the unit system which has been conceptually isolated for analysis, or to evidence from outside the temporal limits posed by first-hand observation. The variations of individual and group behavior in space express the potentialities for change in a sociocultural system and are contained as the permitted range of choice alternatives within the culture. In this sense social structural variation may also be said to represent adaptive results of historical processes through which the sectors of a culturally bounded population have interpreted a common basic value orientation under pressure of locally varied conditions of change. In that only part of the common basic value orientation of such diverse groups is institutionalized by certain of their structures while another part of its content remains suspended in the general cultural system, a special relationship between social and cultural process is indicated.

Cultural processes involve the manipulation of symbols--that is, rationalizing or logical processes. Thus on the level of culture we may speak of logical integration. Social processes, on the other hand, involve descriptions of the operation of formal systems of interaction. To the degree which such systems are dealt with as "task-oriented" or "purposive" within a conceptually autonomous society, we may speak of processes of functional integration. It is clear that the term integration on both of these levels of phenomenological analysis refers to meaningful relationships in process. But the meanings are also of different orders. On the level of culture we can find what people actually think and how they think. This does not necessarily involve thoughts and evaluations about social behavior alone, but also thoughts and evaluations about ideas themselves. On the level of social relations we are more apt to find what people actually do in response to the practical social and environmental conditions which are presented to them. In the first instance meaning is an intrinsic function of the process itself, while in the latter instance meaning is derived from functional relationships hypothesized by the objective observer. In both cases, then, the source of final validation of meaning (and, for that matter, "function") is in the culture. Any problem of sociocultural integration and change must be addressed to that content of culture which offers explanations for what people do in spite of what they think they ought to do. It is in the relationship between the levels of functional and logical integration that the real processes of sociocultural integration and change may be discerned. This relationship involves processes of another kind which we might call modes of sociocultural integration. They demonstrate the ambivalence attached to common ideal values and goals, or the conflicts which rise from choice-alternatives within the value system. Their cultural reference is the patterns of instrumental and intermediate values and goals by which individuals and sub-groups orient their behavior to practical adjustments, and by which they rationalize their deviation from ideal norms. They identify the quality of situations where individualistic means and ends predominate, but where ultimate groupal values are nonetheless effective.

In the situation of the Poro tribes it is possible to isolate two basic ideal models of social organization which are contained as alternative systems within the culture. One is the gerontocratic, hierarchical and kinship-based pattern of values which was institutionalized in the ranked lineages of the patrilineal fuwa, and now in the ritualized structure of Poro. As both family and Poro institutions have a major role in socialization, the emphasis in values and goals is solidarity. Long range historical events, however, created great changes in the conditions of life which had to be met by extensive adaptive alteration in kinship and other social arrangements. In this process the Poro organizations were invested with the sanctioning functions in regard to normative regulations which had been formerly the prerogative of the councils of lineage elders. Thus Poro became "politicalized" as the secret inner council of the gerontocracy, enforcing traditional and ideal principles of normative control in rapidly changing societies which were responding to the practical demands of new and diverse conditions.

The values expressed through Poro stress absolute obedience to the elders and adherence to the hierarchical principles of authority contained in an idealized traditional system of ranked patrilineages. Thus the oldest living members of the founding lineage of any chiefdom are still referred to as "Kings" and their rank within Poro is what it presumably once was in the ancient fuwa of the Komgba homeland. It is said that in the old days all kings were called "Father" because their royal lineages stood in this relationship to all the lineage segments of the fuwa, but that today this terminology would be ridiculous except within the structure of Poro where such relationships have been rigidly maintained. There is also a level of Poro values which refers to intra- and inter-tribal solidarity. Among the Gola, for example, these values are contained in the myths of common origin and descent as well as in the partial fiction of the ancient kinship connections between the great families of Gola and their counterparts among the surrounding Poro tribes. The elders of all-Poro, then, constitute the custodians of a system of ideal values which have been institutionalized in a specific structure whose function is to regulate normative relations in and among societies that have undergone rapid and diverse changes.

The other basic ideal model of social organization has emerged out of the necessity for deviation from traditional norms of behavior under pressure of changing historical conditions. These values are relatively opportunistic and non-traditional, and have their focus of institutionalization in the political administrative apparatus which has been imposed over time upon the old system. This political structure represents a hierarchy of achieved power and coercive social control, rather than the ranking of ascriptive authority roles based on age and kinship as revealed in the structure of the family and ritualized in Poro. In these relations values of youth, prowess, deceit, stubbornness, wealth, control over persons, and individualistic attainments of all sorts are stressed. These are not new values in themselves, for under the traditional system achievement orientation of this kind was nurtured in individuals as a potential asset of the group. It was an instrument of the gerontocracy in building the wealth and power of families. With the development of effective

systems of political control over heterogeneous populations, however, these values became the core of a relatively independent and contradictory set of principles which offered rationalizations for alternatives of action. New bases of loyalty-attachments and avenues of upward social mobility were provided by warfare and clientship which allowed individuals to seek personal advantage with a degree of insulation from kinship obligations and traditional prescriptions.

Both of these systems of value--the "traditional" and the "non-traditional"--represent ideal models, for both refer to forms of behavior and social organization which have been validated by long tenure in the history of these peoples. The first, however, represents ultimate ideal values and goals and the nostalgia for the solidarity of a past social order, while the second represents more individualistic values and goals which allow for more alternatives in choice of means, rapid attainment, and opportunity for a wider range of aspirants. But they are not completely independent systems, for each makes reference to the other in its own terms. For example, opportunism as an individual character trait is admired by the custodians of the traditional system if it can be controlled for the service of the community. On the other hand, an ambitious young chief must always keep in mind that the changes of fortune may go against him and that he may one day have to defend his deportment in office from a weak position before the elders. There is a Gola proverb which expresses this as follows: "If you are an honored elder or beloved by the elders and you should fall, the people will run to help you up and will forget the matter; but if you have reached too high or have even become a king of great wealth and power, yet have not respected or obeyed your elders, be careful not to trip once, for when you do all the people will jump upon you so that you can never rise again."

The emphasis on deference to the prestige of the elders, on the one hand, and deference to youth, power, and wealth, on the other, denotes a most significant interplay of values from these two overlapping traditions. In practice the average individual defers completely to the elders of the family and chiefdom; but the elders, in turn, often defer as completely to a young aggressive man of power and wealth. If they feel that they can control him they will put him forward as their voice and their protector. Thus one finds in individual value-systems what appears to be a conflict between aggressiveness and submissiveness. Bright, energetic young men are continually asserting themselves to leadership or other positions of personal advantage, but are restricted in their ambitions by the necessity for deference and total obedience to old men. Both in family and Poro socialization procedures a Gola youth is encouraged to be wild, headstrong, and self-assertive; but he must also learn to be totally submissive to his elders.

The problem that this contradiction in values poses for achievement is consciously manifest in Gola culture. It is said that there are four ways for a young man to plan his destiny in the world. Firstly, he can accept his ascribed place in society as a member of a given family of a given status, and work diligently to improve the fortune of that family by a good marriage, hard work, and obedience to the elders of his family and larger community. In his old age such a man may hope to become an honored elder presiding over a large number of persons and an accumulated property.

Secondly, a young man may consider that he has no future in his own family because of its poverty or because of his unpromising position among potential heirs. In such a case he goes off to seek his fortune, a procedure for which there is extensive precedent in Gola genealogical history and legend. He attempts to improve his opportunities by developing new loyalties. This he may do by attaching himself as a client to a person of power and wealth, hoping to return someday to his own people as a successful prodigal with sufficient fortune and prestige to gain the position which he was denied. Or he may marry into the patrilineage of a distant relative, hoping that in his old age he might return with his remaining wives and many children to claim his rights to land, to build a village, and to take his place among the elders of his own patrilineage.

Thirdly, a young man may seek to advance himself by cleverness within his own community. If he is sufficiently wily he will be able to manipulate all the devious "ways to get by" the restrictions placed on his impatient personal ambitions. He will know how to show all the necessary deference to the elders, how to appear obedient and submissive, but at the same time he will make himself the noisy and aggressive leader of the young men by intruding in all matters before them. In time he may be recognized by the elders who will attempt to control and subdue him by giving him an appointment as Town Chief, a "Clan" Chief, or even consider him for the Paramount Chieftainship. The opportunities for unusual personal aggrandizement by a young man in such a position are great, and if he treads carefully he may become what is referred to jokingly as "a young elder." That is, he may achieve a position of wealth and power along with the admiration of the elders, in which case he may be included within their councils and for all practical purposes will have attained all the prized goals of Gola life in relative youth. If he continues in this course, he may become one of the great and revered elders regardless of his origins.

The fourth way is one of great risk and requires the attainment of absolute power. This was the way of many of the warchiefs of legend, as well as many young usurpers and upstarts in recent Gola history. It is a subject of great fascination in the discourse among young men. A proverb which appears frequently in this connection is: "It is important to know when to be hard and when to be soft; but knowing when to throw aside all caution and take what you want regardless of family, of laws, or the elders is the most important of all." A statement of this sort represents values for which there is considerable ambivalence. Such statements are made with a devil-may-care bravado which is meant to shock or to get the approval of peers. But they are also regarded as statements about potentially real courses of action. They are also disturbing because they manifest the most individualistic and instrumental values which a Gola can conceive. Furthermore, they are dangerous because they express attitudes which are reprehensible to the elders and to the general community. They must be considered, nevertheless, as a part of the non-traditional ideal value system. Though the goal involved is difficult to achieve, and though failure may mean misery, disgrace, or even death, its successful attainment contains its own validation. There have been powerful men, chiefs and kings who, after accumulating wealth or administrative and military power, have disregarded all council of the elders or Poro and imposed their will upon the whole

community. If he succeeds in consolidating his position and maintaining it into his old age and an honorable death, such a man has achieved a pinnacle in terms of one set of Gola ideal values. It is said of such men that they "make laws, but obey none," that they have "taken by force what others must beg for," or that they "are controlled by no living being, but only Daya [God] and the ancestors."

The first two "ways" of achievement in Gola terms represent values and goals of the traditional ideal system, while the latter two "ways" suggest values and goals of the non-traditional and individualistically oriented ideal system. These are all values and goals which have operated in the known past as well as the present, and none of them can be said to indicate recent "changes" in the cultural system. The varied social arrangements of Gola societies in time and space--as well as those of surrounding tribes--provide numerous alternative expressions of such values in social relations. It is the knowledge of the forms of these variations, contained within cultural systems of intermediate and ultimate values that offers the range of alternatives in choice of means toward relatively common goals.

It would be possible to conceptualize and develop an analysis of a regional "social system" based on two such ideal models of social organization in culture, and their instrumental modes of integration with reference to the diverse and changing structures of social relations among various groups. But despite its complexity this would remain essentially a closed system. It would be possible to identify numerous processes of internal readjustment which characterize the operation of such a system. But change in the whole system must be studied from the point of view of these operations over time and with reference to influences from outside the system. The social system which may be said to encompass the Poro tribes has expanded in space and altered over time in response to historical events and conditions which can to some degree be ascertained. A good part of these events and conditions were always "external" to the system, and must be considered as the major effective agents in the direction of change. As the system met and coped with the problems posed by these "external" forces the results were incorporated into the culture and expressed in adaptive variations of structure in social relations. The migrations into new ecological and social environments, the impact of the prestigious cultures of the large tribes of the far Western Sudan, the arrival of Europeans and technically superior colonists, the slave trade and its politico-economic effects, the establishment of colonial and national administrative authority--all must be considered as providing effective conditions of adaptive change as well as new custodians and exemplars of potentially alternative systems of value within the culture. It is only in the larger setting of a sociocultural system in space and time that its internal dynamics are understood as processes of change.

10

It has been the purpose of this discussion to present an empirical situation in the context of its theoretical implications for the study of sociocultural change. I have attempted to show that the basic materials for this study in these terms have emerged out of a tradition of anthropology

which has consistently maintained its commitment to a frankly historical orientation and to the cognitive dimension of human social behavior. The accumulation of concepts and terminologies directed to problems of sociocultural change is, perhaps, one of the outstanding features of American anthropology. The recent reaffirmation of dynamic concepts in theoretical discussion and in the research designs of some British social anthropologists indicates that a convergence is taking place which has great nurturing potential for the discipline. Old and basic problems are being revived in new terms--problems that represent the tap-roots of the study of sociocultural process and the full realization of the potentials of the comparative method.

The vigorous climate of empirical investigation and theoretical controversy connected with the development of the kulturkreis and culture-area approaches up to the 1930's produced a vast accumulation of unfinished business in ethnological theory and research. Many of the important leads suggested in the work of earlier scholars continue to be pursued actively in archaeology, ethno-linguistics, and physical anthropology. The orientation of many of the basic concepts in these disciplines involve explicit interest in the interrelation of form, space, and time as the variables in process and change. Refinements of evolutionary theory have continued to be made in these disciplines, which reflects their relatively more intimate correspondence with the biological and other natural sciences. But these developments have sifted slowly and unevenly into sociocultural theory. They were being anticipated and dealt with, however, by many anthropologists prior to the present decade. Kroeber's efforts to introduce dynamic spatial and temporal concepts in culture-area theory, and his analyses of changing fashions are cases in point. Another is Sapir's concept of "linguistic drift" and its translation into cultural terms by Herskovits. The function of individual and group variations in relation to the existing formal structure of language or culture, the processes of isolation and convergence which determined both the formation of new entities (dialects, sub-cultures, and demes) and the resulting directional "drift" of changes in a language or culture, are elements of a concept which distills the method and aims of dynamic analysis into a crucible. Eggan's (1941) application of the concept in his study of the Tinguian was a unique and important departure in empirical research which anticipated by almost two decades work like that of Sahlins (1958) and Leach (1954) who, in their own respective terms, appear to have carried forward the implications of these earlier efforts.

Schapera (1953), Eggan (1954) and others have recently urged the necessity for a return to intensive regional studies. Schapera's own work among the Tswana-speaking peoples of South Africa, and the work of Evans-Pritchard, Nadel, Gluckman, and Richards for East and Central Africa are among examples of this approach in recent African studies. In the Western Hemisphere the accumulation of materials and the continual revaluation of theory emanating from particular concentrations of interests has produced classical ethnological situations like that of the Northwest Coast, California, the Plains, the Southwest, and Middle America. The vigorous theoretical contributions of Steward, Eggan, Redfield, Kluckhohn, and many others in recent years is clearly attributable to their respective involvements in regions rich in ethnographic documentation over time.

One of the major implications suggested throughout the above discussion has been that the comparison of societies considered in their regional context--or even the comparison of regional situations--seems to offer considerable promise for furthering the basic objectives of anthropological inquiry. This implication emerges with particular force if we take those objectives to be the classification of the formal structure and content of human social relations, the defining of boundaries of variation, and the understanding of the processes of integration and growth of human societies. The empirical setting in which research problems are placed should encompass a sufficiently large range of relevant conditions and variations in form to qualify any special selection of data isolated for analysis. For this reason the concept of region has been suggested in this discussion as particularly useful.

The question of "units" is often raised in theoretical discussions as a problem in the abstract and becomes permeated with an atmosphere of arbitrariness and epistemological confusion. But if we take a "unit" to imply any discrete entity which we have conceptually isolated for purposes of study in the context of a particular problem-orientation, the matter is removed from the arena of definition of terms and directed to the suitability of a specified unit as a construct in empirical research. Both logically derived and empirically derived units are necessary in research, and they may be used as independent as well as interdependent constructs. The point has been made in this discussion, however, that one of the basic requisites of anthropological theory is the clear definition of empirical social and cultural units, and that our potential understanding of the functions of the units we select for analysis is advanced by their consideration within a larger situational context. The question of what kind of unit is meant by "a larger situational context," or "a region" (vide Singer, 1953) is also one that requires definition with reference to particular theoretical problems.

A region in the sense that the term has been used in this discussion refers to a unit whose boundaries are essentially geographic but within which there is a population organized into relatively distinctive sub-units (local communities, societies, tribes). The totality of these sub-units can be said to constitute a significant macro-social setting for any of its sections or parts. The "significance" of this inclusive social setting is something more than the meanings imposed by the objective observer, but may be considered intrinsic to the situation insofar as conscious and mutually recognized traditions define actual interrelations between persons and groups. The geographic boundaries of a region defined in this way are, then, partially determined by the widest extension of systems of effective relations between proximous groups that consciously share traditions about these relations. Traditions of this kind represent the manifest cultural validation of regional affiliations. They might be termed regional historical traditions as against the "traditions" constructed by the archaeologist or ethnologist from observed distributions. A region thought of in this sense becomes more like what Bennett (1948) has called the "area co-tradition" than either a culture area or "culture circle." Also the traditions which help to define such a region are similar to what Redfield (1956, pp. 70 ff.) has called "Great and Little Traditions."

The real geographic boundaries of a region emerge, however, after intensive investigation, though a regional hypothesis may to some extent

guide the initial approach to a situation. The boundaries may encompass sub-regional differences in language, local cultural and social variants, and even extreme ecological variation. They may cut across the spread of some of these features into adjacent regions. Thus regions may be said to overlap so that their boundaries are never firm. Furthermore, the historical traditions of peoples on the edges of a region may overlap with the traditions of peoples beyond. It is the predominant focus of the regional historical traditions of such marginal peoples which determine their inclusion in one region or another. Marginal groups of this kind will suggest the widest extension of the boundaries of potential reciprocity in social relations and effective knowledge of the macro-social environment.

The reference to a "Senegal-Niger region" in the first section of this discussion was made as a reasonable hypothesis derived from inferences suggested by the systematic organization of materials presented by earlier scholars. These inferences had to do with the accumulating historical evidence about the relations of peoples in this general territory, and the existence of what seems to have been an effective center of influences from the Western Sudan over considerable time. This is a regional hypothesis in the widest and most tentative sense. In consequence of further work, with specific sub-units as the starting point, the unwieldy presumed region may give way to the delineation of smaller regional enclaves whose boundaries are more susceptible to validation. Those peoples of the Central West Atlantic groupings who have been periodically united under shifting confederacies and involved in the development and spread of Poro-type secret societies, have been suggested as such a region. Regional enclaves of this order are discovered by working outward from any particular group, but the conclusive statement can come only through intensive study of many other proximous groups in similar terms.

From the point of view of objective history, regions can be said to vary in their degree of stability over time, for archaeological and other historical evidence may reveal that at different remote periods different peoples inhabited the geographic locale and that there were no apparent continuities between them and succeeding peoples. It may also be revealed that whole complexes of peoples have slowly shifted their locale over time. But it does not seem feasible to speak of "shifting" regions or the "interrupted continuity" of a region. A region and its concomitant geographic space is identifiable at a given point in time. Its depth in time may be measured by the historical experience of the oldest groups who presently inhabit it, or by the objective historical validation of their tenure. At any point in time that a real discontinuity obtained, we might speak of another and preëxisting historical region.

In the case of major movements of population from one general geographic locale to another, it cannot be said that a region such as we have defined here is shifting, but that merely a population is shifting. Populations may carry historical traditions with them about regional relations experienced elsewhere. Many of the Central West Atlantic tribes, for example, maintain legendary traditions about their migrations from the interior of Africa. The Vai are quite specific about having descended from a party of migrants sent by a certain "King Kamara the Great" of an early

Mandingan kingdom to establish a salt depot on the coast. They have genealogical accounts which purport to connect their founding ancestors with ancient families of the Sudan as well as with certain of the intervening tribes with whom they resided during their sojourn. This is part of the content of their mythology concerning origin and migration. But that aspect of their manifest tradition which involves reference to the neighboring peoples who now surround them is a regional historical tradition of decidedly greater explicitness and richness of content. It comprehends detailed bodies of knowledge about their interrelations with the peoples within the general area of their present domain, and about the geographical features and ecological resources of this area. It is the existence of these particular traditions, the content of which is interwoven with the traditions of other proximous groups, involving reference to a mutually recognized geographic space, a sequence of commonly known historical events, and a network of relatively continuous inter-group relations, that provides the material for delineating a region.

The Plains, the Southwest, Yucatan, Guatemala, the Kachin Hills, all suggest regions of this kind. No one would doubt, at least, that they represent significant foci of historically and ecologically integrated developments, the knowledge of which improves our understanding of any of the sub-units within their boundaries. When situations of this order have been investigated in roughly equivalent terms we have reason to expect that comparisons of considerable potential value will be forthcoming. Along with all the other type-concepts which we have constructed it may be that the classification of types of situations in which societies emerge, grow, flourish, decline, reintegrate, or merge would provide the historical and spatial framework we need for the study of sociocultural change. The comparison of regional situations in terms of their characteristic processes relevant to specific conditions and results would work toward the development of dynamic concepts in a language capable of describing and comparing systems in change.

ENDNOTES

(1) An early abridged version of this paper was read at the Third Annual Meeting of the Kroeber Anthropological Society, May 16, 1959, in Berkeley, California. It is based on field work in Liberia during 1956 and 1957 under grant from the Ford Foundation. Additional time for research and writing has been provided by subsequent grants from The Program of African Studies at Northwestern University, and by the Ford Foundation Foreign Area Training Fellowship Program.

The attached map is an adaptation of original maps prepared by Harold K. Schneider, and published as a looseleaf series by The Program of African Studies at Northwestern University. The sources cited for the distribution of groups are as follows: Schwab, G., Tribes of the Liberian Hinterland, Papers of the Peabody Museum of American Archaeology and Ethnology, Harvard University, 1947; McCulloch, M., Peoples of Sierra Leone Protectorate, International African Institute, London, 1950; Pales, L., Carte Ethnique de l'Afrique Occidentale, Dakar, 1949.

The revised distribution of the Gola and peoples adjacent to them is based on the field-observations of the present writer.

(2) This section was written before the appearance of Africa, Its Peoples and their Culture History, by G. P. Murdock, in 1959. The book represents the most recent of the invaluable contributions to the systematic generalization of African materials. The frankly cultural-historical approach, the extensive coverage of material on subsistence economy, and the revaluation of regional groupings from the point of view of recent data in all fields of African studies, provide an urgently needed sourcebook for modern anthropology. Murdock singles out for special acknowledgment his immediate predecessors Baumann, Thurnwald, and Westermann, whose work is closely followed in the organization of his own book. His distinction between what he calls the "Nuclear Mande" of the Western Sudan and the "Kru and Peripheral Mande" of Ivory Coast, Liberia, and Sierra Leone suggests similar regional relationships to those developed in the present discussion. The latter covers the same region as that which is referred to here as "The Central West Atlantic Coast." Though the term "Peripheral Mande" is suggestive of the historical situation involving Mande-speaking peoples on this coast, it fails to comprehend a third important cluster of tribes in the region who represent the West Atlantic sub-family of languages and who, along with the Kru tribes, inhabited the coast prior to the influx of Mande-speakers from the Sudan. For this reason the present adaptation of Baumann's geographic descriptive term "West Atlantic" seems more useful for regional designation.

(3) During the early European trade the sections of coastline now comprising Sierra Leone and Liberia were known collectively as the "Grain Coast" or "Malguetta Coast" after the pepper which was an important item in the commerce. "Gallinhas" and "Sherbro" were terms most often used for the coast of what is now Sierra Leone. The term "Mesurado," --the name of a lagoon in the delta of the St. Paul River near where Monrovia now stands--frequently appeared on maps with reference to the whole of the present Liberian Coast. Cape Mount, about thirty-five miles northwest of Monrovia, was also an important landmark which was used as an alternate designation for this coast.

(4) By the terms chronic, inherent, or intrinsic, I mean to suggest what Sorokin (1941, p. 694) has called "immanent change" in reference to his theory of limits. But as the term has taken on connotations of mystical subjectiveness and orthogenetic emergence (i.e. emmanent) through no fault of Sorokin, I prefer the former usages. A concept of intrinsic and chronic change is based on an assumption that natural systems are by their nature dynamic and that change is a given condition of all sociocultural events. In this sense chronic change is opposed to acute change which denotes stress and immediate basic alterations in systems. The latter is the usual subject of studies of "social change," while the former tends to be implied in the study of "cultural change" and "innovation."

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