The Hoernlé Memorial Lecture 1959

RACE, CULTURE and PERSONALITY

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SOUTH AFRICAN INSTITUTE OF RACE RELATIONS

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The Fifteenth Hoernlé Memorial Lecture

RACE, CULTURE and PERSONALITY

Delivered under the auspices of the South African Institute of Race Relations

by

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SOUTH AFRICAN INSTITUTE OF RACE RELATIONS
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The Hoernlé Memorial Lectures

A LECTURE entitled the Hoernlé Memorial Lecture (in memory of the late Professor R. F. Alfred Hoernlé, President of the South African Insitute of Race Relations from 1934 to 1943), is delivered once a year under the auspices of the Institute. An invitation to deliver the lecture is extended each year to some person having special knowledge and experience of racial problems in Africa and elsewhere.

It is hoped that the Hoernlé Memorial Lecture provides a platform for constructive and helpful contributions to thought and action. While the lecturers are entirely free to express their own views, which may not be those of the Institute as expressed in its formal decisions, it is hoped that lecturers will be guided by the Institute's declaration of policy that "scientific study and research must be allied with the fullest recognition of the human reactions to changing racial situations; that respectful regard must be paid to the traditions and usages of various national, racial and tribal groups which comprise the population; and that due account must be taken of opposing views earnestly held."

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RACE, CULTURE AND PERSONALITY

I A M grateful to the South African Institute of Race Relations for having invited me to deliver the fifteenth Hoernlé Memorial Lecture. I had always hoped that some day this opportunity to pay tribute to the memory of Alfred Hoernlé would come my way, for I owe him a great deal.

It was he who in 1935 proposed my appointment as a lecturer in the Department of Psychology at the University of the Witwatersrand. During the nineteen-thirties, University posts, or for that matter any posts for psychologists, were scarce. After obtaining my doctorate at the University of Edinburgh in 1933, I lectured for two years in a temporary capacity at the University of Stellenbosch, and then marked time as a demonstrator and tutor at the University of Cape Town. It was with alacrity, therefore, that I came up to join Hoernlé and MacCrone in Johannesburg, to my first post that held out some prospect of permanency. The Department of Psychology under MacCrone was then a branch of the Department of Philosophy of which Hoernlé was head, and so I was in close and continuous contact with his powerful and stimulating personality. At that time my scientific interest was in the psychology of temperament. I was conscious of the social and political importance of race problems, but had not paid them much attention as a subject for psychological research.

Hoernlé's humanism and his devotion to the improvement of race relations, coupled with MacCrone's scientific studies of race and culture, greatly influenced my motivation and it was not long before I too became absorbed in African research. It has proved to be an abiding interest and I am indebted to him for having started me off on such a scientifically stimulating and socially rewarding line of enquiry. I have never entirely forsaken my earlier enthusiasm for personality study and tonight these two strands are woven together into a contribution to the psychology of African personality which I hope will not be an unworthy addition to the addresses delivered in commemoration of his name and his services to South Africa.

The importance of personality study for the relations between races

THE history of human conflict is largely a record of struggles between groups. War makes its appearance at the level of human evolution, and with successive developments of social organisation, struggles have occurred between family, clan, tribal, religious, economic, political, national and racial groups.

Because man finds his major satisfaction and his security through group activity, groups inevitably are also the basis for conflicts of interests and the targets of man's frustrations and aggression, turned outwards in order not to disturb the security relations within the group.

Of all the conflicts between groups, that between races is probably the most stubborn. In addition to such economic and political causes as the exploitation of cheap labour, threats to standards of living or to the political control of a dominant minority, all of which are common to group conflicts of many kinds, there is another factor underlying race antagonism, namely the undeniable, overt and unalterable fact of biological difference. You can convert a heathen into a Christian, pour Europeans into the melting pot and turn them into Americans, take Eliza Doolittle in hand and recreate her into My Fair Lady, but you cannot turn one race into another without altering both in the process. The individual can shed faith, nationality or class; but he cannot shed his race. And this fact makes it difficult to place attitudes towards ethnic and cultural differences on a rational basis. It is a common feature of group conflicts that stereotyped notions are built up by means of propaganda and indoctrination concerning the characteristics of members of the opposing groups. Close personal contact can expose the falsity of such notions, and relations between individuals may thus be quite cordial, despite the persistence of conflict between the groups to which they belong. Instances of this may be seen between political opponents, adherents of sharply opposed faiths or even between citizens of nations at war.

In the case of race antagonisms, however, the fact of physical disparity tends to reinforce stereotypes and to fuse them with beliefs and facts concerning racial characteristics into a personality amalgam with unfavourable implications. Once this has happened, the chance of reducing race conflicts to straightforward economic or political terms, uncomplicated by personal repugnance, has become remote. The implications of such an attitude towards race can be well illustrated with reference to *apartheid*. Recognising the existence of a

conflict of interest between the two races, *apartheid* sets out to reduce the sources of friction and frustration by providing opportunities for separate development. Because of prevailing race attitudes, visitors from the Bantu Areas and expatriates permanently resident in the Union would presumably still be treated socially in a manner unacceptable to citizens of semi-sovereign friendly states, and quite differently from foreigners from European countries. And this would also apply to nationals of wholly sovereign and not-so-friendly black states to the north of us. It is clear that antagonism from without and resentment from within would steadily increase, in which case *apartheid* would have failed to bring about an improvement in the relations between the races in South Africa.

If in the last resort it is a feeling of incompatibility between individuals with which we are confronted, then it is of the utmost importance that insight should be gained into the nature of African personality, as a first step towards finding a solution in terms of human relations, rather than of power politics.

Such a study can serve a variety of purposes. First and foremost, it will seek to separate fact from fancy in the conventional portrait of African behaviour.

Whilst this is obviously important to anyone with an interest in race relations, it should not be thought that with the aid of such information, misconceptions and hence prejudice and antagonism will be readily dispelled. For many people racial stereotypes are part of a set of rationalisations whereby they can justify hostility and discriminations to themselves and render these attitudes morally defensible. Unless, therefore, they are prepared to face up to reality — which many are not — or their need for aggressive outlets is not particularly strong, they will resist the unmasking of their prejudices.

Furthermore, the successful exposure of a myth does not necessarily mean the disappearance of the conflict which it helped to justify. In so far as conflicts rest on real grounds — i.e. when they are struggles for economic or political power, as those between black and white in Africa essentially are, despite certain unusual features — they are largely unavoidable, and it is something to have brought them into the open, so that effective steps can be taken towards their solution.

Another reason why personality study is essential in African societies is that our impressions concerning African behaviour are based on circumstances which are in a state of rapid change. What was true of the tribal personality may have ceased to hold for the urban dweller and what applies to the product of the slum location may not hold at all for the African middle class. Obsolescence may thus be added to unveracity in the stereotypes held about members of various racial groups. If we know more about the behaviour patterns that emerge in response to various aspects of acculturation, steps might be taken in

advance to minimise reactions or to modify policies likely to aggravate fears or to widen the gap between the races; but perhaps this is taking too optimistic a view of the responsiveness of politicians to the opinions of social scientists.

A more profound understanding of personality trends in evolving African cultures will also give a better appreciation of the policies, conflicts and symptoms of social stress that are bound to make their appearance in African states that have just gained or are about to gain their independence. When it is observed that witchcraft continues to flourish in these societies, that bribery is rife, and that the democratic institutions established by colonial powers are rapidly declining, it is easy to believe that African thinking is radically different from our own, that primitive notions still hold sway, that Western values are alien to African minds, and that they lack at present the character qualities necessary for the efficient management of their own affairs. It requires a profound knowledge of African personality structure to look below the surface of these behavioural defects, to see them as symptoms of social change, and to evaluate the prospects of a more effective future adjustment in an objective manner.

So far we have thought of race relations largely in terms of the attitudes of dominant white minorities towards black majorities without effective political power. The tables may well be turned when the latter succeed to the position of domination. It is unrealistic and naïve to believe that, without rancour and in the nobility of spirit born from suffering, the new ruling class will proceed to apply those principles and practices which they accused their predecessors of having violated. Aggression and retaliation are the more likely offspring of discrimination and prejudice. Knowledge of the character make-up of the African masses and of the leaders who sway them will give some inkling of the type of attitudes that may be expected to develop towards the white out-group, not only towards the former colonial masters, or towards whites practising some form or other of discrimination, but towards whites as such.

An interesting development in the growth of cultural self-consciousness is the popularity which the concept of an African personality has recently attained in many parts of Africa. At more than one conference of black African states, the importance of vindicating the worth of Africans by establishing the uniqueness and value of their own personality has been stressed. It is understandable that, with their accession to a new status, African communities should wish to eradicate the notions of inferiority based on the record of their past and present achievements in which many historical and environmental circumstances tend to be ignored, and that they should wish to find a standard around which all can be united, despite divergent interests in other spheres.

The propagation of the idea of the uniqueness of African personality has, of course, its dangers. There was a time when the suggestion of any difference was vehemently repudiated, for fear that it would lead to discrimination, especially in the educational and social fields. This danger still exists, for it may well be argued that if African personality has features intrinsic to itself, it requires a certain type of culture in order to realise itself fully, and this is saying in so many words that Africans should "develop along their own lines", which may not be those that they themselves would choose.

It is a sign of maturity and increased self-confidence that the possibility of difference is not only conceded, but that it is seen as something of positive value for African self-respect. It is also an act of shrewd statesmanship to exploit this idea as a means whereby Africans, divided by parochial and economic interests, as well as by geographic factors, can be rallied to a common purpose. It is important, however, to avoid the development of anything in the nature of a "mystique" of the African spirit, for this would merely be adding yet another contribution to the mythology of race, to be used for the further division, rather than the unification, of mankind.

It is therefore imperative to examine the factual foundation on which the claims for the existence of an African personality are based, and to define the precise relationship between race, personality, and culture.

The nature of personality and its relationship to culture

A T this stage it is necessary to define more fully what is meant by personality, to indicate how it develops in the individual and in what relationship it stands to culture and to constitutional factors. Elsewhere* I have defined personality as "the particular compromise in the expression of his own needs and impulses which the individual has struck with the demands and needs of others, as collectively embodied in the culture of his group, more especially its customs, beliefs, values, and laws". Briefly, personality has to do with individual differences between people, particularly in respect of temperament, adjustment, character qualities, habits, interests and attitudes.

In traditional tribal societies, these individual differences are largely institutionalised. People's behaviour varies according to the social roles they have to perform as agemates, kinsmen, tribal functionaries, medicine men, and the like. For each of these roles, and also for particular occasions, behaviour is traditionally prescribed. Tribal methods of child rearing are directed towards preparing individuals in detail for the roles they will have to perform.

The writings of social anthropologists, who were mainly concerned with the structure of societies, with institutions and social norms, may have created the impression that individuality hardly existed and that people behaved strictly in accordance with their social personalities. This, of course, is not the case. The outsider may only perceive people as cast in their traditional moulds; only those more intimately acquainted with individuals in their everyday activities will be conscious of the differences that exist within the framework of prescribed relations. A questionnaire was recently issued to well-known social anthropologists and psychologists with an intimate knowledge of tribal communities in Southern Africa, to obtain their views on the nature and prevalence of such individual differences. They generally agreed that differences of the more profoundly personal type, especially those determined by temperament, occur in African cultures as they do elsewhere, but that Africans are afforded fewer opportunities to reveal these differences than

* "The Development of Personality in African Cultures". Paper delivered at the CSA Meeting of Specialists on the Basic Psychological Structures of African and Madagascan Populations, Tananarive, August, 1959. The definition is based on one given by C. Kluckhohn and H. A. Murray, "Personality in Nature, Society and Culture", Ch. 2, Alfred A. Knopf, 1948.

members of Western societies, partly because of social pressures but partly because of the limited diversity of functions represented by African societies.

To summarise this analysis, individual differences in traditional societies are of two kinds: differences in social personality, which are rather stereotyped, according to status and community-role; differences in individuality which are somewhat more restricted in range than in Western societies and which are largely temperamental in origin.

In societies where behaviour and interpersonal relations are less structured by tradition, social personality differences diminish in importance and become less stereotyped, whilst differences in individuality are no longer predominantly temperamental in origin and become more and more a function of differential exposure to the heterogeneous influences execised by various sub-cultures, by school and church, and by the particular relations, attitudes and values prevailing within the family.

The view here put forward concerning the nature of personality is that it is a cultural phenomenon, that through the medium of educational practices and other social pressures, a culture produces the kind of personalities that are adapted to its requirements. These requirements are only static, of course, in traditional societies, where they are largely dependent on climatic factors, on the nature of the subsistence economy, and on the kind of compromise that a group of individuals happened originally to have struck between their own basic needs and the environmental obstacles to their satisfaction.

In civilised societies, the requirements of a culture tend to change, as man extends his control over the material environment and the structures of societies adjust themselves accordingly. There will be a corresponding change in social personality, to meet the new requirements. An example of this kind of change is given by Riesman *et al** in their sociological study study of contemporary American society. Starting from the tradition-directed personality, Riesman describes two other types of social personality, the inner-directed and the other-directed, that have successively made their appearance in Western civilisation. These social personalities are of course abstractions, modes of conformity which are by no means exclusive, but any one of which tends to predominate in particular phases of society linked with population growth.

The tradition-directed personality, predominant in the Middle Ages in Europe and found in its most typical form in many African societies, is one in which "culture controls behaviour minutely" and in which the individual

* David Riesman, Nathan Glazer and Reuel Denney: "The Lonely Crowd". Originally published by Yale University Press, 1950. Quotations are made from the abridged version, published by Doubleday Anchor Books, A16, Doubleday & Co. Inc., New York, 1954.

conforms according to the requirements of the various social groupings to which he belongs. Because the individuals with which he comes into contact expect him to behave in the prescribed manner, the sanction for his behaviour tends to be the fear of being shamed.

The inner-directed personality which emerged during the period of general expansion beginning with the Renaissance, owes some of its characteristics to the system of values established by the Reformation. It is one which "can manage to live without strict and self-evident tradition-direction". Certain goals and values are implanted early in life into the character structure of such personalities by parental influence. This inner control functions as if it were a psychic gyroscope, sensitive to signals from parents or similar authorities. It exacts conformity through the medium of guilt feelings, experienced by the individual when he deviates from the internally prescribed course.

The other-directed mode of conformity is one which, according to Riesman, has only begun to emerge fairly recently in the upper middle class populations of American cities, but which I believe is rapidly becoming predominant in the rising middle class generations of most Western cities. Other-directed persons are exceptionally sensitive to the actions, wishes and approval of their contemporaries. Like the tradition-directed personalities, they are responsive to a social environment rather than to an inner code; but whereas the environment of the former was parochial, theirs is cosmopolitan, and instead of having to respond to a limited range of traditions and unchanging rules of conduct, they must be sensitive to ever-changing fashions, coming from far and wide. The school, the newspaper, the films, records, and the peer-group have largely displaced the parents as the prescribers and arbiters of conduct.

What is internalised in them is, therefore, not a code of conduct, but the means of rendering them responsive to the influences that emanate from others and that they themselves at times transmit. To quote Riesman again: "As against guilt-and-shame controls, though of course these survive, one prime psychological lever of the other-directed person is diffuse anxiety. This control equipment, instead of being like a gyroscope, is like a radar".

I have given the definitions of Riesman's social personalities in some detail, because these conceptions help one to see what is happening to personality development in the evolving African societies, and reference will be made to them again in a later stage of this address.

The facts of cultural change demand a qualification of the hypothesis that culture determines personality rather than the reverse. It is evident that man's intellect, when coupled with curiosity and an urge for action, will engender the process of cultural change which we call civilisation. A particular interplay

between the native endowment of man and the environment is required to produce it, and to this extent some characteristic of man himself may be responsible for the culture under which he lives. It is probable that this is some temperamental rather than intellectual aspect, something that has to do with activity level, with stimulability, or with susceptibility to emotional reactions. Furthermore, it would have to be a constitutional or genetic characteristic, for otherwise we would still be dealing with something that was culturally induced.

Now it is common to find cultural differences between ethnic groups, and although these are very largely the result of different historical and environmental circumstances they may also reflect a slight difference in needs, which rests on temperamental grounds. In that case, differences in personality make-up encountered between two ethnic groups would not only have arisen in response to different cultural demands, but would also be an expression of a racial difference in temperament make-up.

Is there any evidence of such a difference between black and white in Africa? Various theories have been put forward, but factual evidence there is so far none. As temperamental differences are most likely to be reflected in some function of the central nervous system, the electroencephalogram, which provides a record of the electro-physiological activities of the brain, offers a most promising medium of research. From the work of Dr. A. C. Mundy-Castle at the National Institute for Personnel Research, confirmed by other workers in Africa, it would appear that no obvious differences in bio-electrical brain function exist between black and white in Africa.* There is no greater incidence of abnormalities, no evidence of specific impairment or of neurologically determined emotional immaturity, except in those cases where the adverse influences of tropical and deficiency diseases had been known to occur, and the latter influences are environmental in any case. Some occur, however, at such an early stage, such as the retarding and other harmful effects which Nelson** has demonstrated may follow on kwashiorkor, a protein deficiency disease which is prevalent in Africa and which attacks children in very early infancy, that they might well be mistaken for constitutional deficiencies.

Mundy-Castle's studies of the normal electroencephalogram do, however, suggest that there is a difference between whites and blacks in respect of alpha frequency, one of the brain rhythms that is prominently associated with visual

* A. C. Mundy-Castle, B. L. McKiever and T. Prinsloo: "A Comparative Study of the Electroencephalograms of Normal Africans and Europeans of Southern Africa", E. E. G. Clin. Neurophysiol., 1953, 5, 4.

** G. K. Nelson: "The Electroencephalogram in Kwashiorkor", E. E. G. Clin. Neurophysiol., 1959, 11, 1.

perception and, in a less direct way, with stimulability and activity level. Other investigations have shown that Africans at all educational levels are at a disadvantage in the handling of visual perceptual data, which fits in whith the neurological findings. It is one's impression that there is also a systematic difference in tempo of behaviour between Africans and Caucasians, which could of course be due to climatic, cultural, or nutritional factors; if, however, futher research should confirm that there are characteristic features in the psychic tempo components of the African EEG, the evidence in favour of a constitutional explanation would be fairly strong.

There is nothing basically unlikely in thus linking temperament with race. African races have their origin in areas where the climate does not favour strenuous activity. People who are persistently active because their temperament compels them to be so will be at a disadvantage in dissipating the heat generated by their bodies. This could possibly affect their fertility, their health, or expose them to other hazards, such as the invidious attention which a man who stands out from his fellows draws to himself in a society ever on its guard against wizards. High activity would therefore have a slightly lower survival value, and so by a process of natural selection, a psychic tempo more appropriate to the tropics would evolve as a characteristic of African races.

Whatever may be the outcome of these and other psycho-physiological studies, it should be evident that temperament can only be one of the many elements that have gone to the making of African personalities. It may be an element that runs as a common thread through all or most African cultures, setting them apart from the cultures of the West. If this is so, it is likely to be an important aspect of the "African Personality" that is being talked about by the new leaders of African thought. I shall return to this point later. But the differences between African cultures far outweigh the similarities, and this in turn means a diversity of personalities which defies generalisation.

Some features of personality in traditional cultures

A T a recent meeting of specialists in Madagascar, organised by CCTA to discuss the basic psychological structures of African and Madagascan populations, it was agreed that because of the diversity of cultures and sub-cultures on the African continent, no generalisation could at present be made concerning African personality, as such a generalisation was bound to become too wide and to be devoid of both practical and theoretical value.

The effects of cultural diversity can be well illustrated by comparing two Bantu tribes in the Northern Transvaal, the Pedi of Sekukuniland and the Lovedu of the Northern Drakensberg.

Among the Pedi*, the status of women is low and they are treated with scant respect. Being formerly a warlike people, the education of the boys is directed towards the development of aggressive virtues. Frequent and severe corporal punishment is the principal means of ensuring conformity, and a strong feeling of group loyalty is also cultivated, older boys taking responsibility for the actions of others, each member of the group backing the others and taking punishment collectively. Although trials of strength are encouraged, these serve more as a basis for allocating tribal responsibilities than to earn personal distinction for the individual. Competitiveness and lavish displays of prowess as found among the Zulu are foreign to the Pedi outlook. They believe that character is pre-determined, that one will have all the qualities, both good and bad, of a deceased relative or some living person, and hence that there is little point in trying to mould the individual to any role other than that which he was predestined to fill. Pride for achievement is therefore out of place, and so is effort to master a particular task, if it is apparent that one is not cut out for it.

Behind the apparent toughness of the Pedi boy, a good deal of insecurity can be detected, due to lack of affection in human contacts, the crude dominance-subordination relations that mould his character, and the absence of positive self-identifications with outstanding personal qualities and achievements. Anxiety was formerly held in check by conformity, by the assurance gained from status, and by the release of tension which participation in group

* G. M. Pitje: "Traditional Systems of Male Education among Pedi and Cognate Tribes". African Studies, Vol. 9, Nos. 2, 3 and 4, 1950.

activities, especially fighting, could bring. But with the breakdown in tribal institutions these defences are no longer effective, and there has consequently been a marked increase in the belief in, and practice of, witchcraft. This has invaded all aspects of tribal life, to the point where people are reluctant to participate in tribal functions or to perform social duties for fear of drawing adverse attention to themselves. Belief in witchcraft is, of course, a means whereby anxiety is externalised and projected on some outside object, which is thereupon seen as threatening. This calls in turn for counter-magical measures.

By contrast, the Lovedu are an unaggressive, peace-loving people. Geographical circumstances have rendered them largely immune from attack by others, and they have been able to work out their institutions over a period of centuries in an undisturbed way. They also believe that their divine Rain Queen can vanquish enemies by creating droughts, so that warlike virtues are not needed. Women enjoy both status and esteem, which they derive mainly from their essential function in the kinship system of the society, culminating in the powers of the Rain Queen. They can act as kraal heads, own cattle, settle family disputes, intercede with ancestors, and even "marry wives" whose children, obtained through a man designated for this purpose, will call them "father".

In keeping with their attitude towards women and their non-aggressiveness, the Lovedu have a high regard for the dignity of the individual. They strive for moderation, dislike competitiveness and display, and consider corporal punishment an insult to personality. Their attitude is reflected in their legal system, which relies largely on the restitutive sanction, that is, on the re-establishment of good personal relations. Agreement, rather than coercion, is the principle of their jurisprudence.

In comparison with the Pedi, the Lovedu personality has a good deal more depth and personality. Because they have some appreciation of the individual personality, whose well-being the social order is intended to promote, they are less inclined to feel threatened by the complete subordination of their impulses to the requirements of the group. Their social system and cosmology have given them a feeling that they are masters of their own fate, and anxiety would appear to be less destructive of personal stability in their case than among the Pedi.

The marked difference in modal personality qualities which this hasty and over-simplified comparison of Pedi and Lovedu cultures has disclosed should convince us of the unwisdom of trying to force African personalities into a common mould. The two tribes are racially similar, both belonging to the Southern Bantu group, and have many common features in their cultures, such as the nature of the subsistence economy, the significance of cattle for

social cohesion, the importance of ancestors in the regulation of daily life, the maternal relationship with infants during the prolonged nursing period. Yet the only generalisation one can safely make about both tribes is that their cultures produce tradition-directed personalities who are "sensitive mainly to the intangible forces of the social system and the moral code is upheld mainly by the institutions and by the reciprocal duties and responsibilities between individuals and groups inherent in the social structure".*

Attempts have been made to link African personality to one predominant feature of traditional culture, namely the traumatic effect of sudden weaning after a prolonged period of breast feeding. The African infant lives in a state of virtual symbiosis with its mother during the first eighteen months of life, a state of blissful security when all its needs are completely and promptly met. Then, on weaning, there is a marked change in maternal attitude, the child must begin to fend for itself, and is often sent away to go and live with its grandparents. The feeling of rejection which it experiences, following on a period of complete indulgence, leaves, according to some psychologists, an indelible mark on the child's personality. This may be reinforced, during the remaining years of childhood, by the absence of emotional warmth in the relationship between parents and children, by further traumatic occurrences at initiation, and by the establishment of an attitude of dependence on the ancestors who have no spiritual significance but who are propitiated purely to serve the individual's purposes in the present.

On this reading of the psychological influences that determine personality development, Africans would tend to acquire immature personalities, lacking in personal worth, anxious, inactive, unable to face up to the demands of the external world and the inner drives, and inclined to regress to a state of dependence whenever they are confronted by unpleasant aspects of reality.

This kind of generalisation cannot, however, be accepted for a number of reasons:

1) Although such a personality development may occur under particular cultural circumstances, it is by no means general, because there are considerable deviations in child rearing practices from tribe to tribe. Traumatic weaning only occurs in some tribes; in others, the children are virtually permitted to wean themselves. Toilet training also varies. The initiation rites differ in degree of severity and in the manner in which the child is prepared for them. Some practise circumcision and some do not. There are also differences in the manner in which the child is made to conform to tradi-

* The description of Lovedu culture is taken from "The Lovedu of the Transvaal" by J. D. and E. J. Krige, in "African Worlds", ed. D. Forde, Oxford University Press, 1954. The above quotation is on page 80.

tional requirements, and marked variations in attitude towards sexual practices. And even if the sequence of child rearing practices as described were to occur fairly consistently in most African cultures, other features in these cultures might well differentially modify the effects.

2) Assumptions are made regarding the child's responses to its parents which are based on the structure of Western family life; these assumptions may not be relevant at all to the extended family of African cultures, where there are many parent-substitutes and the whole pattern of emotional relations and of attitudes towards such matters as sexual behaviour, cleanliness, display of affection, may be different. We have no right to assume that what we have learned about the effects of Western parent-child relations on personality development has universal validity.

3) There is in fact experimental evidence that the effects of traumatic weaning are not what they were believed to be. In a rigorously conducted experimental investigation in Zululand, Albino and Thompson* showed that far from being merely a disorganising and frustrating experience, traumatic weaning, imposed at the age level of about 18 months, served as a powerful stimulus to ego-development and facilitated rather than retarded maturation.

4) Finally, whatever relevance prolonged nursing followed by traumatic weaning may have, it still cannot account for such marked personality differences as we have found between the Pedi and Lovedu, and which are clearly the consequence of the specific set of circumstances presented by each culture.

* R. C. Albino and V. J. Thompson: "Effects of Sudden Weaning on Zulu Children", British J. Med. Psychol. 29, 3 and 4, 1956.

Personality development in urban African communities

IN view of the changes which tribal life has to a greater or lesser extent undergone in all parts of Africa, the study of personality development in traditional communities may appear to be largely an academic exercise. Actually, it is far from being that, for in order to anticipate the further changes that will occur in tribal areas, to formulate sound policies for the development of these communities, and to be able to deal with the social maladjustments that are nevertheless bound to occur, knowledge concerning the mainsprings of African traditional behaviour is essential. It is equally essential for an appreciation of life in the urban areas, where many remnants of traditional behaviour are bound to be involved in shaping the pattern of social life.

For the mass of the people living in urban locations, most of the positive features of traditional life have vanished, and with them the sanctions that controlled behaviour. The traditional subsistence activities, which determined so much of the practical and ritual life of the community, have gone, together with the ownership of cattle and the essential contribution which cattle made to social stability. The binding force of kinship relations and the reciprocities they imposed on everyday life have been much weakened. And, with traditional social roles falling into disuse, there is no basis for the establishment of prescribed behaviour forms.

At the same time, there have remained the less positive features of child rearing practices, such as leaving a child to a slightly older nurse when it can toddle, and later to its age-mates; the use of threats and corporal punishment as a means of controlling behaviour; the absence of warmth in parental relations, and the lack of concern for the inculcation of qualities conductive to self-esteem.

Furthermore, the institutions which in Western societies are the means of imposing conformity are either lacking for many township dwellers or function in a feeble way. Most important among these is the family, for as the child loses the web of kinship which enmeshes it in every way in the tribe. the family unit begins to assume greater importance. The township family is, however, much attenuated. There may be an occasional grandparent, aunt or uncle, but only too often there is no father and the mother is left with the sole responsibility for the education of the children. In general, neither parent has sufficient knowledge concerning the diversified requirements and the value

system of Western society, nor of the means to make such knowledge real to the child.

This means that most parents are quite incapable of establishing that internalised control on which Western people depend for their adjustment to society. And for many children who have no family worth speaking of, the very mechanism for doing so is lacking. Church and school, which could supplement parental efforts, only touch a small proportion, and are themselves often ill-equipped to interpret and impose the moral codes of the new society. In any case, because this society is so different from that of the townships, and because there is no effective participation in the life of the white man's world, it is extremely difficult to make these values real.

For the majority of township dwellers — that is all those except the middle class, about whom later — it is therefore true to say that the tradition-directed personality has disappeared and that inner-direction has failed to appear. Nor is there a pronounced trend towards other-direction. For this one needs more than a modicum of civilised life, one needs a wider range of social and occupational roles, richer interpersonal realtions, more fully developed and utilised institutions like the schools and the mass media, and better organised, more meaningful groups. Group formations of the gang type there undoubtedly are, but the kind of conformity which they impose cannot be dignified with the label of other-direction. They function at too crude and terroristic a level.

One is therefore forced to conclude that many of the township dwellers are directed only by impulse and that such conformity as they display is imposed by the stronger and more fear-inspiring impulse of others. One is tempted to coin the term "id-directed" for this type of self, though it is a contradiction in terms to look upon such a personality as social or as implying any significant degree of conformity.

Although these location dwellers are not entirely devoid of culture, they come near to being so, and the evidence in support of the view that instinctive urges dominated their behaviour is to be found in the lawlessness and violence which are prevalent in many urban areas, the frequency of assaults involving stabbing, the laxity of sexual morals and the high illegitimacy rate.

Nevertheless, it would be a mistake to take too pessimistic a view of African urban society. In many ways, it is reminiscent of the early Renaissance. The common man of the Middle Ages, living in small communities dominated by feudal overlords and by a church which threatened with hell fire but offered no spiritual sustenance, ignorant of the true nature of the physical world, and finding outlets for his anxiety and aggression through the medium of witchcraft, was not unlike many tribal Africans in his tradition-

directed personality. Eventually this society burst its bonds in a great expansion of the human spirit, both physical and intellectual. The new era was characterised by violence of all sorts, both between individuals and between groups, as the blood-stained history of Florence, a city which was at the very vortex of the Renaissance, amply illustrates.

Is it not possible that over and above the vice and sordidness of township life there is something else, some more positive quality, an upsurge of vitality still looking for direction and form, a spirit of adventure following on the restraints of a static tribal society?

Tom Hopkinson, at present the editor of *Drum*, certainly seems to think so. In an article on the emergence of African writing*, he remarks that, like the Elizabethan, the African looks out on a mysterious world, but that,unlike the former, he is unable to act out his inner turmoil by means of war, discovery, and adventure. Thwarted by social and political obstacles and by the fact that he lives in the 20th Century, he can only expand his emotional energies and inner tensions in the hurly-burly and violence of the township's daily life, whilst the thinkers and more sensitive spirits can brood and, like other Elizabethans before them, transpose impressions and experiences to a literary form.

Violence, ferocity, and destruction was the theme of almost all the short stories submitted as entries to a competition run by *Drum*. Their atmosphere and content were strongly reminiscent of late 16th Century English writing, particularly the plays of John Webster, and one can well imagine how the cruelties and phantasmagoria of the Duchess of Malfi, devoid of any fatal necessity or ultimate moral purpose, would appeal to township audiences.

Does this same desperate spirit and zest for dangerous living also imbue the African middle class? One may find it no doubt in the few, the artists, writers, entertainers, the occasional politician; but for the rest, are their values not those of middle classes anywhere, strongly influenced by their economic position and their essentially Western occupational roles?

Some answer to these questions can be found in a comprehensive study by Rae Sherwood** of middle class urban Africans, predominantly clerks

* Tom Hopkinson: "Deaths and Entrances — The Emergence of African Writing". Twentieth Century, Vol. 165, No. 986, April, 1959.

** This study was carried out by Mrs. Sherwood at the N.I.P.R., with the aid of a grant from the Council for Social Research, on behalf of the Department of Bantu Administration, which set up a steering committee to direct the work. The principal object was to devise a selection procedure for Bantu Civil Servants, whereby those capable of rising to responsible positions could be earmarked. The investigation covered the social background of the population from which African clerks were drawn, and therefore included a group of other professional workers, the object being to make an assessment of job aspirations and values of the African middle class generally. The study has not yet been completed, and a final report has still to be issued. Meanwhile, two papers have been published in scientific journals, to which reference will be made at a later stage.

employed by State and Municipal Government Departments, though an appreciable number of professional workers was also included in her sample. Mrs. Sherwood did indeed find that they are much closer to the ways of thought and value system of the West than the average township dweller; but because their parental generation is out of tune with the ways and demands of the new technological society or is undergoing vast shifts in character itself, the family is unable to provide much guidance or moral training. Hence the peer-groups, both black and white, become the major instruments of socialisation. Of these two, the white middle-class group is probably the more important.

Because the African white-collar and professional group in the Union is not numerous, and because many of its members have only comparatively recently risen to the middle-class level, they still look to their white counterpart to provide the appropriate model of civilised life. They are in frequent contact with members of this group as their teachers, supervisors, or employers, and their advancement is therefore very much dependent on the impressions which they create and the good opinions which they earn.

Here, however, conflicts arise which have a disturbing effect on their character structure. Education and the Church stress the importance of ambition, hard work, achievement and Christian morality as the guide-lines of conduct. Added to this are certain expectations they develop concerning conduct appropriate to their professional roles. But their experience in everyday life teaches that observance of these values is not necessarily rewarded and that they can often do better for themselves by pursuing goals and by conforming to standards of conduct which are acceptable to the white group. Thus, whereas the white supervisors of African civil servants attached first importance to such qualities as respect, courtesy, and obedience to supervisors on the part of African clerks, the latter, whilst endorsing the desirability of such conduct, ranked it well below such aspects of their duties as being considerate and tactful to the Bantu public, serving their interests, knowing laws and regulations, and applying these objectively and impartially without fear or favour. They tended to be motivated by the ideal stereotype of the civil servant, whereas their supervisors saw the role of the African clerks more in terms of stereotyped white-black relations.

One would expect this conflict situation to engender a considerable amount of anxiety, and there is in fact evidence, both from Mrs. Sherwood's investigations and from others, that the anxiety level is high in this group of professional and clerical people.

The picture presented by her of African middle class persons justifies her conclusion that the circumstances under which they grow up and function in the Union of South Africa encourage the development of the other-directed personality type, in which conformity is normally regulated by anxiety. Hence

it would appear that African personality development is proceeding straight from tradition- to other-direction, and that the historical stage where behaviour was controlled by an internalised code, by guilt rather than by shame as it used to be, or by anxiety, as it is now, has passed them by.

This, of course, does not imply that there are no inner-directed types, or that none will be produced in the future. I am only speaking of group trends, to which there are numerous individual exceptions. Nor does it imply that urban Africans as a group are either ignorant of, or insensitive to, the moral conceptions of the West. In a study of the attitudes of educated Africans towards Western standards of conduct, values, laws, and administration of justice which I completed some time ago*, I found that the relevant concepts were fully understood, and that Western ethical and religious values were generally accepted as a guide to behaviour, except where they conflicted with certain deeply established traditional ideas concerning the satisfaction of natural needs and the potency of witchcraft, or where racial discrimination had caused non-compliant, aggressive motivation to displace ethico-legal considerations. Indeed, there were clear indications that an essential feature of moral conduct, namely the general validity of an ethical principle and the need to apply it consistently in action, had been grasped. Instead of functioning as an internalised code, this value system now operates, however, more indirectly via the actions of others who are also trained to accept it as a guide. From being a moral imperative, it has become a social requirement, and it has no doubt lost some of its stability and effectiveness in its metamorphosis from conviction to habit.

There is, however, another aspect of personality development to which we must now turn. This concerns the habits, aspirations, and controls imposed on individual conduct by the necessity to work, an aspect of modern life which has had the most far-reaching effects on the value-system of contemporary society and on the type of character which it tends to produce.

* This work has been summarised in "The Influence of Social Circumstances on the Attitudes of Educated Africans", S.A.J. of Science, Vol. 53, No. 12, 1957.

The origin of work attitudes

IN the Western technological world, work has attained a significance for the moulding of personality which it did not possess in the earlier stages of our history and for which no parallel can be found in other civilisations.

Some form of effort to maintain life at a subsistence level has always been imperative, and as new needs for material comforts arose, men have been prepared to work harder to reach and maintain a higher standard of living. At times they may have been moved to exceptional efforts when, inspired by devotion, they raised temples or palaces for the greater glory of gods, kings or communities; but apart from this occasional inspiration, often implemented by the enforced labour of slaves or serfs, work was an extraneous necessity, to be avoided whenever circumstances permitted.

In our society, however, work is much more than an economic imperative; it has become a habit or inner need, deeply implanted in the personality structure of the average man. We have acquired a way of treating time as capital, from which our effort must draw an usurious interest. We have developed an urge not to leave well alone; and despite the immense control we have already established over nature, there is a ceaseless search for new problems leading to ever-expanding horizons for the aspirations of man, as illustrated by our recent ventures into space.

Our technological civilisation relies for its continued well-being on the capacity for sustained effort, particularly mental effort, of a considerable proportion of its citizens. Yet there is no conscious feeling among the generality of men that they are being held in thrall by the needs of the competitive society they have created, or that basically they have no more freedom to choose differently than the mediaeval serf compelled to labour for lords of the Church or manor.

Max Weber* has traced the origin of this character development to the Reformation, when from the spirit of Christian asceticism "one of the fundamental elements of the spirit of modern capitalism, and not only of that but of all modern culture: rational conduct on the basis of the idea of calling, was born". Whilst protestant asceticism added in itself nothing new to the idea, found in many creeds, that faithful labour, for little or no material reward, is highly pleasing to God, "it not only deepened this idea most powerfully,

* Max Weber: "The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism". Translated by Talcott Parsons, London, G. Allen and Unwin, Ltd., 1930, p. 180.

(but) it also created the force which was alone decisive for its effectiveness: the psychological sanction of it through the conception of this labour as a calling, as the best, often in the last analysis the only means of attaining certainty of grace".

The religious element, of course, gradually vanished from this psychological sanction, though traces of it are still evident in the more puritanical of Christian sects. The new economic system, to which the notion of salvation had lent its support, had gathered sufficient momentum to proceed unaided on its victorious course. As Weber put it* " . . . the idea of duty in one's calling prowls about in our lives like the ghost of dead religious beliefs. Where the fulfillment of the calling cannot directly be related to the highest spiritual and cultural values, or when, on the other hand, it need not be felt simply as economic compulsion, the individual generally abandons the attempt to justify it at all. In the field of its highest development in the United States, the pursuit of wealth, stripped of its religious and ethical meaning, tends to become associated with purely mundane passions, which often actually give it the character of sport".

This change in value system did not, in itself, alter the work habits which have dominated the behaviour of Western man for so long. The need to work has continued to hold sway over his actions, despite the fact that productive efficiency and labour-saving devices have brought Western economy to a stage of plentitude which permits working hours to be steadily reduced and which makes leisure one of the more popular consumer-goods.

But leisure itself has acquired some of the compulsive characteristics of work and is pervaded by competitive attitudes. Sport, one of our principal leisure-time activities, is utterly competitive, even at the level of the spectator who clamours for his side, or the individual performer intent on reducing his handicap or improving his form. Foreign travel on "packaged tours" is a strenuous form of exercise, and the itineraries are closely fashioned by the desire to see the places everyone does, or those which have connoisseur value, depending on the level at which the tourist returned home seeks to obtain his deference. Even the quiet hobbies such as stamp collecting, gardening, photography, can become invested with restlessness, urgency and high endeavour, if economic motives or the demands for the show-bench begin to displace the purely recreational aspects.

Riesman has aptly described leisure taken in this manner as "gainfully improving (oneself) in body and in mind" and points out that we are really confronted by a new form of puritanism. He thus confirms that the duty concept has been extended to the recreational field. Guilt feelings prevent too

* Op. cit. pp. 181-182.

many of us from enjoying leisure purely for its own sake, even though the opportunites for doing so have become more plentifully available. To quote Riesman again: "We are such responsible members of society that we really have no time for leisure".*

Another reason why work motivation has not been dislodged from its predominant position is that the opportunity to opt for leisure does not affect the tempo and thrust of those who set the pace of our advancement. These men either seek no leisure at all, or else play as hard as they work, the word "game" being indiscriminately applied by them to everything they do. By their efforts they attain the major positions of status and power. They set a style which lesser men, at their appropriate level, will emulate and thus the efforts of most remain geared to those of the few. This may only be true of the middle class and upwards, but these groups are still largely responsible for the value system of our culture.

What has happened, therefore, is that with the trend from inner- to other-direction we are exchanging work as a means towards grace, or as an ethical value, for work as a means towards group approval; work as an inner necessity, for work as a social compulsion. The structure of work motivation has altered, but its manifestation, the habits to which it has given rise, have remained very much the same.

This analysis is, of course, primarily applicable to the upper financial, managerial and business classes. The compulsive aspect of work motivation is less marked among the professional and administrative groups, and falls off still further as one proceeds down the economic scale, to reach vanishing point among the lower middle and working classes of most Western societies. This does not diminish its significance as an aspect of Western culture, for it is those in whom the drive to compete, to achieve, to advance knowledge, humanity or themselves is strongest who determine the structure of our society and influence its value system.

If "compulsion" most aptly conveys the essence of the attitude I have just described, "dedication" and "participation" could signify the texture of two other strands woven into the fabric of contemporary work motivation, to give it richness and variety. The first of these depends on intrinsic interest in the job as such. This applies mainly to occupations which set high intellectual demands, which involve craftsmanship, or which present other opportunities for self-expression. Dedication to the job as intrinsically worth while is comparatively uncommon at the entrepeneur and business levels, but rises to a peak in the professional occupations and others that demand a high standard

* David Riesman: "Selected Essays from Individualism Reconsidered". Doubleday Anchor Books A58, New York, 1954, pp. 127-128.

of education and professional integrity. Another upsurge occurs among the technicians and skilled tradesmen, whilst a low level is reached again among the lower grade clerks, operatives and labourers, where the job contains no intrinsic interest at all and provides little scope for dedication.

The remaining strand, important because it creates meaning where none other exists, gains its motivating power from the social satisfactions to be derived from participation in work with others. The work situation offers much scope for the formation of social groups such as the body of employees identified with a particular firm, the uniformed branch of a service, the team on the factory floor, the mates on a shift, branch members of a Union, or colleagues in a professional organisation. Membership of these groups presents all kinds of opportunities for participation and emotional involvement, from simply "passing the time of day" to discussions during the tea and lunch-hour breaks of matters of common interest, and getting together in recreational activities. Also important are the status satisfactions which work-engendered group activities can bring, such as appointment to a supervisory position as shop steward, and as office-bearer in union or association.

Satisfaction from social contacts and group membership is relatively unimportant at the level where the natural business, administrative and professional leaders are to be found, or among those who have a rich and varied social life outside the work situation. Human relations at work increase in significance as the range of satisfactions to be derived from life becomes narrower and opportunities for social involvement diminish. For working class people, social participation invests the job with its principal meaning, apart from the gratification of subsistence needs which work provides.

These trends in the compulsive, dedicative and participative work motivations which I have postulated probably apply to most Western societies, with variations according to social organisation, tradition and dominant religion.

Work attitudes amongst Africans

UNTIL African societies were drawn into the Western economic domain, work attitudes played no significant part in the development of character structure. All activities, whether concerned with procreation, the provision of food or shelter, the placation of hostile forces or the defeat of enemies, were related to the well-being of the group, governed alike by prescription as to their occurrence, and ritual practices as to their performance. To each individual, by virtue of sex, age, position and kinship relations, was assigned his appropriate role. Under such circumstances, the distinction between work and play is not relevant. Men will do no more than is basically required of them, apart from individual differences in effort within the traditional role-structure. There will be no effort for its own sake, nor in pursuit of purely individual goals.

This does not mean that personality development has not been influenced by the manner of subsistence practised in African cultures. A theory has in fact been put forward* which looks upon the nature of the subsistence economy as having a more direct effect on child rearing practices, and hence on the production of personalities adapted to the needs of a particular culture, than other institutions in that culture. It was thought that societies which practised a pastoral or mixed pastoral and agricultural subsistence economy, in which food accumulation was high, would favour the development of a compliant modal personality, whereas hunting and fishing cultures, in which food accumulation was low, would prosper best through the medium of assertive personalities. In the former cultures, danger to future food supplies can best be avoided by adhering faithfully to the traditional ways of doing things, whereas in the latter, individual skill and initiative are at a premium and innovation is not feared because its effects never have irreparable consequences.

To test this hypothesis, a study was made of more than 600 societies from which 104 were selected on which sufficiently detailed information was available concerning child rearing practices and personality characteristics. Statistical analysis showed that high accumulation of food resources had a significantly positive relationship with pressure towards responsibility and obedience in educational practices, and a significantly negative relationship with pressure towards achievement, self-reliance and independence. These

* Herbert Barry III, Irvin L. Child and Margaret K. Bacon: "The Relation of Child Training to Subsistence Economy". American Anthropologist, 61, 1, 1959.

two sets of qualities can be seen as the opposite poles of a personality factor which has been called "pressure towards compliance vs. assertion". This factor was shown to correlate very highly with high-low food accumulation. Because the nature of an economy may have widespread effects on many aspects of society with a more direct bearing on child-rearing practices than degree of food accumulation, the interrelationships between the compliance-assertion factor and eight other cultural aspects (including complexity of social stratification, political integration, kinship relations, size of permanent settlement unit) were statistically examined.

A strong indication was found that food accumulation was the operative factor in the relationship between the direction of child training and the subsistence economy. The cultures chosen for analysis included the Swazi, Tswana, Sotho, Lovedu, Venda, Zulu, Pondo and Thonga, all ranked in the high accumulation group in the order given. The modal personalities in these societies would therefore be conformist, responsible and obedient, rather than assertive, self-reliant and motivated towards achievement.

As a very broad generalisation, this conclusion fits in with our knowledge concerning these tribes, though it ignores many personality differences between them which are not attributable to subsistence economy but which derive from institutions, beliefs and circumstances peculiar to each tribe.

The personality qualities favoured by the subsistence economy have no particular reference to work performance, except in so far as work is an integral part of the static culture which it is the purpose of the tradition-directed personality to maintain. Consequently, possession of these qualities does nothing to prepare Africans so constituted for the new tasks they are called upon to perform when they move out of a tribal subsistence into a money economy, apart from rendering their possessors more or less amenable to industrial discipline. New motivations have to be acquired and, with these, a radical change in personality-structure is likely to occur to make it more suited to the new society in which it has to function. This process will of course be different for those who move directly as migrants out of a tribal area into industrial or agricultural work, than for those who were born and bred in the towns and in whom tradition direction has already vanished.

The National Institute for Personnel Research has carried out a number of work-attitude studies among Africans ranging from migrant labourers in the mining industry to professionally qualified men and women employed as teachers, nurses and social workers. They represent an acculturation range from pre-literates still living a tribal way of life (disturbed of course to a greater or lesser extent by contacts with the social, economic and political systems of the white areas) to University graduates who may have lost all ties with their tribal origins.

One of these studies sought to discover the reasons that led migrants from the Transkeian areas to obtain work on the gold mines. It was found that harvests are quite inadequate to meet their basic subsistence needs. Their first objectives was therefore to earn money for the purchase of maize. Other objectives, in order of the frequency with which they were mentioned, were: money to buy *lobola* (bride-price) cattle, the settlement of trader debts, cash to pay taxes, purchase of cattle other than for *lobola*, clothing for family and self and money for wedding celebrations. The impression created by interviews and group discussions was that of all these objectives, the desire to build up herds is prepotent in the minds of most migrants, and the real drive behind their recurrent work tours, however frustrated it may be by the more urgent need to obtain cash for other purposes.

It would appear, therefore, that work motivation in these still primitive tribesmen has not risen much beyond the subsistence and traditional level. They work for food and to maintain the family and clan organisation. The possession of cattle is important for both these needs. Cattle are necessary for ploughing, to stabilise kinship bonds and to enhance a man's status in the community. Beasts are generally only slaughtered on ceremonial and festive occasions. Participation in tribal life, its rituals and beer-drinks, the performance of kinship and community duties including subsistence activities, are therefore still the principal motivation of the tribal labourer. When he must work, he adopts a migratory work pattern by preference, as causing least disturbance to his traditional way of life. This life provides many opportunities for leisurely tribal activities, or for leisure to be indulged in whole-heartedly for its own sake, after minimal material needs have been met.

The interviews also disclosed that for this type of labourer the loss of leisure is a major deterrent against continuous employment in white areas. Employment on the mines is attractive to him because the work periods are limited and because all the problems in obtaining a job, getting to it and finding accommodation are taken care of. The industry shelters him from the hazards of township life and he has no responsibility apart from those involved in the actual job. He lives in a protected, paternalistic society, with well-defined roles for each man, so that from a structural point of view life is not so different from that led in the tribe. Migratory mine labourers are considerably more sensitive to the way in which they are handled and to managerial interest in their well-being than to rates of pay and to the hazards or arduousness of underground work, as was found in a study to determine the causes of differences in popularity between certain mines.

When the desire for more permanent work arises, coupled with the expectation of higher wages, mining finds less favour than other forms of employment; but when this stage is reached, the worker is already being

weaned away from tribal life, even though he may wish to keep a foothold in the rural areas. Precisely how and when this occurs has not been fully investigated. The process is a gradual one, depending on the development of individuality in the worker, a weakening of kinship ties, and increasing confidence in his ability to handle his own affairs. Concurrently with this, the attractions of tribal life may diminish as it loses its integrity and puts demands without offering its traditional ceremonials and social satisfactions in return. Conversion to Christianity, education, and rising standards of material comfort also contribute to the trend.

The next stage in the development of work attitudes can be observed in industrial workers with a long period of urban residence, who may or may not have been born in rural areas. A sample of this section of the African population was studied by Cortis* in a number of engineering works where they were employed as machine minders on production-line processes. They were asked to state what circumstances made a job more or less attractive. First in the rank order of favourable features was opportunities for advancement. High wages had the next highest incentive value, followed by job security, considerate management, and happy working conditions, in that order. Ranked as the most disliked feature of a job was insecurity, that is, liability to be laid off or dismissed at short notice. Other disadvantages ranked in order of unpopularity were: lack of consideration on the part of management towards personnel, incompetent supervision, unwillingness to introduce a production bonus and poor wages.

The inconsistency between these two rank orders is only apparent. The results indicate that of the two evils of insecurity and low pay, low pay is considered to be the lesser, whereas of the two blessings of high wages and security, high wages are held to be the greater. Good pay, because of its rarity, has the higher incentive value; insecurity, because of its frequency and its serious consequences for urban workers, induces the greater fear. Similarly, opportunities for advancement, because they are limited, are highly appreciated; but their absence, which is the more usual condition, does not cause undue concern.

The most significant aspect of the results of Cortis's investigation is that these industrial workers no longer look upon work as an interruption of the more meaningful and satisfying life of the African areas. They are committed to their daily task and hope to be able to advance in it. It is evident that within this group a new motivation has made its appearance, in which the need to work is recognised as an enduring feature of life, capable of creating and satisfying other needs beyond the mere subsistence level.

* L. E. Cortis: "The Work Attitudes of a Multiracial Factory Group". Proc. S.A. Psychol. Ass., No. 7-8, 1956-57.

Whether this motivation is at all like that of white operatives it is not possible to say, as no comparable socio-economic group was available. White daily paid employees in the same factories showed rather different attitudes, indicating concern with status, promotion and participation in the decisions of the managerial and supervisory groups. They expressed far less dissatisfaction with wages and appeared to have no anxiety concerning their job, its security and their ability to meet its demands.

Both groups were conscious of the importance of good human relations in the work situation, but the white workers made more of this than the non-white group, which also included Indians. Both groups were equally sensitive to managerial attitudes towards them, but the whites laid far more stress on the desirability of good relations with their fellow-employees.

Clearly the African workers had not yet reached the same degree of social cohesion and group consciousness as the whites and their attitudes were more filial than fraternal. The recency of their association with a paternalistic tribal society may have had something to do with this; but the coarseness of the occupational stratification in their urban communities, their lowly position in the factory job hierarchy, and the absence of any labour organisation among them are probably the more important determining factors.

Work attitudes among middle class Africans

THE work attitudes of Africans at higher employment levels — clerks, teachers, nurses, social workers — were studied in the course of Rae Sherwood's Bantu Civil Servants investigation, to which reference has already been made. A detailed interview schedule which contained such questions as "tell all the things that you like about your job" and other more indirect approaches to work motivation was applied to 205 white-collar and 75 professional workers. For the appraisal of their motivation, comparable material was available from American sources to serve as a check on its uniqueness*. It was found that there was a striking similarity in the range and content of the satisfactions which the white American and black African groups sought to derive from their work. "The Bantu middle class", wrote Rae Sherwood in her report, "do not lack any specific work motivations characteristic of other Western industrial peoples, nor do they reveal work motivations peculiar to their own group except those that occur as a response to specific social pressures".

In a more detailed analysis of the attitudes of 185 clerks who were employed by the State and other public authorities, she found the same basic agreement. "The Bantu group", she wrote in her paper on role expectations in the Journal of Social Psychology, "conceive of the efficient civil servant as ideally following regularised procedures in the performance of official duties, without regard to external pressures. In fact they reveal a clear awareness of the ethos of the public servant, showing conformity in their attitudes to generally accepted patterns of behaviour currently held as ideal for the public service. There is certainly no evidence of 'cultural deficiency' in these areas since the Bantu appear to have mastered and to be able to reproduce spontaneously the professional standards to which the civil servant aspires. Whether overt behaviour conforms to these ideal standards is quite a different problem".

There are indeed pressures both within the work situation and from without which are peculiar to the cultural, socio-economic and political situation in Africa and which may account for such deviations from the ideal patterns do occur.

* Data for the American comparison were derived from Centers, R.: "Motivational Aspects of Occupational Stratification", J. Soc. Psychol., 1948, 28, 187-217. Two papers on this topic have so far been published by Mrs. Sherwood: "Motivation Analysis: A Comparison of Job Attitudes among African and American Professional Workers". Proc. S.A. Psychol. Ass., No. 7-8, 1956-57; and "The Bantu Clerk: A Study of Role Expectations", J. Soc. Psychol., 1958, 47, 285-316.

The major sources of job satisfaction for the whole African middle class group, in the order of frequency with which they were expressed in interviews were: (1) Service towards the community ("helping my people", "uplifting Africans", "teaching the leaders of tomorrow"); (2) pleasant human relations, with superiors, colleagues, members of the public, clients; (3) salary, security and material benefits of the job; (4) Self-development, the acquisition of new skills, personality qualities and values ("I like my job because it enables me to learn new ways of doing things"); (5) Job interest. Values that were infrequently mentioned either as satisfactions or as dissatisfactions were the status provided by the job, and prospects for advancement. The major sources of job dissatisfaction were: (1) frustrations regarding work and work arrangements; (2) unpleasant relations with authorities and problems arising from racial discrimination; (3) poor salary, job insecurity and low material benefits; (4) unsatisfactory relations with colleagues, clients and the public.

In comparing this motivational pattern with that of American white-collared and other middle class groups, Rae Sherwood found only differences in emphasis, or differences that arose from the racial and cultural structure of South African society. This applies in particular to the frustrations experienced occupationally and in human relations as a result of the colour bar and discriminatory practices generally. That the greater concern of Africans with good human relations was not entirely the result of their experience of race antagonism was shown by the fact that unsatisfactory relations with clients and the African public were equally deplored.

There was much more homogeneity of motivation in the African than in the American group. This indicates not only "the emergence of a class of people sharing beliefs, goals and aspirations . . . firmly based on Western value systems in so far as job attitudes reveal these", but also that "the middle-class Bantu are positively motivated by group-oriented values in the job situation, and only secondarily by those that are self-oriented"*. To some extent this tendency may be due to the narrow range of occupational opportunities and salaries; but the structure of their personality make-up as it has developed under prevailing cultural conditions is likely to be the more decisive factor.

The African group differs outstandingly in the high motivational value attached to service. This characteristic was also noticed by Allport and Gillespie** in a cross-cultural study of youth's outlook on the future. They found that African students stood head and shoulders above all other groups in mentioning social problems, in the frequency of references to their own

* Rae Sherwood in the draft report on the Bantu Civil Servant Study.

** Gordon W. Allport and James W. Gillespie: "Youth's Outlook on the Future. A Cross-National Study". Doubleday & Co. Inc., N.Y., 1955.

ethnic group, and in the stress which they laid on collective effort and group responsibility. The explanation lies probably in the need experienced by many Africans to restore some sense of belongingness which was lost with the break-up of the tribal societies, to give this group feeling a more contemporary meaning in terms of emergent political trends, and to vindicate the capacity of African races to gain for themselves a position of equality with others. That, in practice, individualism is often more prominent in African occupational behaviour than social service or group feeling, is understandable in view of the many socio-economic pressures and statutory disabilities to which the individual is exposed, and the absence of a realistic and generally approved plan whereby actions could be guided and inspired.

Considered together, the ideal of service, the group-oriented values of the African middle class, and their sensitivity to good relations with all those with whom they have contacts in the work situation, confirm the hypothesis made earlier in this address that in the more Westernised African social groups, personality development is towards the other-directed type.

The only other difference of any significance found between the African and American middle-class groups is the greater emphasis placed by the former on self-improvement. This too is a characteristic observed by Allport and Gillespie in their study of the youth of ten nations. The theme of self-realisation ("being something, making something of myself") was expressed far more frequently by African students than by any others, particularly those from the highly developed nations. This attitude is not necessarily in conflict with the desire to place interest of group before self, because, as we have seen, the desire for self-improvement is only ranked fourth in the hierarchy of African job-values, and in any case there is little the individual could do on behalf of his group without vocational skills and experience, and without some sophistication in the world of affairs. Indeed, it is precisely because of the effort that Africans have to make, with the limited resources at their disposal, to reach Western standards of competence and to acquire Western habits of conduct, tha tthis motive is so much stronger among them than among their American counterparts.

When work motivation in the middle-class group is compared with that of industrial operatives, it appears that the development of group consciousness also brings a desire for good fellowship which was lacking at the lower level. Fear of losing one's job becomes less of a preoccupation, those employed by the State in particular having been largely influenced in their choice of job by the security it offers. Professional and clerical workers also show less concern about possibilities of advancement, probably because most of them know that they have reached their ceiling under present circumstances. Their level of education and occupational sphere have made them eager for work

with intrinsic interest, but because within their present job universe it is difficult fully to realise their abilities, they also experience their strongest frustration in this motivational area.

Thus, in keeping with similar professional groups elsewhere, the African middle class expect to derive much of the meaning in their daily task from the job interest or dedication motive, which takes a predominantly social form in their case. Unlike other middle-class groups, they are almost equally strongly influenced by the participation motive. Cultural circumstances have caused this motivation to make a belated appearance at this occupational level. Because of the personality structure of African clerical and professional people, the desire for participation on terms of good human relations will continue to hold sway among them, although normally it would have receded to a subsidiary position in the work motivation complex.

Is there a unique element in the personalities of Africans?

OUR survey of work attitudes indicates that the more deeply Africans are drawn into that essentially Western culture, the world of work, the more thoroughly do they acquire the personalities functional for that culture.

This generalisation is, however, subject to a number of qualifications. The migrant labourer at the bottom end of the employment scale, who contracts to work for limited periods only, shows very little assimilation. Though he labours in the sweat of his brow, he is not really a worker in terms of his aspirations. Like the civilian turned soldier in time of war, who returns to his home and job fundamentally unchanged by his experiences, the migrant labourer resumes his normal leisurely rural life as soon as the emergency that led him to leave it temporarily, has passed. And this will remain so as long as tribal life retains its integrity.

This poses a dilemma, for if it is considered desirable that as much as possible of the tribal structure of African rural communities in the Union should remain intact, then apart from providing seasonal labour to the mines, the male members of these communities will not contribute much to the productivity of the country as a whole, let alone to that of the African areas, which all agree should be more fully developed. If, on the other hand, deliberate efforts are made to turn the rural African into a worker, this will in the long run be at the cost of the tribal system, which in turn will vitally affect the type of social and political organisation which the Government is now establishing in the African areas.

Some may believe that the alternatives are not mutually exclusive and that one may be able to retain some features of tribal life despite the inculcation of Western work aspirations. This I consider to be an idle dream. One cannot choose to have the shadow of the tree on one's house whilst seeking to destroy its roots because they are getting into the way of the foundations. Once the African has embarked permanently on a life of work, he will not stop until he has reached his own destination, which may be a good deal further than many now wish him to go.

The second and more important qualification applies to those nearer to the top of the African occupational ladder. Here African personality differs from its Western counterpart in the relative absence of the compulsive work

motivation which is still characteristic of Western culture and which, without economic necessity, impels it onwards on its remarkable and continuous course of material advancement. I am now speaking on the basis of general observation, rather than in the light of the evidence obtained from our attitude studies.

We did, of course, note that group values and the desire for participation rather than personal ambition were the principal motivating force, whilst nothing emerged to suggest that any of our informants looked upon work as a moral duty, or as a game to be played with all one has. To some extent this may be due to the exceptional efforts which Africans have to make even to reach the middle class level, and to the limited scope for further advancement once they get there. Or perhaps one should have looked beyond the white-collared and professional workers to the African promoters of religious sects, to the entertainers and boxers, to the few independent business men and politicians. Some of these no doubt are imbued with a Western type of urge for action and progress; but their fewness and lack of conspicuous status render them ineffective as a source for other-directive emulation. The painstaking rather than burning motivation in the mass of the others makes me believe that lack of opportunity and legal restrictions are not the sole explanation for the unimportance of inner compulsion in African work motivation.

Here I must revert to two hypotheses I made earlier in this address. The one stated the possibility of a somewhat lower constitutional activity level, brought about over the generations, by natural selection. The urge for achievement and success through work is not just the outcome of a particular kind of self-identification resulting from the influence of certain cultural values on the life history of the individual; it also depends on the strength in that individual of the temperament factor that determines activity, and if there is a racial difference in this aspect of temperament, there will of course be fewer Africans who display drive of the Western type.

The other hypothesis referred to the birth of a new vitality in our city-dwellers. Does this not contradict the argument of constitutional difference? Let us admit at once that no racial characteristic is unalterable and that given the appropriate circumstances, the effects of natural selection can be reversed. Climatic and cultural circumstances in the Union may well be tending in that direction, but the effects will of necessity be very gradual, and many generations will have to be subjected to the new conditions before a change in average activity level will become apparent.

The new vitality that I referred to is of a rather different order. It is part of the bustle of the African market-place, a liveliness, instinctive urgency, *joie de vivre*, rather than the capacity for sustained effort of the laboratory, the planning office and the board room. The former depends on the

spontaneous expression of the primary drives and all the emotional responses that go with them, subject of course to some measure of socialisation which is now far less constraining than it was in tribal societies; the latter depends on a more basic neurological quality, in respect of which I have postulated a racial difference, and on some measure of inner-direction and sense of guilt which, as we have seen, do not readily develop in Africans today.

To all this should be added the overriding effect of climate, not now on the race but on the individual. However high one's activity level may be, however one may be driven by inner necessity, it would still be more difficult to sustain effort on activities devoid of immediate instinctive meaning — which includes most work tasks— in a tropical than in a temperate climate. Only the most exceptionally dedicated individuals will succeed in doing so. The climatic aspect is of course far more relevant in tropical than in Southern Africa, but then it is in the territories to the North of us that the fate of Black Africa will eventually be settled.

And when we glance in the direction of these territories, particularly the West Coast, to see how personality development is faring there, we come upon a most interesting cultural phenomenon, which is in line with all that I have said concerning the absence of a compulsive element to achieve and to excel in African motivation. It is the movement which goes by the name of *négritude*, a term coined by Aimée Césaire, a poet from Martinique who presents an ideological concept, rather than the real Africa, in his poems. I am indebted to Ulli Beier*, of the University College of Nigeria, for permission to quote from a recent article of his on the significance of *négritude*.

In his repudiation of the artificiality and materialism of the West, and in his hostility to colonialism, Césaire shouts:

Hurray for those who have never invented anything.
Hurray for those who have never explored anything,
Hurray for those who have never conquered anything,
But who in awe give themselves up to the essence of things.
Ignorant of the shell, but seized by the rhythm of things.
Not intent on conquest, but playing the play of the world.

Could anything be in greater contrast to that typically Western utterance of Tennyson's Ulysses:

To follow knowledge like a sinking star,
Beyond the utmost bound of human thought. . .
To sail beyond the sunset, and the baths
Of all the Western stars, until I die. . .
To strive, to seek, to find, and not to yield.

* Ulli Beier: "In Search of an African Personality", The Twentieth Century, Vol. 165, No. 986, April 1959.

In French West Africa, *négritude* has become a battle-cry, a means whereby those who are striving to rediscover their African identity are drawn together; and also a literary movement of which the poet, politician and scholar, Leopold Sédar Senghor, is the most outstanding exponent. He thinks Western culture is a "world that has died of machines and cannons". Nothing can save it but the new vitality, the new life force, that is found among the black races today.

In his poem *New York*, where apart from Harlem, in which "God makes the life that goes back beyond memory spring up", he found only "artificial hearts paid for in hard cash" and "no mother's breast, but only nylon legs, legs and breasts that have no sweat nor smell" he states the creed of *négritude* most clearly:

> *New York, I say to you New York, let black blood flow into your blood,*
> *That it may rub the rust from your steel points like an oil of life,*
> *That it may give to your bridges the bend of buttocks and the suppleness of creepers.*
> *Listen to the distant beating of your nocturnal heart,*
> *and blood of the tom-tom, tom-tom blood rhythm and tom-tom.*

and he says proudly, as a negro:

> *God who out of the laugh of a saxophone created the heavens and the earth in six days and the seventh day he slept the great sleep of the negro.*

Here then we have a creed which presents African personality as something which retains the capacity to respond to natural forces in an instinctive way, which rejects materialism, the culture of cities, the consuming drive for technological achievement, the inability to relax and to play.

Earlier in this address I referred to the possibility of finding some unique element in African personalities, and if *négritude* is something more than a declaration of faith by a few intellectuals and romantics we may well have come to the end of our search. *Négritude*, as presented in these poems, is in keeping with the concept of vitality which I consider to be characteristic of the behaviour of African peoples. A culture in which this concept concerning the meaning of life reigns, can dispense with an excess of activity of the constitutional type; such activity is required mainly for sustained effort in pursuit of some self-imposed duty or goal. It has no need of the inner-directed personality structure which Africans are not now likely to develop to any extent, and it repudiates the drive element in work motivation, which is relatively lacking in Africans, as destructive of the main purpose of life. Though essentially a West African creed and in keeping with limitations imposed on human effort by the tropical climate, it is by no means inappropriate to certain features of African personality development at all cultural

levels as we have found it here in the South. Indubitably, the philosophy of *negritude* is far more likely to provide the black masses, in their transition from traditionalism, with a meaningful new culture than is provided by the more alien model of the West.

This concept of an African social personality does, of course, envisage rather different societies from those at the summit in the modern world. They will be somewhat less efficient and at a lower level of technological achievement, but also more alive in a more instinctive sense. It does not necessarily follow that they will also be happier.

There is no particular reason to believe that cultures which respect the natural vitality of man will be any more successful in removing the sources of group conflicts than Western civilisation has been; nor are the inward anxieties of Western man with their psycho-somatic outlets, any more destructive of human well-being than the outward projection of African fears and frustrations in the form of witchcraft, possession and similar manifestations.

Perhaps the answer lies, after all, in a blending of the two cultural streams, the tempering of Western "go-getting", artificiality and materialism with African relaxation, spontaneity and spirituality, the displacement of African inertia and sensuality by some of the enlightenment and idealism of the West.