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ACCULTURATION

The concept of acculturation is at the centre of the social changes which are taking place, not without some disorganization, in the developing countries. The increasing interest which they continue to arouse therefore necessitates, among other things, the utilization of exact and operational concepts in the study of a social reality undergoing profound changes and suddenly confronted with civilizations totally different from their own.

After doing our best to define the phenomenon of acculturation and to illustrate it with different examples, we will analyse the process of cultural borrowing which is normally, but not necessarily, the result of the meeting of two societies or two groups of individuals, thereby acquiring a greater knowledge of social milieux, which is a preliminary and indispensable condition for any action undertaken with a view to allowing these young countries to enter industrial society.

The point of contact between ethnology and sociology, acculturation in developing countries raises problems of a methodological order to which we will refer at the end of this study.

ATTEMPT AT DEFINITION

Like its close relation "culture," in the sense in which it is understood in French and which designates the standardization

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of modes of thought and action of individuals, *acculturation* is an Anglo-Saxon word; as far back as 1880 it appeared in a work by the American ethnologist J. W. Powell in the sense of cultural borrowing. This term had great success in the United States and, in 1935, a Sub-Committee of the Social Science Research Council was working on the definition which should be given to it.[1] The term was also adopted by French anthropologists, whereas in England it was known as *culture contact*.

If, as our first approach, we define acculturation as a phenomenon basically related to the cultural changes which occur following relations established between two different societies, we can distinguish six phases in this social process:

1. Contact;
2. Communication;
3. Evaluation or appreciation;
4. Total or partial acceptance of the pattern (or its rejection);
5. Integration and adjustments of the initial constituents;
6. Assimilation.

Communication first of all presupposes the establishment of a contact between two societies or two groups of individuals. By this term we understand physical conditions which allow of communication and social relations between individuals. This contact can first of all be a direct one. The example of the relationship which exists between conquering peoples and conquered peoples are of this type, as are the relationships which have been established between the colonized territories and the mother country. Anthropologists and sociologists adhere to this definition and underline the direct and continuous character of the contacts: "Acculturation comprehends those phenomena which result when groups of individuals having different cultures come into continuous first-hand contact, with subsequent changes in the original cultural patterns or either or both groups."[2] In our opinion, this very much restricts the phenomenon we are studying. Indirect contacts on the one hand, and (or) sporadic or even sudden and

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[1] Cf. below, the definition by Redfield, Linton and Herskovits.

[2] R. Redfield, M. J. Herskovits and R. Linton, "Memorandum on the Study of Acculturation," *American Anthropologist*, 1936, vol. 38, p. 149. Cf. also H. Mendras, *Eléments de Sociologie*, Paris, Armand Colin, 1967.

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unrenewed contacts on the other are sufficient, in our view, to set off the process of acculturation.

We said that contacts may be indirect. Communication between two different civilizations can be made through various instrumental techniques, such as the mass media (radio, press, books, television, etc.) or via the agency of people bearing the values of a given society (explorers, missionaries, etc.) Thus, if Americanization is to be observed in the consumption habits of people in Western Europe, then the latter is in an acculturative situation. Herskovits also quotes an interesting case which was seen among the Hausa of Nigeria. "As a result of the absence of prolonged contact with large groups of other Moslem peoples, the principal agent of acculturation consisted of books containing Islamic teaching. An amalgamation of Islamic and native beliefs was therefore the result of a process in which indigenous wise men, known as Malams, adapted to the native situation their findings in the sacred texts."[3]

Moreover, acculturation exists even though the contacts between two peoples may not be continuous. A brief encounter between two societies is sufficient to set off a process liable to affect the initial cultural constituents. The borrowing of cultural traits or patterns is to be found at the basis of the process, at least in its class conception. This borrowing can cause profound changes in the modes of thought or action of individuals. If one considers the colonial situation, for example, the impact of colonization does not disappear once direct and permanent contacts between the mother country and its former colony come to an end. But it continues to make its impression on the former colonial territories, and leads to profound socio-economic changes. The numerous African countries which have come to Independence since 1958-60 continue to live in a situation of acculturation, even though they may have totally ceased to maintain with their former colonizers relations of either a cultural, economic or social order.

Analogous situations exists in countries where the leading class applies a policy of apartheid or the separate development of races. The example of the Republic of South Africa comes immediately to mind. In this country, acculturation exists to the

[3] M. J. Herskovits, *Cultural Anthropology*, New York, Knopf, 1955.

extent that contacts do exist between populations of the white race and the black race, even if this relationship is one of the dominant to the dominated; in this case, therefore, we are back in a colonial situation. Moreover, supposing that the whites maintain no relations with the black population, a certain cultural compenetration nonetheless exists, since modern and western knowledge is taught in the universities and other teaching institutions exclusively reserved for black citizens.

In order to complete our definition, it should be added that acculturation presupposes the existence of two different civilizations. The process, which is related particularly but not exclusively to the social consequences of unilateral or reciprocal cultural borrowing, is by this very fact differentiated from other forms of social change such as those which occur at the heart of a given civilization—industrialization and its corollary, urbanization, for example. On the other hand, modifications brought about by the interpenetration of social groups within one society, whether it be a question for example of contact between the various social classes, do not come within the field of acculturation. These relations also occur within the framework of one and the same civilization.

Some people would add that one of the societies must be of a higher cultural level. This is the opinion of Malinowski and Murdock in particular. In this viewpoint one can perceive an underlying implication of the colonial type situation. Apart from the value judgements which such a conception of acculturation introduces, it raises the thorny problem of the definition of criteria which allow the appreciation of cultural levels reached by such and such a society. How can one assert that one civilization has attained a degree of cultural evolution higher than another? Are the traditional values of the Hindu civilization subordinate to those of the Anglo-Saxon civilization with which it was formerly in direct contact? Now a system of values grades cultural features in a given social structure, and consequently participates intimately in the cultural system. Moreover, it is generally known that Japan, in imitation of western societies, committed itself to industrialization and modernization as from the second half of the 19th century. Is this country culturally inferior or superior to China, from which it borrowed part of its religious traditions, or to the nations of the western world?

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This conception of the superiority of one civilization over another gives credit to the idea of the basically unilateral character of acculturation: the individuals of the most advanced societies transmit cultural modes which are proper to them to primitive or traditional societies, without, in exchange, undergoing the slightest change in their own modes of thought or action.

THE BILATERAL CHARACTER OF ACCULTURATION

Let us consider the colonial situation once again. It seems to be generally admitted that the European powers which conquered vast territories in Africa, Asia and South America diffused their values and set up their institutions in these places—briefly, they did their best, with more or less success, to impose their own cultural system, to the detriment of local beliefs.

On the other hand, the European conquerors and the colonists seem hardly to have been influenced by the modes of thought and action of the people they colonized. From this contact, the European gained material wealth, while the African for example picked the fruit of cultural values. This is expressed by the British anthropologist, Bronislav Malinowski, when he writes:

> But when one estimates the value of things given and compares them with things removed, one should not forget that when it is a question of gifts of the mind, it is easy to give but more difficult to accept. On the other hand, material advantages are easily acceptable, but are given up only with reticence. And yet it is with gifts of the mind that we are the most generous, while we hold on to wealth, power, independence and social equality.[4]

Apart from the underlying distinction between material and non-material culture to which we will refer later, this text stresses the unilateral character of non-material cultural transfer. This character can in effect be seen when one studies short-term acculturation. Borrowing by the colonist seems to be restricted to the adoption of local food and clothing habits, and perhaps the use of vernacular dialects.

[4] B. Malinowski, *The Dynamics of Culture Change. An Inquiry into Race Relations in Africa*, New Haven, Yale University Press, 1945, p. 57.

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If, on the other hand, one examines cultural contacts on a longterm basis, the bilateral character of acculturation can be seen much more clearly. Whilst, originally, the European introduces the values of the metropolitan society of which he is born, he will almost imperceptibly become detached from it and progressively cultivated in his new environment. On the one hand he will penetrate into an entirely new cultural world and will react in relation to elements of response which are no longer to be found solely in his own habits of mind. On the other hand, he will find a place in the cosmogony of primitive man where, alongside their ancestors, he will hold a privileged rank by reason of his skill—his "magic" power. Thus, the Europeans who hold various social positions in the stratification of their home country will no longer be considered as workers, tradesmen, administrators or bourgeois, but are liable to become in colonial or ex-colonial countries a classless society involved in a system of relations with the local communities. But there will be less and less connection with the mother country and a global society resulting from the encounter with the indigenous populations will be formed.

If we analyse acculturation on a long-term perspective, it can be seen that cultural transformations spare none of the societies which come into contact one with the other. On account of the respective contributions of the colonizers and the colonized, Africa for example seems to be following different roads from those of Western Europe, which was thought to have bequeathed to it a rich cultural heritage showing the only way to material and human progress.

To summarize, acculturation necessarily produces modifications in the groups which are in communication one with the other. Relationships established between societies imply reciprocal cultural exchanges and borrowing. Acculturation therefore appears as essentially bilateral in the effects which it produces. To be sure, one cannot deny the existence of situation where, following communications established between two societies, cultural transmission is made mostly in one direction and not in the other. If one restricts oneself to a classic definition of acculturation according to which borrowing, or even imitation and diffusion, constitutes a necessary phase of this process, it must

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be admitted that in certain cases there is no reciprocity in the transmission of cultural archetypes.

On the other hand, and this is our opinion, if one considers borrowing as a normal part of the process, but which does not necessarily occur in all situations of acculturation, it must be admitted that by the simple fact of intersocietal communication changes if not disorganization occur in the two societies which are in contact with each other, without for all that there being any borrowing. The successive phases of cultural interpenetration which we enumerated at the beginning of this article constitute a pattern for the process, but it can happen that only some of the stages are accomplished, but that these suffice to induce changes, sometimes profound ones, in the groups which have made contact. The hypothesis of rejection by one society of patterns proper to another society illustrate this case very well, as we shall see.

In short, societies are culturally affected to varying degrees. One could go so far as to say that all societies which have contact with others and which establish relations one with the other, either directly or through the intermediary of instrumental techniques, are in a situation of acculturation. To be sure, such a conception of this social phenomenon is an extremely broad one, and we might run the risk of being faced with the reproach to which allusion was made at the beginning of this article— namely, the utilization of a vague and inexact concept for the study of social changes.

In order to obviate this reproach, we must stress that it should be noted that there are degrees of acculturation. Thus the rejection by one civilization of cultural patterns belonging to another and the rupture of contacts between the two civilizations can none-theless lead to social change, even though this may only be the awareness of the existence of cultural differences. Still more, this rejection can result in the re-evaluation of the cult of ances-tral values and the reinforcement of traditional structures. A certain resurgence of the heritage of the past and an occasion-ally exacerbated nationalism in some countries of Africa has been an indication of the partial rejection of western values. One need only take as example the abolition of the teaching of French in Guinea, to the benefit of vernacular languages.

The events which took place in Rhodesia in 1961 give us

another example of what could be called a phenomenon of acculturation in reverse, or counter-acculturation. Let us briefly recall the facts. The native political parties decided to boycott the elections organized by the white minority of the country. What is more, the black leaders exhorted their followers openly to demonstrate their hostility to westernization by giving up wearing European clothes, spectacles, wrist-watches and various other things which in their view constituted symbols of oppression. They even went so far as to assert their opposition to the industrialization of the country, which they considered an obstacle to Bantu nationalism.

The rejection phase in acculturation is often an extreme case in so far as it does not entail important consequences in the way of life of the individual. One can imagine two or several communities in cohabitation who restrict themselves to commercial exchanges, without the contact affecting the system of beliefs or the social structures of the groups involved in the exchange. In Central Africa, for example, the pygmies have to a large extent retained the way of life they have followed for centuries, in spite of the many contacts, more or less prolonged, that they have had with other ethnic groups. In Haïti, too, the peasants of African origin have largely kept to their ancestral ways of life, despite Indian presence on the island and particularly in spite of two centuries of French colonization. In these types of situation, the process of acculturation attains, if one may put it this way, a point which is close to zero.

At the other extreme, the borrowing by a colonized society of techniques which are proper to the western world do not hinder the occurrence of profound changes. The continuation of cultural, economic and social relations during the post-colonial period will maintain the persistence of the acculturative situation to a greater extent. Moreover, the overall relations established between western Europe and the United States or Japan entail in these countries less profound modifications because of the fact that the cultural differences are less marked than those between, for example, Europe and Africa.[5] There therefore exist extreme situations and intermediary situations or, if one prefers, a whole continuum where the effects of the phenomenon we are

[5] M. De Coster, "L'influence de la culture sur la réalité industrielle," *Reflets et Perspectives de la vie économique*, Tome IX, No. 1, 1970, p. 59-76.

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studying have a more or less penetrating effect on the original cultural constituents.

The normal outcome of acculturation is the formation of a new society, which often brings in its train dysfunctional phenomena which we will briefly describe.

Taking, as an example, the encounter between two societies, one of the traditional type and the other modern,[6] various situations can occur. The cultural interpenetration of the two worlds can result in the formation of a new society at the end of the process whose principal phases we have described: contact, communication, appreciation, acceptance, integration and adjustment, assimilation. Although different from the former two, this society has nonetheless been made up from their respective cultural components. If the cultural elements are wellbalanced and smoothly integrated within this new society, this in no way means that it will be definitively consolidated at this level. The degree of evolution which it has attained will constitute a platform or new point of departure for the formation of a new milieu following further contacts with other civilizations.

It is sometimes also to be noticed that, during the course of the acculturation process, one part of the population of one society or the other rejects the new cultural traits which are offered or imposed and, as a result, remains on the fringe of this evolution; or, again, that some social norms of one society are not accepted by the other. Apart from this partial rejection, it also happens that this refusal to internalize foreign norms is a total one: this case has already been discussed.

PATHOLOGICAL ASPECTS OF ACCULTURATION

The contact of different cultures often entails pathological phenomena whose degree of gravity depends on several factors. The greater the difference between the two contacting civilizations, the more certain is the risk of disturbance in the social life. This social disorganization can be made manifest in different forms: resistance to change, rejection, anomy, etc.

[6] We have no intention of making value judgements when we use the words "traditional" and "modern," but of choosing two types of totally different societies, one of which is characterized by a certain conservatism, a marked cult of the past, and the other by a predisposition to change.

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Acculturation

Another factor may give rise to pathological consequences. Acculturation may be free and spontaneous; it also happens that it is enforced and imposed. Acculturation can also be balanced or unbalanced to the extent that intersocietal exchanges are much greater on one side than on the other. It happens that the imposition of a cultural system entails what we have referred to as acculturation in reverse, or perhaps situations of an anomic type.

The cultural shock caused by the meeting of two very different societies can lead to the result that individuals no longer know to which social norms they should adhere. In other words, the process of acculturation sometimes has the result of destructuring a traditional society, for example, without giving in exchange any social reconstruction. This type of phenomenon is qualified as anomic and, more concretely, characterizes a situation in which norms are inexistent so that the individual does not know how to orient his behaviour.[7] This situation is often expressed through serious social troubles, particularly by frequent recourse to the use of drugs and by increases in the rates of prostitution, delinquency, criminality and suicide, etc. If, as we have already defined it, acculturation is related not only to the contact and communication between two groups or two societies, but also to the consequences resulting from them, then anomy appears as a dysfunctional phenomenon disturbing cultural interpenetration.

Anomic situations were observed during the colonial era, when primitive societies witnessed the constitution, alongside a traditional system of the distribution of power, of a new system imposed by the colonial authorities. The coexistence of these two systems gave rise to many conflicts which the colonial administrators had difficulty in settling. In the same way, the sudden collapse of colonial power around 1959-60, of which the former Belgian Congo is the most noteworthy example, saw the establishment in several African countries, for more or less long periods, of a sort of power vacuum, no local authority being able to set up a political and administrative structure capable of replacing the former colonial power.

Moreover, from the detailed investigations aimed at discovering

[7] E. Durckheim, *Le Suicide*, Paris, F. Alcan, 1930, chap. V: Le suicide anomique.

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the general causes for the absenteeism of African workers, the rate of which varies between 15 and 20%, it emerged that the imperatives of custom still to a large extent explain the absence, unjustified in the eyes of the western employer, of native workers. For example, a worker belonging to a clan of which one of the members has just died is confronted not only with a system of ancestral values which order him to return to his village under pain of risking the disapproval or even the condemnation of the clan, but also with modern norms which forbid him to leave his work. This conflict in norms gives rise to anomic situations.

BORROWING IN THE ACCULTURATION PROCESS

We have seen that cultural borrowing was not an obligatory step in the process of acculturation except in its classic context, but that it nonetheless constituted an important factor worthy of our attention.

A whole body of Anglo-Saxon literature distinguishes two major categories of borrowing: material cultural elements and non-material cultural elements.[8] Material culture includes physical objects, directly observable, which have been created by man and which have influenced people's way of living—central heating, telephone and motor-cars, for example. Non-material culture can be summarized in an ensemble of ideological, religious, philosophical or scientific beliefs. Linton, for his part, makes a trichotomous distinction; for he distinguishes between material phenomena, or the products of industry, kinetic phenomena, i.e. explicit conducts which necessarily involve movement, and psychological phenomena which consist of knowledge as well as the value systems in which members of the society participate.[9]

These distinctions, clear though they may appear in theory, give rise to problems of application in research carried out in the field. But independently of these difficulties, this distinction between material and non-material elements is not a penetrating

[8] W. M. Hurh, "Imitation: Its Limits in the Process of Intersocietal Culture Decisions," *International Social Science Journal*, Vol. XX, No. 3, 1968, p. 456; J. M. Pfiffner and F. P. Sherwood, *Administrative Organization*, Englewood Cliffs, N. J., Prentice-Hall Inc., 1960, chapt. 14: The Culture.

[9] R. Linton, *The Cultural Background of Personality*, New York, Appleton-Century-Crofts Inc., 1945, p. 38.

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one for the analysis of social change, and particularly for the analysis of acculturation which is one of its aspects. This categorization of the cultural phenomenon endeavours to be operational in the sense that it tries to demonstrate that traditional peoples first of all imitate the material aspects of a culture, i.e. the aspect which appears to them in physical form and which is more easily assimilated. Then, at a later stage of acculturation they assimilate the non-material elements.

In fact, this is not the case. If one defines culture as the standardization of modes of thought, these possess an objective existence only through their externalization in action. Culture therefore includes apparent elements, or actions—i.e. behaviour modifying, intentionally or otherwise, the external world of men and objects—and concealed elements, that is the mental ratiocination which determined this or that type of action. Thus, as we will see, the borrowing process, and therefore the process of acculturation itself, differs in highly industrialized countries and in developing countries.

In the industrialized countries, the adoption of a pattern is often considered as a series of transformations giving rise to a collection of adaptations by different parts of the whole composing a given cultural system, so that it is very difficult at the end of the assimilation process to perceive the original pattern which was borrowed from the foreign civilization. It is rare that a cultural trait is adopted just as it is without undergoing any form of modification, and this is reflected in the ensemble of the structure with which it is integrated. Imitation is not restricted to the external aspect of the pattern, but also grasps the mental ratiocination. It is therefore more complete than that which is to be observed in young countries. In the first case, it includes both the apparent phenomena of the pattern, i.e. the objectively observable action, and also the forms of thought or ideas which determined these types of action.

In countries where the industrial tradition is more recent, and particularly in the former colonial territories, the process of imitation is rarely carried out in the manner we have just described. The borrowing of cultural traits is too often restricted to the external aspects of patterns which have been diffused via European colonization. Thus the process of imitation makes apparent an evident duality which no longer exists in the terminal

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phase of the same process occurring in the industrialized countries.

In fact the apparent cultural duality of the young nations is often to be seen in the following manner: individuals dress in western style clothing, adopt the language of their former colonizers, imitate their way of living, make use of their techniques, but nonetheless retain archaic modes of thought. If they learn new techniques in Europe, the élite of these countries find great difficulty in modifying or adapting them to local contingencies, because they have not been able to assimilate the mental ratiocination, i.e. the non-apparent parts of western technology. In their case, the adoption of foreign cultural patterns remains epiphenomenal if viewed in an acculturation perspective, i.e. within the framework of communication between two different societies. On the other hand, we will see that if one considers the process of enculturation, by which we mean the diffusion of cultural patterns within the society itself, the techniques borrowed are reformulated within the system of reference of this élite. These considerations allow us to discard the theory distinguishing three aspects or three phases of acculturation: transculturation, the process by which cultural transmission is effected, deculturation, in which the imitating society loses totally its own cultural patterns, and finally acculturation *stricto sensu*, or the reception by this society of foreign patterns. In fact, the members of a society do not dispose of their cultural archetypes, but if new elements are introduced these are reformulated in the light of their "*Weltanschauung*."

METHODOLOGICAL ASPECTS OF ACCULTURATION

The analysis of social milieux undergoing acculturation raises important methodological problems, some of whose aspects will be discussed here. One could put the question of which is the most appropriate method for investigating such a complex social reality. Should one break it down and consider the culture contacts as a juxtaposition of two global societies, or should one rather consider these milieux as one sole concrete whole wherein heterogeneous elements are interwoven and fused? The dualistic pattern, which is the approach generally used for the study of developing countries, gives preference to an apprehension of

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the social reality taking the modern-traditional dichotomy as a starting point, and, consequently, to a dissociation of the reality based on these two poles.

In our opinion, there exists no "dualistic theory" in the sense that a theory is a systematized ensemble of knowledge explicative of a reality, but in our view there do exist methods of approach varying from the simple point of departure—for the analysis of a given situation—to the most evolved pattern, in the sense that Max Weber utilized this concept.

The dualistic pattern may be summarized in the following way. Social phenomena observed among the peoples of developing countries are connected with two different types of mode of insertion into the global society. These two modes are modern on the one hand, and traditional on the other. The origins of this phenomenon are to be found in the heritage of European colonization. In these societies the European colonists diffused modes of thought and action which were proper to them, and which came into conflict with traditional techniques, so that two types of very different cultures were coexistent. For some sociologists who are partisans of this approach, these cultural systems are incompatible in the sense that the archaic culture constitutes a coherent and indissociable whole; if one of the elements were caused to disappear on account of acculturation, the whole edifice on which the system of traditional beliefs was based would collapse. In these conditions, it is inconceivable that the archaic mentality would be able to adapt itself progressively to contact with modern civilization, or that modern explicatory factors could be grafted onto the "*Weltanschauung*" of traditional peoples. According to this strict conception of the dualistic pattern, the traditional society constitutes a sort of enclave or islet totally distinct from a broader society and can only be analysed by reference to its own system of stratification. This is why supporters of this conception often talk in terms of "development blockage" to explain the impossibility of a symbiosis of the two systems.

Since then, this pattern has acquired a certain amount of flexibility. At present, less is said of development blockage than of putting a brake on development, tending to prove that traditional culture, while still remaining fundamentally different from modern culture, can be modified by contact with the latter

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without the foundations of the system being undermined. According to this conception, which acts as a corrective to the too absolute dualistic pattern outlined above, the effect of the traditional factor is to slow down the process of modernization. It follows, as a result, that a traditional society can be interpreted by reference to the global society in which it is situated.

Instead of speaking of modern cultural enclaves, of islets of modernity or of "interstitial industrialization"[10] in a traditional civilization, sociologists tend rather to consider the dualistic pattern as the existence in the same individuals of a double frame of reference for action. Alain Touraine uses the concept of "segmented conscience" to characterize individuals who sometimes follow the pattern of traditional archetypes and on other occasions follow modern patterns of a western type, according to the situation with which they are faced.[11]

Although one should not deny the existence of a certain dimorphous reality at the epiphenomenal level, the dualistic pattern is based on the study of two distinct societies, analysed as each possessing their own determinism, and, at the extreme, independently of their global structure. Yet on the methodological plane it would be unfortunate not not study acculturation in a holistic perspective, i.e. more the dynamics proper to it rather than to a divided society which would not take account of the original social structure of acculturation.

Examples will allow us to throw light on this problem and to underline the mistake which in our opinion would consist in analysing populations who have undergone or are undergoing acculturation as taking their inspiration sometimes from traditional archetypes and sometimes from modern cultural patterns, being able to orient their behaviour only within the framework of a primitive society or an industrial society, respectively.

We will take our first example from the world of the African bush. In most of the tribes which populate the savannah or tropical forests of central Africa, the bush people ensure their livelihood through hunting, fishing or gathering. As an accessory side-line, they also do some very rudimentary cultivation. It is

[10] The term originated with B. R. Salz (*The Human Element in Industrialization. A Hypothetical Case Study of Ecuadorean Indians*, Chicago, 1955).

[11] A. Touraine, "Industrialisation et conscience ouvrière à Saô-Paulo," *Sociologie du Travail*, No. 4, 1961, pp. 77-95 and esp. p. 84.

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a known fact that in many of the small tribes of the Kwilu region and on both sides of the Congo River, as well as in some of the Bantu tribes of Angola and Zambia, work on the land is generally considered as a degrading activity, usually left to the women and slaves. According to tradition it is, as a general rule, hardly conceivable that a man put his hand to spade or hoe in order to break up the soil. The men prefer to go in for more superior activities, such as livestock raising, hunting or fishing.

As the aboriginal communities came progressively into contact one with the other, they exchanged their surplus products. Then the following phenomenon was seen to take place among the tribes: the men condescended to cultivate the land, but a careful distinction was made between the harvest products. The women's crop was kept for the community's consumption, while the product of the men's harvest was in a way commercialized, i.e. bartered for other products which the tribe lacked. Then it was seen that this "masculine" production increased more and more and went to supply the local markets—in exchange for which the producers received a cash income—or it was sold directly to commercial tradesmen.

The first agricultural undertakings which came to settle in the bush region had, in the early days, the greatest difficulty in hiring farm labourers. It was soon realised, indeed, that to ask them to work on the land was a humiliation to them. Nevertheless, the large agricultural companies finally broke down these prejudices by making people understand that they would receive a salary in exchange for their work.

In fact, the conflict of values which made the European societies clash with the natives was progressively solved by the reformulation of the Bantu's social system, on whom a salary bestowed particular prestige and, as a result, they could be regarded not as field labourers or "*bassendje*" (peasants) but as wage-earners. This long process of acculturation which has just been described was not the resultant of the juxtaposition of two value systems, nor of the pure and simple integration of the European system to the detriment of the traditional system (unremunerated cultivation still remaining the lot of the women), but of a reformulation of foreign norms in terms of a traditional system.

In the same way, the study of the Messianic movements which

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have met with a certain amount of success among Ba-Kongo ethnic groups (André Matswa' "Amicalism" and Simon Kimbangu's "Kimbanguism") show a resurgence of the ancestral heritage and a reformulation of religious principles borrowed from the Judeo-Christian tradition. Hermeneutics of the religious texts of the black people of the Americas (Cuba, Haïti and Brazil in particular) confirm an analogous phenomenon: the gods of these peoples have been syncretized with Catholic saints.

In the field of therapeutics, ethnologists have remarked that patients in the urban environments of black Africa have recourse to the services of healers and European doctors successively. If the patient goees first of all to the village healer before visiting the European doctor, it is so that the treatment given by the latter should be more effective. In this case, therefore, there is no conflict of values but a complementarity of the two systems or, to be more precise, the integration of modern medicine into traditional therapeutics.

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We believe that it would be erroneous to regard the adoption of foreign techniques and customs by members of a society as the surrender of their cultural patterns in the course of a deculturation process. In fact, they are only adopting foreign norms in terms of their own system of beliefs.

In societies in a situation of acculturation, the individuals are impregnated with a culture. This constitutes a coherent system at the heart of which are woven disparate elements whose origins are to be found both in ancestral traditions and in the heritage of colonization, if one takes as example the African countries which have recently attained independence, i.e. places where acculturation is occurring with the greatest intensity and gives rise to profound modifications. Composite though it may be, this culture is nonetheless a unit on account of the fusion of foreign elements within the traditional system. It would seem, therefore, that in the urban and agricultural milieux of the young nations affected by modernization, individuals do not refer sometimes to traditional cultural patterns and on other occasions to modern patterns, or even to a juxtaposition of two different cultural systems. Individuals react rather to a given situation in terms of

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the elements of response which they find in their own culture and which is modified through the reformulation and the integration of foreign norms within this system.

Acculturation should be studied as a global phenomenon involving the analysis of two or several cultures considered as a configuration of networks of interindividual relationships, rather than regarding the civilizations in contact as absolutely distinct entities each one responding to its own determinism.