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Memorandum for the Study of Acculturation

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Française d'Extrême Orient, to accept de Hevesy's views and to characterize them as a "*pas mince découverte*" (Bull., l'École Franç. d'Extr. Orient, 1934).

There can be no doubt as to the importance of the two discoveries mentioned above, but there is still a third one. This is that W. Schmidt's Austric and Austro-Asiatic families of languages *are non-existent*. It was proved by de Hevesy in a paper in the Bulletin of the School of Oriental Studies (London), in his book "Fin-nisch-Ugrisches aus Indien" and in a paper presented before the Third International Congress of Linguists at Rome. The evidences brought forward were so convincing that already fully 98% of the specialists agree with de Hevesy.

The AMERICAN ANTHROPOLOGIST being principally of an Americanist nature, some of its readers are likely to be misled by the tenor of Doctor Michelson's note. I therefore thought it useful to correct any possible misunderstanding.

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### MEMORANDUM FOR THE STUDY OF ACCULTURATION

Recognizing the importance of the study of acculturation, and the varying points of view from which the problem has been approached, the Social Science Research Council, early last year, appointed the undersigned as a Committee to analyze the work on the problem already done, to study the implications of the term "acculturation," and to explore new leads for further investigation. After a number of meetings, the following outline was drawn up as a first step toward clarifying the problem and to serve as an aid in the classification of studies already made.

The work of the Committee will be facilitated, and its final report the more complete, if its members have knowledge of as many of the studies of acculturation now being carried on as is possible. To this end, the tentative outline which has been drawn up to help organize its work is presented with the suggestion that information concerning acculturation studies now in progress be sent to the Chairman, or any member of the Committee, at the addresses indicated below. It will be particularly helpful if, in sending such material, the extent to which the data do or do not fall in with the categories set up in this outline might be indicated. It is expected that the results of the Committee's work will be made available to persons who communicate with it. The file of their names, and of the problems on which they are engaged, will also be available for the exchange of information and methods.

#### OUTLINE FOR THE STUDY OF ACCULTURATION

##### I. Definition

"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 of either or both groups."

(NOTE: Under this definition, acculturation is to be distinguished from *culture-change*, of which it is but one aspect, and *assimilation*, which is at times a phase of acculturation. It is also to be differentiated from *diffusion*, which, while occurring in all instances of accul-

turation, is not only a phenomenon which frequently takes place without the occurrence of the type of contact between peoples specified in the definition given above, but also constitutes only one aspect of the process of acculturation.)

## II. Approach to the problem

### A. Listing of materials available for study

1. Published materials—of prehistoric contacts (to indicate how acculturation has characterized human contacts from early times), as well as of contacts between primitive groups, between primitive and literate groups (both mechanized and non-mechanized), and between literate groups of either or both categories.
2. Unpublished materials of studies in acculturation which are completed or in progress.

### B. Classification of the above materials

1. Do these studies treat of entire cultures or specific phases of culture?
2. If the studies are restricted ones, what phases of the culture are treated?
3. What are the motivations of the studies (insofar as this affects the type of material treated), e.g., are they scientific, or are they designed to aid in the formulation of administrative, educational, or missionary policy?

### C. Techniques employed in the studies analyzed

1. Direct observation of acculturation in process.
2. Recent acculturation studied through interviews with members of acculturated groups.
3. Use of documentary evidence which gives historic testimony concerning early contacts which have resulted in acculturation.
4. Deductions from historical analyses and reconstructions.

## III. Analysis of acculturation

(NOTE: The significance of physical type in determining attitudes operative in acculturation, as well as the importance of the concomitant occurrence of race-mixture or its prohibition, must not be overlooked as a factor which may pervade any situation, process, or result envisaged in this section.)

### A. *Types of contacts*

1. Where contacts are between entire groups; or are between an entire population and selected groups from another population, e.g., missionaries, traders, administrators, special craftsmen, pioneers and their families, and immigrant males (all these considered with special reference to the elements of culture likely to be made available by the members of such special groups to the population among whom they live).
2. Where contacts are friendly, or are hostile.
3. Where contacts are between groups of approximately equal size, or between groups of markedly different size.
4. Where contacts are between groups marked by unequal degrees of complexity in material or non-material aspects of culture, or both, or in some phases of either.
5. Where contacts result from the culture-carriers coming into the habitat of the receiving group, or from the receiving group being brought into contact with the new culture in a new region.

### B. *Situations* in which acculturation may occur

1. Where elements of culture are forced upon a people, or are received voluntarily by them.
2. Where there is no social or political inequality between groups.

3. Where inequality exists between groups, in which case any of the following may result:
  - a. political dominance by one group, without recognition of its social dominance by the subject group;
  - b. political and social dominance by one group;
  - c. recognition of social superiority of one group by the other without the exercise of political dominance by the former.
- C. The *processes* of acculturation
  1. *Selection* of traits under acculturation:
    - a. the order in which traits are selected (in specific cases);
    - b. the possible relationships to be discerned between the selection of traits under the various types of contacts leading to acculturation, and the situations in which acculturation may occur (as set down under III A and B above);
    - c. partial presentation of traits under forced acculturation;
      - a'. types of traits permitted and forbidden to receiving group;
      - b'. techniques employed by donor group for imposing traits;
      - c'. types of traits whose acceptance can be forced;
      - d'. limitations of forced acceptance;
    - d. resistance of receiving group to traits presented to them;
      - a'. reasons for this resistance;
      - b'. significance of understanding resistance to traits as well as acceptance of them.
  2. *Determination* of traits presented and selected in acculturation situations:
    - a. traits presented by the donor group because of
      - a'. practical advantages, such as economic profit or political dominance;
      - b'. desirability of bringing about conformity to values of the donor group, such as humanitarian ideals, modesty, etc.;
      - c'. ethical and religious considerations;
    - b. traits selected by the receiving group because of
      - a'. economic advantages;
      - b'. social advantages (prestige);
      - c'. congruity of existing culture-patterns;
      - d'. immediacy and extensiveness of changes necessitated in certain aspects of the culture by the adoption of functionally related traits;
    - c. traits rejected by receiving group.
  3. *Integration* of traits into the patterns of the accepting culture:
    - a. the factor of *time* that has elapsed since the acceptance of a trait;
    - b. the element of *conflict* produced within a culture by the acceptance of new traits at variance with pre-existing ones, and the degree of conflict which ensues;
    - c. the process of *adjustment* in acculturation;
      - a'. modification and reinterpretation of traits taken over;
      - b'. modification of pre-existing patterns resulting from the taking over of new traits;
      - c'. displacement of older traits in a pattern by new ones;
      - d'. "survivals";
      - e'. transfer of sanctions;
      - f'. shifts in cultural focus caused by acculturation.

IV. *Psychological mechanisms* of selection and integration of traits under acculturation

## A. The rôle of the individual

1. As member of the selecting group; personality of the first individuals to accept foreign traits and their position in society as influencing selection and acceptance of new traits.
2. As member of the donor group: personality of the individuals who are in contact with the receiving group, their attitudes and points of view, and the way in which the group to which they belong is regarded by members of the receiving group, as making for favorable and unfavorable reception of traits.
3. The individual as member of a special group in his society (priestly class, sib, secret society, etc.) and his position in this group, as accelerating or retarding acceptance of new traits.

## B. Possible consistencies in personality types of those who accept or reject new traits.

## C. Differential selection and acceptance of traits in accordance with sex lines, differing social strata, differing types of belief, and occupation.

## D. Initial hostility and subsequent reconciliation of individuals to the new culture as a factor in integrating new culture-traits, and caused by

1. intensity of contact;
2. duration of contact and resulting habituation to new cultural elements;
3. social, economic or political advantages resultant upon acceptance;

## E. Psychic conflict resulting from attempts to reconcile differing traditions of social behavior and different sets of social sanctions.

V. *The results of acculturation*A. *Acceptance*: where the process of acculturation eventuates in the taking over of the greater portion of another culture and the loss of most of the older cultural heritage; with acquiescence on the part of the members of the accepting group, and, as a result, assimilation by them not only to the behavior patterns but to the inner values of the culture with which they have come into contact.B. *Adaptation*: where both original and foreign traits are combined so as to produce a smoothly functioning cultural whole which is actually an historic mosaic; with either a reworking of the patterns of the two cultures into a harmonious meaningful whole to the individuals concerned, or the retention of a series of more or less conflicting attitudes and points of view which are reconciled in everyday life as specific occasions arise.C. *Reaction*: where because of oppression, or because of the unforeseen results of the acceptance of foreign traits, contra-acculturative movements arise; these maintaining their psychological force (a) as compensations for an imposed or assumed inferiority, or (b) through the prestige which a return to older pre-acculturative conditions may bring to those participating in such a movement.

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