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## THE PRIMITIVE RACES IN AMERICA

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The literature relating, specifically, to the psychology of the primitive races in America, during the past two or three years, is exceedingly meager, and indeed in most cases its psychological bearing is rather indirect.

In Part I. of the *Handbook of the American Indian Languages* (I) an attempt is made to bring together material bearing on the morphology and phonetics of the American languages with a view, ultimately, of organizing an analytical grammar. When more material has been collected in subsequent volumes, an attempt will be made to get hold of the phonetic processes involved in these languages, so as to discover the psychological foundations of their structure.

Boas, in the introduction of eighty-three pages, traces the significant social and psychological influences which have been factors in modifying phonal, articulatory and language complexes. His study brings out the fact that there is little correlation between language, material culture, and anatomical structure when these three elements are employed, respectively, to determine ethnic relationship between groups of people. A difference in physical type, and customs, is noted when the language is common; or one finds the anatomical type the same, but the language and the social customs at wide variance, and so on. This makes it fairly certain that sets of influences may act now in one direction and now in another. Boas's conclusion is that the biological unit is safest as being the most inclusive and permanent, since, obviously, anatomical structure reacts

more slowly to changes than do either social customs or linguistic forms.

Considerable discussion is given to the inherent nature of language forms, and attention is called to the very limited number of the possible phonetic elements that are actually employed in human speech. Boas holds that the influence which determines the particular group of phonetic elements that are used in a given language is their facility in articulation, since, all unconsciously, those phonetic elements are selected which make for the most rapid communication. All languages have a few phonetic elements in common, but each has some that are peculiar to itself. One tends to interpret the elements of a strange speech in terms of those phonetic elements with which he is familiar, and thus there arises always an error in placing correctly unfamiliar language forms. In this way one accounts for a fallacy that has frequently arisen, to the effect that primitive peoples are unable to differentiate phonetic elements. Different observers attribute to a group different forms of pronunciation, because of a personal error of observation. Boas finds no correlation between similarity in psychological traits of two peoples and their language structure, so that the morphological structure of a language is little related to the mental development of a people.

In the *Handbook* are presented also detailed language studies of the Athabascans, by Goddard; the Flenguait and Haida, by Swanton; the Tsimshian, Kwakuitl, and Chinook, by Boas; the Maida, by Dixon; the Algonquian, by Jones; the Siouan, by Boas and Swanton; and the Eskimo, by Thalbitzer. Thus there is made available some carefully prepared material for an exhaustive comparative Indian language study.

Bushnell (2) gives the results of an exhaustive study of twelve Choctaws, the remnants of a numerous people once living in the Bayou Lacombe region of Louisiana. A few artifacts were unearthed, which belonged to the prehistoric inhabitants. They indicate a relatively low state of culture, and indeed the present inhabitants in point of fundamental habits and customs have probably undergone but little change as the result of their associations with Whites for five or six generations. Their habitations are still crude, improvised shelters; their food habits primitive; their implements and forms of adornment simple and barbaric; nor do their forefathers seem to have given much attention to the spiritual or matters of spirit worship. Many of the original customs and beliefs still persist, such as the form of tribe and family organization, the institution of marriage,

customs associated with death and burial, the form of punishment for criminal offences. Bushnell found them still using their old games and pastimes, and there has persisted a firm belief in their historic myths (3) and superstitions. These relate to an account of the creation, the presence of sickness and evil, the origin of evil spirits, and many other myths having to do with the ordinary affairs of life. Suggestive of the simplicity and childlike character of their mental machinery, is the direct, uncritical and purely objective character of their explanations, which is in marked contrast with the symbolism of some of their neighbors and that of the northern Indians. The influence of their environment is directly apparent. The dense forests and swamps are regarded as the haunts of mysterious beings to whom they attribute all manner of personal injuries and unusual natural phenomena. Some of these beings are visible to the eye, the presence of others can be detected only by their sounds.

Eastman (5), himself an Indian, purports to give an analytical interpretation of the Indian mind, his religious nature, his concept of ceremonial and symbolic worship, his moral code and moral sense, and the subtle, spiritual, and ideal elements of his being. One is tempted to question, however, whether Eastman's Indian is not, like Hiawatha, more mythical than real; whether, indeed, he has not given us an æsthetic, highly ethical, and deeply spiritual, interpretation of a set of habits and customs, which was wholly foreign to the primitive Indian mind. Eastman tells us that rightly interpreted the Indian was a mystic, that he was always thinking of the deeper meaning of things, that to the Indian there was a spiritual and a physical mind, and that to the latter were relegated ceremonials, charms, incantations; affairs which had to do with personal safety, sickness, food, and other selfish interests. The spiritual mind deals only with the essence of things, and concerning the spiritual the Indian never spoke. Obviously then spiritual matters were wholly intuitive, and since he never related his thoughts concerning these matters, one could truly know only by inference whether the Indian felt them.

Eastman is writing doubtless of the Dakotas, since he pretends to speak from his own early experiences. These Indians believed they possessed a soul in common with animals, plants, and inanimate objects. They held to a future state but did not concern themselves as to its nature. We are told, they were logical thinkers on matters within their experience; that they were individualistic in such things as religion and war; and that they were fearless, death having no

dread, since life had value simply in the interest of family and friends, and when these interests demanded, one sacrificed his life gladly. The Indian was said to be courageous, as a matter of course, yielding neither to fear, danger, desire, or agony, it being disgraceful, only, to be killed in a private quarrel.

The one paramount mystic ceremony that the Sioux observed was the vapor bath, which was performed with great solemnity, and is said to have influenced the spiritual life of the partaker very profoundly.

Eastman's book is interesting reading. He has taken the precaution to say it does not pretend to be scientific, and indeed, it is of doubtful value as a contribution to our knowledge of the Indian mind.

Grinnell (7) has collected some legends relative to two sacred objects, and the mystic ceremonies connected with them, which the Cheyenne say have always belonged to their tribe,—the medicine arrows, and the sacred Buffalo Hat. With both these objects are associated also mystic culture heroes. The origin and purpose of the objects have to do with the warding off of danger, and the provision of food. In olden times, during a great famine, when the tribes were about to be stricken off, corn, buffalo and other game were brought by the mystic appearance of a strange old man and woman, who, however, remained with the tribe only a very short while, when they abruptly disappeared. Before leaving, they enjoined the tribe to certain observances, on penalty of a return of the famine should they lapse. Notwithstanding, through some oversight, the observances were not strictly kept and the threatened famine immediately followed. While away in search of food the Buffalo Hat was found and was brought into camp. Immediately it cast a spell which caused the buffalo and game to return, and the corn to grow. The origin of the medicine arrows is equally mystic. It is said that the hero who found the medicine arrows possessed rare spiritual powers. He could, for example, change his form to that of an eagle, a fox, a cloud, or simply vanish into vapor, and when fancy pleased return to his human form.

The Buffalo Hat and the medicine arrows have been cherished possessions of these tribes for generations. They afford spiritual protection; are talismans given them, they believe, by the spirits to help their people to health and plenty in time of peace, and in war to give them victory over their enemies. So long as proper reverence is given these relics, and the ceremonies associated with them are religiously observed, these protective gifts are helpful, but failure in

these matters has invariably led to misfortune, famine, and defeat by their enemies.

The Buffalo Hat typifies subsistence, the medicine arrows defence. The latter were medicine for men; the women might look upon them; the former was largely medicine for women. Grinnell (8) gives a detailed account of the ceremonies related to each of these objects, and the story of the capture of the arrows by the Pawnee in one of their wars. Here among a primitive race we thus find a form of symbolism which indicates considerable power of mental abstraction.

Swanton (11) reports, at length, on the Indians of the south central states. Unfortunately, most of his data are from secondhand sources, so obviously their value is correspondingly less. They are largely a collation of the reports of travellers and traders who visited this region in the early days.

In material culture the tribes, judging from these reports, were not far advanced, but there had developed among them a very strongly centralized form of social organization, and a fairly well organized mode of religious worship. The government consisted in a despotic control exercised by a centralized authority, known as the great chief, who ruled over the eight, or ten subsidiary chiefs of surrounding villages, and each such group formed an independent social unit. Now, in the central village of each group, there stood a temple for the worship of the great spirit, and within each temple an altar fire was kept constantly burning, a functionary being set apart whose exclusive business it was to keep the fire kindled and to see to it that it should never become extinguished. It is said that some of the villages did not have true temples, nevertheless the temple form of worship was a characteristic of the southern Indians. The temples were dedicated to the sun, and associated with worship in them was an elaborate ceremonial. Four or five days of fasting, at the least, and the use of emetics till the blood issued, was a necessary form of preparation; and a contrite submission and silent contemplation was the assumed attitude of the worshiper. To the temple the father always carried his first fruits. One passing the edifice, bearing a burden, must put it down and go through a form of exhortation to appease the spirit that dwelt within. Legend has it that the building of temples was commanded by a man and his wife who visited the people from the sun, and thus it is that all temples were dedicated to the sun spirit.

Belief in a kind of spiritism was universal with these people.

They peopled the universe with spirits, and the spirits formed a sort of hierarchy, with the sun at the head all-powerful and supreme. So far as is known, however, there was no belief in anything akin to a distinctly evil spirit.

With a social organization as complex as obtained among these Indians, it is not surprising to find evidences of a caste system. Social levels existed, based on an hierarchy of totemic clans. Property and individual rights were, however, generally respected. A medical function was also recognized, which, although not altogether free from magic, was far more highly specialized than among the Northern Indians. Polygamy extended to as many wives as a man could support. Wives were not held absolutely to faithfulness to their husbands and chastity among unmarried girls was said to be practically non-existent.

Freire-Marreco (6) has found evidences from a close study of the Mohave-Apache, of the Verde River, Arizona, which she believes controverts some teachings of many English anthropologists, to the effect that it is a fundamental characteristic of primitive mind to be mobbish. She discovered rather a loose, individualistic mode of life among these peoples, and this she throws into contrast with the strongly centralized and coherent social organization of some related tribes, the Pueblo of the Upper Rio Grande, New Mexico. Freire-Marreco is convinced that the determining factor in fixing the character of the social organization of a primitive people is not a natural mental bent, but rather the nature of the physical environment that encompasses them. Whether the obtaining of food, for example, is dependent on coöperative endeavor or the individual initiative of the members of the group; or whether, possibly, the nature of the environment is such as to compel or preclude coöperative effort, she holds, carries more weight in determining the mode of life of a people than their inherent mental make-up.

The Mohave-Apache are not so advanced in material culture as the Pueblo. They live in small camps, scattered here and there, two hundred, frequently, being spread out over an area of seven miles square. They have their subsistence by hunting and gathering wild fruit, and according to the Pueblo their manner of life is more like that of brutes than humans. In contrast the Pueblo are congregated into compact villages, two hundred being crowded together upon an acre of ground. They are agriculturists and carry on quite an extensive scheme of coöperative irrigation. A Pueblo spends his entire life in close proximity to the village of his birth, while the

Mohave-Apache wanders away hundreds of miles, as the presence or absence of food tempts him to move on. A corresponding difference is noted in the manner of internal organization. While the Mohave-Apache have no centralized form of control or machinery for coördinate effort, except a war chief who is without function save in war, the Pueblo village has a chief and council that exercise rather definite legislative and judicial control. Freire-Marreco takes as an illustration of the differences in practice of these forms of organization the annual spring festival dance, a ceremony of petition to the great spirit for a return of the vernal rains. Among the Mohave-Apache any one may start the dance and give it any direction that the impulse of the moment may dictate. The interest grows from day to day and other individuals and tribes join in from time to time, as they become possessed with the desire. With the Pueblo, on the other hand, it is radically different. This feast is definitely planned in advance, and the plans are submitted to the council for ratification. Not only is its character predetermined, but the date of its commencement and every detail of its procedure are thoroughly prearranged.

Here then are two forms of social organization strikingly different and it is held that the determining influence which has shaped them, respectively, is simply a matter of difference in general social morphology.

A form of social organization quite as loose as that of the Mohave-Apache obtained among the Eastern Cree and Northern Sauteau, reported by Skinner (10). Among these tribes each family formed a distinct social unit, which partook of the patriarchal character; the sole bond of coöperative unity appearing to lie in the family totem. Frequent changes in the location of camps, because of food scarcity, precluded the possibility of anything like a permanent village community. The families were ordinarily widely scattered, often as many as twenty miles intervening between any two, and under such circumstances, it is clear, even a rough coöperative system would necessarily break down.

Skinner offers extensive data regarding these tribes, their habits, material culture, and family and social customs. Polygamy formerly was common, and when a man married an older sister he usually took the younger ones also as they became old enough. Social purity among the unmarried was not held as a virtue, nor was fidelity of wife to husband considered a social necessity.

Animism and spiritism were highly developed, and there existed something in the nature of a spirit worship. At the proper age the

young man would repair to a place of seclusion in the forest, where, with fasting, and prayer to the great spirit, he awaited his vision, in which his future should be revealed to him, with its possibilities and limitations; and no one pretended to extend his activities beyond what his vision had vouchsafed. Conjury was practiced in the hunt, in love-making, in war, and to avenge a personal wrong. If one wished to harm an enemy, the spirit left its body, which then would be stretched out lifeless, whence it departed to injure or kill, by magic, whom it would. Animals, too, were believed to possess spirits as well as men, and their favor, it was thought, must be obtained if that species were to be taken by the hunter. Indeed, direct communication with the animal world was carried on by especially gifted individuals. To the bear, in particular, was attributed highly human powers, in that he was believed to understand any conversation that he might overhear. It is thus apparent that a very close kinship was felt with the animal creation.

There was some medical knowledge, but the physician must be one who was also highly skilled in magic. Idiots were believed to be possessed of evil spirits, so usually they were killed by burning at the stake, but no attention or treatment was accorded the insane.

On the Negro, only two scientific studies have been reported. Odum (9), in the one, has attempted to cover the entire field of the Negro's mental and social life, but, unfortunately, his data are only from observations and certain general interrogations. The present pressing need is for information regarding the Negro mind secured under carefully controlled conditions. Odum, however, reports to have experienced great difficulty in securing accurate data, for the reason that the Negro is naturally untrustworthy and secretive. It was seldom possible, he tells us, to get from an individual correct information regarding any important details. The negro is skillful in inventing plausible stories, and expanding upon minute details having no foundation in fact. To obtain acceptable data, it was necessary to make repeated inquiries from various sources and to check up results constantly. This fact, of course, is interestingly suggestive of the nature of the Negro's mental machinery.

Odum sums up the mental qualities of the Negro as: lacking in filial affection; with strong migratory instincts and tendencies; little sense of veneration, integrity or honor; shiftless, indolent, untidy, improvident, extravagant, lazy, untruthful, lacking in persistence and initiative, and unwilling to work continuously at details. Indeed, experience with the Negro in class rooms indicates that it is impossible

to get the child to do anything with continued accuracy, and similarly in industrial pursuits, the Negro shows a woeful lack of power of sustained activity and constructive conduct. Fear, sickness, and even stupidity are being constantly feigned to escape an unpleasant task. His mind works mechanically. He is fond of joining together euphonious words and phrases, with little regard to their meaning.

The Negro is said to love excitement. He is restless, bumptious, and sensuous. He will never work except when necessity compels. He has always been the subject of petty thieving, and Negroes often commit, unfeelingly, savage and ferocious crimes. His emotions are for the most part of the physiological type, with little objective control. Social purity, we are told, is unusual among girls who have reached adolescence, and infidelity among married women is not uncommon. Negroes possess little power to inhibit sensual feelings of any kind. They are gluttonous and drink liquors to excess. Anger of the epileptical, gesticulating, maniacal sort is easily excited, and a paralysis of fear sets in at the approach of death, at the presence of certain animals under peculiar conditions, and at unusual celestial occurrences; and an inherent terror of officers of the law is said to cause constant migrations.

Negroes are gregarious, but the social instincts of friendship, loyalty and emulation are little apparent. Other social instincts, however, they possess in a striking degree. They are proud, jealous, stubborn, assertive, covetous, egoistic. They are likewise reckless, assertive, impulsive, demonstrative, over-religious, fabalistic, and superstitious. Their crimes, Odum holds, are largely the expression of the animal instincts, which have been left to work themselves out unrestrained. On the other hand the Negro is imitative, adaptive and his protective instincts are strongly developed. While very primitive, therefore, in the majority of his traits, he possesses the possibilities of development under proper conditions of control.

The Negro child is characterized as psychophysical. He loves to sing, but cares little for instrumental music other than the banjo. He is fond of dancing and all types of motor activity of the grosser sort. He has a good memory, both auditory and visual, and up to the age of eleven or twelve his mind is bright and clear. In school the young child is alert, eager, attentive and interested, indeed, seems brighter than the white child of corresponding years, but with the oncoming of adolescence mental growth suffers arrest; the child becomes dull and stupid, and further development appears to be confined to the physical.

Odum speaks of Negroes as rather insensitive to pain. They go through surgical operations with relatively few fatalities and they convalesce rapidly. Negroes are immune to malaria, and yellow fever. Fibroid tumors among them are rare, and the sequellæ of syphilis and gonorrhœa are much less pronounced than among whites. In connection with this relative immunity from disease, the report of Da Rocha's (4) 285 hospital cases of Negroes in an institution for the insane is interesting. He tells us that general paralysis, one of the sequellæ of syphilis, is extremely uncommon in the Negro race, in spite of the fact that a large proportion of both men and women have been afflicted with gonorrhœa and syphilis at least once during their lives. Fixed delusions are rare, and epilepsy occurs very much less frequently than among whites. Senile dementia is found in about the same proportion, but Negroes are subject to the periodic insanities in greater frequency. It is interesting that among the Negro insane the women outnumber the men, whereas with whites just the reverse obtains. Da Rocha attributes this to the relatively greater stress of civilization which falls upon the Negro woman, rather than upon the man as in the dominant race, since upon her falls the burden of the family support. Negro women, also, were found to be more addicted to drunkenness than the men. Women are thus more exposed to the exigencies of social life; they succumb in larger numbers to its temptations, and break mentally more frequently than do the men.

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## INDIVIDUAL AND GROUP EFFICIENCY

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In the following pages it is my purpose to review briefly the efficiency literature which has appeared during the last two years, and which admits of summary under the following heads.

1. *The Conservation and Increase of Vocational (Industrial-Commercial) Efficiency*, by means of scientific shop or business management.

In two lucidly written and aptly illustrated volumes, Emerson has presented the ablest exposition extant of the philosophy of efficient industrial management (9), together with a codification of the practical scientific principles involved (10). He recognizes that efficient shop management—which depends on the establishment of scientific analytical motion and times studies, of time equivalents for every operation or task, and the adoption of a standard service or labor equivalent for a given wage—cannot be instituted without a staff of consulting experts, consisting not merely of efficiency engineers and wage specialists, but also of “character analysts,” psychologists, hygienists, physiologists, bacteriologists and economists. While absolute standards for chemical, physical and electrical processes can readily be set and enforced, human beings must be rated, classified and treated as sentient, moral beings. Properly to administer men on efficiency principles requires the expert services of the psychologist, physiologist, physician and humanitarian. Indeed Emerson avers that, so far from being a purely engineering problem, the highest staff standards are psychological. “It is psychology, not soil or climate, that enables a man to raise five times as many potatoes per acre as the average of his own state” (9, p. 107). Moreover, the science of industrial efficiency is an idealistic philosophy, and not merely a cold, brutal, calculating scheme for oppressing labor—a fact which has been emphasized by Brandeis (3), who argues that there is no inherent incompatibility between the claims of scientific management and the rights of organized labor. Scientific management means the “square deal” for the wage-worker; shorter hours, without “speeding up”;