

SOCIETY AND
NATURE

A Sociological Inquiry



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by
HANS KELSEN



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INTRODUCTION

OUR thinking is characterized by a fundamental dualism and by the tendency to overcome this dualism in establishing a monistic view of the world. The dualism manifests itself in various forms. The distinction between society and nature is only one of them.

Society and nature, if conceived of as two different systems of elements, are the results of two different methods of thinking and are only as such two different objects. The same elements, connected with each other according to the principle of causality, constitute nature; connected with each other according to another, namely, a normative, principle, they constitute society.

Causality is not a form of thought with which human consciousness is endowed by natural necessity; causality is not, as Kant calls it, an "innate notion." There were periods in the history of human thought when man did not think causally—that means, that man connected the facts perceived by his senses not according to the principle of causality but according to the same principles which regulated his conduct toward other men. The law of causality as a principle of scientific thought first appears at a relatively high level of mental development. It is unknown to primitive peoples. Nature, and that means the facts which civilized man conceives of as a system of elements connected with one another according to the principle of causality, is interpreted by early man according to a totally different scheme. The primitive interprets "nature" according to social norms, especially according to the *lex talionis*, the norm of retribution. To him "nature" is an intrinsic part of his society. The dualism of society and nature, so characteristic of the thinking of civilized man, is thoroughly foreign to primitive mentality. Modern science, on the other hand, tries to realize its monistic aim by conceiving society as part of nature and not nature as part of society.

This book undertakes the task of investigating on the basis of ethnographical material how primitive man interprets the surrounding nature and how from the fundamentals of this interpretation, especially from the principle of retribution, the idea of causality, and therewith the modern concept of nature, have developed. This development signifies the separation of nature from society in human mind.

If the insight gained into the origin of the concept of causality proves to be correct, then the controversy which recently has flared up in natural science about this concept appears in a new light, and then the tendency to eliminate or modify the idea of a causal law determining with absolute necessity all events shows its true meaning. The so-called "crisis of causality," the alleged revolution of our conception of the universe, can be understood as a last step of an intellectual process the significance of which is the gradual emancipation of the law of causality from the principle of retribution. It is the emancipation from a social interpretation of nature.

This process shows a relation between social and natural science which is very important from the point of view of intellectual history. This work is intended as a sociological contribution to this problem.

PART I

PRIMITIVE CONCEPTION OF NATURE

CHAPTER I

PRIMITIVE CONSCIOUSNESS

1. PREVALENCE OF THE EMOTIONAL COMPONENT

THE consciousness of primitive man is essentially characterized by the fact that with him the rational component, which is aimed at objective cognition, lags far behind the emotional component, which arises from feeling and volition; originally this emotional component almost exclusively dominated the mind of early man.¹

A consideration of the peculiarity and function of these two fundamentally different attitudes of man toward his environment² is extremely important for a comprehension of primitive mentality. One leads to the idea of an objective connection between things, to reality as determined for civilized man by the laws of causality, to nature; the other leads to ideas which neither describe the world nor satisfy our curiosity and desire for knowledge but which serve subjective non-cognitive interests. These latter ideas, because they are related to objects which we desire or fear, are formed rather by productive fantasy than by receptive observation; ambivalent throughout, they decrease as well as increase the initial emotion, satisfy as well as re-excite desire, and allay as well as stir up fear. Upon these ideas are based concepts of value: of what is useful because desired, of what is harmful because feared, of what is morally good or bad because it is the expression of a group, rather than an individual, interest. These ideas are not concerned with explaining phenomena but with the need which primitive man feels for reacting to natural events, the justification of which action is the specific function of these ideas. Hence evaluations are expressed which establish a normative order of human behavior. Just as the rational attitude leads to nature governed by laws of causality, so the emotional attitude leads to society governed by norms. For civilized man these are indeed two different worlds, corresponding to fundamentally disparate mental attitudes.

It goes almost without saying that the emotional component is the

older or, at least, originally the stronger element.³ This fact has been well expressed by saying that in the beginning man's behavior was essentially determined by desire.⁴ Thence can be explained the pre-eminent position which so-called "magic" has in the life of primitive man. For it consists mainly in the fact that the less man technically dominates nature, the more he turns with his wishes, expressed in a peculiar sign-language, to superhuman beings. Especially because he hopes that their power will satisfy his needs does he imagine these beings.⁵ There is no reason to suppose among primitive men either a developed tendency to cognition or a direct desire for an objective explanation of the world—an explanation, that is, independent of his wishes or his fears and free of any evaluation; for even the average civilized man strives in a lesser degree after objective cognition than after judgments of value and thus after a justification of his individual interests in the light of collective interests (which present themselves ideologically as norms).⁶

The mentality of primitive man is characterized by a lack of curiosity.⁷ The best-informed ethnologists agree in depicting him as an individual who cannot easily be brought to that state of astonishment which is the first impulse to investigation. The quest for deeper causes is foreign to his nature.⁸ The new arouses in him fear,⁹ not curiosity.¹⁰ His mind, unlike that of civilized man, is not sensitive, so far as logical contradiction is concerned. Dudley Kidd writes:

With regard to the Kafirs, we must try and grasp the fact that they are capable of entertaining contradictory ideas at the same moment. Until some one points out the contradiction, a Kafir sees no difficulty in believing that his grandfather "went out like a candle" at death, while at the same time he will tell you that his grandfather visited the kraal yesterday in the form of a snake. Later he will tell you that all yesterday his dead grandfather was living below the ground in a splendid world of enjoyment. This grandfather's spirit can be both material and immaterial, and it can exist and not exist at the same moment. When you point out how contradictory these statements are, the Kafir will re-examine the question, and his answer will turn on the mood he happens to be in. Opposing statements of fact vignetted off in his mind into one another, apparently without passing through any region of conscious untruth or mental incompatibility.¹¹

W. H. R. Rivers reports:

During the course of the work of the Percy Sladen Trust Expedition to the Solomon Islands, we obtained in the island of Eddystone a long account of the destination of man after death. We were told that he stays in the neighbourhood of the place where he died for a certain time, when spirits arrive in their canoes from a distant island inhabited by the dead to fetch the ghost to his new home. On one occasion we were present in a house packed tightly with people who heard the swish of the paddles of the ghostly visitors and the sound of their footsteps as they landed on the beach, while

for several hours the house was filled with strange whistling sounds, which all around us firmly believed to be the voices of the ghostly visitors come to fetch the man who had lately died. . . . Later, after visiting a cave at the summit of the island, we were given a circumstantial account of its ghostly inhabitants, and we learnt that after death the people of the island inhabit this cave. Here the natives possess two beliefs which seem to us incompatible with one another: if the spirits of the dead go to a distant island, they cannot, according to our logic, at the same time live in a cave on the island where they died. Of course the natural interpretation is that the ghosts live in a cave in the interval between death and the setting out for the distant island, or that, while some go to the distant island, others take up their abode in the cave. It was clear, however, that the contradiction was not to be explained in these simple ways, but that the people held the two beliefs that the dead go to a distant island, and yet remain on the island where they died.¹²

Primitive man's rational desire for cognition is weakly developed;¹³ and, wherever it does show itself, it is inseparably connected with, even fundamentally influenced by, the emotional-normative tendency. This tendency dominates his inner world. "Not contemplation but rather action is the center from which radiates man's interpretation of reality," remarks Cassirer;¹⁴ and he points out that in the first stages of mythical-religious consciousness "things exist for the ego only by becoming emotionally effective, that is, by causing emotions of hope or fear, of desire or fright, of satisfaction or disappointment. Nature, too, is presented to man in this way long before it can become the object of perception, or even the object of cognition."¹⁵

2. LACK OF CAUSAL THINKING

The idea that events are determined by laws of nature, the concept of the principle of causality—a fundamental basis of scientific thought which develops slowly and with difficulty in men's minds—is entirely beyond the grasp of primitive man.¹⁶ One can speak of "causal thinking" only if the regularity perceived in any succession of events is also considered necessary. But precisely this regular chain of events, by which primitive man's behavior actually is guided and upon which he relies in his actions and omissions, gives him no cause for meditation: like a child, he accepts the chain of events without thinking about it. Indeed, one must be a Newton in order to discover the law of gravitation simply by observing that an apple loosened from the tree always falls to earth. Conscious reflection, from which alone can emerge the law of causality, occurs in the mental processes of primitive man only if extraordinary things happen through which the normal succession of events is unexpectedly interrupted—and, above all, if strong emotions are aroused.¹⁷ For this reason a concept of causality or a tendency to causal thinking is out of the question for primitive man. If some

ethnologists attribute causal thinking to him,¹⁸ they impute our concept of causality to certain ideas which he has about the connection of events. Such an imputation can easily be induced, inasmuch as the modern law of causality originated, as we shall show, in the course of a gradual change of meaning, in primitive notions about certain social relationships according to which primitive man interprets nature. But neither this fact nor the fact that primitive man may actually utilize causal connections in his practical life—connections, that is, which civilized people interpret as causal—entitles anyone to attribute causal thought, or a tendency to causal thinking, to him. For, like an animal, he uses these connections without being aware of their nature and without ever reflecting about them.¹⁹

Above all, one must not identify, as is often done, a need for explanation with the tendency to causal thinking. True, primitive man has a certain need for explanation, but only in a limited degree; this need is less pronounced than any other he may have and is subject to his desires and fears. If extraordinary events which, really or imaginarily, touch upon his vital interests attract the attention of primitive man, his immediate response will be not rational explanation but emotional reaction.²⁰ His entirely secondary desire for explanation, however, is satisfied when he can interpret the facts in question according to his social order which also comprises nature; for instance, he is satisfied when the facts requiring explanation can be interpreted as reward or punishment or their condition. An example of this is the interpretation which primitive man gives to a death which would be wholly natural to us but in his opinion is a punishment inflicted by a superhuman authority or a delict committed by magic,²¹ which consequently entails an act of revenge, justified by such an interpretation. Even though a warrior is killed in action and the cause of his death is obvious, the vengeance of his relatives is sometimes directed not against the killer but against a supposed faraway sorcerer, whom they try to discover by means of a strange ritual. On him retribution is exercised. Prejudiced in his belief in magic, primitive man does not assume a false or "mystic" cause. What interests him is, not the fact which is the cause of the death of his relative, but the individual responsible for it. Therefore, he need not go into an inquiry after the cause but can hold someone responsible for the death; that is, he can accuse some individual of the murder although, according to the modern view, there is absolutely no causal connection between the person held responsible and the death. The thinking of primitive man is dominated by this idea of retribution

and not by the law of causality. It never occurs to him to find out the real causal connection, i.e., to attribute the result to some fact which alone can be considered the cause.

Schultze,²² who concedes causal thinking to savages, gives the following example as proof of his assumption: "A Kaffir, who broke off a piece from the anchor of a stranded ship, died soon afterwards. Since then the Kaffirs have ascribed divine character to the anchor, and when passing, honored it with greetings in order to avoid its wrath." Schultze believes that "two events are subjectively brought into causal connection which have objectively no such relation, namely, the breaking off of a piece of the anchor and the death of the Negro." But there is no causal connection in this case, for the simple reason that the assumed connection in the interpretation of Schultze is limited to two quite concrete events. The Kaffirs, interpreting this incident, do not suppose that damage to an anchor generally causes death to the injurer. If they see in this event any application of a general law, then it is that of retribution and not that of causality. The anchor, imagined as a personal being, has taken vengeance on the injurer, just as men, because of injuries done to them, take and are entitled, if not obliged, to take vengeance. Such an interpretation is also an "explanation," although not according to the law of causality. It is an explanation merely in the sense of a normative justification legitimatizing personal behavior.

Phillips writes of the natives of the Lower Congo:

In intellect we find the same stunted development as with the emotions; the relation of cause and effect, in all but the most patent and mechanical of cases, being beyond their grasp. Here again custom rules; just as many a school boy performs operations with fractions thus and thus because he has been told to do so, and believes the answer will be right because it is the rule, so the natives attribute known effects to the most inadequate causes, inadequate both quantitatively and qualitatively. Let us take a case. Some years ago, the chigoes, or burrowing fleas, were imported from Brazil; let us ask a Kabinda what is said as to their origin. He will probably say they have come because the King of Kabinda is not yet buried (a man who died forty or fifty years ago), and nothing will persuade him to the contrary. You may point out that in Loango, where the king is still alive, the chigoes are just as bad, or that they are as troublesome in Ambriz, where the Portuguese hold the land; nothing will alter his belief.²³

This is a very characteristic example. The natives did not attribute an effect to an "inadequate cause," as Phillips assumes; they interpreted a natural event not according to the law of causality but according to the principle of retribution: the chigoes have come to Kabinda as a

punishment for a sin committed in that country. Hence, the fact that in Loango and Ambriz the chigoes are just as bad as in Kabinda is no counterevidence at all.

One can assume a tendency to causal thinking only if, distinct from emotional drives, an inclination to pure cognition has been developed, or if, independent of desire and fear, a wish has become manifest to comprehend the objective connection of the phenomena of nature.²⁴ As a connection of phenomena independent of desires and fears, nature does not exist for primitive man any more than, in this sense, it exists for the child. The primitive man interprets those facts which in the scientific cognition of civilized man form the system of nature according to the same principles that determine his society.

3. LACK OF EGO-CONSCIOUSNESS

Hand in hand with the predominance of the emotional over the rational tendency in the soul of primitive man goes a remarkable lack of ego-consciousness, a lack of any developed experience of his self. Kidd says of the Kaffirs: "They are but dimly conscious of large tracts of their own individuality, which lie below the level of full consciousness. . . . The subliminal self is enormously greater than that portion of it which rises to full self-consciousness."²⁵ This is typical as regards the condition of primitive mentality. This lack of ego-consciousness is, however, the reverse of fear of his environment, which dominates the whole life of primitive man; he sees the world which surrounds him as full of powerful spirits, particularly of the deceased, to which he ascribes superhuman powers. When questioned about the belief of his people, an Eskimo answered the explorer Rasmussen: "We do not believe, we fear. We fear everything unfamiliar. We fear what we see about us, and we fear all the invisible things that are likewise about us, all that we have heard of in our forefathers' stories and myths. Therefore we have our customs. . . ."²⁶ Fear of the souls of the dead, that is, fear of vengeance which they may take on those who offend the social order, as well as hope for protection and support in the case of orderly behavior—in short, belief in the retributory function of the souls of the dead is the basis for the widespread ancestor-worship among primitive peoples. The dead forefathers are everything and have made everything. The living are nothing. Ethnologists agree in their reports that primitive man, in contradistinction to civilized man, does not consider himself as Lord of Creation, superior to animals,

plants, and inanimate objects, but as equal, if not sometimes even inferior, treating these other beings and objects with respect and awe.

This attitude corresponds with the actual situation of the savage, who finds himself in a bitter struggle with the dangers of nature, which threaten him from all sides, and particularly with the frequently much stronger animals. It is easy to understand that he sees superhuman forces in this threatening world; and it is also possible to comprehend that under such circumstances there could not arise that proud ego-consciousness which separates civilized man from nature, technically overpowered by him, and particularly from animals, entirely subordinate to him. What Nieuwenhuis said about the native of central Borneo may be considered typical:

Indeed, the position which the inhabitants of central Borneo ascribe to themselves in the kingdom of Nature is very modest. For they regard themselves as not essentially, but only in degree, different from the animals, plants and stones of their environment. Characteristically, the Bahau ascribe not only to themselves, but also to all animate and inanimate beings the possession of souls (*bruwa*). According to their opinion, the soul of a tree, a dog, or a rock, reacts in the same way as the soul of man and is moved by the same feelings of pleasure and pain. The Bahau try, therefore, to allay by sacrifice the angry souls of animals, plants, and stones which they are compelled to damage or to destroy. . . .²⁷

Widespread is the belief that game animals cannot be killed against their will and that the animals or the spirits residing in them make the success of hunting dependent upon a certain behavior of the hunters.²⁸ An analogous idea toward the plant world can also be found. If, for instance, a tree is to be felled among the tribes of the Kattourie (India), the same rites are observed as hunters perform when they intend to kill an animal. The tree is asked to bless the undertaking and to permit the felling,²⁹ just as with other tribes the animal is requested to agree to being killed. Reports about the Dschagga in Africa are similar.³⁰ Even in the nineteenth century, lumbermen in the German Upper Palatinate begged the healthy tree's pardon before they "dispatched its life."³¹ The Fiji Islanders ask the coconut tree's permission before they pluck a nut.³² Among the Bakaonde of Northern Rhodesia the smith does not trace his work to his own skill. He believes that his father's death soul accomplishes what his own hands produce. He prays:

Oh! Spirit of my father: who worked iron here of yore,
Listen to me, and hear my prayer.
To-morrow I, too, will work at the iron.
I pray thee, help me, and guide my work, that it may prosper.³³

Indeed, even toward the tools which he has manufactured with great skill and care, primitive man assumes a submissive attitude. Thus, in Togo, the smith directs a prayer to his hammer and tongs;³⁴ so also, the Baganda sacrifice to the bark in which they go out fishing.³⁵ Certain tribes in Indonesia offer food to the implements with which they work, and elsewhere people make sacrifices to the harpoons with which they kill the dugong.³⁶ The Tlingit (Tlinkit) Indian addresses his angling hook and line for his halibut-fishing as personages of respect, namely, as brother-in-law and father-in-law; and the Arapao at the sun dance directs his prayer to his digging tool. The Pangwe in Spanish Guinea regard their utensils as animate and hence as persons.³⁷ S. R. Riggs writes:³⁸

The Dakotas viewed every object known to them as having a spirit capable of helping or hurting them, and consequently a proper object of worship. . . . Besides these, they pray to the sun, the earth, the moon, lakes, rivers, trees, plants, snakes and all kinds of animals and vegetables—many of them say to everything, for they pray to their guns, arrows—to any object, artificial as well as natural, for they suppose every object, artificial as well as natural, has a spirit which may hurt or help, and so is a proper object of worship.

The missionary Brebeuf reports of the Hurons:

Every year they marry their nets or seines to two little girls, who must be only from six to seven years of age, for fear they may have lost their virginity, which is a very rare quality among them. The ceremony of these espousals takes place at a fine feast, where the seine is placed between the two virgins; this is to render them fortunate in catching fish.³⁹

Preuss is right when he says: "Primitive man is a being who does not rely upon himself."⁴⁰ He considers his instrument a god, whereas civilized man sometimes goes so far as to recognize that even God is only an instrument of man.

4. SOUL BELIEF AND EXPERIENCE OF THE EGO

How far the attitude of primitive man toward nonhuman beings and inanimate objects is determined by the idea that in them are incorporated human beings, namely, the souls of dead ancestors and the like, can be left aside here, as well as the question of the relationship between animal and human soul.⁴¹ Decisive is the status which primitive man attributes to nonhuman beings in relation to himself. And this shows how small is his self-evaluation. Belief in the soul is of the utmost importance to him. This is especially true inasmuch as the savage does not consider himself capable of producing his own off-

spring, because, originally at least, he had no idea of the connection between the sex act and pregnancy. He sometimes interprets the birth of the child as an act of an ancestor whose soul has penetrated the woman's body in order to be reborn and thus to assure the continuity of his group.⁴² From the idea of the reincarnation of an ancestral soul in the newborn child originates presumably the extraordinarily widespread and originally general belief of primitive man in the existence of two souls:⁴³ one which gives life and guarantees its most important functions, and another, entirely different one, which continues a man's existence after his death. The fact that the life soul of a man is the reincarnated death soul of an ancestor explains the peculiarity that primitive man by no means identifies himself with his life soul but sees in it a guardian spirit to whom he prays and sacrifices,⁴⁴ and who can, in his opinion, even reside outside the body, during sleep, for example, and under certain other circumstances.⁴⁵ In this nonidentification with his life soul presumably lie the deeper causes which explain why primitive man sometimes does not relate his spiritual activity to his inner center, to his ego. Of the Kaffirs, Kidd writes:

When he feels qualms of conscience, they usually seem to him to come as unreasoned checks, almost *ab extra*. It is as if he suffered from some alternation of personality, or as if some faculties of his soul had suddenly arisen out of the strange hidden depths of his own personality, and made themselves felt in his consciousness. Frequently it seems to him as if a voice were arresting him, somewhat in the style of the Demon of Socrates, and, as in his case, it warns him what not to do, and does not urge him to positive duty.⁴⁶

This is particularly characteristic of the fact that primitive man does not have any ego-experience, which probably is possible only if this dualism of souls is overcome and the life and death soul are combined into a unified concept of soul.⁴⁷

The idea that the soul of a venerated ancestor lives in the body of a child may—at least in some cases—explain the fact that some primitive peoples in no way assume authority over children, that they treat them, despite their own actual superiority, respectfully, and that they do not dare to punish them or even to scold them. So, for instance, Stefánsson,⁴⁸ one of the best observers of the Eskimos, explains the respect shown by the parents to their children directly by their belief that the soul of a dead person is reincarnated in the child.⁴⁹

Many ethnologists stress the extraordinary politeness shown by primitive peoples not only toward whites but also to one another. Kidd⁵⁰ describes the behavior of the Kaffir as follows:

He always begins with Yes, even when the next word is No; he always raises himself in the saddle when he points to the goal; he always declares the end of the journey is just over the rise. This he does out of natural politeness, for he is not troubled with our Western conception of truth. Politeness is far more important in his eyes than truthfulness; he consequently tells you the thing he thinks you would like to hear. An old author describes how he had been asking the natives about strange animals, and among other things he had made inquiries about a unicorn. The natives, wishing to agree with the white man, assured him there was a unicorn some way off. At considerable difficulty this traveller went out of his way for a day, and saw this wonderful unicorn. It turned out to be an old he-goat which had lost one of its horns. The natives did not mean to deceive. They meant to please.

And: "The man will tell you just what he thinks you wish to hear, and then he will give a grunt of satisfaction, as much as to say, 'There: that is nicely settled now.' " This is not the result of any special education, but the reflection of that inner weakness which arises from the lack of a solid center of personality. Lévy-Bruhl rightly says:

The primitive who has a successful hunting expedition, or reaps an abundant harvest, or triumphs over his enemy in war, debits this favourable result not (as the European in a similar case would do) to the excellence of his instruments or weapons, nor to his own ingenuity and efforts, but to the indispensable assistance of the unseen powers.⁵¹

In a report of Father Allouez of 1672-73 we read that the Indians (Outagamis)

do not attribute the victory either to the strength or bravery of their soldiers, or to the strategy of their captains, but to fate, or to the manitou, who gives one tribe to be eaten by another when it pleases Him. That is why they fast, for they hope that the manitou will speak and show himself to them at night, and will say to them: "I give thee some of thy enemies to eat; go and seek them." That is why, they said, the captain of one of those bands would infallibly kill some foes, because, they said, the manitou speaks to him. I explained to them that he would kill some enemies because he was valiant, brave, a good leader, etc.⁵²

Since primitive man attributes his fortune to the influence of these dangerous unseen powers, he feels uneasy in his successes. A game haul which is too big and a harvest which is too good make him ill at ease.⁵³ Fear of the "envy of the gods" is a characteristic symptom of an ego-consciousness diminished by belief in the existence of superhuman powers.

It is comprehensible that primitive man makes every conceivable effort to secure for himself the favor of these invisible forces. The most direct way is by identification with those powers. Primitive man attains this identification by various means, but, above all, by the already mentioned belief that the soul of a mighty ancestor is rein-

carnated in the newborn child. The attempt to identify one's self with one's ancestor appears also in other forms—for example, in certain ceremonies which are performed by the Australian Arunta in honor of their ancestors. The participants fall into a sort of trance, believing they have become one with their mythical forefathers.⁵⁴ The identification with the superhuman authority is the counterpoise of an ego-consciousness abased by permanent pressure. Primitive man, however, identifies himself not only with the superhuman authority but also with other beings. This identifying thinking, so characteristic of primitive man,⁵⁵ has as its basis his weak ego-consciousness. Only because primitive man cannot distinguish clearly between his ego, the tu, and the id, and because he does not feel himself to be a subject clearly contrasted with the object,⁵⁶ can he so easily identify himself with other beings. That is the reason for his often observed capacity to understand instinctively other beings and for his striking ability to imitate men and animals.⁵⁷ From this weak ego-consciousness also arises his lack of self-confidence, which manifests itself clearly in the magic which occupies a central position among all primitive peoples.⁵⁸

5. COLLECTIVE CONSCIOUSNESS AND TENDENCY TO SUBSTANTIALIZE

Lack of ego-consciousness is only the negative side of a mentality completely determined by social life. It is a well-known fact that young children, when they speak of themselves, do not use the first person. Primitive languages are characterized by the fact that the "possibilities of expression in the first person are comparatively undeveloped."⁵⁹ Ungnad writes that "in the original Semitic language there exists no expression for the 'Ego.'"⁶⁰ The "original Semite" does not say: "I kill," but: "Here killing." "Only gradually there developed what we mean by saying 'I kill.' " If the Maori speaks in the first person, he does not necessarily speak of himself but of his group, with which he naturally identifies himself. He says "I" have done this or that and means thereby, "my tribe has done it." "My" soil means the land of the tribe.⁶¹

A particularly striking symptom of the individual's complete solidarity with the group is the custom, observed among certain tribes, according to which, in case of illness, not only the sick person but also all the members of his family must undergo treatment.⁶² Of the Kaffirs, Kidd writes:

A native will also sometimes take medicine by proxy. Thus, a man once came to me and complained of a long list of symptoms, and said he badly wanted some medicine. For a *placebo* I gave him some jalap and a dose of salts. As he was licking up the last few grains of Epsom salts with his tongue—how they love to have ill-flavoured medicine, and to eat it slowly!—he thanked me for the dose, and said that he hoped the medicine he had just taken would do his wife good, for the pains were hers and not his.⁶³

If among the Guaranis, an Indian tribe in South America, a child falls ill, all the relatives have to refrain from eating the things which are considered to be harmful to the child.⁶⁴ Karsten says of the Jibaro Indians:

The conception of individual personality and consequently of individual responsibility does not exist among the primitive Indians in the same sense as among civilized peoples. The individual forms an inseparable part of a whole, namely, of the family or tribe to which he belongs. Especially the members of the same family are regarded as, so to speak, organically coherent with each other, so that one part stands for all and all for one. What happens to one member of that social unit happens to all, and for the deed of one member the rest are held equally responsible. How the Jibaros conceive this connection appears from certain of their social customs. For instance, custom requires that after a child is born the parents shall fast and observe other rules of abstinence for a couple of years, or until the child is named. This is due to the idea that something of the souls or essence of the parents inheres in the child so that all three in one way form a single organism, a single personality. But this mystic connection between the parents and the child also subsists after the child has grown up, although perhaps less intimately. Similarly the tie which unites brothers and sisters in a family is so intimate that they may be said together to form one organic whole. Among the Jibaros and the Canelos Indians, when one member of the family is sick the rest have to diet in the same way as the patient himself, for if they eat unsuitable food it would be the same as if the patient ate that food, and his condition would grow worse. From the same point of view we have to explain the custom prevailing among the Jibaros that when a man dies his brother must marry the widow. The departed husband, who is still jealous of the wife he left behind, does not cede her to any other man than his brother, who with himself forms one personality and represents him in the most real sense of the word. When a younger Jibaro is murdered by his enemies the duty of revenging his death is also first of all incumbent on his brothers.⁶⁵

If primitive peoples censure homicide as a crime, they consider it rather as an injury inflicted upon the group, which has been deprived of a useful member, than as a wrong done to the person slain.⁶⁶ If a man has been killed, it is the blood of the group that has been shed. Among the Arabs, according to Robertson Smith,⁶⁷

the ultimate kindred group is that which always acts together in every case of blood-revenge. And in Arabia this group was not the family or household, not the relatives of the slayer and the slain within certain degrees of kinship, as we reckon kinship, but a definite unity marked off from all other groups by the possession of a common group

name. Such a group the Arabs commonly call a *hayy*, and the fellow-members of a man's *hayy* are called his *ahl* or his *caum*. To determine whether a man is or is not involved in a blood-feud it is not necessary to ask more than whether he bears the same group-name with the slayer or the slain. The common formula applied to manslaughter is that the blood of such a *hayy* has been shed and must be avenged. The tribesmen do not say that the blood of M or N has been spilt, naming the man; they say "our blood has been spilt." . . . No man who is within the group can escape responsibility merely because he is not a close relation of the slayer or the slain. If there is blood between Liḥyān and ʿAdī there is war between every man of Liḥyān and every man of ʿAdī till the blood is atoned for. And conversely if a man of Kinda sheds the blood of another man of Kinda it makes no difference whether he can actually count kin with his victim on our way of reckoning descents: "he has shed the blood of his people" and must die or be cut off from the name and place of his tribe.

Since the individual is nothing but a member of his group, he can be replaced by another one. Lafitau⁶⁸ reports of the North American Indians: "The loss [by death] of a single individual is a great loss but a loss that has to be repaired necessarily by replacing the missing individual by one or several other individuals according to the greater or smaller importance of the person who has to be replaced." Hence the institution of adoption, widespread among primitive peoples, especially Indians. Its function is to replace the deceased member of the group by a living individual.

Primitive man is induced to this collectivistic attitude not only by his lack of ego-consciousness but also by a peculiarity of thinking which may be termed a "substantializing tendency." He does not distinguish, as we do, between the body and its conditions, its qualities, the forces which move it, or the relation in which it stands to other bodies; he rather imagines these qualities, conditions, forces, and relations as substances. Inasmuch as he fears certain qualities or conditions or wishes to obtain them, he considers the thing feared or desired as somehow infectious, or as an emanating substance, contagious through touch. Thence the widespread method among primitive peoples of curing illnesses by sucking or tapping blood. So the Pawumwa Indians of Brazil, like many other primitive peoples,

wear a small short stick in the nasal septum, the ends protruding into the nostrils. This peculiar custom is associated with a primitive idea of medicine. They claim that disease is something solid and travels in a straight line like an arrow, while air is like nothing and can bend corners. Hence, when they breathe the disease strikes the end of the stick and falls out of their nostrils, while the purified air passes into their lungs.⁶⁹

This also explains the fact that illness is regarded as a collective evil which befalls not only a single individual but also those who live in

common with him, so that they, as well as the sick person, have to take the prescribed medicine even if the latter is only wounded.⁷⁰ Accordingly, primitive man also regards death as a contagious substance, which has its seat in the dead; hence his aversion to touch a corpse for fear of "pollution." Even pain is frequently considered a substance; from this originates the practice, still existent in certain parts of northern Europe, of getting rid of toothache by touching the aching tooth with a small stick, which is then driven into a tree, thereby transferring the evil.⁷¹ The transfer of an illness from a human being to a tree among the natives of Lobi, a territory on the Upper Volta (West Africa), is described by Henri Labouret as follows:

In this case the patient is at night carried by his parents to a junction of foot-paths in the bush. In this place, a priest waits for them, very near a big tree. The ill man is made to lean against the trunk and ointed with a special medicine, then the priest "catches the tree's breath," puts it beside him, then takes the man's breath and inserts it into the tree, whilst he makes the tree's breath pass into the body of the ill man. After this, the parents who have brought the patient may take him home. But he will have to beware of ever resting in the shadow of the tree which has been thus treated, and whose branches must not be cut to make a fire with, for if he inhaled its smoke he would die immediately. When the tree dries out and dies, the ill man is sure to recover, but if the trunk remains strong and full of life, the man is doomed to die.⁷²

That primitive man cannot conceive of such an abstract concept as time is not to be wondered at. It is significant, however, that he considers time as a substance to be renewed perpetually.⁷³

For the view that bodily qualities are transferable through touching there is an abundance of examples: among certain Papua tribes the back and limbs are rubbed against a rock in order to make them as strong as the latter;⁷⁴ should a Kaffir girl eat the protrusive underlip of an animal, she becomes ugly, for then she also acquires such a lip;⁷⁵ among the polar Eskimos, whenever parents wish their children to become strong, they sew the skin of a bear's throat into the child's hood. A favorite amulet is a piece of old hearthstone, for "fire is the strongest thing known; the old hearthstone has withstood the fire throughout many generations and must therefore be stronger than the latter. The man who carries it as an amulet, will live long and be strong in misfortune."⁷⁶ Cannibalism, especially corpse-eating, is frequently connected with the belief in the possibility of acquiring the strength and powers of the devoured. It has occasionally been observed in China that children had little pieces of their flesh cut out to be given to their sick fathers as medicine; this practice involves a transfer of the strength of youth, which is considered a substance.⁷⁷

It is of the utmost importance for the collectivistic thinking of primitive man that not only bodily but also mental and especially moral qualities, such as good and evil, and even morally qualified acts, such as a committed sin, are regarded as substances, which in some way stick to, or are inherent in, the body of the evildoer. Upon this idea rest the purification ceremonies so characteristic of primitive morality and religion, especially the widespread custom of freeing one's self from a committed wrong by loss of blood, by spitting or vomiting. Confession of sins has the same sense; as widely observed among savages, it consists in speaking out the wrong one has done, frequently accompanied by actual vomiting.⁷⁸ On this same basis is founded the well-known practice of transferring the evil of which one feels guilty to an animal which is to be sacrificed or chased away—the scapegoat.⁷⁹

The fact that primitive man imagines the values resulting from his social order as substances has given rise to the false idea that he is morally indifferent. This interpretation is quite wrong, for it is contradicted by the indubitable fact that primitive man, much more than civilized man, is socially bound and that his social bonds are much more efficient than those of modern man. Morality, however, is social order; and one is not entitled to speak of morality unless the spiritualization and intensification characteristic of modern morality have been reached. That the difference between the morality of primitive man and civilized man is only quantitative and not qualitative is clearly proved by the confession of sins—an institution common to both. If for modern man consciousness of a committed wrong had nothing "substantial" in it, then the feeling of relief which confession entails could hardly be understood.

The idea that moral and legal qualities are substances leads to the belief that evil, like illness, is contagious. Hence, the wrong committed by an individual assumes collective character because it necessarily spreads to those who live with the perpetrator or are in close social relationship to him. That is the reason for the collective liability which is so highly significant for a primitive legal order. It is self-evident for primitive man that retribution is exercised on the whole group, although the delict has been committed by a single member only; and it is entirely justifiable that children and children's children expiate the sins of their fathers. For, like illness, sin is a substance, and therefore contagious and heritable. Indeed, even the collectivism, the group, is considered a substance. A man belongs to one and the same group if he

shares with others the same group-substance: the blood is preferably regarded as the seat of this substance. Blood community, blood brotherhood, the entire blood myth, still effective today, are ideas based upon this primitive tendency of substantialization—a tendency which is not yet entirely overcome in the scientific thinking of civilized man and which plays a fateful part in the social theory of our time, particularly in the doctrine of the state.⁸⁰

Just as primitive man substantializes the social group as such, so does he substantialize every concrete social relationship—as, for instance, property.^{80a} In conformity with a lack of ego-consciousness is the fact that at the beginning of social development individual property is unknown. As soon as it does appear, however, it is accompanied by an ideology based upon the already mentioned substantializing tendency. One regards certain objects, especially those of daily use, as belonging to a certain individual because they are connected with him by the transference to them of the substance of his personality;⁸¹ for the personality of an individual, his specific “essence,” is regarded as a transferable, radiating substance. Hence arises that peculiarity of primitive thinking which accepts the part for the whole. A fingernail loosed from the body, a cut tuft of hair, a man’s excrements, contain his personality. Needless to say, this idea plays a significant part in the magic of savages.⁸²

The substance which connects an individual to his group, the substance of the group or the social substance, manifests itself by far the strongest in primitive thought. In primitive consciousness, therefore, there is no possibility of any distinction between individual and community; thus the idea of an individual independent of the community cannot exist. What W. C. Willoughby says of the Bantu is typical: “In studying Bantu institutions it is necessary at the outset to eliminate our idea of the individual . . . the individual does not exist in Bantu society. . . . The unit of Bantu society is the family.”⁸³ Elsdon Best asserts practically the same thing about the Maori: “In Maori society the individual could scarcely be termed a social unit; he was lost in the *whanau*, or family group, which may be termed the social unit of Maori life.”⁸⁴ Occasionally this collectivistic attitude leads to highly paradoxical consequences. If a man meets with an accident which renders him incapable of working, he is pillaged by his group because he has damaged the whole community. Even the death of an individual may cause the group to despoil his relatives, who are considered guilty for not having prevented the demise. A man whose wife elopes suffers the

same fate; he should have prevented her from running away. In this connection Elsdon Best remarks:

Thus it was that the Maori obtained damages when he considered that the welfare of the community had suffered, or a wrong act committed. Now should one of us have the misfortune to break a leg, or meet with some other serious accident, the act of fining him for the offence would be considered a most improper procedure; yet it was a Maori custom. Their point of view is as follows—that man is not an independent unit, the individual does not exist, he is a part of a tribe and he has injured the tribe by being laid up and so rendering himself incapable of working or fighting—clearly he should be punished.⁸⁵

About the Tlingit Indians, Oberg reports:⁸⁶ “Theoretically, crime against an individual did not exist. The loss of an individual by murder, the loss of property by theft, or shame brought to a member of a clan, were clan losses and the clan demanded an equivalent in revenge.” In this connection the social positions of the perpetrator and the victim play a decisive part. “That is to say, if a man of low rank killed a man of high rank in another clan, the murderer often went free while one of his more important kinsmen suffered death in his stead.” Unconditional submission to the community is especially significant:

The man selected as compensation prepared to die willingly. He was given much time to prepare himself through fasting and praying. The execution took place before his house.—On the day set for the execution, the man put on all his ceremonial robes and displayed all his crests and emblems. He came out of his house, stood at the doorway, and related his history, stressing the deeds that he and his ancestors had performed. All the villagers were gathered around for this solemn occasion. He then looked across to the clan whom his death was to satisfy to observe the man who had been selected to kill him. If this man was great and honorable he would step forth gladly; but if the man was of low rank he would return to the house and wait until a man of his own rank or higher was selected to kill him. When this was done he stepped forth boldly with his spear in his hand, singing a girl’s puberty song. He feigned attack but permitted himself to be killed. To die thus for the honor of one’s clan was considered an act of great bravery and the body was laid out in state as that of a great warrior.

Such a custom is possible only as long as the average individual does not realize that he is a personality different from the group.

6. AUTOCRATISM, CONSERVATISM, AND TRADITIONALISM

Durkheim has remarked the fact that in primitive society, in which division of labor does not differentiate individuals according to their social function, no idea of an individual personality is yet formed.⁸⁷

Corresponding to the circumstance that man does not regard himself as a separate individual, but only as a member of a collectivism, is the autocratic character which the social organization shows as soon as chieftaindom appears.⁸⁸ The chieftain represents the whole group, and the solidarity of the group is demonstrated by the individual's unconditional submission to the chieftain.

In his interesting study on Kaffir socialism, Dudley Kidd writes that the Kaffirs "are not obsessed with the European idea of personal liberty, but believe strongly that individuals belong to the chief, and that they are his property. They find their self-realisation in their constituted head, for the tribe comes to self-consciousness in the person of the chief."⁸⁹ There is no individual, only a collective consciousness, and consequently no private property:

Amongst the Kaffirs, the person of the individual belongs in theory to the chief: he is not his own, for he is the chief's man. It is extremely difficult for us, with our advanced conception of the inviolability of the rights of the individual, to appreciate the bearing of this fact. . . . The relation of the individual to the chief can be understood from the following statement made by a Zulu, who was describing to a white man the custom of the Festival of First Fruits. He said: "The Zulus, if the mealies are ripe, are not permitted by themselves to eat them. The king must always give them permission before they do so. If somebody is eating new mealies, before the king has given his permission, he will be killed entirely. The white men are wondering about it, and say: 'Is a man not allowed to go into his own garden for harvesting food, which he planted himself, and to eat it?' But the Zulus are not wondering about that, saying: 'We are all the king's men: our bodies, our power, our food, and all that we have, is the king's property. It is quite right that we do not commence to eat new mealies unless the king has permitted it.'"⁹⁰

In theory, the entire property of all the members of the tribe belongs to the chief. When bargaining with the Kaffirs for such things as assegais, and even snuff-boxes, the native, when reluctant to sell, has said that he had no right to part with the property of his chief.⁹¹

The Kaffirs, however, only allow people to hold private property and cattle when this does not conflict with the good of the community; they make short work of the man who grows too rich and who neglects the interest of the clan. Such a man is sure to be accused of amassing wealth by using sorcery, and is consequently "eaten up" by the chief.⁹²

All the land owned by the tribe is vested in the chief, who allows every man to use as much ground as his wives can till. No land can be sold, entailed, or devised, and yet a man knows that his gardens will never be taken from him so long as he cultivates them. All unallotted land that is not required for gardens, together with all wood and water, is regarded as common property for the grazing of cattle or for the needs of all the members of the clan. The nationalization of land is therefore absolute.—It is important to note that it was the sense of the solidarity of the clan

that led to the tribalisation of the land. It is easy to imagine the institution of a carefully thought-out plan of land-tenure devised so as to prevent scandalous selfishness and neglect of the good of the people, and also so as to produce and foster a spirit of camaraderie and social unions: but this is not what happened amongst the Kaffirs; for in their case the system of land-tenure is the effect and not the cause of their communism. In their case individual self-consciousness is not fully developed, though the clan-consciousness is amazingly strong. The individual amongst the Kaffirs to a large extent confuses (we might say fuses) himself with his clan, and therefore has not that strong sense of personal property and "rights" that obtains amongst people who have become acutely conscious of their own individuality.⁹³

This collectivistic attitude of the Kaffirs is essentially connected with the autocratic character of their political system.

When we come to speak of the sense of justice, this saying of the Zulu will be found of value in showing how a Kafir differs from a European in his conception of justice and of "rights." But in this place it is merely given to show how entirely the rights of the clan supersede those of the individual. So fully does the individual belong to the head of the tribe, that a chief, named Shiluvane, issued the decree: "I do not allow of anybody dying in my country except on account of old age." This command was given with a view to the checking of the use of sorcery and witchcraft to murder people; for the chief imagined that old age was the natural cause of death, and that none of his warriors could die in the prime of life unless they were bewitched by some private enemy. But the very expression, "I allow no one to die," shows how completely the people were regarded as the property of their chief. The very existence of the tribe depends upon the existence and maintenance of a great number of mature and able-bodied human beings: and in this sense the people themselves may be regarded as a means of production, for it is they who create and protect the tribe. For this reason, the individuals with all their personal rights must be socialised and brought into subjection to the recognised head of the tribe.⁹⁴

Since the bodies of all the members of the tribe belong to the chief, any damage done to the person of the individual is regarded as a criminal offence, and restitution has to be made, not to the person injured, but to the chief. Thus if A breaks B's leg, or knocks out his eye, he has to pay damages, not to B, but to the chief. When a white magistrate reverses this procedure, the natives think he is doing the tribe an injury, for he is putting a premium on antisocial selfishness. The action of the white man is therefore regarded as an immoral one. Thus the tables are turned, and instead of Glaucon's objection, "'Tis a city of pigs, Socrates," applying to the socialistic state, it would be used by a Kafir as a remark applicable to our individualistic régime.⁹⁵

We are prepared now to see that the Kafir does not regard justice as an abstract thing in the way we do in Europe: to him it is essentially a personal thing, and he cannot abide our Western idea of cold, impersonal, and abstract justice. He likes it to be hot, personal, and concrete. It is the chief alone who can give it to him, for justice is a thing that scarcely exists apart from the chief who creates it. As English children believe—or used to believe, in the good old days—in the necessary justness of all that their fathers do, and consider such decisions to be necessarily final, even so the Kafir, before he is educated, has a passionate faith in the essential rightness of the decision of

his chief. It never occurs to him to question the word of his chief, for the verdict instantly inhibits all other action of his judgment. The man does not want abstract justice, but the personal opinion of his chief: and the last thing a Kafir would like to do would be to call in a white man to examine, and possibly to reverse, the decision of his chief, even when such decision had been given against him.⁹⁶

Nationalism and political absolutism go together at all times. Inasmuch as the authority of the group, represented by its leader, absorbs all the individuality of its members, they lose every impulse to develop personal feelings of responsibility; this circumstance also leads to the already mentioned collective liability, peculiar to primitive morality, that is, to the idea, self-evident to primitive man but repugnant to civilized man, that a right or wrong act of a member is to be attributed to the group and that therefore not only the member but the whole group must bear the consequences.⁹⁷ Kidd writes:

Perhaps the very central conception of Kafir law—a conception in intimate correlation with the whole idea at the base of the Clan-System—is that of collective, or corporate, responsibility. It is a conception most admirably suited to a race that is in a backward condition, for it is a great deterrent from crime in all immature societies.⁹⁸

This complete submission of the individual to the group manifests itself also in a traditionalism peculiar to primitive mentality, in the customary character of the formation of law, in the exaggeratedly scrupulous observation of customs and usages inherited from, and watched over by, the ancestors, and in the fact that breaches of the social order occur less often in primitive than in civilized society;⁹⁹ thence can be explained the striking lack of any socially organized sanction against certain crimes—for instance, murder if committed within the group itself—whereas social reaction in the form of a blood feud appears clearly if the perpetrator belongs to another group. In one's own group the transcendental sanction, inflicted by superhuman authorities, i.e., the ancestral souls, is sufficient.¹⁰⁰ The fear of this transcendental power is, indeed, so great that it may even bring about the death of a person conscious of guilt.¹⁰¹

The Let-htas . . . have no laws or rulers, and the Karens say they do not require any, as the Let-htas never commit any evil among themselves or against any other people. The sense of shame amongst this tribe is so acute, that on being accused of any evil act by several of the community, the person so accused retires to a desolate spot, digs his grave and strangles himself.¹⁰²

Labouret reports of the natives of Lobi:

Though suicide is not frequent in this region one can find some cases of hanging or inflicting wounds by poisoned arrows. Generally it is believed that the deceased had

been driven to despair through a grave wrong which had irritated the gods. Consequently, he cannot have a funeral.¹⁰³

A weak ego-consciousness connected with a strong collectivistic consciousness leads to an increased sensitiveness as far as the judgment of society is concerned, particularly to an increased fear of public disapproval. F. Nansen writes of the Eskimo: "It now and then happens that someone or other, wounded, perhaps, by a single word from one of his kinsfolk, runs away to the mountains, and is lost for several days."¹⁰⁴ D. Crantz reported: "Nothing so effectually restrains a Greenlander from vice, as the dread of public disgrace. And this pleasant way of revenge even prevents many from wreaking their malice in acts of violence or bloodshed."¹⁰⁵ With this is connected the frequently observed fear of being ridiculous. Gilbertson writes:

A remarkable and effective method of putting offenders to shame is the "drum-dance" or singing combat, described by many writers on Greenland. . . . The procedure was briefly as follows: If a person (women as well as men could carry on the contest) felt himself aggrieved by another, he challenged the offender to meet him at a certain time and place to hold a singing combat. Each of the parties then prepared satirical songs about his opponent. At the appointed time, before the assembled people, the contestants, by turns, attacked each other by these satires until one or the other had exhausted his resources.¹⁰⁶

The obvious aim of this deal is to make the adversary appear ridiculous. This is his punishment.¹⁰⁷

This collectivistic attitude manifests itself finally in a rigid conservatism, which may be ultimately increased into a strongly marked misoneism.¹⁰⁸ The dead rule over the living; therefore the past is considered sacred. Only what the forefathers have done must be done; and, in order to achieve success or to avert misfortune, it must be done in the same way.¹⁰⁹ The connection between an act, carried out according to tradition, and the success which primitive man expects from it consists in the belief that the ancestors are offended and punish with failure if their descendants do not act as they themselves acted, but reward with success if they do. For success and failure originate from the dead, but nonetheless living, ancestors. What has been described by various observers as the highly developed sense of justice of primitive man¹¹⁰ is nothing more than the fact that the order which governs his community sticks far more securely in his heart than law and morality in the heart of civilized man, who considers himself an individual more or less independent of the group. In this connection the

main significance of initiation rituals, common among primitive peoples, is to bring the boys into rapport with the spirits of the ancestors, who guarantee the social order, and to induce initiated man, by ceremonies which produce fear and awe of the superhuman authorities, to obey the tribal customs.¹¹¹

The traditionalism which arises from this collectivistic sense of primitive man leads to a concept of truth entirely foreign to modern thinking. For primitive man a statement is not true because it conforms with the empirical reality perceived by his senses and confirmed by reason—such a reality does not exist for him—but because it has come down to him from his ancestors, who considered it true. Rasmussen¹¹² tried to discover from the Eskimos the reasons why they believe in traditional rules transmitted from their forefathers and why they follow them so strictly.

For several evenings we had discussed rules of life and taboo customs without getting beyond a long and circumstantial statement of all that was permitted and all that was forbidden. Everyone knew precisely what had to be done in any given situation; but whenever I put in my query: "Why?" they could give no answer. They regarded it, and very rightly, as unreasonable that I should require not only an account, but also a justification, of their religious principles.

Finally, a particularly intelligent shaman said to Rasmussen:

Therefore it is that our fathers have inherited from their fathers all the old rules of life which are based on the experience and wisdom of generations. We do not know how, we cannot say why, but we keep those rules in order that we may live untroubled. And so ignorant are we in spite of all our shamans, that we fear everything unfamiliar. . . . Therefore we have our customs.

The sense of this answer is: We observe the order of life transmitted to us by our forefathers because we fear the consequences if we transgress it; and we believe in the terrible consequences of transgression because our forefathers, too, believed in them and taught us to do likewise. Primitive man does not dream of examining this doctrine or of comparing it with his own experiences. He regards the statement concerning the necessary connection between breach of norm and misfortune as true and thus considers the norm binding; and he bases this view on the authority of his ancestors, not on his reason. Melland writes that it frequently occurs among the Bakaonde that a man confesses to have committed a sin, though he is evidently innocent, "because he has been convicted in a manner sanctioned by custom."¹¹³ He believes he has committed the sin not because he actually committed it but because he

believes in the authority of an old rule which determines the procedure of evidence.

In primitive mythical thinking, governed by emotions, the logical and the moral-social values, the reason of true cognition and the reason of right volition, coincide. For primitive man truth is identical with the binding force of his social order. Just as the latter is valid because it is handed down from the forefathers and is enjoined upon the descendants, so what the ancestors taught to be true, that is, what they commanded their descendants to believe in, is true. In accordance with primitive traditionalism, social authority is the source of truth. This is only another form of the primacy of the emotional over the rational sphere of consciousness, and in this sense there exists an interrelation between the weak impulse to cognition and the curtailed ego-consciousness of primitive man.