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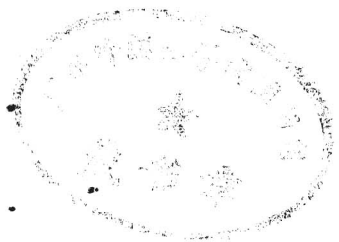
Cultures in Contact

STUDIES IN CROSS-CULTURAL INTERACTION

Edited by

STEPHEN BOCHNER



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We do not know how social psychology will develop, and it takes quite a variety of forms already. However, it is a great pleasure to be associated with books by some of those social psychologists who are developing the subject in such interesting ways.

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Preface and overview

STEPHEN BOCHNER

INTERACTION between members of different ethnic groups is an increasingly common aspect of modern life, as more and more people study, work, play or settle in cultures other than their own. Not just the visitors, but also those indigenous to a given society can be profoundly affected by such contact. The aim of this book is to look closely at the processes and outcomes of cross-cultural encounters – to provide an account of what transpires and emerges when persons from different cultures meet.

The volume has been organized into three parts. The first section provides an overview of the field. The various types and purposes of contact are described, and the major empirical findings reviewed. A chapter with a historical perspective traces the development of research and thinking in this area from its beginnings at the turn of the century to the present day. A broad aim is to alert the reader to the main theoretical, practical and methodological issues that have been pursued in work on cross-cultural interaction.

The second section of the book deals with the processes underlying effective communication between culturally diverse persons. The topics cover the attribution of behaviour, language, and non-verbal communication including a special chapter on gestures. The discussion centres on those aspects of the communication process that may either enhance or hinder mutual understanding during cross-cultural interaction.

Whereas the first two sections of the book deal primarily with theories, concepts and processes, the last section is expressly concerned with the practical outcomes of culture contact, i.e. with the reactions of the persons engaged in the meeting. Clearly this is a vast field, since cross-cultural interaction takes many shapes and forms, and is engaged in for a variety of reasons. Nevertheless, several of the effects appear to generalize across different contact situations, and some conclusions can be drawn about how people are affected by unfamiliar environments. The two chapters in this section deal with overseas study and tourism respectively; both activities that literally millions of people participate in, and which have a profound impact on international relations. Even though

these two areas constitute only a small sampling of contact situations occurring in the world, the problems encountered by overseas students and tourists (and their hosts), are typical of most varieties of cross-cultural encounters.

Each chapter is an original contribution by an acknowledged authority, and was written expressly for this book at the request of the editor. Most of the authors met at Oxford in June 1979 at a one-day Workshop which was specially convened for the purpose of presenting the papers to a select, invited audience. At the Workshop, the contributions were critically reviewed, and the final drafts were written in the light of that experience.

The Oxford Workshop had a second purpose – to celebrate Otto Klineberg's eightieth year and some six decades of pioneering work in the psychology of cross-cultural interactions. Klineberg has been one of the giants in the field, and practically all those working in the area today have been affected by his seminal ideas and studies. Klineberg's presence at the Workshop, made possible by a grant from the Cyril Foster Bequest, was a major inspiration to the editor, and greatly influenced the selection of topics and hence the shape of the book. Although Klineberg would be embarrassed at the thought that this volume is a *Festschrift* to him, all of the authors would like to pay tribute to his wisdom, scholarship, and to his unfailing support of younger workers, during his long and distinguished career.

About the contributors

Michael Argyle is Reader in Social Psychology in the Department of Experimental Psychology at Oxford University, and a Fellow of Wolfson College. He has been a visiting professor at universities in the U.S.A., Canada, Europe, Australia, Africa and Israel. He has carried out cross-cultural studies using subjects from Italy, Japan, and Hong Kong, and pioneered the use of social skills training in Britain. He is the author of numerous books and articles on social interaction.

Verner C. Bickley is the Director of the Culture Learning Institute of the East–West Center in Honolulu, Hawaii. Before that, he was the Language Officer of the British Council in Japan, and First Secretary of the British Embassy Cultural Department in Tokyo. He has taught linguistics and English in universities in Singapore, Burma, Indonesia and Japan, and has been active in broadcasting with the B.B.C., Radio Singapore, Radio Republik Indonesia, the Burma Broadcasting Service, and the NKH in Japan. He was awarded the M.B.E. in 1964.

Stephen Bochner is Senior Lecturer in Psychology at The University of New South Wales in Sydney. He has held visiting appointments at the University of Hawaii, the East–West Center, Rutgers University, and Oxford University. His special area of interest is cross-cultural psychology, and he has carried out field research in Southeast Asia and Central Australia. He has been on the editorial board of the *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology* since its inception, and has edited several books and published numerous articles on the subject of inter-cultural interaction.

Peter Collett is a Research Officer in the Department of Experimental Psychology at Oxford University. He is the editor of *Social Rules and Social Behaviour* and co-author of *Gestures: Their Origins and Distribution.* He is interested

in the study of behavior in natural settings and has worked on ritual forms of interaction in different countries.

Adrian Furnham is a Lecturer in Psychology at University College, London. He completed his B.A. and M.A. degrees at the University of Natal. He subsequently earned a M.Sc. from the University of London, a further M.Sc. from the University of Strathclyde while on a Rotary International Fellowship and a D.Phil. at Oxford University. He has published several articles on cross-cultural differences in social behavior.

Miles Hewstone graduated from Bristol University with a B.Sc. in Psychology, and is currently completing a D.Phil. at the University of Oxford.

Jos Jaspars is a Lecturer in Psychology in the Department of Experimental Psychology at Oxford University, and a Fellow of St. Edmund Hall. He obtained his doctorate from Leiden University, and has studied with George Kelly and Raymond Cattell in the U.S.A. Prior to coming to Oxford, he was Professor of Social Psychology at the University of Nijmegen and the University of Leiden. He has been the Editor of the *European Journal of Social Psychology,* Chairman of the European Association of Experimental Social Psychology, and has published extensively in the area of social perception.

Otto Klineberg has degrees in psychology and medicine from McGill, Harvard and Columbia universities. His first publication appeared in 1927, and in his long and distinguished career he made many seminal contributions to knowledge. He has conducted empirical research in many parts of the world, and has been largely instrumental in showing that there is no scientific basis for the belief in a link between race and cognitive abilities. His writings have had a profound impact, not just on his professional colleagues, but on public opinion at large. He went beyond conventional scholarly publications to write for a broader audience, and was responsible for the UNESCO brochures on race and science.

After his retirement from Columbia in 1962, Klineberg embarked on a new career in Paris, where he holds a Chair and is the Director of the International Center for the Study of Intergroup Relations, that is when he is not travelling to various parts of the world to lecture on the psychology of race relations.

Klineberg has been the recipient of the Butler Medal, the Kurt Lewin Memorial Award, the New York Society of Clinical Psychologists Annual Award, a medal from the University of Liege, and the Annual Award of the International Society for Educational, Cultural and Scientific Interchanges.

Most recently, in 1979 he received the American Psychological Association Award for Distinguished Contributions to Psychology in the Public Interest.

Philip L. Pearce is a Lecturer in Psychology at the James Cook University of North Queensland. He did his undergraduate degree at the University of Adelaide, and completed a D.Phil. at Oxford University in the Department of Experimental Psychology. His research interests include cognitive mapping, and attitude changes associated with overseas travel.

Contents

PART I **Cross-cultural interaction: theory and definition of the field** 1
STEPHEN BOCHNER

1. The social psychology of cross-cultural relations 5
STEPHEN BOCHNER

2. Contact between ethnic groups: a historical perspective of some aspects of theory and research 45
OTTO KLINEBERG

PART II **Processes in cross-cultural interaction** 57
STEPHEN BOCHNER

3. Inter-cultural communication 61
MICHAEL ARGYLE

4. Meetings and misunderstandings 81
PETER COLLETT

5. Language as the bridge 99
VERNER C. BICKLEY

6. Cross-cultural interaction, social attribution and inter-group relations 127
JOS JASPARS and MILES HEWSTONE

PART III **Outcomes of cross-cultural interaction** 157
STEPHEN BOCHNER

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7. Social difficulty in a foreign culture: an empirical analysis of culture shock 161
ADRIAN FURNHAM and STEPHEN BOCHNER

8. Tourists and their hosts: some social and psychological effects of inter-cultural contact 199
PHILIP L. PEARCE

Name Index 223

Subject Index 231

PART I

Cross-cultural interaction: theory and definition of the field

STEPHEN BOCHNER

THIS section provides an introduction to the theories, concepts and issues prominent in research on inter-group contact. In the first chapter Bochner draws on the perspective of social psychology to account for the development of ethnic identity. He then lists some major variables of cross-cultural contact, such as whether it occurs within or between societies; its time span, purpose, type of involvement, frequency and the degree of intimacy and relative status of the participants. The discussion then shifts to an analysis of the in-group–out-group differentiation, and the implications of this categorization for inter-group behaviour. Various factors contributing to the distinction between "us" and "them" are explored, including hypotheses relating to deindividuation and territoriality.

An overview of the empirical literature on the effects of contact then follows, organized according to the four main classes of dependent variables that have been measured: attitudes, social perceptions, attributions, and behavioural indices. Bochner then offers a model of contact based on two ideas: (1) that behaviour settings can be characterized as either monocultural, bicultural, or multicultural; and (2) that individuals in multicultural settings will respond to the contact by either undergoing or resisting changes in their ethnic identities, in effect either becoming or remaining mono-, bi-, or multicultural persons. The implications of this theory for inter-group relations are explored, and the chapter concludes with a review of some empirical studies that were generated by the model.

Klineberg's chapter is based on the author's personal contribution, over six decades, to research on inter-ethnic contact. He reviews the literature in four areas. The first issue is whether some groups are genetically inferior to others, particularly in cognitive ability. At the turn of the century it was widely accepted that non-white peoples were less well endowed intellectually than whites. Klineberg shows how the position has changed over the years, the current view with a few exceptions being that there is no scientific basis for a doctrine of racial inferiority.

The second issue is the role played in group contact by ethnic stereotypes, and Klineberg reviews the classic studies in this area. He then looks at inter-group conflict, rejecting that it is inevitable. Finally, Klineberg surveys findings relating to the effect of contact on mutual understanding, concluding that three contact variables in particular improve inter-group attitudes: equal status, superordinate goals, and intimate relations between members of the two groups.

Taken together, the contributions in this section provide a general theoretical framework for an inquiry into cross-cultural interaction, identifying the main issues and giving some indication of the major research findings. Some of the issues will be explored in greater detail later in this book, particularly topics such as social perceptions, stereotypes, attribution, and the contact variables contributing to positive inter-group relations.

1

The social psychology of cross-cultural relations

STEPHEN BOCHNER

Introduction

THE AIM of this chapter is to review the main issues, concepts and theoretical models involved in the study of cross-cultural relations. The approach will be to regard cross-cultural contact as a problem in social psychology. This view holds that relations between culturally disparate individuals are largely determined by the groups to which these persons belong, and to the nature and quality of the relationships existing between the respective groups.

As a preliminary to the analysis of cross-cultural contact, there follows a brief discussion of how individuals, groups, societies, and cultures are patterned.

Individuals and groups

Human beings are social creatures (Aronson, 1972). They mature, work, play and generally live out their span as members of groups; and as countless studies in social psychology have shown, the groups that individuals belong to greatly affect their attitudes, values, perceptions of the world, and ultimately the person's very sense of identity, of who they are.

Two features of social life greatly complicate the relationship between the individual and the group. The first is that individuals usually belong to more than one group. The main groups that most persons belong to are the *family* (or families, if the person is married but also has parents who are living, or children who have left home); the *work*, occupational or professional group; *recreational* groups such as sporting clubs, bridge-playing companions, regular drinkers in a pub, stamp-collecting associations, and all the many leisure activities that people carry out in the company of others with similar interests; groups that provide a setting for spiritual activities such as *worship* and prayer; *artistic* groups for the expression of the self; and *political* groups (political parties, trade unions, pressure groups) enabling a person to influence events and exercise power. A problem arises when the person belongs to groups that place contra-

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