The Survival of Small Societies

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I did not choose this topic solely because it was close to one of the continuing interests of Diamond Jenness. Gauging the identity of small and subordinate societies has been one of my own interests for a number of years. But for many more years Diamond Jenness had been concerned about the survival of Indian and Eskimo cultures,[1] with the syncretic and other adjustments they made to find order in their changing world,[2] and with the administrative acts and regulations that set external and often arbitrary constraints to life in their communities.[3]

The issues within this discussion are the directions, the scope and the net result of cultural change in the small and comparatively powerless communities associated with Indian reserves. Anthropological writings contain little that is directly aimed at this group of issues.[4] Anthropologists have not been neutral, but the subject has. It has been concerned with the analysis of change but not with its evaluation. Anthropologists have always been the champions, albeit often ineffective, of Indian rights as they saw them, speaking up for traditional customs and values when those officially charged with Indian welfare opposed them, and of later years upholding freedom of Indian choice and self-determination. But the anthropologists have been forced to march under a very uncertain banner of theory. Their professional knowledge was relativist and their commitment thereby almost neutralized. Professional knowledge provided no scope or scale for deciding when the Indian was better or worse off or even whether or not he was becoming less Indian. Anthropologists struggled individually to find their commitments and usually arrived at them from the stance of decent, humane, anti-colonialist people. Of later years their position has become increasingly anti-bureaucratic. Without

any professional technique of evaluation, the anthropologists bypassed many dilemmas of Indian life by the advocacy of an enlargement of Indian choice and decision whatever it might be.[5] I have advocated this as much as anyone. The support of free choice has the advantage of fitting both democratic principles and our knowledge of the motivations of change.

But the Indian politician has not been restrained in this way. He has said what he thinks about the directions of cultural change quite clearly. Usually he has denounced what has happened over three centuries as the loss of land, values, language, religion, art and all.[6] From our neutral position on cultural gains and losses we anthropologists can ask whether this is mere speechmaking to gain support and power for whatever purposes or whether there is an intrinsic validity to his denunciation. But we can no longer avoid trying to give an answer ourselves. Anthropology must be linked with Indian interests, as they are and also as the Indians see them.

The issue is comparatively old in the concerns of practical anthropology where the directions of change, its losses as well as gains, were inevitably considered. Such questions underlay the 1954 survey of the Indians of British Columbia and the 1965 survey of the Indians of Canada in their inquiries into employment, organization of reserves, creation of band corporations, education and so on.[7] The ascertaining of cultural flow and its direction entered also into the fashioning of recommendations. Guidelines could not be drawn for action on matters such as education if the actual as well as the desired directions of change were unknown to those most concerned. And while the objective analyst has often shunned the question, the Indians, the teachers, the administrators and the politicians have all claimed to know the answers.

Canadian pluralism, like the melding forces in all large contemporary nations, is not very effective in the drastic reduction of minority cultures to an indistinct location somewhere among its middle values. Nor, with some exceptions, does it produce lasting ethnic slum communities. Many groups, some of them quite small, have remained separate and distinct in city as well as rural areas.[8] Indian communities are among those that remain culturally distinct and their members see themselves as such. This is the

present fact. What is the outlook, and can anything be said about the costs and benefits of the trends of cultural change?

How distinct are the Indians going to remain? Will they become merely another nominally distinct ethnic group, a named majority in some rural areas and elsewhere a small barely recognized minority? They have now merged with other people for schooling, and increasingly for employment. As Indians move into the cities, a Skid Row area houses some, but others live throughout the city located as individuals or single families. There are few social barriers to intermarriage and those are only slight, especially in the cities. The adjustments that urbanizing peoples make have been studied elsewhere more fully than in Canada but some of the general findings in Africa, Oceania and Asia are pertinent here also. Urbanizing has not meant the immediate severance of cultural ties and many Indians in the city retain their links with relatives and with the cultural forms of the home community. Perhaps in Metge's terms they should be seen as part of rurally-based Indian culture.[9]

The separate identity of Indians may well be determined more by what happens to people in a reserve community than to individuals in the cities and raises the question of how viable is the reserve in the contemporary world, an issue to which the 1965 survey devoted much attention. How practicable is a move towards autonomy of the reserve, perhaps through management of its own affairs as an ethnically separate municipality? How much effort will people find it worthwhile expending on the teaching and learning of languages that are very local and on maintaining their cultural traditions, perhaps through reducing them to written form? Obviously many of their choices in relation to other political and economic issues will be coloured by their decisions on these matters.

Some of the types of change among Canadian Indians, the rates and extent of cultural change, are those found nearly universally among small communities in plural societies.[10] The disparity in numbers alone does not make it impossible for a small community to retain its cultural identity nor does it halt its absorption into the matrix of the large society, but short of a conscious decision by a community, an analytic approach to cultural change,

or unusual conditions of prestige and power, very disparate numbers indicate that cultural influences will flow more from the larger to the smaller group.

The effective disparity between the size of the Indian communities and the Canadian matrix is even greater than suggested by the census figures. The disparity between 250,000 Indians of official status, or the possible total of 500,000 and the national population of 22,000,000, must take into account the dispersion of the 559 bands over a vast area, with very limited bonds between them. Language and cultural differences divided the Indians in the past just as space did, their division not created by a divide and conquer policy framed to make administration easier; the earlier dispersion of groups with wide cultural differentiation had already determined their political weakness. Recently the new political associations have begun the struggle to bind Indians together beyond local groupings, but in spite of dramatic growth of the associations the task is far from over.

Following the influences of mass and power, the cultural flow has continued at a high rate, and has been predominantly in one direction. The Indian contributions to Canadian history and culture were made early and enabled the nation to survive and grow,[11] but the growth of the nation has been mainly along lines set by the European origin of its immigrant population. In contrast, the Indian cultures have become Europeanized extensively but in recent years have had little countervailing influence on the development of Canadian society.

The changes in Indian life have often been directed by others and always, until very recently, were responses to programs that were conceived and administered by the churches, or by the government agency with administrative responsibility for the Indians, now the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development. Neither the motivation nor the design of them emerged from the Indians to any great degree. The partial and uneven success of the programs has been characteristic of imposed change everywhere throughout the world. Tuberculosis control could be directed and carried out by the Department of Health personnel and yet have obvious benefits that have needed no stressing; it has been remarkably successful. In contrast, agri-

cultural work and improvements must be carried out by the Indian farmer himself, and will be carried out only if he wants them and judges them to be advantageous in his own value system; in relation to the length of time the Department has pushed farming, and in spite of everybody's assertions about its contribution to the betterment of life, it has been remarkably unsuccessful.

The programs of change and development were intentionally selective, the authorities being more interested in effecting some changes rather than others and showed no interest at all in perpetuating any aspects of the local cultures, which few officials knew in any detail. Except where small handicraft industries grew up, they did not care whether Indians continued some of their crafts like basketmaking or let them die out, but they did care whether Indians continued give-away feasts and ceremonies involving bodily mutilation or even ceremonies of long duration that took them away from work. They also cared whether Indians became literate and individually self-supporting on the Canadian pattern. But the suppression of institutions was easier than the initiation of them, at least in the short run. The result of Departmental action was usually negative or a cultural loss, in that people could be compelled to give up institutions and proscribed behaviour but could not be compelled to believe and seldom could be compelled even to act. Few Indians who had not been farmers began to farm. Fewer still began to believe in the benefits of a civilization that produced disadvantages for them. Changes were at first adjustive in a minimal sense: the Indians did what they had to do and stopped what they were compelled to stop. Then changes became accumulative as key structures of the tribal societies began to fail.

A fully satisfactory definition of the terms cultural gain and loss is elusive.[12] Cultural relativism tried to rescue anthropology from the philosophic morass of making judgments while claiming objectivity when universal values either do not exist or are very hard to discern. But as stated above, many Indians have no doubts that they are now worse off and continue to regret what they regard as their losses. From his position, the museum ethnologist also has few doubts; how could he, when the collections are now irreplaceable? But beyond material culture, life has altered

and the changes can be summed up at least impressionistically. The net long-run result has almost certainly been cultural loss.

Indian cultures have less content than they did. The days and seasons are less shaped by the demands of social and even economic institutions; there is less form in art, less symbol and ritual in religion, fewer techniques with less style in them. The incorporative process suggested by Vogt as the mode of adjustment of Indian cultures does operate on the reserves but it is a more useful description of an earlier phase.[13] After that as the cultural matrix that incorporates the innovation has less structure and coherence, loss and replacement are handier variables. Many cultural replacements have been made, as obviously people get a living still, and some go to church and some now watch television and read papers and magazines and make purchases guided by aesthetic variables; but until recently there have been fewer things to take part in or even to observe, and there are still for many people days and seasons that are more formless and less filled with culturally prescribed and styled events than there used to be. Possibly the hours are now filled with more conversation and with gatherings that have less shape and organization; it is equally likely that good fieldwork will continue to reveal the less obvious structures in the new. Yet the invisibility of structures poses problems for their maintenance. The insider also can lose sight of them when they exist as tenuous understandings or only as statistical modes.

The new things in Indian life entail a series of adjustments in their turn. Some of the replacements have been made in a highly rational manner, as is the case when men adopt new techniques that gain the same result in a more efficient way. No persuasion has been needed to induce the fisherman and trapper to use superior gear if he can afford it. Yet other replacements have not yielded such a clear gain and their inception has often been forced. The growth in the use of English (and for a few, French) has enabled people to use the language of power, it is true. Even with widespread schooling it has in past years been inadequately mastered by most, so that it has been a poor tool for manipulation of political and economic destiny. At the same time the use of the traditional languages and the capacity to use them has lessened, and very dramatically so in the past two decades in some com-

munities. At least one language has completely disappeared in that period. Many people appear to possess a smaller total vocabulary albeit in two languages, and to control a more impoverished syntax than did their parents.

The exceptions are still many. Oratorical talents are perhaps common in cultures without writing; certainly they are possessed by many Indians today — probably more commonly than among whites in spite of the inhibiting influences of the older special schools for Indians. Much of the effectiveness of the emerging Indian political leaders rests on this gift; as access to television increases, the oratorical talent of many Indian leaders may have formidable results.

Nor is all of the non-standard English inadequate. At times it is used by very eloquent speakers and its variations from the standard, including the double negatives that speakers of standard English are now inhibited from using, become a source of strength. It is just possible that the varieties of English used by the Indians of Canada may develop creatively and take their lasting place by the side of those spoken and written in Africa, the West Indies, India, Australia and the United States. But the small numbers of Canadian Indians would appear to limit the likelihood, and the strengthening influence of schools operating with Provincial standards would seem to diminish it further.

A loss with unequal replacement has also been suffered in the systems of art, religion and magic. There are regions where a Christian church, a revival or continuation of traditional religion or a new synthesis of traditional religion and Christianity offers an ordering and interpretation of Indian life and a participation in ritual and ceremony that are possibly as full as existed before. More commonly, however, a few people attend a skimped service that has an uncertain linkage to their daily life and that offers no comprehensible interpretation of its meaning. And the rich theatre of magical performance has vanished entirely.

The erosion of art is the most visible loss. Control of everyday art has passed from the community. Of course people operate with aesthetic values still, but the decoration of clothes and utensils, and the use of cosmetics and the styling of hair are now stand-

ardized variants of commercial fashions. With the loss of meaningful form has gone the loss of the role of the artist. What remain are some crafts that employ hide and weaving materials, usually simplified from earlier forms, turning out objects that can find a sale to whites. For ceremonies there is commonly a replacement of local dress by costume of Plains and Central American styles, which indeed offers decorative pleasure but loses the symbolism of the localized art.

There are people who stand out in art as in politics, sport and business, who have taken the base of traditional art and become creative artists, living by the sale of their work on a national or international market. But their contribution is to the sophisticated segment of the national culture that enjoys their work, and their influence on Indian cultures and the reserves is not yet significant.[14] Few Indians could now afford to buy work of the contemporary artist at prices as high as hundreds of dollars for a bracelet or a small carving in argillite, or of thousands of dollars for a complex mask.

Although the total structure of Indian life has been affected, the forces making for change have been different at the various points of the structure. Systems of Indian belief and action have been of greater interest to the trader, the agent, the courts and the police, the missionary and the welfare worker respectively, and pressure has been applied to alter these systems where they were in conflict with the rules of the authorities. At first it was of concern to the trader and the agent of the government to have a responsible person to deal with. Hunting and gathering societies do not create centralized political systems, and often the chief who could give an undertaking on behalf of a group had to be created. The Indian Act specified who he should be or how he should be chosen. After a century of carrying out certain imposed offices, the role is now becoming an integral one, partly because the offices now include the management of assets that are coming to be significant in size.

While the creation of the desired form of authority was an uphill battle, the undermining of the existing form was easier. Major punishments of an offender became the prerogative of the government, new and important sets of offenses were defined

by law and people of high traditional status lost some mechanisms of power and occasion for using it.

Both government and church aimed at the destruction of the existing systems of magic, religion and healing, with the results already mentioned.

The latest Indian institution to receive the direct attention of authority is the family with its attendant network of kin beyond the nucleus of parents and children. School, health, and welfare officials, armed with the numerous laws and codes of a contemporary nation, are intensely concerned with the care and training of the child and the support of the older dependent, and the tone of family life from birth onwards will need to continue to alter to accommodate the standards and the requirements of the welfare state.

Adjustment is major and continuous. While there may not always be a net loss as a result, the replacement of Indian culture seems to be unabated. The question arises whether anything can halt cultural loss in the Indian and other small communities which are now found within larger ones? Must they always continue to adjust and adapt until they are an indistinguishable part of the national society?

It has been believed that personality structures may persist, still fostered and produced within the more conservative bonds of the family.[15] But the public health nurse, other welfare workers, and the pre-school program are all now involved in what happens to the infant and young child. It is not easy to think that their involvement will maintain the traditional system of upbringing and personality formation.

With all of these pressures for homogenization what then can be the scope of a conscious decision to remain Indian and to foster Indian culture? Enough examples now show that under some conditions small nations and large tribal societies can assert the value of a culture and for the space of some decades or even centuries maintain it as the life of their members. Political utterances of Indians have increasingly called for holding to the Indian way of life. The utterances have usually been non-specific and perhaps usually should be seen as rallying cries rather than as

labels for anything clear in the way of program. But a growing number of people now call specifically for the local language to be taught in school and have demanded that this be fitted into the official program of bilingualism, as is now proposed in Manitoba. This, along with the teaching (and first the collecting) of Indian history, of Indian myth and tales of heroes, is one of the most feasible and important proposals now being made. So far it finds school systems unprepared and informed teachers in short supply, and even writing systems for many languages undeveloped.

Perhaps the effectiveness of an Indian decision to remain Indian should first be assayed in relation to the sorts of changes that are now occurring. Some of the cultural changes in the 559 bands across Canada show variation too wide to summarize. But many of them show strong similarities from reserve to reserve that stem from their relatively small size and their relationship to the large and dominant national society. They are not unlike those occurring in small and subordinate communities elsewhere in the world. From the sample of thirty-five bands studied socio-economically in the 1965 survey and the others which were reported on from various points of view, some of the changes that have taken place and are seen as likely to continue are summarized and offered as statements that can lead towards generalizations about the paths of cultural flow in small communities.

Canadians have applied new names to many Indian bands and cultural groups; these names have gained currency both within and outside of the group, thereby altering their self-view.

Occasionally the name is a translation or approximation of an extant local name but more often it has a completely extraneous background and origin.

For example, the Indians now called Thompson after the river named for the explorer, and earlier called Couteau by the Hudson's Bay Company, had previously named their whole group and its hamlets with names mostly descriptive of the localities. The new name is now standard written usage, employed by whites and by the people themselves.

The commonest result of the new nomenclature was a blurring then a widening of the self-view, as Thompson people became also Indians or Natives. But the wider categories have not yet become communities capable of unity of action and the price paid by this group or others has been confusion of cultural identity; misunderstandings in communication with officials and other outsiders; defensiveness where a name was unflattering; and plain annoyance at being misnamed.

A parallel discussion might show that the re-naming of individuals for the convenience of mission and school use also had its effect on self-regard.

> *The prevailing technological, legal, economic and administrative patterns of an industrial society now favour the emergence of nuclear families and tend to lessen that integration of the small community that depends on lineage and similar structures.*

This sort of statement has been made countless times for the Canadian Indian and other tribal peoples affected by large-scale governmental and industrial patterns. It is at best a statement that contains the greater part of the truth. Many contrary instances have been studied and reported where the more extensive kin structures persist under the operation of similar administrations and pressures. Nevertheless, the inducements for the isolation and emergence of the nuclear family are always present. The Indian Act, which certainly has not shaped all of Indian life but has exerted a continued pressure on some aspects of it, specified descent and inheritance without any mention of the mother's brother, whose bond to his nephew is a key link in many kin structures. The relevant sections of the Act are concerned with the support of the wife and the children above all, and treat inheritance as determined by the degree of consanguinity equally for the mother's or the father's line.

The effect of contemporary welfare laws and administration is now even greater than that of the Indian Act, and the nuclear family unit is supported as the basis of society. The design and the financing of a house have a husband, his wife and their few children in view. Automobiles, furniture, cooking and serving

vessels, and even television screens suit a unit the size of the smaller nuclear family. In keeping with these consistent pressures, wages and salaries are paid to the individual, commonly are spent by him, and he is held responsible for debt as the husband and father. Enterprises of the wider kin group are less usual than they were and are likely to be undertaken by a group of brothers, a section of the nuclear family grown to maturity.

A corollary is that the integration of the community is lessened if the more extensive kin structures are weakened. This is self-evident unless they are replaced by some other grouping and bond. And no new bond is automatically brought into being by these contemporary changes.

> *Economic adaptations have entailed successive moves away from indigenous cultural forms (e.g., in order, these are likely to be successive abandonments of: goods exchange, kin distributions, seasonal work, subsistence undertakings such as fishing, value systems backed by indigenous supernatural sanctions).*

This generalization describes a common historical sequence in work and exchange. The trader introduced a new system of purely material exchange in which the aims of trader and Indian were reduced to the balancing of material values. Usually there was need for little beyond the communication with things. In some instances there were variations on the purely material pattern, when the taking of an Indian wife created other obligations for the trader and his new kinsmen, or when the trader was given fictional membership in a tribe. Furthermore, the Indian trapper often entered into a paternalistic relationship that bound him through advances and debt to the particular trader.

The trade in goods and furs grew at the expense of exchange between local and kin groups, although in a period of transition and to a lesser extent today the purchased goods were also given in exchanges between Indians. The annual round altered as some particular part of it became of greater commercial importance. For example, the development of commercial fishing on the Pacific Coast brought its own and special requirements for residence. Fishermen and their families came to live in cannery

towns and gave up their other places of residence, or spent less time at them. Subsistence hunting diminished as the game dwindled and the trader supplied food as did the Department in times of great need. Later the hunters, trappers, fishermen and farmers were required to operate according to the Game Acts, the Fisheries Acts, and the advice of agricultural supervisors rather than according to the direction of the shaman.

> *New enterprise in a reserve has been more likely to see a pooling of capital and labour from close kin and near neighbours than from others. The greater availability of capital from outside sources has not yet altered this tendency although in instances where the interest of external investors is very great, as in the development of urban reserve lands, a new class of reserve entrepreneurs may be arising.*

Close kin and near neighbours are among those who meet more often, are already in the habit of exchanging information and may have passed the point of needing to ask whether they want to work together. It is likely also that they have shared ownership in the past of substantial items like houses, cars and trucks, livestock and fishboats, and that they have shared work in a logging, harvesting or fishing crew. They may have surmounted some of the barriers to management of an enterprise on a reserve and have embarked on a joint venture.

But enterprises that employ kinsmen do not expand readily. They must undergo a qualitative change if they are to include others on a fully equal basis.[16] And if they remain restricted to kinsmen they are likely to arouse the understandable antagonisms from others that will limit their effectiveness.

Externally organized co-operatives and corporations may present alternatives to kin enterprises. Co-operatives and corporations interested in the resources of the reserve or in supplying services to it may open partnerships and employment to reserve people on a basis of universality. Such organizations may follow rational, invariable and open rules and procedures for authority and compliance, for arriving at decisions, carrying out production, collecting debts and distributing benefits. Alternatively they may avoid both traditional legitimacy and open operation through spe-

cial arrangements between reserve entrepreneurs and external ones. Even if fully open and univeralistic their difficulty is likely to be in the uncertain flow of information to reserve people about their procedures. Words and figures that are ordinarily adequate will not necessarily allay the suspicions that are directed towards the outsider and that have some basis in experience.

Welfare payments may maintain a small reserve community when otherwise its resources would fall below a minimum level and those people who could do so would leave to live elsewhere.

From the coming of the trader, through the operation of the Department to the present day, external support has kept some bands in existence when earlier they would probably have gone under, perhaps through merger with more successful bands. Today payments under welfare programs maintain families on a reserve and hence keep some bands extant. The alternative that some Indians prefer to receiving welfare and remaining on a reserve that is short of employment and exploitable opportunities and resources is migration to an urban centre and some bands have lost a considerable proportion of their numbers. Without the support of welfare, it is likely that many more would have left.

Power holders in a reserve community are likely to try to gain some control over welfare payments and development funds from outside agencies.[17]

Those who hold power are likely to be the elected chief and council, or the leaders of dominant lineages, who may endeavour to maintain their positions by directing the flow of benefits through alliances with officials and external entrepreneurs. Thus they may continue to render decisions on protection, on comfort and on the distribution of wealth. The irruption of the trader disturbed their relative position less than that of others. Indeed, by the presentation of special clothing and other gifts, the trader and the treaty-maker endeavoured to enhance the position of the leaders. The missionary had a greater motive for altering the social order, in part because he might find it easier to gain for his church the adherence of those who had no power in the old order and in part because of the frequent identity of the secular and sacred orders. The Indian Act and the Canadian legal

system prescribed a concern for individuals equally, and the Department therefore was always a potential threat to men of power. The successful power-holders were those who coped with the threatened disruption by co-operation or judicious opposition.

Today the universal availability of welfare payments in forms such as family allowances and old-age pensions offers sustenance independent of the goodwill of anyone on the reserve. Even more, developmental and other funds threaten the existing internal order. In the past, astute power-holders have been likely to proffer their services as guides to administration, and external organizations seeking co-operation were likely to accept them. With the growth of larger Indian regional associations which promise to have considerable political influence and with changing public attitudes, the men who want to exercise power find that open independence and, when necessary, public opposition to officials are often now more valuable to them.

There is no discernible link between religious affiliation of a reserve and business success, as measured by average earnings of the band.

It is a part of Canadian folklore that the bands converted to Protestant Christianity are more successful in their adaptation to contemporary life than those converted to Catholicism. This belief is often put forward by people who have read neither Weber nor Tawney nor indeed the recent challenges to their conclusions. In the bands studied in the survey no significant correlation was found between material advance and religious affiliation of bands.

In the examination of this issue the sample was corrected for differentials in location, in type of traditional livelihood, and for the mixed affiliation of some bands. The result was derived from the comparison of income in like bands.[18]

The goal of travel away from the reserve has been one of the prime stimulants of work and saving while on it.

As with many tribal and peasant communities in the contemporary world, people on reserves tend to move to centres of higher population density. The movement for reserve populations

may be occasional and short-term, seasonal or permanent. The goal may be recreation as well as employment. Some people save up for travel and it acts as one of the stimulants of work and earnings. Travel has different effects on children going away to school; on youth seeking city excitement; on the older and well-off going to winter vacations in warmer climates; on families going away for seasonal labour; on skilled workers following opportunities for employment; on men and women — the latter less likely to return to the reserve; on the adjustments of the migrants and those required of the remaining reserve population.[19]

Extensive use of English or French, the languages of commerce, employment and administration, is inevitable for people on a reserve.

Schools, which nearly everyone has attended for at least several years, have taught only the dominant languages, with few exceptions until recently. Other influences have reinforced their use. There has been little opportunity for employment for anyone not speaking one of them. Increasingly, the dominant language has become the language of the home, and younger people speak less of the local Indian language than do their parents, if indeed they speak any at all. The possibility of slowing or halting this process is discussed below.

Adoption of a national language leads to various forms of cultural exchange which results in a net loss.

This is a highly impressionistic conclusion. The acquired language is seldom accompanied by full participation in the dominant culture because most Indians have lacked the opportunity to become creative in the new arts and techniques. And on the other hand the acquired language is inadequate for participation in many aspects of the Indian cultures.

Several responses of the small reserve societies may affect the processes of language change and cultural gain or loss. For example, marginal languages and local variants have arisen and may have slowed down cultural loss.

A trade jargon used in the West arose in a particular situation and was hardly adequate for more than the particular pur-

poses of superficial contact and trading, and consequently could play little part in cultural transmission. Some missionaries used the Chinook jargon for some of their services but its adequacy for technical, political and aesthetic communication was very limited. And at the present day the localized variants of English screen communication in a similar way. This argument is not dependent on a finding about how far a local variant might develop given time and the sort of support advocated by Hall for Pidgin and must here bypass the issue raised by Hymes of the extent to which language is needed for cultural transmission across boundaries.[20]

It appears that some reserve and regional communities, even some with numbers no greater than a few hundred, are about to embark on a program of language teaching. This is in some cases an unofficial program, separate from the schools, only a few of which teach in a local Indian language. The program may not lessen all of the types of cultural flow from the dominant society — in contrast, it is almost always initiated with the support and guidance of linguists or anthropologists and association with universities — but it seems certain to increase the retention of Indian culture.

Along with the programs of formal language teaching must go the development of writing systems, which will further supplement the oral transmission of culture. They may also contribute to greater language stability in situations where the change decade by decade is now very rapid.

Radio, television and magazines have been among the influences bringing about extensive value changes. There are some new radio programs in local languages which might even aid in the retention and regeneration of the languages.

Drinking has been an adaptation to the dominant society and to the stresses of deprivation and may have slowed down further adaptations.[21]

Before the coming of the whites, the Indians of Canada did not brew or distill alcoholic drinks, but with the advent of the trader they accepted and sought liquor as one of the trade items. The drinking of rum and other distillations and brews met several

Indian needs. Commonly people had sought ecstatic and hallucinatory states through fasting, physical pain, long isolation and other measures. There were also the needs of hospitality with prestige dependent on the consumption or presentation of valued commodities. Finally the events, often disastrous for the Indians, that followed the incursion of the whites created an increasing social instability and a growing uncertainty about food and life itself. The new pattern of drinking deadened the shocks and the anxieties common to reserve life and also operated to provide a new stability, for a while lessening the need to adapt further.

It is a commonplace of the commentary on cultural boundaries that conflict and identity are linked together. For the reserve community a marginal conflict at a certain low level with the surrounding one has countered cultural erosion.

Alien and external police forces have raised boundaries of mistrust and in the short run at least have created a solidarity of values and reinforced the cohesion of reserve communities.

Contrasting results follow the readiness of the surrounding communities to accept people from the reserve. In regions where the national society is more open in matters of housing and jobs this readiness poses a greater threat to the cultural survival of the reserve than where the larger society is more closed. Where the surrounding communities are open more people leave the reserve to live elsewhere. If the surrounding communities show little acceptance of Indians, the ability and willingness of people to move away from the reserve is reduced. The cultural influence affecting the reserve will be greater or less accordingly.

Other effects follows more or less directly from the demography of smallness. What happens if young people see more of outsiders than of their own group? If free to travel and mix from school onwards, they are more likely to find spouses outside the community. The extent of this likelihood is probably determined by the size of the group, by the years and conditions of joint schooling, and by the freedom of access to jobs; it is an index of the openness of the boundary between the small community and the majority. Similar variables enter into determining

where the couple will set up residence and consequently what is to be the nature of their participation in community life.

Many other generalizations can be formulated about change in areas where external influence is considerable. Such are the ones that could be linked with the locus and scope of decisions. The major society inevitably removes from the small group many decisions about affairs which concern it. What is the likelihood that people with certain kinds of ability will try to regain the power of decision, will struggle against its loss, will ignore the change or will move into the larger society where more power commensurate with their abilities may be exercised?

In summary, while it is clear that the processes of change in small communities are not limited to what was once simply labelled acculturation, it is also clear that change is continuous and far-reaching and has directions that can be ascertained. Although there may not be an end-point for the existence of many small communities, the sum of the adaptations has so far increased the similarity of all of them to the national community.

For the museum-centred anthropologist this cannot even be the subject of query. Only the observer innocent of knowledge of material culture, of technology and substances, could be oblivious to this type of change in Indian life — the diminution of people able to prepare and manufacture; the dearth of craftsmen not replaced; the paucity of employment of technical terms that were in use two generations ago. On the other hand, new materials have replaced or even added to the old; tools have been manufactured with additional or substituted cordage, nails, rivets and iron; dresses, blankets and headdresses adorned with new materials have served the same final purposes as formerly; electronic devices and the internal combustion engine are everywhere; this list could be as long as the advertising pages or the mail order catalogue.

Technology and materials have played their determining role as well as their instrumental one. Cash purchase has effects different from those of collecting and fabricating. With the technical change, the allocation and amounts of time, the work groups and their composition have altered and the ethnoscience of plants, fauna and substances is different or no longer needed at all.

A different type of change in small communities is that of becoming or staying open or closed to an outer world.

The prying pressures of the majority are ceaseless. They vary from openly repressive in intent to supportive. It is not easy to say which groups have been responsible for exerting most pressure on Indian cultures, nor whether the pressures for change from a surrounding majority that lacks any interest in Indian cultures are less than those which have emanated in the past from would-be suppressors.

Indian societies have responded in several ways. Some new aspects of life, even ceremonial life, have become more open. Audiences are welcome to many ceremonies as well as the widespread "Indian Days" where modified dances are presented, sports events are organized and traditional food may be prepared for the visitors as well as the participants. In contrast, other aspects of life have been drawn back behind a protective wall which the white outsider is discouraged from penetrating.

Is there a different future for the survival of the institutions that shield themselves and those that invite spectators or outside participants? I have written elsewhere of changes in institutions that become secret to a high degree.[22] (I am not of course referring to those Indian "secret societies" whose secrecy consisted only of the special knowledge and preparation of some of the participants in an open ceremony.) It would seem that the degree of secrecy attained by some of the societies, e.g., the company and potlatch system of the Carrier,[23] is roughly comparable to that of contemporary Masonic lodges but not to that of the Sons of Freedom Doukhobors in which secrecy confused the purposes and organization of the group to such an extent that variations became intolerably divergent and the society broke down.

But the issue of closed societies might emerge with greater significance at some future time. The major society is avid for news of colourful difference; the ubiquitous television and film crews search every nook and cranny. Small societies are exotic and those which endeavour to keep to themselves will need to build a higher and higher wall which eventually may hide even from themselves what they are doing.

The purpose of this discussion has been to raise issues and put forward hypotheses. It began by asking if there could be any conclusions about the direction and the amount of cultural flow, and if one could gauge the usefulness of these conclusions about the change in small and subordinate societies.

Most of the answers put forward here have been rather vague, but not all of them need to remain so. In the 1965 survey a study of a selected number of groups enabled a reasonable testing of the linkage between religion and economic development to be carried out. A number of other hypotheses related to development were also tested.[24] Perhaps many others are amenable to a quantitative trial. Hypotheses dealing with migration are especially open to quantification of some of the variables, even if others dealing with topics like the locus and scope of decision must be managed verbally.

At times, the part played by the anthropologist in the contemporary life of small communities is more that of the shuttlecock than the champion he would choose to be. But his position could be improved and his utility extended if he saw his role with fuller clarity. If he becomes an advocate of the rights of the small community he will be a better advocate if he can show full scholarly support for his position. His position is not completely altered if he is an Indian studying and participating in his own culture. Advocacy and scholarship still need to be reconciled. Anthropologists working among Indians must do so at the Indians' behest, and their work will be justified in large part by their assessment of the direction of change and their provision of soundly based guidelines for action.

Notes

1. "Clearly, for better or worse, the new era has dawned, and only the future can decide whether the natives will survive or go under." (*The Life of the Copper Eskimos,* Report of the Canadian Arctic Expedition, 1913-18, vol. 12, pt. A [Ottawa, 1923], p. 249). Even earlier and many times in later years Jenness wrote on the topic of cultural survival.

2. For example, *The Faith of a Coast Salish Indian,* Anthropology in British Columbia, Memoir no. 3 (Victoria, B.C., 1955).

3. This is documented in his magnificent final contribution, *Eskimo Administration,* Technical Papers nos. 10, 14, 16, 19, 21 of the Arctic Institute of North America (Montreal, 1962-8).

4. Notable earlier exceptions include W.H.R. Rivers, *Essays on the Depopulation of Melanesia* (Cambridge, 1922), and more recent ones, G. and M. Wilson, *The Analysis of Social Change* (Cambridge, 1954); R. Redfield, *The Little Community* (Chicago, 1955); B. Benedict, *Problems of Smaller Territories* (London, 1967).

5. An exception is the well-known letter on the potlatch written by Boas and published in the Vancouver *Daily Province,* March 6, 1897.

6. Indian denunciations of loss can be found in the *Minutes of Proceedings and Evidence* of the Special Joint Committees of the Senate and the House of Commons appointed to examine the Indian Act, in the 1946-8 and 1959-61 sessions, and also in the Consultative meetings on the Report of the Indian Act held during 1968. Also, see the discussion in B.J. James, "Continuity and Emergence in Indian Poverty Culture," *Current Anthropology* 11:435-452 (Oct.-Dec. 1970).

7. H.B. Hawthorn, C.S. Belshaw and S.M. Jamieson, *The Indians of British Columbia* (Toronto, 1958); H.B. Hawthorn, ed., *A Survey of the Contemporary Indians of Canada,* 2 vols (Ottawa, 1966 and 1967).

8. Current research on the viability of small communities in Canada includes that of F. Vallee on French-speaking communities outside of Quebec.

9. J. Metge, *A New Maori Migration: Rural and Urban Relations in Northern New Zealand* (London, 1964).

10. Benedict, *Smaller Territories,* especially chapter 4.

11. Diamond Jenness, *The Indian Background of Canadian History,* National Museum of Canada Bulletin no. 86, Anthropological Series no. 21 (Ottawa, 1937).

12. Well-known attempts include Sapir's 1924 article, "Culture, Genuine and Spurious."

13. E.Z. Vogt in *Perspectives in American Indian Culture and Change,* ed. E.H. Spicer (Chicago, 1961).

14. The carving and erection of a totem pole in Massett by Vancouver-based artist Bob Davidson in honour of his grandfather may be the beginning of such contributions. Vancouver *Sun,* August 23, 1969.

15. For one example of many, A.I. Hallowell, *Culture and Experience* (Philadelphia, 1954), chapters 18 and 19.

16. For a fuller statement, see Benedict, *Smaller Territories,* p. 51, but Benedict overlooks the advantages of kin and friendship groups as a basis for enterprise.

17. *Ibid.,* p. 53.

18. Hawthorn, ed., *Contemporary Indians of Canada,* Vol. 1, pp. 130-134. This section was written by S.M. Jamieson.

19. Some of these issues were explored in a colloquium conducted in 1970 by Joan Metge and Susanne Storie, and the results may appear in various theses and papers.

20. R.A. Hall, Jr., *Hands off Pidgin English* (Sydney, 1955); D. Hymes, "Linguistic Problems in Defining the Concept of 'Tribe', " in *Essays in the Problem of Tribe* (Seattle, 1968).

21. Ernest Beaglehole discusses a somewhat similar situation in *Social Change in the South Pacific* (London, 1957).

22. "A Test of Simmel on the Secret Society: The Doukhobors of British Columbia," *American Journal of Sociology* 62:1-7 (July 1956).

23. Personal communication, Vernon Kobrinsky.

24. Hawthorn, ed., *Contemporary Indians of Canada,* vol. 1, chapters 5 and 6.