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ADDRESS

TO THE

ANTHROPOLOGICAL SECTION

BY

A. C. HADDON, M.A., Sc.D., F.R.S., M.R.I.A.,

PRESIDENT OF THE SECTION.



So much has been written of late on totemism that I feel some diffidence in burdening still further the literature of the subject. But I may plead a slight claim on your attention, as I happen to be an unworthy member of the Crocodile kin of the Western tribe of Torres Straits, and I have been recognised as such in another island than the one where I changed names with Maino, the chief of Tutu, and thereby became a member of his kin.

I do not intend to discuss the many theories about totemism, as this would occupy too much time; nor can I profess to be able to throw much light upon the problems connected with it; but I chiefly desire to place before you the main issues in as clear a manner as may be, and I venture to offer for your consideration one way in and some ways out of totemism.

A few years ago M. Marillier wrote¹ that 'totemism is one of the rare forms of culture: it is incapable of evolution and transformation, and is intelligible only in its relations with certain types of social organisation. When these disappear it also disappears. Totemism in its complete development is antagonistic alike to transformation or progress.' In due course I shall describe how one people at least is emerging from totemism. At the outset I wish it to be distinctly understood that I do not regard this as the only way out; doubtless there have been several transformations, but a record of what appears to be taking place appeals more to most students than a guess as to what may have happened.

What is most needed at the present time is fresh investigation in the field. Those who are familiar with the literature of the subject are only too well aware of the imperfection of the available records. There are several reasons which account for this. Some of the customs and beliefs associated with totemism have a sacred significance, and the average savage is too reverent to speak lightly of what touches him so deeply. Natives cannot explain their mysteries any more than the adherents of more civilised religions can fully explain theirs. Further, they particularly dislike the unsympathetic attitude of most inquirers, and nothing shuts up a native more effectually than the fear of ridicule.

Language is another difficulty. Even supposing the white man has acquired the language, the vocabulary of the native is not sufficiently full or precise to explain those distinctions which appeal to us, but which are immaterial to him.

Granting the willingness of the native to communicate his ideas, and that the hindrance of language has been overcome, there remains the difficulty of the native understanding what it is the white man wishes to learn. If there is a practically

¹ *Rev. de l'Hist. des Religions*, xxxvi. 1897, pp. 368, 369.

insuperable difficulty in the investigator putting himself into the mental attitude of the savage, there is also the reciprocal source of error.

'Oh, East is East, and West is West,
And never the twain shall meet.'

If Kipling is right for the civilised Oriental, how about those of lower stages of culture and more primitive modes of thought?

We must not overlook the fact that the majority of white men who mix with primitive folk are either untrained observers or their training is such that it renders them yet more unsympathetic—one might say antagonistic—to the native point of view. The ignorance and prejudice of the white man are great hindrances to the understanding of native thought.

When students at home sift, tabulate, and compare the available records they get a wider view of the problems concerned than the investigator in the field is apt to attain. Generalisations and suggestions crystallise out which may or may not be true, but which require further evidence to test them. So the student asks for fresh observations and sends the investigator back to his field.

The term 'totemic' has been used to cover so many customs and beliefs that it is necessary to define the connotation which is here employed.

It appears from Major J. W. Powell's recent account of totemism¹ that the Algonkin use of the term 'totem' is so wide as to include the representation of the animal that is honoured (but he does not state that the animal itself is called a totem), the clay with which the person was painted, the name of the clan,² and that of the gens,³ the tribal name, the names of shamanistic societies, the new name assumed at puberty, as well as the name of the object from which the individual is named. He distinctly states, 'We use the term "totemism" to signify the system and doctrine of naming.' I must confess to feeling a little bewildered by this terminology, and I venture to think it will not prove of much service in advancing our knowledge. It looks as if there had been some misunderstanding, or that the Algonkins employed the word 'totem' to cover several different ideas because they had not definite terms with which to express them. Major Powell's definitions practically exclude those cults which are practised in various parts of the world, and which by the common consent of other writers are described as totemic.

Professor E. B. Tylor has given⁴ the following clear exposition of his interpretation of the American evidence: 'It is a pity that the word "totem" came over to Europe from the Ojibwas through an English interpreter who was so ignorant as to confuse it with the Indian hunter's patron genius, his *manitu*, or "medicine." The one is no more like the other than a coat of arms is like a saint's picture. Those who knew the Algonkin tribes better made it clear that totems were the animal signs, or, as it were, crests, distinguishing exogamous clans; that is, clans bound to marry out of, not into, their own clan. But the original sin of the mistake of Long the interpreter has held on ever since bringing the intelligible institution of the totem clan into such confusion that it has become possible to write about "sex totems" and "individual totems," each of which terms is a self-contradiction. . . . Totems are the signs of intermarrying clans.'

A reviewer in 'L'Année Sociologique,' ii. 1899, says (p. 202): 'One must avoid giving to a genus the name of a species. It will be said these are merely verbal quibbles; but does not the progress of a science consist in the improvement of its nomenclature and in the classification of its concepts?'

Totemism, as Dr. Frazer and as I understand it, in its fully developed condition implies the division of a people into several totem kins (or, as they are usually termed, totem clans), each of which has one, or sometimes more than one, totem. The totem is usually a species of animal, sometimes a species of plant, occasionally a natural object or phenomenon, very rarely a manufactured object. Totemism

¹ *Man*, 1902, No. 75.

² A group that reckons descent only through the mother.

³ A group that reckons descent only through the father.

⁴ *Man*, 1902, No. 1; cf. *Journ. Anthropol. Inst.*, xxviii. 1898, p. 138.

also involves the rule of exogamy, forbidding marriage within the kin, and necessitating intermarriage between the kins. It is essentially connected with the matriarchal stage of culture (mother-right), though it passes over into the patriarchal stage (father-right). The totems are regarded as kinsfolk and protectors or benefactors of the kinsmen, who respect them and abstain from killing and eating them. There is thus a recognition of mutual rights and obligations between the members of the kin and their totem. The totem is the crest, or symbol of the kin.

Sometimes all the kins are classified into two or more groups; for example, in Mabuag, in Torres Straits, there is a dual grouping of the kins, the totems of which are respectively land and water animals; and in speaking of the latter group my informant volunteered the remark, 'They all belong to the water; they are all friends.' On the mainland of New Guinea also I found that one group of the totems 'stop ashore,' while the other 'stop in water.' When no member of a group of kins in a community can marry another member of that same group, that group is termed a phratry. An Australian tribe is generally divided into two exogamous phratries.

North America is the home of the term 'totem,' and though typical totemism does occur there, it is often modified by other customs. In Australia we find true totemism rampant, and it occurs in Africa, where also it is subject to much modification. Quite recently the Rev. J. Roscoe has published an important paper¹ on the Baganda, in which he describes a perfectly typical case of totemism. Among the Baganda there are a number of kins each of which has a totem, *muziro*. The kin, *kika*, is called after its totem; no member of a kin may kill or eat his totem, though one of another kin may do so with impunity. No one mentions his totem. Old people affirm their fathers found some things injurious to them either as food or to their personal safety, and made their children promise not to kill or eat that particular thing. No man may marry into his mother's kin, because all the members of it are looked upon as sisters of his mother; nor may he marry into his father's kin except in the case of two very large kins. In Uganda royalty follows the totem of the mother, whilst the common people follow the paternal totem. Each kin has its own special part of the country where the dead are always buried. For sympathy or assistance the member of a kin always turns to his particular kin. From what Mr. Roscoe says about the married women of the Green Locust kin, it is evident that the magical aspect of totemism is present as it is in Australia and Torres Straits. The Baganda are thus a true totemic people who are in an interesting transitional condition between matriarchy and patriarchy. Totemic practices also occur in various parts of Asia.

To put the matter briefly, totemism consists of the following five elements:—

1. Social organisation with totem kinsmen and totem symbols.
2. Reciprocal responsibilities between the kin and the totem.
3. Magical increase² or repression of the totem by the kinsmen.
4. Social duties of the kinsmen.
5. Myths of explanation.

Totemism is only one of several animal cults, and it is now necessary to consider certain cults that have been termed totemic before I proceed with the main object of this Address.

¹ *Journ. Anthropol. Inst.*, xxxii. 1902, p. 25.

² The first intimation of this aspect of totemism is entirely due to the researches of Messrs. Spencer and Gillen (*The Native Tribes of Central Australia*, 1899). Dr. J. G. Frazer, appreciating the value of these observations, extended the conception to totemism generally, *Journ. Anthropol. Inst.*, xxviii. 1899, p. 285, read December 14, 1898; the *Fortnightly Review*, April 1899, pp. 664, 665; cf. also 'Israel and Totemism,' by S. A. Cook, *Jewish Quart. Review*, April 1902, pp. 25, 26 of reprint.

Manitu (Guardian Spirit).

Very widely spread in North America was the belief in guardian spirits which appeared to young men in visions after prayer and fasting. It then became the duty of the youth to seek until he should find the animal he had seen in his trance; when found he must slay and preserve some part of it. In cases when the vision had been of no concrete form a symbol was taken to represent it: this memento was ever after to be the sign of his vision, the most sacred thing he could ever possess, for by it his natural powers were so to be reinforced as to give him success as a hunter, victory as a warrior, and even power to see into the future.

The guardian spirit was obtained in various ways by different American tribes, but the dream apparition was the most widely spread. Dr. Frazer¹ calls it 'individual totem'; Miss Fletcher speaks of the object dreamed of (the *wahube* of the Omaha) as the 'personal totem' or simply as the 'totem'; it is termed by the Algonkin *manitu*, by the Huron *okki*, by the Salish Indians *sulia*, and *nagual* in Mexico. Perhaps it would be best to adopt either *wahube* or *manitu* to express the guardian spirit.

Miss Alice C. Fletcher finds that among the Omaha² those who have received similar visions, that is, those who have the same *wahube*, formed brotherhoods which gradually developed a classified membership with initiatory rites and other rituals. These religious societies acquired great power; still later, according to this observer, an artificial social structure, the 'gens,' was organised on the lines of the earlier religious societies. Each 'gens' had its particular name, which referred directly or symbolically to its totem, and its members practised exogamy and traced their descent only through the father. 'As totems could be obtained in but one way—through the rite of vision—the totem of a "gens" must have come into existence in that manner, and must have represented the manifestation of an ancestor's vision, that of a man whose ability and opportunity served to make him the founder of a family.' Mr. C. Hill-Tout,³ in discussing the origin of the totemism of the aborigines of British Columbia, states:—'There is little room for doubt that our clan totems are a development of the personal or individual totem or tutelary spirit, as this is in turn a development of an earlier fetishism.'

Dr. F. Boas points out⁴ that the tribes of the northern portion of the North Pacific group of peoples, such as the Tlingit, Haida, and Tsimshian, have a maternal organisation with animal totems: the clans bear the names of their respective totems and are exogamous. The central tribes, particularly the Kwakiutl, show a peculiar transitional stage. The southern tribes have a purely paternal organisation, and their groups are simple village communities which are often exogamic.

Dr. Boas distinctly asserts⁵ that 'the natives do not consider themselves descendants of the totems; all endeavours to obtain information regarding the supposed origin of the relation between man and animal invariably led to the telling of a myth in which it is stated how a certain ancestor of the clan in question obtained his totem. . . . It is evident that legends of this character correspond almost exactly to the tales of the acquisition of manitows among the eastern Indians, and they are evidence that the totem of this group of tribes is in the main the hereditary manitow of a family.'⁶ This analogy becomes still

¹ *Totemism*, 1887, pp. 2, 53.

² 'The Import of the Totem,' *Amer. Assoc. Adv. Sci.*, Detroit Meeting, August 1897.

³ *Trans. Roy. Soc. Canada* (2nd ser.), vii., sect. 2, 1901, p. 6.

⁴ *Report U.S. Nat. Mus.*, 1895 (1897), pp. 322, 323, 334. ⁵ *L.c.*, p. 323.

⁶ But Mr. E. S. Hartland points out (*Folk-lore*, xi. 1900, p. 61) that we have clear evidence from the legends of the descent at all events of some of the clans from non-human ancestors; and Mr. Hill-Tout says: 'Among the Salish tribes it is uniformly believed that in the early days, before the time of the tribal heroes or great transformers, the beings who then inhabited the world partook of the character of both men and animals, assuming the form of either apparently at will.'

clearer when we consider that each man among these tribes acquires a guardian spirit, but that he can acquire only such as belong to his clan. Thus a person may have the general crest of his clan, and besides use as his personal crest such guardian spirits as he has acquired. This accounts partly for the great multiplicity of combinations of crests on the carvings of these people.'

Throughout a considerable portion of North America there appears to be a mixture of variously developed cults of the totem and of the *manitu*. It is not perhaps possible at present to dogmatise as to the relative chronology of these two cults. Personally I am in favour of the superior antiquity of the totem cult, as the conception of an individual spirit-helper appears to me to be of a higher grade than the ideas generally expressed by purely totemic peoples, or what may be gathered by implication from a study of their ceremonies.

The social organisation appears to be very weak in some Californian tribes; our knowledge of the Seri in this respect is very meagre, but Dr. Dixon definitely denies¹ the existence of totemic grouping among the Maidu.

Accepting then for the present the priority of the totem cult, we find a substratum of totemism underlying many of the social organisations in North America. Religious societies are a noticeable feature of the social life of North-west America; those societies have the guardian spirit (*manitu*) as their central idea, but it appears as if the organisation is rooted in a clan² system which has been smothered and virtually destroyed by the parasitic growth. The problems to be solved in North-west America are very complicated, and we must await with patience further researches. It is perfectly evident from the researches of Boas, Nelson, Hill-Tout, and others that comparatively recent great changes have taken place. Dr. Boas indeed states that 'the present system of tribes and clans (of the Kwakiutl) is of recent growth and has undergone considerable changes.'³ An interesting illustration of this is found in the alteration in the organisation of the (Kwakiutl) tribe during the season of the winter ceremonial. 'During this period the place of the clans is taken by a number of societies, namely, the groups of all those individuals upon whom the same or almost the same power or secret has been bestowed by one of the spirits.'⁴ The characteristic North American idea of the acquisition of the *manitu* was evidently also fundamental among the Kwakiutl, as all their tales refer to it, and the whole winter ceremonial is based on it.

I agree in the main with Mr. Hartland⁵ in thinking that, 'whether or no totemism was anciently a part of the tribal organisation, the *manitu* conception is of modern date. It is part of the individualism which is tending, not among these tribes only, to obscure the older communistic traditions.'

Nyarong.

Allied to the *manitu* of North America is the *nyarong*, or spirit helper, of the Iban (Sea Dayaks) of Sarawak. The Iban believe that the spirit of some ancestor or dead relative may come to them in a dream, and this *nyarong* becomes the special protector of the individual. An Iban youth will often retire to some lonely spot or mountain-top and live for days on a very restricted diet in his anxiety to obtain a vision. This custom is called *mampok*. On the following day the dreamer searches for the outward and visible form of the *nyarong*, which may be anything from a curious natural object to some one animal. In such cases the *nyarong* hardly differs from a fetish. In other cases, as the man is unable to distinguish the particular animal which he believes to be animated by his *nyarong*, he extends his regard and gratitude to the whole species. In some instances all the members of a man's family and all his immediate descendants, and if he be a chief all the members of the community over which he rules, may come to share the benefits conferred by the *nyarong* and pay respect to the species of animal in one individual of which it is supposed to reside. 'In such cases,' Drs. Hose and

¹ *Bull. Amer. Mus. Nat. Hist.*, xvii., pt. 2, 1902, p. 35.

² Matriarchal totemic kin.

³ *L.c.*, p. 333.

⁴ *L.c.*, p. 418.

⁵ *Folk-lore*, xi. p. 68.

McDougall remark,¹ 'the species approaches very closely the clan totem in some of its varieties.' Here we have a parallel to the North American custom, but the later stages are not carried as far.

Personally I concur in the opinion expressed by Drs. Hose and McDougall that there is no proof that the peculiar regard paid in Sarawak to animals, the sacrifice of animals to gods or spirits, the ceremonial use of the blood of these sacrificed animals are survivals of a fully developed system of totem worship now fallen into decay. It is very significant that the magical and social aspects of totemism are entirely lacking.

Those who have read Miss Alice Fletcher's sympathetic account of 'The Import of the Totem'² can scarcely fail to recognise that the moral support due to a belief in the guidance and protection of a *wahube* ('personal totem') is of great importance to the individual, and would nerve him in difficulty and danger, and thus proving a very present help in time of need it would surely justify its existence in a most practical manner, and consequently be of real utility in the struggle for existence—a struggle which in man has a psychical as well as a material aspect.

The advantages of totemism are many, but most of them are social and benefit the special groups or the community at large. The hold that the *manitu* has on the individual consists in its personal relation: the man feels that he himself is helped, and I suspect this is the main reason why it supplants totemism. I believe Mr. Lang some years ago suggested the term *manituism* for this cult. If this name be not accepted I venture to propose the revival of the word 'daimon' (*δαίμων*) to include the *manitu*, *nyarong*, and similar spirit helpers, and 'daimonism' as the name of the cult.

Theriomorphic Ancestor Worship.

Dr. Frazer calls attention³ to a publication by Dr. G. McCall Theal⁴ in which he describes the tribal veneration for certain animals, *siboko*. The Bantu believed that the spirits of the dead visited their friends and descendants in the form of animals. Each tribe regarded some particular animal as the one selected by the ghost of its kindred, and therefore looked upon it as sacred. Dr. Frazer says: 'Thus the totemism of the Bantu tribes of South Africa resolves itself into a particular species of the worship of the dead; the totem animals are revered as incarnations of the souls of dead ancestors. This entirely agrees with the general theory of totemism suggested by the late S. G. A. Wilken, and recently advocated by Professor E. B. Tylor.'⁵ But is this totemism? The *siboko* are the residences of the ancestral spirits of the tribe, not of a clan; there is no mention of *siboko* exogamy. Is this anything more than theriomorphic ancestor worship? There can, however, be little doubt that true totemism did occur, and probably universally so, among the Bantu people; but some of the tribes appear to be in a transitional state, and others have doubtless passed beyond typical totemism. The decay of the Bantu totemism in South Africa appears to have been mainly due to a patriarchal organisation combined with a pastoral life.⁶

In describing Dr. Wilken's theory that the doctrine of the transmigration of souls affords the link which connects totemism with ancestor worship, Professor Tylor concludes as follows: 'By thus finding in the world-wide doctrine of soul-transference an actual cause producing the two collateral lines of man and beast which constitute the necessary framework of totemism, we seem to reach at least something analogous to its real cause.' I have already expressed my belief that the animal cults of the Malay Archipelago, so far as they are known at present,

¹ *Journ. Anthropol. Inst.*, xxxi. 1901, p. 210.

² *Amer. Assoc. Adv. Sci.*, Section Anthropology, Detroit Meeting, August 1897.

³ *Man*, 1901, No. 3.

⁴ *Records of South-eastern Africa*, vii. 1901.

⁵ *Journ. Anthropol. Inst.*, xxviii. p. 146.

⁶ E. Durkheim, *L'Année Sociologique*, v. 1902, p. 330; cf. also F. B. Jevons, *Introduction to the History of Religion*, 1902, pp. 155, 158.

cannot be logically described as totemism, and the majority of the peoples of this area have so long passed out of savagery that we are hardly likely to find here an unequivocal clue to the actual origin of totemism.

The reverence paid to particular animals or plants by certain groups of people in Fiji may, as Mr. Lorimer Fison says,¹ 'look like reminiscences' of totemism, but he has 'no direct evidence.' It surely belongs to the same category as the Samoan custom of which Dr. George Brown writes:² 'In Samoa every principal family had some animal which they did not eat, and I have always regarded this as meaning, not that they thought the animal divine, or an object of worship, but that it was the "shrine" in which their ancestral god had dwelt, or which was associated with some fact in their past history which had led them to adopt it as their totem.' An opinion which Professor Tylor has independently expressed,³ but he naturally dissents from the incarnate god being termed a 'totem.'

I agree with Dr. Codrington⁴ in doubting whether the evidence warrants a belief in totemism as an existing institution in the Southern Solomon Islands. I suspect that totemism has been destroyed over a considerable portion of Melanesia by the growth of secret societies as well as by theriomorphic ancestor worship. Herr R. Parkinson,⁵ however, proves true totemism in the Northern Solomon Islands as the Rev. B. Danks had previously done⁶ for New Britain, Duke of York Island, and New Ireland.

The more one looks into the evidence the more difficult is it to find cases of typical totemism; almost everywhere considerable modification has taken place, often so much so that the communities cannot logically be called totemistic. The magical increase of the totem by the clansmen does not appear to be common, but that may be due to its having been overlooked; on the other hand, magic may be performed against the totems to prevent them from injuring the crops, as in the case of the 'Reptile people' of the Omaha.⁷

Animal Brethren.

Throughout South-eastern Australia and probably elsewhere in that continent there is a peculiar association of a species of animal, usually a bird, with each sex. To take two examples given by Mr. A. W. Howitt,⁸ 'the bird totems of the Kurnai are the Emu, Wren, and the Superb Warbler, which are respectively the "man's brother" and "woman's sister." . . . When we turn to the Kulin we find both the Kurnai totems in just the same position. In addition there are also a second male and female totem, namely, the Bat and the small Night Jar.' Mr. Howitt is careful to point out, 'They are not true totems in the sense that these represent subdivisions of the primary classes; yet they are true totems in so far that they are regarded as being the "brothers" and "sisters" of the human beings who bear their names.' Mr. A. L. P. Cameron⁹ also states that these are 'something different from ordinary totems.' Later Mr. Howitt¹⁰ says: 'Among the Wotjobaluk tribe which have a true totemic system these were real totems although of a peculiar kind. They were called *yaur*, or "flesh," or *ngirabil*, or *mir*, just as were the totems proper. The only difference was that the Bat was the brother of all the men, while any one totem was the brother only of the men who bore it as their totem. . . . It is evident that the institution of the "man's brother" and the "woman's sister" as totems is very widespread throughout Australia. I have traced it over an extent of about a thousand miles and in tribes having marked differences in language and in social organisation. It seems to be very persistent and enduring, for it remained among the Kurnai in full force

¹ *Ann. Rep. Brit. New Guinea*, 1897-98, p. 136.

² *Ibid.*, p. 137.

³ *Journ. Anthropol. Inst.*, xxviii. p. 142.

⁴ *The Melanesians*, 1891, p. 32.

⁵ *Abh. Ber. k. Zool. Anth. Eth. Mus. Dresden*, vii. 1899, Nr. 6.

⁶ *Journ. Anthropol. Inst.*, xviii. 1889, p. 281.

⁷ J. O. Dorsey, *Ann. Rep. Bureau Ethnol.*, 1881-82 (1884), p. 248.

⁸ *Journ. Anthropol. Inst.*, xv. 1886, p. 416.

⁹ *Ibid.*, xiv. 1885, p. 350.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, xviii. 1888, pp. 57, 59.

after the ordinary social organisation in class divisions and totems had become extinct.' Mr. Howitt speaks of these as 'abnormal totems,' and Dr. Frazer¹ calls them 'sex totems.' As it appears most desirable to distinguish between this cult, which is confined to Australia, and true totemism I propose, in default of a distinctive native term, to call these revered animals 'animal brethren.' Although the natives do not appear to distinguish nominally between these animal brethren and ordinary totems, it does not follow they are to be considered as the same. I am calling attention to an analogous confusion of terms in the totemism of Torres Straits.

I must now pass on to a further consideration of true totemism as understood by Tylor, Frazer, Lang, Hartland, Jevons, Durkheim, and others, as it is impossible within the limits of an Address to give an account of all the varieties of pseudo-totemism.

A Suggestion concerning the Origin of Totemism.

I take this opportunity to hazard a suggestion for a possible origin of one aspect of totemism. Primitive human groups, judging from analogy, could never have been large, and the individuals comprising each group must have been closely related. In favourable areas each group would have a tendency to occupy a restricted range owing to the disagreeable results which arose from encroaching on the territory over which another group wandered. Thus it would inevitably come about that a certain animal or plant, or group of animals or plants, would be more abundant in the territory of one group than in that of another. To take a clear example, the shore-folk and the river-folk would live mainly on different food from each other and both would have other specialities than fell to the lot of the jungle-folk. The groups that lived on the seashore would doubtless have some natural vegetable products to supplement their animal diet, but the supply would probably be limited alike in quantity and variety. Even they would scarcely have unlimited range of a shore line, and there would be one group of shore-folk that had a speciality in crabs, another would have shell-beds, while a third would own sandy shores which were frequented by turtle. A similar natural grouping would occur among the jungle-folk: sago flourishes in swampy land, certain animals frequent grassy plains, others inhabit the dense scrub, bamboos grow in one locality, various kinds of fruit trees thrive best in different soils; the coastal plains, the foot hills, the mountains, each has its characteristic flora and fauna. There is thus no difficulty in accounting for numerous small human groups each of which would be largely dependent upon a distinctive food supply the superfluity of which could be bartered² for the superfluities of other groups. These specialities were not confined to food alone; for example, the shore-folk would exchange the shells they collected for the feathers obtained from the jungle-folk.

It may be objected that in the great prairies and steppes of America, Eurasia, and Australia the natural products are very uniform; but these areas are not thickly populated, and in most cases they probably were only inhabited when the pressure of population in the localities with more varied features forced migration into the open. Certainly these were never the primitive homes of man.

In a recent paper read before the Folklore Society Mr. Andrew Lang put forward the hypothesis that while each primitive human group called itself 'the men' they named the surrounding groups from the names of animals or plants, and hence arose totemism. The idea that there was an intimate connection between the group and the object from which they were nicknamed would soon be developed, and myths of origin would spring up to account for the name. Mr. Lang's theory, still unpublished, regards totem names as given from without for a variety of reasons, amongst which, I understand, he includes my own suggestion.

¹ *Totemism*, p. 51; *The Golden Bough*, iii. p. 416.

² It may be objected that the idea of barter is by no means primitive; but as I believe that sociability was a fundamental characteristic of primitive man I can see no reason why it should not have occurred quite early in a rudimentary sort of way.

His conjecture is based on the similar names, or sobriquets, of villages in the folklore, or *blason populaire*, of France and England, which, again, is almost identical with the extant names of Red Indian totem kindred now counting descent in the male line. Similar phenomena occur in Melanesia with female kin. Mr. Lang is rather indifferent to the causes of the name-giving so long as the name-giving comes from without and applies to groups, not to individuals.

To return to my suggestion. Among the shore-folk the group that lived mainly on crabs and occasionally traded in crabs might well be spoken of as 'the crab-men' by all the groups with whom they came in direct or indirect contact. The same would hold good for the group that dealt in clams or in turtle, and reciprocally there might be sago-men, bamboo-men, and so forth. It is obvious that men who persistently collected or hunted a particular group of animals would understand the habits of those animals better than other people, and a personal regard for these animals would naturally arise. Thus from the very beginning there would be a distinct relationship between a group of individuals and a group of animals or plants, a relationship that primitively was based, not on even the most elementary of psychic concepts, but on the most deeply seated and urgent of human claims, hunger.

There is scarcely any need to point out that the association of human groups with fearsome animals would arise by analogy very early. Hence tiger-man and crocodile-man would restrain the ravages of those beasts (Dr. Frazer¹ describes this as the negative or remedial side of totemic magic); but I take it this was not as primitive as the nutritive alliances. The relation between groups of men and the elements has a purely economic basis; for example, rain is rarely required for itself, but as a means for the increase of vegetable food; similarly the fisherman wants a wind to enable him to get to and from his fishing grounds.

The next phase is reached when man arrived at elementary metaphysical conceptions and endeavoured by sympathetic or symbolic magic to increase his food supply. Naturally the food or product that each group would endeavour to multiply would be the speciality or specialities of that group, and for this practice we now have demonstrative evidence. Though this may be an early phase of totemism I do not consider it the earliest: it can scarcely be the origin of totemism, but it doubtless helped to establish and organise the system.

The essential difference between the view advocated by Dr. Frazer,² and that here suggested is that according to him totemism 'is primarily an organised and co-operative system of magic designed to secure for the members of the community, on the one hand, a plentiful supply of all the commodities of which they stand in need, and, on the other hand, immunity from all the perils and dangers to which man is exposed in his struggle with nature. Each totem group, on this theory, was charged with the superintendence and control of some department of nature from which it took its name, and with which it sought, as far as possible, to identify itself.' Whereas I suggest that the association between a group of men and a species of animals or plants was the natural result of local causes, and that departments of nature were not 'assigned to a particular group' of men. I think it is scarcely probable 'that in very ancient times communities of men should have organised themselves more or less deliberately for the purpose of attaining objects so natural by means that seemed to them so simple and easy.' I suspect that if there was any deliberate organisation it was in order to regulate already existing practices.

To us it might appear that these magical practices could be undertaken by anyone, but this does not seem to have been an early conception. As far as we can penetrate the mind of existing backward man there is a definite acknowledgment of the limit of his own powers. The members of one group can perform a certain number of actions; there are others that they cannot undertake. One group of men, for example, may ensure the abundance of a certain kind of animal, but another will have power over the rain. An interesting example of this limitation is afforded at Port Moresby, in British New Guinea, where the

¹ *Fortnightly Review*, 1899, p. 835.

² *Loc. cit.*, 1899, p. 835.

Motu immigrants have to buy fine weather for their trading voyages from the sorcerers of the indigenous agricultural Koitapu.¹

The remarkable researches of Messrs. Spencer and Gillen in Central Australia prove that it is the function of the kinsmen of a particular totem to perform what are known as *intichiuma* ceremonies, the object of which is to cause the abundance of the species of animal or plant which is the totem of that kin. The descriptions of these ceremonies are well known to students.² I have adduced further evidence of a like nature,³ and from what Mr. Roscoe has found in Uganda we may expect other examples from Africa.

It may be that in some, possibly in all, of the instances of sympathetic and symbolic magic there is a belief that wind or sun, animal or plant, or whatever the objects may be, are animated by spirits akin to those of humankind; but even so, as Dr. Frazer⁴ points out, the action of the magician is a direct one: it does not imply the assistance of other powers who can control the body or spirit of those objects. The data from Australia and Torres Straits point to the conclusion that there is a magical aspect of totemism, which is of great economic importance, and there is no evidence that the officiators at these ceremonies acknowledge the assistance of spiritual powers resident either within the objects themselves or in the form of independent, more or less supreme beings. The existing data do not deny their existence, they simply ignore them in the ceremonies, and so far they are practically non-existent.

According to the suggestion I have ventured to make, the primitive totemic groups ate their associated animals or plants; indeed these were their chief articles of diet. Messrs. Spencer and Gillen point out⁵ that while amongst most Australian tribes a man may not eat his totem, amongst the Arunta and other tribes in the centre of the continent there is no restriction according to which a man is altogether forbidden to eat his totem. On the other hand, though he may, only under ordinary circumstances, eat very sparingly of it, there are certain special occasions on which he is obliged by custom to eat a small portion of it, or otherwise the supply would fail. The Arunta are a peculiar people, while they may be primitive in some respects; in others they are not so, as also has been pointed out by Durkheim.⁶ According to the strict definition of the term, they are not even a totemic people. Judging from the evidence of the legends of the Alcheringa time and the traces of group marriage and mother right, Mr. Hartland⁷ is of opinion that the present disregard by the Arunta of the totem in marriage is a stage in the sloughing of totemism altogether, whereas the *engwura*, or final initiation ceremonies, indicate that 'the organisation is undergoing a slow transformation into something more like the so-called secret societies of the British Columbian tribes.'

The eating of what are evidently the totem animals by the Arunta may possibly be a persistence from an earlier phase, but, without doubt, the totem taboo is characteristic of totemism in full sway.⁸ We have evidence to show that under certain conditions the totem taboo may break down, but this is a later transformation, and indicates a breaking up of the rigid observance of totemism.

Mr. Lang⁹ has made a simple suggestion to account for the origin of the totem taboo. He says: 'These men therefore would work the magic for propagating their kindred in the animal and vegetable world. But the existence of

¹ J. Chalmers, *Pioneering in New Guinea*, 1887, p. 14.

² Baldwin Spencer and F. J. Gillen, *The Native Tribes of Central Australia*, 1899; cf. also J. G. Frazer, *Fortnightly Review*, 1899, pp. 648, 835.

³ *Folk-lore*, xii. 1901, p. 230, and *Report Camb. Anthropol. Expedition to Torres Straits*, vol. v. (in the press).

⁴ *Loc. cit.*, 1899, p. 657.

⁵ *Loc. cit.*, pp. 73, 167.

⁶ *L'Année Sociologique*, v. 1902.

⁷ *Folk-lore*, xi. 1900, pp. 73-75.

⁸ I am fully aware that this appears to cut the ground from under my suggestion; but the latter deals with incipient totemism, and I do not see why the totem taboo should not have arisen from several causes.

⁹ *Magic and Religion*, 1901, pp. 264, 265.

this connection would also suggest that, in common decency, a man should not kill and eat his animal or vegetable relations. In most parts of the world he abstains from this uncourteous behaviour; among the Arunta he may eat sparingly of his totem, and must do so at the end of the close-time or beginning of the season. He thus, as a near relation of the actual kangaroo or grubs, declares the season is open, now his neighbours may begin to eat grubs or kangaroos; the taboo is off.' Dr. Frazer puts forth two suggestions: 'the one is that as animals do not eat their own kind, so man thought it inconsistent to eat his totem kin; the other is a hypothetical idea of conciliation.'

I have barely touched upon the relation of social organisation, with its marriage taboo, to totemism. It is by no means certain that the social regulations and customs, which are so much in evidence in a fully developed totemic society, were primitively connected with totemism. So far as the Arunta are concerned, Messrs. Spencer and Gillen believe² the 'totemism appears to be a primary, and exogamy a secondary, feature . . . and that exogamic groups were deliberately introduced so as to regulate marital relations.' But is this primitive?

If one admits that mankind was originally distributed in small groups, which must have consisted of near kin, it does not seem difficult to imagine that marriage would more likely take place between members of contiguous groups rather than within the groups themselves. The attraction for novelty must always have operated, and in the struggle for existence there was always one advantage to be gained by alliances between neighbouring groups, not only from a commissariat point of view, but for offensive and defensive purposes. There is, of course, the converse of this, as wife-stealing would lead to feuds; perhaps daughter-abduction was more frequent, and this probably was not regarded as an offence so serious that a mild scrimmage would not set matters right. It would not take long for wont to crystallise into rigid custom, and custom is always supported by public opinion.

Social regulations must be later than social conditions, and I suspect that the privileges and taboos which run through the social aspect of totemism first arose when totemic groups were in process of aggregation into more complex communities, and afterwards gradually became fixed into a system.

Hero-cults.

The facts to which I have hitherto directed your attention fall well within the sphere of totemism, but I wish now to indicate two interesting departures from typical totemism, both of which occur among the Western tribe of Torres Straits.

I have alluded to the dual grouping of the totem kins at Mabuia, and an analogous arrangement occurred in the other islands; I propose to speak of each group of kins as a phratry. Strictly speaking, a phratry is a group of exogamous kins within a community; that is, no member of a group of kins (or phratry) could marry another person belonging to the same phratry. The evidence that this is or was the case in the Western tribe of Torres Straits is strong, but it is not absolutely proven.

In Yam, as in the other islands, there is at least one *kwod*, or taboo ground, where sacred ceremonies were held. In the principal *kwod* in Yam there was formerly a low fence surrounding a space about thirty-five feet square in which were the shrines of the two great totems of the island. All that now remains is several heaps of great *Fusus* shells.

Two of the heaps are about twenty-five feet in length. Formerly at the southerly end of each long row of shells was a large turtle-shell (tortoise-shell) mask representing respectively a crocodile and a hammer-headed shark. These were decorated in various ways, and under each was a stone in which the life of the totem resided; stretching from the front end of each mask was a cord to which numerous human lower jaw-bones were fastened, and its other end was

¹ *Fortnightly Review*, 1899, pp. 838-40.

² *Journ. Anthropol. Inst.*, xxviii. 1899, pp. 277, 278.

attached to a human skull, which rested on a stone. Beside the shrine of the hammer-headed shark was a small heap of shells which was the shrine of a sea-snake, which was supposed to have originated from the shark. These shrines were formerly covered over by long low huts, which like the fence were decorated with large *Fusus* shells.

Outside the fence were two heaps of shells which had a mystical connection with the shrine: they were called the 'navels of the totems.'

I have referred to the *intichiuma* ceremonies of the Arunta tribe of Central Australia as being magical rites undertaken by certain kinsmen for the multiplication of the totems. In some cases, apparently, the ceremonies may take place wherever the men happen to be camping; in other cases there are definite localities where they must be performed, as there are in these places certain stones, rocks, or trees which are intimately connected with the magical rites. These spots may be spoken of as shrines. In the island of Mabuia the magical ceremony for the alluring of the dugong was performed by the men of that kin in their own *kwod*, which was a fixed spot; and doubtless this was the case in the other islands of Torres Straits, for even in the small islands there was a tendency to a territorial grouping of the kins. This localisation of a totem cult has proceeded one step further in Yam Island. Here we have a dual synthesis. The chief totem of each group of kins is practically alone recognised; in other words, the various lesser totems are being absorbed by two more important totems. Each totem has a distinct shrine, and the totem itself, instead of being a whole species, is visualised in the form of a representation of an individual animal, and this image was spoken of as the totem (*augud*). Indeed, the tendency to concretism had gone so far that the life of the *augud* was supposed to reside in the stone that lay beneath the image,¹ and certain heaps of shells were the navels of the totems, a further linkage of the totem to that spot of ground.

A suggestion as to the significance of this transformation is not lacking. There are various folk-tales concerning a family of brothers who wandered from west to east across Torres Straits. Some of them were, in a mysterious way, sharks as well as men. The two brothers who went to Yam were called Sigai and Maiau, and each became associated, in his animal form, with one of the two phratries. The shrines in the *kwod* were so sacred that no women might visit them, nor did the women know what the totems were like. They were aware of Sigai and Maiau, but they did not know that the former was the hammer-headed shark and the latter was the crocodile; this mystery was too sacred to be imparted to the uninitiated. When the totems were addressed it was always by their hero names, and not by their animal or totem names.

Malu, another of these brothers, introduced the cult that bears his name to the Murray Islanders, who form part of the Eastern tribe. He also was identified with a hammer-headed shark. Totemism, as such, had practically disappeared from Murray Island before the advent of the white man, and the great ceremonies at the initiation of the lads into the Malu fraternity were a main feature of the religion of these people.

In Yam totemism was merging into a hero cult; in Murray Island the transformation was accomplished; the one had replaced the other.

In Mabuia, one of the Western Islands, there was a local hero named Kwoiam whose deeds are narrated in a prose epic. Kwoiam made two crescentic ornaments of turtle-shell, which blazed with light when he wore them at nighttime, and which he nourished with the savour of cooked fish. These ornaments were called totems (*augud*)—presumably because the natives did not know by what other sacred name to call them—and they became the insignia of the two groups of kins of Mabuia. The crescent which was worn above Kwoiam's mouth was regarded as the more important, and those kins which had land animals for their totems

¹ For the keeping of a soul in an external receptacle, and for Dr. Frazer's views on its bearing on totemism, cf. *Fortnightly Review*, May 1899, p. 844; *The Golden Bough*, iii, 1900, pp. 418-422; and S. A. Cook, *Jewish Quart. Review*, 1902, p. 34 of reprint.

were called from it 'the children of the great totem,' but the water group were called 'the children of the little totem.' There is reason to believe that the dual grouping of the kins is ancient. The erecting Kwoiam's emblems as the head totems of the two groups of kins must be comparatively recent. Here again the primitive association of a group of men with a group of natural objects obtains in the small groups or totem-kins, but in the larger synthesis a manufactured object replaces a group of animals, and this object possesses definite magical powers. There were two navel-shrines connected with the cult of Kwoiam, which were constructed to show that the two *augud* were born there. When it was deemed necessary to fortify the *augud*—that is, the emblems—they were placed on their respective navel-shrines. Further, in Muralug and the adjacent islands Kwoiam himself was a totem (*augud*). Thus in the westernmost islands of the Western tribe the transition from totemism to hero-worship was in process of evolution till it was arrested by the coming of the white man.

To what was this transformation due? It is not very easy to answer this question. We have evidence that in comparatively recent times a change took place in the social organisation of the people, and that the former matriarchal conditions had been replaced by patriarchal. Although superficially the marriage system of the Western tribe appears to be regulated by totemism, Dr. Rivers has found¹ that it is really a relationship system, and that descent, rather than totemism, is the regulating factor. The Eastern tribe, as represented by the Murray Islanders, had progressed further along this road than had the Western tribe. Such a change as this could not fail to have a disturbing effect upon other old customs.

The folk-tales that I collected clearly indicate a migration of culture from New Guinea to the Western tribe, and from the Western tribe to the Eastern tribe. I believe I can demonstrate the migration from New Guinea of a somewhat broad-headed people that spread over the Western Islands but barely reached Murray Island. It is conceivable that the culture myths have reference to this migration, and that the gradual substitution of a hero cult for totemism may be part of the same movement; but, on the other hand, this social and religious change is most thorough in Murray Island, where, I imagine, the racial movement has been least felt. The isolation of Murray Island from outside disturbing factors is very complete, and, being but a small island, a change once started might take place both rapidly and effectively.

It is interesting to note that the totem heroes of the Western tribe were invoked when their votaries were preparing to go to war. I obtained the following prayer in Yam Island:—'O *Augud* Sigai and O *Augud* Maiau, both of you close the eyes of those men so that they cannot see us,' which had for its intent the slaughtering of the enemy without their being able to make a defence. I was informed that when the Yam warriors were fighting they would also call on the name of Kwoiam, who belonged to another group of islands, and on Yadzebut, a local warrior. Yadzebut was always described as 'a man,' whereas Kwoiam and Sigai were relegated to a 'long time' back. From the folk-tales it is evident that Sigai and Maiau are more mythical or mysterious than Kwoiam. We thus have an instructive series: Yadzebut, the local famous man; Kwoiam, the hero, who was also a totem to other people; and Sigai and Maiau, the local totem heroes whose cult was visualised in turtle-shell images, and the life of each of whom resided in a particular stone. Perhaps it would be more correct to speak of this as the grafting of a new cult on totemism rather than to describe it as an evolution of totemism. A transformation has certainly occurred, but it does not appear to me to be a gradual growth—a metamorphosis in the natural history sense of the term—so much as the pouring of new wine into old bottles.

I hope on another occasion to deal with the question of religious and secret societies, as the growth of these has invariably disintegrated whatever antecedent totemism there may have been.

¹ *Reports Camb. Anthropol. Expedition to Torres Straits*, v. 'Kinship' (in the press).

It is highly probable that something like what was taking place in Torres Straits has occurred elsewhere, but I cannot now enter into a comparative study of the rise of hero cults.

Local or Village Exogamy.

I have more than once¹ called attention to the fact that among some Papuan marriage restrictions are territorial and not totemic. Dr. Rivers² has shown that in Murray Island, Eastern tribe of Torres Straits, marriages are regulated by the places to which natives belong. A man cannot marry a woman of his own village or of certain other villages. The totemic system which probably at one time existed in this island appears to have been replaced by what may be called a territorial system. A similar custom occurs in the Mekeo district of British New Guinea, and it is probably still more widely distributed.

I was informed by a member of the Yaraikanna tribe of Cape York, North Queensland, that children must take the 'land' or 'country' of their mother; all who belong to the same place are brothers and sisters, a wife must be taken from another 'country';³ thus it appears their marriage restrictions are territorial and not totemic. The same is found amongst the Kurnai and the Coast Murring tribe in New South Wales.⁴

At Kiwai, in the delta of the Fly River, B.N.G., all the members of a totemic group live together in a long house which is confined to that group. I have also collected evidence which proves there was a territorial grouping of totemic clans among the Western tribe of Torres Straits.⁵

Within a comparatively small area we have the following conditions:—

(1) A typical totemic community with totem-kin houses (Kiwai).

(2) A typical totemic community with territorial grouping of the kins. Although there is totem exogamy, the marriage restrictions are regulated by relationship. The former mother-right has comparatively recently been replaced by father-right, but there are many survivals from matriarchy (Western tribe, Torres Straits).

(3) A community in which totemism has practically lapsed, with village exogamy and marriage restrictions regulated by relationship, patriarchy with survivals from matriarchy (Eastern tribe, Torres Straits).

(4) Total absence of totemism (?), village exogamy (Mekeo).

I do not assert this is a natural sequence, but it looks like one, and it appears to indicate another of the ways out of totemism. It is suggestive that this order also indicates the application of the several peoples to agriculture: the people of Kiwai are semi-nomadic, those of the Mekeo district are firmly attached to the land. This constraint of the soil must have operated in a similar manner elsewhere.⁶ The territorial exogamy occasionally found in Australia cannot be explained as being due to agriculture; a rigid limitation of hunting grounds may here have had a similar effect.

In offering these remarks to-day I desire, above all, to impress on you the need there is for more work in the field. When one surveys the fairly extensive literature of totemism one is struck with the very general insufficiency of the evidence; as a matter of fact full and precise information is lamentably lacking. The foundations upon which students at home have to build their superstructures of generalisation and theory are usually of too slight a character to support these

¹ *Folk-lore*, xii. 1901, p. 233; *Head-hunters, Black, White, and Brown*, 1901, p. 258.

² *Journ. Anthropol. Inst.*, xxx. 1900, p. 78.

³ *Brit. Assoc. Report*, Dover, 1899, p. 585

⁴ Frazer, *Totemism*, p. 90.

⁵ *Reports Camb. Anthropol. Expedition to Torres Straits*, v. (in the press).

⁶ Cf. *L'Année Sociologique*, v. 1902, pp. 330, 333.

erections with much chance of their permanence. There is only one remedy for this, and that is more extensive and more thorough field work. The problems connected with totemism bear upon many of the most important phases in the social and religious evolution of man, the solution of which can only be obtained within the space of a few years. The delay of each year in the investigation of primitive peoples means that so much less information is possible to be obtained. There is no exaggeration in this. Those who have a practical experience of backward man and who have travelled in out-of-the-way places can testify as to the surprising rapidity with which the old order changeth. In sober earnestness I appeal to all those who are interested in the history and character of man, whether they be theologians, historians, sociologists, psychologists, or anthropologists, to face the plain fact that the only available data for the solution of many problems of the highest interest are daily slipping away beyond recovery.



British Association for the Advancement
of Science.



SOUTH AFRICA, 1905.

ADDRESS

TO THE

ANTHROPOLOGICAL SECTION

BY

A. C. HADDON, Sc.D., F.R.S.

PRESIDENT OF THE SECTION.



THERE are various ways in which man can study himself, and it is clearly impossible for me to attempt to give an exposition of all the aims and methods of the anthropological sciences; I propose, therefore, to limit myself to a general view of South African ethnology, incidentally referring to a few of the problems that strike a European observer as needing further elucidation. It seems somewhat presumptuous in one who is now for the first time visiting this continent to venture to address a South African audience on local ethnology, but I share this disability with practically all students of anthropology at home, and my excuse lies in the desire that I may be able to point out to you some of the directions in which the information of anthropologists is deficient, with the hope that this may be remedied in the immediate future.

Men are naturally apt to take an exclusive interest in their immediate concerns, and even anthropologists are liable to fall into the danger of studying men's thoughts and deeds by themselves, without taking sufficient account of the outside influences that affect mankind.

In the sister science of zoology, it is possible to study animals as machines which are either at rest or in motion: when they are thus studied individually, the subjects are termed anatomy and physiology; when they are studied comparatively, they are known as comparative anatomy or morphology and comparative physiology. The study of the genesis of the machine is embryology, and palæontologists, as it were, turn over the scrap-heap. All these sciences can deal with animals irrespective of their environment, and perhaps for intensive study such a limitation is temporarily desirable, but during the period of greatest specialisation there have always been some who have followed in the footsteps of the field naturalist, and to-day we are witnessing a combination of the two lines of study.

Biology has ceased to be a mixture of necrology and physiology; it seeks to obtain a survey of all the conditions of existence, and to trace the effects of the environment on the organism, of the organism on the environment, and of organism upon organism. Much detailed work will always be necessary, and we shall never be able to do without isolated laboratory work; but the day is past when the amassing of detailed information will satisfy the demands of science. The leaders, at all events, will view the subject as a whole, and so direct individual labour that the hewers of wood and drawers of water, as it were,