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## Tribalism and Detribalization in Southern and Central Africa\*

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The literature for Southern and Central Africa on these related concepts is now fairly extensive. A review of some of it, such as is proposed here, indicates that tribalism and detribalization shift in meaning according to context. Tribalism in the broadest sense means the condition of living in tribes, found widely in Africa when the white man first came. The logical opposite of tribalism is non-tribalism; but since the transition is usually seen as a gradual and generally incomplete process, the name detribalization has been applied. It cannot, however, be reduced to any one continuum, for the demographic, social and psychological factors involved may cut across one another. Moreover, tribalism can occur in town, detribalization in the country. Such difficulties require care in the definition and use of these concepts and suggest an analysis on semantic lines.

To take tribalism first, four senses seem useful according to context:

1. The state of living in tribes: a generic sense, to which the name *tribalism* may be given. The quality of living in tribes is *tribal*.
2. Remaining in, keeping in contact with, or returning to settle in tribal areas. This

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sociographic sense, often in the context of migration, may be called *ruralism*. The adjective would be *rural-tied*, the transition *ruralized*.

3. Adherence to tribal values and behaviour patterns. This psycho-sociological dimension may be relevant in town or country, and in view of common usage will be called "*tribalism*" (in quotation marks). The transitional condition is "*tribalization*," the adjective "*tribalized*."
4. A category of interaction among Africans in towns. Research in Central Africa (e.g., Epstein, 1956, 724; Mitchell 1956a, p. 18) has appropriated the generic term tribalism to this context. Actually a role-category is involved which will be designated here as *tribe*. The adjective, if needed, is *tribe-categorized*.

In general terms, tribalism covers all these aspects, which need only be distinguished by their special names when the context demands it. This, however, is almost invariably the case when specific questions about tribalism are asked; and indeed each sense generates its own type of question:

*Ruralism*: What measurable contacts do urban-dwelling Africans maintain with rural areas?

*"Tribalism"*: How far do relationships and loyalties based on tribal ties persist among Africans in urban areas?

*Tribe:* In what social contexts does *tribe* as a category of belonging operate in urban African role-playing?

The main purpose of this review paper is to summarise the locally available literature on such issues, to underline conclusions and to suggest where further research might profitably be done.

#### TRIBALISM

##### *Ruralism*

While it seems self-evident that contacts maintained by urban-dwelling Africans with their rural areas of origin would be a good indicator of tribalism, the information available for Southern and Central Africa is on the whole sparse. G. B. Wilson in his study of Broken Hill in Zambia indicated that the great majority of temporarily urbanized African workers there paid occasional short visits to their rural homes, and that people from home came to visit them. An average of 30 per cent of the men visited home each year (1941, pp. 46-47). For Gwelo in Rhodesia, Schwab contends that even Africans who have been working for many years in the town have close links with a reserve and make lengthy visits to it (1961, 132).

For a full account, intervisiting in both directions, urban and rural, should surely be considered. This has been done for South Africa in a study of Baumannville location, Durban, in 1955. It was found that during the previous twelve months more visits had been made from the country to this relatively desirable and convenient city location than had been made to the country from it: 246 against 206 visits in an enumeration of 113 households. Frequency of visiting in both directions was proportional to the distance of travel involved. The pattern of intervisiting was not substantially different for blood relatives compared with affinals, nor did increasing residence in Baumannville disturb it. The reasons given for visiting indicated that 79 per cent of the visitors to, and 81 per cent of those from, the location had as their objective the maintenance of family ties or the seeking of social contact with kin. Thus rural-tied relationships were maintained in a community whose average length of residence in the location was more than ten years (Reader and Mann 1955, 98-99).

Later, also in South Africa, the Border Regional Survey of Rhodes University included a study of periodicity of home visiting in a local migrant labour situation in East London, Cape Province. It was shown on a sample basis (N=263) that frequency of home visiting was

directly proportional to the distance of travel involved, and that three in four of the migrants were in contact with their rural family and home once a month or more (Reader 1961, p. 56).

Other evidence of ruralism besides the frequency of rural ties has been put forward by different writers. G. B. Wilson gave figures for the transfer of cash and clothes to the country by African workers in fulfilment of their family obligations (1941, p. 40). Van Velsen states that such contributions are regarded by the Tonga migrant from Malawi as a kind of insurance premium (1961, 237). It might further be maintained that the proportion of rural to urban marriages in a community, for example, 54 per cent in Langa location, Cape Town (Levin 1947, p. 9 n.), was broadly diagnostic. The proportion of married workers with their wives in the country could also constitute a sociographic indicator of ruralism. In the investigation by the University of Natal of Dunlop workers, only 6 per cent of the African sample had their wives in Durban, while 14 per cent indicated that they would do so if housing and other facilities existed. But 76 per cent were against making their home in town, and 80 per cent said that they would rather work in a factory in a reserve (1950, p. 220).

The interpretative reliability of such figures, however, depends on the socio-economic context. As G. B. Wilson pointed out, it was the possibility of bringing wives to town which most differentiated the situation in Zambia from that on the Witwatersrand. Of the men over twenty years of age at Broken Hill, the majority had their wives with them, for it was the policy of the copper mines to accept married status, but not to accommodate any issue of the union (1941, pp. 25, 47). In the Republic of South Africa, on the other hand, stringent conditions of influx control are applied, and migrant labour rather than urban family life is encouraged (Fagan Commission 1948, p. 33). It would evidently be invalid to compare figures on wives in town derived from these two situations.

Another possible factor for determining ruralism is the incidence of sending African children from town to the rural areas. This too, however, is complicated by motivation and context. Hunter in an early work on the Pondo and Xhosa described the process in both directions. There was a great deal of "borrowing" and "lending" of children between town and country. Town children were sent to relatives in the country because it was cheaper or more healthy for them to live there. Farm children were sent to relatives in

town to go to school (1932, 682). In a later study of the East London locations by the Border Regional Survey, it was found that children up to the age of fifteen years constituted two in three of all persons away from the locations. Numbers of children away increased as this age was approached, when they were considered to be most susceptible to juvenile delinquency (Reader 1961, p. 46). Among the Mambwe of Zambia a tribesman goes to the Copperbelt alone to work and sends back money for his wife to join him when he is established; but she brings with her only a child in arms who cannot be left behind. Older children usually remain at home in the care of kinsfolk (Watson 1958, pp. 63-64).

Finally, the factor of retaining land rights in a rural area has received attention from those concerned with ruralism. Watson points out that in Zambia land is still the final tribal security. As long as rights to the use of land continue to depend on kinship affiliations, kin relationships will retain their importance (1958, p. 158). Gluckman similarly states that those who stay at home hold the land as security for support in money from those who go out to work (1960, 68). Against this, however, is the fact that in the South African context at least, not every tribesman can obtain land rights. In an analysis of 1,200 African operatives engaged in secondary industry and building, it was found that of the rural-based part of the sample (52 per cent), 40 per cent had no land rights in the present or foreseeable future, while an additional 20 per cent only anticipated them (Glass and Biesheuvel 1961, p. 6). Clearly in circumstances of land shortage a younger son, for instance, might be fully rural-tied, desire land, but fail to obtain it. Yet for a rural population as a whole, retaining land rights might still be a reliable index of ruralism.

It is against this background that Mayer's statement for migrants in East London, Cape Province, must be appraised. He says that the migrants who remain susceptible to the rural pull are the ones who make the most of their opportunities for home visiting, and also for associating with fellow "exiles" from the same home-place during their stay in town (1962, 584). In effect, this is a two-stage hypothesis. First, it suggests two indicators of ruralism. The one of them Mayer calls "home-visiting" (1962, 590), and the other "the principle of *common home ties*" (1964, 30). Second, these two indicators together are postulated as rural-tied criteria which can be used to determine how "tribalized" (sense 3) a man

is: how strong is his adherence to tribal values and behaviour patterns.

The second stage remains a plausible hypothesis until confirmed by other and external criteria of "tribalism" (see below). The first stage, however, since the sociographic factors involved are quantifiable, can be tested by an experimental design. This may be applied to the seven potential variates which have just been reviewed, of which Mayer's are two, namely: (1) home-visiting; (2) rural transfer of cash and goods; (3) rural or urban marriage; (4) wife in country or town; (5) children in country or town; (6) retention of rural land rights; and (7) common home ties in town.

The hypothesis here is that all these variates load highly on one sociographic dimension—ruralism. We wish to know whether this is true, and if so what the loadings are, so that in future field-work questions on the less heavily-loading variates may be omitted in favour of the more diagnostic ones. The technique which suggests itself for this purpose is factor analysis. In order to avoid the difficulty of uncontrolled background factors such as family size and distance away of home area, however, it seems best to seek only dichotomous responses for each variate—marriage rural/non-rural, wife in country/not in country—instead of using continuous distributions which would invoke the background factors.

The conventional factor-analytic approach with dichotomous distributions would be to make use of derived functions of joint frequencies, i.e., fourfold point or tetrachoric correlations. Slater has suggested another method which operates directly on joint frequencies such as would be obtained by taking every possible combination of dichotomous responses to seven variates in a series of  $2 \times 2$  tables (Slater 1947, 114-127). Apart from the saving of labour in this case, any of these methods would probably yield similar results, and they could be used to cross-check one another (see Appendix 1).

The outcome, it is to be hoped, would be a high loading for most of the variates on the one dimension, ruralism. A second or further dimension with variates heavily weighted on it would be a disturbing but important find: it would indicate that what we were measuring was not homogeneous. In any event, some answer would be given to the original question—what measurable contacts with rural areas urban-dwelling Africans maintain—for the particular population from which the sample was drawn. Starting from such a population, with background factors like

influx control policy held constant, the investigation could be extended to other and different populations. The problem of correlating the basic indicators of ruralism found with the psycho-sociological dimension of "tribalism" will be discussed shortly.

### "Tribalism"

"How far do relationships and loyalties based on tribal ties persist among Africans in urban areas?"

*Tribal Cohesion* The strength with which Africans adhere to "tribalism" is usually assessed in the notion of tribal cohesion, a construct induced from their behaviour in and out of tribal situations.

By all accounts, tribal cohesion in West and Central Africa is still strong in spite of some degree of urbanisation. Indeed, in at least one case, migration (one of the urbanising media) has led to an intensification of "tribalism": in other words, to "tribalization". This phenomenon, which Rouch calls "super-tribalization," he found in a study of migrants from the former French West African territories into Kumasi, Accra and other towns of the Gold Coast. Forde in summarising his work has said that entry into urban life, "far from weakening the links between ethnic groups, greatly strengthened them. Solidarity of people of a single tribe and even of a single village increases among these recent migrants, and the groups so formed become more and more closed under their own chiefs. Associations and cults strongly express this solidarity, which is associated with competition for employment or trade under conditions of a comparatively free market" (Forde 1956, 38-39).

In a summary of Busia's work in Sekondi-Takoradi, on the Ghana coast, it is stated that although kinship loyalties are tending to break down, town-dwellers generally retain intense loyalty to home and tribe, as evinced in the popularity of tribal associations. This hinders the growth of civic, as distinct from tribal, responsibility (McCulloch 1956, 86). For Central Africa, too, Epstein has said that "... examination of the internal organisation of bodies such as the trade unions and the African National Congress would suggest that "tribalism" still remains a most important factor; cleavages within these bodies are frequently expressed in tribal terms" (1956, 724).

In East and South Africa there is a different emphasis. In Kenya, Parker says that "... there are definite signs of the passing of tribal cohesion. Prostitution, the large number of juveniles who

have from the outset of urban development sought freedom from parental and tribal control in the towns, and a widening cleavage between old and young, provide additional evidence. . . . New forms of social discipline are in a measure replacing tribal sanctions. Native tribunals in the towns are of necessity intertribal in constitution . . . and [appear to be working well]." (McCulloch 1956, 130-131). Speaking of South Africa, Hellman says: "Every African knows to which tribe he belongs, but the strength of tribal loyalty varies. . . . It is the Government's intention to reinforce tribal loyalties. . . . Articulate African opinion [however] has condemned . . . [such] measures. . . . The functions of a chief have diminished greatly in the country. In a town they have no relevance. Unlike the situation in British West Africa, the tribe has not become the basis for present-day African political organisations such as the African National Congress. On the contrary, the desire of chiefs to retain their traditional privileges does . . . conflict with the aims of the African political organisations to secure the extension to Africans of the democratic rights accorded to Europeans, and tribal allegiances impede the development of African national consciousness (Hellman 1956, 738-739).

A comparison of this position with the vigorous "tribalism" analysed by Mayer for the Ciskei, South Africa, indicates that not two different senses of "tribalism" but two different contexts are involved, which need to be specified in each case. In East London, as Mayer puts it, trade unions do not transcend tribes: there are no fundamentally different tribes to be transcended. Social opposition appears between those Africans in East London who regard themselves and are regarded as townsmen, and those who are considered as in town but of the country. In the latter category again, there is still a sharper opposition between the so-called "red" and "school" categories. This reflects a bitter conflict over the desirability of adopting white people's ways which has split the Xhosa for generations (Mayer 1961, p. xiv).

Mayer's analysis of the African townsmen in East London connects with the "juveniles" of Parker and Hellmann's "articulate African opinion" respectively for East and South Africa. These Africans are the town-rooted, who can be characterised as "urban" or in the process of urbanization. Their main social ties are all contained within the town, and in Mayer's words, "the urban traditions are the only ones that count for them" (1961, p. xv). The "red" and

"school" people who are in town but of the country are on the contrary migrants, and it is in the different context of migrancy that "tribalism" again assumes its full importance.

Competent studies in Central Africa suggest not only that migrants are similarly "incapsulated" by tribalism in towns there, but that all the main participants in the migrant labour system have an interest in maintaining tribal cohesion. Watson in his analysis of the Mambwe of Zambia says that tribal cohesion and migrant labour are essential to one another (1958, p. 188). Van Velsen for the Tonga of Malawi lists various factors working towards the continuance if not reinforcement of tribal integration. These are (1) the basic assumption in the industrial economy that the average African is not in any real sense a wage-earner but a labour migrant who has his tribal village to fall back on; (2) the vital interest based on land which Tonga abroad have in maintaining their position in the community and economy of Tongaland; and (3) the principle of "tribal integrity" on which the administration of the territory is based. Such considerations lead van Velsen to suggest that all three categories of persons—industrial employers, the Administration and the Tonga themselves—have under present conditions an interest in maintaining tribal cohesion among the Tonga (1961, 239-240). Gluckman makes much the same point in more general terms when he says: "We see, in short, that tribalism persists in the rural areas because of Government support and because the tie to tribal land is of the utmost importance to a man" (1960, 68).

These structural data, however, although offering external criteria of tribalism against which validation might be sought, do not provide quantifiable material for intercorrelation with the sociographic data of ruralism. Such material might be obtained from the psycho-sociological

dimension of "tribal" social values which only Mayer so far appears to have analysed. For the "red" Xhosa of East London he posits consciousness of a common past (largely expressed in terms of descent from common ancestors) and also a present duty to maintain the distinctive "tribalized" way of life which history and the ancestors have sanctioned. This preservation is threatened whenever Xhosa people take over elements from the way of foreign peoples. "Thus the 'tribalism' of the Red Xhosa takes the form of opposing any blurring of intertribal boundaries on the cultural level; any participation in the institutions of non-Xhosa or sharing of common interests with them. This opposition is moral in that it is referred to the ancestors. There results the ideal of exact coincidence between the bounds of group, culture and history, which may be called essentially 'tribal'" (Mayer 1961, pp. 40-41).

A sequence of dichotomous attitude questions to test this area can be devised for intercorrelation with a sequence on the sociographic dimension of ruralism. A simple questionnaire on these lines for administration to an urban African migrant sample is shown in Appendix 4. Responses on seven variates of "tribalism" would thus be returned, which could again be tested for unidimensionality using the first stage of a factor analysis as suggested by Slater (1947). Assuming that the one dimension of "tribalism" emerged, a number of statistical techniques could then be used to demonstrate what correlation existed, if any, between the dimensions of "tribalism" and ruralism (see Appendix 2). A suitable measure of association between individual items on the two scales might assist in deciding which questions to eliminate in future field investigations. Finally, partial validation of both dimensions against the external structural criteria previously mentioned might be achieved. These criteria may be tabulated against ruralism and "tribalism" as follows:

*Table 1*  
DIMENSIONS OF TRIBALISM

<i>Ruralism</i>	<i>Structural Criteria (validation)</i>	<i>"Tribalism" (Appendix 2)</i>
1. home visiting	1. degree of integration of migrant's work with home economy	1. tribal recognition
2. rural transfer of cash/goods		2. common ancestors
3. rural or urban marriage	2. support given by family in the industrial situation	3. cultural inheritance
4. wife in country or town		4. pro-rural way of life
5. children in country or town	3. migrant's participation in political activities at home	5. anti-education
6. retention of rural land rights		6. anti-church membership
7. common home ties in town		7. anti-acculturation

For validation purposes the sample population might be divided into an upper (more) and lower (less) tribal group on the basis of the structural criteria. Each group could then be scored on ruralism and "tribalism" respectively, and differences between the mean scores on each of these dimensions could be tested for significance using Student's t-test (McNemar 1962, pp. 102-108).

Consistently high correlations between ruralism and "tribalism" on different African populations and in different social contexts could mean that eventually psycho-sociological tribal orientation might safely be predictable on the basis of a few sociographic criteria. Such criteria, as Mayer suggests, might reduce to home visiting and common home ties in town (1962, 1964); or they might not (see Appendix 3).

*"Tribalism" and Tribe* It is not generally known that *tribe* as a category of belonging, although of great significance in Zambia, has little meaning in Rhodesia. The indigenous population of this country consists of two major groups, the Ndebele and Shona speaking peoples, the latter being divided into five main clusters of dialects. The members of each of these groups, although coming from different parts of the country between the Limpopo and the Zambezi rivers, have lived together for over one hundred years and so developed their own customs and dialect. Consequently members of a given dialect group are not necessarily related by clan ties. For social purposes a tribesman is therefore more likely to distinguish himself in terms of the territorially-defined chiefdom to which he belongs or the dialect that he uses rather than in terms of his tribe.

The distinction between the psycho-sociological and categorical dimensions of tribalism has been discussed more than once in the Southern African literature. Gluckman points out that rural membership of a tribe involves participation in a working political system and sharing domestic life with kinsfolk; and this continued participation is based on present social and economic needs, and not only on conservatism. Tribalism in towns, in Zambia at least, is primarily a means of mutual classification for the multitude of heterogeneous Africans who live there (1960, 55). Mitchell and Epstein have underlined the importance of the study of "para-tribal" systems among Africans: those which exist together with, but outside traditional tribal systems, for example, in industrial centres (1957, 13). Mitchell's distinction between tribal structure

(rural) and tribalism (urban) in another work (1956a, p. 30) suggests that there is no necessary correlation between rural "tribalism" and the para-tribal category of belonging in towns. Epstein also indicates that the concept of tribalism at large has two distinct points of reference. One is intratribal and refers to the persistence of, or continued attachment to, tribal custom. The other stems from a particular form of social organisation, but operates today in a social system much wider than that of the tribe. These two aspects must be carefully distinguished, says Epstein, since it is clear that there may be "revolutionary changes in custom" while the tribe itself remains an important category of interaction (1958a, p. 231).

The question of correlating rural "tribalism" with the paratribal category of belonging in towns seems to be a pseudo-problem. It disappears if migrant participation in town and in country life is regarded, as it surely should be, in terms of role-playing. The reasons why two apparently disconnected senses of tribalism are needed to describe the migrant's behaviour in town and country seem to be (a) that this behaviour takes place in two relatively disconnected social contexts, urban and rural; (b) that such contexts, quite different culturally, invoke highly differentiated role-behaviour appropriate to each, and (c) that nevertheless, many migrants acting out their roles in towns often continue to remain, in sense 3 of the term, fundamentally "tribalized," and therefore to use "tribal" modes of role-playing where the urban context does not dictate otherwise. This interpretation in terms of role theory will be used in the analysis which follows.

#### *Tribe*

"In what social contexts does *tribe* as a category of belonging operate in urban African role-playing?"

In practice the role-category of *tribe* is significant both in the migrant and in the settled African townsman context. Mayer points out that the differences between (in his case) "school" and "red" people must not be overstressed to the extent of suggesting that "school" people have no particular "tribal" loyalties. Even the town-rooted, if plunged into a multi-tribal setting, might still regard some tribal categories as fundamentally important (Mayer 1961, p. 41). There is evidence from Central Africa too that not only in the urban courts do urban Africans regulate much of their social behaviour in terms of tribal norms and values (Epstein 1958a, p. 231), but that cleavages in urban associations are on occa-

sion ascribed by Africans themselves to tribal antagonism (Epstein 1958b, 104). It is nevertheless among temporary urban migrants that the category of *tribe* comes into highest relief, for purposes of role-identification (Mitchell 1956a, pp. 21-22). Here, too, the problems of mutually incompatible role-performances are most acute.

Mitchell distinguishes with relevance here between three social contexts on the Copperbelt in which tribal membership has, or had, significance for the African in town. The first, which might be called *intra-tribal*, involves recognition among strangers in an urban location that they come from the same rural locality or chiefdom. Such men are then linked by a set of roles and relationships imported with them from their rural home. This in-group identification provides a basis for the second type of context, which will be called *inter-tribal*. Here ethnic origin as displayed by language, ties of association and way of life enables members of other tribal groups to fit their acquaintances into role-categories which then determine behaviour. A third context, to be called *extra-tribal*, involves tribal membership as an approach to authority. This led on the Copperbelt to the tribal elder system, which for some years served to present the African residents' point of view to the mines and to location superintendents (Mitchell 1956a, p. 32).

In the intra-tribal context, Mayer indicates that if a migrant's close friends in town are themselves country-oriented migrants from the same tribe, his urban relationships are not really "urban" at all, but displaced tribal (1964, 28). This phenomenon of incapsulation implies that the migrant continues to play rural roles in town whenever possible. The principle of common home ties which Mayer uses to define this situation is in fact a role-category: one which bears some resemblance to the "home-fellow" category set out by Epstein for Ndola in Zambia (1961, p. 51).

From Epstein's work it appears that the home-fellow role category is only one of a number of criteria which Africans use to structure their relationships in towns. As Mayer has done (1964, 30), Epstein classifies "home-fellow" (involving mutual aid and implicit home-orientation) separately from the more general category of "tribe," which merely role-identifies acquaintances on the basis of the "diacritical indices" of dress, custom, etc. (Epstein 1961, pp. 49-51). Other role-criteria in Ndola are neighbourhood and locality, kinship and prestige, the latter pro-

viding a working model for the incipient class structure (Epstein 1961, 53).

The classical exposition of *tribe* at the inter-tribal level is still that of Mitchell (1956a; 1956b). "Because tribal characteristics are so easily displayed in dress, behaviour, and in particular in speech," he says, "tribalism becomes the most important means whereby day-to-day relationships on the Copperbelt are organised" (1956b, p. 6). This is reminiscent of Southall's class of "categorical relationships," based on Mitchell (1959, 100-101), in which persons meet in an informal context without yet knowing one another very well, and thus intuitively assign one another to various type (i.e. role) categories as an empirical approach towards appropriate behaviour (Southall 1961, 29). Mitchell emphasises that tribalism (i.e., *tribe*) does not form the basis for the organisation of corporate groups. It remains essentially a category of interaction in casual social intercourse. Together with the prestige ranking system, it operates to mediate social relationships in what is predominantly a transient society. One cannot, moreover, generalize about the operation of these two "principles of association" without reference to the specific social situation (i.e. context) in which the interaction takes place (Mitchell 1956a, pp. 42-43). What Mitchell is analysing here is surely role interaction in informal urban contexts.

More than this, however, by the use of a social distance scale Mitchell discovered that the many tribes in town were grouped into a limited number of categories by town-dwelling Africans, and that certain institutionalized behaviours had developed between the various categories (1956a, pp. 22-28). This seems to represent a further stage of role-behaviour in which specific stereotypes occur in the role-expectations assigned to each role. The situation then comes to the fringe of "egocentric relations," in which people know one another well enough to base their mutual expectations of behaviour (i.e. role-expectations) on this personal or stereotyped knowledge (Mitchell 1959, 100-101; Southall 1961, 29).

The extra-tribal context of *tribe* can be viewed in two main aspects: the political, in relation to the white man or other racial group at large; and the industrial, *vis-à-vis* the employer. Much has already been made of the ambivalent political role-playing of the modern chief or headman, representing his people's aspirations on the one part and the policy implementations of the Administration on the other (e.g., Epstein 1958a.

p. 65, with refs.; Watson 1958, pp. 188-189). Role expectations for tribal authorities in town can easily be mistaken by an urban administration, as happened on the Copperbelt mines. The institution of tribal elders, set up by the mines administration, rested on the assumption, soon out of step with the times, that work roles between urban Africans were also tribal ones (Epstein 1958b, 100).

It is clear from the literature that in the work sphere in towns, a role-system is involved which is different both from casual non-work relations in town and from social relations in the country. The different systems sometimes overlap, as in Mayer's contention that participation in the larger-scale economy as worker involves for the rural migrant a simultaneous discharge of a more valued role as provider (1961, p. 146). But work and rural roles are usually at least disparate. Gluckman quotes the case in Zambia of a chief visiting town who was treated by African trade union leaders with respect, until he tried to intervene in an industrial dispute (1960, 69). Mayer states that the three reference groups which he enumerates for East London—real townsmen, "school" migrants and "red" migrants—have little or no significance at work. White employers expect all types of Xhosa to play, and the Xhosa do play, similar roles in the urban economy (1962, 587). The behaviour of black workers in South Africa, once they are industrialized, shows no obvious differences whether their origin or orientation is urban or rural. Industrialized Africans of all types in town form a socially homogeneous work group (Y. Glass in Reader 1963a).

All this must not obscure the fact that there is an eclectic element in role-selection which sometimes allows Africans to combine in their urban role-playing both foreign and tribal elements. At the individual, self-employed level, Mitchell's instance of William, the urban diviner and medicine man, is a case in point. His wearing of a white coat and his case-cards are based on the high prestige and appearance of Western medicine. Yet his practice does not subscribe to Western scientific principles, but is grounded in tribal magic (1960a, p. 18). At the group level, Southall mentions that trade unions in Mombasa, East Africa, were able to use the appeal of tribalism in gaining African support. Here *tribe* was invoked as a basis for common action in the work situation. But other special interests in Mombasa have crossed tribal and racial boundaries. The printers' union links African and

Asian members. The ratepayers' association brings together Europeans, Asians, Arabs and Coloureds (Southall 1961, 39-40).

In sum, *tribe* is a category of belonging in towns for which the role-playing context must always be stated, since Africans can alternate or combine rural and urban roles. The principle involved has been called situational selection (Mayer 1962, 580 and refs.), although *role-selection* might have been a better name. This is determined not only for each social context, but as Mitchell remarks, "the total set of external imperatives is probably unique for each town" (1960b, 171).

To say that more work needs to be done on the problem of role-playing in tribal and extra-tribal contexts in Central and Southern Africa would perhaps be presumptuous. At the intra-tribal level in a South African town, Mayer has done much of this work under the approach of migrancy and town and country rootedness. His work, with or without a role-orientation, could obviously be replicated to advantage elsewhere. In Central Africa, Gluckman, Mitchell, Epstein and their associates have explored the inter-tribal level of urban relationships in a way which is easily translatable into role and context theory. It may, however, be at the level of extra-tribal role-playing that the richest field of research lies. Africans who today reject their European rulers are not necessarily rejecting the techniques and roles of production and government which these rulers introduced (c.f. Mair 1960); yet neither are they altogether free of the tribalism which their rural background imparts.

#### DETribALIZATION

In the same way as with tribalism, there are different dimensions of detribalization as a process which need to be separated for analysis. While these are broadly the logical opposites of tribalism, two possible senses of detribalization fall away for practical purposes. The generic term *detribalism* would be the state of living out of tribal life. While relevant in some rural areas (e.g., on European farms) as well as being concomitant with full urbanization in towns, this condition is still largely in process of becoming, and is then covered by detribalization. Again, detribalism is not, so far as is known, a category of urban belonging. This leaves two dimensions which form the logical opposites of ruralism and "tribalism" as previously defined, namely:

*Immigration*: moving from tribal areas, with a lapse of ties with people left behind.

"Detribalization": the dropping or rejection of tribal values and behaviour patterns.

These are adaptations of the two meanings ascribed to detribalization by Mitchell (1956c, 694-695). In his usage "the lapse of social relationships with people living in tribal areas" is classed under the psycho-sociological dimension of "detribalization" together with "the dropping or the rejection of tribal modes of behaviour." This might be justified if sociological analysis of the lapsed social relations were intended. In practice they have only been used as sociographic indicators of the place of the individual on the "tribalized"/"detribalized" psycho-sociological scale. Mayer means by the process of urbanization among migrants "a shift in the balance between within-town ties and extra-town ties . . . [such that the] extra-town ties have collectively shrunk to negligible proportions . . ." (1962, 580). This surely amounts to a plain count of relationships, and can at best be an index of detribalization, not a definition of urbanization. Another purely sociographic use of rural ties is in their factor-analytic treatment as a variate of ruralism, suggested earlier.

The dropping of rural ties can also be used as one of the bases for distinguishing between immigration and migration, as Mayer has done (1961, pp. 5-6). The contrast should strictly be between *emigration* and migration, the former being more appropriate from a detribal standpoint (L. *emigrare*, to wander forth). However, this term may well be needed in other contexts connected with urbanization. Hence the word *immigration*, with the selected meaning of "passing into a new habitat" (*Shorter Oxford English Dictionary*), with the implication of permanence, will probably be more generally suitable, and is retained here. Labour migration is seen as the movement from tribal to other places of work, and perhaps back again. With the question of the gradual lapse of tribal ties left open, it seems best at present to deal with migration as a special case of immigration. It will soon appear that migration is the prime means of leaving tribal areas in Central and Southern Africa, and is a necessary condition both for the undeniable overall increase of urban African populations during this century, and for detribalization itself.

Using the two dimensions of detribalization in the present way, the merits and demerits of Gluckman's well-known statement of detribalization seems to become plain. In his view, the moment an African crosses his tribal boundary he is detribalized, outside the tribe, though not outside

its influence (Gluckman, 1960, 58). Such a man is indeed detribalized, in the sociographic sense that he is a migrant; and so, sociographically, he will remain until, as Gluckman says (*ibid.*), he returns to the political area of his tribe, when he becomes (sociographically) tribalized again. But this leaves open the extent of his "detribalization," if any, on the psycho-sociological dimension. For this, further investigation is needed, as Mayer has suggested (1961), of the degree to which the migrant has dropped or maintained home ties, consorted with new city associates as against home-fellows in the urban area, and neglected or arranged to perform certain crucial rural roles *in absentia*.

As with tribalism, each of the two senses of detribalization generates its own type of question:

*Immigration:* To what extent do Africans migrate to urban areas (migration)? How far do their ties with rural areas lapse (immigration)?

*"Detribalization":* What is the process whereby Africans change their orientation from the tribal to another way of life?

The available Central and Southern African literature on these issues will again be reviewed.  
*Immigration*

The question "to what extent do Africans migrate" is deliberately broad, since "to what extent" is meant to cover the questions "how in view of influx control, and at what rate?"

*How in view of influx control?* Official policy in South Africa for many years has been to admit Africans into an urban area when there is work for them; to exclude them when there is not (Reader, 1961, p. 53). In addition, Havemann has contended that influx control is also resorted to as a means of reducing or slowing down the demand for African housing (1951, 7). This in turn might be reduced to a desire to keep out people who would be a drain on local municipal resources. Havemann points out that such a wish is not directed against Africans alone. When the "civilised labour" policy (employment of poor whites rather than blacks) and the 1930 depression jointly produced an influx of poor whites into South African urban areas, some municipalities protested vigorously, and would certainly have controlled the influx had they been able to do so. Nor is influx control, says Havemann, a peculiarly South African expedient. It has close parallels in the Settlement Law of seventeenth-century England, and in the anti-settlement laws of twentieth-century America (eventually declared *ultra vires* the Constitution). In both these

precedents the reasons for migration and the motives for keeping out the migrants were much as in the South African case (Havemann 1951, 8).

Southall gives a useful brief review of influx control in Central Africa (1961, 10). In Rhodesia, as in South Africa, legislation restricts African residence in towns to land set aside for the purpose, and, for the migrant, to the actual duration of employment. Gussman's case-study of Bulawayo (1952, p. 24) and comparable evidence from Salisbury show that municipalities have on the whole been unable to meet their African housing obligations. Africans are forced to contravene the law by the mere fact of their residence, working women are obliged to find accommodation in married or single men's quarters, and married couples have to share with single men. Similar regulations obtained in Zambia, but were ineffective because of the absence of physical barriers to movement. Accommodation on the Copperbelt mines was usually adequate, but in towns like Lusaka, illicit compounds run by European land-holders relieved the sheer physical pressure on accommodation. Botswana according to Schapera did not practise influx control (1947, p. 85). It has since done so, but rather with a view to discouraging settlement or transit on political grounds than from any desire to control work-seekers.\* Further afield, Southall reports that Kenya, Tanzania and the Congo have all had unsatisfactory experiences with influx control, largely on grounds of economic pressure, administrative cost, or the impossibility of preventing evasion (Southall 1961, 10).

The total picture is one of irresistible pressure by African labour upon urban centres in Central and Southern Africa. From the African's viewpoint, as Havemann says, influx control means "sticking to his job lest he be expelled from town when he is unemployed, and staying in town lest he be debarred from entry if he should go home for any length of time. In these circumstances, the African worker naturally brings his family to town, or as close to it as he can get. . . . To the extent that the influx has been stemmed at the city borders, it has produced great black belts outside . . ." (Havemann 1951, 7). In so far as basically rural-oriented workers have brought their families with them, this suggests caution in the use of "family urban-dwelling" and "persistence in same job" as sociographic criteria of psycho-sociological detribalization.

\* African Immigration Proclamation, No. 14 of 1958: this required that each African entrant into Botswana should obtain a visitor's or residential permit.

*At what rate do Africans migrate?* The geographers Green and Fair (1962, p. 80) found that the shifts of the African population on the whole continent were not suitable for mapping because of the general unreliability of the demographic data and the absence of a full census for Africans in the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland. However, in the Republic of South Africa the shift of Africans from rural to urban occupations "has been generally more spectacular than even that of the Europeans" (Green and Fair 1962, p. 81). In 1946 there were 1,856,028 Bantu in South African urban areas. The increase up to 2,328,534 in 1951 was attributed to an influx from the European farms and other rural areas (40 per cent), the Native Reserves (8 per cent) and neighbouring territories (23 per cent), and natural increase (29 per cent). By 1960, although only 30 per cent of the total African population were in urban areas, this represented 3,192,130 Bantu compared with 2,461,162 urban Europeans. It has been calculated that if the tempo of African demographic urbanization experienced during the period from 1946 to 1951 is maintained to the close of the century, more than 10,000,000 out of a total Bantu population of 21,000,000 will then be established in urban areas (Tomlinson Commission 1955, p. 29).

In Rhodesia, the African population in 1956 was 2,550,000 against 177,124 whites. Between 1936 and 1956 the total increase in the number of Africans in urban employment was 355,656. Of these, 44 per cent were accounted for in six main urban centres. In Zambia, the Africans in 1956 totalled 2,110,000 against 65,277 Europeans. In that country there was a total increase of urban-employed Africans amounting to 122,356 between 1946 and 1956. Of these, 98 per cent were found on the Copperbelt and along the line of rail extending southwards to Livingstone. Green and Fair conclude from their data that by far the most significant factor in the distribution of population in Southern Africa today is the major urban centre, and its surrounding cluster of lesser urban areas and comparatively dense rural population (1962, p. 81).

The general answer to the original question—to what extent do Africans migrate—is thus that they migrate to urban centres overwhelmingly and in spite of all efforts to stop them. This leaves quite open, however, the second sociographic question: *How far do their ties with rural areas lapse?* (immigration). Hellmann (1948, p. 110), writing on a Johannesburg African shumyard, lists three criteria of detribalization

which bear directly on the present question of immigration:

1. Permanent residence in an area other than that of the chief to whom a man would normally pay allegiance.
2. Complete severance of the relationship to the chief.
3. Independence of rural relatives both for support during periods of unemployment and ill-health or for the performance of ceremonies connected with the major crises of life.

This list raises the important point that a man does not have to be sociographically urbanized in order to be detribalized. On all three of these criteria African squatters or farm servants on European farms in South Africa could be completely detribalized—out of a tribal area and severed from all tribal relationships—without any direct urban contacts at all. The farmer, to the greater or less extent that his race attitudes allowed, would become their “father” and their chief. In the Ciskei (Cape Province) of the 1930s, Hunter reported that “Practically all those [Africans] resident on farms are servants permanently employed and having no stake in any reserve. . . . Families on farms keep their clan and tribal names, but are members of no tribal community and under no chief. Many individuals do not know the name of the reigning chief of their tribe” (1961, p. 505).

The extent of contact with the reserves, she goes on, naturally varies with the date at which the family left the reserve, and with the proximity of the farm to the reserve. Kinship bonds with those outside the farm are, however, weakened by lack of leisure, restrictions which hinder visiting and the summoning of relatives to ritual killings of stock, and the fact that relatives can often only get employment at a considerable distance from one another (1961, p. 523). Moreover, permanent immigration of farm workers to the urban areas has been the subject of complaint by farmers over the last twenty years at least. It is now virtually impossible for an African farm worker to migrate legally to town with his family (Roberts 1958, pp. 81-82). Yet, as previous figures have shown, many do succeed in immigrating.

In town it is often hard to determine how immigrant a man is in terms of Hellmann's criteria. Hunter, working in the locations of Grahamstown and East London, Cape Province, found that “about half the community are permanent town-dwellers” (1934, 336). In Rooiyard,

Hellmann considered that the great majority were living in town temporarily. She assessed this by the fact that many left their cattle in the rural areas or had from time to time sent articles of furniture home. “But it must be borne in mind,” she said, “that the Rooiyard populace is comparatively young (few couples had adult children) and it is possible that during the course of years their attitude may change and they may come to be permanent town-dwellers” (Hellmann 1948, p. 111). This raises the difficulty of any assessment of an urban African's intentions based solely on the length of time he has already spent in town. Mitchell's demographic notion of “stabilization” (1956c), while useful as a measure of urban exposure, has been criticised as a predictor of future urban behaviour (Reader 1963b).

The concept of “permanent residence” works best in conjunction with Hellmann's other criteria, which bear on it. She found that the relationship to the chief varies from individual to individual. Some went readily with gifts to urban meetings organised to welcome a visiting chief; others merely shrugged their shoulders. However indifferent they seemed in town, though, many Africans visited their chief when in the rural area, as a mark of respect and allegiance. The dependence of land-owning Africans on the chief requires no emphasis (Hellmann 1948, p. 111). Among the Mambwe of Zambia, as Watson points out, the chief retained his authority, with which land tenure and tribal cohesion are intimately bound up, throughout the whole period of direct and indirect rule and the development of industry (Watson 1958, p. 5). Richards speaks similarly of the Bemba (1935, p. 21), while among the Ngoni of Malawi, who have a high rate of labour migration (Read 1938, p. 56), and the Zambian Ngoni (Barnes 1954, p. 135) there is marked tribal cohesion and a strong political organisation.

But it was in the dependence of the Rooiyard African on his rural relatives that his unbroken, although weakened connection with tribal life became most apparent. Of the 40 families constituting the relatively settled population of this now defunct slumyard, only 17 had all their children with them. Apart from one childless couple, all the others had one or more children exposed to tribal influence by their upbringing in the country under the care of rural relatives. These 22 families had necessarily to maintain contact with their home and tribe of origin. Hence tribal child-rearing formed an effective check to the total immigration either of the

**Table II**  
**CRITERIA OF IMMIGRATION**

<i>Immigration</i>	<i>Implies negative criteria of Ruralism</i>
1. permanent residence in an area other than the rural place of origin	—
2. severance of relationship with rural chief	giving up rural land rights
3. independence of rural relatives	no home visiting no rural transfer of cash/goods wife in town children in town
4. inter-tribal marriage	—

children or their parents (Hellmann 1948, pp. 111-112).

Hellmann also suggests that the process of immigration is aided by inter-tribal marriage. Among 52 couples with husband and wife belonging to different tribes, only one complete family and eight wives went home. In 48 couples married intra-tribally, 10 complete families and 12 wives went home (presumably in the period of investigation). It seemed that the men were being cut off from their tribal background in inter-tribal marriages more than the women, who tended to remain linked to their kin (Hellmann 1948, p. 112).

Four criteria of immigration thus emerge, which can be arranged in the above table.

Whether to use a low score on ruralism or a high score on immigration as a sociographic indicator of movement between the tribal-detribal polarities is a matter for practical investigation in field situations. *A priori*, it might be better to take the positive variates of ruralism than the negative ones of immigration. There is also the point that "permanent residence" is hard to determine. If scores on both these dimensions could be taken, intercorrelation might be carried out to determine their degree of overlap. It could then happen that a combined score would serve best for measuring sociographic detribalization (Appendix 4).

#### *"Detribalization"*

"What is the process whereby Africans change their orientation from the tribal to another way of life?"

The definition of "detribalization" involves the dropping or rejection of tribal values and behaviour patterns. This is meant, however, to heed the caution once expressed by Fortes against associating the term with evaluations such as "pathological," "disintegrated" or "demoralized" (1938, 61). It does not suggest that tribal norms become unconsciously the standards against which urban behaviour is assessed (Mitchell

1959, 100-101). All that is implied is that (a) urban or non-tribal behaviour is contrasted with tribal behaviour; (b) in cases where apparently permanent behavioural changes take place, tribal behaviour of some kind was the area of departure; and (c) if and when a psychological change of orientation occurs, it is from a rural life-outlook. All this may happen along economic, sociological and psychological sub-dimensions of "detribalization," which, although they do not warrant special names at present, will be treated separately in analysis.

*The economic sub-dimension.* Migration certainly does not imply "detribalization." But, as will be seen below, it is usually migration for primarily economic reasons which makes a man leave his tribal area at all, and thus exposes him to the non-tribal influences which make "detribalisation" a possible choice. Moreover, decisions for migration may trigger off those towards immigration and hence detribalisation.

Mitchell has summarized along three axes the factors motivating migration from rural areas (1958, 17):

1. Through the economic system. All writers on the sociology of migration have emphasized its economic basis.
2. Through the normative system of a society. Migration becomes a habit, perhaps even a *rite de passage*: the expected type of behaviour for young men. An appropriate role for a young man is thus to leave the tribal area and make his way into the outer industrial world.
3. Through the personal choice of individuals. Many reasons may be obtained from the statements of informants—to escape quarrels, witchcraft, avoid arduous duties, etc. As Mitchell says, however, "Several writers have pointed out that we should be cautious of the technique which asks the direct question to the migrant [regarding the reasons

for migration]." He quotes Richards: "... a particularly angry scene with his [the migrant's] local chief may have become dramatized in his mind for all time and quite obliterate consciousness of a long series of economic frustrations and hardships which were equally 'motives for

travel'" (Mitchell 1958, 17-18).

A review of sources other than those examined by Mitchell shows that this tabulation is basically correct, with the addition of "propaganda and advertisement" which in the discussion following his paper, he said that he had not sufficiently considered (1958, 22).

Table III

# PRESSURES TO LEAVE RURAL AREAS TO WORK

## 1. ECONOMIC — General:

Inability of reserves to support population:

G. B. Wilson 1941, p. 55; South African Institute of Race Relations 1947, 65; Reader 1961, p. 36.

Economic necessity and pressure:

Phillips 1938, p. 55; Schapera 1947, p. 121; Houghton 1958, 40.

Diverse money wants:

Janisch 1942, p. 23; Schapera 1947, p. 141; South African Institute of Race Relations 1947, 65; Eberhardt 1949, p. 50; Mitchell 1954, p. 10; Watson 1958, p. 39; Gluckman 1960, 65; Mayer 1961, pp. 91, 94.

## Special Wants:

Cash for taxes and levies:

Janisch 1942, p. 23; Schapera 1947, p. 141; South African Institute of Race Relations 1947, 65; Watson 1958, p. 40.

Marriage payments:

Janisch 1942, p. 23; Watson 1958, p. 40; Mayer 1961, p. 91.

Clothes:

G. B. Wilson 1942, p. 18; Schapera 1947, p. 142; Watson 1958, p. 40.

Trader debts:

South African Institute of Race Relations 1947, 65; Watson 1958, p. 40.

Court fines:

Watson 1958, p. 40.

To build homestead:

Mayer 1961, p. 91.

## 2. NORMATIVE

Expected behaviour:

Schapera 1947, p. 115; Watson 1958, p. 40; Mayer 1961, p. 91.

Initiation into manhood:

Schapera 1947, p. 116; Mayer 1961, p. 91.

For urban experience:

Watson 1958, p. 43; Reader 1961, p. 36.

## 3. PERSONAL

Escape from domestic problems,

consequences of offences, etc:

Schapera 1947, pp. 118, 120; Watson 1958, p. 47.

Desire for adventure and change,

dullness of tribal life:

Schapera 1947, pp. 115, 117.

Urban-experienced men preferred by girls:

Schapera 1947, p. 116.

## 4. POLITICAL

Propaganda and political pressure:

Schapera 1947, pp. 144-155.

Mitchell concludes that economic factors, while being a necessary condition of labour migration, may not also be sufficient. Additional "last-straw" causes (Gulliver 1955, p. 28) may be needed to precipitate the migration. The rate of migration may be determined by economic conditions, such as the degree of subsistence possible in the tribal area and the level of wants created by western contact; but the incidence of migration may depend on psychological conditions (Mitchell 1958, 18-19).

In South Africa in 1958 a rural investigation was conducted by the National Institute for Per-

sonnel Research on migrant labour in three districts of the Transkei, Cape Province. Besides confirming the inadequacy of local food production, and investigating other matters confidential to the sponsor, the Institute found that there were two major ultimate needs in migrancy: cattle and money. The cattle-need was fundamental and could never be fully satisfied. Money needs varied greatly according to whether the migrant was, on his own assessment, "red" (blanketed) or "dressed". The former, in a gross majority in this sample, were working primarily to maintain a standard of living dictated by the rural sub-

sistence economy. Any surplus money left after paying debts and satisfying needs of the type shown under Special Wants in Table III, they put into stock.

It was found, furthermore, that economic needs driving the migrant fell into three broad classes, each with a different degree of urgency. The first centred about cattle, the second and third about money:

1. The long-term desire for cattle, analogous to the European's wish for wealth and security. Indeed, the African's cattle kraal is sometimes referred to nowadays as his 'bank'.
2. Fairly long-term accumulating needs, usually cyclic in character. The main one of these is the growing need for maize as the harvest is eaten off. The need for new blankets to wear as the old ones become ragged is another example.
3. Sudden, short-term needs, requiring immediate satisfaction. The legal attachment of a beast at the dipping-tank when taxes have not been paid, or the sudden sickness of a family member, are examples. These may correspond on occasion to Gulliver's "last-straw" causes (Gulliver 1955, p. 28).

Economic needs can easily change in type according to context. Cattle for *lobolo* is a good example. A young man first going to work, still with no permanent sweetheart in view, will see this as the first type of need: something wanted in the future but not pressing. When he begins to "go steady", however, the cycle of obtaining so many head of cattle comes before him as the second type of need. When, finally, the in-laws demand certain beasts before they will allow the wedding to proceed, the man is faced with the third type of need for which in the last resort he may have to go out and work at once.

If, as often happens, the "red" migrant experiences these work pressures at a time of social, economic or ritual activities at home, he will do everything possible to put off going until it is more convenient. He may hold a beer-drink to raise money, sell a beast or small stock, or even borrow money from a man who has recently returned from work. In the end, when he has nothing to dispose of and needs press even harder, he may go to the local trader for an advance or interest-bearing loan (Reader: unpublished work for the National Institute for Personnel Research).

By such devices, marked seasonal fluctuations of migrant labour occur in South Africa, on the whole to the advantage of the migrant. In the

Border Regional Survey of the Ciskei, Cape Province, it was clear that at least four major factors contributed to migrant labour fluctuations, weekly, monthly and seasonally. These were weekly or monthly commuting home, lengthier returns to plough or to rest, seasonal fluctuations of demand from various sectors of the economy, and the generally accepted holiday intermissions. But it was also found that the availability of migrant workers was tied to seasonal fluctuations in their own rural economy. During the harvest period, April to October, for example, less labour was available in the local city of East London. It was hard to resist the conclusion that although labour was plentiful in the area, it was labour that ultimately called the tune (Reader 1961, pp. 56-59).

These are evidently some of the economic concomitants of rural rootedness. In the Transkeian sample of the National Institute for Personnel Research, however, a notable though smaller group were "dressed" instead of "red". To wear European clothes alone is not, of course, necessarily to be town-rooted. The readiness of "dressed" people to accept new ideas does suggest, however, that they are more likely to become town-rooted than "red" people are, and that where change is taking place, these people will be in the vanguard of it. Moreover, many of the "dressed" men were industrially rather than migrant-oriented, in the sense that they tended to come home only after long periods of work, and then only during recognised factory recesses. It was noted of such workers that even to work in a city like Cape Town had the effect of strengthening a man's urban outlook if he were already "dressed", or of inducing a "dressed" outlook if he were not (Reader: unpublished work for the National Institute for Personnel Research).

To pursue this line of research further requires analysis at the level of the sociological and psychological sub-dimension of "detrribalization". While migration alone secures only sociographic detribalization, its economic co-ordinates may well be necessary conditions for "detrribalization" to happen.

*The sociological sub-dimension.* Watson states that the concept of "detrribalization" implies that an African must choose between two systems of social relations and values: one based on modern industrial production, the other on traditional subsistence production. The choice, however, is not always final. An African can keep these different spheres distinct and separate. He

may move from his tribal area to town, engage in paid labour and take part in social and economic activities there. On his return to the reserve, however, he will quickly resume tribal ways, for the good reason that his claims to the use of land are bound up with the continued existence of tribal society (Watson 1958, p. 6). This is evidently the general position of the migrant labourer in Southern Africa.

Nevertheless, translation of this situation into role and context theory suggests that while true, something more is wanted for present purposes. There is more than one social context open to the man who leaves the tribal milieu. Through lack of land or the prospect of it, he may go as a squatter on European farms. This, as has been indicated, implies at least a degree of detribalization on all counts, for he has burnt his boats almost as thoroughly as if he had immigrated to town. Only closeness to the tribal area of origin may encourage the retention of some rural ties. But the roles which the man and his family will play are new: servant-roles towards the European farmer and his family and neighbour- and fellow-worker roles towards the other farm-servants.

Even in town, however, there are a number of different contexts in which the migrant or immigrant may role-play. On the mines the compound-context encourages "tribal" roles as far as is feasible in an urban industrial context. The context in secondary industry, as has emerged, demands highly specific work-roles whose reciprocal rights and obligations tend to converge for workers everywhere. In East London, Cape Province, workers tended to act out rural residential roles in shack accommodation, suburban roles in municipal houses (Reader 1961, p. 125 *et passim*). There are also the three sub-contexts described under tribe, and no doubt many others.

The whole question in terms of "detribalization" is, under what conditions do immigrant Africans permanently reject the rural context of origin, and associated contexts and roles, and choose to act out appropriate roles in urban or other non-tribal contexts?

Mayer, who has preferred the "social network" model, has discussed this question for Xhosa immigrants in East London (Mayer 1961, 1964). The answer seems to be largely one of finding out what factors overcome the natural pull of the country home. On the face of it, the rural pull has everything in its favour. "In South Africa," as Mayer says, "there is an obvious lack of security in town . . . One has only to think of two points —the denial of freehold rights to Africans in

towns and the regulations [of influx control] allowing them to be expelled if they do not remain in employment. In that situation . . . any South African migrant with land rights in the country, however poor, has good reason to see his rural home as a sheet anchor, a sole insurance against the emergencies of want and old age" (Mayer 1964, 23).

Hellmann, however, does not believe that such insecurities and grievances "are instrumental in causing the Native to leave an urban area. When he does return to the country he returns with his eyes opened to a stern reality, but he does not return because of that reality" (1948, p. 113).

In terms of "network" theory, Mayer states that if a man's new ties in town come to have sufficient moral content, he will have become personally rooted in town and will think he is "at home" there (1964, 24). Mayer's meaning of "moral," however, is only clear for the rural-rooted, where it implies "referred to the ancestors" (1961, p. 41). What is the moral reference for the town-rooted? Whatever it is, it is apparently expressed through the sociographic shift in balance from extra-town to within-town ties which Mayer calls the process of urbanization. But how is this shift in turn to be evaluated? Is a man with only two remaining home ties more detribalized than a man with six? This evidently depends upon (a) the connectedness (Bott 1957, p. 59) of the network of which each is part; (b) the intensity of the ties, their strength, and the willingness with which the parties are prepared to forego other considerations in carrying out the obligations associated with these ties; (c) the regularity with which contacts person-to-person are made; and (d) the relative statuses of Ego and his interactors. Not sociographic description and balance, but full-scale sociological analysis would be required in evaluating "detribalization" in this way.

At the behavioural level, role and context theory would seem to give an account of "detribalization" which is more clearly separated from questions of motivation and orientation on the psychological dimension. In role theory, a man is ruralized and "tribalized" if he persistently plays rural tribal roles in both tribal and non-tribal contexts, unless obliged by external authority to play other roles. He is to some degree detribalized if in the same contexts he plays non-tribal roles when he might have played rural tribal ones. The verification here does not consist entirely in asking him about his extra- or within-town ties, although this will be valuable in understanding

his role-playing. It consists in observing and analysing how he behaves in specific social contexts.

In this process the classification of contexts is obviously important, and a knowledge of the social structures of communities will assist. To take the institution of marriage as an example, in exogamous corporate kin groups such as are found in tribal areas, the conjugal partner who marries into the group is in a special position compared with individualized marriage in urban areas. Politically, jurally and ritually, she (or he in a matrilineal system) remains affiliated with the natal corporate kin group, although assimilated to the affinal group by marriage. Segregation of conjugal roles is then likely to be even more marked than the most extreme cases described for urban families with close-knit networks (Bott 1957, pp. 99-100). Thus we have the situation as analysed by Mayer for the Ciskei, in which "red" peasants do not think it right to bring their wives to town at all (1961, p. 210) and will spend months away from them without distress. At a more "detribalized" level is Epstein's case of the African trade-union leader who married paying bride-wealth and still maintains tribal marital obligations, but requires a considerable re-ordering of his domestic life in town in order, *inter alia*, to entertain important delegates (1958a, p. 237). Still more "detribalized" are evidently marriages in town, where in most cases "two of the most characteristic features of Bantu marriage—the gradual rapprochement of the families of contacting parties and the invocation of the dead ancestors to sanction the union—are absent" (Hellman 1948, p. 84). Judging by Bott's material on families in London, England, it would, however, be dangerous to go beyond this and evaluate "detribalization" in terms of degrees of marital co-operation, at least without careful consideration of network and context.

Role theory does not, then, attempt to answer the question of why Africans permanently reject rural contexts of origin. It only answers, in terms of behaviour, how and when they do so. Surely no sociological theory can answer the why questions except in terms of its behavioural end-effects. This question is necessarily relayed back to the psychological level for investigation.

*The psychological sub-dimension.* As Kuper has pointed out for West Africa (Kuper 1965, p. 19), we do not know the psychological concomitants of African migration, with or without urbanization. We should be prepared to find,

however, that migrating Africans reject tribalism, not primarily because of complex re-orientations of mental process, but because they like something else better. Writing as a westernized African, Makulu speaks of the gloomy, monotonous, unattractive and desolate aspect of present-day African tribal life. Villages are depleted of able-bodied men away on migrant labour, leaving behind them old men, women and children. "In many parts of Africa," he says, "disintegration of rural communities starts at the point where areas of industrialization are accessible to the villages. Men leave their villages and go to the industrial centres. At first they are merely "campers," as they still maintain their foothold in the village. They return home during times of ploughing. At this stage the economy of the rural communities is not terribly disrupted. The second phase follows when men begin to bring their families [to town]. . . . At first they continue to keep contact with their villages by sending wives home occasionally, but this phase soon passes and home-returning becomes irregular. Families find their place in the new centres where tempting town life offers easy life. Families grow up in towns . . . and urbanization therefore becomes the order of the day" (Makulu 1960, 11).

As suggested previously, one necessary condition of "detribalization" may be migration. Another condition would seem to be *westernization*, whose values may be defined as *to do and be done unto as white people do and are done unto*. Even on the farms, where the industrialization of agriculture has to some extent also taken place, African squatters are affected by westernization. M. Wilson reports them as saying, "We who have lived among Europeans cannot stand the hardships of the Xhosa country" (1961, p. 507), and this despite the fact that, "It is clear that the "farm Native" has lost economically by contact with Europeans. Working very much harder than he did under tribal conditions, he has no more nourishing or varied a diet than the rawest Pondo on the reserves . . ." (Wilson 1961, p. 517). With "school" or "dressed" people, however, those who have opted for Western values, the full process of detribalization still requires some additional commitment over and above a desire to be westernized. Hence Mayer's distinction between "school" migrants, who return to the reserves, and "real townsmen" who do not (1961, p. 4).

The extra commitment required has evidently to do with what Mayer calls town-rootedness.

By the town-rooted he means the core of (in this case) East Londoners whose homes and roots are in town only. Children who are born and grow up in town are naturally town-rooted, but this is not the only way to qualify (Mayer 1961, p. 5). Here emerges, however, an extreme case of the sociographic variate "permanent residence in an area other than the rural place of origin" which was used to determine detribalization. There must presumably be an equivalent term "farm-rooted" to describe those born and brought up in a family of farm servants, though here the situation may be against their free volition. But what is other-than-tribal-rootedness over and above sociographic factors such as "town-born" which exhibit it? "Country-born people can become town-rooted too," says Mayer, "by deciding to stay on permanently and becoming incorporated in the town community. They are then immigrants rather than migrants" (1961, p. 5).

The investigation of this factor of decision-making should not be confused with an apparently similar issue previously raised in connection with Mitchell's use of the term "stabilization" (Mitchell 1956c; Reader 1963b). There the question was whether a sociographic index could predict a future intention at the psychological level to remain in town. Here too the issue at first seems to be whether, at the psychological level, what a man says now regarding his non-tribal intentions can be held to apply or to bind him in the years to come, especially after he retires from work. This, however, is surely a pseudo-problem in relation to "detribalization." If an African states that he has decided to remain in town for certain reasons, and this is confirmed by his having renounced tribal land-rights, discontinued his contacts with relatives in the rural area of origin, and so on, then surely to all intents and purposes he is detribalized, and in this case town-rooted too. The further question of what rural values and behaviour elements he retains in a state of detribalization would have to be decided by careful questioning and examination of the way in which he plays his various urban roles. The possibility that in the future he may become tired of or disgusted with town life, begin negotiations for a rural plot of land and retire to the country, merely indicates that he could become "tribalized" again. To regard the tribal-detribal polarities at this stage as joined by an irreversible continuum is surely unjustifiably to limit their usefulness and application.

If these points are accepted, the way to investi-

gate other-than-tribal-rooted decision-making becomes fairly evident. A series of focused case-histories might be taken, stratified on age, sex, education, tribe and any other factors held to be relevant to the decision-making function. The focus would be upon (a) the broad period over which the critical decision, or decision-sequence, was taken, in relation to the present age of the respondent; and (b) the reasons and predisposing factors leading up to the critical decision. We should not anticipate that the reasons given will be other than at the level of broad commonsense, except for maladjusted individuals. These reasons may even be downright hedonistic. The decision to remain in town for a tribal African may be at the level of any comprehensive preference the world over.

To sum up this review of tribalism and detribalization in Central and Southern Africa as a whole, it would seem that there has been too much reliance so far on sociographic factors of ruralism and immigration alone to indicate how matters stand on the psycho-sociological dimension. These sociographic variates need to be drawn together compactly by factor analysis, and the non-significant among them discarded. At the sociological level the problem to solve is no longer that of migration, which has been well covered, but that of (permanent) immigration which has not. Here more work in terms of "network" and of role and context theory might help to show how a man handles urban situations and makes decisions in them. Co-operation with social psychologists is greatly to be recommended in this field. Research along the lines of the attitude questionnaire in Appendix 4 and the case-history approach suggested above might indicate how and why non-tribal decisions are made. It should be pointed out, however, that a low score on the "tribalism" part of the questionnaire will not by itself mark "detribalization." It will show only a readiness to accept non-tribal influences which is characteristic of the "school" or "dressed" person. The factor of decision for non-tribal rootedness has to be separately assessed through the individual case-history.

It is to be hoped that sufficient emphasis has been laid in this account on detribalization as a process. As Mayer says, "The valid objection to detribalization as a working concept, after all, is not that it implies change, but that it tends to imply synchronized change of the whole man. Provided we . . . allow for his perhaps remaining 'tribal' in some situations while becoming 'urban' in others . . . there is no *a priori* objection to

using the idea of change. Indeed, the difficulty of accommodating movement, or process, has already been noticed as a main limitation of any model that works solely in terms of situational selection" (1962, 589). It seems clear that Africans in Central and Southern Africa, apart from the degree to which they are being urbanized and westernized, are also undergoing a general process of detribalization. The "alternation" model, as Mayer calls it (1962, 579), has been valuable for initial differentiation of the double roles of migrants in town and country, at the sociographic level. Used in isolation from the psycho-sociological dimension of "detribalization" and the case-history of decision-making and choice, it could prove a barrier to further understanding.

#### APPENDICES

1. Following Slater, the procedure suggested is:
  - (a) Joint frequencies of response on the variates can be studied by means of Chi-squared tests on  $2 \times 2$  tables for each variate cross-tabulated with every other variate.
  - (b) To avoid the difficulty of attaching undue value to extreme chi-squares, an overall test of non-association can be obtained by summing the individual chi-squares and testing with  $N$  degrees of freedom, where  $N$  is the number of  $2 \times 2$  tables.
  - (c) If the overall test proves significant, a test of whether the items cluster can be obtained by carrying out the first step (i.e., the test for a common factor) of the method suggested by Slater for factor analysis of a set of  $2 \times 2$  tables.

I am obliged to Mr. R. S. Hall and Prof. J. M. Schepers of the National Institute for Personnel Research for these suggestions and interpretations.

2. A suitable procedure might be:
  - (i) Complete the first-stage factor analysis of variates on "tribalism" according to Slater (1947).
  - (ii) Rank-order the items in ascending order of magnitude, rejecting those of loading less than, say, .3, where  $N > 100$ .
  - (iii) For each subject calculate a total score (0/1) based on the items retained in each of the two dimensions ruralism and "tribalism." Thus each  $S$  will have two total scores.
  - (iv) Using these scores, calculate the product moment correlation between ruralism and "tribalism." With so few items it will probably be necessary to correct for coarse grouping, using Sheppard's correction (*vide* McNemar 1962, p. 24).
  - (v) To achieve the best measure of association between individual items on the two scales, the *biserial phi* technique may be used. This allows of correlation between truly dichotomous responses, as on the ruralism scale, and masked continuous ones, as on the "tribalism" scale (*vide* Thorndike 1949, pp. 168-169).

Prof. J. M. Schepers and Mr. A. O. H. Roberts of the National Institute for Personnel Research kindly made these suggestions.

3. Since completing this article I have received a copy of Grant, G. C. 1969 *The Urban-Rural Scale: A Socio-Cultural Measure of Individual Urbanization*. In this work, initially undertaken quite independently of mine, Grant has assembled a pool of 52 items hypothesized as measuring urbanization. The data obtained by administering these items to a sample of 100 Zulu industrial workers were subjected to two forms of analysis: an item analysis for reliability of the instrument and a principal factor analysis. The latter yielded six factors, which were rotated by the varimax procedure. Factors U, V, X and Y (1, 2, 4 and 5) clearly imply various aspects of urbanization. But factors W and Z seem to be more associated with "tribalism," while factors U and V have overtones of detribalization. Place of birth, ownership of rural land and place of residence of parents, and allegiance to chief, loaded particularly heavily on the principal factor, U.

#### Questionnaire on Tribalism

##### 4. Ruralism (sociographic)

###### 1. Home visiting—

- 1.1 In the last year did you visit relatives in the rural areas? YES/NO
- 1.2 Did relatives from the rural areas visit you? YES/NO

###### 2. Rural transfer of cash/goods—

- 2.1 During last year did you send cash or goods to the rural areas? YES/NO

(N.B.—For the above questions "last year" in the case of fairly recent arrivals may be taken as the year going back from the date of interview. For very recent arrivals to whom this cannot apply, the above questions should be marked N/A—not applicable.)

###### 3. Rural or urban marriage—

- 3.1 Were you married in the country or in an urban area? RURAL/URBAN/N/A

###### 4. Wife in country or town—

- 4.1 Is your wife now living in the country or with you in town? COUNTRY/TOWN  
Not married/Elsewhere.....(Not applicable)

###### 5. Children in country or town—

- 5.1 How many living children have you?.....  
No children (not applicable)
- 5.2 How many are at your country home?.....
- 5.3 How many are living with you in town?.....  
COUNTRY/TOWN  
(constructed)

- 5.4 How many are living elsewhere?.....

###### 6. Retention of rural land rights—

- 6.1 Do you have land in the rural area? YES/NO
- 6.2 Do you expect to get land in the rural area in the future? YES/NO
- 6.3 Do your parents have land in the rural area? YES/NO

###### 7. Common home ties in town—

- 7.1 When not at work, do you try to meet only with home-fellows in town? YES/NO

"Tribalism" (psycho-sociological)

8. Common way of life—

8.1 Do you think that Africans should be distinguished by their tribes/places of birth—

8.1.1. in the rural areas? YES/NO

8.1.2 in towns? YES/NO

8.2 Do you feel close to other members of your tribe because you have common ancestors with them? YES/NO

8.3 Do you say that the ancestors have handed down customs of your tribe which you must preserve? YES/NO

8.4 Would you oppose for yourself any customs which did not agree with your tribal way of life?

YES/NO

9. Conservatism—

9.1 Are you willing to be educated? YES/NO

9.2 Are you willing to be received into church membership? YES/NO

9.3 Do educated men of different tribes have anything in common? (Probe if necessary.)

YES/NO

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