

ETHNOLOGY

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1. *General*

In characterizing the work of the Wenner-Gren Foundation in the fields of social and cultural anthropology over the last decade, a few highly significant points must first be made. The Wenner-Gren Foundation is a unique institution in several ways. It is the only foundation devoted exclusively to research in anthropology. While its aim is integrative, holding that every branch of the science of man should be supported, it considers social and cultural anthropology on the same level as physical anthropology or archaeology, and not in competition with economics, political science or other disciplines which may appear to have more powerful practical claims. Secondly, the Foundation is truly international. Not only does it consider equably the claims and interests of scholars all over the world, it regards it as a special obligation to try to foster the work of scholars in the smaller countries or in those distant from the major centres of anthropological learning and resources. Moreover unlike some foundations which, international in their scope, still tend to distribute their support with some eye on national interests, the Wenner-Gren Foundation acts solely with regard to the promotion of anthropological science irrespective of any other national benefits which may accrue. Again—and a point not to be overlooked—the Foundation, though generously endowed, is not a large one as foundations go; its grants are modest and carefully scrutinized—many are for sums of less than \$1,000. Yet the Foundation is not conservative. It has a keen interest in the exploration of new ideas and in pushing out the frontiers of knowledge beyond the conventional boundaries. There is one thing more—the Foundation supports the dignity of the anthropological profession. If its grants are modest, they are never mean; reasonable comfort without luxury is the standard intended; and once a grant is made, full confidence is placed in the recipient to use it to the best advantage.

The range of activities of the Foundation (which changed its name from The Viking Fund, Inc. on May 1st, 1951) during the last decade in social and cultural anthropology has been very wide, despite some reduction in income from 1952 onwards. The Foundation has to maintain a very active programme, including international symposia and conferences; aid to learned societies and international congresses; awards of medals and prizes to distinguished scholars; grants to scholars to travel and lecture; pre-doctoral and post-doctoral fellowships and grants for field research; publications of its own and support for publications of other institutions. Recently the Foundation has enlarged its activities in a novel way by establishing, through the generous gift of its Founder, Dr. Axel L. Wenner-Gren, a European Conference Center for international scientific participation. I discuss each of the types of activity in turn.

2. *International Group Conferences, Symposia and Seminars*

A programme of supper conferences for anthropologists to present papers on recent research before colleagues, begun in 1944, was continued with brief intermissions, until 1957. Of the memorable contributions there delivered, some two dozen were on topics in the fields of social and cultural anthropology. Some were individual reports or studies in general problems—on the German family from 1750, on a Kalahari desert field trip, on acculturation in Northern Rhodesia, on the history of the Medicine Dance, on Ojibwa metaphysics, on African culture history, on ritual and social structure, on normative culture and on the comparative method. Prepared group discussions included a seminar on mass communications (in which prominent sociologists participated); a conference (at the University of Chicago) on the American Indian in transition; and an examination (by the Human Relations Area Files) of the possible use of computers in anthropology. In the earlier years these supper conferences were held in New York City, and participants came mainly from there and the Eastern Seaboard. But in 1954 allocations were also made to allow these conferences to be held elsewhere under the joint aegis of the Foundation and the editors of the American Anthropological Association, in order to co-ordinate the presentation of papers for publication in the *American Anthropologist*. In the fall of 1957 the programme was still further extended to aid the editor of *Current Anthropology* to obtain the advice of colleagues in various parts of the United States, Europe and elsewhere, to help form policy and develop the proposed new publication. Between 1957 and 1959, as a development of this programme, 40 regional conferences were held in 31 countries.

The Foundation also sponsored several major undertakings during the period. In 1952 an international symposium on anthropology was arranged. In this gathering, a "professional stocktaking," scholars from the major regions of the world summarised the results of anthropological research to date, and examined probable future directions of research. Of the 50 international papers, only a few dealt specifically with social anthropology, but these included an outstanding contribution by Lévi-Strauss on social structure, while other valuable papers dealt with culture, personality in society, acculturation and various aspects of applied anthropology. The papers contributed to this symposium, published with commendable speed in 1953 as *Anthropology Today* (under the chairmanship of A. L. Kroeber) were effectively backed by an appraisal of the material in a companion volume, *An Appraisal of Anthropology Today*, which included a chapter pacifically headed Cultural/Social Anthropology and an interesting chapter on values. This conference also sponsored the *International Directory of Anthropological Institutions*, published in 1953, and embodying the work of two dozen contributors familiar with the work of the countries they described. In addition to material on University departments and other educational institutions, valuable data on professional and research associations were included, so that the volume could rightly be described as a handbook of world resources for research and education in

anthropology. (Another edition of this work to bring it up to date is now under consideration.) In 1955 another international symposium, on Man's Role in Changing the Face of the Earth, involved much discussion of cultural and social factors. In line with the Foundation's continuing policy of seeing that symposia show results, another massive volume resulted from these discussions. By 1958 international symposia had begun to operate from the European Conference Center, the first being held in Burg Wartenstein after its inauguration, to discuss with Sol Tax a definitive policy for *Current Anthropology*. At this centre other international conferences or symposia with a social referent have included examinations of: the teaching of anthropology; economic anthropology; the social life of early man; the rural peoples of the Mediterranean; stability and change in Thai culture.

3. *Aid to Learned Societies and International Congresses; Medals and Awards*

Many learned societies and congresses have been helped by the Foundation during the last decade. The American Anthropological Association, the Society for Applied Anthropology and the Royal Anthropological Institute have benefited at various times. The Institut d'Ethnologie has been aided in establishing a laboratory for social anthropology in Paris, the Association of Social Anthropologists of the Commonwealth has been assisted in publishing its register of members, and the New York Academy of Medicine has been able to hear lectures on medical anthropology. As an indication of how long the arm of the Foundation can stretch, a new department in the University College of the Rhodesias and Nyasaland has been helped to purchase basic anthropological textbooks, while on the other hand the New York National Committee for Recording for the Blind has been enabled to equip itself with anthropological volumes.

In giving aid to international congresses the Foundation has continuously kept before itself the objective of enhancing international participation. This has been done in various ways, but mainly by providing funds to help with travel costs. Assisted in this and other ways have been the Pacific Science Congress, the Conference of the Institute of Social and Historical Medicine, the Darwin Centennial in Chicago, the International Congress of Americanists and the American Psychiatric Association of New York—to aid the anthropological phase of the Symposium on International Psychiatry.

Linked with the Foundation's policy of aid to learned societies has been the annual award of Viking Fund medals and prizes for distinguished research, publications and contributions to science. The award in General Anthropology has been to scholars selected by a committee of the American Anthropological Association and, apart from well-known living social anthropologists, the recipients of the award during the last decade have included Linton and Redfield.

4. *Research Grants*

Turn now to the grants given directly for research, which for many scholars are the prime test of a foundation's success. As C. G. Seligman wrote fifty years ago in a letter to the Director of his college in seeking support for Malinowski's field work, "Research is to anthropology what the blood of the martyrs is to the Church."

During the first decade of the Foundation's operations, about \$420,000 was expended on "Ethnology and Social Anthropology" in 140 projects. In mid-1952 the Foundation suffered a sharp reduction in income. In 1958 the Board of Directors came to the conclusion that other foundations and government agencies had become more aware of the pressing needs of anthropology, and that therefore the Wenner-Gren Foundation might devote less of its resources to the support of research as such, and more to catering for the more general needs of the profession. Nevertheless, the amount expended on research in ethnology and social anthropology during this decade was considerably increased, and the number of projects supported more than doubled. Direct comparability is difficult to attain. But even on a conservative estimate, when grants for general travel and study, for museum work, for equipment and photographic work, and for research in ethno-botany, medical geography and a few other subjects difficult to classify have been left out of account for the recent period, upwards of 200 projects in social anthropology and allied fields were assisted, at a cost of about \$350,000.

Regionally, the coverage was world-wide, from Eskimo to Australian aborigines; from Japan and China through India to Egypt and southern Europe; from Latin America and the Caribbean to the Northwest Coast. But a notable feature of the research grants of this last decade has been their more effective geographical spread. Until 1951, about 60% of the research grants allotted were for work in the Americas and less than 25% for work in Africa, Asia and Oceania. In 1951-60, only about 35% of the grants went for research in the Americas, and about 45% for work in Africa, Asia and Oceania. The change in research grants for Africa was most marked; as compared with 3 only in the former period, the last decade saw at least 26 grants for research in social anthropology in Africa, and well-known studies of, e.g., Bamenda, Bemba, Gusii, Karomjong, Lugbara, Mambila, Tiv have owed support to the Foundation. This alteration in research orientation has presumably been due not only to a more outward-looking approach of American scholars in recent years, but to a growing realisation by social anthropologists in many countries that they could turn to the Foundation for help.

To give an idea of the content of all this research is not easy, but at least its general range may be indicated. Many projects have been concerned with analysis of the social structure of particular communities or sectors of society. Some fell in the conventional anthropological domain of remote, exotic cultures, e.g., Botel Tobago and Batan, Ifaluk, the Kota of South India,

the Beja and Nuba of the Sudan, the Tacana of E. Bolivia, the Motilone of Colombia, the Varohio of N.W. Mexico, the Caribs of British Guinea, the Murut of North Borneo, Rennell island in Polynesia and various New Guinea tribes. But significantly, a high proportion of these analyses have come to be in relatively advanced societies, of peasant type or even more technologically developed—communities in Ceylon, Jamaica, Nepal, Egypt, rural Austria, Kentucky, Tennessee, and including a re-study of "Plainville, U.S.A." Again, much attention was devoted to problems of acculturation and social change: a symposium on change among the Australian aborigines; culture change in Mexico, Japan, in Laguna Pueblo, among the Tewa, the Chippewa, the British Columbian Kootenay, the Khasi, the Eskimo; acculturation in Greece, Italy, the Marquesas, Fiji, Rarua, a Bantu tribe of Portuguese East Africa; assimilation among Papago Indians; disorganization in Picuris Pueblo. Special studies undertaken included an examination of the effects of urbanization on lower-class Mexican families by case history methods, a consideration of status mobility among contemporary Chinese gentry, and the effect of communism as a change factor in Soviet Armenia. In the major topic field, economic studies ranged from consideration of the nature of the economy in early societies and of economic types in pre-urban areas to studies of the food economy of Inca and Aztec, Southeast Asian agriculture, the modern role of traders among the Navaho, and the entry of Mexican and other Latin American Indians into industry. Political problems which received attention included studies of comparative political organization in Bamenda, political leadership among Pathans and among Nigerians, and a comparison of village democracy in Denmark, Vermont and Saskatchewan. Not specifically political, but with some suggestive undertones, were studies of pan-Indianism among tribes of the northwest of the United States, and of cultural nationalism in Puerto Rico. In kinship, studies of matrilineal structures in India and elsewhere, of the bilateral system of the Konkama Lapps, of the development of the Southern Slav family, and of kinship and ritual organization in the Southern Ryukyu islands were undertaken. Studies of ritual and religion have included various investigations into the caste system in India, themes and trends of Sadhuism; the Buddhist monastic system among the Sherpas of Nepal; some basic institutions of Islam; Peyote and allied cults, the Shango cult of Trinidad, the "Saint's cult" in Bahia, the effect of Christianity on the Oraon; as well as research into traditional religious institutions and beliefs in New Guinea. At a very general level, projects in the study of value and idea systems, in the comparative and theoretical study of law, in the theory of culture, have received support. The results range from a study of segmentary opposition and the theory of games, to analyses of institutional typology—including Oriental institutions—and of the relation of legal philosophy to moral values.

In associated spheres, studies of the relation of culture and personality have included: personality and child-rearing among Cree Indians, the cultural background of Araucanian child life, socialization in a Papago village, personality and culture change among Wisconsin Indians; the influence of

Confucianism on Chinese personality, a comparison of Chinese and American personality, sources of tension in Hindu communities, psycho-social tensions in a Thai village after the advent of Western technology. Associated to some extent with this field, but with a very different object, has been an elaborate study of the anthropological aspects of education in Puerto Rico. Having a special application and interest of their own have been some studies in mental illness and personality disorder—into typology of mental disease, ethnic variations in psychopathology, psychogenic disorders among Zulu women. Linked with this work at another level has been the Foundation's support for medical anthropology and health education, with the need for comparative study of cultural and social factors kept well to the fore.

A special sector of support for research in the socio-cultural sphere has been the attempt to make available materials for further study. Included here have been projects for preparation of the writings of early anthropologists—the principal contribution here being a biographical and critical study of the life and work of L. H. Morgan. Preparation of bibliographies, e.g., on South Asian materials; on culture-change studies; analyses of film archives; translations of little-known ethnographical material, have all helped to provide technical aids. In the broader methodological context social anthropologists usually embody their enquiries and comments with their more concrete results, and on the whole this seems wise. Apart from a study of means of categorizing cultural phenomena, another on controls and experiments in field work, and an examination of the possible application of electronic computers to anthropological data, work of a specifically methodological kind seems to have been undertaken indirectly rather than directly under the auspices of the Foundation.

5. *Publications and Aid to Publications*

The activities of the Wenner-Gren Foundation in the publication field may be summarised as:

- a) publications of its own continuing series of special studies,
- b) publication of synoptic volumes prepared within the Foundation,
- c) sponsorship and publication of a world journal,
- d) aid to the publication of books, series or specific issues of journals.

Over the last decade the Foundation has continued under the editorship first of Irving Hallowell, and then of S. L. Washburn, to issue its valuable series of *Viking Fund Publications in Anthropology*, and to make them available to scholars all over the world. Volumes dealing with aspects of social structure, oral literature, religion, technological innovation, illustrate the breadth of interest in the social and cultural fields. Of the synoptic volumes issued by the Foundation, apart from *Anthropology Today* and its associated works, and *Man's Role in Changing the Face of the Earth*, the most significant has been

the *Yearbook of Anthropology*, published in 1955 as a summary of the then current achievements (i.e. two years or so before). In the social field this volume contained a number of significant studies including articles on the relation of sociology and anthropology, the concepts of "native" and "primitive," the concept of function, comparative methods, the study of complex civilizations and of anthropology in various practical contexts. The volume also contains some very interesting material in a dozen or so regions of Europe and South-east Asia. (A list of Ph.D. dissertations on anthropology and of medals, awards and memorial lectures in anthropology was a courageous effort, but is now only of retrospective interest.) The theoretical studies from the *Yearbook* published in 1956 as *Current Anthropology* took their place as a supplement to the encyclopaedic inventory of knowledge displayed by *Anthropology Today*. But although the idea of a *Yearbook* seemed timely and valuable, it was essentially experimental. The production problems it involved ultimately proving too much of a strain upon the Foundation's personnel resources, the work has been continued in a new conception, which retains the name and thought of *Current Anthropology* but undertakes the achievement of the design in more flexible form. Under the stimulating and almost incredibly energetic guidance of Sol Tax, the new *Current Anthropology* periodical appears to be fulfilling its aim of providing up-to-date and scholarly materials over the whole field, and drawing the interest of scholars internationally to its support. As an indication of the value of such a journal to social anthropology, a recent article on double descent systems was able to print, side by side with the original contribution, 14 comments by specialists from at least 10 countries. The reader thus gets a synoptic view of current opinion in a way impossible otherwise to obtain. Considering the breadth of theoretical interest which this journal has, it may be difficult at times to secure equally the allegiance of all disciplines within its field. But for social anthropologists, as for others, it offers a ready and quick means of publication for their ideas and the opportunity for communication throughout the world to a degree unparalleled elsewhere.

Aid to the publication of journals, monograph series and specific books has been diverse. It ranges from contributions to *Sociologus*, *Human Organization* and the *American Anthropologist*, through support of the London School of Economics Monographs on Social Anthropology, to assistance towards the publication of collected papers and discussions on the ethnology of Middle America and a set of essays in honour of Leslie A. White.

Part of the policy of the Foundation has always been to help make anthropological publications as readily available to scholars as possible. In accordance with this view, the Foundation had the happy thought of presenting each foreign member attending the International Congress of Anthropological and Ethnological Sciences at Philadelphia in 1956 with a parcel of books published by or for the Foundation. Social anthropologists, like their colleagues, would wish to record their appreciation of this generous action.

6. *European Conference Center*

In the middle of 1957 social anthropologists, like their colleagues in the allied disciplines, were given the possibility of new developments through the establishment of the European Conference Center of the Foundation at Burg Wartenstein. As elsewhere recorded, this massive, ancient castle in the foothills of the Austrian Alps, with its attached farmhouse complex, was a free gift to the Foundation from its Founder. The two-year programme of repair and modernization has resulted in a conference centre of great charm and beauty, furnished with impeccable taste. Social anthropologists in common with their colleagues have already begun to benefit from its facilities, as will be seen from the titles of the symposia which have already taken place there. This new centre offers great advantages. The property itself would appear to be worth upwards of half-a-million dollars, but the regular cost of operating is small, less (sometimes much less) than 5% of the total appropriations by the Foundation for support of research. Each international symposium held there brings together a score or so of scholars at a cost of rather less than \$10,000 per gathering, and is considerably less than an equivalent international gathering would cost if held for a comparable time in New York. The fear expressed by some members of the profession in the early days of the establishment of this Conference Center that this might restrict severely the Foundation's support of outside research has then no basis in fact.

To social anthropology as to the allied disciplines, the establishment of the European Conference Center is likely to prove a very considerable gain. Not only does it facilitate gatherings of European scholars among themselves; it also enables them to see more of their colleagues from the United States and other parts of the world, since international representation in symposia can be more easily achieved than when the gatherings were held in New York. Moreover, the quiet retirement of the scene, among the forest pines, allows scholars to think and discuss problems together in surroundings which cannot be matched—at least for anthropologists—anywhere else. As the years go by, as more and more anthropologists—especially the younger scholars—have the opportunity to enjoy the hospitality of the Foundation at the European Conference Center, the value of such an institution for increasing international communication of ideas in the anthropological field will become more and more evident.