

# Alfred Korzybski Memorial Lecture

## GENERAL SEMANTICS AND 'PRIMITIVE' LANGUAGES

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... in things abstract, men but differ in the sounds that come from their mouths, and not in the wordless thoughts lying at the bottom of their beings. — HERMAN MELVILLE, Mardi.

When I was honored with the invitation to speak to you tonight, I decided it would be appropriate for an anthropologist to re-read carefully sizable portions of Science and Sanity, asking the inevitable anthropological question: to what extent is this work, for all the sweep and imagination of its synthesis, palpably tinged — and perhaps limited — by the Western culture that is its matrix? The examination will proceed — inevitably — from my own limited perspective which is largely that of what Count Korzybski called 'restricted anthropology' as opposed to that of the 'general anthropology' advocated and advanced by Korzybski.

I shall begin with some general impressions. I do this with diffidence because I know many of you have mastered the text far more completely than I. Nevertheless I am certain that the innovator and integrator whose life and work we commemorate this evening would have wished any speaker to be completely candid. Korzybski's central point of view was in many respects remarkably close to that of even a 'restricted anthropologist.' As Ashley Montagu and others have pointed out, Korzybski's key conception of man as the time-binding animal contains perhaps the essence of the crucial concept of anthropology: culture. Korzybski, obviously, was literate in conventional anthropology. I find roughly twenty titles in the bibliography to Science and Sanity, though Malinowski and Lévy-Bruhl are the only ones I note to have been quoted. Korzybski states<sup>1</sup>:

In my work, I prefer to follow the French and Polish schools of anthropology, as it seems to me that these schools are freer from semantic identification and aristotelianism than the others.

Yet my impression on a first serious re-reading in about fifteen years is that Korzybski's viewpoint was more culture-bound than I had remembered. Let me document briefly and incompletely. He speaks of 'degree of "culture"' and of 'savage races.' He is fond of the word 'progress' and of 'rate of progress.' Now I do not deny that 'progress' can be used as a valid concept in a somewhat culture-free sense. Surely the development or evolution of cultures<sup>2</sup> has on the whole had a directional trend toward cumulative enrichment. But it struck me repeatedly that behind Korzybski's pejorative and question-begging usages of certain loaded terms such as 'progress' there lurked a series of dubious nineteenth century premises from which he had not fully emancipated himself. Such a phrase as '... in the case of primitive tribes which apparently have not progressed at all for thousands of years ...'<sup>3</sup> is appropriate to nineteenth century thought but not to twentieth. When Korzybski says, '... the world of the animal, the primitive man, and the infant, which no matter how complex, is extremely simple in comparison with the world of the "civilized" adult,'<sup>4</sup> he is guilty of over-simplification or actual falsification. The social organization of the Australian aborigines and many 'primitive' languages are so exceedingly complex that the lifetimes of many highly 'civilized' men have not sufficed for them to comprehend these 'worlds.' The very

juxtaposition of 'primitive man and infant' betrays a false conception long since exposed in detail by A. I. Hallowell, Margaret Mead, and others.

So much for some over-all impressions. Lest we remain altogether too impressionistic throughout, I want to turn to a more intensive scrutiny of a single anthropological topic bearing upon the fundamental question I stated in my first paragraph. During the quarter of a century that has elapsed since Science and Sanity was written, knowledge about 'primitive' languages has accumulated at a prodigious rate. In the light of this information, including the vastly improved methods for analyzing linguistic structures, I want to consider three interrelated themes:

1. The present position of some of Korzybski's generalizations on 'primitive' languages.
2. An evaluation of Korzybski's apparent acceptance of the 'finality' of the outlook of Western science.
3. Constants and variants in the concepts of the human species as suggested by the quotation from Mardi which I have deliberately taken as my prime text for this talk.

On the whole, it appears to be true that 'the semantic problem' is less acute in the smaller and more homogeneous societies. This is presumably because it is more nearly the case that approximately the same experiences have been attached to the same words in the life histories of different individuals. And in face-to-face groups there is less functional necessity for higher order abstractions. Korzybski is right in observing that 'primitive' languages often have 'an enormous number of names for individual objects.' However, in his treatment of these matters,<sup>5</sup> I believe he overlooked two points of some interest and importance. First, many non-literate languages have built-in indexing devices of some elegance which I might have expected Korzybski to evaluate positively. For example, the third personal pronoun in Navaho is not nearly as vague and equivocal as in most contemporary Western tongues. In Navaho 'it' as the object of a verb has several different forms, depending upon whether 'it' is conceived as definite or indefinite or as a place. The Navaho must also choose between a number of possible alternatives for a third person subject of a verb. One of these, which has been called 'the person of preferred interest,' makes a nice discrimination that is typically Navaho. This form designates the hero of the story as opposed to others, a Navaho as opposed to a member of another tribe, and so on. Second, Korzybski neglected the fact of cultural selectivity and emphasis. While there is certainly a tendency for 'primitive' languages to have fewer broad categories than 'civilized' languages, it is not true to assert flatly that in non-literate groups all perceptibly distinct objects and qualities are named in endless specificity. There are more words for flocking behavior in English than in Navaho. Navaho insists on three terms that we lump as 'brown'; on the other hand, our 'green' and 'blue' are pooled in a single category.

Again, while it is undoubtedly a valid generalization that high order abstractions are more salient in Western languages, the problem is more complex than Korzybski seems to realize. In particular, the most significant point is, I suspect, not that of presence or absence or relative incidence but rather, perhaps, once more that of cultural selectivity and emphasis. In what realms does abstraction proceed furthest? What are the experiential and logical bases of abstract categories and systems of classification? For the Hopi B. L. Whorf<sup>6</sup> says:

.. the Hopi language contains no reference to time, either explicit or implicit.  
 [Yet] .. the Hopi language is capable of accounting for and describing correctly in a pragmatic or operational sense, all observable phenomena of the universe ... The Hopi metaphysics also has its metaphysical forms comparable to these [time and space] in scale and scope. What are they? It imposes upon the universe two grand cosmic forms, which as a first approximation in terminology we may call manifested and manifesting (or, unmanifest) or again, OBJECTIVE AND SUBJECTIVE.

Laura Thompson<sup>7</sup> also says of the Hopi:

.. they also have a system of cross-classification, not recognized by Western science, which cuts across the empirically established, mutually exclusive orders, and closely relates phenomena from the different classes or species into higher orders which function as independent wholes in the cosmic scheme.

Finally — on this first theme — I do not believe that Korzybski sufficiently understood the necessity of approaching semantic problems in both cross-cultural and intra-cultural perspectives. Here it will be instructive to refer to some recently published material by E. E. Evans-Pritchard<sup>8</sup> on the Nuer:

It seems odd, if not absurd, to a European when he is told that a twin is a bird as though it were an obvious fact, for Nuer are not saying that a twin 'is like' a bird but that 'he is' a bird. There seems to be a complete contradiction in the statement, and it was precisely on statements of this kind recorded by observers of primitive peoples that Lévy-Bruhl based his theory of the prelogical mentality of these peoples, its chief characteristic being, in his view, that it permits such evident contradictions . . . But, in fact, no contradiction is involved in the statement, which, on the contrary, appears quite sensible, and even true, to one who presents the idea to himself in the Nuer language and within their system of religious thought. He does not then take their statements about twins any more literally than they make and understand them themselves. They are not saying that a twin has a beak, feathers, and so forth. Nor in their everyday relations with twins do Nuer speak of them as birds or act towards them as though they were birds. They treat them as what they are, men and women. But in addition to being men and women they are of a twin birth, and a twin birth is a special revelation of Spirit; and Nuer expresses this special character of twins in the 'twins are birds' formula because twins and birds, though for different reasons, are both associated with Spirit and this makes twins, like birds, 'people of the above' and 'children of God,' and hence a bird is a suitable symbol in which to express the special relationship in which a twin stands to God. When, therefore, Nuer say that a twin is a bird they are not speaking of either as it appears in the flesh. They are speaking of the anima of the twin, what they call his tie, a concept which includes both what we call the personality and the soul; and they are speaking of the association birds have with Spirit through their ability to enter the realm to which Spirit is likened in metaphor and where Nuer think it chiefly is, or may be. The formula does not express a dyadic relationship between twins and birds but a triadic relationship between twins, birds, and God. In respect to God twins and birds have a similar character.

In short, 'pre-logical thinking' and 'identification and confusion of orders of abstractions' do not have exactly the 'full sway' that Korzybski<sup>9</sup> maintained.

Allow me to turn to the second theme. Korzybski was abundantly aware of the postulational and provisional character of Western science. He knew, of course, that the specific content of science can and must alter through time. On the other hand, he appears to me to attribute to the approach of science a kind of primacy or ultimacy. An argument can surely be made for this position. Indeed that is my own 'natural' or 'instinctive' response. Yet the 'scientific attitude' in its deepest and fullest sense itself requires us to question this evaluation. Is it not conceivable that a world view constructed upon scientific axioms — even the most valid one imaginable — will at best yield us some elegant descriptions of natural processes and some highly useful predictions of events to come under specified conditions — but still leave out of account other phenomena that are also in nature and also 'real'? Can the scientific picture not be imagined as only one of a sizable number of equally possible and equally coherent depictions of experience, each based upon radically different axioms and postulates?

The study of 'primitive' languages and cultures suggests that we ought to envision possibilities of this order. Dorothy Lee<sup>10</sup> has argued that the Western codification of reality assumes lineal dimensions as inevitable, but that the language of the Trobriand Islanders represents a non-lineal

codification of reality. Bateson,<sup>11</sup> using mainly non-linguistic materials, suggests that the concepts of goal response and climax are not strictly applicable in Balinese culture. Dr. W. H. E. Stanner of the Australian National University, in an extraordinarily acute and sensitive paper from which I am privileged to draw in advance of publication, documents with vivid details the fact that, like all other members of the human species, the Australian aborigines reason abstractly and deductively. He insists that one finds much logic, system and rationality in their actual scheme of life. 'If one wishes to see a really brilliant demonstration of deductive thought, one has only to see a blackfellow tracking a wounded kangaroo, and persuade him to say why he interprets given signs in a certain way.' But the bases and core of the rational system are quite different from ours. In the first place, the fundament of aboriginal thinking is kinship which has the central place European thought has accorded to religion and to science. Second, our contrast of 'body' versus 'spirit' is not there and the whole notion of 'the person' is enlarged. Third, while the aborigines can and do 'on some occasions conceptually isolate the "elements" of the "unity" most distinctly . . . his abstractions do not put him at war with himself.'

While Dr. Stanner was never able to discover any aboriginal word for 'time' as an abstract concept and a sense of 'history' is completely alien, there is a strong metaphysical emphasis upon abidingness. 'The value given to continuity is so high that . . . they are a people who have been able, in some sense, to "defeat" history, to become a-historical in mood, outlook, and life.' Neither 'time' nor 'history,' as we understand them are involved in one of their most distinctive concepts which is also perhaps the most elusive for the Western mind to grasp. In one Australian language it is called 'alcheringa' which has been rendered by anthropologists as 'the dream time' or 'the eternal dream time.' But Stanner observes that English-speaking aborigines always translate this notion simply as 'the dreaming' or just 'dreaming,' though it remains obscure to him why they have selected this English word. In any case, says Stanner, 'A concept so impalpable and subtle suffers badly by translation into our dry and abstract language.' Some aborigines, however, realize that somehow this concept symbolizes much of the difference between the Western and the aboriginal world-view. In language that I find poignant, an intelligent old man once remarked to Stanner:

White man got no dreaming  
Him go 'nother way  
White man, him go different  
Him go road belong himself.

Who is to say at present that the road that belongs to us Westerners, to us who cherish the scientific outlook, is in all respects 'better' or 'more valid' than the aboriginal road? Nor is the problem fully met, it seems to me, by accepting, as we must, the approach of many-valued logics. For many-valued logics are still contained within the scientific system which does not encompass the utterly disparate geometry, as it were, of the model of the universe created by Australian aborigines. Let me conclude this theme with extended quotation of some thoughtful passages from Stanner:

One cannot 'fix' The Dreaming in time: it was and is, everywhen . . . one has not succeeded in 'thinking black' until one's mind can, without intellectual struggle, enfold into some kind of oneness the notions of body, spirit, ghost, shadow, name, spirit-site, and totem . . . So long as the belief in The Dreaming lasts, there can be no flash of 'momentary Athenian questioning' to grow into a great moment of sceptical belief which destroys the given unities . . . The truth of it seems to be that man, society and nature, and past, present and future are at one together within a unitary system of such a kind that its ontology cannot illumine minds too much under the influence of humanism, rationalism, and science. One cannot easily in the mobility of modern life and thought, grasp the vast intuitions of stability and permanence, of life and man, at the heart of the aboriginal ontology . . . One may see that, like all men, he is a metaphysician in being able to transcend himself. With the metaphysics goes a mood and spirit, which I can only call a mood of 'assent'; neither despair nor resignation, optimism nor pessimism, quietism nor indifference. The mood, and the outlook beneath it, make him hopelessly out of place in a world in which the Renaissance has

triumphed only to be perverted, and in which the products of secular humanism, rationalism and science challenge their own hopes. They, unlike us, see 'life' as a one possibility thing. This may be why he seems to have almost no sense of tragedy. This (and the sentiment of self-pity) can develop only if life presents real alternatives or if it denies an alternative that one feels should be there. A philosophy of assent fits only a life of unvarying constancy . . . . His intricate social organization is an impressive essay on the economy of conflict, tension and experiment in a life situation at the absolute pole of our own.

Korzybski<sup>12</sup> says that mechanistic principles (including those of the quantum mechanics) are not only 'firmly' but 'irreversibly' established. These are strong words for a scientist. I think Korzybski is right in some sense when he asserts that structure constitutes the only possible content of 'knowledge.' But did he envisage adequately the multiplicity of 'structures' existing in various human cultures which order selected aspects of human 'thinking' and experience in significant and internally consistent ways? My provisional conclusion is that on the cross-cultural dimension Korzybski was the victim of the fallacy he discussed so often: The equation of 'knowledge about' and the 'multiordinal knowledge which involves equally the activities of the lower nerve centres and of the higher.'<sup>13</sup> It is an induction from my experience that a number of sociologists actually have read the ethnographic literature more closely than most anthropologists. They have a vast amount of information at their disposal but their 'reflexes' are different from those of anthropological field workers. To my knowledge Korzybski never had the experience of sustained participation in a non-Western culture. His learning was cortical; the autonomic aspect is missing, and this lack is reflected in his writing.

Please do not interpret anything I have said thus far as a defense of radical cultural relativity. I recognize that much anthropology during this century has overemphasized the differences as opposed to the similarities between cultures. There are constants as well as variations in human life-ways. There are some in content, many more in form and in 'intent.' Even the position taken by certain linguists on the consequences for 'thought' of the varying structures of languages does not inevitably lead to complete relativism. Dorothy Lee<sup>14</sup> is careful to say:

The assumption is not that reality itself is relative; rather, that it is differently punctuated and categorized, or that different aspects of it are noticed by, or presented to the participants of different cultures. If reality itself were not absolute, then true communication would be impossible. My own position is that there is an absolute reality, and that communication is possible. If, then, that which the different codes refer to is ultimately the same, a careful study and analysis of a different code and of the culture to which it belongs should lead us to concepts which are ultimately comprehensible, when translated into our own code. It may even, eventually, lead us to aspects of reality from which our own code excludes us.

The comparative study of languages shows clearly that both as regards lexicon and grammar there are alike universals and cultural variations. One dimension of this is brought out rather dramatically by recent work in glottochronology: in the many languages already investigated by this technique it has been possible to isolate a 'basic' vocabulary which changes at an astonishingly regular rate and a 'cultural' component of vocabulary which changes at a variable rate. 'Basic' vocabulary includes those lexical items found in all languages: words for body parts, low numerals, geographic entities, simple activities of universal distribution, and the like.

Likenesses between languages rest, as do all cultural universals, upon the sameness of the external world, common factors in the human situation always and everywhere, and upon the fact that the species has a particular kind of nervous system and general biology. Solomon Asch<sup>15</sup> has found, for example, that varied languages possess morphemes that simultaneously describe a physical and a psychological quality. And all of the languages studied by him possess some morphemes that designate physical-psychological pairings identical with those found in English. He very properly concludes that the psychological operations responsible for the description of physical and psychological

properties by the identical morphemes are the same in the languages studied. It is likewise an impressive fact that all known languages have terms for at least some universal human emotions: anger, fear, and so on. The same may be said for 'death' and other concepts that the human animal can hardly escape formulating in some manner or other. In at least a broad and loose — but still immensely meaningful sense — Melville was right in saying that '... in things abstract, men differ but in the sounds that come from their mouths, and not in the wordless thoughts lying at the bottom of their beings.'<sup>16</sup>

This is true and important both intellectually and practically for it makes some pan-human abstractions discoverable and renders possible genuine communication between all peoples at least at the level of these wide, universal issues. But these optimistic and exciting considerations must not lead us to overlook the culturally variable dimension which is still ever present. Let me give only one example which is trivial enough in itself but is fresh and brings out the essential point. John Lotz<sup>17</sup> shows how vocabularies for number influence behavior in ways that cannot be accounted for by biological properties, non-linguistic references, and the like. He takes as an instance 'ideal targets' for records in sports in Anglo-Saxon countries and in those using the metric system. His material is both amusing and instructive as is what he has to say about how varying number systems affect different cultural standards in law: age limits, speed limits, length of fish permitted to be caught, etc. The fundamental and 'round' numbers — conventional cultural 'artifacts' — carry over also into other semantic fields: colors, kinship, spatial organization, movements.

Human beings discriminate and they generalize. There must be no attempt to explain away either relativity or universality. Relativity has an indispensable place in analyzing words and acts in their specific settings but must be balanced by universality as regards some broad issues of principle, especially those at a higher level of generality. Psychology, psychiatry, sociology, and anthropology in different ways and on somewhat different evidence converge in attesting to similar human needs and 'psychic' mechanisms. These, plus the rough regularities in the human situation, regardless of culture, give rise to concepts that are universal or widespread among human beings. However, there are other concepts that are far from universal or even widespread. And the net, explicit or implicit, in which concepts are customarily drawn together takes many variant forms. Yet the stand of radical cultural relativity is likewise untenable. If one tries to understand a word or act solely in terms of its context, one reaches absurdity, for it is inescapable that no two contexts are literally identical.<sup>18</sup>

I am in some doubt as to Korzybski's position on linguistic and cultural relativity. Some passages seem to me to lean in one direction, others in the opposite. It is certain that he was not a naive or simplistic positivist. He knew that, while sense data must be given due weight in intellectual work, concepts do not arise ineluctably and directly out of quantities of sense data, however precise and vast. He realized, with Whitehead, that there is a 'conceptual order' as well as an 'observational order.' He was abundantly explicit as to the illusion of believing that any scientific generalization completely describes any range of phenomena in their concrete diversity. Yet — if I may come back once more to an impression — it strikes me that he was appreciably closer to the positivists than to, say, Whorf. I believe Korzybski tended to overemphasize the universality of human knowledge and of a 'natural logic' independent of the cultural molds of language. In these respects he was actually somewhat on the Aristotelian side. In another respect his view is more nearly that of twentieth century positivists: Western science constructs or can construct a language that avoids semantic difficulties, eliminates extraneous elements, and builds firmly upon postulates and categories all of which are testable by direct or indirect reference to publicly verifiable sense experience. I myself also believe this to be possible — but only if the forms and repertory of this metalanguage are based upon the fullest cognizance possible of every variety of human reason and experience and not just of those as local in time and space as those basic to science in the West.

Nor am I satisfied with Malinowski's statement which Korzybski<sup>19</sup> quotes:

To sum up, we can say that the fundamental grammatical categories, universal to all human languages, can be understood only with reference to the pragmatic

Weltanschauung of primitive man, and that, through the use of Language, the barbarous primitive categories must have deeply influenced the later philosophies of mankind.

Except for the unscientific, question-begging terminology (such as 'barbarous primitive categories') this is all right as far as it goes, but it does not go far enough. By stating the fact that contemporary philosophies retain 'primitive' traces (more exactly: influence from some but by no means all of the cultures outside the Greek-Jewish-Western Science tradition) Malinowski implicitly rules out the hypothesis that 'the later philosophies of mankind' may still have something to learn from those precipitates of history that have been outside the main streams culminating in the 'advanced civilizations' of the West and the East. We should be interested not only in the origins of our own thought but also in the possibility that the accidents of history and the press of environments did not channel into the few 'high civilizations' everything significant that men have learned from their experience. As Stanner remarks: 'The worst imperialisms are those of preconception.' I am not persuaded that even Korzybski escaped from ethnocentric imperialism.

I have not answered -- even to my own satisfaction -- the questions I have raised. I do hope I have posed the issues to you. I agree entirely with Korzybski that there are attainable norms for mental health that go beyond the fashions of a particular time and place or the statistical modalities of conduct in a given group. As an anthropologist, however, I must insist that the data for such norms must embrace, or at very least take account of, the distilled experience of non-Western and non-scientific cultures to a far greater extent than does Science and Sanity. For, to emphasize in conclusion Dorothy Lee's observation, this may eventually lead us to aspects of reality from which our own code excludes us. The record thus far suggests that all cultures have their blind spots, their distortions, their anaesthesias. It would be amazing if a development as special as Western outlook contained -- even in principle -- all the answers. The scientist is trained to consider carefully all relevant experiments. Human cultures represent so many experiments carried out by human organisms in settings, historical and environmental, which have aspects alike of difference and of similarity. It would be absurd to dismiss without proper examination any language, any concept, any value as the stupid mistake of 'ignorant savages' (or 'heathens') who had taken 'the wrong road.'

\* \* \* \* \*

The tape recording made of the discussion after Dr. Kluckhohn's lecture was not sufficiently clear for transcription. We are sorry we are unable to print the very interesting questions and answers, and the comments made by members of the audience. A few remarks by the Director of the Institute in closing the somewhat heated discussion period went as follows: . . . I don't know whether that last was intended as a question or as commendation. Anyway, if I may say so, sir, you rather stole my fire -- I was going to thank Dr. Kluckhohn from exactly your point of view . . . [his lecture] 'has been extremely instructive to me' . . . I should like to point out that I invited Dr. Kluckhohn to give the lecture this year because I knew some of the points of view he has expressed here. I thought it would be useful to get some of them into the record so people outside of anthropology can examine them, etc. I don't say I agree with everything the lecturer said about Korzybski. . . . But I think there's been a tendency among persons working in GS because they have found it very very useful in many aspects -- which obviously Dr. Kluckhohn didn't touch on -- to fly to its defense if anyone raises a few questions or says anything remotely critical. Now I don't believe that general semantics is such a weak 'thing' that it has to be defended. And I don't intend to defend Korzybski or GS. Actually I don't think, Dr. Kluckhohn, that you said anything that GS needs to be defended against. . . . I might question some of your interpretations, e.g. Korzybski's use of the word primitive in various contexts, when I read your paper. I'm sure that when the lecture gets published some people will take the opportunity to bring up other points that we have not touched on tonight. I myself would enjoy examining more 'criticisms' of general semantics. In closing let me toss out one thing Korzybski always said:

'My system is very limited. I limit myself to the Western world because it's the only world I know.' Unfortunately in 1933 he did quote Lévy-Bruhl, who seems to be a person who is now in very low repute. [Laughter.] I don't know, I'm not an anthropologist and so I am willing to follow Dr. Kluckhohn's notions [I do know that Korzybski did not quote Lévy-Bruhl in his later writings]. . . . I am grateful to you, Dr. Kluckhohn, and I hope that we haven't seemed to be heckling you. I enjoyed your lecture and profited from it and thank you very much.

## REFERENCES

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3. Science and Sanity, p. 39.
4. Science and Sanity, p. 453.
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6. Language, Thought, and Reality. New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1956.
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9. Science and Sanity, p. 514.
10. 'Lineal and Nonlinear Codifications of Reality,' Psychosomatic Medicine, 12 (1950) 89-97.
11. 'The Value System of a Steady State,' in Social Structure, ed. M. Fortes. London: Oxford University Press, 1949. Pp. 35-53
12. Science and Sanity, p. 454.
13. Science and Sanity, p. 455.
14. 'Lineal and Nonlinear Codifications of Reality,' Op. cit., p. 89.
15. 'On the Use of Metaphor in the Description of Persons,' in On Expressive Language, ed. H. Werner. Worcester, Massachusetts: Clark University Press, 1955. Pp. 29-38.
16. Cf. Science and Sanity, p. 22: '...the meanings of meanings are somehow closely related to, or perhaps represent, the first order un-speakable affective states or reactions.'
17. 'On Language and Culture,' International Journal of American Linguistics, 21 (1955) 187-89.
18. For a fuller statement of the argument in this paragraph, see Clyde Kluckhohn, 'Ethical Relativity: Sic et Non,' The Journal of Philosophy, 52 (1955) 663-77.
19. Science and Sanity, p. 3.

## CLYDE KLUCKHOHN

The author of 'General Semantics and "Primitive" Languages' is professor of anthropology in Harvard University. He was born in Iowa (1905), prepared for Princeton at Culver and Lawrenceville and then spent a year in New Mexico. He resumed his education at the University of Wisconsin (AB 1928) and went on to Oxford for two years as a Rhodes Scholar. His early experiences in the Southwest, where he learned the Navaho language and came to know Indians of a number of different tribes (described in his first book To the Foot of the Rainbow, 1927) and another visit to the Indian country after Oxford, decided him on a career in anthropology.

He attended the Sorbonne, wrote a second book on the Southwest, Beyond the Rainbow (1933), studied at the University of Vienna -- and while there was psychoanalyzed -- and won a diploma in anthropology at Oxford. He began teaching at the University of New Mexico (1932-34) and joined the Harvard faculty in 1935. He received his doctorate in anthropology from Harvard in 1936, and was made a full professor in 1946. He was Carnegie Corporation Fellow at Columbia (1939-40), held a Guggenheim Fellowship (1945-46), received the Viking Fund medal for general anthropology (1950), and is a member of the National Academy of Sciences.

Dr. Kluckhohn has taught all branches of anthropology and courses in linguistics and anatomy; and has engaged in archeological excavations in the American Southwest, in England and Greece. Since

1942 he has spent much time in government and administration: training of military government officers; intelligence and psychological warfare concerned with Japan; Far East policy division of OWI; work with OSS, the Navy and MacArthur's staff in Tokyo. He organized and directed the Russian Research Center at Harvard (1947-54) -- the largest non-government research institution dealing with the USSR in the Western world, it studies all aspects of Soviet policy, particularly politics, psychology, economics, sociology. Among his writings are The Navaho (1947), Personality in Nature, Society and Culture (1948), and the prize-winning Mirror for Man (1949), a popular study of what anthropology could do for world peace. What is Science? (1955), contains his brilliant discussion of the branches and sub-branches of anthropology. In considering present developments in the field, he predicts that 'the anthropological study of language will be for the next generation or two in the vanguard of behavioral science.' From this point of view, Dr. Kluckhohn chose the subject of the 1956 Memorial Lecture.

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