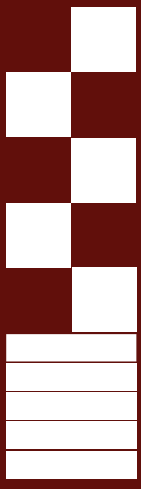
Early Media Effects Theory & the Suggestion Doctrine

Selected Readings, 1895–1935

edited by
Patrick Parsons



a
mediastudies.press
public domain
edition

Early Media Effects Theory & the Suggestion Doctrine

edited by Patrick Parsons

Published by:
mediastudies.press
414 W. Broad St.
Bethlehem, PA 18018, USA

Copy-editing: Emily Alexander

Cover design: Mark McGillivray

Landing page: mediastudies.press/early-media-effects-theory-the-suggestion-doctrine

Public Domain series - issn (*online*) 2770-2480 | issn (*print*) 2770-2472

isbn 978-1-951399-28-3 *(print)* | isbn 978-1-951399-26-9 *(pdf)*

isbn 978-1-951399-29-0 *(epub)* | isbn978-1-951399-27-6 *(html)*

doi 10.32376/3f8575cb.f1e0489e | lccn 2024931261

Edition 1 published in December 2024

Contents

CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

An Introduction to Social Psychology (1922)

Charles A. Ellwood

New York: D. Appleton, pp. 155–57, 224–44 [with elisions].

EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION

As social psychology began to mature through the 1920s and 1930s, the foundational texts of McDougall and Ross were joined—as is often the case as a field expands—by new introductory and survey books, each providing their summary of the latest developments in the field. In nearly all cases, the authors discussed the question of social influence, attitude formation, and attitude change, and did so using the language and precepts of suggestion theory, sometimes nested in behaviorism, sometimes as a process of general psychological application. The following chapters offer three examples which illustrate not just the then state-of-the-art research on suggestion but speak to its standing as a widely accepted concept in the field.

The sociologist Charles Ellwood (1873–1946) graduated from Cornell University in 1896 but also studied at the University of Chicago under no less a cadre of stars than Albion Small, John Dewey, and George Herbert Mead. In Germany, he also took instruction from Georg Simmel. With his Chicago background, he became a leading exponent of the symbolic interactionist perspective and advocated the application of sociological theory in the solving of social problems. He taught at the University of Missouri-

Columbia and at Duke University and was president of the American Sociological Society in 1924. He wrote texts in several areas of sociology and social psychology, books so popular that he reportedly had sold a million copies by the end of his career.

Ellwood's 1922 *An Introduction to Social Psychology* gives special attention to the issue of public opinion, arguing that it is, by nature, the product of rational discussion among individuals. Following, without naming, Tarde, he states that public opinion arises in deliberative discussion; it is "the rational judgement of the group." The process must rely on a social system that protects free expression but, at the same time, can be channeled by those in leadership positions. He identifies the press as one important source of public opinion leadership, but worries that sensationalism, bias, and commercialism hamper its role as a positive social force.

Suggestion and imitation are treated later in the text. Despite his interactionist views, he appears to draw on instinct theory and habit to explain both processes, distinguishing between them and adding that both are normal and inherent in everyday life. He critiques the "suggestion-imitation theory of social life" as drawn by Tarde and Baldwin, in that they go too far in the assignment of social power to those processes. For Ellwood they are a component, not the central driver, of collective behavior. He dwells on imitation especially, using fashion trends as a practical example, and analyzes its role in "social order" and "social progress." A breakdown of types of and contexts for suggestion and imitation are implicit, but not detailed, in the text.—*P.P.*

An Introduction to Social Psychology (1922)

The Formation and Function of Public Opinion[1]

The highly dynamic societies of modem civilization control their social changes by what we call public opinion. To some extent, savage and barbarous societies did the same; only in these latter the opinion of the group was so bound by traditions and custom that public opinion, in the modem sense, could get no great development By public opinion, we mean a more or less rational collective judgment formed by the action and reaction of many individual judgments. Such a collective conscious opinion is obviously formed to mediate and control some change in the policies or institutions of the group. It implies, not so much that uniformity of opinion has been

[1] For collateral reading on public opinion, see Cooley: "Social Organization," Chap. XII.

reached by all members of the group, or even by a majority, as that a certain organization and coordination of the opinions and judgments of the individuals of the group has been reached. This is probably true even in those primitive groups which act only upon the principle of unanimity, and it is even more true in modem societies under the principle of majority rule. Of course, there is a certain core of agreement among the individuals of a group, or at least among a majority, but there is no absolute uniformity of judgment. As Professor Cooley says, public opinion is "an organization of separate individual judgments, a cooperative product of communication and reciprocal influence."[2] It does not represent, therefore, necessarily, as some social psychologists have claimed, the judgment of the lowest member of the group making the opinion, or even the mediocrity of its average individuals. It may well represent the matured judgment of leaders and specialists, after these have reacted with their public.

Whether control by public opinion will be control by the worst or the best minds in the group, however, will depend upon the circumstances of its formation, and the opportunities given for leadership to men of the highest intelligence. It will depend upon the appreciation which the group has of the judgment of the expert or of the superior mind, and that in turn will depend much upon the traditions of the group. It will also depend upon whether the conditions under which the opinion of the group is formed are such as to favor the wisest and most rational judgments circulating freely among the members of the group. Freedom of intercommunication and the encouragement of freedom of thought are necessary conditions for the formation of a public opinion of the highest degree of rationality. Without free speech, a free press and free discussion the highest development of public opinion is impossible, since it is formed by the action and reactions of many separate private judgments. Professor Giddings has rightly insisted that the highest type of public opinion depends for its development upon such conditions. He perhaps goes too far, however in saying that in those countries where free discussion and freedom of assemblage are interdicted, there can be no true public opinion.[3] In such countries, however, public opinion, while it develops, is usually of a very low order of rationality; and hence is either powerless to effect social changes, or, if it succeeds in effecting them, they are apt to be unwise. The proper functioning of public opinion in a social group demands, therefore, the fullest development of the mechanism of free

[2] "Social Organization." p. 121.

[3] "The Principles of Sociology," p. 138.

intercommunication. Such free functioning of public opinion is, on the whole, one of the best safeguards which societies have against social catastrophes, since it represents the free collective judgment of the group as a whole, and the most rational attempt it is capable of making to control collective action.

If the importance of a high development of public opinion in social life is such as we have just indicated, then it is equally important that the whole machinery of its formation be kept not only free, but also uncorrupted and alive, so to speak, to its social responsibility. Now, in the large, complex social groups of modern civilization, the formation and guidance of public opinion is becoming increasingly a function of the press. To the modern newspaper and magazine belongs especially the preponderant part in the guidance and formation of public opinion. If the press is commercial, if it is managed even to serve individual or class interests rather than to meet social needs, it will as surely fail to create the highest type of public opinion as if it were unfree. Means and methods yet remain to be devised by which the press can be kept free, and yet, at the same time, brought to realize in the highest degree its social responsibility as one of the most important parts of the machinery of our whole social life. Owing to sensationalism, to party and class bias, and to commercialism, it must be admitted that, even in the most advanced civilized societies of to-day, the press is still far from being the instrument of rational social readjustment which our social life demands.

The social function of public opinion, as we have already said, is to mediate in the transition from one type of social activity to another. It is a selective process, which has to do with the construction of new social habits and institutions. As our social life comes more and more under the sway of conscious and rational processes, custom, laws and institutions come more and more to rest upon public opinion. It is probably a mistake to trace the origin of these back to the public opinion of primitive groups, because, as we have already pointed out, customs and institutions very often have their origin in the lower stages of social evolution from instinctive reactions, or even in some cases from accidental adjustments on the part of primitive society. But in the later stages of social development, especially in free society, the rational judgment of the group, which we call public opinion, comes in to modify profoundly customs and institutions. In these stages public opinion is often the decisive element in establishing a law or institution; and in this sense the laws and institutions of democratic society may be said to rest upon public opinion.

In democratic societies, public opinion is, then, a force lying back of the power of all regulative institutions. It is to be regarded, perhaps, as the chief instrument of social control in highly dynamic societies, inasmuch as the other institutions of control, especially government, very largely rest upon it. Moreover, it seems to be playing an increasing part in controlling all social adjustments. If it can be developed to the highest degree of rationality as well as of power, the social life of the future may evidently expect much from it; for the most important problems before our civilization are capable of solution through the development of rational public opinion. [...]

Chapter X: Imitation and Suggestion in the Social Life

There remain three social mental processes of such great importance in the social life that they demand further and more specific consideration. These are, imitation, suggestion and sympathy. They are closely related processes, and are so intimately bound up with social life that whole social psychologies have been built upon the study of their action, without much regard to other elements in either the individual or the social mind. Following our usual method, we shall take up first the active, or motor, side of these processes, namely, imitation.

The Psychology of Imitation. The word "imitation" is often used for three very distinct kinds of psychic processes. First it is used as a name to cover the social method of developing the instincts. In such cases, imitation is a more or less unconscious copying of the instinctive behavior of one animal by another, usually of the same species. The perception of the instinctive activity excites a similar activity in the observing individual from a similar instinctive basis. We say, in such cases, that the instinctive response is excited sympathetically. This social method of developing the instincts is peculiar to the higher animals. In lower animal forms, instinctive reaction can be excited only through the appropriate stimuli in the environment; but in many of the higher animals, including man, the seeing of the activity going on in other individuals, usually of the same species, excites the impulse also. [...]

A second sort of imitation is seen in the tendency to conform, or to be like one's fellows. It is the passion to do as others do, and is usually more highly conscious than the type which we have just described, but is still largely without consciousness of the purpose of the imitative act. It also characterizes animals that live in groups and show a relatively high development of intelligence. It is certainly more than a mere neural tendency to do what we see others doing. Rather, it must probably be considered a

specific manifestation, or differentiation, of the gregarious impulses. When we strive to conform our ways of action and even of thinking to those of our group, without specific reason for doing so, we are at once gregarious and imitative. The re-enforcement of the general neural tendency to imitate by the gregarious impulses would undoubtedly produce such a result. This copying of others for the sake of being at one with one's group is, in human society, then, mainly an instinctive matter, as is shown by the fact that very few people could give intelligent reasons for so doing.[4] It is also manifestly one of the most important features of the social life of mankind. It is, moreover, imitation in its purest form.

Still another sort of imitation is rational imitation, or the copying of the action of another, not merely for the sake of social conformity, nor yet because it satisfies some primitive impulse, but because it is in accord with some rational purpose to do so. Thus, the imitation we see in fashions is largely of the second sort, it expresses a mere instinctive desire to conform; on the other hand, when we adopt some improved tool to accomplish something, the imitation is of this third sort. Such rational imitation doubtless in part grows out of the preceding sorts of imitation, but it is quite different from them on account of its large rational and purposive element. It is no longer pure imitation, but a rational response which is imitative in form, just as the first sort of imitation was an instinctive response, merely imitative in its form. Rational imitation is, however, like the other two preceding sorts, closely connected with the social life of man. It has been a chief factor in his cultural evolution. [...]

The Connections of Imitation With Suggestion and Other Mental Processes. To be rightly understood, imitation must be correlated by the student with other mental processes. Imitation is but one of the types of interstimulation and response. It is an outcome of instinct and habit and is mediatory of both of those fundamental aspects of the mental and social life. Not only are instinctive reactions in man developed and modified by imitation, but the same statement is of course true of our acquired habits. Without imitation to mediate the expressions of instinct, habit and adaptation in human social groups, anything like harmonious social life would be impossible. For imitation in the broad sense in which we have just used the term, is nothing less than that type of mental interstimulation and response which results in uniformity of activity in the interacting individuals. It is closely connected, therefore, with other processes, which tend toward mental uniformity in a

[4]Compare the argument in Trotter: "Instincts of the Herd in Peace and War," pp. 18–32.

group. It is especially closely related to suggestion, which is a process tending toward *intellectual* uniformity in a group, and to sympathy, which in a broad sense is any process which tends toward *feeling* uniformity in a group. We might define these various terms very simply, indeed, respectively as socially induced activity, cognition and feeling. Imitation, suggestion and sympathy are therefore, all closely related processes. This does not mean that wherever we find one, we must necessarily find the others also; but it does mean that these three processes are continually associated in actual social life, and may perhaps be regarded as the motor, affective and cognitive aspects of one socio-psychic process which for the want of a better name, we may call "mental induction."[5] In discussing these factors in our social life, therefore, we should be careful not only to see that they are related, but to bring them together in our actual descriptions of social activity. This is usually done in the case of imitation and suggestion, imitation being regarded as the active side of the total suggestion-imitation process; but sympathy is not less the affective side of the same process. [...]

The Psychology of Suggestion. By suggestion, we mean the process of communicating an idea from one individual to another, which idea is accepted uncritically without rational ground for its acceptance. The state of mind which is necessary in order that a suggestion may work is called suggestibility. It is the tendency to believe without proof and to act without sufficient reason. It is a state in which an idea or image, particularly one that is associated with some original tendency of human nature, becomes more or less isolated in the mind from inhibiting or controlling processes and tends to work itself out automatically. Hypnotism is an extreme example of the working of suggestion and suggestibility. The normal individual in every day social life is, however, more or less suggestible. The critical faculties are rarely fully awake. Indeed, suggestibility is a normal and necessary accompaniment of gregarious, or group, life. The social animal must be ready at all times to respond to the ideas communicated to him by the fellow members of his group, and he usually does so more or less uncritically. We can scarcely agree with Boris Sidis that man is "social because he is suggestible"[6]; but we must admit that no high development of group life is possible without suggestibility. It represents the receptive, plastic side of consciousness with reference to the rest of the group. It is evidently the cognitive side of the same process which manifests itself actively as imitation.

---

[5] Compare the statements in Ellwood: "Sociology in Its Psychological Aspects," p. 293.

[6] "The Psychology of Suggestion," p. 310.

The psychology of suggestion is, therefore, essentially the same as that of imitation. Suggestibility manifests itself particularly in connection with all of the great subconscious tendencies of original or acquired human nature. It particularly manifests itself, therefore, in connection with the instinct-emotions and deeply established habits. It is a form of interstimulation between individuals which makes for the intellectual unity of the group. It thus tends toward uniformity in activity, and while, like imitation, it has its pathological manifestations, it must be regarded as a normal and necessary quality of the socialized individual. It is so uniformly present in all forms of imitation as the receptive, or cognitive, side of the process, that usually it will not be necessary for us to discuss it as a separate process.

The Suggestion-Imitation Theory of Society. Since Bagehot published his "Physics and Politics," in 1869, sociologists and social psychologists have put forth suggestion-imitation theories of the social life. Bagehot himself said: "The main force which molds and fashions men in society as we now see it is unconscious imitation. The more acknowledged causes, such as change of climate, alteration of political institutions, progress of science, act principally through this cause."[7]

In 1890, Gabriel Tarde, an eminent French sociologist, put forth, in his "Laws of Imitation," the theory that human social life must be interpreted fundamentally in terms of the suggestion-imitation process. Tarde believed that the influence of one mind upon another was entirely through the suggestion-imitation process. In as much as he accepted the psychological view of society, he proclaimed that imitation is "the elementary social phenomenon," "the fundamental social fact."[8] He even went so far as to say that imitation is the criterion of the social, and that "society is imitation."[9] Social unity, according to Tarde, is therefore wholly the result of the suggestion-imitation process. It is not due to organic heredity, but rather to "the effect of that suggestion-imitation process, which, starting from one primitive creature possessed of a single idea or act, passed this copy on to one of its neighbors, then to an other, and so on."[10] While Tarde left a place in his social psychology for conflict, or opposition, and invention, yet he found the essential elements of these in the suggestion-imitation process. He believed that the laws of imitation are to sociology "what the laws of habit

[7] "Physics and Politics," p. 97.

[8] "Social Laws," p. 56.

[9] "Laws of Imitation" (translation by Mrs. Parsons), p. 74.

[10] "Social Laws," pp. 38, 39.

and heredity are to biology, the laws of gravitation to astronomy, and the laws of vibration to physics."[11]

In 1895, Professor J. M. Baldwin, an eminent American psychologist, put forth independently a similar theory of the social life. Like Tarde, Baldwin found imitation to be fundamental in both the mental and social life, but he guarded himself against Tarde's extreme formulas and maintained only that imitation was the method of social organization and development. The individual develops intellectually and morally by imitating the mental attitudes and the actions of those about him, Baldwin said, while society changes through the imitation of the thought or activity of some individual who is accepted as a social leader.[12] In contrast to Tarde, Baldwin found that the content, or the matter, of the social life, in distinction from its method, is thoughts. Thus in Baldwin, the imitation theory is combined with an intellectualistic view of social life. His theory may be briefly summarized as follows: (1) the matter of social organization, or the content of the social life, is thoughts; (2) the method of their organization is imitation; (3) these thoughts originate with the individual; (4) certain of these thoughts are imitated and thus generalized by society.[13]

It is not necessary to criticize in detail this theory of society. As a theory it unduly simplifies the social life by overlooking, or slighting, the working of other factors than imitation and suggestion. There is no evidence to show, important as imitation and suggestion are in the social life, that they are more important than many other factors in the individual and in the environment. Habits are not wholly acquired by imitation, nor is it true that the learning process is fundamentally an imitative process.[14] Recent psychologists have tended to minimize the importance of imitation in the process of learning, or of acquiring new habits. The student also must not forget that psychology shows that the imitative tendency is constantly modified and controlled by a great number of other elements in human nature and in the environment. We cannot interpret society in terms of one of its very general aspects or processes, apart from all the rest of the processes of collective living. If we should do so, we would get a very abstract and one-sided view of the social life, one which is separated in particular from the great forces of organic and social evolution, which have made even imitation itself; for man is social,

[11] *Ibid.*, p. 61.

[12] "Social and Ethical Interpretations in Mental Development," Fourth Edition, Chaps. II, III, XII, XIII.

[13] *Ibid.*, pp. 504–524.

[14] Compare Thorndike: "Educational Psychology," Vol. ii, "The Psychology of Learning."

not because he is imitative, but because his whole nature has been evolved under conditions of group life. Hence he is imitative because he is social, rather than social because he is imitative.

Imitation is, then, not the foundation of the social life, but an instrument which the social life has developed to perfect its coordinations. It is, as we have already said, and as Baldwin has insisted, the chief means of propagating the *acquired* uniformities in human society. It is this because it is the type of interaction between individuals which results in uniformity of activity. It is, therefore, the great and indispensable means of bringing about unity in groups when uniform, concerted action above the purely instinctive level is necessary or desirable. Imitation makes for social uniformity, and so makes for social unity, except in those cases where unity rests upon difference rather than upon similarity of activity. [...]

Fashion in the Social Life. The work of imitation in the social life is perhaps best illustrated by fashion, for, as we have already said, fashion is imitation at its purest. Fashion is copying the members of one's group, not for the sake of utility, but for the sake of conformity. Fashion may be accompanied by utility, but its real motive is the advantage of conformity. It is perhaps best seen in clothing, but it affects all the methods, or "styles," of living and thinking. There are fashions, for example, in houses, in furniture, in behavior, in morality, in values and even in ideas. Because all of these things press upon the individual with the weight of mass-suggestion, it is very difficult to avoid conformity to them. And yet they may have very little inherent utility, value or truth in themselves.

It is a mistake to set fashion in opposition to tradition or custom. In small isolated communities the only fashions which obtain are usually the customs of generations. They are none the less fashions, however, because they are clearly imitations on the basis of social conformity. In larger communities, more or less in contact with the whole civilized world, fashion becomes chiefly an imitation of contemporaries, rather than of the past. In such communities, owing to emancipation from tradition and custom, to the accumulation of an economic surplus, and to competition in social self-exhibition, fashions change often with great rapidity. As soon as a fashion or style has become generalized in the mass of the group, those who maintain their social prestige by "conspicuous consumption" and other means of attracting attention to themselves, feel that they must change their style of dress, of behavior, or even of general living, in order that they may assert their superiority to the mass. Here evidently the instinct of self-assertion comes in to modify the

tendency toward social conformity. The elite, to whom the masses have come to took for standards along some given line, change the fashion in order to assert their superiority, or perhaps to gain some economic advantage. The masses of the group, with their habitual tendencies to follow their leaders, imitate the elite. Again the elite change the style, and again modes of living in the group change. Under the conditions of modem civilization, while this results in great variety in the social life, it also results in much economic and vital waste, and not infrequently in social confusion. How to control fashion imitation along all lines by the reason has accordingly become one of the great problems of Western civilization. The mere fact that such a problem exists, however, shows the relative independence and the great power of the imitation process in human society.

It must be admitted that fashion imitation has good as well as bad sides. New ideas of great social value, superior social standards, and even superior modes of general living may be spread to a large extent by fashion imitation; that is, they may become accepted by the masses because they are imitated as fashions from social superiors, rather than because their utility, or value, is rationally perceived. As a matter of historic fact, superior religions, moral codes, artistic productions and even mechanical inventions, have often been thus diffused, largely through the power of fashion imitation. As a rule, such things have to become "fashions" before they can become embodied as a part of the social tradition. Fashion imitation here shades, of course, imperceptibly into the broader "conventionality imitation," that is, any imitation of contemporaries, of which fashion imitation is manifestly a part, and which we have already discussed as a factor in social change.

The Psychology of the Crowd. Another good illustration of the influence of suggestion-imitation in the social life is in the psychology of crowds, or mobs. In the socio-psychological sense, we have a crowd only when we have some unity in the activity of a large group of individuals gathered together in one place. This unity of activity usually comes through some stimulation, which excites the whole mass of individuals in the group. This stimulation at the same time serves to fix the attention of all the members of the group upon one object, or in a given direction. Under such conditions, a group of human beings usually becomes highly suggestible. The fixation of attention and the excitement which characterize the psychological crowd serve to inhibit the free working of those habits, ideas and standards, which normally guide the individual in ordinary social life. Moreover, the mere presence of a great number of individuals in close proximity increases nervous excitement,

emotion, and so suggestibility. A group of individuals in such a condition are very manifestly apt to behave differently from what they would in ordinary social life. Acquired habits and the control of reflective thought drop away, and individuals are left with only their emotions and instincts to guide them. Moreover, one instinct-emotion excited under such circumstances exerts a strong inhibiting influence upon all of the rest. It is no wonder, therefore, that civilized men act like savages in crowds. The whole crowd becomes, as it were, a mere creature of impulse, liable to follow any extreme suggestion in the line of the emotion which has already been excited. Crowds become thus capable of performing the basest deeds, though at the same time they may often appear to act heroically. Social and moral conduct on a high scale, however, is impossible for the crowd, because its actions are simply the result of a suggestion-imitation process acting upon the level of instinct emotion. That civilized men are capable of such behavior is again a forceful illustration of the power of suggestion and imitation in human society under certain conditions. It is also a proof that the forms and conditions of association are of themselves powerful influences upon social conduct. […]

Imitation as a Factor in Social Order. Both conventionality imitation and custom imitation are powerful factors in furthering social order. The imitation of one's contemporaries brings about a great deal of the unity and order which we find in human groups. This is especially true where the social intercourse of the members of the group is close and intimate. Social classes, professions, communities, groups of all sorts, under such circumstances, readily fall into similarities of activity and of habit, which they pick up from one another. This serves greatly to aid in keeping the life of the whole group harmonious at any given time.

But it is chiefly custom imitation which acts as a conservative factor favoring social order in human groups. The social importance of folkways, of custom, of usages and of traditions in preserving social continuity has already been pointed out, and the importance of these factors is, of course, the importance of imitation. The spiritual possessions of the race are thus handed down from one generation to another mainly through the imitative process. Children get the bulk of their habits, ideas and standards from association with their elders, and, as we have seen especially from their family circles. From a very early age the child absorbs imitatively the examples in the way of behavior and character furnished by his intimate group of associates. Language, moral standards, religion, esthetic tastes and political traditions are thus acquired by the child. In many cases these imitative absorptions

from early environment remain the dominant elements in the mental and moral character of the individual throughout life. Thus are to be explained, without any doubt, in the main the peculiar local traits which we find in nearly all human groups. National peculiarities, for example, are very largely acquired by the participation of each individual in the customs and traditions of his country. The whole content of cultural development, indeed, because it is made up of acquired habits is passed along from generation to generation very largely by imitative methods. Even in the industrial and technological realm, where utility is supposed to reign supreme, custom, usage and tradition are found not less than in the other phases of social life, only more under the control of other factors.

Social order and organization, therefore, are very largely conserved through imitative processes. Nearly all forms of the social life are handed down from one generation to another through imitation. Only the simpler forms may be supposed to spring directly from human needs, or from mere habituation to physical environment. In all other cases, practically, imitation acts as a mediating process by which social and cultural forms are preserved. The harmony and order of human social groups are, therefore, very largely a product of conventionality and custom imitation.

Imitation as a Factor in Social Progress. Conventionality imitation is one of the main methods, as we have already seen, by which changes are brought about in human societies. This imitation may be of two sorts, either of its own leaders by a group, or of one group by another group. This latter sort of imitation, the imitation which results from the contact of groups, especially of dissimilar cultures, has been one of the most powerful influences in human history. Civilization has been spread very largely through the imitation of one group by another. No civilization, so far as we know, has been developed by a people without borrowings from other people. In the history of existing modern nations these borrowings have been so extensive that no nation can be said to have developed its own civilization. Even Western civilization, so-called, has borrowed extensively from the civilizations of the Orient; and we now know that every existing culture in the world has borrowed to a greater or less degree from every other culture.