

(quasi-political) aggregations of clans.¹ What I have termed the "historical trend" of the phratries seems different in the two regions. The West Coast phratry, aside from later accretions of originally disconnected clans, seems to have arisen as the result of its splitting up into a large number of clans, that have not altogether lost their sense of kinship. The Iroquois phratry, however, seems to be a secondary confederation of clans.² Thus we conclude that what threatened to be an interesting problem, opening up a wide historical perspective, is hardly more than a conceptualistic mirage.

Degree of Geographical Isolation. At this point I wish to urge that the degree of geographical isolation of the two areas involved must by no means be neglected in weighing the claims of a theory of independent origin against those of historical relationship. The greater the geographical distance, the stronger have we a right to demand the evidence to be of historical connexion, that is, the more rigidly do we apply our criteria. The reason for this is that, as the distance between two tribes possessing a feature in common increases, the greater becomes the difficulty of assuming that all the intervening tribes once also possessed the feature, but lost it, or that the tribes compared

¹ Two or three facts bearing on the complex problem of the nature of the two phratric organizations will suffice here. While, among the West Coast Indians, the phratry as such has its definite crest or crests, the relationship among its clans being largely determined by ownership of this same crest, the Iroquois phratries can hardly be said to be characterized by crests or totemic emblems. On the West Coast the various clans, like those of the Iroquois, are characterized by distinctive sets of personal names; unlike the Iroquois clans, however, a number of clans belonging to the same phratry often possess certain names in common (I have in mind chiefly Mr. C. M. Barbeau's Tsimshian data), a fact that points to the West Coast phratry (or phratric nucleus) as an old kin group that has become subdivided into a number of clans. Both these facts clearly emphasize the kin-group nature of the West Coast phratry as contrasted with the Iroquois phratry. Equally instructive is the ceremonial relation subsisting between the phratries in the two cases. Among the Iroquois the phratries act as such in their relations to each other—in games, in mourning or commemoration ceremonies, in council deliberations. Among the West Coast Indians reciprocal functions, it is true, have been reported for the phratries (witness the phratric burial duties among the Tlingit), but where a more complete analysis has been made (again I have in mind chiefly Mr. Barbeau's Tsimshian data) it would seem that what is really involved in such cases is not the (or an) opposite phratry as such but a group of paternal kinsmen which, in a society with matrilineal inheritance, must needs belong to the (or an) opposite phratry. Here again the West Coast tribes emphasize the phratry as a kin group, the Iroquois as a functional unit.

² There are several reasons for believing this to be true. One of the more important ones is the fact that while the clans correspond to a large extent in the Iroquoian tribes, their grouping into phratries does not. In other words, the Iroquoian clan tradition seems older, on the whole, than the phratric tradition.