

careful mapping of the paths along which culture elements can be shown to have travelled with relative rapidity. Other things being equal, a culture element found distributed along lines of rapid transit must be considered as lesser in age than one distributed over the same geographical extent but largely along lines lying aside from trade routes.

*Chronological Inferences from Geographical Distribution.*

Such considerations as general intimacy subsisting between tribes, intermarriage, linguistic kinship, and means of access constitute some of the external factors governing the rate of cultural diffusion. None of these can be considered as altogether independent of the others, but each may operate in quite different degree. We are now in a better position to make profitable use for chronology of the method of geographical distribution than if we interpret such distribution at its face value. Putting the various factors involved in the transmission of a culture element into the form of a formula, we may say that: a culture element is transmitted with a maximum ease when it is conceptually readily detachable from its cultural setting, is not hedged about in practice by religious or other restraints, is without difficulty assimilable to the borrowing culture, and travels from one tribe to another living in friendly, or at least intimate, relations with it, particularly when these tribes are bound to each other by ties of intermarriage and linguistic affinity and are situated on an important trade route. Geographical arguments as to the age of a culture element transmitted under all these conditions need to be most qualified. General statements, such as have been made by Rivers and others, as to the relative conservatism or ease of diffusion of broad categories of culture, such as religion, mythology, social organization, art, and technology, are of little practical service, as everything depends on the specific nature of the borrowed element, the degree of similarity between the two cultures brought into relation, and the favourable or unfavourable character of the external circumstances of borrowing. While one cannot disprove, for example, that social organization, as maintained by Rivers, is the most conservative of all cultural features, it seems clear to me that the various elements