

**KANSAS: SOME REFLECTIONS  
ON CULTURE INHERITANCE  
AND ORIGINALITY**

**JAMES C. MALIN**

**INTRODUCTION**

The purpose of this paper is too complex to express adequately in any simple title. The first assumption essential to an orientation upon the subject matter is that of culture as defined by the cultural anthropologist--the way of life as a whole of any people. In this case the geographical setting or area in which that culture developed is Kansas, whose boundaries are completely artificial, except for the short river section at the northeastern corner, which may or may not be considered a natural boundary. The concept of culture deals with men and what they did in their geographical area with properties of the earth which they were able to make available to their use. A sharp distinction must be observed between determinism and factors that merely influence history. In no sense is determinism admissible to the history of this culture and area during its one century plus as space partitioned according to existing arbitrary lines. A natural resource has its origin in an idea held by men, and in the cultural technology men use to bring the properties of the geographical area into the horizon of utilization. Thus natural resources depend upon the inventive genius of men and are inexhaustible, unless men's minds become exhausted.

**KANSAS AS A GEOGRAPHICAL AREA**

Kansas as a geographical area is an accident of politics, or possibly, a consequence of a series of accidents. Its boundaries have not made sense according to any frame of reference based upon tangible facts and logical conclusions drawn from facts. For many reasons the eastern boundary would lie more appropriately about fifty miles east of its historical position, but repeated attempts to effect even modest adjustments were futile. In terms of types of farming, the northern tier of counties has belonged to the Nebraska corn belt. On the other hand, however, serious consideration was given at least twice to proposals for the annexation to Kansas of that part of Nebraska that lies south of the Platte river. Several plausible, if not sound, reasons were advanced for such a change. But many Kansans objected that the area in question contained too many Democrats. The southern boundary line was bungled on account of the slavery prohibition, the Indian barrier, and misun-

derstanding about Indian reservation limits. The territory of Kansas extended to the Rocky Mountains, but for peculiar reasons, when Kansas became a state, Kansans voluntarily restricted themselves to the country east of 102° west longitude. The foregoing citations applied to Kansas limits in relation to other states and territories, but still other boundary schemes referred primarily or only to internal matters. Numerous proposals were made to divide Kansas either into an East and West Kansas, or into a North and South Kansas. But tangible facts and logic made little headway against emotional attachments to the combinations of historical traditions associated with a geographical area and its people.

Subsequent to Lincoln's dictum of 4 July 1861, denying the sacredness of a state, so-called state government in the nation was restricted by successive assumptions of power on the part of the central government until all true self-government disappeared. The vestiges of state structure survived, to be sure, but as little more than administrative agencies of the central authority. Yet, the symbols and legends of state sovereignty survived, so far as they had any meaning, and were filled in by each generation and social group according to the subjective need of the hour. In states other than Kansas, each in its own peculiar character, the people behaved in a similar fashion. Persistent always, however, was an overriding loyalty to the symbols and legends embodied in its traditions. Few, and Kansas was not among them, were willing to discard even their antiquated constitutions.

#### KANSAS IN AN ECOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE

Plant and animal life of Kansas necessarily is that of midlatitudes regardless of whether or not "native," in the popular pre-columbian discovery sense, or introduced by recent European man. Thus the species and varieties of life found in the area represent those peculiarly adapted to such a geographical habitat, as well as outliers of those most specifically adapted to the high and low latitudes. In this latter sense, Kansas lies in a transition zone, or a belt of overlapping margins of dispersion patterns occupied by marginal species of life forms. In this belt, the more distinctly northern and southern life forms meet and intermingle.

The Kansas area is transitional also in its east-west variations of both diminishing moisture and rising elevation to the westward. Thus such species as lie in the fringes of optimal environment, both in a north-south and an east-west orientation, represent elements of unusual risk as pertains to survival in relation to the short-term fluctuations of weather and other hazards.

Kansas is situated in the central portion of the North American grassland. In its mid-latitude position, between the Platte river on the north and the Canadian-Arkansas rivers on the south, both the east-west zoning and the north-south zoning of life forms are more sharply differentiated than in any other part of the grassland. This is particularly conspicuous as relates to

the east-west orientation. The true forest country lies to the east, and the true moist-desert to the west.

#### KANSAS ACCORDING TO PRIMITIVE PEOPLES

In this area called Kansas the occupancy by primitive peoples who had attained a Folsom type culture dates from about ten thousand years ago. Within some two thousand years of the present, later primitive cultures had invaded the area from the desert southwest, from the forested southeast, and from the woodlands of the continent east of the Mississippi river. Probably these invasions occurred more than once. If so, this central grassland was long a meeting ground where an intermingling of cultures occurred. Individual village sites reveal to the archeologist successive periods of occupancy, in some cases, interrupted by periods of apparent abandonment in which the site was covered by several inches of wind blown material. Thus the dust-storms of the grass country, and of major proportions, are demonstrated to have occurred long before Europeans appeared on the scene. For several centuries prior to the modern European discovery of the western world, the Great Plains as well as the prairie was occupied by people living in villages and dependent largely upon agriculture for food supply, but supplemented by wild game. These were the peoples who were displaced by European culture within the four centuries usually labeled modern history and documented by written records. In this perspective it would not be unexpected if resemblances occurred in some of the patterns of behavior of European man in America.

#### EUROPEAN-AMERICAN FOREST CULTURE IN THE GRASSLAND

In the process of displacing an occupying Indian population and of resettling the area with men of European-American culture, each of the invading people was a unique individual and new to the area. He brought with him his peculiar personality and his cultural heritage. By the experience of living together, diverse elements were blended into a new culture. Even people coming from the same eastern state brought variants of their unique localities. Differences, not likeness, were the rule. Railroads within land-mass interiors had not exercised extensively their leveling effects until late in the nineteenth century. These points are more than commonplaces and have usually been lost from view. More attractive have been the over-simplified generalizations about Puritan, slaveholder, abolitionist, northerner, southerner, republican, democrat, etc.

The high degree of mobility of population poses problems for the consideration of the historian. To what extent did first comers determine or impose a pattern of culture that would survive in spite of a rapid turnover of population? To be more specific, do the political institutions once established mold the culture regardless of the changing population that implements them? Stated in opposite extremes, did the changing population modify and

direct the functional operation of the institutions regardless of their origin and their first institutional form as established in Kansas? If the answer rejects both extremes, may the pragmatic adjustments be determined quantitatively, or only subjectively?

The sources of Kansas population (107,209), according to the federal census of 1860, assigned to states of birth are as follows:

TABLE 1

New England	3.9%	
Northern tier of states west of New England	8.4	
Iowa	3.7	
Total, northern states		16.0%
Lower South		13.5
Border states east of Appalachian Mountains		
North	6.5	
Border states north of Ohio river	28.8	
Total northern border		35.3
Border states east of Appalachian Mountains		
South	5.0	
Border states south of Ohio river	8.5	
Total southern border		13.5
Missouri		10.6
Total border states		59.5
Foreign born		11.8

The first generalization to be made from these figures is both the absolute and relative statistical unimportance of the New England contribution, 3.9% of the whole. The contribution of the strictly northern states' 16% is only slightly larger than the lower south's 13.5%. Clearly, the border states peopled Kansas and most conspicuous as a group were the three Ohio valley states north of the river of that name: Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois, totaling 28.8%. A special explanation is in order about that group of states. They had been peopled largely from south of the river and south of the Mason-Dixon line. A conspicuous culture trait is critical to this discussion. Although they were antislavery in sentiment, they were even more pronounced anti-Negro. So far as generalization can be accurate in the matter, they tended to take a position that the only way in which Negroes would be tolerated among them was as slaves--but emphatically, they did not want Negroes, either free or slave. The seeming paradox involved in this situation is that people sometimes found themselves to be antislavery and proslavery at one and the same time. A similar generalization holds largely for the population of all border states, including Missouri, except that possibly after 1850 the balance turned in Ohio. It is only in this context that the position of Missouri can be reinterpreted in accordance with facts. Missouri was not so much

interested in slavery as such as in being embarrassed by a large free Negro population. In this context also, Missouri's interest in making Kansas a slave state is intelligible.

The peopling of Kansas by the border states was decisive, therefore, in giving the free white-state point of view an overwhelming majority. In December 1855, in adopting the Topeka state constitution, the freestate party voted separately on the Negro question and by a vote of three to one decided to exclude free Negroes from the state if admitted under that instrument. The Wyandotte state constitution of 1859 incorporated a modified white-state proviso in restricting participation in political affairs to white men. This position was confirmed by popular vote twice after the Civil War, and Negro suffrage came to Kansas only with the fifteenth amendment to the federal constitution. Racial integration in the public schools of Topeka came only in 1954 in consequence of a ruling of the United States Supreme Court. The basic culture trait had a way of persisting in spite of the legends about John Brown, and the relation of Kansas to the American Civil War and the abolition of slavery.

As a whole, the Wyandotte constitution had been derived primarily from the Ohio constitution of 1850 as a model. The civil code of the territory adopted by the first freestate territorial legislature (1858) and continued thereafter under statehood was based also upon that of Ohio. The criminal code, however, followed a different pattern, being based upon the Missouri code, which in turn reached back to Kentucky and Virginia. In view of the course of Kansas territorial history and the prolonged war on the "Bogus" legislatures of 1855 and 1857 and their laws, this adoption of the Missouri criminal code in 1858 and its continuance was one of the most remarkable occurrences of the territorial controversy.

The foregoing population analyses and interpretations of culture traits and institutions are related to the census of 1860 and state beginnings. Analyses of successive census enumerations of 1870 and later, national and state, reveal a migration pattern that was little different. Thus the original culture traits were reinforced by people similarly oriented. In other words, the original culture pattern as registered in 1860 did not necessarily determine the attitude for the next century. The major additions to the population only continued in the basic pattern. But this whole situation, additions to population--and losses--, requires further consideration in its own right, featuring population structure and the meaning of mobility.

The quantitative extent of population change and of turnover is little appreciated and must be given explicit formulation as a preliminary to further discussion. From the accompanying tables of population the increase of numbers between 1860 and 1870 should be noted. If every person listed in 1860 were still present, 257,193 new residents were listed, or more than 2-1/3 times the number present in 1860. In other words, of every ten persons present in 1870, seven would be newcomers. In 1880, with almost one

TABLE 2  
Kansas Population, 1860

Year	Total population	Increase over preceding enumeration	
		Number	Percentage per decade
1860	107,206		
1865	135,807		
1870	364,399	257,193	239.9
1875	528,349		
1880	996,096	631,697	173.4
1885	1,268,530		
1888	1,518,552		
1890	1,428,108	432,012	43.4
1895	1,334,734		
1900	1,470,495	42,386	3.0
1905	1,455,968		
1910	1,690,949	220,454	15.0
1915			
1920	1,769,257	78,308	4.6
1925			
1930	1,880,999	111,742	6.3
1940	1,801,028	79,971	
1950	1,905,299	104,271	

million present, 631,697 or 173% had been added after 1870. Or, of every eleven present in 1880, seven were newcomers. Comparing 1880 with 1860, in the same manner, of every nine persons present in 1880, eight were new. So far as numbers were concerned the old settlers of 1860 would appear to be a relatively insignificant proportion. For example, if measured by votes in the ballot box, they would seem to be negligible. But these figures tell only a small fraction of the story.

The mobility of population was fundamental to the changing structure of the society, and this subject has received scarcely any consideration. Materials are available for such research but the task is formidable and no over-all attempt has been made to undertake it.

I have made studies of the turnover of farm operators, using selected townships and county samples. This procedure was most revealing, but necessarily had its limitations. By comparing the farm operators of 1860 as a base year, name by name, with the subsequent census enumerations it was possible to determine who and how many persisted in their residence in the particular township or county at the subsequent enumeration dates. Where both state and federal manuscript census records were available, this meant

TABLE 3

Kansas Population, 1885

		State total	1,268,530
Population:		Native born	1,135,855
		Foreign born	132,675
Born in	Where from to Kansas		
Kansas	336,344	Kansas	330,057
Illinois	134,703	Illinois	194,089
Ohio	112,323	Missouri	136,729
Indiana	100,271	Iowa	109,067
Missouri	76,777	Indiana	94,186
Pennsylvania	62,425	Ohio	74,633
Iowa	61,932	Pennsylvania	42,483
New York	42,367	Kentucky	25,020
Kentucky	40,116	New York	24,086
Tennessee	19,537	Nebraska	20,938
Foreign	132,675	Foreign	60,218
Germany	39,159	Germany	16,142
England and Wales	18,963	Scandinavia	10,630
Scandinavia	18,690	Russia	8,623
Ireland	15,092	British-American	6,925
British-American	12,387	England and Wales	6,623
Russia	9,623	Austria-Hungary	3,933
		Ireland	3,083

Fifth Biennial Report of the Kansas State Board of Agriculture, Population, pp. 9-60.

the comparisons were at five year intervals. Otherwise at ten year intervals. The heavy losses occurred during the first five or ten years, the rate of loss being reduced later until a lapse of about twenty years when the list of persistent individuals or a family representative became relatively stable. In eastern Kansas a loss of sixty per cent during the first ten years was not unusual. This was true, not only for the 1860 census used as a base, but for subsequent enumerations, and only in the twentieth century was this pattern modified, the losses being somewhat reduced. Arranged by rainfall belts from east to west, substantially the same story was told for each. In other words, geographical factors exercised a remarkably slight apparent influence.

This analysis should be carried a step further. In each census subsequent to 1860, used as a base year, the newcomers during the decade should be separated from the old settlers. The latter, then, when compared with later enumerations were relatively the more stable. The newcomers of each enumeration always were highly unstable, the rate of losses being substan-

TABLE 4  
Kansas Population, 1895

Population:		State total	1,334,734
		Native born	1,206,332
		Foreign born	128,402
Born in	Where from to Kansas		
Kansas	529,865	Kansas	525,662
Illinois	111,945	Illinois	145,449
Ohio	90,354	Missouri	123,356
Missouri	78,748	Iowa	81,744
Indiana	76,825	Indiana	69,951
Iowa	54,199	Ohio	63,801
Pennsylvania	48,357	Nebraska	35,588
Kentucky	30,423	Pennsylvania	34,410
New York	29,600	Kentucky	20,508
Nebraska	14,641	New York	18,029
Foreign	Foreign		
Germany	39,527	Germany	20,235
Scandinavia	18,285	Scandinavia	11,480
England and Wales	15,348	Russia	9,743
Ireland	11,800	England and Wales	6,438
Russia	10,740	British-American	5,326
British-American	9,283	South European	4,625

Decennial Census, 1895. Tenth Biennial Report of the Kansas State Board of Agriculture, Part 8, p. 541.

tially the same as the first census after settlement, the pioneer decade for each area. In other words, the newcomers of any decade, and the original settlers of the area behaved in the same fashion in terms of population losses for the particular area.

Furthermore, in relating losses to periods of drouth and economic depression, the rate of loss was not necessarily greater than for periods of favorable weather and prosperity. In fact, many samples revealed a lesser rate of loss for drouth and depression than for favorable weather and prosperity.

The aspect of population change that is most in need of clarification is that of population replacement in relation to losses. The rate of loss was relatively stable; but the rate of replacement was highly variable and that accounted for the net gain or loss of population for a particular area, and for the state as a whole.

Returning, then, to the general population growth figures the proportions of old settlers and newcomers take on a different significance in this turnover perspective. Could the whole of the Kansas census for 1860 be



TABLE 5 -  
Kansas Population, 1905

		State total	1,544,968
Population:		Native born	1,400,441
		Foreign born	118,378
Born in	Where from to Kansas		
Kansas	739,795	Kansas	733,608
Missouri	113,176	Missouri	162,629
Illinois	108,709	Illinois	129,837
Ohio	76,666	Iowa	79,083
Indiana	69,201	Indiana	61,378
Iowa	59,151	Ohio	53,262
Pennsylvania	41,677	Nebraska	39,786
Kentucky	27,923	Pennsylvania	29,592
New York	24,098	Kentucky	19,033
Nebraska	21,243	New York	15,541
Foreign	118,378	Foreign	68,709
Germany	43,124	Germany	24,411
Scandinavia	17,929	Scandinavia	11,144
England and Wales	13,203	Russia	10,242
Russia	11,535	England and Wales	5,920
Ireland	8,958	British-American	4,369
British-American	7,444	Ireland	2,756

"Decennial Census, 1905." 15 Biennial Report of the Kansas State Board of Agriculture (bound in, but paged separately), p. 44.

compared name for name with that of 1870, the operation would reveal quite exactly how few of the 100,000 were still in Kansas in 1870. As that has not been done, however, resort must be had to the farm operator turnover statistics, supplemented by less reliable but significant tentative generalizations about urban business establishments. Exploratory studies of the latter have been made, but are not in a form that lend themselves to statistical presentation. Nevertheless, this much may be said, that businesses using fairly substantial capital investments were on the whole much more stable than those requiring small capital outlays. The most unstable of all were the service occupations where labor was the prime investment: barbers, restaurant operators, real estate agents, etc. From all these sources, the conclusion seems reasonable as a tentative working hypothesis that the farm operator loss rate of 60 per cent or more for the first ten years from any base census year is not excessive for newcomers. On this basis, of the 100,000 population of 1860, approximately 40,000 might still be in the state in 1870. But such a small number would be virtually lost in a population of 364,399 in 1870, a ratio of something like one in nine, or one in ten.

A comparison of the populations of 1870 and 1880 would be more hazardous because of the larger number of seasoned settlers involved. The figure already calculated for 1880, of eight newcomers for every nine present in that enumeration, would be drastically modified; just how much would be a guess, possibly fourteen out of every fifteen. Conceding even the roughest approximation of accuracy, the possibility of early settlers, pre-Civil War population, acting as the determinant of Kansas culture as of 1880 or later, seems preposterous. Yet, a concession must be made to the influence of aggressive individuals and to the power of legends and symbols that had become an important emotional factor in the Kansas tradition, such as Memorial Day orators eulogized as Kansas ideals. Supporting this point of view also, was the sound statistical fact that until 1910 at least, the replacement population of newcomers came from substantially the same border states, with an emphasis on the northern border states that had comprised the original 100,000. The newcomers were new to Kansas to be sure, but allowing for variants, personal and locality-wise, the overall cultural trends embraced strong similarities.<sup>1</sup>

If the same techniques could be applied to the territorial population, comparing the settlers of the first three years with those of the census of 1860, an even more telling and drastic situation would be revealed. The newcomers of those first three years were induced to come to Kansas under undue excitement, and their disappointments and disillusionments were notorious. There is good reason to believe that the number who returned to the East or who went elsewhere was greater than from most other new settlements. Furthermore, numerically, the numbers who arrived in Kansas during those first three years was not large, whether from north, south, or border areas. Volume migration to Kansas came first in 1857 and the newcomers of 1857-1859 inclusive did not come under the abnormal conditions which had climaxed in the presidential campaign and its induced Kansas Civil War of 1856. It was this new population of 1857 that became critical in turning the scales, deciding that the freestate party should participate in the elections of the winter of 1857-1858 by which it seized control of both the territorial legislature of 1858 and the Lecompton state government under the nominally proslavery Lecompton constitution.<sup>2</sup> The number of fifty-sixers and earlier settlers who were present in the Kansas population of 1870 or 1880 was so small as to appear negligible statistically, either in absolute numbers or percentage-wise.

Having looked at the population problem statistically and arrived at these conclusions, the fact must be recognized that statistics do not tell the whole story. Qualifications have already been noted. At the time of the second inauguration of John A. Martin as governor of Kansas, January 1887, the nine men who had preceded him in that office were invited to attend the ceremonies. Of the first ten state governors, including Martin, except for Anthony and St. John, all had come to Kansas prior to the census of 1860. Of these

first ten governors three were born in Ohio, and two each in Pennsylvania and Indiana. One each was born in Massachusetts, Virginia and New York. Of the two post-war arrivals, St. John, of Indiana background, became notorious as the prohibition governor. The only New England born governor among the first ten, Charles Robinson, was opposed to prohibition, and near the end of his career ran for governor on the Democratic ticket. Also, he was a religious liberal. Where, if anywhere, in the record of Kansas governors is to be found the New England Puritan stereotype so often ascribed to Kansas? Statistically, this small group was insignificant, yet, placed in society as they were, the influence of these persistent men was out of proportion to numbers.

Newspaper editors afford another group that is worthy of attention. A list of eleven may be compiled, of men arriving prior to 1860 and still present in 1889, whose careers were sufficiently important to give them some statewide attention. Pennsylvania and New York contributed three each, Massachusetts two, and Ohio, Indiana and Maryland one each. Although their papers were primarily local in circulation, several of them received much wider recognition. Unquestionably of greatest importance throughout the whole period were Anthony of Leavenworth, John A. Martin of Atchison, Sol Miller of Troy and G. W. Martin of Junction City and Kansas City. Others moved about or otherwise interrupted their editorial activities. Over-emphasis on these men should be avoided, however, because, by the eight-  
 teen eighties the papers having an approximation of statewide coverage were edited by men who arrived after the Civil War--the Topeka Capital and the State Journal. The three Kansas City, Missouri papers, the Journal, the Star and the Times, drew a part of their staffs from Kansas journalism.

TABLE 6

## Kansas press: Territorial comers still active in 1889

D. R. Anthony	Massachusetts	1824-1904
John S. Gilmore	New York	1848-1913
Vincent J. Lane	Pennsylvania	1828-1914
G. W. Martin	Pennsylvania	1841-1914
John A. Martin	Pennsylvania	1839-1889
Sol Miller	Indiana	1831-1897
S. S. Prouty	New York	1835-1889
John Speer	Ohio	1817-1906
Jacob Stotler	Maryland	1833-1901
T. D. Thacher	New York	1831-1894
D. W. Wilder	Massachusetts	1832-1911

## TOWN PLANNING

Another approach to the study of Kansas culture is an analysis of town planning. Three types appear: those oriented to river navigation; to the public square; and to main streets. By coincidence, Kansas was being settled during the eighteen-fifties when the steam locomotive on rails was challenging the steam boat on rivers and before the outcome of that new technology was fully evident. The lag in culture evaluation of rail innovation was conspicuous, accentuated by the fact that the "old" system itself had been an innovation to the preceding generation. So substantial had been the advantages of steam navigation that it appeared secure. And besides, it was in the age-old tradition of water communication as fundamental to the organization of all society. The novelty of rail communication was thus doubly difficult to appraise. Familiar to all, however, was the orientation of river towns on the levee, just as on the seacoast all towns were oriented on the harbor water front. The street system must serve the river front and the levees. Wholesale and retail business establishments must occupy locations most convenient for unloading and breaking bulk for retail trade. Conversely, collecting and reshipment businesses must find places convenient for their peculiar requirements. Choice residence sites often occupied bluffs overlooking the river upstream from the commercial levee. The Kansas cities, both in Missouri and Kansas at the junction of the Kansas and the Missouri rivers, Leavenworth and Atchison, and lesser rivals on the right bank were all planned as typical river towns. Their immense advantage over inland towns was conspicuous during the first two decades of Kansas history. The coming of the railroad changed all that. Probably most town promoters thought that rails would be important primarily to supplement or complement river navigation. Only a few bold souls, who thought of rails as displacing altogether the river communication system, pointed out that in a railroad oriented culture, a river location might be a handicap--expansion being possible only in one direction. For the towns serving Kansas, on the west bank of the Missouri river, a railroad bridge was imperative, and the town that was first with such a facility might gain the decisive lead over rivals. The City of Kansas, Missouri (the old Westport Landing) dedicated its bridge in July 1869. Leavenworth and Atchison lagged, acquiring railroad bridges in 1872 and 1875 respectively.

Once the river town acquired its railroad, the next question was the effect of the new technology on the town's orientation. What, if anything, was the railroad equivalent of the levee as a unifying focus of the whole city's activities? In the beginning, each railroad insisted upon serving itself first, and the town might be divided in support of the claims of the several roads. The idea of a jointly owned terminal railroad, switching, and transfer facility, was slow in coming. Slow also was the conception of a union passenger station. Leavenworth's internal quarrels and rivalries certainly damaged

its competitive strength, and to put the matter in that language may be an understatement.

The town built around a square was in the southern tradition where the county was the minimal unit of local government. This type of town planning had been carried north of the Ohio river along with other traits typical of southern culture. Thus, regardless of whether the immigrants to Kansas were from the southern states directly, or from the border states, they were accustomed to the public square orientation. Inland eastern Kansas towns of the territorial period were mostly built around squares, the so-called proslavery towns, and the towns founded by freestate immigrants from the Ohio river border areas.

The third type of town planning was to build the business houses along a main street: Lawrence, Topeka, and Manhattan being the most notable examples of New England design. Again, note should be taken that the New England type of planning was not conspicuous during the period of territorial beginnings. Circumstances altered cases, however, and the proslavery town of Franklin, about five miles east of Lawrence, was built along the California Road as its Main street. The local situation, not imitation of New England, determined the plan.

After the Civil War, when central and western Kansas were settled, both of the latter town plans were used. County seat rivalries fostered the public square type, but often, even success in that enterprise did not always result in the dominance of the Square, as in Hill City, Ness City, Kinsley and Meade. Possibly the public square design was too pretentious. The village or small town could be accommodated in one or two blocks of business houses along a single street.

The railroad had its influence upon all inland towns. From them, unlike river towns, theoretically, railroads might radiate in all directions. In practice, where there was only one railroad, the Main street often intersected it at approximately right angles, with the railway station near the point of intersection. Where there were two or more railroads, each tended to maintain its own service facilities regardless of town planning, and often destroying any unity of town orientation that might have been planned. But in these respects, after the Civil War, Kansas was no different from other western states. After World War I, motor highways have introduced a series of further reorientations of town organization, and the end is not yet. Highways might be routed through the town, around the town, or might by-pass it altogether.

#### THEATRE AS AN EXAMPLE OF THE ROLE OF THE RAILROAD IN REORIENTING KANSAS

Returning the description to the first decades of Kansas history, the rivalry between railroads as innovators in competition with river navigation worked a reorientation of the whole area in relation to the southern and the

eastern United States. This may be illustrated meaningfully by reviewing, as one example, what happened to the theatre, a theme that involves more than commerce in commodities of the field and of the factory. During the eighteen-fifties, the resident theatrical company reigned at Leavenworth, and later was combined with the traveling star system. By the eighteen-seventies the complete traveling dramatic company was coming into its own.<sup>3</sup>

During the decade of the eighteen-fifties and the eighteen-sixties the fact is conspicuous that the Missouri river and water communications influenced, if they did not actually dominate, not only the orientation of theatre and other entertainment, but most aspects of the outlook and activities of the inhabitants of the Missouri valley. Until well along in the eighteen-sixties most travel necessary to entertainment was dependent upon the river almost as literally as showboats. The resident theatre associated with the traveling star system required the least possible dependence upon mobility, especially during the winter months when the river was closed to navigation. Theatre that required travel was peculiarly a summer institution. The orientation was upon New Orleans by way of Cincinnati or by way of St. Louis, and was based upon long practice and upon established personal relations.

Recruitment of actors for the resident company at Leavenworth was from St. Louis, Louisville, Cincinnati, or New Orleans. A study of the New Orleans theatre of the eighteen-fifties, and the eighteen-sixties, both before and after the American Civil War, reveals the major role of that city in relation to the interior river cities, extending to the Missouri river elbow region, and including Leavenworth. Many, if not most, of the stars who played in the Leavenworth Theatre played at the St. Charles and DeBar Theatres and others in New Orleans and in St. Louis. Except for physical equipment and size of the house, the theatergoer might not be able to distinguish which of the three cities he was in: New Orleans, St. Louis or Leavenworth.

By 1870 a revolution had occurred. The complete traveling dramatic troupe was taking over; was oriented upon Chicago; and was traveling by rail. These companies provided entertainment during the winter months and frequently recruited actors from the towns in which they played. By the early eighteen-eighties the specialized one-play company, originating in New York City, became a competitor of the traveling dramatic company that played a different bill each night for a week or ten days. But the specialized one-play company could not afford one-night stands in small towns, and thus tended to be limited to cities large enough to present the play more than once. In Kansas, the organization of theatre circuits provided a maximum of assured box office receipts with the minimum of travel expense for the specialized company. The multiple play traveling companies found difficulty in securing accommodation in the theatre of the larger towns, but still were without competition in the small towns.

Studies of the relations between Chicago and New York City need to be done. New York City dominance over Chicago in theatre paralleled closely

in time the centralization in New York City of so many other functions of society in the United States during the last third of the nineteenth century. The railroad was certainly a major factor in this whole process of reconstruction of society.

#### CONCLUSION

The question that emerges from such an analysis as is presented here is not whether Kansas is a child of New England, but takes on a different form: how did New England wield as much influence as it did, and how was the legend about New England parentage and Puritanism imposed upon the Kansas tradition contrary to so conspicuous a weight of available facts?

The Civil War, the so-called reconstruction issues that came in its wake, the settlement of Kansas by an unusually large proportion of Union soldiers, the dominance of the Republican party, making Kansas virtually a one-party state, all worked to crystallize thinking along a fairly uniform pattern in which no doubt was entertained about the moral imperative--the North won the war, saved the Union, freed the slave, therefore the North was morally right, and the Republican party claimed the credit, virtually equating the Republican party with the North. In terms of the mental conditioning of a whole people, this process was most effectively carried out. The mind of the Kansans, if not committed already to this point of view before coming to Kansas, was thoroughly indoctrinated, not in the facts of this history, but in the legend about history.

In referring to the Union veterans of the Civil War in this connection, it is necessary to differentiate between Union veterans as a whole and the G. A. R. The latter as an organization had only a small membership or scarcely any representation in Kansas until late in the eighteen-eighties and nineties. Its influence even at that date lay, not in numbers, but in organization which often arbitrarily assumed the role of speaking and acting for all Union veterans, and the public and historians have tended to accept this generalization without investigation of the facts. Also, action of veterans as such was sometimes, and more often than realized by historians, erroneously attributed to the G. A. R. So far as the Civil War legend was involved, with its moral concerns, the influence that had shaped thought was not New England Puritanism in the direct conventional sense, but rather, patriotism cast in the mold of the moral imperative and associated directly with living issues, the Union and the abolition of slavery. And, parenthetically, emphasis is in order that this moral commitment even about abolition of slavery was largely in consequence of the course taken by the war and postwar retrospect, and should not be confused with the debated issue of the "cause" of the American Civil War. So much that crystallized in people's minds after the event--results--has been read back chronologically into prewar years and attributed to causes.

The complex of attitudes associated with the Civil War tradition--patriotism--attained, almost if not quite, the status of a secular religion. So far as theology in the conventional sense was concerned, to be sure, Kansans were overwhelmingly Protestant, not Puritan, in any legitimate sense of that much-abused word. And the new scientific and philosophical ideas that were so potent in the nineteenth century in challenging theology came from Europe--Great Britain, Germany, and France. The conclusion seems justified that the challenge to theological orthodoxy by science and the higher criticism met with less intolerance than the challenge to patriotism as a secular orthodoxy.<sup>4</sup>

The subject of education--formal education--would require an essay at least as long as the present paper to present even its minimal outlines--the net conclusion of such a discussion being that education was not administered conspicuously in the proper sense as learning, but illustrated rather the power of indoctrination, confused by a conflict between imitation of Eastern models and pragmatic functionalism, all of which discouraged originality.

At this point the paper is brought to an arbitrary close--time has run out with only a sampling of features of Kansas culture. In dealing with the facts of history as differentiated from the legends about them, the observation has often been made that the legends, even though false, may themselves become causes. In the present connection the argument would run, that although Kansas is not a child of New England, the legend about it being such operated as though the legend was true. From this line of reasoning a paradoxical conclusion might be drawn, that facts of history are false and that the legends, the false, are true, both in the causal sense.

The mode of thought injected by this point of view involves the concept of action and reaction, or reciprocal action in the naive space-time frame of reference. A space and a time interval is implied between cause and effect. Reactions and reciprocal actions require further extensions of time. All this is futile and interposes a bar to effective thought. It is syllogistic manipulation in a near vacuum and is unrelated to the essential facts. Either party may assert and his opposite number deny, without arriving at a resolution of differences, each choosing his premise and scrupulously observing the rules of formal logic. The outcome must necessarily be intellectual defeatism.

A different approach is essential and one that preserves throughout the complete relatedness of all the facts present in the field. At the instant of decision, all the factors present in a situation act simultaneously. Sometimes this approach to the conceptionalizing of causation is called field theory. Regardless of the name, however, the principle utilized, simultaneity of action in the field, transcends the limitations of naive space and time and their relativisms. No priority in time, nor time intervals between any two or more factors are involved. Literally, all factors present in the field act together--simultaneity is an absolute. Once this mode of thought is pursued



to its conclusions the frustrations of the conventional theories of causation are dissolved.<sup>5</sup>

Such a reorientation of thought about causation cannot be pursued further at this time, but the reader is challenged to apply the principles to the subject matter of this paper and to other facts that are omitted but are equally pertinent. The opening of the second century of the history of Kansas would seem to be an appropriate time for some innovation.

The University of Kansas

Footnotes:

<sup>1</sup> These population analyses are drawn primarily from the present author's studies: John Brown and the Legend of Fifty-six (Philadelphia, 1942); "The turnover of farm population in Kansas," Kansas Historical Quarterly, 4 (November, 1935), 355-372; The Grassland of North America: Prolegomena to its history (Lawrence, 1947), Chapters 16-19. Compare with A. D. Edwards, "Influence of drought and depression on a rural community; a case study in Haskell county, Kansas," USDA Farm Security Administration, Social Science Research Report, No. 7 (Washington, 1939). Edwards used the same methodology.

<sup>2</sup> See the present writer's John Brown and the Legend of Fifty-six, Chapter 30, and "Notes on the writing of general histories of Kansas," Part One "The setting of the stage," and Part Two "J. N. Holloway, History of Kansas (Lafayette, Indiana, 1868)," Kansas Historical Quarterly, 21 (Summer, Winter, 1954), 184-223, 264-287.

<sup>3</sup> James C. Malin, "James A. and Louie Lord: Theatrical team--Their personal story, 1869-1889"; "Theatre in Kansas, 1858-1868. . ."; "Traveling theatre in Kansas"; Kansas Historical Quarterly, 22 (Autumn, 1956), 242-275; 23 (Spring, Summer, Autumn, Winter, 1957), 10-53, 191-203, 298-323, 401-438.

<sup>4</sup> The present author has dealt with aspects of philosophy and theology in several articles which afford some background for these conclusions: "Kansas Philosophers, 1871-. . .," Kansas Historical Quarterly, 24 (Summer, 1958), 168-197; "'Creative Evolution': The Philosophy of Elisha Wesley McComas, Fort Scott," Kansas Historical Quarterly, 24 (Autumn, 1958), 314-350; "William Sutton White, Swedenborgian Publicist. . .," Kansas Historical Quarterly, 24 (Winter, 1958), 426-457, 25 (Spring, Summer, 1959), 68-103, 197-228; "Ironquill's 'The Washerwoman's Song,'" Kansas Historical Quarterly, 25 (Autumn, 1959), 257-282; "Eugene Ware and Dr. Sanger: The Code of Political Ethics, 1872-1892," Kansas Historical Quarterly, 26 (Autumn, 1960), 255-266.

<sup>5</sup> Other discussions related to this one are to be found in the present author's The Contriving Brain and the Skillful Hand (Lawrence, 1955), Chapter 11, and in "Adventure into the Unknown by Relativist 'Man-afraid-of-his-mind!'" in an Emory University Symposium volume, Relativism and the Study of Man (Princeton, 1961).