

MODES AND TENSES

by Leona HOLBROOK

E/ On such a day as this in early April of 1967, I stood before a group of young professional students in an undergraduate class for physical education majors in a college on a tropical island in the centre of the Pacific Ocean.

There, on the windward side of that island, a place had been trimmed out of the lush emerald green of the natural vegetation for a school, its buildings, its service drives and its playing fields. There, the spume from wind-driven waves and the sea spirals and spins through the crags and crevices of the rocks on shore and trails away over the headland, diminishing and dissolving in lost streamers across the sports fields and over the roofs and towers of the library, the dormitories and the classroom buildings.

Here, in a classroom at the Church College at Laie on the Island of Oahu in the Hawaiian Islands, are forty young men and women. As I study their faces, their colours, their hair, their expressions, their body types, I see the likenesses of fine sculptured figures which were modelled or chiselled by Malvina Hoffman for her series for the Hall of Man in the Chicago Museum of Natural History and for the Smithsonian Institute in Washington, D.C. I see again the faces and the figures of natives I had seen in the bush, in the cities, and in the waters of the bay when I was very young and visited several of the island groups of the Pacific with my parents. I see here fine human beings from the whole Pacific area and the continents on the Pacific fringe. There are blacks, and blacks who are brown. There are browns, and browns who are black. There are caucasians who are called "white"; and there are orientals and others from the "Far East", who are shades or mixtures of pure brown, or black, or

yellow, or white. They come from island groups and continental borders which represent about one-third of the area of the globe.

Blue eyes and brown eyes and black eyes watch closely. I know I will look into these eyes, and I know I will talk to these people about the profession, about physical education, about universals. I must talk about ways which they will recognise and in words which they will understand well on the basis of their experiences and their needs. They are attentive and responsive.

In the middle of the room a handsome young man with features, colour and hair which I recognise as typical of Fiji, seems physically and personally to stand out even as I talk and direct my attention and remarks to all present. After the session, the professor in residence and I speak of the students, and I learn of some of them, their backgrounds, their names, and their activities. Jo is the big man from Fiji. Jo is a soccer player. Jo is a swimmer of great ability. Everyone likes Jo.

At the evening concert of dance and music which represents the People of the Pacific at the Polynesian Cultural Centre, Jo is a dancer presenting both powerfully and beautifully the tribal dances of Fiji. Jo participates with the dancers from the other islands in the dances he has learned from them. Jo is watched. Jo is a man of excellent personal substance. He is a fine human specimen, a worthy representative of his tribe and of his racial stock, the Melanesian. Jo is not to be forgotten.

I recalled them all there in the classroom as I left a dark island studded with midnight lights and the plane flew to the mainland toward the dawn.

I left the Pacific knowing and believing that these many young persons, college educated and prepared in professional education, would carry the teachings and the learnings inherent in physical education and in education to their own people on their islands and on their continental shores.

I knew that each one in his own situation would teach in his own way, and his people would learn through concepts and activities which might be both unique and enhancing to their specific mode of living.

I believed that these young professionals, for their association together and their study together, would convey to their countrymen, to their fellow nationals and to their tribesmen the imperative message which is spoken through activity - the message which speaks of biological reality, which calls for human quality and which depends upon universal truth.

For nearly three years I have seen the golden sunsets in the western sky knowing that the last darkening rays over our mainland mountains and plains and valleys were the first radiations of the rosy light of dawn on the tropical mists, the ceaseless waves, and the deep coloured islands of the Pacific.

I have recalled the school, the classroom, and the students, and I have thought of them back in their islands, in their cities and in their villages. I have remembered Jo.

Within a few hours from Hawaii I was quite directly dropped into a district convention of the AAHPER in one of our Eastern cities. There I heard it said, "*We must employ a person to be in the AAHPER office in Washington to project an image for our profession*". Some of the thoughts about Jo which had been in my mind as I had seen him in the classroom came to me as an answer. Here is a handsome big young Fijian. Who can project an image for such a man of substance? He needs no one to be an image for him. He will go out in the world and make his own way and do his own good work. There is a little blond modern dance teacher. Could a person who is to project an image for Jo also project an image for that dance teacher? Can she not best represent herself - tell her own story through her work? There also is a middle-aged professional, a man who is an administrator, a coach and an academic physical educator. Here, right here, is a grey-haired little old lady. Who can project an image for the four? We must all have our own substance and let our works and ourselves be known.

Can one person hired to project an image work for the many in their many assignments? Can one person contracted for employment project an image for the profession which will make up for some deficiencies, counteract some discrepancies and magnify many virtues? I must and can trust Jo to be his own man, to work for himself and for the profession, to be his own substance and to be responsible for his own image. I must leave many persons and professional responsibilities to many responsible professionals.

Seven weeks ago, a big man looking so brown he was near black came to my office; with quiet voice and gentle manner, he requested permission for late entry into a graduate class in History of Physical Education. "*You are Jo from Church College and Fiji?*"

"Yes."

From Jo's participation in class and elective seminars, I have gained understandings which affect my philosophy of

physical education and thus perhaps the resultant programme of action in which I may give suggestions, suggest directions or give direct leadership. In Jo's contributions, students are more than entertained or informed or amused or interested. They are stimulated, provoked and challenged in the variance of approach by a man whose whole world has been different from their own. They are re-affirmed in some of the verities which must exist-for all mankind.

Jo's tribal village, on one of the lesser islands of the Fiji group, is not on a main road. A few years ago, the tribal elders were given a chance to determine if they would have the road come to their village. They chose to have the road taken another way to preserve their respected and respectable quality of life which tribal experience and practised dignity had developed.

Jo explains that each person is taught to be self-respecting, to honour his parents and his ancestors, and to so conduct himself and his life as to do credit to his tribe. He explains that survival is not enough. The quality of life must be built and protected. He observes that after all the bushman in his village is not so different, for is that not what the man in civilisation seems to be seeking - both survival and the quality of life? Jo finds both survival and the quality of life in his own village and knows that he can be instrumental in creating the elements for continued survival and enrichment for the quality of life.

Jo explains that there must be biological joy, personal joy, human joy, and total joy in existence. His accounts of living responsibly in the environment - of working, of producing, of riding horses, of fishing, of giving some assistance to others - affirm his sense of living fully and joyfully, even in this present strange environment and intemperate climate. Jo has the habit of full joy. He takes his full personal joy with him wherever he goes.

In a conversation with Jo, I posed the question, "*Jo, you are a young man, a vigorous man - and, as you have stated - a 'primitive' or a 'bushman'. You were raised on a tropical isle. I am nearly two generations away from you. I was born in this valley and raised in cities. Is there a generation gap between us?*" Jo answered easily and readily in gentle steady emphatic words as he reached out two hands part way over the desk and pushed his head and body forward, "*No, because I reach out to you and you reach out to me, and we both fill up our lives and ourselves.*"

Jo tells that the uncle, the grandfather and the father give leadership, training and direction to the youth in their

tribe. Young men are encouraged to perform excellently and they are acknowledged when they do so. They are not chided for failure but are consoled or comforted and given aid or direction in developing other participating or contributing skills or talents. In the "Old Fiji", the best fisherman brought his biggest and best fish to the chief. On a fishing expedition or a related type of endeavour, the non-producer still served his tribe well for he was, in the cannibal practice, eaten. Thus if one were not a producer, he contributed to the economy by becoming a product. What is the wisdom in that old practice? Can the wisdom provide some ideas for new and modern and improved practices?

Jo's grandfather put him as a four-year-old in the dance circle with the men. By experimenting and treating and with some patterning after the older boys and men, and with some instructing by interested elders, Jo became a dancer. He was pleased with his endeavours and his relation to the tribe and their recognition of him. Jo put himself into his own world and brought the parts of his life together and gathered the essential elements of his world around him.

Jo and I discussed some of the problems of our modern world. We spoke briefly of underdevelopment and strife in nations, in cities and in race and colour ranks. I explained that some economists have spoken of "have" nations and "have not" nations. Persons have spoken of the "haves" in the social structure and of the "have nots". I proposed to Jo that in addition to those who "have" or "have not", there may be those who "know" and those who "do not know"; there may be those who "do" and those who "do not". Some economists have proposed that the "haves" should give a share of their products and possessions to the "have nots". Jo readily responded, *"Some little from those who 'have' might need to be given to the 'have nots' just for starting, but the ones who 'know' must teach the others what it is essential for them to 'know' and the ones who 'do' must help the others to learn to 'do'. One must know and do in order to have. Primitive or underdeveloped peoples should be given the assistance in finding out the things they should know and in learning how to do. They should not be given quantities of projects they have not learned to care enough about to produce. The emphasis must be upon teaching them how. If they are underdeveloped, they need to develop. To give underdeveloped people something they do not have does not develop them"*.

Jo is described by one who knows him well, *"He is a fierce, fair and clean player on the soccer field. In other situations he is gentle, kind and full of natural, endowed and developed wisdom"*.

The title of this speech is "Modes and Tenses". I have elected to apply and interpret the title toward the last of the presentation so we might philosophically apply and interpret together. For philosophers as you are today, that is better than to fill mechanically an outline from the beginning.

So the title: "Modes and Tenses". What is a "Mode"? The dictionary says,

Mode:

1. *Manner or form of being.*
2. *Gram. Mood.*
3. *Philos. The manner, appearance or form in which a basic substance is manifested.*

"Mood" (because that word was listed above, under mode).

1. *Gram. The set of distinctive forms of a verb showing the attitude and understanding of the speaker regarding the action or condition expressed.*

The indicative mood is used for factual statements, the subjunctive mood to indicate doubt or unlikelihood, and the imperative mood to express a command.

There are modes in the verbs which have been used to describe Jo and his activities or which characterise him in his manner or form of being. It is interesting that the verbs which describe what we do, often in another word form describe what we are, as "to run" - "a runner" - or "to paint" - "a painter". Philosophically, a mode is "the manner, appearance or form in which a basic substance (the basic person himself) is manifested.

And so "the mood" . . . (shows) "the attitude and the understanding of the speaker (and thus, the hearer) regarding the action or condition expressed" . . . and "the indicative mood is . . . for factual statements, the subjunctive mood to indicate doubt or unlikelihood, and the imperative mood to express a command". There are many indicatives in our racial and biological history, there are some subjunctives in our history and our future, and there are many imperatives for our present and our future.

Past, present and future are the tenses. They come simple, as just stated, yet there are past perfects, present perfects and future perfects. The indicative and the properly selected imperatives can help us to make for a present perfect and lead us toward a future perfect.

"What understandings are gained?" That deals with tenses; that is the past blending into the present. "And how can they affect pursuit of programmes of action?" That is the present leading into the future.

We can gain these understandings by our view of our land and our people, by our knowledge of the world of mankind, by our perspective of the broad Pacific and its many peoples, and by our reflecting upon and analysing what we have learned from Jo.

1. We must constitute our own quality in personal and professional substance.
2. We must plan and work for survival. We must concern ourselves with the survival of man and his full spirit. Subsistence or biological survival is not enough. A man's life must be endowed with ethical, intellectual and spiritual qualities.
3. We must make and find and amplify the factors which make for human joy.
4. We must reach out and help others to reach out and we must fill up ourselves. We must aid others to fill the hollows in their lives, so they may not know the voids which torment and the gaps which drive them as fellow human beings to acts of despair and to deeds of destruction.
5. We must help people to accomplishment, to expression, to recognition and to wholeness.
6. We must help our "have nots" to "know" and to "do" so they may by their own production "have". We must help them to develop and thus possess the continuing means to produce and thus to have.

Josais Vakalala from Nahalili Rewa Vitilevu gives emphasis to his statement that he will go home to his island to pursue a positive programme of action for his people. He has developed his own understandings with us.

We will go back to our homes and to our work. Have we developed our understandings as we have met with the young men and women and the professionals of our mainland, and have we learned from Jo?

The modes are indicative and imperative; the tenses are present and future.

L. H.