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Doctors and Patients: Reflexions on the Problem of
Social Change

Social change, it is often said, has two sources: one being the internal dynamism of a group, power struggles, technical innovations, pressures by restricting customs, to give but a few main examples. The second source lies in external influences: commercial imports, studies abroad, tourists, conquests would be examples for such external stimuli of social change.

These two sources, in practice, are not exclusive; they join forces, although in most cases not equally. We might say, however, that in developing countries during the colonial and post-colonial periods, external stimuli have been of particular importance for social change. Social change, for these cultures, often did not consist in developing or in gradually transforming existing patterns of life, but in the abrupt introduction of alien ones.

Being interested in social change, we thought that two main problems would be, first, along which channels new information traveled into a culture, and, second, how they were selected for adoption. The following assumptions may be made:

