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RECOGNITION BY ABORIGINALS OF EXPRESSIVE SOUNDS DERIVED FROM EXPRESSIVE
TOUCH OF URBAN SUBJECTS
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Expressive forms in touch and sound measured and produced according to the methods described in the previous two papers were presented to northern Aboriginal subjects. These sound forms may function implicitly in musical and vocal communication of various cultures. Although the specific touch expressions had been previously measured in Bali, Japan and Mexico, as well as in the U.S. (Clynes: Ann. N.Y. Acad. Sci., Vol. 220, Art. 3, pp. 55-131, 1973), sound forms generated from these were tested only in Australian urban populations. Would these particular sound and touch forms be recognized by a population of different cultural background? This question was tested by obtaining results from a group of Aboriginals in the Northern Territory. It was expected that if these forms are universal human characteristics they should find their echo at least as readily among Aboriginals as among the groups with whom they were tested originally. The results concerning discrimination between expressive sounds expressing Anger, Hate, Grief, Love, Sex, Joy and Reverence will be presented as well as the results of how Aboriginals selected specific expressions of a particular emotion from a group of similar expressive sounds that had been deliberately distorted in various slight degrees, by changing the parameters. The findings relate to the thesis that these expressive forms are of biologic origin rather than culturally developed, and thus common to mankind.