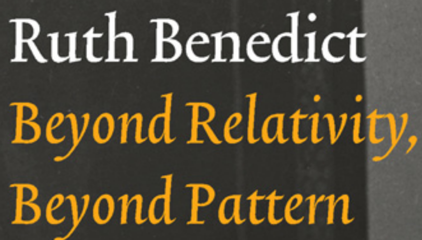

# Ruth Benedict

## *Beyond Relativity, Beyond Pattern*

Virginia Heyer Young

*Ruth Benedict*

Critical Studies in the History of Anthropology

SERIES EDITORS: Regna Darnell, Stephen O. Murray

# Ruth Benedict

# *Beyond Relativity,*

# *Beyond Pattern*

Virginia Heyer Young

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## SERIES EDITORS' INTRODUCTION

Ruth Benedict's *Patterns of Culture* was a bestseller in 1934, catapulting its author to prominence as an articulate spokesperson for examining different cultural patternings. Her ability to write clearly and aesthetically opened the insights of cultural anthropology to a general audience, even without the kind of exoticizing "free love" titillation that helped make Benedict's student Margaret Mead's *Coming of Age in Samoa* a bestseller six years earlier. Benedict brought to life the consequences at cultural borders of cultural relativity, both as method and epistemology, while providing a critique of interwar U.S. society that was more implicit but also more comprehensive than Mead's discussion of other lifeways as providing "lessons."

Popular success is rarely a boon to a professional career. Few anthropologists now know much about Benedict's work after 1934, except that she, along with Boas, wrote against race in the Nazi years and during World War II. Few of Benedict's projects other than the description of Japanese ethos(es) were finished or published. *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword: Patterns of Japanese Culture* (1946), a bestseller at the time, is remembered, if at all, as a period piece, reflecting a rather naive anthropological effort to advise an American government first combating and then occupying Japan. The influence of this book in the postwar reconstruction of Japan and the ready acceptance of anthropological expertise in the public domain have receded from professional awareness in a more cynical era.

On several counts, Virginia Heyer Young's work redresses the imbalance in remembering Ruth Benedict. First, Young concentrates on the later years, when Benedict herself spoke of the need to move "beyond relativity." The contemporary challenge to the anthropological concept of cultural relativity from cultural studies, philosophy, and so forth renders it imperative to reexamine the limits of the concept in the thinking of one of its primary architects. Benedict was unwilling to dissolve into nihilism; indeed, she wanted a relativity in understanding cultural difference to ground the comparative scientific study of cultural values, at both the psychological and group levels.

Second, the position of the author as a student of Benedict's in the final years of her life provides readers a personalized access to Benedict's thoughts and actions as a teaching and senior anthropologist. Feminist scholars will be intrigued by the women's networks around Benedict. Young has her own take on Benedict as a scholar and mentor, but she is also faithful to her documentary sources (in addition to the class notes she and others preserved, correspondence, and other documents not previously available to scholars).

Third, there is an enormous documentary labor reflected in the collection of class notes from students in Benedict's later courses. Although these notes are hardly the polished products Benedict might have crafted them into before publishing them, readers will be able to evaluate for themselves the problems she was grappling with and the emerging nature of her conclusions. Benedict's story also sheds light on the story of the Columbia department of anthropology of which she was a member for so long.

Finally, many of Benedict's later ideas, such as those on social cohesion and synergy, are remarkably contemporary in tone and insight. She foreshadowed the interdigitation of literary criticism and poetics with ethnographic writing. She used cross-cultural context as a standpoint from which to critique her own society. The later Benedict who emerges from this book is remarkably contemporary and deserving of reexamination, however belatedly.

*Regna Darnell and Stephen O. Murray*

# PREFACE AND ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I could never toss out my graduate school notes from Ruth Benedict's courses. They became eventually the beginning point for this book. In each culling of my files for an office or house move, I threw out some of my Columbia anthropology notes, but with just a glance at those from Ruth Benedict's courses I was reminded of the steady flow of original ideas and interpretations, the critiques and references within anthropology, and the special points she had written little about but introduced in her courses, in some cases fully developed, at other points an outline of a conceptual scheme, sometimes merely noting promise in colleagues' ideas. Fascinated as I was by Benedict's teaching, I hardly understood her full thought or her place in the intellectual climate of her times, although when I worked for her research project in my second year as a graduate student I could observe her at the center of a large group of congenial intellectuals launched on an innovative endeavor, the study of national character. Benedict's thought and writings had gone far beyond *Patterns of Culture*, yet when she died suddenly she had not completed several major projects, and no one except her knew what all the pieces were, where they were preliminarily presented, or how they fit together. No one among her associates tried to put the pieces together, and I, as a third-year graduate student, did not recognize what might be done.

Anthropology moved far away from Benedict's methods and concepts soon after she died. Even the culture and personality field, which she had helped shape and which she favored as the center of cultural anthropology, turned to a more specialized development of a psychoanalytic framework. In ethnography, a new "thick description" made comparison of cultures more difficult and prevailed over the method and objective of comparativism that Benedict had promoted. Specialists from political science, psychology, and literary studies, whom she had brought together to integrate diverse data and viewpoints the way she had done in her holistic national culture papers, went in their own directions. The new trends forced questioning of the validity of the idea of culture pattern, of the holistic framework that she sought, and of the reliability of ethnography.

Anthropologists, including myself, worked within the new trends. *Patterns of Culture* continued to be read as a classic treatise on culture, and *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword* was generally admired as an achievement in holistic representation of culture, yet no one tried to replicate Benedict's methods. When the study of national cultures reemerged in anthropology after three decades, few of its proponents made reference to Benedict's previ-

ous studies, even when they wrote on the same national cultures. Benedict's comparisons of the constituents for a "free society" were forgotten and were not pursued in anthropology, and as a result she is taken to be a "full relativist" disregarding human universals. Her concept of "self" was not the one taken up in psychological anthropology, and only recently it has reappeared as though a new idea. Most of Benedict's major writings that followed *Patterns of Culture* remained in manuscript form. Her plans for two books, one on her theoretical approach to culture and one on her concept of national culture, were not brought together, but many parts of each planned book were written.

After I retired from teaching, I looked more closely at my old student class notes and tried again to understand the intellectual endeavor presented there. It was impressive, but it was in the fragmentary form of student class notes. I searched her papers archived in the Vassar College Library, and there I saw the abundance and maturity of her late work. In the context of this unpublished writing, many published articles gained significance, and the structure of her courses took on wide reference. She had made many of the same points in class and in written form, but the lectures contained enlargements and different ways of stating ideas, striking imagery, and examples not found elsewhere. In addition, they were designed as basic graduate education, and as such they defined her whole anthropological thought and placed her pursuits explicitly in relation to those of colleagues and to influential past formulators of the discipline. Brought together, lecture notes, manuscripts, and published articles and books gained meaning. It was clear that the scattered articles, the public lectures, the analyses of national cultures, and the courses were all of a whole. They were Benedict's post–*Patterns of Culture* thought and work, ranging over numerous societies, with many loose ends, but the parts all as fine hewn as her books.

Recognizing the contribution to her thought that the class notes represented, I searched for more copies of notes taken in her courses to compare, or combine, with mine. A useful resource was the membership directory of the Columbia Graduate Anthropology Alumni Association, which formed and began publishing a newsletter, *AnthroWatch*, in 1993. I wrote or telephoned everyone in the directory whose degree date matched Benedict's teaching years. When phone calls startled some aged or ill persons, raising specters of old battles, I wrote apologetic letters and soon was using the mails entirely. *AnthroWatch* ran a series of recollections of the Columbia faculty as far back as members' memories could go, and a few commented on Benedict. I placed an ad there for notes from Benedict's courses but received no replies. In the Benedict papers at Vassar, I found two seating charts that students had

signed in different periods. Letters were sent to the names I recognized and could find addresses for, and some of these persons knew the first names or whereabouts of the cryptic last names written on the charts. But I found no notes. I placed an ad in the Cooperation Column of the *Anthropology Newsletter*, and another issue printed a brief article on my project and a request for notes, but no replies came. Many of the people I contacted had taken her courses, but all had discarded their notes. There were some wild goose chases. Jane Richardson Hanks had loaned her notes to Preston Holder to study for his orals, and he had never returned them. She wanted them back, and I wanted them, too. Preston Holder had died, but the chairman of his old department at the University of Iowa gave me the address of Holder's widow, Joyce Wyke. I had met them both at Columbia when they had the esteemed status of returned students from the field. The notes might be in their old Iowa house, and when she went back to clean out the house and sell it she would look for them, but each time I called she had not gone back.

During these searches, calls to two former classmates, Marion Marcovitz Roiphe and Eric R. Wolf, were cause for elation, for both had saved their notes. Both sent their notes to me, enthusiastic about the project. Discouraged by my meager findings from a lengthy search, I began compiling the sets into combined texts, while still searching for names of former Columbia anthropology students. I remembered an obituary in the *Anthropology Newsletter* of another former classmate, William S. Willis, who had died suddenly in 1983. The newsletter staff found the author of the obituary, Ira Harrison, and when he had cleared his desk off at the end of a semester, he finally answered my letter with information that Willis's papers were archived in the American Philosophical Society in Philadelphia. Happily, they included all his class notes from Columbia. I had been resigned to having only three sets of notes. To find a fourth, very full set was, to use one of Ruth Benedict's favorite phrases, "manna from heaven." All of these sets happened to be for the years 1946–48. I had sought notes from any year, but I found that the duplicate sets enlarged the amount of her lectures that were transcribed and provided cross-checks that aided accuracy. The five course "texts" make up the appendixes. I discuss my problems and methods in compiling the notes in an introduction to the appendixes. Many of the points to be made in this book derive from these course lectures. They are referenced with the abbreviated name of the course and the date of the lecture. Many of the people I contacted compensated for their regret at having thrown away something suddenly in demand by writing recollections of Benedict, and these anecdotes enliven my section on the recorded memories of Benedict.

In preparing this book, I had assistance that I would like to acknowledge

here. The help and cooperation of Nancy McKechnie and her successor, Dean Rogers, curators of Special Collections of the Vassar College Library, where most of Ruth Benedict's papers are archived, were central to my task. Mary Wolfskill, curator of the Margaret Mead papers archived in the Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, provided much assistance in working with the documents of the Research in Contemporary Cultures project and the correspondence between Mead and Benedict. Lambros Comitas at the Research Institute for the Study of Man informed me of a small, seldom-known collection of Ruth Benedict's papers in which I found several important papers that had not been in her own files, which constitute the Vassar collection. I have much appreciated the encouragement and critical reading of Richard Handler early in this project. Peter Suzuki located sources I had despaired of finding. Rosalind Rosenberg's interest stimulated new thoughts. Regna Darnell's guidance at many stages of the writing process has greatly improved the manuscript and is much appreciated. Robert Burchfield did the final copyediting of the manuscript in a most masterful way, improving all but the unimprovable. I alone am responsible for the inherent shortcomings. My husband, James Sterling Young, gave me perspective on the political aspects of Benedict's work on the United States, and since he knew the Columbia scene and the anthropology department soon after Benedict's time, he has been a constant consultant.

# CHAPTER 1
# Ruth Benedict's Life and Work

## Knowledge of Ruth Benedict's Thought

Ruth Benedict is a central figure in cultural anthropology, yet her thought is generally known only by one book, *Patterns of Culture*, published in 1934, fourteen years before her sudden death. Her later books, *Race: Science and Politics* (1940) and *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword: Patterns of Japanese Culture* (1946), were widely read but were not principally statements of culture theory, as *Patterns of Culture* was and as were a number of articles and papers on the new investigations she began after *Patterns of Culture*. She began to note observations of social conditions underlying personal security and individual freedom, noting them first in research memoranda and, a few years later, in publications. Her articles on personal freedom seldom have been a subject of commentary. This was an ambitious comparative search in which she attempted to find "laws" for a "cohesive society." In the same period, she published several articles that carried further her viewpoint on the relation of individuals to culture. Later she wrote studies of the national cultures of Thailand, Romania, and the Netherlands that employed further alterations of her concept of culture, particularly by referencing history significantly and by presenting a model for individuals living within the strictures of their culture, a model that grew out of her earlier portrayals of individuals molded by their culture. Benedict's studies of national cultures have been available and circulated in the mimeographed editions prepared for their sponsor, the Office of War Information (OWI), but have seldom been taken into account as representations of her concepts. All of this work is found in numerous manuscripts of lectures and prospectuses of projects archived in her papers.

*Patterns of Culture* would be named a classic by most anthropologists. It drew an image of a people's selection from "a great arc of potential human purposes and motivations . . . material techniques or culture traits," a selection that was the source of a configuration, and it gave coherence and psychological consistency to the culture (Benedict 1934:219). The configu-

ration shaped the social institutions and the ongoing choices, conditioned the thought and behavior of the people, and tended to be maintained. The book also challenged ethnocentrism found in much scholarly work and in public opinion by arguing that the many independent preliterate cultures of the world, which had endured, nurtured generations, and maintained institutional continuity, had proved their success in meeting the fundamental problems of continuing human life. All should be recognized as workable ways of living. Benedict's achievement was in adding a psychological and configurational framework to a fundamental, but not always observed, relativistic position in the anthropology of her times. *Patterns of Culture* presents many other aspects of the idea of configuration, and the reader will find them described for different points to be made throughout this introduction to her subsequent work.

As Ruth Benedict wrote *Patterns of Culture*, new questions engaged her. She wrote in the penultimate chapter: "It is possible to scrutinize different institutions and cast up their cost in terms of social capital, in terms of the less desirable behavior traits they stimulate, and in terms of human suffering and frustration" (Benedict 1934:229). This was the opposite side of the coin. Cultural relativity was not the full lesson of the comparative study of cultures. It was true of forms but not of functioning, as she phrased the point in her course on theory, noting that "cultural relativism breaks through ethnocentrism, but the study of cultural relativism is not final. . . . There is a cultural relativity fallacy" (Theory 1/15/48). Cultures can be shown to function for a general good, or with excessive human suffering, or by exploitation of some members. Benedict took the investigation of the functioning of cultures, and the weighing of culture's effect on individuals, as her first work after *Patterns of Culture*. She thought it was possible to find correlations of cultural "arrangements" with their effects on social life, effects such as "minimizing aggression and frustration," "social cohesion," "vigor and zest," "a sense of being free," and cultural arrangements that were detrimental to social well-being. She sought a method for weighing which cultural arrangements that had been described and assessed in particular societies were broadly beneficial and which ones appeared to benefit only the few. More limited judgments of parts of cultures had been made in *Patterns of Culture*, particularly concerning cultural attitudes toward psychological misfits, attitudes that in some cultures were tolerant and in others labeled these persons as abnormal. In this new search that she soon launched, she envisioned a social science for identifying causes and deterrents of particular "social outcomes." Benedict was explicit in her differentiation of the words "social" and "cultural," the former referring to the relations among individuals and groups and the

latter a more inclusive concept encompassing "habits," "values," "attitudes," and organizational patterns. She initially attempted controlled comparisons within culture areas using a diffusionist model of reinterpretation of selected traits, but she later by-passed this method – apparently because habits, values, and attitudes were not well enough described in many field studies – and she illustrated social effects by whichever ethnographies best elucidated them. Comparison was her principal method for insights and exposition, whether she arrived at her perceptions through comparison of twenty cultures, as she first planned to do, or two cultures, as she found expeditious for brief presentation. Benedict came to emphasize deep perceptions rather than numbers of cases. She designated this problem "an area beyond cultural relativity" (u.p. ca. 1937). As she worked with a social science to connect causal conditions and social outcomes, Benedict began to look more closely at processes of culture change and came to think that, through understanding change, rational direction of change would be possible. The underlying assumption she worked with was that of cultural relativity. It provided perspective in locating cultural causes of social outcomes, and the principle of relativity guided knowledge needed for altering them. This was the first of her post–*Patterns of Culture* projects.

The comparative book she planned was put off because of her "duty" to write a book on race – a few months before her decision the Nazi police condoned a public rampage that destroyed a German Jewish community, the event known as *Kristelnacht*, and American racism was at that time causing great suffering – and when *Race: Science and Politics* was completed in 1940, the comparative book was put off again for an invited lecture series. The lectures, the Anna Howard Shaw lectures at Bryn Mawr College in 1941, were thought never published by Benedict and the original manuscripts lost or destroyed by her, as described in chapter 3. Several parts of the lecture manuscripts had been copied, preserved, and later published by two of her students (Maslow and Honigman 1970). Recently, the complete manuscripts of five of the six lectures have been identified in her papers. Benedict's letters indicate that she initially intended the lectures to be published as a book defining her concepts of anthropology, but as she wrote the series the last two of the six lectures were given over to anthropological insights into the national and world crises of the period. With the manuscripts now available, it is clear that she published the part of the lectures addressed to public issues in periodicals read by general readers. Her letters discuss her plan to use the sections on anthropological theory in a textbook. The textbook, and again her project on an area beyond relativity, was put off when she accepted requests to aid the U.S. government in the tremendous task of understanding

other nations that suddenly had become allies, or enemies, in World War II. Benedict and other anthropologists played a large role in writing guidance for explaining the actions of wartime governments and the thought behind them. Her work on these problems employed the idea of culture pattern, and it also occasioned a major refinement of that idea, a new way of representing patterns that she developed in the set of national culture studies.

Although the comparative book she planned on the functioning of cultures was never written, a very full record of the diverse parts of her thought on this subject remains. Several published articles present the subject, and other unpublished materials include lectures, a first chapter of a planned book, and statements of anticipated findings in grant applications. All of these are now in her papers in the Vassar College Library or in a small collection in the Research Institute for the Study of Man. As I pieced together the scattered manuscripts defining her plans and ideas, I realized that although Benedict's main objective of the late 1930s had never been completed, her manuscripts could be collected and arranged to reveal the development and envisioned outcome of this work. Benedict's later work on national cultures consists of her reports for OWI on Thai, Romanian, Dutch, and Japanese cultures and numerous memoranda for that office on more specialized topics. These papers are available in the National Archives. *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword* is in print and still is discussed in studies of Japanese culture. Her writings during the postwar phase of this work, the Research in Contemporary Cultures (RCC) project, as well as the organizational files of that project and all other documents written for it, are filed with Margaret Mead's papers in the Library of Congress. Only when this work is studied as a whole is the consistency of Ruth Benedict's objectives clear.

## Ruth Benedict's Early Life

Ruth Fulton Benedict was born in New York City in 1887 to Bertrice Shattuck Fulton and Frederick Fulton, both from rural Norwich, New York, and both from deeply religious Baptist families. Her parents were professionals, her mother educated at Vassar College and a schoolteacher and her father a New York City homeopathic doctor and surgeon, the same profession his own father practiced in Norwich. She wrote of her childhood in "The Story of My Life," a manuscript from 1935 published posthumously as part of Margaret Mead's selections from her writings, *An Anthropologist at Work* (1959:97–112). Her father died at age thirty-one, when Ruth was twenty-one months old and her sister, Margery, was three months old, after his year-long fight against an infection thought to have been contracted in the medical research

he loved. The bereaved mother and daughters remained on the maternal grandparents' farm, the site of the father's death, until Ruth was past six years old. Her mother taught school in town, and the two young girls were often cared for in the town apartment and on the farm by their three maternal aunts. The frugal grandparental farm was a secure, but severe, place for the child, Ruth. She probably transferred her experience of upstate New Yorkers to New Englanders when she said in a class lecture: "The cultural core is like a centrifugal force . . . organized around a central emphasis, for example, that everything is a fight. Then engaging in agriculture is a fight, as for old New Englanders, in contrast to Italian peasants for whom agriculture was conducted as loving the soil. If everything is a fight, then it is thought one fights women, fights buffalo, and so on" (Personality and Culture 12/10/46). She imagined a different family from her own in "the beautiful country on the other side of the west hill where a family lived who had a little girl about my age. This imaginary playmate and her family lived a warm, friendly life without recriminations and brawls" (in Mead 1959:99). She wrote of her staunch grandfather, a Baptist deacon and a farmer, leading the kneeling family in daily morning prayers; he sometimes protected her private world, but he was not a close paternal figure. Since he had four daughters and no sons, the farm work was done by hired hands. The women cooked for a number of persons that far exceeded the family members and probably included farm hands, and Ruth and her sister prepared the vegetables and washed the dishes. While they washed dishes they memorized verses of poetry and the Bible. Because her father died before she could remember him, Ruth would retreat from the family into a fantasy world of nature to try to retrieve or construct memory of her father during his struggle to live, imagining "a worn face illuminated with the translucence of illness, and very beautiful." Shortly before she wrote her brief autobiography, Benedict had been told by an aunt about an incident she had no memory of, that her mother had taken her to see her father in his coffin, where her mother

> in a hysteria of weeping implored me to remember. Nothing is left to me consciously of this experience, but if it is suppressed it would go a long way to explain the effect my mother's weeping has always had on me, . . . an excruciating misery with physical trembling of a peculiar involuntary kind which culminated periodically in rigidity like an orgasm. . . . Certainly from my earliest childhood I recognized two worlds whether or not my knowledge was born at that tragic scene at my father's coffin – the world of my father, which was the world of death and which was beautiful, and the world of confusion and explosive weeping which I repudiated. I did not

> love my mother; I resented her cult of grief, and her worry and concern about little things. But I could always retire to my other world, and to this world my father belonged. I identified him with everything calm and beautiful that came my way. . . . Happiness was in a world I lived in all by myself, and for precious moments. There were quite a number of ways I could put myself in order for them; I associate them especially with holding a sleeping kitten on my lap on the woodshed steps looking out over the east hills, and with shelling peas for the family – there were thirteen or fourteen to feed and it was a long job – at peace on the front porch while everybody else was busy in the kitchen. The transition back again into the mundane world and all its confusions was likely to be stormy. The family were constantly exercised about my ungovernable tantrums. (in Mead 1959:98–99)

As she described her childhood tantrums, they expressed frustration in her efforts to visit a fantasy world, the world of inner experiences in which she attempted to retrieve memory of her father. With family discipline by means of weeping over her and confining her to her room, she abandoned "tantrums," but the reality of her other world brought continued rebellion in the form of episodes of vomiting and illness, and later depression, experiences she described as "outside invasions of my person, and it seemed to me that devils swept down on me. . . . [The episodes] were more acceptable than unwanted participation in the 'other' world that was not 'mine' " (in Mead 1959:108). The preferred world of fantasy was the first of the cultures, different from her family's, that she valued. It was a deeply relativist experience.

The mother and children moved, where she found jobs as teacher, school principal, or librarian in Midwestern towns, and after a few years they settled in Buffalo, New York. There the sisters were given scholarships in an Episcopal girls' school. They were accompanied on these moves by one or another of their three maternal aunts, who helped care for the family. Ruth had a secure extended family but remained distant from her mother and continued to feel keenly her deprivation of an idealized father. The farm remained the place of summer retreat for Ruth Benedict her whole life.

Ruth and her sister were educated at Vassar College. A family acquaintance sponsored full scholarships for them because the farm family could not have afforded to send them to college. Ruth majored in literature and was elected to Phi Beta Kappa. They both graduated in 1909. The parents of college friends sponsored a year of travel in Europe for their daughters and the Fulton sisters. After the year in Europe, Ruth taught at a girl's boarding school in Pasadena, California, where her recently married sister and her mother

had settled. Ruth kept a journal intermittently as a young woman, selections from which Margaret Mead included in her collection of Benedict's writings. She became dissatisfied with her job because of the chaperoning expected of teachers in a girls' school and returned to the family farm with a plan to renovate the orchard in order to support herself as a writer. She decided that summer to accept the long courtship of Stanley Benedict, a professor of biochemistry at Cornell University Medical School. In the first years of her marriage, she researched the lives of several nineteenth-century feminists whom she admired. She wrote in a journal of the tasks of a suburban housewife, writing at first of their routineness and soon that they were ridiculous and intrusions on her ambition to apply herself to writing, "to speak out the intense inspiration that comes to me from the lives of strong women" (in Mead 1959:140). Instead of writing, however, she spent 1916 and 1917 in "the meddling of social work. . . . In a sense I'm satisfied with the job," and she named her accomplishments in it (in Mead 1959:141). She had expected to have children and wrote in her journal that children probably gave women a sense of fulfillment and at least gave them a useful project, but the marriage was infertile. Stanley's presence was "ecstasy" and "quiet understanding," but when she spoke to him about her frustration in her desire to apply herself to writing he criticized her inability to find satisfaction, and their harsh words further estranged them.

> The intimacy is proved, established; all he asks is to keep an even tenor. . . . But I'm made of the exactly antithetical scheme – it is my necessary breath of life to understand, and expression is the only justification of life that I can feel without prodding. The greatest relief I know is to have put something in words . . . so we grow more and more strange to the other – united only by gusts of feeling that grow to seem more and more emptiness in our lives, not part and parcel of them; and by an intolerable pity for each other as human beings cruelly tortured. (in Mead 1959:143)

Margaret Caffrey's biography of Benedict depicts the cultural influences of the times playing on Benedict's ambivalence in her acceptance of a conventional married life and recounts also her attempts to bring humor and imagination into the marriage.[1] Her inability to formulate her thoughts in words drove her to move beyond the satisfactions and compromises in her marriage to seek a vocabulary, a framework, for understanding human life.

A year and a half before she wrote the journal entry last quoted, Benedict had already started seeking such a framework. She had enrolled in a course with John Dewey at Columbia University in January 1919 and was inspired by it. Dewey went on leave the following fall, and she tried the New School for

Social Research, where she became deeply interested in anthropology, which she studied with Alexander Goldenweiser and Elsie Clews Parsons. After two years they recommended her for study with Franz Boas at Columbia University. Boas hastened her Ph.D. degree and publication of her two early monographs. In 1923 he brought her on to the Columbia faculty as lecturer; she was the only continuously appointed faculty in the department in addition to Boas until his retirement. Mead wrote that Benedict sometimes served without salary, and Columbia records confirm this, showing that she received no salary for three academic years beginning in 1925, although she had regular faculty appointments. The middle year of these three carried a salary from Barnard College, where she taught while Gladys Reichard was on leave from that post (Mead 1959:347; CUA-CL). Mead wrote that Boas had to stretch his limited funds, and thought Benedict did not need a salary in addition to support from her husband.

She seldom wrote in her journal after she began her studies. During the 1920s, she intermittingly kept a diary of the days' comings and goings. She spent most of the week in Manhattan sharing an apartment with a college friend, and on weekends she joined Stanley at their home in suburban Bedford Hills. She attended classes, wrote, conducted museum trips for Barnard classes, taught her own classes, attended the lectures of visiting anthropologists and visited with them. She continued to write poetry as she had done since 1912 or earlier, and her first published poem appeared in 1925 (Mead 1959:536n8). She went to lunch, tea, and dinner with friends daily and to the theater often. Weekends with Stanley were usually reported to be companionable, but as though they had a truce of silence about their differences. In 1930 they separated, but they never divorced. He willed his estate to her, and he died in 1936. She learned of his death through the newspaper notice, his sisters having withheld the news from her, and she attended the burial service. Stanley's sisters contested his will, but Ruth fought successfully in court for her inheritance. She did not write Mead about her emotions when she wrote the facts surrounding Stanley's death (RB to MM, December 23, 1936, MM B1).

## Among the Boasians

When Ruth Benedict began to study anthropology, Franz Boas's vigorous paradigm for the field was fully formed. It was a body of thought that he had developed in moving from physics to geography and to problems of ethnology. His thought encompassed scientific and historical modes of analysis. He developed his concepts in pursuing fieldwork, first with the Eskimo of Baffinland in 1883 and in many years of work with British Columbia Indians

beginning in 1885. Boas fundamentally revised European and American anthropology by methodically disproving the conclusions of racialist and evolutionist thought of the nineteenth century; by demonstrating the separateness of race, language, and culture; and by arriving at a concept of plural cultures in contrast to a single progressive culture history. In this radical departure, he contested the principal view in American anthropology at that time pursued in the Bureau of American Ethnology, in the ethnological museums, and in the disparate beginnings of university departments of anthropology (Boas 1940; Stocking 1968; Stocking ed. 1974; Darnell 1998a; Lewis 2001). In his post at Columbia University, which he assumed in 1896, he attracted brilliant and productive students to this major shift in ideas, among them Alexander Goldenweiser, Alfred Kroeber, Robert Lowie, and Edward Sapir, students who, by the time Benedict completed her degree, had published their own demonstrations of many parts of Boasian concepts of ethnology, history, language, and culture, thus producing a greater degree of synthesis of the field than Boas's revisionist writings and voluminous ethnographic works had allowed. These men later founded, or greatly influenced, many of the departments of academic anthropology in the United States and Canada, and each of them developed divergent programs within the framework of Boasian anthropology (Darnell 1998a:209). They were Benedict's colleagues, along with the younger Margaret Mead, Benedict's and Boas's student. Particularly congenial for a few years was Edward Sapir, an influential scholar of American Indian linguistics and a published poet, as Benedict was also. The Boasian paradigm would continue to be the framework of American anthropology for two more decades. Furthermore, "the Boasian point of view, which in 1919 had only begun to affect the thinking of social scientists outside cultural anthropology, by 1934 conditioned the thinking of social scientists generally" (Stocking 1968:300). Of particular impact in this regard was the concept of plural cultures and the tenet of the greater force of culture than of race in mental factors (Boas 1911).

Ruth Benedict's first publication, "The Vision in Plains Culture" (1922), concerned variation in the experience and social uses of the sought-after vision in which a tutelary spirit directed the vision seeker in augmenting his or her personal powers through observing a personal ritual. This problem was designed similarly to the studies in variation of traits such as folklore elements, clan/gens elements, and material culture practices and forms, through which Boas and his students reconstructed histories of culture contacts, migrations, and alterations in traits of culture. Benedict was less concerned than they were with these traits and with historical reconstruction, and instead she studied variations in cultural interpretation of an arduous imaginary

experience and the adaptation of it to different social contexts. Her dissertation, "The Concept of the Guardian Spirit in North America," published the next year, traced a more widespread religious practice throughout the continent and compared it in other areas of the world. She noted the fallibility in evolutionary sequences of guardian spirit ideas suggested by European theorists. Her main argument was the unity of the idea of a guardian spirit, its wide diffusion, and its occurrence with and independence of a variety of traits such as totemism, shamanism, and differing economic attitudes and practices. Benedict's interest in religious behavior that enhanced individuals' powers foreshadowed her later inquiry into psychological aspects of culture. At this time she wrote several chapters and an outline of a book on American Indian religious behavior. She would soon abandon this book project for her interest in the totality of a culture. Religion was just one aspect of thought that was psychologically influenced, and she came to think that almost every aspect of culture equally reflected psychological factors.

As Benedict worked within Boasian cultural anthropology, she took up a latent problem it posed, which had not deeply engaged her colleagues: what brings coherence and cohesion to a culture? Her work on this problem was a realization of two undercurrents in Boas's thought, the idea of patterning in culture and the force of psychological factors in shaping culture. She brought together these problems in a striking new formulation that caught the imagination of her discipline and overshadowed other disciplinary trends. In one of her postwar class lectures, she described the new problem, which had emerged to lead her beyond the methods and questions of her colleagues:

> The problem had become: coherence in culture and how to study it. The theoretical positions held in the 1920s . . . [included that] culture . . . is something man initiates to structuralize his own human potentialities. . . . Man's imagination in creating culture was seen in the same way as he creates drama and folk dances. The problem was to count man in. Culture does not operate by efficient causes of its own. . . .
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> In "Psychological Types in the Cultures of the Southwest," the point was that certain psychological sets in the Southwest had eliminated many surrounding traits and had seized certain other traits, giving them an elaborate development which could only be understood in terms of these psychological sets. I was stressing the selectivity of man in changing his whole culture. Cohesion was a psychological problem, not a historical problem, but one arising from a living culture. (Theory 12/11/47)

In the address she refers to here, given in 1928 at the annual anthropology meeting and received with astonished comments by listeners such as Alfred

Kroeber, comments she passed on in a letter to Margaret Mead, and also in her 1932 article, "Configurations of Culture in North America," and in *Patterns of Culture*, Benedict explained coherence and cohesion by the psychological attitudes that came to be preferred in a culture. Her argument in this book, briefly noted above and further discussed in several sections of this chapter, began with the image of "a great arc on which are ranged the possible interests provided either by the human age-cycle or by the environment or by man's various activities" (Benedict 1934:21).[2] A society selects from this arc and thereby constructs its pattern. Through the choice, rejection, and alteration of attitudes and behavior, culture patterns tend to impose limits and bring about a specific configuration unique to a particular group. Cultures tend to be integrated, "like an individual," and to have a pattern, a configuration. The patterning of three cultures was described: the Zuni pueblo Indians of New Mexico, whose calendrical ceremonies kept up the measured equilibrium of civic moderation and extended hospitality to the powerful and benevolent visiting gods; the Kwakiutl Indians of the salmon- and cedar-rich western coast of Canada, whose hereditary chiefs displayed their ability to violate nature and society, and their skills in managing debts owed them, in ceremonial distribution and destruction of the fine manufactures of their kin group;[3] and the Dobuan yam gardeners of a Melanesian island, who practiced magic to protect their produce, their land, and their lives from the sorcery attacks of their in-laws and fellow villagers, yet who achieved social cohesion by minimizing aggression. They phrased malice politely, for example, with the formula for thanks when receiving a gift: "If you now poison me, how should I repay you?" (Benedict 1934a:153).[4] Individuals learn the culture pattern with every experience in life, and enactment of the culture teaches and reinvigorates it. Persons who cannot fit in to the expected behavior may be tolerated; or the culture may include a role in which they can usefully enact their different disposition; or in some cultures, as in the United States, they may be stigmatized as abnormal. Benedict's sources on Pueblo culture were her two summers' fieldwork in the pueblo of Zuni and study of the extensive literature on the culture area. For Dobu, she drew on the field study of Reo Fortune (1932), a New Zealand anthropologist trained in psychology. The Kwakiutl materials came from Boas's extensive field reports and analyses. Boas had drawn an analogy between Kwakiutl potlatches and American economic practices of borrowing, managing indebtedness, and purchasing life insurance (Boas 1899, in Stocking ed. 1974:106). Benedict extended the analogy, adding that Kwakiutl chiefs' great displays had similar psychological motivation to American financial moguls' displays of conspicuous wealth.

Franz Boas wrote an introduction to *Patterns of Culture*, noting its method

of "deep penetration into the genius of the culture," and Benedict had selected three cultures that were "permeated by one dominant idea." He wrote that "extreme cases" make clear "the cultural drives that actuate the behavior of the individual" (Boas 1934). These strong words would seem to rule out the rumors that Boas did not agree with her rendition of Kwakiutl culture. Eric Wolf, in a later reanalysis of the extensive records on the Kwakiutl, described the complex of power in that culture – social, political, and religious mechanisms combining into a constellation of power – an analysis that had different purposes and relevancy from Benedict's earlier thought. Wolf, like Boas, noted that Kwakiutl culture was "extreme" and that there was value in studying extreme cases (1999:16). Benedict recognized problematic aspects of her presentation of the idea of configuration, commenting in correspondence that Raymond Firth had accurately pointed these out in his otherwise laudatory review of the book in the journal *Man*. He had written "a very satisfactory review of my book. . . . His criticisms were ones I myself feel to the full – 'tabloid' naming of cultures, animistic phrasings of how culture acts – though he mentions that I call attention to these phrases as verbal devices – and the need of further evidence. He'd read the book with great care" (RB to MM, February 14, 1936, MM S5).

Differing explanations of the patterning of Kwakiutl culture (Codere 1956) and more extensively of Pueblo culture became, within the next decade and more, a major issue of debate and constituted an important episode in reflexivity in interpretation of culture. Most of the revisionist interpretations of Pueblo culture were based on the Hopi pueblos. Hopi and Zuni cultures shared many traits and could usefully be taken to represent a single type, but they did have important differences that all ethnographers knew, for instance, in Hopi villages' long experience of fissioning, while Zuni maintained a single large community from the time of earliest Spanish exploration in this area. Li An Chi was the first to suggest modification of Benedict's interpretations, noting a few specific points based on his brief fieldwork in Zuni. He considered leadership more assertive than Benedict reported, and he thought the matrilineal system disadvantaged Zuni men even less than Benedict represented (Li 1937). Dorothy Eggan, in a 1943 article, distinguished cultural ideals from real experience and held that the Hopi ideal was Apollonian, as Benedict had characterized Zuni culture, but that real experience was anxiety ridden, demonstrating this with dreams she had collected as well as descriptions of behavior. Mischa Titiev's *Old Oraibi: A Study of the Hopi Indians of Third Mesa* (1944) investigated divisiveness in the community and breakdown in integrative institutions. He also found a deep-running disruptive anxiety that sorcery may be actually

practiced (Titiev 1943). Leo Simmons (1942) recorded the life story told to him by Don Talayesva, a Hopi man who was beset by anxieties, paranoia, and depression. Laura Thompson and Alice Joseph, however, wrote of "logico-aesthetic integration" in Hopi thought and behavior, documenting a culture of greater harmony and personal integration than Benedict had portrayed in Zuni (Thompson and Joseph 1944; Thompson 1945). Esther Goldfrank's alternative interpretation (1945) employed the theory that the practice of irrigation in Pueblo society generated despotic organizational systems, as in early state societies, but she supplied no data on the organization of irrigation in Zuni. No other source described complex irrigation procedures in Hopi, and Ruth Bunzel, a seasoned Zuni field-worker, said in an informal discussion among anthropologists in 1947 that Zuni irrigation was only slightly developed. Where Goldfrank's data was full was on childhood disciplines severely practiced in order to achieve cooperative personalities, reflecting the interest in child-rearing processes that many anthropologists took up at that time and adding a specific psychological causation much narrower than Benedict's configurational causation. In addition to these published differences of interpretation, some anthropologists and students who had visited the pueblos or studied them criticized Benedict's image of civic moderation in hallways of conventions. Benedict let the differences of interpretation stand and did not reenter the fray. To her students, she commented on the practice of sorcery, making a point similar to Titiev's, that in Zuni until recent years sorcery had not been actually practiced – there was no sorcery equipment, no stories of training in sorcery, no known instances of its use or accusations identifying sorcerers – but some Zuni informants implied it was practiced and suspicion was pervasive, as in the saying, "You yourself know how many you have killed." Only under increased stress of incursions of American influence, with a rise in interpersonal hostility, "a system of sorcery detection was worked out within a five-year period" (Religions 2/11, 3/25/47). Benedict, in a class, and Ruth Bunzel, in the discussion reported above, commended Li An Chi's observations on Zuni (Seminar 3/18/47). Benedict also noted differences between Hopi and Zuni culture when she was giving a synopsis of Zuni religion. Hopi kachina gods were invited to the village and entertained for half a year and then sent home, while Zuni kachina gods were always present in the village. Hopi priests must turn the sun at solstice, while Zuni priests must be happy themselves in order to make the sun happy in its course. Hopi letter-perfect rituals were kept secret within each cult, while Zuni rituals were memorized, and ceremonies attended, by many persons who were not cult members (Religions 2/13 and 2/18/47). Her summary chapters, however, generalized the Zuni descriptions as Pueblo

culture, and so the critics had a case. John W. Bennett surveyed the diverse representations of Pueblo culture and noted that all fell into a polarity emphasizing either "organic wholeness" or "repression," and he concluded: "The interpretation of Pueblo culture in these terms is a reflection of preference and value [of the observer] and I do not see how this can be eradicated or corrected by collecting more facts and making more interpretations. Therefore it becomes a problem for the sociologist of knowledge to deal with" (1946:374).

*Patterns of Culture* was criticized for locating cultural causes in psychological factors by the large contingent of anthropologists who confined explanation of society and culture to materialist causes. Also criticized was Benedict's use of analogies to philosophically conceived psychological complexes in describing two contrasting cultural configurations, an Apollonian and a Dionysian configuration, the contrast she borrowed from Friedrich Nietzsche's studies of Greek tragedy, to typify the Pueblo culture of Zuni and the generalized type of the Pima, the Plains, and the Kwakiutl Indians. Her employment of psychoanalytic terms for patterned behavior, "megalomanic" for Kwakiutl chiefs and "paranoid" for Dobuans, was criticized as well. A frequently cited label for her whole analysis has been her phrase "culture is personality writ large." She did not again employ this phrase or the analogies to psychological types or psychoanalytic terms in her writings or lectures after *Patterns of Culture*. She abandoned these usages, although some of her students and a number of other anthropologists employed them, particularly the contrast of Apollonian and Dionysian. These terms came to be too convenient labels, "tabloid naming of cultures," as she had acknowledged in Raymond Firth's criticism. Some commentators wrote of these terms as though they fully conveyed her understanding of the cultures, ignoring Benedict's detailed descriptions, which were far from being stereotypes and described interrelationships of many facets of culture.[5] In later work, instead of an analogy of a principal type of behavior, she characterized a cultural concept of the self, as in her writings on Japan and other national cultures, characterizations that included a range of variant personal adjustments to the culture pattern. These types of self were not familiar to Western philosophical discourse or to psychiatry, and had no associated labels, and while depicted in fiction and cinema in several of the national cultures, were for the most part not denoted as generalized types by members of these cultures.

The contestation of *Patterns of Culture* was a measure of the book's impact in anthropology. Benedict's silence may have contributed to her reputation for aloofness, which appears to have flourished among some of the Columbia students. Her student Cora Du Bois wrote a comment on Benedict that may

refer to her silence on other explanations of Pueblo cultures, for otherwise Benedict engaged in critique, as in her many reviews of colleagues' books. The comment was part of Du Bois' remarks for a memorial service held six weeks after Benedict's death, an occasion that gave license for high praise. Du Bois' probable reference to Benedict's silence in the many years of debate over this book and Du Bois' important role in psychological anthropology working entirely independently of Benedict give her eulogy historical interest. Du Bois wrote of Benedict: "Malice and aggression were singularly unvoiced; . . . dispute was an intolerable derogation not only of the self but of others. Achievement was a means of self-expression, and not a weapon of self-assertion" (1949). These highly honorific words are one indication of the strongly divergent opinions current in the discipline. Forty years after its publication, George Stocking Jr. wrote that *Patterns of Culture* "remains today the single most influential work by a twentieth-century American anthropologist" (1974:73). In some anthropological discourses more than half a century after its publication, Benedict's thesis has been reduced to a few remembered labels that do injustice to the ethnographic detail and the solid grounding of her argument in cultural anthropology. Others explore her work and its background and find new messages pertinent to present disciplinary problems. Revisits to this 1934 book will be noted later in this chapter in the section Benedict's Recent Commentators.

Several trying aspects of Benedict's early adulthood had been resolved before she began work on *Patterns of Culture*, resolutions that allowed, and were reflected in, fuller direction of her energies to her anthropological work. She and Stanley Benedict separated in 1930. Shortly thereafter she began living with a woman companion, a relationship to which Benedict was devoted for a decade in spite of the vagaries of her companion. A closer view of aspects of sexuality in her life becomes possible as information on her personal relations comes together in vignettes that appear in later chapters. Her depressions, her "devils," ceased, as indicated in her correspondence and in observations of an insightful colleague, Abraham Maslow (1965). After the success of *Patterns of Culture*, she stopped writing poetry. Although her poems were deeply felt personal statements, and many were published in literary journals (although published under a faint disguise of a pseudonym, Anne Singleton), to be recognized as a poet came to be less compelling after recognition for her anthropological writing (Mead 1959:93). Her friendship with Edward Sapir, which had once been admiring, had become abrasive, and her letters expressed distance three or four years before she began writing *Patterns of Culture*. It was the kind of friendship that he thought allowed criticism of her personal life; probably equally important to her as time went on, they

strongly disagreed in their approaches to the growing field of personality and culture. These points are fully visible in Sapir's letters to Benedict, published by Mead (1959), and in Benedict's unpublished letters to Mead, and they appear in the several, and varied, studies of their relationship (see especially Darnell 1990:172; Handler 1986; Mead 1959:158; Modell 1983:126). The residue of this attenuated friendship was both sadness and anger. These changes seem to have given Benedict a new sense of self-direction and new energy. Furthermore, as she was writing the last chapters of *Patterns of Culture*, she already had in mind a new pursuit of nonrelative aspects of culture.

## Culture or Personality?

In "counting man in" and showing a people's collective selectivity based on a learned psychological bent, Benedict engaged the question of the relationship of the individual and culture. Boas had posed this problem in 1920, but only a few anthropologists had taken it up before her, among them Sapir and Mead. In Benedict's new work, culture was always a strong factor, but culture resided only in individuals. Culture for Benedict was always an enveloping and multifaceted whole, though always malleable by it members. In culture growth and in the transmission of culture in each generation, recasting of meaning often takes place, whether initiated within groups by individuals or as a result of outside pressures, and this was part of her insistence that culture resides mainly in individuals. Pursuing her view of individuals as the fully conscious originators of culture elements, she opposed the psychoanalytic idea of a subconscious mind: "The psychoanalyst believes there is a large sphere of an unconscious. The anthropologist believes the whole personality is evident in behavior" (Personality and Culture 5/8/47). This view is a departure from Boas's views of unconscious mental processes and his openness to Freud's thought on the unconscious mind. Stocking has traced Boas's thought on the relation of psychology to anthropological problems, noting Boas's "systematic elaboration of the unconscious origin of psychic phenomena" and his several approving commentaries on Freud's work, noting also, however, Boas's doubt of the universality of, in Boas's words, "the theory of the influence of suppressed desires" (Stocking 2001:59, and quoting Boas 1920). A review of Sapir's use of the terms "unconscious" and "subconscious" concluded that he did not use them in a psychoanalytic sense but in the ordinary sense, as in one example: "unconscious perception of form and pattern in the behavior of others" (Allen 1986:462). Benedict's position is a deliberate distancing of her objectives from the concepts of psychoanalysis,

which had been brought into the personality and culture field at the time she was pursuing a quite different approach.

Because Benedict viewed culture as a major determinant of behavior and thought, she was critical of the weak versions of culture projected by others who joined in the early formulations of the field of personality and culture. Edward Sapir sought ways "to free himself from the necessity of admitting the role of culture" (RB to MM, November 20, 1932, MM B1; also in Mead 1959:325). The sociologist John Dollard presented, in Abram Kardiner's seminar at the New York Psychoanalytic Association, a case study of a black schoolteacher whom he considered to have a "White character structure. . . . When we were drinking afterwards John said to me that it just proved that culture didn't make much difference anyway" (RB to MM, August 22, 1937, MM B1). Although she held culture to be a forceful determinant, Benedict valued psychiatric insights, for example, writing about Dollard's *Frustration and Aggression*: "I'd change the anthropology in it and come to somewhat different conclusions, but it's a stimulating book" (RB to F. DeLaguna, January 29, 1940, RFB 28.2). She thought that Kardiner's development of the idea of a basic personality in each culture was also an important contribution.

*Patterns of Culture* was published at a time when there was little consensus on the parameters of the field of personality and culture and several years before the idea of a "basic personality" was first formulated. It influenced later thought on culturally regular personality structure, but the book was about the concept of culture and not about the complex, organized entity "personality" studied by psychologists and psychiatrists. Benedict described how culture controls and shapes psychological impulses and drives and selects psychological attitudes, but she did not write about individual personality. She said in a lecture that she would have preferred the field of study be called "the growth of the individual in his culture" rather than "personality and culture" (Theory 12/11/47). In contrast, Sapir's phrase for this field was "the impact of culture on personality." For Sapir, personality is in the objective case; he wanted to understand the individual in culture, and he had a particular interest in the creative individual (Darnell 1986, 2001). Benedict emphasized the psychological sources of culture, the representation of culture in individuals, and as her work matured she added learning taking place within culture. I can think of only one mention in her work of creative individuals: "Societies maim themselves by denying exceptional human gifts," she wrote in "To Secure the Blessings of Liberty" (u.p. ca. 1941b:14). Nonconformists and misfits interested her more than gifted individuals because the nonconformists and misfits showed the boundaries of the culture, helping to define it clearly. Her emphasis was on individuals responding to their culture, whether in accord

with it or in opposition. The terms "Apollonian" and "Dionysian" referred to culture types but were not adequate to describe individual personalities. A review of a few points in the history of the personality and culture field, as well as a look forward to Benedict's later work, will confirm that there were varied approaches to this field.

Margaret Mead's first books, on Samoa (1928) and Manus (1930), which influenced Benedict, showed how culture produced relatively uniform motivation and behavior in most but not all of its members. For each Samoan girl in her study, Mead showed in tabular form variations in the girl's household and factors affecting each one's socialization experience; for Manus children and adults, she emphasized the differing effects of kinship position on the roles they were expected to fulfill. Socialization was not uniform, and Mead showed that variations in life history could lead to deviant positions. While the culture may be consistent, and certainly set up parameters for the individual, and personalities were similar for most of the group, they were not seen as uniform. Mead attended to gender-specific behavior in *Sex and Temperament in Three Primitive Societies* in 1935, finding again dominant cultural types, which in some cultures included both genders and in others differentiated the genders. The direction in which she took these ideas was not in personality dynamics but to analysis of interactional styles in the learning process, as in her and Gregory Bateson's work in Bali (Bateson and Mead 1942). Mead continued analysis of culturally specific emotional learning in her postwar study of Manus (1956), and that work was far removed from formulation of a basic personality.

The concept of a basic personality was developed by the neo-Freudian psychoanalyst Abram Kardiner, working with ethnologists' materials on preliterate cultures. He applied neo-Freudian explanation to behavior and institutions in these cultures in a seminar that he taught yearly at the New York Psychoanalytic Institute beginning in 1935, a seminar attended and addressed by several anthropologists and which Benedict herself addressed in 1936 on several topics and on the ethnography of Zuni. There was no fanfare and funding from the foundations, which two years earlier handsomely sponsored the Yale interdisciplinary seminar on the effect of culture on personality, a seminar designed by Edward Sapir. Because of Sapir's early death, and probably because the seminar's objective was training students to do national culture research in their home societies and did not attempt to define the subject and methods further, it was a "great synthetic effort [that] had no lasting results" (Darnell 2001:133). Kardiner's seminar, in contrast, greatly influenced the field. In *The Individual and Society: The Psychodynamics of Primitive Social Organization* (1939), he presented his formulation of the

concept of basic personality, adhering to a psychoanalytic theory of mental processes, and he illustrated it with the case material anthropologists had presented in the seminar. That book was the starting point and the reference point for developments and critiques of this concept. Benedict's line of thought was different, but she thought well of Kardiner's book and spoke out for it while others in the field, Margaret Mead and Cora Du Bois, for example, came close to dismissing it. Du Bois, a participant in Kardiner's seminar and her fieldwork sponsored by him, designed her research in the Indonesian island of Alor to compare projections about personality that are based on description of culture with results from personality tests. Her Rorschach test protocols from Alor confirmed, more than any other materials, Kardiner's method of analyzing a basic personality. Before that, a cautious Du Bois wrote Benedict from Alor that Kardiner had written her "one of those supposedly encouraging baubles of, 'we'll know all about it when you come back' which of course throws me into a perfect funk – because I know quite well he won't and I wont" (CDB to RB, July 26, 1938, RFB 28.6). Back in New York and reporting on the Alorese in Kardiner's seminar, Du Bois wrote of her great excitement when Rorschach test specialist Emil Oberholzer's analysis of the Alorese Rorschachs, without knowledge of her ethnographic data, showed personality characteristics corresponding to Kardiner's projections from institutional data of a basic personality type.

> The Rorschachs seem to be giving him full confirmation. . . . Oberholzer is gratifyingly cautious. . . . I may have unwittingly selected data to skew K's analysis (which coincides too consistently with my impressions), but I can't have tampered with the Rorschachs. . . . If I ever get time, I may go back to K's first and third portions of his book and try to work out with some semblance of coherence what is constructive in that jumble. Too bad the analysts, with all their clinical insight, have no "scientific" or methodological disciplines. (CDB to RB, February 2, 1940, RFB 28.6)

Benedict replied: "I liked his book a lot. The business about 'primary institutions,' which I do criticize, seemed to me just a bright idea he threw in ill-advisedly; it could have all been left out without prejudice to his main psychiatric insights" (RB to CDB, March 21, 1940. RFB 28.6).[6]

Benedict's focus was always on culture. Milton Singer emphasized this point, as did Virginia Wolf Briscoe and Hervé Varenne (Singer 1961:23; Briscoe 1979; Varenne 1984:285). She did not study personality of individuals or use the concept of a group personality. Her description of a deviant man in Zuni, Nick, the man who had memorized hours upon hours of ritual poetry and found fulfillment in conducting his clan rituals yet whose brilliance

and forcefulness subjected him to persecution, was not remotely psychoanalytic yet showed the inner dynamics of an individual. She probably shared a nonspecialist's view of the psychologists' and psychiatrists' concept that an individual personality was made up of mostly unconscious sets of mind and emotions arising from individual experience and traumas and from the effects of culture. Benedict's own brief autobiography, "The Story of My Life," employed several psychiatric terms in describing her childhood behavior. But her works were about culture and not about personality or individuals. "She saw in the societies she studied compelling evidence for both a process and a product larger in conception and execution than any single individual" (Briscoe 1979:450). When she wanted to refer to others' use of a theory for personality, she referred to the idea of "needs" and "press" as elaborated by psychologist Henry Murray and not to the Freudian concept of the impulses of the id and the "work" of the ego and superego (Personality and Culture 5/8/47). Murray's terms, "needs" and "press," which he defined as technical processes, were words of ordinary usage, as were the ideas behind his terms that Benedict used, "adient" and "abient," employing the Latin prefixes for direction, the former referring to experience that furthers positive needs and the latter referring to processes for avoiding harm or blame.

The phrase "psychological type" in her writing was close to "worldview" but included also culturally embedded attitudes and behavior. It denoted what was later called "ethos." Benedict, like Mead, did not move toward the concept of basic personality, both never incorporating the complexity of individual personality in their meanings of "cultural character" or "national character," a point emphasized by Singer (1961:54) and Du Bois (1960). Benedict developed an idea of a "self" in the national cultures she described, but the "self" was not a "basic personality type." It referred to individuals' ways of coming to terms with their culture, of using it to their benefit, and of relating to their social environment. In her most mature work, *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword*, Japanese culture is portrayed as integrated as any culture she had previously described, even though she was well aware that it was a stratified, literate, urbanized society with an aristocracy and variation in religions. Obligations placed on individuals were similar in the different contemporary situations faced in this society, since the obligations derived from a common system of ethics and from the kinship system underlying it. The ethical principles were similar throughout, and at the same time they carried variant degrees and versions of obligations. There were consequently different modes of fulfilling obligations and different circles of obligation. These were furthermore an obligation to improve the self and different options to pursue in self-improvement. Japanese culture was not given a type-name. No

mythological figure, no psychoanalytic behavioral type, would have characterized this cultural behavior. The symbols Benedict took for her book title and discussed in the last chapter did not represent schism in the culture but represented two principles of behavior, which the pattern supported in different circumstances of life: the honored Samurai sword, which Benedict took to symbolize self-responsibility, and the chrysanthemum plant trained with hidden wires.[7] The sword and the chrysanthemum are both themes in *The Tales of Forty-Seven Ronin* and in the plots of Kabuki dramas that remain popular with the Japanese after several centuries. Benedict did not know or explore the Japanese language for a term to typify the culture. The Japanese psychoanalyst Takeo Doi later proposed the Japanese word *amae*, meaning the desire to be passively loved, and described its wide signification for Japanese psychology and culture. Doi had found Benedict's analysis of Japan inspiring (1973). Zuni, Kwakiutl, and Dobu cultures were not necessarily simpler, nor did Benedict mean they were reducible to a single idea, but when the idea of psychological coherence in culture was new, her analogy to single terms redolent with meaning in Western culture had heuristic value.

## Polarities, Social Outcomes, and Universals

Benedict implied admiration for some cultures over others in her early writing, and this was her point in her studies "beyond cultural relativity." Her admiration was not for particular values, however; as a relativist and a functionalist, she could admire different and incompatible values. What made a culture successful in her view were "attitudes and arrangements" for commonality of benefits, for the support and scope of participation by all members, for rehabilitative measures after punishment, for arrangements that encouraged individual zest. These were social effects, "social outcomes," and this kind of benefit to individuals had been achieved in cultures with attitudes and arrangements incorporating widely differing values. Her categories for analysis were also value free; they were polarities within inclusive wholes, and the whole was as delimited as the opposite poles within it. Apollonian and Dionysian was the polarity she used first to characterize contrasting cultures. Her later work made wide use of the polarity of complementary and symmetrical behavior, the former found in hierarchical and organic societies, the latter found in segmented societies and also in some democratic societies. These categories of societies constituted a complete typology, as they did for their originator, Emile Durkheim. A subtype of complementary behavior, dominance and submission, was another polarity. She compared dominance over children cross-culturally, as well as domi-

nance over ethnic minorities. While dominance was often excessive, absence of some structure of dominance could bring about "dissolution of authority in the larger group" (Personality and Culture 10/24/46). Benedict regretted the lack of research that might describe nondominant types of leaders (RB to F. DeLaguna, January 29, 1940, RFB 28.2). She would have admired Waud Kracke's later portrayal of two leaders in Amazonian Kagwahive society, the force-wielding Homero, who was much admired, and Jovenil, who led other families by persuasion and by setting an example of cooperation (Kracke 1978). Another bipolar contrast she used was changes in age status during the life cycle, changing from high social status to low and back to high, as visualized in the shape of the letter U, or moving from low to high to low again, as in an inverted U. These different life-cycle arrangements carried no value judgments with them, and they were minimal schemes linked with other cultural items affecting status. Another polarity she drew up contrasted the culturally regular use of pride and humiliation. This polarity encompassed two different emotional responses to culturally imposed humiliation: shame and guilt. It is characteristic of her use of polarities that she placed shame and guilt within the larger experience of humiliation, a point that became clear in her analysis of Japan, and she contrasted both shame and guilt to pride (Benedict 1939, 1946a; Personality and Culture 11/7/46).

Benedict distinguished between cultures that allow "a sense of being free" and those that extend freedom to only the few. This distinction does not rest on particular values but on institutional security and welfare that give support and scope to all individuals within a culture, and a sense of freedom was found in many different institutional arrangements: "The functioning of a society in terms of gratifying needs . . . is not dependent on the set up, whether matriliny, kingship, authoritarian fathers, or other. . . . Egalitarian and hierarchical societies can be arranged to make the parties either secure or insecure" (Personality and Culture 3/20/47). Insecurity came in many forms, and a sorcerer could terrorize a community that lacked institutions to control sorcery. Even where sorcery was not practiced, fear of sorcery was sometimes prevalent. In the last lecture in her course in theory, she said: "The former question was, what kinds of social forms are good and what are bad? However, I ask a different question: under what conditions are different ends achieved" (Theory 1/15/48). To her mind, cultural relativism allowed defining conditions for a free society, allowed making laws against injustices, and, in world circumstances in 1941, allowed joining war against injustices.

Benedict thought the moral principles underlying human rights derived from human universals. In the Boasian paradigm, relativism and human universals were compatible. The early adaptive inventions of the human species

were universal attributes of humankind. Benedict itemized her version of them in the Shaw lecture series: inventions in material culture, the invention of the supernatural to supplement technology, the invention of incest to direct sexual attraction outside the immediate family, the invention of cultural forms of approval and disapproval and the sanctions behind these forms, the sharing or exchanging of material goods, and arrangements for procreation and care of the child (u.p. 1941b). She noted the striking similarities worldwide, and universal character, of the "making-of-man" cults, with their myth and ceremony of disempowering women (Personality and Culture 10/31/47). In her course on social organization, she added to the list of universals some form of control of theft, and she said, "Traits beyond cultural relativity are a common denominator of ethical moral sanctions" (Social Organization 12/12/46).

Some human rights advocates represent Ruth Benedict as a proponent of "full relativism," and some have said that cultural relativity should be abandoned because it allows no moral judgments and because ethnic fundamentalists base their defense of violence and in-group aggression on relativism (Zechenter 1997). An additional point appears relevant, however: powerholders seldom need the ideology of relativism to back them up. To sacrifice the important idea of cultural relativism, even in critical political contests, is a high cost.

Not only in attempts to persuade against human rights violations has cultural relativism been attacked but also by a modern-day advocate for absolutist culture, Christopher Shannon, who criticizes Benedict's advocacy for tolerance and her plea in *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword* for "a world made safe for differences" (Benedict 1946a:15; Shannon 1995, 2001). He finds fault also with cultural consciousness, which may come particularly through experiencing a different culture from one's own, which Benedict discussed in the same book as a resource for bringing about desirable culture change. He sees becoming culture conscious and consciously bringing about change in culture as marks of the ideology of American liberalism and its grounding in the advocacy of freedom and personal autonomy, positions that he opposes. He implies that Benedict wrote that the Japanese should reform themselves by accepting values and practices similar to U.S. ones. He implies this by means of omitting from a quotation the phrase by which Benedict introduced it, that "the Japanese can not be legislated into" these different practices (Benedict 1946a:314; Shannon 1995:670, 2001:8). He is correct in observing that "their public men," as well as Benedict herself, have seen reforms in these directions as desirable to adapt to their basic values. Shannon stated the context of his position more fully in *Conspicuous Criticism: Tradi-*

*tion, the Individual, and Culture in American Social Thought, from Veblen to Mills* (1996), a full-fledged denunciation of U.S. social science. He examines *Patterns of Culture* as an example of the undesirable aspects of liberalism: "Benedict's cultural relativism . . . reinforces . . . [an] insidious Western assumption . . . that human happiness should be the organizing principle of social life" (Shannon 1996:98). Shannon does not misperceive her views in his critique of *Patterns of Culture*; however, he has a different meaning of culture, an absolutist one, which he identifies as a conservative Catholic position and which he says begins with:

> insistence that reason, belief, and even unbelief make sense only in the context of some received tradition of inquiry. From this perspective meaningful inquiry is never free or open; it always entails personal submission on the part of a community of knowers. . . .
>
> *Patterns of Culture* is not a book about the idea of culture but a book about the ideal of cultural consciousness. . . . Ultimately, cultural consciousness offers a synthesis of parasitism and eccentricity, of conformity and alienation, best expressed by the ideal of tolerance. (Shannon 1996:xv, 102–3)

Authoritarian and ensconcing tradition, this view is contrary to Benedict's concept of culture change and reform in culture, and it is contrary to the whole anthropological view. Human rights advocates' turn against relativism encounters strange bedfellows. Relativity is, of course, anathema to absolutism. Social science tussles with its own dilemma between relativism and universalism, and problems in human rights are the world's current aspect of that dilemma.

The issue of human rights, as Julian Steward wrote in criticism of the American Anthropological Association's (AAA) Statement on Human Rights in 1947, made at the request of the United Nations, is not one of science but one of values. Milton Barnett and John W. Bennett agreed with Steward on this point (AAA 1947; Barnett 1948; Steward 1948; Bennett 1949). However, the AAA's statement was well grounded in relativistic science and could be reread. It contained, for instance, this currently relevant advice: "Even when political systems exist that deny citizens the right to participate in their government, or seek to conquer weaker peoples, underlying cultural values may be called on to bring the people of such states to realization of the consequences of the acts of their governments and thus enforce a brake on discrimination and conquest" (AAA 1947:543). The limits of a science of society were nowhere more evident than in Steward's citation of the Hindu caste system, along with EuroAmerican economic imperialism, as not deserving tolerance.

Benedict defended hierarchical organization. She commented on human rights in hierarchies in one of her classes:

> The well-being of an area does not depend on whether the people or an aristocracy has power, but it means the allowance and furtherance of practicing the cultural commitments of the people, that is, increased respect for human rights and obligations as they are understood according to the character structure of those peoples. Legitimacy means the cultural commitments of the people. Human rights involve mutual obligations. Compare, for example, American denial of hierarchy, Japanese insistence on hierarchy and Chinese assent to hierarchy. (Personality and Culture 4/24/47)

Her stress on obligations accompanying rights reminds that rights, and obligations, take place in structured relationships, and denial of rights indicates violation of "cultural commitments." It also means that she considered rights not universal but culturally defined. Her contrast between ideas of hierarchy in American and Chinese cultures tells much about their governments' current differences over human rights and about historical tensions within both nations.

Anthropological knowledge of processes of internal culture change is a basis for advancing human rights and for aiding peoples' own attempts to better their social conditions, and Benedict's critics have contributed toward these ends in depicting the gains that accrue to those who maintain and defend subordination of groups in their societies (Nagengast 1997; Zechenter 1997). Benedict was cognizant of these issues. In course lectures, she described societies able to respond to internal violence, for example, African societies calling sorcerers before a court and obtaining confessions from them. Other societies were helpless to control a sorcerer among them, for example, the Pomo and Yurok in California, who feared the sorcerer and believed his power was effective only in his in-group. They could control a sorcerer only by killing him when he was vulnerable when renewing his powers in the woods. In the western Algonquian area, sorcerers were controlled by the belief that they could kill only when they came from a distance, and sorcerers from another tribe were hired for a useful function they could perform, protection against specific violations of hunting territorial rights (Religions 3/25/47).

In addition to problems in the management of in-group aggression, Benedict saw the problems a society faced from a zealot within: she described the supererogates as "those who take very seriously, and are involved in, ideas of the culture. They bring change by elaboration, or running into the ground, the original commitments of society. . . . A quality can become so entrenched

in a culture that it goes beyond cultural utility and can not be estimated by the culture which pursues it" (Personality and Culture 1/9/47). Her discussions of violence sometimes concerned individual aggression, reflecting the influence of contemporary psychological investigation of this topic; however, she also described institutionalized subordination in racism (Personality and Culture 2/13/47; Benedict 1940). Cross-cultural study of the manipulation of power was still in the future (Wolf 1999), and problems in attempting to further indigenous reformist programs are only recently receiving analytic debate (Field 2003; Vargas-Cetina 2003). For Benedict, the progressive side of culture change was in culture's responsiveness to its own members' evaluations and initiatives, and this position assumed that in any culture some members may have consciousness of their culture. She did not think "social engineering" and relativism were in opposition.

Cultural relativity and cultural universals are an issue worldwide. Regna Darnell has shown in the history of Boasianism what the dimensions of thought have been on this subject and concludes: "The moral imperative of North American anthropology . . . steered between relativistic tolerance for diversity, whether of language or culture, and the obligation of the anthropologist as public intellectual to bring the fruits of cross-cultural investigation back to the critique of his or her own society" (2001). In 1983 Clifford Geertz compiled the excessively confident – or seeming so – statements of human universals made by anthropologists and by critics of relativism, and in 1998 Micaela di Leonardo added to the survey. Geertz defended relativism while searching for reliable universalistic findings. Geertz himself was not merely "anti anti-relativism," the title he took for his 1983 address, and he identifies his own work as pluralist; but he gleans the literature for a reliable universalistic trend of thought here and research finding there. He has put together research on the cultural construction of emotion, including his own early writings on Javanese emotion words, with developmental psychologists' and linguists' demonstration of the infant mind as "meaning making, meaning seeking, meaning preserving, meaning using" (Geertz 2000:214). To these ideas he has joined research on brain functions' dependence on social references.

## Speaking on Public Issues

The period leading up to World War II was a time of breakdown of international channels of communication, of incomprehension of actions of other nations, of political fears in the United States. A gathering in September 1941 of the nation's great philosophers, scientists, and social scientists was named the Interdisciplinary Conference on Science, Philosophy, and Religion in

Their Relation to the Democratic Way of Life. Albert Einstein, John Dewey, and Enrico Fermi addressed the assembly. Margaret Mead gave the principal anthropological address, "The Comparative Study of Culture and the Purposive Cultivation of Democratic Values" (Bryson and Finkelstein 1942:56–69). In agreement with John Dewey's paper and others', Mead took the position that authoritarian nations were inimical to science and humanism and that democratic nations provided the necessary social context for freedom and for the development and dissemination of science. Mead said, in agreement with other conference speakers, that this position justified American entry into the war against fascism. Benedict attended the conference and spoke affirmatively for Mead's paper but added a limitation, that ends do not justify means. This point, familiar in the discourse of that period, referred to leaders' advocacy of worthy ends while often using undemocratic means to impose them. Benedict did not speak up for democracy as a principle at this conference or in her writings and lectures (compare Yans-McLaughlin 1986:208, 209). She had published criticisms of American society for its racism, denigration of the poor, impediments to minorities, deprivation of opportunity to youths, and stigmatization of aberrancy. She had written that in many primitive democracies, men were too afraid to sleep at night; she had said that in some hierarchical societies, pride was within reach of all; and she was too relativistic to declare for democracy as a principle of general advocacy.

After the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, Benedict joined the effort to defeat German and Japanese fascism, writing on tactics that she derived from interpreting the meaning of words and acts in enemy cultures, in the cultures of allied nations, and in the nations in war zones. She was brought into government intelligence work because of her experience in pattern analysis. At that time she put aside research on problems beyond cultural relativity. When she adapted her analysis of Japan for the American public in *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword*, she explained the odd Japanese culture by comparison with the equally odd and "provincial" American culture, and she ended the book with the point that American habits of thought could undermine the procedures for building a peaceful Japan being implemented after the surrender. In this passage she again took the role of expert critic, as she had in earlier criticism of American society, basing her criticism on anthropological analysis of her society.

Mead pointed out the absence of reference to the atomic bombing of Japanese cities in *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword* and, excusing Benedict, explained that "in 1946, the significance of the impact of Hiroshima on Japanese thinking had not yet penetrated American consciousness" (1974:64). Mead was right regarding the American public, but whether this applies to

Benedict's point of view is questionable. The bombing, the surrender, and Benedict's intense work in analysis of Japanese behavior brought an extraordinary immediacy. In her review of John Hersey's book *Hiroshima*, Benedict excerpted Hersey's descriptions of Japanese behavior after the bomb exploded, and it was much the same as she had predicted it would be right after an anticipated surrender, their methodical ways of coping and helping in the scenes of horror, their quiet in their pain and suffering, their acceptance of an inevitable destructive end to the war their leaders had advocated. The immensity of catastrophe was portrayed but was not her only point, and it was paired with the culturally conditioned yet humanly empathetic reactions of the Japanese. In portraying the Japanese with an empathetic and understandable culture, a view Americans had denied all through the war, hindsight suggests that she failed to emphasize enough that atomic attack was outside the universe of sanctionable human action. But she continued: "It will stir a new set of readers to an understanding that all other issues in the world today pale beside the necessity of outlawing war among nations" (Benedict 1946c).

Benedict had not before or after the war taken the role of citizen protestor of government actions and had remained the expert critic. Probably one reason she did not otherwise join the public protests against the bombing was her strong concern that the policies planned for the occupation of Japan not be disrupted by political pressures and counterpressures. She was in agreement with the policies of the occupation forces, which she deemed constructive and judicious, although many persons in government and among the public thought they were too lenient (Benedict 1946a:298, 306). Another reason for her silence on the atomic bomb may have been her hope to join the research conducted during the American occupation of Japan to see how well her "study at a distance," without fieldwork, matched direct observation in the culture. She had learned a lot about the mores of being heard in government agencies and knew she could be an effective adviser if she could observe on the scene. She had expected to go to Japan, and her disappointment was great when she found out that an army policy against women's participation in any aspect of the occupation forces denied her this opportunity (RB to MM, September 20, 1945, MM G6). Later, in mid-December 1946, she was invited by the director of the Planning Division of Office of Naval Research (ONR) to do research in Japan and Korea and "participate in their reorganization," but she replied that as much as she wanted to do so, "it is less important than the project I have submitted to the Office of Naval Research" (RB to ONR, January 26, 1947, MM G6). Judging from the design she constructed for this project, the Research in Contemporary Cultures (RCC) project, a design that

accommodated many interests besides her own, this was a choice for others over herself.

She recorded her feelings about the end of the war in a letter, written the day after the Japanese surrender, to Robert Hashima, her Japanese American assistant at OWI to whom she also gave prominent thanks in the preface to *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword*. Hashima published in a Japanese periodical in 1949 a Japanese translation of Benedict's letter to him, and he enlarged for the Japanese readers of her book her methods in OWI for finding meanings through posing questions to native informants. An English translation of Hashima's article, and a retranslation to English of the letter, reached English readers only in 1985. A later article included a facsimile of Benedict's original letter (Suzuki 1985, 1992). American-born Robert Hashima had lived in Japan from age twelve to adulthood and chose to return to the United States in 1941. He was interned along with most other Japanese Americans and later released to work with OWI. Benedict's letter wrote of her admiration for Japanese conduct at the surrender. She was undoubtedly proud and relieved that it was much as she had predicted, for she had dared to give American policy makers assurance on how the Japanese would take defeat and military occupation. She wrote Hashima also of her apprehension about American's ability to act during the occupation with comprehension of Japanese character. The last chapter of *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword*, written many months after the letter, pointed out that the Japanese would watch how far America would go in bringing about general disarmament and other measures that Benedict thought necessary for peace. In a radio address called "America Converts to Peace" soon after the Japanese surrender, she wrote that she feared nations would follow their self-centered goals as they had done after World War I. She warned that Americans find it hard to obey rules set up for international cooperation, just as they are not well geared to constructive handling of local disputes, such as civic violence and labor-management disputes where fact-finding is not stressed and goals of peace are not ordinarily at the forefront (u.p. 1946a). Her public comments were on complex problems drawing on her particular insights into American culture, insights that are discussed in chapter 5.

After World War II, the reemergence of isolationism and the formation of the United Nations magnified the importance of cultural relativism. By the start of the cold war, Benedict had set up her project, RCC, researching Russian and other cultures. She warned that American and Soviet distrust of each other was intensified by ethnocentrism on both sides. The problem was in "each belligerent . . . nation's commitment to its own dearest virtues and moral values. . . . It means the way Americans learn to value personal

freedom and resent community interference and the way Great Russians learn to value community responsibility and to suspect those who disavow it" (u.p. 1948b).[8] From cultural relativity could come the understanding that could de-escalate the cold war, and her point remains as relevant in today's hazardous world. At the same time, she continued, it is possible to define universal values:

> The tragedy of the modern world is that something each people regards as so intimately and naturally good – their experience, their dreams and hopes of their "own way of life" – are [*sic*] today threatening to engulf us in the most comprehensive evil we can imagine. To the student of comparative cultures, the presence of these different ways of life is inseparable from human evolution. They are different man-made ways of solving the universal human problems of human gregarious living and human morality. Even if we on this planet ever achieve the ideal of "One World," humanity would be the poorer if they were lost in a general and universal character structure. No one culture can maximize all human potentialities: it will have a slant and a selectivity which will develop certain strengths other people do not have and it will have weaknesses which are the obverse of its strengths. Certain cultural criteria for welfare and happiness can be found which have cross-cultural validity, but most of those traits each nation defends with its life and its wealth and for which it risks its place in the sun are alternative possible solutions of the problems of human life. (u.p. 1948b)

Benedict affirmed that there are universal conditions of cultural functioning, but, faced with the ethnocentrism and isolationism that flourished after the war, she stressed the necessity of understanding other nations and called up the tenets of anthropological thought that could accomplish this understanding, cultural relativity and cultural configuration.

## Reflections on Wartime Research

The societies that OWI assigned Benedict for research were larger and institutionally more complex than the tribal societies for which she previously had demonstrated integrated patterns. She later addressed the issue of using anthropological concepts in complex societies in answer to critics who predicted that culture patterns held no force in nations with complex economies and class stratification. She argued that these cultures integrate themselves through selecting and elaborating cultural elements in processes similar to those in preliterate societies (Benedict 1946b; see also chapter 5). Her defense

and demonstrations of anthropological analysis of national cultures were not well received by some anthropologists (e.g., Steward 1950). Anthropologists soon abandoned the study of national culture under widespread criticism within their profession. During the 1980s, there was a revival of work on the value systems and cultural characteristics of contemporary nations, some of it within anthropology and some in other disciplines, and the terms "national culture" and "national character" again came to be freely used in this work. None of it that I have seen referenced the studies done by RCC or by Benedict for the OWI, even when it concerned the same cultures.[9]

Anthropologists know full well that the people we describe are not often favorably impressed by our accounts of their culture. However, Benedict's book on Japan, *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword*, translated into Japanese in 1947, was received in Japan with admiration and a sense of self-revelation; there have been criticisms also, but fifty years after publication it is still discussed in Japanese university forums and textbooks and is a best seller there (Fukui 1999; Hendry 1996; Kent 1999). Again, a Dutch anthropologist finds her report on Netherlands culture the best and most inclusive work on that culture (Van Ginkel 1992).

Nor do we anthropologists often affect policy. The search for evidence for any utilization of advice generated in social science research for World War II government agencies has produced only skepticism of any effectiveness in the government of this research (Doob 1947; Mabee 1987). There is no evidence that the OWI's advice on the retention of the Japanese emperor was consulted in reaching the policy decision on the surrender terms.[10] The fight with this enemy had been bitter and costly, and the savagery of Japanese policy throughout East Asia had been described in the press. Many persons in the State Department and in Congress opposed retention of the office of emperor, considering it the source and symbol of militarism. Benedict's report to OWI, issued shortly before the surrender, argued for retaining the emperor because of the central symbolic relationship of the office to Japanese cultural patterns of obligation and responsibility and because the measure would contribute to an orderly postwar transition. Others held this view also. Benedict's detailed presentation of her case was widely circulated and probably helped neutralize opposition to the controversial policy of maintaining the office of emperor. Influence of Benedict's work in governmental circles was credited several years after the war when the chief of the Advanced Study Group of the U.S. Army General Staff wrote her: "Your book on the patterns of Japanese culture . . . has given us a good insight into pertinent problems now facing the U.S. . . . We understand that you are engaged in studies related to European cultures. . . . We should appreciate it very much

if you could advise us concerning . . . available studies which could give us an insight into European cultures similar to that given in your book regarding Japanese cultures" (Don Z. Zimmerman to RB, February 26, 1948, MM G2). The book was addressed to the American public, and she hoped to turn opinion away from a prejudicial view of the Japanese.

After the war, Benedict was offered funds by ONR to analyze patterning in national cultures. She organized a large research project, RCC, and directed it along with her return to a full course load of teaching. RCC conducted research on national patterns in four European cultures and in China and Syria. For this project, she enlisted Margaret Mead's help, and the project was strongly influenced by Mead's methods and concepts. It employed the methods of "the study of culture at a distance," which Benedict and others who worked for government agencies developed in national cultures research during the war. The project was designed to bring together Benedict's and Mead's methods and views and to employ theories of personality from the fields of psychiatry and genetic psychology. Sources were interviews with persons educated in the cultures studied, psychological testing, the analytic literature about these societies, and study of fiction and films and other projective materials from the societies.

While the theoretical premise of her work on national cultures was the concept of patterning, Benedict continued other interests at this time. In an article and lecture and in her analysis of Japanese culture, she employed her theory of discontinuity in the life cycle, a theory that clearly placed her work outside the determinism of infantile experience that some persons in the personality and culture field professed. Another interest that had always been implicit in her work, culture change, appeared prominently in this period. The ending of *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword* is much concerned with Japan's potential for change after the surrender. Culture change was outlined comprehensively in the course lectures, in academic style, with one category accommodating Japanese change from core patterns into partial distortions of them to serve war leaders, a process she saw also in excessive conservatism in other cultures. Another point about a culture's ability to change and thus integrate itself rested on her observation that literate cultures burden themselves by enshrining printed texts that grew out of superceded cultural forms, for instance, where some Christians adhere to the text of the Bible. She used this illustration of mixed themes in culture in spite of her love of the Bible as literature when she was growing up. In "The Story of My Life" she wrote, "*David Copperfield* . . . and *Ivanhoe* . . . didn't make a fantasy world for me at all, and no book even at this time ever competed with the Bible. The story of Ruth was better than Ramona, and the poetry of Job was

better than Longfellow" (in Mead 1959:111). But in cultural configurations, a contradictory mix of old and new values could confuse an adaptation of values to new realities, as in another example from her times, the unrealistic abhorrence of divorce in American culture along with belief in romantic love. Preliterate cultures were less hampered in adapting to changes than literate cultures and could respond to new ideas of their members and new ideas reaching them through diffusion (Personality and Culture 10/10/46; Religions 12/11/47). The lectures may have been Benedict's first explicit mapping of the subject of culture change.

## Benedict's Recent Commentators

Scholarship on Benedict's thought must be placed in the context of two contrasting interpretations of Boasian anthropology, both major anthropological events and both published in 1968, one by Marvin Harris and one by George W. Stocking Jr. Harris argued that the Boasian paradigm had no theoretical foundation and impeded theory development. Stocking considered theory building a long-term objective of Boas and one that retreated into the future, but most important, he conveyed a coherence and decisiveness in Boas's huge body of writings that many anthropologists had not comprehended and that greatly enhanced understanding of Boas's work and its stature and Boas's role in the history of the discipline.

Harris argued against psychological explanation of culture and for materialist explanation, and he critically analyzed *Patterns of Culture* in developing his theoretical position. However, he did not follow Leslie White's and other contemporaries' objective of developing evolutionary theory, and he based his explanations on particularistic ethnography. His work promoted theoretical rigor in the discipline. One of his late projects, videotaped research in New York City homes, was parallel to the kind of fine-grained observational techniques Mead had pioneered and described for films and for written methods of recording. Harris's implied repudiation of the synthesis of humanism and science, which was a mandate and a potential in the work of Boas and some of his students, is one respect in which later work proved him too narrow. Nonetheless, his views did serve well over the years in checking involutional tendencies that flourished in the discipline's preoccupation with particularism and with the observer's self-reference in the experience of fieldwork. Benedict's psychological phrasings of behavior were supported ethnographically, that is, by essentially the same methods Harris used. Thus I see Harris's 1968 criticism of Benedict as part of a long-range directional change in which he played a role, which came closer than other approaches

to realizing an explanatory competence in the discipline, and this was an objective Benedict sought and Boas often wrote was possible.

Stocking's work inspired more study of early American anthropology, and Benedict has received some of the attention that has been given to the contributions of Boasians. Richard Handler's examination of the exchanges of poetry and critiques between Edward Sapir and Benedict and their divergent views in the nascent field of personality and culture, placed in the context of currents of thought of their times, illuminates both of these major figures (1986). Handler also wrote an insightful evaluation of Benedict as a modernist writer (1990). Daniel Rosenblatt argues for the current relevance of Benedict's work and particularly ushers her into currently popular discourse by making clear that she endowed the concept of culture with personal agency. He also recognizes more than many commentators that the problems she undertook derived directly from Boas's concepts. Furthermore, he notes that Benedict's phrase "culture is personality writ large" was a flourish of the pen and cannot be taken as code for her concept of configuration (Rosenblatt 2004).

Apart from the context of study of the Boasian tradition, Benedict's work has inspired other restudies. *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword* has been elevated to the plane of Swiftian satire by Clifford Geertz (1988). Virginia Wolf Briscoe draws on Benedict's policies as editor of the *Journal of American Folklore* and on her papers and writings to insightfully characterize Benedict's whole approach (1979). Feminist scholarship, looking into the circumstances of women's careers and gender-related characteristics of their work, inspired Barbara Babcock's study of Benedict (1995). Moreover, Babcock importantly calls attention to the philosophical references that frame *Patterns of Culture*, a part of the book that some critics, including Mead, have dismissed on various grounds. Specialized study of the context of Benedict's research on Japan has been greatly expanded (Kent 1994, 1996b; Suzuki, 1980, 1991, 1999). Japanese responses to *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword* shortly after the war were discussed by John W. Bennett and M. Nagai (1953) and have been reported for recent years by Pauline Kent (1996a, 1999) and Joy Hendry (1996). James Boon's (1999) rereading of *Patterns of Culture* finds covert implications of androgynous elements in rituals that Benedict probably was well aware of, yet the discourse of her time rarely used insights such as Boon has followed up. Her other meanings in this book were heavily freighted and hardly allowed an opening to symbolic interpretation. She used observations of gender crossing to point out how commonly it occurred. Boon's reading enhances the appeal of the book in this period of deconstruction of meaning. Boon asks why the book is misread and misremembered so often and notes "the centering effects of her eloquence . . . that readers can not quite deflect Apollonian/Dionysian

dualities from memories of Benedict's descriptive accounts that were . . . not so confined by them as we seem to recall" (1999:30, 28).

Margaret Mead wrote and compiled two books on Ruth Benedict, *An Anthropologist At Work: The Writings of Ruth Benedict* (1959) and *Ruth Benedict* (1974). These books bring together some of Benedict's published work, manuscripts, journals, diaries, letters, and poetry and also include Mead's recollections and views of Benedict and her work. Two biographies of Benedict, Judith Modell's *Ruth Benedict: Patterns of a Life* (1983) and Margaret Caffrey's *Ruth Benedict: Stranger in This Land* (1989), are tremendously informative, and all of these biographical works have to be studied to gain from the various authors' different perspectives. Commentary on some aspects of the different interpretations of different biographers, which have had important consequences, are found in Kent (1996a). Two recent books have explored the sexual attitudes and relationship of Benedict and Mead, *Margaret Mead and Ruth Benedict: The Kinship of Women*, by Hilary Lapsley (1999), and *Intertwined Lives: Margaret Mead and Ruth Benedict and Their Circle*, by Lois W. Banner (2003). Banner worked after the entire correspondence between the two women had been released, and Lapsley had available all but the last deposit of their letters. Only part of this source was open for research at the time Modell and Caffrey wrote. Lapsley, a psychologist, sets out to prove and celebrate their relationship as lovers and is not concerned with representation of their work. Banner, a social historian, interprets the friendship and works of both women as creative products of their social place and period and in turn shaping the social and intellectual thought of their time. My book differs from the biographies and the two books on the lesbian relationship in being concerned mainly with representing Benedict's complete writings and research after *Patterns of Culture*.

## Plan for the Full Gamut of Ruth Benedict's Work

When Ruth Benedict's contribution to culture theory is judged solely by *Patterns of Culture*, as many anthropologists do, and even when *Race: Science and Politics* and *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword* are added, her anthropology is sold short. Add to these books her analyses of culture pattern in Thailand, Romania, the Netherlands, and the United States, and one may obtain a better understanding of her thought in the productive last decade of her life. Add the important "Continuities and Discontinuities in Cultural Conditioning" in 1938, add "Some Comparative Data on Culture and Personality with Reference to the Promotion of Mental Health" in 1939, add "Primitive Freedom" in 1942, and add her explanations of her concepts of

cultural anthropology in the Shaw lecture series and in her course lectures, and her anthropology takes on the dimensions and shape it would have had if she had not died suddenly at the peak of her career, projected books unwritten. This little-known work of Benedict's shows she practiced a broader anthropology than some critics credit. Her work was not specialized or tangential but in fact engaged the core of cultural anthropology. Indeed, she bridged European and American theories more than her Boasian colleagues by bringing Durkheim's thought into her own modes of analysis and by crediting, and critiquing, A. R. Radcliffe-Brown's contributions. Among the most memorable of her achievements were some penetrating moments, like her message to set straight the Japanese frontline troops that Japanese leaders incorrectly interpreted the Samurai ethic when they required soldiers to commit suicide rather than surrender. She reminded them that for the Samurai, suicide was always an act of choice and always had explicit circumstantial meaning. Also impressive are her ventures in proof of panhuman conditions of viable communities.

Piece by piece, Benedict's major intellectual projects after *Patterns of Culture* accrued to my original plan to reproduce the texts of her courses. The chapters that were to put these course texts in context became longer and more central. The title of the book poses its theme, that Ruth Benedict went beyond her early defense of cultural relativity to include a defense of universalism, and she extended the idea of pattern beyond her first well-known presentation of it to a concept of pattern that included culture history and included intentional patterned ways of living within the bounds of one's culture. This chapter has outlined the high points of her life, her career, and her work and has discussed positions for which she is widely known. Thus it frames the subsequent chapters, which move between institutional history and intellectual history and are both chronological and topical. Chapter 2 describes the department of anthropology at Columbia University and her role in it in the early part of her career and until her wartime work in Washington DC. Chapter 3 draws on her discussions of anthropology with her closest colleague, Margaret Mead, discussions carried on in their correspondence when Mead was away for fieldwork. Their agreements and disagreements help define each one's work. These letters express aspects of their personal relationship as well. Chapters 4 and 5 excerpt and review Benedict's published and unpublished writings after *Patterns of Culture*, and I reconstruct lines of continuity and trace her new ideas and new forms of earlier ideas. Excerpts are drawn also from her discussions of methodology, her correspondence with colleagues, her national culture reports for OWI, and a series of writings after the war about American culture. *The Chrysanthemum and the*

*Sword* speaks so strongly for itself and has been so well contextualized by commentary on it that I make only a few points about it, which illustrate the particular trends in her work on which I focus. My discussion of the RCC project stresses Benedict's own work in it and is based on the funding applications and progress reports that she wrote for the project sponsor and on the minutes of the general seminar of the whole group, as well as on my own participation in the project; some perspectives of key participants in the research and problems that became apparent to the participants are evaluated. Chapter 6 presents some previously published student views of her as a teacher and some newly collected ones, and I discuss her relations with students as I observed them. This chapter also describes the academic setting of her return to teaching after the war, which was as problematic as the earlier rivalrous faculty relations. Chapter 7 summarizes Benedict's contribution to anthropology and reports on her participation in collegial dialogue in her discipline. It is brought to a close with some insights from her letters and manuscripts of an emotional side that has only been glimpsed in personal episodes accompanying the main emphasis of this book on her works. The course "texts" are reproduced in the appendixes.

CHAPTER 2

# The Search for Boas's Successor

The lengthy process of replacement of the aging Franz Boas in the Columbia University department of anthropology was significant in Ruth Benedict's career as well as in anthropological history. The history of these deliberations during the 1930s has been recounted in the biographies of Benedict and in studies of the Columbia anthropology department (see especially Caffrey 1989; Goldfrank 1978; Linton and Wagley 1971; MacMillan 1986; Modell 1983; Silverman 1981). Benedict commented on the episode in her letters to Margaret Mead while Mead was doing fieldwork during these years, letters that were still closed to researchers at the time of the previous studies, and they add information about her own role in the search for a successor that differs from previous reports and add her interpretation of several aspects of the process.

Franz Boas had been appointed to Columbia in 1896 as a lecturer nine years after he had immigrated to the United States with a doctorate in physics and fieldwork in geography and ethnology, nine years in search of support for his innovative ideas and a position from which to project them. When he was appointed lecturer in anthropology at Columbia, the university, like all other American universities, had no anthropology department. Lecturers in anthropology at Columbia were supervised by a committee chaired by James McKean Cattell, an experimental psychologist. Cattell and Boas in the same years sat on a committee of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, where they were also in a position to further academic anthropology. A department of anthropology was established at Columbia in 1899, placed in the Faculty of Philosophy where psychology also was situated, and Boas was appointed professor. Two part-time lecturers continued teaching anthropology in the new department; Boas named one of his own students, Clark Wissler, a lecturer beginning in 1905 (Darnell 1998a:158, 246). Boas's position was a joint appointment with the American Museum of Natural History (AMNH), where he was made assistant curator the same year he began teaching at Columbia. Boas wanted to make use of the collections of the

museum and its sponsorship of research in the training of anthropologists. He also wanted to bring the classification of ethnological collections in line with changing concepts in the discipline; however, the president of the AMNH, Morris K. Jessup, along with other anthropological museum directors of the period, stressed their mission to make exhibits understandable to the public. Boas had written in an exchange of letters in *Science* in 1887 with Otis T. Mason, curator of ethnology at the National Museum in Washington DC, that the way the museum grouped and labeled specimens imposed unscientific classification (Darnell 1998a:141; Stocking 1968:155). Boas resigned from the AMNH in 1905 over this issue and other differences, but he continued to depend on the museum and the Bureau of American Ethnology in Washington DC, for support of field research and publication for himself and his students.

The president of Columbia University, Nicholas Murray Butler, who held that post from 1902 until 1945, that is, until after Boas's retirement, was supportive of Boas in the early years but became less so with the approach of World War I. Boas had been brought up in a liberal and enlightened German Jewish intellectual environment. He was outspoken as a pacifist as well as a critic of several influential scientists. He compounded anti-Semitic prejudice against himself by writing, in a letter to the *New York Times*, a protest to the anti-German furor that was whipped up during World War I and, in the same letter, criticizing the imperialism of the United States at the time of the Spanish-American War (Boas 1916, in Stocking ed. 1974:331). Butler became openly critical of Boas and restricted further enlargement of the anthropology department (Lewis 2001a:457). A Columbia student of the late 1920s, and later a lecturer there, expressed a widely held opinion: "The whole department was discriminated against" (Lesser 1981:161).

Anticipation of Boas's retirement had been in the air for several years when Bronislaw Malinowski stopped off in New York in 1926 to visit with the Columbia anthropologists. He was interested in Boas's job, and some of them considered him a likely candidate, but the mix of temperaments turned out to be volatile, as Benedict and he both reported.

> Malinowski has been here again, with Radcliffe-Brown, and mostly he succeeded in setting everyone by the ears. He was ready to rake in the disciples – and if not, he'd have no alternative but that we burn him at the stake. He was greatly nettled that his doctrine was not a page out of the apocalypse to us, and being of a temperament that's quite a bit out of kilter, he translated it into an attitude of suspiciousness and misrepresentation on our part toward him. Yet he's a delightful person and I agree with quantities of his gush. It has cured me of any lingering inclinations toward gospel

trumpetings; from now on I take my anthropology with no admixture of propaganda.

He was experimenting on the American flapper. His line to me was that he and I, we'd discovered that blessed maturity where sex promptings mattered little – and he singled out Jeanette [Mirsky] the second time he met her as his "biological affinity." He wanted an assignation. Of course she told everyone first and last. But he'd tried others too in other ways. It all puts an end to the hope that he might be an addition here in New York. He greatly desires to be called to America somewhere, and when he went through before it seemed it would be something to be hoped for. Alas. (RB to MM, May 12 1926, MM S4)

Malinowski's comment on this visit was written to Benedict the next December in a letter that began with his apology for his long delay in informing her that he had written in support of her research application to the Rockefeller Foundation. He went on:

I always lose touch with Anthropology while in London, and completely, thus cannot take even an indirect interest in it. So to get all things off my chest, I was very touched with Boas's review of *Crime and Custom* in the *Forum*, which was as nice as he could write about such an abominable person as myself. Tell me whether you think my E[ncyclopedia] B[ritannica] article [probably referring to one dated that year and entitled "Anthropology"] was "fair" and "just"? I corrected the final proofs *after* my row with Franz and while I was so furious with him and bitter that I could not mention his name without swearing. Yet in print I put some specially nice things *extra*.

I would be very grateful if you gave me news of American Anthropology and gossip about Am. Anthropologists. Do they still hate me at Columbia? I seem to arouse strong feelings and that in spite of my real friendliness. I liked people and things (mainly people, however) in the U.S. very much and got positively attached to many of my friends there. (Malinowski to RB, December 6, 1926, RFB)

As Boas advanced in age, he attempted to control the appointment of his successor. He had had many disagreements with his distinguished former students, but mutual admiration and shared objectives overshadowed their disagreements, if only temporarily, and Boas reached a decision to bring Edward Sapir and Alfred Kroeber to Columbia during his last years there on the assumption they would be his successors. The university was slow in making this possible but finally approved positions for both men, and Boas wrote the offers in February 1931. Sapir had hoped for such an offer, but it

came after he had decided to accept a position at Yale (Darnell 1990:330). Kroeber replied that he was not inclined to leave the University of California at Berkeley, but he did not definitely refuse the offer for more than a year. Boas suffered a heart attack in December 1931, but he rallied by spring. Kroeber taught as a visiting professor at Columbia that spring semester but still did not refuse the permanent position. Benedict wrote Mead: "He [Boas] has not renewed the offer of the full professorship to Kroeber. Fortunately Kroeber keeps saying that he doesn't want it, but Boas is afraid just the same that he might take it, and he might, heaven knows. So Boas is fighting against making the offer again. At least I'm glad there's little chance of his coming. My opinion of him sinks lower weekly, and personally I find him more and more false" (RB to MM, April 2, 1932, MM B1)

Malinowski visited again and was "in the ring" for the job (RB to MM, March 4, 1933. MM B1), as was Ralph Linton:

> Guess who I had lunch with twice this week. Ralph Linton, who is pulling every wire he knows to come to Columbia as Boas's successor. . . . I'd rather see Linton here than Lowie or Kroeber, by a lot. . . . But think how amusing it would be if Ralph would fetch it. Think of Kroeber's point of view; Linton doesn't belong to the aristocracy. Only people get in who are solid with the machine. Well heaven knows I'm too much on the outside to be interested in the machine's keeping everything their own way. But I wish that Linton didn't talk so much about the "Jewish Ring" in anthropology – that's what's keeping him down. . . . I like him, but I'm not awfully sure of him ethnologically speaking. (RB to MM, April 15, 1932, MM B1)

Boas continued to teach courses and work with students. Some of his courses were taught by visiting refugee scholars whom he funded privately in order to help them enter American academic channels. This funding came principally from Elsie Clews Parsons, who drew on her inherited wealth to support anthropological research and publication. She funded much work in the Southwest, the site of her own studies, and also supported other projects in the Columbia department. Among the visiting faculty was the German physical anthropologist Bruno Oetteking, who was not a refugee. Students said he came to class one day in a storm trooper's uniform, and Boas told him, "Go home and change your dress" (MacMillan 1986:40). By 1935 some of Boas's recent students taught undergraduate courses, most often Ruth Bunzel, Gene Weltfish and Alexander Lesser. Benedict had been made administrative officer of the department in 1932. She carried on most of the graduate teaching in cultural anthropology and was the main sponsor

of student dissertation research. Boas and she obtained funding from the Columbia University Council on Research in Social Sciences for student fieldwork on North and South American Indian cultures on her Project #35. Benedict supervised the project, and numerous students were funded for dissertation fieldwork, writing, and publication. Historian Robert MacMillan (1986) has written the most detailed account of the department under the aging Boas and the emerging leadership of Benedict. He views the search years as a time when no school of thought unified the Columbia program, a time when Boas's objectives had become diverse and less clear, when he was diverted by aging. MacMillan sees the other faculty headed in different directions, Benedict teaching psychological patterning and Lesser and Weltfish teaching a partially Marxist anthropology. The students brought their own interests and were spurred on by the open ambience of New York City to develop their own diverse inquiries. He contrasted Columbia with the University of Chicago, finding that the Chicago anthropologists and their environment brought about a circumscribed school of thought and procedures. He conducted interviews in 1974 with students who entered the two departments from 1931 to 1937, finding some of the Columbia students highly critical of Boas and Benedict – indeed, vitriolic about her – and other students, admirers of them. He sees an emerging community of interests and a sense of professionalism in the Columbia department with Project #35 and with Mead's 1935–36 Seminar on Cooperation and Competition among Primitive Peoples. In this seminar, students reported on the literature on cooperative, competitive, and individualistic behavior and customs in a particular culture, and they wrote chapters to be assembled in a book edited by Mead with the same title as the seminar. MacMillan contends that in spite of this rally, Benedict's influence waned and that she became more distant from the department. In several endnotes appended after his defense of his dissertation, however, he grants that in estimating Benedict's influence and presence in the department, he was drawing on the opinions of only a few students and that other students had given positive views of her. Student testimony in other publications showed that Benedict's influence remained strong but that tensions did prevail between her and a number of students.

Recruiting to replace Boas became active in the academic year 1935–36, with Lloyd Warner the first to be invited for interviews in February, but he met with little enthusiasm from administrators and some of the sociologists. At that point Benedict reported: "Boas is still fighting to have me made head of the department, and I've told him that it's obvious I can no more fight for that than cast a vote for myself on a ballet" (RB to MM, February 6, 1936, MM S5).

> The Dean [Howard L. McBain, dean of Arts and Sciences] asked me over this afternoon, and the discussion has gone against Lloyd. At least for any present action. I said over again that the other person in the age group was Linton, and they may ask him to come on. The Dean talked to me again about Boas's proposal that I be made head, and I told him yes, but if they did that it must be because that was what was selected as desirable above any other course. He asked me about younger students for minor appointments, and I told him the great difficulty was that the incomparably best person was another woman. With the greatest seriousness he said, "Well, that's coming. If she's best, then why not have her? We'll select the best people and we'll have a department of women. Somebody's got to be the first to do it." He told me they were appointing a woman to be head of Indo-Germanics. Anyway it's something to get a Columbia dean to talk in that vein. (RB to MM, February 10, 1936, MM S5)

It surely was something, but she played lightly with the musings of "the machine" and "the aristocracy," which she could only advise from the outside. Later in the same letter she wrote of comments on these muddled moves made by a prophetess on a consultation undertaken casually during a Saturday outing with a colleague, Geoffrey Gorer. She identified the prophetess only by the name Elizabeth, a person Mead apparently knew:

> Geoffrey has a native power of hypnosis, I guess he has told you, and Elizabeth was disturbed and taken with him. As soon as we got in she began telling him how he mustn't work with his eyes; he must veil them. I don't think she knows much about hypnosis. . . . To me she talked at first all about the Columbia situation. "They would moil and moil around, and I'd get tireder and tireder with it, but they'd have to come to me, and it was alright that I should be on top." She didn't know what the situation was at all – whether a job or something else, but it was very accurate as far as the moiling went. She spoke of Papa Franz and got his mannerisms very well. I asked her whether taking the offer would destroy me, and she said no, I'd have it lots easier then, – something I couldn't see any sense to at all till the dean said today why not appoint MM! (RB to MM, February 10 1936, MM S5. The last clause suggests this part of the letter was written the same day as the letter previously quoted.)

Moves and machinations continued. Dean McBain was considering making a temporary appointment while searching for a permanent candidate, and Robert Lowie was to be offered a one-year appointment:

> I balked one bright idea of the Dean's – thank God. . . . They would offer

> Lowie a 1 year job – could not call him for it's tabu to call a Jew. I convinced him (the Dean) it was a scurvy trick – by using no such phrase, of course. So we're saved that. Of all people in America Lowie wanted the job and had a right to it, and the next year would be impossible in the department if Lowie were here and the negotiations for the permanent appointment were going on all around him. (RB to MM, March 14, 1936, MM B1)

A one-year appointment was them offered to Frans M. Olbrecht, professor of anthropology at the University of Ghent, who had taught at Columbia on temporary appointments earlier. Olbrecht quickly accepted. Then "Nicholas [Murray Butler] has OKed my being Executive Head of the Department – not even 'Acting' "(RB to MM, March 26, 1936, MM S5). Dean McBain died in early May of that year at age fifty-five, and Benedict wrote that from the point of view of the department, his death was a calamity. She had tried to steer the search away from temporary appointments and from a plan Boas had proposed for bringing in junior persons, one of whom was Leslie Spier. In a letter to sociologist Robert Lynd, a member of the search committee, Benedict stated that she would accept being by-passed for the chairmanship if the person chosen were of senior status. Ralph Linton was acceptable to her, she wrote, but she favored Lloyd Warner, as she knew Lynd did also. In this letter to Lynd, she wrote that McBain had told her, "the universities will have to come to it [placing women in department chairmanships], and he didn't believe it was bad policy to take the bull by the horns and accept the necessity. . . . Of course I know the difficulties" (RB to RL, May 29, 1936, in Caffrey 1989:276). Boas was forced to retire by the university administration in June 1936, even though his professorship had not been filled and no alternate plan had been agreed on.

In October a new committee was formed to find Boas's successor made up of historian Carleton Hayes, whom Benedict admired and who had been a close friend of Howard McBain's, and sociologist Robert MacIver and chaired by H. E. Hawkes, dean of Columbia College. Hayes had come to her office to confer with her: "Hayes seemed to be in hearty sympathy with my main point that what the department needed was people with definite and special bodies of knowledge – appointments in linguistics and archeology" (RB to MM, October 2, 1936,MM S5). Reporting one month later:

> The committee had me over for lunch Saturday . . . they announced that they had consulted Sapir and Wissler, and independently, and in entire agreement with these two, had recommended that Boas's successor be – Duncan Strong. Since Hawkes had led off the discussion by saying that the committee had decided (!) that ethnology should be the major activity

> of the Columbia department I asked that they recognize this by giving me equal status with Strong, telling them that I knew he would come with the status of Associate Professor. I was secretly appalled at the idea that he might be brought as full professor and I left as assistant professor, and I felt peculiarly helpless. At the budget meeting on Monday, however, Hawkes told me that they had drawn up a report embodying my suggestions – provision for two associate professors. Then there'll be an assistant professor, probably [George] Herzog, for linguistics. . . . I did not dare to fight [their suggestion of] Strong at the luncheon on Saturday because they also discussed Malinowski. And I don't care about the title of head of the department. What I want is a voice, and power to put across a kind of ethnology Strong knows nothing about – yet anyway. . . . Butler must have instructed them to have no dealings with Boas, for . . . they have never approached him for any facts or information. I talked it over with Bob Lynd, but his program involved just a postponement of the whole affair; visiting professors, interim status. And at the end, perhaps the anthropology department brought in under sociology. At least Strong is enthusiastic and presentable . . . and he's a naturally cooperative person. (RB to MM, November 10, 1936,MM S5)

Lunch with MacIver two weeks later brought the report that Strong was no longer to be head of the department: "He [MacIver] asked me what I would do if I had a free hand in the department" (RB to MM, November 26, 1936,MM S5). Benedict was promoted to associate professor to begin in July 1937, and her appointment as executive head was renewed the following year to be effective through June 1939. The committee's plan in early 1937 was again to offer Lowie a one-year professorship, along with appointments of Strong and Herzog:

> Obviously MacIver had presented his recommendation of me as head, and Hawkes, being under orders to accept nothing of the sort, had brought about an impasse. I said that I thought Linton ought to be considered as well as Lowie. I can't tell you how unwilling I'd be to have Lowie here. Ten days ago . . . we heard that the committee had drafted their recommendation naming Linton, me, Strong, and Herzog. Then Boas went into action. . . . Boas said flatly that $7000 for Linton was a waste of money, and that if that money could be channeled toward the department it was essential that it be expended for research and not for a full professorship. . . . Hawkes had me over, and asked about . . . the money Boas had in the last three years raised from outside the university. The need for financing research is a theme I can be eloquent on, and Hawkes asked

> me to get together the figures and meet with the committee. I outlined what the department could do on a S.A. project with $7000 and Hawkes is interested because the Pan-American fervor is popular now. . . . Hawkes is obviously not sold on Linton and anything might still happen. (RB to MM, January 21, 1937,MM S5)

This committee abandoned its plan to bring Lowie on a visiting basis, and in spite of Boas's objections, it made an offer of a one-year visiting professorship to Ralph Linton at $7,500 and stated in the offer that he would be considered for a permanent position the following year (RB to MM, April 6, 1937,MM B1). Contrary to the folklore of the department, which told of an early rift between Boas and Linton, their early correspondence had been cordial (Lewis 2001a:458). However, when Linton arrived in September 1937, he paid his first call on Boas, who in spite of his forced resignation the previous year continued to occupy two offices in the department. Boas told him, "This is not at all what I wanted" (Linton and Wagley 1971:48). In December 1937 Linton's visiting appointment was changed to a permanent one. Benedict's designation as executive officer was renewed in January 1938, and she was still in this office in late August. In planning with dean of the faculty George B. Peagram for her sabbatical scheduled to begin in September 1939, Peagram told her he wanted to appoint W. Duncan Strong as acting chairman during her year of absence and that he did not want Linton in the post (RB to MM, January 18, August 28, 1938, MM B1). Nonetheless, by September 1938 Linton had the chairmanship.

Benedict's support for Linton during the search for a successor to Boas was clear, and her reports to Mead in the fall he arrived were positive. By December the students were complaining that Linton's courses were boring, and Linton was insecure because he knew student opinion. By January he had chosen his courses for the following year: the college and graduate introductory courses, Europe and Asia as an area course, and no seminar or guidance of graduate work. "It's a poor showing for a full professor" (RB to MM, December 3, 1937, and January 18, 1938, MM S5). In a small incident that both Benedict and a student reported, Linton gained a reputation for paranoia: he angrily told a class that some student must have stolen a book of his that he could not find (RB to MM, February 22, 1938, MM B1; Harris 1997:8). After another year had passed, Benedict wrote that she was disappointed in his draft chapters for his book, *Acculturation in Seven American Indian Tribes*: "The eleven 'acculturation' studies of American Indians – the contact with Whites – that I turned over to him the year he first came. . . . He's done absolutely nothing with them. His discussions are just as if he had

no case material in front of him at all" (RB to MM, February 19, 1939, MM B1).

Accounts from students of that period side with one or the other. Jack Harris, who entered the Columbia program in 1936, wrote:

> We thought it unfair that Benedict was not named chair of the department and an outsider was brought in, Ralph Linton. Linton was not a very likeable person. . . . The course that he gave on Oceania, I remember the reaction of all of us was that it was way beneath us, it was on an undergraduate level. (1997:8)

Another student, Leona Steinberg Bond, entering in 1937, wrote:

> When Ralph Linton became head of the department of anthropology at Columbia, it divided the department into two camps. Those who regarded Ruth as the true head regarded Ralph as an interloper. He was very unhappy about this and aware of his unpopularity with those who were considered to be bright students. . . . The level of antagonism between these two cannot be exaggerated. (letter to author, October 14, 1997)

Dorothy Bramson Hammond, a 1940 entrant, has written:

> Student opinion, probably correctly, held that Benedict had been unjustly treated by the administration. . . . The faculty were all discreet. . . . Most of us, however, were Benedict partisans and fierce loyalty to her precluded any whole-hearted acceptance of Linton. (1994:16)

Some students were Linton loyalists, among them Ernestine Friedl, who entered in 1941:

> It was a difficult situation for students; many of us tried to stay neutral. . . . Linton was an excellent formal lecturer whose asides were witty and informative. Benedict rambled from one topic to another as thoughts came to her. She taught like the poet she was. We had to give our complete attention to her discourse if we were to follow along. Our concentration was rewarded by the ideas she introduced which stimulated us to think. (1994:15)

It is hard to believe that Linton had not found out about Benedict's support for him in the consultations that led to his appointment at Columbia, since Robert Lynd had a letter stating her support of Linton, and three other professors had heard her advice in the committee and in consultations. Antagonism between them was commonly reported. Linton would reveal what was probably the true basis of his antagonism to her at the time of her death.

He was informed that the cause of her death was angina, and he replied, "Goddamit, she can't even die of a woman's disease" (Howard 1984:281). He is reported to have claimed he killed her himself with his own sorcery kit (Mintz 1981).

That she was denied successorship to Boas's position is not the whole story, and she played as strong a role as anyone in the search for his replacement. Through her assertive presence with the dean of the faculty and among influential faculty members, she displayed her competence in planning for the department, and this role pointed up the embarrassment to the university of keeping a woman who was highly regarded in her discipline and among the public out of the chairmanship. She had kept up her influence through being administrative officer of the department for three years and executive officer for the next two years. In the long process of replacing Boas, "Benedict seemed more aware of the bureaucratic complexities than anyone" (MacMillan 1986:51). Compare this evaluation based on the Columbia Central Files with Lapsley's quotation from Natalie S. Woodbury, a student at that time, "As an administrator she was just a blue-eyed disaster" (1999:276). Benedict's objective was to retain the ethnographic emphasis of the department and to assure the prominence of the methods and approach she had been teaching. At key points she steered the choice away from Boas's preference for hiring juniors and away from the committee's decision to procrastinate with one-year appointments. In the end, they settled on her first choice among available candidates, Ralph Linton, who was moving in the direction of her own interests. She did not want the senior Boasians, Kroeber and Lowie, to bring in what she thought were outmoded and dead-end ideas. Their writings at that time opposed attitudinal and psychological perspectives in the study of culture, and only after Benedict's death did Kroeber, although not Lowie, become persuaded of the value of including these viewpoints. Kroeber, more than many, grew with the discipline he had done so much to shape as the first amplifier of Boasian science, and he is widely remembered for this long-sustained role and thus may be thought undeserving of Benedict's disdain. But considering his works accomplished before Benedict's death, her animosity was a likely expression of their differences.

The deans had recognized that no one person could fill Boas's shoes. Duncan Strong, trained at Berkeley and initially recommended by Boas, greatly expanded the archaeology program. An adjunct professorship in physical anthropology was created for Harry Shapiro, who was trained by E. A. Hooton at Harvard, a post Shapiro held along with an appointment at the AMNH. Boas's former student George Herzog was assistant professor in linguistics. Alexander Lesser and Gene Weltfish continued as lecturers, and Marian W. Smith,

a very talented ethnographer working among Northwest Coast Indians who had completed her degree under Boas and Benedict, was hired as instructor. Duncan Strong brought an enlarged student enrollment in archaeology. The department was suddenly diversified and more diffuse. Student opinion, as cited, suggests that Benedict retained intellectual preeminence in it.

Colleagues appear to have been Benedict's most frequent social contacts at this time, judging from her correspondence. There is scant evidence of socializing with literary figures, such as was important to Mead. Benedict participated in interdisciplinary seminars that flourished in the New York scene but mentioned in her letters no social visiting other than with anthropologists. She enjoyed an easygoing friendship with Geoffrey Gorer, although she did not respond when he "fished hard," as he told Mead, for an offer from her to write an introduction to his book *Himalayan Village* (MM to RB, July 31, 1938, MM S4). New York's circle of anthropologists and their students and friends was enlivened by another visit from Malinowski, again playing Don Quixote:

> Malinowski pouted in a corner while the cranks cornered him one by one till he escaped to the bedroom and [the host, Ashley] Montague came back from a conference with him to announce that Malinowski wanted to dance. After that Malinowski kept coming over between dances and putting over [*sic*] my breasts and begging me to dance. I knew better than to accept and the evening passed without my really seeing him at all. Which was excellent. In parting he gave me another – the evening's third – of his silly kisses and told me that he was drawing his sword against me in print presently but we loved each other just the same and my sword thrusts though they had pierced his breast had been honorable ones in fair battle and not rear thrusts. (RB to MM, October 2, 1936, MM S5)

A few years later Benedict was discouraged about the state of the discipline: "With Sapir dead, with the Harvard department manned by little people, and Chicago minus Radcliffe-Brown, the real centers of anthropology have become fewer. . . . Lowie is on the defensive, I think, but he's pretty bitter; he knows what anthropology *is*, and you and I are wolves in the fold" (RB to MM, March 19, 1939, MM S5). Nevertheless, she enjoyed social relations with colleagues. On her way to the Blackfeet reservation in Montana in July 1939, where she would conduct a field school, she spent the train layover in Chicago at the University of Chicago in "good visits" with Lloyd Warner, Robert Redfield, Fay-Cooper Cole, Roy d'Andrade, William Ogburn, and Louis Wirth (RB to MM, July 7, 1939, MM R7).

The period before the impending war began to absorb Benedict's atten-

tion, and that of other social scientists and of her friends Margaret Mead and Gregory Bateson, was a time when she played a significant role in her own university and in her discipline, and she helped shape post-Boasian anthropology at Columbia. Boas continued to influence the department until he died in December 1942 while he was conversing at a departmental luncheon. Ralph Linton's presence at Columbia expanded the department's preeminence in the field of culture and personality. Benedict was on sabbatical for the year 1939–40, and in Washington DC from 1943 through 1945, and again on sabbatical until September 1946. Linton moved on to Yale in 1946 before Benedict returned. Benedict's exercise of influence with key senior faculty and administrators at Columbia; her cordial relations with the two most important British anthropologists of that period, Malinowski and later Radcliffe-Brown; and her sense that the future of the discipline lay not in the broad Boasian programs of Kroeber and Lowie but in exploring the psychological aspects of culture forecast the large role she would continue to play in the discipline.

CHAPTER 3

# Friendship with Margaret Mead

## Letters to and from the Field

Ruth Benedict and Margaret Mead wrote each other every few weeks or oftener during Mead's frequent field trips. The correspondence records the dynamics of personal and intellectual encounter between these two quite extraordinary persons. Their correspondence has long been known through Mead's selection of passages of letters for her book about Benedict, *An Anthropologist at Work: Writings of Ruth Benedict* (1959), and the full correspondence is part of Mead's archived papers. Mead's letters to Benedict and Benedict's carbon copies of her letters to Mead were removed from Benedict's papers by Mead, who was Benedict's literary executor, so that the letters were not available until Mead's papers were opened for research in the Library of Congress. Mead had culled the letters, leaving fewer than half initially available, while others were deposited but remained temporarily restricted for some years. The reserved letters were in the files of Rhoda Métraux and were added as the third deposit in the archive in November 2001. The reserved letters contain the correspondence when Mead was in Samoa and a large selection of later letters that perhaps were held back because they contain personal comments on colleagues still living at the time of Mead's death in 1978. Biographers of both Benedict and Mead had skirted the question sometimes posed of whether they had a lesbian relationship. Mary Catherine Bateson wrote in her memoir about her parents, Margaret Mead and Gregory Bateson, that she had been told of this relationship by a close friend of her mother's (1984). A recent biography by Hilary Lapsley, *Margaret Mead and Ruth Benedict: The Kinship of Women* (1999), gives strong evidence for such a relationship principally from the first two acquisitions of letters, which Mead had included in her papers. Lapsley's surmise about a lesbian relationship is confirmed in the letters contained in the last deposit of papers, letters not available at the time of Lapsley's research. Lois W. Banner, in *Intertwined Lives: Margaret Mead and Ruth Benedict and Their Circle* (2003), utilized the

full collection of letters. She discusses the views and practices of sexuality in their times.

The last deposit of papers includes the correspondence written to and from Samoa during Mead's fieldwork there, and the letters make clear that Benedict and Mead had been lovers before Mead's departure for Samoa in the summer of 1925. Benedict's letters expressed deep love, and some were written daily. Mead's letters were amorous as well. Benedict wrote joyously of her anticipation of their reunion planned for Europe the next summer. Both their husbands would be there, Luther Cressman waiting to join Mead and Stanley Benedict there for a professional conference. Ruth Benedict wrote that she would wait upon Luther's prior claim to reunion but was counting the days until her own ecstatic moment in some trysting place would come. When they arrived in Europe, Ruth Benedict and Luther Cressman found out that Mead had met Reo Fortune on shipboard and fallen in love with him. A husband had been an expected claimant, but a new lover was a shock to Benedict. As both women traveled from city to city in Europe, Benedict's letters, no longer addressed "Dear One" but abruptly "Margaret," expressed her disarray in trying to cope with her unabated love. With their return to New York, the record of correspondence ceased. Mead divorced Luther Cressman after a time and married Reo Fortune. When the correspondence resumed with Mead's and Fortune's trip to New Guinea in 1928, Benedict's letters were not the ardent love letters she had sent to Samoa but still addressed a close friend and confidant with news of herself and the anthropology scene in New York. The letters often closed with declarations of ardor now more reserved.

The letters give much insight into their friendship and their collaboration, their shared ideas and their intellectual differences. After her initial adoration, Benedict wrote with strong attachment and with admiration for Mead's unique abilities. She appears to have become more self-sufficient emotionally than Mead, fifteen years her junior. Benedict preferred a relationship as peer to Mead rather than the relationship of teacher. Mead sometimes retained her student attitudes, irking Benedict in her desire for a more egalitarian friendship. The letters contain more news and intellectual interchanges than mention of deeper feelings, and indicate Benedict's and Mead's ways of collaboration, their sharing of work objectives, and their differences in emphasis and in interpretation. Their comments on relationships with colleagues and their views of colleagues' work provide a perspective on the discipline. The obligations of their acknowledged division of labor between field and university were devotedly carried out by both during the long periods of Mead's fieldwork. From the field, Mead asked Benedict for help of many kinds: sending books, film, and food supplies; doing business trans-

actions; transmitting messages and letters; editing and revising manuscripts she wrote; opinions on ideas for articles; and advice about her interchanges with colleagues. She also wrote many keenly analytic passages about the day's field observations and many theoretical discourses arising from fieldwork. Benedict responded to all these requests and commentaries and wrote news of friends and colleagues, of student personal problems and job problems, and of publishing matters and the professional scene. She included several discussions of kinship and social structure, observations on her reading, and commentary on Mead's analytic points in her letters. She wrote often about ominous events of impending war in Europe and its repercussions in the United States. At this period the letters began "Ruth darling" and "Margaret darling" and closed with warm words of love, as was the convention of the time. The tenor of one of Benedict's closings typified the concern, warmth, and intellectual stimulation they shared: "Keep well, and I love you – lots. And I'm sick to have an intelligent person to talk anthropology to" (RB to MM, July 8, 1932, MM B1). They were close friends and intellectual collaborators. The medium of letter writing during separation imposed a moderation that Benedict seemed increasingly to find more comfortable and sustainable than a close personal presence. Correspondence allowed Benedict both personal expression and remoteness. Illustrations from these letters are used here for insights into Benedict's psyche, her version of anthropology, and her professional relationships. My selections from them also give glimpses of the vivid record Mead made in these letters of her fieldwork and thoughts during the intense stimulation that fieldwork brought her; but these are mere glimpses, and the detail that Mead voluminously wrote ranks as the best of field data.

One immediate impression from the correspondence beginning with Mead's second New Guinea trip in 1932 is that this was a period of buoyant, hearty moods and a collected and confident psychological state in Benedict. The periodic depressions of her early adulthood apparently no longer occurred. This important change in her work and life has not been recognized in most commentaries about her. The prevailing impression of Benedict in studies of her derives from Mead's romanticizing of the depressions of Benedict's early life to the extent that Mead appears unable to envision Benedict free of them in spite of Benedict's assurances throughout their correspondence at this time that depressions were a thing of her past. As mentioned in chapter 1, in "The Story of My Life" Benedict recounted that, as a child, she tried to remember her deceased father and could only imagine him, how interruption of her imagining brought episodes of rebellion, then discipline. Forced to abandon rebellion, illness became her episodic response to deprivation of retreats into imagination, and in adulthood depressions

were the response. Benedict described these depressions occurring from childhood through young adulthood: "it seemed to me that devils swept down on me" (in Mead 1959:108). Although Mead received letter after letter from Benedict in the early 1930s assuring her that depressions had ceased and she was in the best of spirits, Mead's biographical commentaries about Benedict made only slight reference to a change. Mead wrote in one sentence that a "new integration" came to Benedict with the writing of *Patterns of Culture* and with the gathering threat of war in Europe (1959:96). This sentence was not enough to dispel the vivid image she had created of Benedict as tragically obsessive. Mead did explain to some extent Benedict's relation to her period in history and noted the popularity of Freudian-style self-analysis when Benedict wrote "The Story of My Life," as well as educated women's freedom to speak out about ambiguities of their social position and the license for writing introspectively in poems and journals, but not all readers have understood these things. Unfortunately, Mead's stress on Benedict's early psychic struggles and her inadequate reporting that Benedict had resolved these struggles in her mature life were seized on by a critic of *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword* as evidence that Benedict was psychotic and projected her psychosis onto the culture of Japan.[1]

Benedict's steady psychological state appeared early, when she was in the first stages of writing her first book. In a handwritten closing to a typed letter, Benedict wrote: "Darling, I wish you were here. I'm getting on very well, no devils, and more drive than I can remember. You'd be quite pleased. . . . I don't even hate my Introductory course, and I can't say more than that. But you belong especially to seasons when there are no devils – you belong to both" (RB to MM, April 2, 1932, MM B1). Two weeks later, after a long report on the politics of finding Boas's replacement, she went on: "This is all shop gossip. I've been almost as shut in to my little round, though, as you are in the watershed of the Sepik. I'm so well and unresentful of my busy-work that you'd be disillusioned again with me. I've done almost nothing else. I've written the reviews I had to do, worked off a couple of Encyclopedia articles, and done my routine work" (RB to MM, April 15, 1932, MM B1).

Her composure lasted, and none of her letters report depression. Several years later she wrote while vacationing at her family farm: "I'm feeling very fit and rested. All I need is to take some time out by myself; all the harassed tiredness leaves me. There is no problem of devils any more and I recuperate like dried up moss under rain" (RB to MM, August 21, 1937, MM B1). Further testimony to Benedict's inner peace at this time comes from a psychologist, Abraham Maslow, who was trained at the University of Wisconsin and who studied with Benedict while he was a research associate in psychology at

Columbia and later while teaching at Brooklyn College, a period from about 1935 to 1942. Maslow wrote that his efforts to understand two teachers, one of them Benedict, whom he "loved, adored, and admired," brought about his theory of self-actualization, which is his most noted work (Maslow 1954). A more balanced personality could hardly be imagined than his description of the psychology of a self-actualizing person, as summarized by Margaret Caffrey (1989:256). Richard Handler demonstrates through consideration of her articles of 1930 and 1932 and *Patterns of Culture* that "in her anthropological writings she achieved the integral personality that she and so many of her contemporaries sought" (1990:180).

Among many problems, Mead sought advice on collegial relationships, and Benedict calmed the troubled relationships in which Mead sometimes found herself. Mead was annoyed, for instance, that Cora Du Bois had delayed writing her after Du Bois had visited her in Bali on her way to her field site on the island of Alor: "I have never had anything except the utmost desire to help Cora, yet she seems to avoid me as if I meant her harm" (MM to RB, May 2, 1937, MM B1). Cora Du Bois had been a student of Boas's and Benedict's when both taught at Barnard in 1927, and on Benedict's advice Du Bois had gone to the University of California for her Ph.D. study, one reason being the easy access to field study of California Indians. Benedict supported her fieldwork with Project #35 funds and was particularly interested in the ethnology of the Wintu among whom Du Bois worked. By this time, 1937, Du Bois had received specialized training in the psychoanalytic study of personality, and there were high expectations among many in this field for her project in Indonesia. Benedict regarded Du Bois highly, but Du Bois did not have as much experience conducting fieldwork as Mead had. In her reply she drew a lesson for Mead:

> Cora's not writing you is just a matter of the work that's been piled on her this year. . . . Her not writing is not an intentional slight. . . . You go first to people whom you think most valuable, but most people can't stand much comparison of themselves with people they know are better. When you feel you are pouring out wisdom and sharing it with them, they are feeling sunk because you're so good, (your brain, not your good-nature). Don't ask me why people are so stupid as that, but remember the whole "kill the father" movement in anthropology against Boas. He often asks me the same question you have: Why don't people consult me? (RB to MM, May 18, 1937, MM B1)

Benedict often took the role of smoothing rivalries. Mead's interests were specialized, and she was sometimes impatient with work outside her own

pursuits, even impatient with Benedict's broader anthropological interests. The letters, however, show this hardly ruffled Benedict. Mead's arduous fieldwork and innovative thought were so valued by Benedict that she responded to Mead's occasional tunnel vision diplomatically.

Mead asked advice about writing the ailing Boas from the field: "I think it would be simpler if you said whether you thought I should or should not write him. . . . I don't think I have ever mattered seriously except as a Student with a capital S." Benedict replied: "You're not 'off his books', but . . . he's got past living in the world at all and hardly knows that other human beings aren't just shadows. Sometimes for a long time I *know* I'm just a shadow. So letters don't make much difference" (MM to RB, May 16, 1937; RB to MM, June 18, 1937; both in MM B1). In Benedict's reports, Boas's health and activities had their ups and downs, and three months later she wrote, "Papa Franz is looking well. . . . He feels very useful" (RB to MM, September 21, 1937, MM G1).

Mead and Bateson were en route from Bali to Tambunum, a settlement in the Iatmul area of the Sepik River, from mid-March to the first of May 1938. Mead's first letters from Tambunum observed the beauty of the river and the vivaciousness of the people and Bateson's pleasure in being back among the group he had worked with previously. After two months spirits were still high: "Counting the days till we start home, but not a bit bored or unhappy. . . . We make a good life of it" (MM to RB, July 4, 1938, MM B1). As time went on, letters reported illness and fatigue and continual work through these periods, then not sleeping well on their makeshift mattress, then weariness of "this hot, crowded, uncomfortable public way of living" (MM to RB, September 16, 1938, MM B1). More disturbing than the stress of the field situation, however, was Mead's longing for a letter from Benedict. Her letters are dated a week or two farther apart than before. The transit time of up to nine weeks was not more than to the Balinese villages, but in June Benedict hastily set off for a trip to Guatemala for six weeks, and a letter she mailed from there never arrived. On Mead's journey to Rabaul, headed for the Sepik, she complained that Benedict did not write about theory and method (MM to RB, April 2, 1938, MM B1). What troubled Mead most was her feeling that Benedict's letters were uncommunicative, and she became convinced that Benedict had lost interest in her and her work. As the summer went on, Mead became obsessed with these thoughts, and her detailed reports of many breakthroughs in field analysis – "fieldwork luck simply follows me about, there's no denying it" (MM to RB, August 10, 1938, MM B1) – were interspersed with passages of anxiety. Benedict's letter in response to Mead's mild anxiety of early summer opened with a slow, even pace; news of her own schedule

and questions about Mead's; and sympathetic words about illnesses in the field. Then she reassured Mead of her empathy in a remarkably self-revealing passage:

> But as for any real distance between us, I know there's no need to be troubled. . . . If I gave myself wholly to nagging details of anthropology and lost my obsessional self, you'd be baffled – and worse. But it's strange that in spite of all my busyness I have constantly freer and freer access to my obsessional self – and happier access – and you are the only person in the world who knows or cherishes that side of me. It makes you seem very close to me, when other people who see a quite different person in me seem very remote. I don't have devils anymore; its hard to put in words how completely they're gone. You'll understand when nobody else would if I put it that I feel as if I lived in that country I despaired of for so long; none of the nagging things I have to do really touch me. I don't feel lonely either – not really, even with you away. It's like a little piece of eternal life, with all that's past and all that's present enormously real, and no desperateness about the present. Even not having enough leisure doesn't upset me the way it used to, for I can carry the sense of leisure around with me even when I'm busy with Columbia politics. I suppose I've achieved identification with my father – or something. Anyway I like it and I think you would, and I don't think you'd find it a bit sanctimonious even if the words I put it in have a suspicious flavor. Or didn't they? (RB to MM, August 3, 1938, MM B1)

After this passage of self-explanation, Benedict wrote a careful comment on their intellectual relationship. This relationship should be reviewed to put the comment in context.

## Intellectual and Personal Dimensions

Benedict and Mead were initially teacher and student, respectively, but Mead carried Boas's emphasis on the individual in culture to the subject of learning culture. The discipline of anthropology that, since E. B. Tylor's writing, had defined culture as learned behavior, making learning the key to culture, looked askance on studying the subject of learning, particularly childhood learning. Puberty ceremonies could pass muster, but accounts of these ceremonies emphasized the demonstration of male authority and ritualized transition more than they showed the learning that took place; care giving, teaching, and the behavior conveyed during childhood in cultural enactment fell too much to women to warrant attention, were too close to what psychologists studied, and were outside overt organizational activities. Mead created

the ethnographic study of learning by herself in her work in Manus in 1928, and Benedict recognized its importance. While she recognized the insights in data on childhood, almost a decade passed before she herself wrote on childhood learning (Benedict 1938b). She included childhood learning as an item in what anthropology needed to investigate in her theoretical formulation in her 1941 Shaw lectures, devoting one of the six lectures to socialization. American teaching of children and American adult values were the subject of a 1943 article. At the OWI, Benedict interviewed on childhood in Thailand, Romania, Holland, and Japan. The subject was included in her national culture reports on the first three nations, particularly in the interpretations of Romanian culture. It was only touched on in her report on Japan written for the Office of War Information (OWI). Her lengthy material on childhood in Japan was published in *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword*, where I, in disagreement with another commentator, Clifford Geertz (1988), find it not only fine analysis but also central to her interpretation of Japan's ability to reconstruct industriously and with clear purpose. I also find it a contribution to personality and culture studies in its inclusion of interpretation of variant individual ways of living in accordance with the culture. After the war, in an address to anthropologists, "The Study of Cultural Patterns in European Nations," Benedict fully incorporated learning into her theoretical position:

> To anthropologists, the study of national character is a study of learned cultural behavior. . . . During the last decade, theoretical points made by anthropologists about cultural conditioning had been widely accepted. Anthropologists had presented their case convincingly enough so that there was wide agreement that social arrangements are of fundamental importance in shaping any people's tenets about life, whether they are assumptions about the function of the State, economic motivations, relations between the sexes, or dependence on the supernatural. . . . These methods were quite specific, and were designed to investigate how each new generation had learned and transmitted its way of life in all its specificities. Experience had shown that it was necessary to stress many aspects of life which rate as trivia in Western international studies. (1946b:274)

Benedict had incorporated into her own way of thinking Mead's findings about transmitting culture. For her part, Benedict's grasp of the complexity of what she called "the social environment" was what carried her writing beyond the psychological – and biological – determinism that Mead sometimes employed. Benedict was fully aware of how much she was learning from her former student, and she valued Mead's work above any other's. Thus Benedict's letters express impatience, probably embarrassment, with

Mead's seeming lapses into a student role. The self-revelation in Benedict's letter of August 3, 1938, was, in part, a way of overcoming Mead's deference. Benedict's letter continued directly with a parable from earlier times:

> There's one thing I recognize as true in your questions, though. When you spoke of your anthropology as a "flower for my hair," it was an echo of our old cross-purposes when I wrote "This Gabriel." Do you remember? Your obsessional self is always looking for a creature from the upper realms at whose feet you can lay an offering. And I look always for an equal denizen. Well, you are the equal denizen, and the only one there's ever going to be. So when you feel I don't take your work with a gesture as if it were a tribute, remember it's only because I need so much to take it as between equals. It's so much more appropriate too! (RB to MM, August 3, 1938, MM B1)

Mead's first response to this letter was joyous, and she explained her earlier despair. I quote this response, dated October 6, 1938, below in connection with an intellectual difference between them to which the explanation refers. A week later Mead wrote her response to the self-revelatory aspect of Benedict's letter and to the parable, a letter Mead called, almost archly, Benedict's "complete survey of the world." Her response was selective, and a little obtuse, an assurance that she did understand Benedict's obsessional self and her far country and that she understood herself to be a symbol of the journey to the far country, and "in that sense I have been a proper denizen" (MM to RB, October 14, 1938, MM S4). She did not comment on the poem, "This Gabriel," about the praise-giver:

> He smiled, knowing the grey
> And dusty journey for the same
> Men saw upwinding through the stars; . . .
> What comfort had he had in praise
> That makes of him this Gabriel
> Walking the stars, his even pace
> Shaped to a crystal citadel?

The careful reprimand for a student's dependence on praise and delivery of gifts of research, Mead apparently could not acknowledge.

Before she received the letter with the parable, Mead had already mailed a letter that was so distressed that Benedict, apparently alarmed, answered with unstinting praise. Mead had also mailed a deprecating commentary on the manuscript of Benedict's article "Continuities and Discontinuities in Cultural Conditioning." In the first of these letters, Mead tried to convince herself that her fieldwork was a waste of time, but reviewing her abilities in

the field she found this could not be so, and she ended the letter hoping her gifts of fieldwork would be accepted:

> I have at last decided that for ten years I have been on a sterile track in developing field methods which rely too much on my idiosyncratic abilities and interests and which other fieldworkers either will not or can not use – I suspect its a mixture of both. Anyway, the net result is a tremendous waste of time when what we need is primarily comparative material on as many different cultures as possible, methods which might be used by workers with a poorer memory span, a narrower attention span, a lower degree of willingness to make physical contacts with natives, less of a tendency to think on the spot and collect materials to the theoretical positions developed on the spot, less energy. I am perfectly aware that I do nothing in the field that a first class social fieldworker or children's analyst doesn't do every day. But perhaps because we have so much fewer people to draw on, we don't seem to get the students who can do this sort of thing. As they can't do it they also can't believe it and the work is majorly wasted. . . . But for this trip at least I am not giving up my "finger on the village pulse," and I mean to know what the children do do as well as what they think they do, etc. But I may be able to devise formulas, by comparing the types of materials, so that at least the order of reality with which the various techniques which are available to more fieldworkers may be better defined. This virtuosity business has got to be knocked out of the picture for good. . . .
>
> This is much later, my ability to keep my finger off the pulse being low, as always. I asked about a temper tantrum which I could hear. (MM to RB, September 16, 1938, MM B1)

There follow several examples of Iatmul children's temper tantrums as expressions of their resentment of their parents allowing them to be adopted by another family. She then returned to her own distress:

> I suppose the two things have something to do with each other, my conviction that a type of fieldwork that I have put so much into developing has been all waste motion and my growing feeling that I bore you, that I have had to stay away too long. Maybe the mechanics of psychic energy will work so that I will feel in my unconscious that if I invent methods of fieldwork which are better, which will produce materials which you can use, which your students can use, then I will be reinstated. If that should happen, I'll have a fine drive for the remaining ten weeks here. But in my heart I know well enough that while I may begin over again as an anthropologist, there is no such beginning over with you if "our cup is broken." [This expression

was used by Benedict's Pima Indian informant to describe the destruction of his culture and is quoted in *Patterns of Culture.*] And the better part of wisdom is to stop this kind of writing from which no good can come. Marie says you are looking beautiful. I hope you are happy. (MM to RB, September 16, 1938, MM B1)

These were alarming anxieties, and Benedict reprimanded no more. She answered with strong praise for Mead's fieldwork and assured her of its very great contribution to the discipline:

Margaret Darling, I've been heartbroken about your fears over my letters . . . it troubles me a lot because at any time a word from me would have set it right. And it *is* all right, darling. If I didn't pay attention to the passing of time, and my letters were far between, it was just losing track of time and nothing more. I was feeling as close to you as always, and you were as indispensable to me. No, I haven't been bothered by my "devils"; its a very different thing being tired and discouraged, as I sometimes am. But even that is on a kind of upper crust of my self; my inner core is all right. And this fall I've been definitely free from those annoying circulatory disturbances that rise to a climax in fainting spells. . . .

Your distress over the fact that you can do a kind of fieldwork that nobody else is equipped for is a twist to the facts that I don't feel the force of – except, knowing you so well, it brings you so close to have you make a point that nobody else in the world could have made. But I look at it the other way: it's a miracle that there should be even one person who can do what you can, and it isn't to be expected that the miracle will happen over. I know it won't. But you've done an astonishing number of cultures, and now knowing those from the kind of study you give them, other lesser studies become meaningful. I know what you mean, there are so many problems we could get contrasting material on from different societies if the investigators could work as you can. But I have made up my mind to that; there are flaws in the instruments (the "children" around this department) that can't be helped. There is nevertheless a great deal of enlightenment to be had. And for some work we shall have to stick to your studies. The fact that you've pioneered in field methods has made the work of lesser people much more valuable, and your own work has answered question after question. That is all a cause for thanksgiving to me – unalloyed. I know you long to work always with people better than you are, and it's hard on you to discover that they're lacking. But it can't be helped. And it's a situation I've recognized for at least fifteen years – and given thanks all that time for the miracle of you being you. (RB to MM, October 23, 1938, MM B1)

Benedict clearly wanted to keep up Mead's spirits in the fieldwork which she valued highly. Her open explanations of herself come less from a personal need than as a response to Mead's fear of rejection. Mead expressed this fear in her autobiography, *Blackberry Winter: My Earlier Years*, writing of her friendship with Benedict: "I always feared that one day I would find a gulf I could not bridge" (1972:115). Benedict may have found Mead too intense, more dedicated than she to the discipline, and incognizant of her old anguish at having been supplanted by Mead's marital relationships. Benedict, however, admired each of Mead's husbands and kept up friendships with all three, and she greatly admired Gregory Bateson's work. Mead's ties to her co-field-worker husbands, Reo Fortune and, after 1935, Gregory Bateson, seemed not to reduce her attachment to Benedict. These men derived part of their anthropological frameworks at the time from Benedict's work, further supporting the women's collaboration.

Benedict's marriage had dissolved long before this time. A glimpse of Benedict's thoughts about her dissolved marriage appears in the letter that told of the visit to the prophetess who conjured accurately on Columbia's search for Boas's successor. Benedict asked the prophetess about Stanley. "She said that he was waiting for me to make the move toward reconciliation; he'd never make the move, but he'd never make any other close tie because he would always believe I would come back. I asked whether I should get a divorce, . . . he would always give it if I wanted it. Then she got mixed up for she said he was so social that he was always happy . . . and I needn't worry about him" (RB to MM, February 10, 1936, MM S5). Stanley Benedict died the next December. That lesbianism may have been a default position for Benedict is suggested by a letter to Mead in which she reported a burden of a younger woman anthropologist, Ruth Bunzel, who declared she was in love with her, and Benedict wrote that she thought this friend would be happiest with a good man (RB to MM, August 3, 1938, MM B1). Benedict's opinion proved wrong, and Bunzel later had a long, happy relationship with a woman companion.

Benedict kept Mead informed about her lesbian companion during the 1930s, Natalie Raymond. Early in this relationship Benedict wrote that she regretted hurting Mead by loving someone else, that she knew how devastating this was, and mentioned her own distress when Mead arrived in Europe a decade previously in love with Reo Fortune. Raymond was reported to be playful and erratic, perhaps what Benedict meant by a "denizen," an alien within a territory, what she wished Mead could be. Benedict helped Raymond financially and helped Mead and Bateson and others with personal loans, and she kept a joint checking account with Raymond long after Raymond had

gone on to other adventures. She also kept Mead posted on her careful management of friendships with two women whose love she did not reciprocate. This may have been a familiar problem for her. She wrote in "The Story of My Life" of a neighbor girl of fourteen, the same age as she: "The youngest Becker daughter was one of those people who have been romantically devoted to me" (in Mead 1959:109). She explained her attraction to Ruth Valentine, an academic psychologist, who became her companion in the fall of 1939 and remained so: "We've been comfortable together. . . . I know she thinks God made me out of rare and special clay, but she doesn't bother me about it" (RB to MM, December 4, 1939, MM B1). Valentine was close to Benedict in age, unlike Benedict's previous lovers, who were much younger. Her manner was that of a depressed person, and in a letter Benedict commented on her friend's burden of psychological illness among her family members. Benedict's letters all along assured Mead she was not lonely: "I suppose I'd have made a good monk or better yet a Samurai to go off periodically by myself and retreat. It isn't that I dread going back to NY next year, but that this year I've got a real stake in being out of it. We haven't any way today of phrasing that . . . except in religious terms but it's not religious with me at all, but it is a highly positive value. . . . Every possible way I can say it sounds narcissistic but it isn't" (RB to MM, October 10, 1939, MM B1).

Benedict's letters give impressions of some of her emotional qualities. She enjoyed sociability, and while perhaps aloof and haughty as some students have suggested, she was not reclusive. Much social activity occurred in an evening's round of drinks after a seminar or an anthropological convention, for instance, with Edward Sapir or John Dollard. When Sapir and his family visited New York, she would drop in on them. Benedict often reported visits with Boas, to whom she was loyal and devoted, and with his family, and reported frequent visits with Mead's sisters, Priscilla and Elizabeth, and she wrote news of all of them. Her references to her mother and sister, Margery, and her sister's husband and children who lived in Pasadena, California, indicate weak attachments and distance in values, yet she visited them yearly. Her feelings for her mother, even as she had said of her childhood, had no intensity. Benedict had grown up lacking parental influence almost entirely but had security in a large, diffuse, extended family. She valued "intimate relations" and used this term interestingly. She wrote an introduction to *Jungle People* by Jules Henry (1941), who had been one of her students, noting that in this small society in the Brazilian Gran Chaco, which lacked any alliances or peaceable relations beyond the small kin group and thus killed, and expected to be killed by, any stranger, even they had the most intimate and secure relations within the extended family. In the United States, "the

household group is the restricted boundary on intimate contacts" (Personality and Culture 3/27/47). Having no family herself, no children, she was particularly aware of a boundary on intimacy. She saw the extended family, such as she had experienced in her childhood and later among the Zuni and which was found in various forms in most primitive and contemporary cultures, usually providing more warmth than the small U.S. household.

An example of where her passions lay is her affirmation of the right to divorce in a disagreement with Mead occasioned by their different courses of action arising over a student's refusal to grant her husband a divorce. The husband's lover was another student, and Benedict was fond of all three in the triangle and for years had hoped for good fieldwork from the wife. Benedict's letters to Mead indicate her long preoccupation with this triangle to what seems an extraordinary extent as she reported on the fears, hesitations, anxieties, and scheming of these three persons. As the wife and husband became embittered and their lawyers were trying to arrange a settlement, Benedict was asked to give an affidavit that the wife had been faithful in the marriage. She had been willing to remain silent about the wife's infidelity but would not lie about it. Benedict observed in a letter to Mead that the wife, her student, "charged that as an interested person I maliciously made up those lies" (RB to MM, March 2, 1940, MM S5). A court hearing was the next step, and Benedict agreed to testify in court about the wife's infidelity. Mead thought Benedict would endanger her reputation by testifying, and her sympathies were with the wife's desire to keep her husband because the wife thought she was experiencing premature menopause. Benedict was not moved by these arguments "because according to my lights no one can fall lower than to hold on to a husband who wants to be free of a marriage"; she was "pretty hot" because "you say you can't make any sense out of my role and that's important between you and me apart from the court case." And she wrote on a trend in opinion away from favoring alimony for employable wives in divorce suits, a trend she favored (RB to MM, March 2, 1940, MM S5).

## Disputes and Affinities

Mead's thoughts were often driven by a sense that she was on the brink of new kinds of more comprehensive explanations. Benedict often expressed an acceptance of limitations in anthropological explanation, as she did in the letter of October 23, 1938, quoted earlier, but she respected Mead's intellectual ventures, and she discussed her prolific ideas and posed contrary explanations to her. Mead complained of any lapses in these exchanges, and she asked

for commentary on many of her manuscripts. Benedict made revisions to Mead's manuscripts written in the field and forwarded them to the journal editor or publisher for whom Mead intended them. Mead sketched an idea for a paper on the importance of the culture area and a second, less clear idea. It was an elaboration of the idea of deviancy in culture, in which every culture has "type situations," and persons in nonstandard situations react to the type situations disruptively. "Do you think it sounds good enough to write a short paper about? If you do, will you say so in your next letter because I might do it on the boat coming home" (MM to RB, January 12, 1939. MM B1). Some of Mead's trial balloons got no response or a suggestion of a flaw. Some of the critiques Benedict gave her were extensive, advising against pitfalls or internal contradictions, in one case against essentializing an observed process. She told Mead how to bring the best part of a point to the fore. She pointed out several apparent internal contradictions in the manuscript of *And Keep Your Powder Dry* (RB to MM, April 3, 1938, September 29, 1939, August 1, 1942, MM S5).

Mead critiqued the proofs of Benedict's "Continuities and Discontinuities in Cultural Conditioning" (1938). She saw it as simplistic, a reaction I myself had until my restudy of *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword* while teaching about it, when I realized the dynamic place of the concept of discontinuity in that analysis. Mead's perception of the article ignores the usual holistic scale of Benedict's thought. For some problems, holism has limitations, but this article is a valuable model on several scores. Mead wrote:

> Your Psychiatry paper has left me rather at a loss. It's partly perhaps that I don't have a clear idea of what the journal is like, how popular it is, what is its audience. My guess is that the paper in a sense started from [F. E.] Williams' material, that that was the germ which kept growing in your mind, to be used presently. But then I find I can get no further. I simply don't know whether the paper is a restatement of old points with some new and casual illustrations, because you were rather "telling it to the children" to an audience unsophisticated in anthropological points, or whether you had some much more complicated point in mind which you didn't have time – or was it space – to work out and document fully enough. I have drawn diagrams and outlines, worked out theoretical schemes for why you chose the three illustrations, and if they are, as it were crucial points in some design which I only half grasp. Did you pick sex as biologically determined, responsibility as a purely "function of the social situation" point, dominance and submission, as a pair the experience of one half of which is essential to the experience of the other so that it would fit into a discontinuity series? But you seem to have treated dominance and

> submission in the same tone of voice as responsibility, which belies my interpretation. And even if my interpretation were incorrect I don't see the whole design clearly. (I don't suppose you will have time to catch the word, men's house, for Australia in proof, will you. The purists would pick on it.) (MM to RB, September 28, 1938, MM B1)

In trying out a complex Batesonian-like interpretation, Mead lost the point of the holism that was always Benedict's approach. The simplistic quality of the article stems from the whole-culture focus, and this way of thinking produces schema of generalities. But science is not skeptical of simplicity, and it seeks simple explanation. In social science, a holistic scheme sets up an encompassing framework from which to proceed. The analytic device of continuity and discontinuity was not just bipolar types of behavior, such as Benedict often employed, but was two models of the process of individuals' acquisition of culture and two models of the life-cycle experience set up in cultures. Discontinuity in cultural directives disturbed the equilibrium implied in cultural configuration. It was a method for relating inconsistency and contradiction in culture to the integrative processes of cultural configuration. Benedict was interested in showing that the concept of pattern could accommodate discontinuity and contradictions, that it was not only a steady state, thus making the configuration idea widely applicable. Furthermore, the model provides a frame that accommodates both child development and overall culture pattern and implies no causality; in fact, it obviates an explanation of childhood as the cause of culture when childhood experience is discontinuous with adult culture. A principal criticism of the culture and personality field was that it posited childhood experience as the cause of culture, a criticism that is untenable in regard to this article and to all the examples of discontinuity that both Benedict and Mead continued to provide. That holism could not conceptualize all the problems Benedict took up became clear in the study of national minority groups in the later national culture work.

Benedict rejected Mead's criticism but did so unconfrontationally: "Your last letter berated me for my Continuities article. You list a number of doubts and criticisms on general points but I don't recognize that I said those things. You can tell me at more length and I'm sure I'd understand." She explained that she originally took examples from Samoa, Arapesh, and Manus but did not have room for those accounts, "So I substituted baby illustrations" (RB to MM, November 15, 1938, MM B1). The illustrations she used in the article are not insubstantial: she used incidents reported by five of her students, whom she names, and from eight published sources. While Benedict's defense of

her article was in transit, Mead received her earlier August 3, 1938, letter of reassurance.

> Darling, your lovely long August 9 [*sic*] letter from the farm has just come and I feel as if the heavens had opened after a long drought. I haven't been sure from one day to the next what I thought, some days I've thought that at the bottom of my heart everything was alright, that I thought so that is, but others, the world has just been black and I have been sure that horrible unconscious forces were at work in you, even if you didn't know it. I never got the letter from Guatemala, so you see what a gap there has been. And the article didn't help any, it rather hindered because I couldn't understand what you were trying to do exactly and I was in a sufficiently morbid state so that the fact that in an article which dealt with points that I'd worked on so hard you never once referred to a thing I'd done, it seemed that you thought my work was utterly useless too, and that cast me further into the depths. (MM to RB, October 6, 1938, MM B1)

Benedict had placed in a larger framework a point Mead worked out for Manus culture alone, and Mead seemed unimpressed with this. One can understand Mead's expectation that her work should have been cited. In other writing also Benedict sometimes referred to her students' data without citing it and developed ideas without citation to others who had contributed to them. This article, for instance, could well have cited Arnold Van Gennep, whom she cited in *Patterns of Culture*, and A. R. Radcliffe-Brown on ritual transitions. Mead probably was right in suggesting that Benedict's idea derived from F. E. Williams's detailed ethnography of puberty ceremonies among the Orokaiva of New Guinea, work she cited in *Patterns of Culture* and in her courses, although Williams did not discuss issues of learning culture. Mead observed a similar point in *Growing Up in New Guinea* (1930), that in the transition to adulthood, childhood learning was successfully overcome through rituals and social obligations imposed later in the life cycle; Benedict could well have cited Mead's important contribution.

Failing to perceive Benedict's point about culture process, Mead sought an explanation in levels of behavior. Bateson's and Mead's later work, especially in *Balinese Character* (1942), was attentive to the question of biological influences in cultural behavior. Although Mead fully employed the concept of culture, which for Benedict circumscribed her anthropological work, Mead may have retained more of Boas's reservations about the concept of culture than Benedict did. Boas had written in a broad characterization of the field of anthropology: "An examination of our field suggests that the whole group of anthropological phenomena may be evanescent, that they may be

at bottom biological and psychological problems, and that the whole field of anthropology belongs either to one or the other of these sciences" (1908, in Stocking ed. 1974:268). Benedict did not inquire into biological explanations, but Mead and Bateson used explanations of this kind when they were applicable in cultural problems. It is suggestive that Benedict neither wrote a review of *Balinese Character* nor referred to it in classes except for one minor illustration.

A similar difference in intellectual mode came out in their exchange of ideas on Iatmul male behavior and a comment by Benedict on sex differences. Benedict suggested a different explanation from Mead's of Iatmul men's behavior, which she based on Bateson's presentation of social organization in *Naven* (1936).

> You say the Iatmul men are driven toward being everything that's different from women, but don't you think that they're driven in this direction in large measure by the split up loyalties and segmented groups the men have experience of? You say somewhere that to you these seem an accident not really pertinent to their character formation. . . . As I see it the character of the tamberan [moiety] organization works itself out in their character formation exactly as one would expect.
>
> I shall be so interested in your idea for a book on sex differences. It's one thing I haven't any ideas on – either from personal experience or from anthropology. I'm sure they're there but I don't know anything to say. . . . The way to approach it may very well be through the phraseology of the zones, and it would be worth trying, but the zones have never really clicked for me. I suppose it's because the zonal discussions are all mixed up with a series of stages through which human life cycles progress, and it seems harder to me to disentangle the salient points than to begin over and stick just to conditioning without any particular use of what's been said about zones. . . . As soon as you can you must write a book on childhood conditioning. (RB to MM, August 3, 1938, MM B1)

Mead, however, thought this explanation inapplicable. She disagreed with Benedict's interpretation of Iatmul men's behavior, and Mead's explanation of it wove together social organization, childhood conditioning, and gender differences. The main thread of her argument about changes among the Iatmul of the Tambunum area is this:

> Conflicting loyalties are not a key note in Tambunum society. The initiatory moieties have lost their distinctive character as aggressive regulators of social life, they seldom function except during initiation proper, and have become fining mechanisms only [i.e., a means of issuing fines for

> transgressing taboos]. By partially abandoning age grades, the significance of a ruling age grade has vanished. The totemic moieties here have split into separate villages which have practically nothing to do with each other, and so the only conflicting loyalties which remain are between own clan and ties through mother, the latter always being preferred if possible. But women have such ties also. . . . But I interpret this greater trust in mother's kin as part of the tie to the mother and distrust of all male solidarity. . . . Tambunum men are torn between 2 standards, and their early childhood only prepares them properly for the former. The father in his own house is a sort of shadow of the mother; little boys make a practically complete maternal identification; . . . There is not a great deal of conscious anti-feminine ethos here among the men, and none of the contempt for women's ethos here which is found up river. . . . It is the feminine within their own personalities which the men have to fight, and on the whole fail to fight here. Our killing record is only 21 heads for the entire population of 600, including [the] oldest men, and over half of those are kills by young men away at work. We are definitely tending toward morality here, with waggen [totemic ancestral spirits] killing their own clan members for sin. . . . We are also so much less given to art, and symbolic thought here. (We are in square terms getting very western.) (MM to RB, October 17, 1938, MM B1)

Benedict had proposed a broad social organizational explanation for Iatmul men's gender orientation, in contrast to Mead's explanations drawn from gender opposition. Benedict went on in her letter to distance herself from explanations in terms of sex differences and biologically based child behavior associated with zones of the body, as worked out by psychiatrist Erik Erikson. She urged Mead to write further on the idea of cultural conditioning, an idea she favored and wrote of in an article, "Some Comparative Data on Culture and Personality with Reference to the Promotion of Mental Health" (1939). There she made an analogy to Ivan Pavlov's experiments in which "emphasis is laid not on the constitutional types of his dogs nor on their individual background, but upon the environment through control of which he produced neuroses in his subjects. For this reason his results are invaluable as an introduction to the discussion of investigations upon human beings under different life-environments" (Benedict 1939:246).

The article was prepared for a conference of mental health investigators held by the American Association for the Advancement of Science. Further on in this article, Benedict wrote that she considered knowledge of cultural conditioning the main contribution anthropology could make to the subject of mental health. Mead wrote her that this paper was "a masterpiece" and that

she was impressed by Benedict's newly thought-out Chukchi material on "the ego and security points" (MM to RB, January 12, 1939, MM B1). However, Mead had begun with social explanations of gendered culture in *Sex and Temperament in Three Primitive Societies* in 1935 and proceeded later to demonstrate the integration of biological factors with social ones in explaining gendered culture in *Male and Female* in 1949. Benedict did not share Mead's direction at the time of the above letters, but ten years later, after collaboration with Mead on the postwar Research in Contemporary Cultures (RCC) project, Benedict for the first time recommended including some aspects of this subject matter in national character studies.

Different perspectives of another kind came out in Mead's and Benedict's opinions of *General Anthropology* (1938), edited by Boas. Their responses reflected Benedict's engagement with critiquing both nineteenth-century anthropology and the alternatives to it produced by Boas's students and Mead's impatience with contemporary anthropology and her drive for new kinds of knowledge: "One item to mention for the year, is the publication of the cooperative textbook. It's just out and I hand it to the Papa. By dint of throwing Dixon's and Oetteking's articles into the wastebasket and subordinating Lowie's and cutting it; he's got together a quite remarkable book. I'm sending a copy to Rabaul for you. His chapter on Invention fills a big need, though it won't make your heart beat especially" (RB to MM, September 19, 1938, MM B1). On shipboard heading back home, Mead criticized the book, writing twice as much as I quote:

> I've been nibbling steadily at the Boas and others' book, and my considered opinion is: it represents the best negative anthropological thought up to about 1928, an excellent statement of the things which we have no evidence for believing and which if believed, clutter up the wheels of thought. . . . It's clear enough that we now have quite enough evidence to make all the points about everything being related to everything else, *ad nauseam*. . . . Half the recorded cultures which we have are enough to make this order of points with, and you knew the point in 1923. Unless we can ask new questions of another order, then there is no need to be anthropologists anymore, anthropology has given us its one contribution, insistence on multiple causes, historical accident, innumerable readings of the same facts, cultural denial of what we would assume to [be] biological or logical necessities, etc. (MM to RB, March 28, 1939, MM B1)
>
> The textbook demonstrates that it is impossible to find correlations or principles underlying culture – when the institutional approach is used, and it is merely necessary to say over and over – no correlations, everything

> is related to everything else, anything can be used for anything, and there are only limiting conditions in culture. Just a final brooming up of all the nonsense that has been talked in the last fifty years – or is it a hundred. . . . It's really very significant that anthropology really never made any sense to Gregory until he came in contact with your approach – through me and the mss. [of *Patterns of Culture*]. It really is a pity that book came out so late, and appears in a sense to negate everything which Boas's students have done in the last ten years, so that after saying he encouraged new work and a new approach more than any of the younger men, it now looks as if he never had. (MM to RB, April 5, 1939, MM B1)

Mead's anger in these letters expresses impatience for inattention to the work of the last decade, when in truth her work could be judged the most original and among the best. She knew well, however, that Benedict had based her own work on ethnographic data from the past fifty, and more, years and found much in it of value for the comparative method that she pursued. Benedict agreed about the quality and importance of Mead's work and wanted to move anthropology forward. She responded with typical moderation and a comment on her own contribution to the textbook, the chapter on religion, without saying that it illustrated the value of comparison based on old ethnography:

> You're absolutely correct about the textbook. But that is what the Papa's textbook should be, don't you think? And you'll find that for college use a book making his usual points is still needed, and I don't think it's a waste. It wasn't written to entice people to become anthropologists, but to make some comparative facts available to colleagues. I'm glad you liked [Ruth Bunzel's] Economics chapter. Actually my whole Religion chapter, except for the little sketches, was done twelve years ago and hasn't been revised. If I'd begun revising, it would have been an entirely different chapter, and not particularly appropriate to the Papa's book. (RB to MM, April 7, 1939, MM B1)

Benedict's chapter in *General Anthropology*, relic of her preconfiguration period or not, was an inspiration to myself and others. Cora Du Bois wrote about the chapter in her style of outspoken junior that she used in her letters to Benedict:

> It is the clearest, most sensible and most usable statement on that muddled subject I know of. It has not only given me no end of ideas for a month or 6 weeks of primitive religion in my general course, but even better, has helped me conceptualize and place a lot of the Alorese data which was

> floating about nebulously. You are really a great help on so many scores! It is pretty fresh of me to even think that needs saying. But I feel like saying it, so please don't mind. (CDB to RB, February 2, 1940, RFB 28.6)

Benedict shared Mead's drive to move to a new anthropology:

> I wonder how much you'll be depressed or encouraged about anthropology on your trip across the continent. I'll confess I'm discouraged about it. There's no one that I can see who's seriously working at Culture and Personality problems, and the old guard seems to me to be self-righteous and in the saddle. I sent you, to Bali, my Christmas meeting paper [probably one presented to the American Anthropological Association (AAA) entitled "Culture and Personality," not found in RFB], and there was enough in it that ought to be suggestive to people working with culture, but they are all talking on the level of Kluckhohn's counting noses, and of recording case histories [life histories] in Plains Indian tribes. Not a person even questioned me afterwards. You'll think that paper was kindergarten – and I do too – but that meeting was sub-sub-kindergarten. The children I've trained here can improve the old fieldwork – though heaven knows they can't reach your levels – but they don't show any sign of being able to go ahead with leading ideas. Darling, you and I are going to have to go ahead and write the books and there's no way out. I wish this book I have to write next year weren't on broken cultures; it's a nuisance. But some things can be done with the material nevertheless. (RB to MM, January 30, 1939, MM B1)

Whatever their disagreements, and they were minor, Benedict thought the two of them stood alone in the personality and culture field, the field which for Benedict was cultural anthropology itself.

Although they were so different, there is an interweaving of their work. What Clifford Geertz calls Mead's conflation of herself with Benedict was reciprocated. Mead made herself the inventor of culture patterns, for example, in *An Anthropologist at Work*, and attributed to Benedict some of her own research program, and Benedict's thought reflected Mead's. When Mead's hunger for appreciation and interchange accumulated and overwhelmed her, Benedict gave profusely and wrote over and over, in effect, your work is essential to me and to anthropology. Benedict added to her own inventory of ideas Mead's stress on childhood learning – as principle in the Shaw lecture series and as practice in her national character studies – but Mead did not work on the traditionally broad anthropological canvas that Benedict was accustomed to, and this, if not well enough understood by reading their work, is easily learned in their disagreements in letters.

Ruth Benedict and Margaret Mead were brought together, and set off from others, by their fine minds. They were both deeply influenced by the ideals of their teacher, Franz Boas, and they shared a view of the direction in which anthropology should develop. They collaborated easily and extensively, both being cooperative and both devoted to their shared program. A totally different style of collegial relations has been described for some contemporary colleagues, who happened to be males: competitiveness and maintenance of boundaries, failure to take up what appear the best of collaborative circumstances (Murray 1986). Mead and Benedict did not coauthor any work, but they planned more joint research than they could undertake. Furthermore, both felt a deep friendship.

No day-to-day differences were likely to diminish the excitation of this friendship. That sexual passions also arose in their intense engagement is not surprising. Even after the denouement in Europe on Mead's return from Samoa, there was an occasional burst of emotion from Benedict to Mead – "But you belong especially to seasons when there are no devils – you belong to both, but I've a special hunger for you when my blood pressure goes up!" (RB to MM, April 2, 1932, MM B1). But in the Bali years, Benedict wrote no such cries of desire and instead gave reports of her intriguing and elusive companion in New York. In later years Mead's persistence was the driving force for renewing their initial intimacy. Mead urged Benedict to visit her near her large summer ménage at Holderness, New Hampshire, busy with care of her one-year-old daughter, with her husband, and with several London refugee children. Benedict complained that she would be unable to get satisfactory train transportation to and from Holderness, but she finally accepted Mead's insistent plan for a weekend together and afterward sat out the early morning hours in a train station waiting for a connecting train to continue on to a conference she was scheduled to address (MM to RB July 23, August 26, 1941; RB to MM, August 16, 1941, MM B1). Benedict wrote Mead after the weekend:

> But being with you at Holderness was all that counted in this last week. . . . The miracle is that you could manage it so in the midst of all the claims on you this summer, and that these claims only made our being together the richer. I love you, darling, and that's for what you are. And by sheer good luck I get no end of joy out of what you *think*. They're all part of what you *are*, and I don't think of separating them, but some people I've loved don't give the other blessings too. (RB to MM, August 27, 1941, MM TR1)

The extraordinary record of letters during Mead's long years in the field ended after her return to New York and after Benedict's sabbatical the next year in California. A few letters from the summers, as the last one quoted, and

a few during Benedict's years in Washington, D.C., give glimpses of the later years. After the war, when Benedict was approached by the research office of the navy department to design a research project, she enlisted Mead's help, and it was the dream project several persons in their circle had talked about when interest in the study of national culture arose in the early days of the war. The records of that project are the sources for those few years of work together.

While the correspondence of the 1930s provides much insight into their personal and intellectual relations, Mead's later writings on Benedict show that she had little knowledge of Benedict's work while she was in Bali and Iatmul. Benedict had not reported to Mead her thinking on the subject she called "an area beyond cultural relativity." Perhaps she did not write about it because she knew it was not within Mead's interests, perhaps because she was still working it out. Mead was caught up in the rich observational data from functioning cultures and less interested in comparative problems that had to employ cultural reconstructions. Mead's busy life when she and Gregory Bateson returned, with the birth of their daughter in December 1939; with the preparation of their book on Bali, which came out in 1942; with Mead's teaching in several short-term posts; and with the period's overwhelming attention to the challenges of war apparently kept her scarcely aware of Benedict's work and thinking from 1936 through the early 1940s and throughout her Washington work. Mead's two books on Benedict show scant knowledge of Benedict's contributions during those times and show Mead's preoccupation with Benedict's more psychologically troubled early life. Mead was either disinterested in or uninformed on Benedict's thoughts about an area beyond relativity. She did not hear Benedict's lectures at Bryn Mawr in 1941 and apparently did not read them and could not find them in Benedict's papers when she was preparing her books about her. Mead had available copies of Benedict's national culture reports for OWI, but I know of no reference she made to them and no commentary on their particular qualities. Their correspondence gives many insights into their intellectual work, but the works alone reveal themselves.

CHAPTER 4

# Beyond Cultural Relativity

## Correlating Social Conditions with Social Outcomes

Franz Boas and Ruth Benedict designed a project in 1930 that would sponsor fieldwork on North American Indians "with emphasis on . . . the reinterpretation of culture traits that is unique for each cultural center." Investigations in at least ten tribes – by 1937 twenty tribes had been studied – would be brought together "in a comprehensive study of the processes of culture change and acculturation. . . . The theoretical implications of all the studies will be worked out in a book by the junior applicant [Ruth Benedict] on the individuality of cultures, the integration of different elements, and the interrelation of psychological types of cultural and of individual behavior" CUA-CL, CUCRSS, Project #35). The style of the initial project statement is Boas's, yet his definition of the comprehensive book foreshadows *Patterns of Culture*, going beyond Benedict's papers of 1928 and 1930 on psychological aspects of culture and configurations, as though Boas knew how her ideas were developing. This research statement is far from "salvage research," the term often used for fieldwork among American Indians in this period. It was the study of cultures reinterpreting diffused traits in order to achieve patterning and integration. Benedict wrote that students were sent to areas where the cultures were functioning with the least disruption. She had written in a letter to Margaret Mead quoted in the preceding chapter that she regretted her proposed book would be about dead cultures, as many tribal cultures did seem at that time, before Native American reenvisioning of values and customs of their past had gained a foothold, but she also went on to say that the material could support some significant points. Her remark about dead cultures inferred a contrast between the tribes most of her students went to study and Mead's work in less disrupted cultures.

The title submitted was "The Study of Acculturation," and the Columbia University Council on Research in Social Sciences, to which they had applied for funds, designated it as Project #35, the title by which it was usually known.[1] Benedict wrote the yearly reports and requests to the council. In

each report of work accomplished and request for the next year's funding for fieldwork, writing, and publishing, Benedict repeated that there would be a summary volume to follow the individual monographs that began appearing, but the summary book was never written. In her final project report to the funding committee, she wrote that her 1934 book was "a preliminary general statement of the range of human behavior and its local patterning by social institutions. . . . A final volume will be able to present a much more controlled analysis of the problem and to document conclusions important in the field of the social sciences" (u.p. 1938:12–13).

The year *Patterns of Culture* was published, her report to the funding committee mentioned that a new point had emerged in several of the field studies: "It has become clear that this material is relevant not merely to a study of the processes of incorporation and modification of culture traits . . . but to the study of social sanctions." The next year the new finding about social structure was more fully stated: "The cultures of the American Indians are often complexly organized, having rival groups each with great economic or prestige prerogatives, yet their punitive and political institutions are far below what is usually considered the necessary minimum" (CUA-CL, CUCRSS, Project #35; RFB 60.2). This was the point of origin of her lengthy attempt to determine the social conditions and types of social sanctions that make possible a sense of freedom, a subject of several articles and lectures. She would attempt to find social correlates of beneficial social conditions and of disruptive social conditions. Vigor often described a sense of being free in her writing, and conditions leading to fear and insecurity prevented a sense of freedom. This was the form in which she engaged the problem stated near the end of *Patterns of Culture*: "It is possible to scrutinize different institutions and cast up their cost in terms of social capital, in terms of the less desirable behavior traits they stimulate, and in terms of human suffering and frustration" (Benedict 1934:229). This remained her principal concern until the crisis of World War II mobilized academics and she went to work for the Office of War Information (OWI). The consistency of this effort can be seen in grant applications, articles, unpublished manuscripts, lectures, and a draft for the first chapter of the summary book she planned. Her terms of definition and explanation changed over this period, but her objective, "to cast up their cost," remained the same.

The title that Boas and she gave this project, "The Study of Acculturation," differs from later connotations of the word "acculturation," and in a later report Benedict noted, "Culture areas were chosen where native thought and behavior patterns were known to be strongly maintained at the present time" (u.p. 1938:5; see also CUA-CL, CUCRSS, Project #35). The title reflects the

meaning she gave "acculturation" in a 1926 application for funds for her own research, which also foreshadows her concept of culture as she later presented it in *Patterns of Culture*. This early plan was for research in "a well integrated primitive culture of considerable complexity and vigor, the Indians of the southwest United States," and concerned Pueblo incorporation of Spanish culture traits. In this plan, acculturation was "the transfer of traits from one culture-configuration to another," and it was the process of "the formation of social pattern." In contrast to anthropologist Frank Cushing's position that Pueblo cultures were molded by the desert environment and "uncontaminated . . . by the three centuries of Spanish mission influences, . . . we can show instead the immense part that is played by the acculturation of Spanish elements in a vigorous indigenous culture," and she cited work by Boas and Elsie Clews Parsons that already indicated this. She was interested in the "social psychology . . . [of] this process by which foreign elements are torn from their context and inserted almost at random in an alien pattern" (u.p. 1926). This dynamic view of pattern, as formed in random selections and recombinations, would become her hallmark, although the changeability and historical nature of pattern, evident in these early sentences, were not what most readers took away from *Patterns of Culture*. This 1926 application to both the Social Science Research Council and American Council of Learned Societies was not accepted for funding because it lacked "wide implications" (Modell 1983:168). The following year a definition of acculturation, "continuous first-hand contact, with subsequent changes in the original cultural patterns," and a prospectus for research in acculturation were agreed on by a committee for the Social Science Research Council (Redfield et al. 1936). Only later did the term "acculturation" acquire the meaning often implied of disruptive loss of integration in contact with Western cultures.

For Project #35, Benedict trained her students to go beyond the trait list studies prevalent at that time and to study "sociological problems" and "the functioning of culture." A student of Robert Lowie's who studied with Benedict in the 1930s, Dorothy D. Lee, wrote about the methods of study that Benedict taught:

> Most of us as a rule did not regard an ethnography as a coherent unit representing an internal consistency. If we did read one through it was to discover how many traits the culture shared with other known cultures. Most of us, however, as a rule merely used the table of contents, or even the index, to aid us in studying the diffusion of discrete traits.
>
> Ruth Benedict taught us to read an ethnography as we would visit a tribe: to accord equal dignity to every datum, to read slowly and repeatedly,

delving beyond the interpretive words of the writer, till we could savor the culture. She taught us meticulous attention to detail, because to her mind no detail was trivial. (1949:346)

In her draft for chapter 1 of her planned book on Project #35, Benedict described the kind of data her students had sought:

It was necessary to know how far kinship nomenclature and obligations are extended: this is different from recording a kinship system and requires intensive work. . . . Similarly the study of the use of medicine bundles to kill own tribesmen can be documented as fully as the contents of the bundle or the method of opening it. . . . First and foremost the fieldworker documented *acts*, those which happened under his eyes and those which were reported with different comment by different informants; he collected feuds, prosecution of offenses, instances of witchcraft, suicide, murder in the in-group; he watched slights and insults and ridicule and the way people took these, and investigated the conflict or lack of conflict which followed; he recorded material on mental disturbance, and its frequency and nature. (u.p. ca. 1937:12–13)

Benedict's project title for the 1938 report was "Problems of Culture and Personality" and not the earlier title, "The Study of Acculturation." Her new title carried her particular meaning for this field, namely that the research was to be on culturally regular behavior in its institutional framework, not on individual personality. This was her consistent meaning of the term "culture and personality" in early and late work. In a letter to Margaret Mead about that time, Benedict stated this meaning:

Yes, it's *the* thing I've been hammering at these last three years, and even yet when a student faces a new problem he asks all the psychological questions before he even phrases the sociological one. The first simple question always to be asked first seems to me to be: are there mechanisms so that the group (the pair of relatives, the family, the village, the tribe) *can* pursue a common goal, and what kind of a goal – and what are the consequences? Then you go on from there. Instead they come back from a field trip full of personality points they haven't seen the background of. (RB to MM, November 15, 1938, MM B1

Benedict's objective throughout this period was "to cast up the cost" of cultural institutions. The problems she wanted to elucidate are consistent: Is group welfare provided for? Does the culture "minimize individual aggression and frustration"? Does prestige for individuals benefit the whole social group or only individuals? Can the tribe protect against in-group murder?

Her terms for the desirable conditions of cultural functioning vary: "social solidarity" gave way to "social cohesion." "Psychic vigor" and "mental health" for all members are the desirable conditions in her address to a meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Science (1939). In a paper on beneficial cultural functioning, she generalized it as "harmony between things ideal and things possible" (u.p. 1942a). The idea was phrased at the time of the 1946–48 courses: "The real definition of freedom, that of 'loyalty freely given,' means that individuals and institutions are acting in the same direction" (Personality and Culture 3/4/47). The idea of synergy was used in several lectures of a series given in 1941 but was not used thereafter (1942a; u.p. 1941a–d). The phrase that began to appear most often had been used first about 1937: "an area beyond cultural relativity" (u.p. ca. 1937).

Benedict first arrived at the phrase "beyond cultural relativity" in the title of draft chapter 1 for the book, which was to bring together the findings of fieldwork in Project #35. The title of chapter 1 had been typed "Against Cultural Relativity." She had written, "Beyond?" faintly and well above the word "Against." "Against" is firmly crossed out, and "Beyond," without the question mark, is firmly written right above it, all in Benedict's handwriting (u.p. ca. 1937).[2] This first chapter is the only part of the book preserved and probably all that was written. She stated her problem in this introductory chapter:

> The best established conclusion of all anthropological work of the last half century we have already spoken of: it is that the formal aspects of culture such as whether a society has a king as its head or whether chieftainship is open to any man of parts, whether there is one god or many, whether livelihood is gained by hunting or whether it is gained by cultivating gardens, are irrelevant as categories determining in themselves how much or how little social solidarity a tribe may have. In any one of these categories there are tribes where every man's hand is raised against another, and ones where this is not so. Social solidarity, in any possible investigation, is not a problem of the formal items of the culture pattern; it is a problem of the emotional relations between individuals in that society. (u.p. ca. 1937:10–11)

While she wrote no more of the planned book than the title and introduction, Benedict wrote her findings from the project in skeletal form, addressing an academic audience rather than the general audience that her articles on this subject addressed, in her 1938 report to the funding committee. She reported variations among five tribes in the relation of distribution of goods and form of political institutions to intratribal hostility. The Ojibwa families, hunting alone all winter and entirely dependent on their own catch,

were unable to trust other households when they gathered in the summer, and all were mutually suspicious. Furthermore, they had no tribal symbols or customs. The neighboring Potawatomi adopted small-group organizations from Plains tribes but interpreted the group symbols as property and power to kill. The Dakota had mechanisms for "generosity, courtesy and mutual cooperation" in customs of the giveaway that granted prestige and accomplished equal distribution of goods. The Pawnee had sacred symbols of subtribes and redistribution methods that spread resources and attracted adherents to leaders who were able to give rewards. The Omaha hereditary priestly and political offices were incompatible with their free individual access to the vision quest as a source of power, and intratribal exploitation and hostility resulted. She concluded

> that the economic methods of production have low correlation with the forms of behavior manifested whereas methods of distribution have high correlation, and that in the political field the presence of tribal as opposed to segmented familial sanctions does not buildup a tribal in-group where life and possessions are secure from attack by fellow tribesmen unless the political institutions are supported by appropriate economic and prestige mechanisms. Religious institutions express with great fidelity the ideals and kinds of behavior set up by the economic and domestic institutions. (u.p. 1938:11)

She went on to state one conclusion reached by comparison beyond these Plains tribes:

> In all areas studied there are cultures whose institutions are such that individuals do not obtain power over other individuals; there are for example no mechanisms whereby one individual can be in debt to another or politically subservient. In such societies the behavior trait of dominance-submission so prominent in our own society does not occur; autocratic behavior on the one hand and submissive behavior on the other is not present. . . . Such findings suggest that behavior traits investigated in our own culture and often regarded as inalienable should be correlated instead with the social institutions under which we live. (u.p. 1938:11)

These conclusions spoke to important social problems: an effective political in-group depends on appropriate economic distribution and prestige mechanisms, and authoritarian and submissive behavior derive from social institutions, not from human nature. Thus she had defined a problem. Sanctions for social behavior that could promote a sense of freedom, security, and self-fulfillment could be illustrated by cultural comparisons. Even in the

brief form of this report, the work merited publication, but it never reached a wider audience than the research committee. Another society that could not achieve group cohesion larger than the extended family, as among the Ojibwa, was the Kaingang in the Gran Chaco area of South America described by the last student to be funded on Project #35, Jules Henry. The Kaingang, never before studied and a functioning, relatively unacculturated society, practiced the blood feud, while within the kin group warm and succoring personal relations prevailed. Institutions, not psychological factors, were the cause of aggression in this society. The Kaingang served Benedict's developing thesis well. Functioning Indian societies, those relatively intact even with some degree of change from acculturation, were rare in North America but were numerous in South America, and little ethnography had been done since early German research in Brazil. Benedict proposed extending fieldwork to South America, and in 1937 she wrote a prospectus for Project #126, "South American Ethnology," later named "Field Research among the Simple Indian Tribes of Central and South America."

Benedict defined the new research in classic diffusionist terms. North and South American simpler societies had common original culture traits, and many had undergone changes as the high cultures of Middle America and the Andes had spread; thus the two continents were a culture area within which comparison of local culture growth within a field of diffusion provided the conditions of controlled comparison sought in Project #35. That she defined the project by a historical and diffusionist model and placed varied integrative patterns as local cultural developments out of this base speaks to her basic Boasian framework. This was the same year she titled Project #35 "Problems of Culture and Personality," rather than its original title, "The Study of Acculturation." To her mind, the culture and personality field provided the best way to understand the process of adoption and redefinition of diffused traits. She remained a true Boasian. Fieldwork was funded through 1939, and support of manuscript writing continued another year. Benedict had high hopes for Buell Quain's work among the Trumai of the Upper Xingu River in Brazil, but he died there by suicide after one year of work and after arranging to have his field notes transported out of the jungle to be sent back to Columbia University. Some other fieldwork for this project was never written up, and some reports came in after Benedict was engaged in problems related to World War II. The South American project produced noteworthy ethnology, for example, Ruth Landes's research on Afro-Brazilians discussed in chapter 6, but no comparative finding such as had come from Project #35.

Benedict's plan to write a book drawing on Project #35 remained un-

changed after Ralph Linton announced, soon after his arrival at Columbia, that he had obtained a subsidy for a book on Indian acculturation under his editorship and offered seven students, some of whom had been funded by Project #35, authorship of a chapter each in the volume. The publisher would bind these chapters separately to fulfill requirements for the Ph.D. degree. Benedict signaled the students to accept the opportunity (Harris 1997:9). In a letter to Mead in Tambunum, she stated her intention to write the comparative volume during her sabbatical in 1939–40, which she hoped to spend in England with Mead and Gregory Bateson. She described her project: "I shall have to write the book on North America, the summary volume of all the fieldwork done under the Columbia University Council for Research, a book on the conditioning of behavior in different tribes by their social institutions" (RB to MM, August 28, 1938, MM B1). The outbreak of war in Europe a year later would prevent spending the sabbatical in England. Her writing plan would also change, and she had decided by the next spring to delay this book in favor of a book on race. Her objective in later writing on comparisons of cultures remained much the same as described in this letter, but the plan and method underwent changes. She never launched into a large-scale comparison such as she proposed for Project #35 and noted in two manuscripts as a pressing task for anthropology (u.p. 1941e; u.p. ca. 1941b).

With increasing political conservatism in the United States in response to fear of involvement in war in Europe, and with the emergence of totalitarianism, the research topic "how behavior correlated with social institutions" appeared radical and was feared in some quarters. When Benedict delivered a paper on the relation of social institutions to mental health at the American Association for the Advancement of Science meeting in December 1938, the response in her own department was hostile: "Duncan Strong is also critical of my conclusions about the correlation of cultural institutions and behavior on the grounds that it leads to criticism of the existing social system. In the eyes of more and more people, that is red and 'dangerous.' " Linton was said to have made public accusations of Communists in the Columbia anthropology department (RB to MM, March 19, 1939, MM B1). She cued in the homeward-bound Mead: "The state of mind of this country right now is pretty jittery. The loose slinging about of the words Fascism and Communism doesn't help in the national temper" (RB to MM, April 7, 1939, MM B1).

Benedict had decided to commit part of her sabbatical year, to begin in the fall of 1939, to writing a book on race and racism. She had begun work on it while directing the summer field school among the Blackfeet (Goldfrank 1978:134).[3] War broke out in Europe on September 2, 1939. At

that time, Benedict had left the Blackfeet reservation in Montana and gone to Pasadena, California, intending to visit briefly with her family. Mead and Bateson had returned to New York from Bali in May, and Bateson had left for England just before the outbreak of war to see about a job. Mead was pregnant at the time and, having suffered a miscarriage earlier, took her doctor's advice to stay in New York. Benedict settled down in Pasadena to work on her manuscript on race. She had met, and soon became attached to, Ruth Valentine – "she's a comfortable person to be with" – and she changed her train ticket to a spring return east. Mead, anticipating the birth of her baby with her husband absent, protested vigorously being abandoned by Benedict, the child's appointed guardian, yet in December she gave birth safely (RB to MM, August 24, September 23, December 2, 1939; MM to RB, August 24, 1939; both MM B1). In January Benedict finished *Race: Science and Politics*. She sent the manuscript to Boas for his reading and then to the publisher. Weary from writing at a self-imposed pace of a certain number of pages per day and from a bout of pleurisy, she wrote Mead: "I feel I've done my good works and my Christian duty for the rest of my natural life and shan't ever have to again" (RB to MM, January 22, 1939, MM B1). The book was widely read and highly regarded, as was the pamphlet she wrote with Gene Weltfish the next year, *Races of Mankind*. She received many requests for articles and lectures on race, and in the next years she published four articles, wrote two manuscripts for which intended publication is unidentified, and wrote five lectures on race and racism, in spite of writing that she had done her duty for life. She had apparently made a similar remark to Cora Du Bois, who wrote of her great appreciation of the book. "It is precisely the kind of presentation – in its eloquence and simplicity – that is badly needed. I'm going to have the students know it inside out. . . . Even though you were a bit snooty about the book when you were telling me about it last spring, I'm extremely grateful to you for having written it" (CDB to RB, August 23, 1941, RFB 28.6).

Benedict made the point in *Race: Science and Politics* that culture and behavior were learned and that variations in culture and behavior were not related to race or other aspects of heredity of groups. Among many examples was American blacks' observation, learning, and practice of the culture of whites in the American South. Race prejudice and racial discrimination, not inherited characteristics of behavior, kept American blacks from attainment of social equality. She cited studies of American communities that showed how racism kept blacks in the low position allotted them. She defended this position in her review of Melville Herskovits's *Myth of the Negro Past* (1941), where his thesis was that New World blacks had maintained during slavery

and after it many aspects of their cultures of origin, including social customs and emotional expression; that they had created an African American culture deeply rooted in African culture; and that nonrecognition of the African roots of this culture and lack of respect for it by both blacks and whites were the principal causes of the low regard and low social position of blacks. In her review of *Myth of the Negro Past*, Benedict criticized Herskovits's discrediting of several recent community studies that showed the workings of racial stereotyping and social oppression, discrediting them because they did not take up his thesis of the retention of Africanisms. Benedict wrote that his demonstration of historical cultural continuity was valid but only a footnote to the main causes of suppression of blacks. Benedict had reviewed favorably Herskovits's earlier books, *Life in a Haitian Valley*, describing the amalgam of African and New World cultures, and *Rebel Destiny*, analyzing the culture of Saramaccan Maroons in British Guinea (1937b; 1934d). Her criticism was not against the idea of African American cultures with African roots but for Herskovits's undercutting the main issue of American blacks' full observation of American social codes and thought and their struggle against the intricate system of racism and for full participation in American society.[4]

## From Pattern to Discontinuity

Benedict's investigation of an area beyond cultural relativity would continue until her work in Washington DC, but while she was engaged in that problem she also modified the idea of pattern by looking into the contexts of contrary cultural elements and the means for management of discrepant cultural arrangements. Cultures may impose different behavior expectations at different periods of life, and some cultures guide individuals through these changes, while in other cultures contrary codes cause confusion. She first presented this idea in "Continuities and Discontinuities in Cultural Conditioning" in the journal *Psychiatry* in 1938. She wrote there that discontinuity, even counteractive cultural expectations, may be imposed at different points in the life cycle by many societies, and many primitive societies manage discontinuous expectations through ceremonial transitions, for instance, from one age grade to the next. Some societies do not provide transitional procedures or transitional instruction even though expecting major behavioral changes, as some parts of the American life-cycle expectations illustrated, and there the changes expected may not be accomplished successfully by many individuals. The concept explained cultural dysfunction, on the one hand, and effective management of inherently difficult patterns, on the other. The idea of discontinuity in culture was drawn from the ethnographic data

on age-grade transitions in New Guinea, Africa, and North America and was foreshadowed in discussions of puberty transitions in *Patterns of Culture*. Mead's work on Samoa and Manus contributed much to the idea, but Benedict's generalizing and comparative discussions made it a broader concept.

The fruition of the concept of discontinuity in culture was to come in her analysis of Japanese culture. There is good reason to look ahead in the sequence of her work to this aspect of her interpretation of Japanese culture because the idea of continuity and discontinuity, if not grand theory, is an original conceptual point, and it opened a more dynamic potential in the idea of configuration. Moreover, it posits a different relationship of childhood to culture than the psychoanalytic one. Mead was not impressed by the 1938 article when she read the proofs before publication, as the correspondence discussed in chapter 3 has shown, and Clifford Geertz found the reappearance of the idea in *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword* an intrusion of Mead's influence. Benedict's chapter on childhood is about "levers," about causes, he thinks, and about "borrowed devices awkwardly introduced and clumsily applied" (Geertz 1988:125). Geertz found the chapter on childhood unrelated to the pattern of Japanese culture and a misapplied borrowing from Mead. However, Benedict's point is precisely that early childhood learning in Japan is not the learning of the adult culture and that, on the contrary, it has to be altered for the child to become a Japanese adult. The learning that takes place in late childhood in that culture initiates the learning of adult codes and discipline. Based on interview data, she argued that until age six to nine, Japanese boys and girls had indulgent care and had few restrictions placed on their exuberant behavior at home. Childhood was the freest period of life until old age. Japanese schools recognized their culture's particular difficulty in transition from early to late childhood and carefully structured it but did not always overcome the despair that came with realizing the burdens of obligations and the heavy shame of insults. The pattern of "circles," circles of obligations and the circle of human feelings, allowed moving between duty and self-indulgence and between clearing one's name in all social relations and enjoyment of one's inner feelings.[5]

Many anthropologists bridle at inclusion of the study of childhood learning, although their discipline is about learned behavior. Often, as in this criticism by Geertz, the prejudice stems from a misperception that childhood learning may be put forward as a cause of culture. In some quarters this claim was made, as in the later work of John Whiting and Irving Child testing Freud's projections of infant experience and thought into adult behavior ([1953] 1966). This was never Benedict's or Mead's point or method. Mead's

*Growing Up in New Guinea* (1930) showed that childhood was a time of immunity from the ideas and practices of sorcery that pervaded the culture, and childhood self-confidence and ease were replaced with adult caution by incorporating boys and girls into adult cultural obligations and dangers at the time of adolescent betrothal. Benedict said in her courses that Freud erred in emphasis on infant learning at the expense of life-long learning. Neither Mead nor Benedict followed a chart of components of child learning, and they did not focus on observations of feeding, toilet training, and discipline as some others did. They were too relativist to begin with psychiatric formulas, and cultures had too many facets affecting children to use Western learning concepts as the model in other cultures. Mead found explanatory aspects of interpersonal relations that were entirely new to observational study, such as the broadening of the social universe that early adroit physical competence opened up for Manus children and the associations of meaning with different eating postures for Balinese children.

This first work on childhood by Benedict was not a demonstration of early learning as either a cause or a replica of adult culture but was a model of culture exaggerating, creating, and managing discontinuity in the life cycle. She had developed the idea for several cultures by the time she studied Japan. One important insight she derived from this point about Japanese culture was that children's early freedom was the resource for many of the strengths of Japanese adult character. It gave the psychological resiliency and self-confidence to observe the intricate obligations of the ethical and institutional systems and to seek the special rewards of high compliance and self-perfection. It was the resource for consciousness of culture and thus for directing culture. The variety of experience derived from cultural discontinuity in Japan went a long way in explaining various individual ways of managing in this culture, various forms of psychological stress, various individual means of living up to inner expectations, various ways of self-protection, various interpretations among different social groups and, over time, of how to live according to the codes. Edward Sapir had stressed individual variation in his theoretical statements, but it was rare at that time, before Anthony Wallace's demonstration of individual personality variation among the Tuscarora and later the Seneca, for the personality and culture field to demonstrate how individuals lived up to and were affected by the expectations of their culture. Benedict made a beginning in explaining this dimension.

Benedict became fully committed to including the study of childhood in her work. Benedict's study of childhood was "a borrowed device" in that Mead's work convinced her of its importance. Mead's influence on Bene-

dict, resented by some Benedict admirers, is seen in their correspondence, but alongside it is Benedict's assertion of her own point of view. Geertz's criticism of Benedict's borrowing from Mead goes on to note that Benedict discussed teasing in Japan. Attention to the effects of teasing in other cultures may first have been employed in Bateson and Mead's *Balinese Character*. That is not Benedict's only borrowing from Mead. She found similar teasing in Thai culture, and she used other ideas of Mead's, for example, that Burmese gender relations were in some ways similar to those of the Tchambuli. But the borrowed points are few among the many original observations of critical points of cultures that Benedict produced. That Mead wrote with a belittling tone of the success of *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword*, as Geertz observed, recalls a statement in Mead's preface to a limited distribution of Benedict's Romanian study in 1974, a statement claiming that Benedict did not know to what section of Romania one of her principal sources applied, a statement that downgraded her description to an earlier period and a small section of the country and that ignored her breadth of sources and careful specification of provinces and social categories to which her analysis applied. On the second page of the Romanian study, for which Mead wrote this preface, Benedict placed the source in question accurately. Complex and ambivalent feelings are shown in these two examples and in the correspondence. But Benedict's debt to Mead was great, as she acknowledged in her letters. Mead's resentment may have been deep because Benedict died without acknowledging explicitly and fully her debt to Mead in her published work or manuscripts.

## Anthropology for World Problems

Benedict accepted an invitation from Bryn Mawr College to give a series of endowed lectures, the Anna Howard Shaw lectures, to be held in the spring of 1941. The day she sent off the manuscript for *Race: Science and Politics* to the publisher, she wrote to Frederica DeLaguna, who had asked Benedict to speak to her anthropology seminar at Bryn Mawr while there for the Shaw lectures, informing her of her writing plan: "My plan is to spend part of my sabbatical preparing the lectures, in a rather expanded form, for publication – of course withholding publication till after the lectures are delivered" (RB to FDL, January 22, 1940, RFB 28.2). She apparently did not carry through with this plan. The lecture manuscripts are brief, each from eleven to twenty-four double-spaced pages. She was asked for lecture titles in December 1940 and sent them, the series to have the overall title of *Personality and Culture*. DeLaguna wrote that the president of the college, Marion Edwards Park, who had proposed Benedict's name for the lectureship, thought

that both personality and culture would be misunderstood, "personality" suggesting "Dale Carnegie's meaning" and "culture" suggesting refinement. Among several titles the president would prefer was *Social Institutions and Human Nature*, a title that may stem from Benedict's second lecture title, "Human Nature and Man-Made Culture." Benedict replied that she thought the term "personality and culture" was "a sufficiently scholarly designation. If however, there is danger of misunderstanding, Human Nature and Social Institutions would be satisfactory" (FDL to RB, January 14, 1941; RB to FDL, January 16, 1941; both in RFB 28.2). The lectures were thought to have been preserved only through excerpts made by one of Benedict's students and later published, but recently four of the six lecture typescripts have been located in Benedict's papers in Vassar College, and one other has been located in the Benedict papers given by her colleague Sula Benet to the Research Institute for the Study of Man.[6]

The plan and method in the lectures differ from her book plan in 1935, in which race and culture area were to be held constant by comparing only American Indian examples. While Benedict's articles, before and after these lectures, illustrated her points with comparison of two or three specific cultures, these lectures employ descriptions of generalized cultural arrangements, and most of them are not located by tribal name. Here she used typologies of social structure, of economic distribution systems, and of dominant purposes in religions. These typologies give more abstraction to her ideas than her comparisons of whole cultures in *Patterns of Culture*. Cultures are not typed psychologically in these lectures, or in any of her writing after *Patterns*, and she makes no use of the idea of psychological types of culture. Her social structural types expand Emile Durkheim's typology, retaining his hierarchical and organic types and dividing his segmented type into a corporate and an atomistic type. Each type is associated with an inherent mode of social interaction. However, differing from Durkheim's work, the cohesiveness or instability of the society is not correlated with the social type. Nor is it correlated with the economic distribution type, nor with a type of religion or the degree of religious concern with ethics, but rather it is determined by the attitudinal basis of interpersonal behavior in the social institutions of each society.

In the introductory lecture, titled "The Problems of Anthropology," Benedict stated that it is necessary for anthropology to go beyond cultural relativity:

> Much anthropological study of these problems stresses merely cultural relativity. . . . But such facts only clear the ground and make it possible to

> separate those things which are culturally relative from those that are not. The fundamental problem in the study of society – like the fundamental problem in engineering or in physiology – is still to learn the conditions which do bring about a designated outcome. We need desperately to know the positive conditions under which, for instance, social conflict and disintegration occur and it is possible to study such conditions in society after society with the same scientific detachment with which one studies cultural relativity. We need to know what conditions are necessary for social cohesion and stability, and these too can be studied. (1942a)

In the second lecture, "Human Nature and Man-Made Cultures," she made the points that individual cultures are learned behavior, in contrast to culture as a product of a human nature, and that there is great diversity among cultures. She went on to describe her typology of social structures and introduced the idea of synergy, "the old term used in medicine and theology to mean combined action. . . . I shall speak of cultures with low synergy, where the social structure provides for acts that are mutually opposed and counteractive, and of cultures with high synergy, where it provides for acts that are mutually reinforcing" (Maslow and Honigman 1970:326; u.p. 1941a). Low and high synergy could be observed in any of three social types, corporate, organic, and hierarchical society; but high synergy was seldom found in the least unified and most dispersed societies, termed atomistic societies. The mutually reinforcing effects of high synergy were not caused by the social type but by attitudes embedded in the institutions of each society.

The third lecture, "Individual Behavior and the Social Order," illustrated low and high synergy stemming from attitudes, purposes, and forms of economic distribution and from the uses to which supernatural power was put. The lecture then took up character structure, which Benedict considered the agency of teaching and learning culture, and the ideational and attitudinal forms in which the institutional arrangements were carried out (u.p. 1941b). The fourth, and missing, lecture, "Socializing the Child," was said in her concluding lecture to have described different character structures that contributed to low and high synergy. It is reasonable to project that she related synergy to continuity and discontinuity in cultural learning, her innovative concept discussed in this chapter, and that she made the point that high synergy is more possible with continuous behavior expectations than with discontinuous ones, and low synergy would be likely unless discontinuous learning were bridged by teaching and by clearly defined stages in the life cycle. The fifth lecture, "Anthropology and Some Modern Alarmists," applied the concept of low synergy to American society, saying its problems were

not caused by groups on whom the problems are widely blamed, minorities and youth, but were caused by counteractive and discontinuous aspects of American culture (u.p. 1941c). The last lecture, "Anthropology and the Social Basis of Morale," discussed privileges, social sanctions, and emotional expression. She gave examples of societies with high synergy allowing privileges for certain persons and requiring privileged persons to accept responsibility for the general good. High-synergy societies can use strong behavioral sanctions as long as they provide recognized means for overcoming humiliating sanctions. High-synergy societies can also allow the exhilaration of feats of aggression, like counting coup among Plains Indians, as long as warfare and aggression are restricted to marginal activities. This kind of socially tolerable aggression contrasts with the "socially lethal" wars of modern nations (u.p. 1941d). Benedict was never an advocate for moderation. Passion was always allowed space in the cultures she felt most akin to.

Mead speculated that Benedict had come to dislike the lectures, had decided against publishing them, and had destroyed all the copies. Mead and her staff could not find them in the papers, although they are all clearly titled and dated. Benedict, however, published the first lecture in toto and adapted excerpts from all the other lectures for articles and speeches. It is notable, however, that she did not again use the word "synergy." None of her articles and manuscripts that use passages of these lectures employ the word, nor is it found in any other manuscripts after the Bryn Mawr lectures. Mead wrote that synergy was "a concept that initially interested her enormously. . . . She was still lecturing on the subject at Columbia in 1946" (1974:56). None of the student notes from Benedict's classes in 1946–48, however, record the term. She continued to speak and write about social cohesion, social stability, conditions of freedom, and an area beyond cultural relativity but seems to have abandoned the word "synergy." There is no real clue to why she abandoned the idea. Durkheim had used the term "anomie" for a condition of society similar to low synergy; anomie included reference to norms and emotions. Radcliffe-Brown had used "euphoria" and "dysphoria," and later "eunomia" and "dysnomia," and he defined the later terms, respectively, as "good order and social health, . . . disorder and social ill-health," terms that refer to norms and function (1935b:401). The terms used earlier refer to emotions. Synergy is a term for social function. Synergy also may imply social process. Synergy as process may have made Benedict wary. If synergy is seen as process and not just functioning, it implies a force apart from direct human agency. Thus it may suggest the element that she criticized in the new evolutionism of Leslie White, that evolution proceeded on its own course apart from control by individuals. Furthermore, her idea of discontinuity in

culture, first presented in 1938 and employed for several cultures thereafter, is more precise and more explanatory than the similar synergy. When she introduced the term "synergy," she wrote that low synergy occurred "where the social structure provides acts that are mutually opposed and counteractive," and "counteractive" is the word she used to describe discontinuous cultural elements (u.p. 1941a:17, RISM; Benedict 1938b). Discontinuity is a more specific and broader-based way of accomplishing a similar analytic task, since it indicates a problem that is managed well or poorly but does not imply a force independent of agency.

The sections of these lectures Benedict never brought to publication are the ones of most theoretical import, and these may have been slated for publication in a textbook for which she made detailed plans in the year after the Shaw lectures. The sections that she did not publish in periodicals were better adapted to a textbook format, where they could be accorded space for explanation and illustration. These subjects are the social typology, character structure, and processes of social disintegration and social stability that she referred to in the lectures as low and high synergy. Using the social typology as a tool for comparison, she showed that institutional form was not related to "social outcomes." Thus she was free to explain "social outcomes" by cultural attitudes. This typology is of interest also because in it she brings Durkheim's thought into her own. Inspiration from Durkheim was rare among her Boasian colleagues. Benedict and Mead also were the rare Boasians who credited the work of Durkheim's heir, Radcliffe-Brown (Theory 12/2,4/47). Benedict had developed a plan for a textbook in the spring of 1942 with Gene Weltfish as collaborator. There is no indication in her papers that she contemplated an alternate plan for compiling all the Shaw lectures into a book.

> I've been considering acceding to Houghton-Mifflin's desire for an anthropology textbook. Nothing in the field has yet superceded Kroeber's and you know how I feel about that. I've been looking through a number of college sociology texts. . . . I could get most of the points I'd intended to make in a book for the general public in a textbook and it would get much more use. What do you think? Gene Weltfish says she'll supervise the archeology, linguistics and material culture sections, and her best students will do the actual assembly of the material. (RB to MM, July 18, 1942, MM B1)

No outline or draft for such a textbook has been found in her papers. The plan was apparently shelved when she was asked early in 1943 to contribute to studies of national culture being done by other scholars for OWI. Benedict joined the OWI staff in June 1943. She never prepared the three theoretically

significant topics for publication, but the typology of social structure did reappear prominently in her 1946 course, Social Organization of Primitive Peoples.

The record of publication and adaptation of the Shaw lectures begins with publication of a large section of lecture five with the title "Our Last Minority: Youth" in the *New Republic* (1941). The first lecture was published in full in the *American Scholar* (1942) with the title "Anthropology and Culture Change." Excerpts from the other lectures, particularly concerning conditions that make freedom a shared quality of life in different primitive societies and different periods of Western society, were used in manuscripts of two speeches addressed to anthropologists and in two articles that appeared in the general scholarly periodicals. The Shaw lecture on social morale was given in briefer form at the annual meeting of the American Anthropological Association (AAA) in December 1940. The next year "Ideologies in the Light of Comparative Data" was her address to the association's annual meeting. A passage in it is similar to one quoted above from Shaw lecture one on the limits of cultural relativity.

Another manuscript that borrows from the Shaw lectures, "To Secure the Blessings of Liberty," written circa 1941, makes the point that freedom is neither assured by a democratic form of society nor restricted to that form: "In many democracies men do not sleep well nights in confidence that they are safe from the aggressions of their fellow tribesmen. . . . On the other hand societies with kings and courts and taxes sometimes achieve a social solidarity where from top to bottom of the population men feel that they can follow their own purposes according to their ability and are not conscious of interference" (u.p. ca. 1941b:6, 9).

Benedict spoke also about a vital issue of the time, the contrast between treason and accusations of subversion – "neither in war nor peace do civil rights include the right to treason" – while subversion is "an undefined word and therefore it is convenient; it hides the fact that we cannot prove treason against some poor school teacher or some labor union organizer or some distributor of tracts" (u.p. ca. 1941b:17). This manuscript contains several examples drawn from Western history. The manuscript may be the original from which she adapted the article "Primitive Freedom," published in the *Atlantic Monthly* (1942). The earlier manuscript is much the longer and also lacks the example of the Chukchi, which was significant in the published form, but many passages are identical. The published article said, as several prototypes had, that a condition for freedom was that rights valued in each society be granted to all members of the society and that the American idea of civil rights is valuable precisely because civil rights are granted by law to

all persons. The list of civil rights in America includes important ones for guaranteeing freedom, but the list is limited. Some primitive societies, unlike America, extend to all members the right to share in the available food supply. Some primitive societies extend to all youths the techniques and tools to be productive and the means of gaining respect. The Chukchi, like Americans, do not, and they pay a high price in aggressive and depressive behavior. She continued that democracies were not alone in promoting freedom for their citizens, nor were they better at it than other political systems. Democracies had to provide the social conditions for freedom.

Benedict borrowed another idea from American culture, the joint stock company, and she used it to describe some primitive systems that worked for the common good. The joint stock company works on the principle that rewards differ according to contributions, a principle that obligates those with greater privilege to care for the interest of the whole group. She was not one for abrogating privileges, which were rewards for good leadership. "Societies maim themselves by denying exceptional human gifts" (u.p. ca. 1941:14). Her joint stock company image for protecting society's interests reminded Americans most conversant with that term to look to the performance of their own joint stock company, their society. The article, "Privileged Classes," in the periodical *Frontiers of Democracy*, enlarged on this point, a point first made in the Shaw lectures. She distinguished special privileges, which were rewards for real contributions to society, from unwarranted privileges.

Two articles in this period joined the public debate about a prospective peace treaty. Benedict had touched on this subject in the Shaw lectures, but these articles were specific criticisms of positions taken in the field of international affairs. "Editorial on War," published in the *American Scholar* in 1942, derided two positions that had been proposed, one recommending that diplomats be free from legislative interference, the other calling for legislative power over foreign policy for the reason that the common man or woman reliably wants peace. Her proposal was to place authority for international policy in the United Nations and raise an international army under its command so that nations could disarm. "Post-War Experts" in the *New Republic* in 1942, at the height of German power, criticized academic proposals for a postwar diplomacy of armed and balanced power.

Each of these papers addressed the great problems of the time, the social conditions of freedom and of tyranny, the problems of war and peace, American social problems. To make a plea to the general public for recognition of legitimacy of indigenous political systems in impending postwar political policies and to advise against trying to introduce Western systems of national government in areas that had traditional local political systems,

Benedict presented two contrasting categories of political systems, Eurasian and North Atlantic. In the Eurasian pattern, community consensus about the legitimacy and actions of leaders was sought; in the North Atlantic pattern, national elective systems represented diverse interests and operated by majority rule. This categorization was intellectually bold and substantial, yet in addressing a general audience she gave limited ethnographic verification, leaving academic readers wondering about how these categories were further constituted. This is a persistent problem for the public anthropologist. The insights in this article, "Recognition of Cultural Diversities in the Post-War World," derive from her method of large-scale contrasts of cultural systems (Benedict 1943c). She again selected points on which pattern could be starkly differentiated and set up opposite categories. In local Eurasian systems, the extensive authority and responsibility of local leadership, which would be either a council of elders or a leading tribal or community family not of landlord position, allowed local leaders to gain consensus through genuine agreement or as a condition for the benefits of group membership. While Eurasian systems differed in specific form, many relied on maintaining consensus. Benedict described village councils in China, the Punjab, and Poland and referred briefly to the Russian *mir*, the traditional village council. She did not discuss Japan, the nation that would be most at issue after World War II, although Japanese local consensus procedures could also have illustrated her point. In contrast, the North Atlantic pattern had weak community organization but had state and national political parties, which represented diverse and conflicting viewpoints, operated through elections, and accepted the principle of majority rule, a principle very different from consensus in that it allowed the minority to continue to press their interests although out of office. In the Eurasian system, acceptance of consensus usually carried with it the protection and social stability achievable where high-status persons fulfilled obligations to dependents for the purpose of retaining leadership, but the system failed to accommodate dissent, and nonconcurring families and clans were ostracized from the group. If dissidents were numerous and if they massed as authoritarian movements, the local system was subject to external takeover. Consensus could not usually be attained beyond local group and village levels.

A half century after this article was written, the political situation in Afghanistan that accompanied the United Nations–sponsored national interim government after the defeat of the Taliban, the last of a series of autocratic central rulers (Shahrani 2002), has illustrated the strength and the weaknesses of the Eurasian system. In most areas, tribes and towns held assemblies in June 2002 to agree on leaders to be sent to a national assembly,

where they affirmed by virtual consensus an interim national leader, Hamid Karsai. This traditional method of affirmation of a leader by consensus, not by election, derives mainly from customs of the most numerous ethnic group, the Pashtun, and the enthusiasm that was reported to accompany this extension of a tribal system to a national purpose was apparently felt mainly by the Pashtun. Other ethnic groups that had different interests and traditions from the Pashtun also participated in this process. Among several of these ethnic groups, warlords have been strong, and while there were short periods of local self-government, often the warlords maintained their rule by violence (Shahrani 2002). The pattern of locally achieved consensus is seldom extendable outside the coherent group, and this is the main issue on which a proposed constitution foundered and was only nominally approved in December 2003 (Gall 2002, 2003–4). While the strong central authority of the proposed constitution was considered similar to a U.S. and Western European system and was supported by the United Nations, the demand by ethnic groups of Afghanistan for a greater degree of parliamentary oversight to limit the central authority is actually a closer approximation of Western political systems that recognize a political role for minorities. The strong central authority thought necessary for governing the war-torn nation is closer to the Pashtun and Eurasian consensus model and carries with it the danger of autocracy and the forcing underground of dissent. Maintenance of systems for negotiation of internal differences in nations in order to keep some centralized authority is currently a political issue. Clifford Geertz has pointed this out. He has recently called attention to the contrast between political systems that can negotiate differences and those that seek consensus. He notes as general in the modern world an "overall picture of cultural identity as a field of differences confronting one another at every level. . . . It is less consensus that is at issue than a viable way of doing without it. . . . There is the drive toward creating . . . an intricate, multiply ordered structure of difference within which cultural tensions which are not about to go away . . . can be placed and negotiated" (Geertz 2000:355–57). The cultural background of this contrast was posed by Benedict's article.

Benedict's point back in 1943 was that the American system was no more representative of a popular will than was the Eurasian village council and leader, but it was a national level of authority. She noted in class lectures that Eurasian systems differed in how far the states of that period reached down into local affairs, for example, whether they appointed mayors, police, and teachers as some central European states and the Japanese state did or maintained state laws of kinship practices and local dispute settlement as the Thai Buddhist monarchy did, or whether, as in traditional Poland, India, and

China, the state seldom concerned itself with local governance. This was a sweeping linkage among Eurasian systems that differed in specific form, a linkage worth pursuing for comparative purposes, but her purpose was not to pursue the intellectual problem but to convince American readers that there was no vacuum of traditional popular political organization where nations were weak and even where nations had become totalitarian, and any attempt to impose a national elective system would have to respect these existing modes of social order. For persuasion of a general audience, she omitted ethnographic references, the very information that an academic audience considered essential. To anthropologists at the time, it would have been clear that her discussion of community institutions in China was based on the work of Fei Hsiao Tung and Martin Yang and that her account of Poland derived from discussions with her colleague, Polish-educated Sula Benet (Fei 1939; Yang 1945). It was clear that Benedict wrote from ethnographic accounts because she included precise detail of village elders' responsibilities and the titles for local leader in three Asian languages. To write for the public always carried a cost within the discipline. Yet in this article Benedict responded to the challenging issue of political order in surrendered nations with a categorization of real interest to the discipline and a significant cross-cultural perspective on American politics. That it was more than a heuristic device for a general audience is shown in her restatement and enlargement of the point in a course lecture, and at that time she cited two recent books as sources (Personality and Culture 11/21/47; Moon 1945; Northrup 1946). Later ethnography on several Eurasian societies that hold assemblies for the purpose of arriving at affirmation of values and leaders has shown wide variation, for example, the Pashtun of Pakistan and Afghanistan have quite different types of local leadership from the Jains of northern India, yet both regularly hold large assemblies to affirm consensus (Ahmed 1980; Barth 1959; Carrithers and Humphrey 1991). As national organization is sought among ethnic and community-oriented groups, local organization can impede centralized authority. The problem is as real today as in 1943.

In each of these papers, Benedict stressed that the perspective of anthropology is essential for framing the problems. Her conviction that anthropology could give the answers to the big problems of the day is in full contrast to the discipline's current bafflement about what to say to nonanthropologists and who may listen. Benedict was teaching the relativity of cultures, and she was also attempting a reconfiguration of America's image of itself into a view that she thought was fully apparent through cross-cultural and holistic lenses. Her comparative and holistic framework strongly contrasts to current anthropology's framework, which often stresses "thick description,"

"unpacking" symbolism, and particularism; is seldom comparative; and is aimed more often at self-referentality than at overcoming observer bias – a concern Mead paid much attention to. Postmodern thought and a turn to reflexivity have led to these ways of doing anthropology and have brought benefits, but they tend to put out of focus the comparative and holistic framework of anthropology.

## Theory, Method, and Science

Benedict wrote about her own theory and methods, and she also contested other theoretical approaches of the time, particularly the return to evolutionary stages as explanation and materialist explanation. She challenged the validity of a widely assumed evolutionary sequence from bilateral kinship organization to unilateral kinship organization in "Marital Property Rights in Bilateral Society" (1936). She showed that in most matrilineal societies, property was held by the husband and his kinsmen in much the same way as in patrilineal societies, thus questioning the validity of separating the two types as two evolutionary stages. An article challenging the mode of production as explanation was published a few years later. "Two Patterns of Indian Acculturation" (1943) is a history of colonial labor in North and South America comparing the large areas of "free tribes" with Middle America and Peru, where native patterns of conquest and empire had accustomed the populations to serving as conscripted labor. In the "free tribes," labor was independent, not assignable by chiefs, and colonists found they could not command work as they could in areas already trained to corvée. The article is based on extensive data on North and South American colonial history, native technologies, and native political organization of these areas. Benedict wanted to challenge the prevailing explanations of New World conquest history by archaeologists, which were based on technological factors alone. She attempted a rebuttal of an argument of economic determinism, showing her profession that she had not absented herself from its central controversies by moving to psychological aspects of culture or by addressing a general audience. Neither evolutionary stages nor materialist causes were sufficient explanations, as both were being propounded at the time. The contrast between free and subject populations in the New World is the starting point of a later paper on the history of U.S. colonial political development written after her OWI research.

Benedict thought of her work as science, wrote of the scientific character of anthropology in specific terms, and described the scientific methodology of Project #35. As has recently been noted, she recognized that science was

influenced by the culture of its period, but she sought a current science of culture (Stassinnos 1998). Boas's commitment to science has again been discussed and demonstrated (Lewis 2001b). Benedict wrote of her views on science for both a popular and a disciplinary audience:

> Sociology and psychology depend upon data from one epoch and region of the world, contemporary Western civilization. They can not provide from their own material sufficient instances against which to check hypotheses. History is limited to what is preserved in documents. . . . Anthropologists, however, are lucky. They can hear any confidences. They can know intimately the leaders and the derelicts. They can document the gaps between the way people say they ought to behave in any situation and the way they do behave. (1942b)

She promised procedures "to check hypotheses," what she had been engaged in this whole time, "a more controlled analysis" than *Patterns of Culture*. Benedict summed up the purposes of work she had done on comparative social cohesion in a succinct memorandum to the Conference on Science, Philosophy, and Religion in 1943. She had been sent a questionnaire asking her views of "the major evil" in the world and how her discipline could contribute to "global consciousness." What makes her reply interesting is that it is largely a statement of her methods and purposes in Project #35: "I am an anthropologist and my special field of inquiry has been to investigate in a large number of societies what fundamental social and cultural arrangements maximize or minimize hostility and conflict (aggression). . . . Social cohesion or lack of cohesion are implemented by fundamental cultural arrangements. These later can be pointed out and generalized" (u.p. 1943b).

Here Benedict stated her method as comparison and generalization. In her address to anthropologists, "Ideologies in the Light of Comparative Data" (1941), she had defined method: "The fundamental problem before all sciences – physical and social – is still to learn the conditions which do bring about a designated outcome. The prime lesson the social sciences can learn from the natural sciences is just this: that it is necessary to press on to find the positive conditions under which desired events take place, and these can be just as scientifically investigated as can instances of negative correlation" (in Mead 1959:385).

In an address on the topic faith to a seminar of psychiatrists and theologians about the time "Primitive Freedom" was published, Benedict discussed the social conditions for "firmness as a state of mind, as balance and dignity and steadfastness and resourcefulness, . . . harmony between things ideal and things possible. There *are* social laws which govern the presence of such a

state of mind in a society, and I think I can summarize them most briefly by saying that such societies make certain privileges and liberties common and inalienable to all members" (u.p. 1942a).

This address is important as a contribution to her search for the social conditions for a sense of freedom and is discussed in that regard in a later chapter, but here I note her conviction that there are discoverable laws of social cause. One asks, why her willingness to summarize ten years of comparative study on Project #35 without demonstrating the comparative data? Not only at this informal gathering but also her article "Primitive Freedom" summarized her lengthy work with the same point. The address did so cogently, but still questions arise: What more might the full comparison show? Had the full demonstration been delayed or abandoned? Issues of the war were on everyone's mind, and OWI was asking for a very different kind of analysis from anthropologists. However, Benedict's concern with method and science, with "a more controlled analysis," and her long-held plan to write it are called into question. In her talk on faith, she said, "There are social laws . . . and I think I can summarize them" (u.p. 1942a). Whether willingness to summarize meant willingness to dispense with the comparative method, she nevertheless saw her work as science, and she shared in the growing emphasis at that time on science. Stocking wrote of a dualism of historical and scientific approaches in anthropology and among Boasians during the interwar years, placing Benedict as more historicist, more a developer of pattern, more a romanticist (1976:17). In a later paper Stocking suggested that the tension of this dualism, found in early British anthropology as well as among Boasians, may explain the abandonment of major book plans by several British anthropologists, plans that called for scientific generalization about human behavior, which their methods did not allow them to provide (1991). One wonders if Benedict's abandonment of her book on conditions of social cohesion may be another instance of this kind of tension. Abraham Maslow, a psychologist who studied with her, wrote of being shown newssheet-size charts that plotted characteristics of eight societies studied by her Project #35 students. Her funding application said that well over twenty societies would be compared. By the spring of 1942, if not earlier, she apparently had arrived at her conclusions. After taking time off for writing *Race: Science and Politics* (1940) and for the Shaw lecture series, she wrote a brief version of these conclusions without the lengthy demonstration originally planned. In this summary, the article "Primitive Freedom," one culture demonstrated the abrogation of freedom, the Chukchi of Siberia, and one culture, the Blackfeet of the Plains, demonstrated the sense of being free.

Benedict did put off and never returned to the book on Project #35 and

did so for compelling reasons, because of the crisis of war. But the basic idea of that project, describing the range of conditions for free societies and for oppressive societies, was carried over in her later work on complex cultures. For example, her contrast between a Soviet sense of social well-being and an American one in her Yale speech of 1948, quoted in chapter 1, suggests she was continuing the objective of finding the range of social attitudes with which people feel freedom, finding them in contrasting institutional forms in the old consensus-based community inherited by an autocratic society and in a society that retained the principal values of its early decentralized political democracy. This point of contrast was the same one she drew in a lecture and in her article "Recognition of Cultural Diversities in the Post-War World," discussed above (Personality and Culture 11/21/47; Benedict 1943c). Further concern with this point appears in the subject she herself was working on in her postwar research project described below. Thus Benedict retained confidence that the conditions for facilitating or abrogating free society could be defined and demonstrated comparatively. When she took up work for OWI, she put aside her project and methods of the previous years. Her problem for OWI was not to generalize conditions that bring social outcomes but to describe patterns in single cultures that would predict behavior under designated conditions. Her prewar objective was delayed again by the Research in Contemporary Cultures (RCC) project after the war, which also concerned the study of culture patterns, although her own research plan within that project continued her comparative interest. Her course lectures in 1946–48 indicate that she wanted her students to take up her earlier work on defining social conditions of social outcomes and finding social laws in this regard. She may have intended to return to this subject.

CHAPTER 5

# Beyond Psychological Types

## Contemporary Cultures and Return to Pattern

In the Office of War Information (OWI), Benedict was assigned the problem of discerning patterns in strategic cultures for general guidance in dealing with their governments and providing specific knowledge that would predict behavior under conditions expected in the course of the war. For instance, OWI wanted advice on propaganda broadcasts to enemy troops, on how to ease relations between American troops and civilian populations of allied or occupied nations, on interpreting intelligence data on enemy commitment to keep fighting, on how to increase troop surrenders, and on terms of Japanese national surrender. Her first assignments were to complete work anthropologist Geoffrey Gorer had begun for the same office on Burma and to draw up an account of Thai culture. Both countries were of strategic importance, with Burma on the supply route to China's inland wartime capital, Chungking, and Thailand allied with Japan. In September 1943 Benedict completed a forty-nine-page report on Thailand. In November she wrote a sixty-five-page report on Romania.[1] By January 1944 she had completed a seventeen-page report on Dutch culture and an eight-page memorandum on problems foreseeable in U.S. troop presence in Holland and recommending dos and don'ts for army broadcasts to the Dutch. In the next few months she wrote a long report on German morale and brief reports on Italy, Finland, Norway, and France.[2] She read historical and political accounts of these nations, novels, folklore, and social analyses. Much of the data needed to discern behavioral aspects of cultures had to be obtained in interviews with culture members living in the United States. In regard to Japan, she explained in the foreword to her final report to OWI that her study was limited to Japanese ethics. She continued:

> Information on Japan's ethical categories and tenets was given only casually and inadequately in the literature on Japan, whether written by Japanese or by Westerners, and the material had to be obtained from those who

> had lived in Japan. Japanese reared in Japan discussed with me movies, textbook materials and novels by Japanese, they described events they had participated in, they gave the Japanese phrasing of praise and blame, and the consequences of various acts. Westerners who had lived in Japan also described their observations. (u.p. 1945)

In these studies, Benedict's use of pattern is in some respects different, but essentially the same, as in her work on the Zunis, Plains Indians, Kwakiutls, and Dobu. Pattern is not named by a psychological type or, more accurately, by a worldview, as in her work on the primitive groups. The idea of psychological types in culture arose as an explanation of the process of bringing cohesion to a culture, a process she added to Boas's model of cultures in which the distribution of culture traits was often the only known factor. The diffusion process offered many traits for groups to adopt, reject, or redesign. In their choices and their redesigns, groups were guided by their preexisting preferences and aversions, by their psychological disposition; members of cultures sought consistency and integration. All the contemporary cultures she studied later differed from these preliterate ones in that written texts and legends preserved parts of their histories in their present views of themselves; furthermore, the interrelations of levels of their hierarchical social structures affected behavior and thought at each level. She took into account people's consciousness of their history and effects of class stratification.

For example, a Thai absolute monarchy of six hundred years duration, up to 1932, had state laws of kinship, marriage, and dispute settlement, thus extending state authority down to the household and village level, and state authority met no forceful kin or locality groupings. There was no hereditary aristocracy, and even the king's numerous descendants born to his hundreds of concubines – one famous king fathered his many children after his twenty years of celibacy in a monastery – were known by successively lower titles in each generation that separated them from royal paternity. The successor king had to be a son of the king's sister, eliminating problems of affinal influence on the absolute power of the royal line. A national bureaucracy administered the laws of the state. Low population density, probably resulting from periodic invasions from neighboring kingdoms, relieved pressure on the rich rice lands and maintained peasant welfare.

The Romanian state was a late-nineteenth-century institution. The ethnic Romanians had been exploited by the Roman Empire and then by the Ottoman Empire, forced into agricultural labor by Greek settlers who were given large land grants, and conquered by the Hapsburg Empire; yet they invented a nationalist historical identity. The customs of the sheepherding

ethnic Romanians had much autonomy up to the present in spite of this history of colonial domination. The state supported a large bureaucracy by giving numerous offices the right to land and corvée labor, thus giving them economic power in affairs of villages, but the state could not give local social authority. The Romanian aristocracy could tax but, as with earlier overlords, did not own peasant lands or rights to their labor. Exploited but defiant of authority, and with light kinship obligations, Romanians' loyalties were to their secular peasant and herdsman ceremonies and customs.

Holland had a long commercial history that created a nation of burghers; it had no aristocracy but had a meticulously defined class system with social distance among occupational groups yet tolerance of its large Jewish minority far greater than most of Europe. The Dutch crown had controlled the legislative body and political administration up to World War II; there had been a tradition of efficient local-national reciprocity and orderly political parties.

These histories, and ideas of history, left their mark. The integrative force of culture pattern was not the main historical process as it could often be in the prereservation period of American Indian societies, for history in state societies had more to do with conquest, subjugation, and the political effectiveness of states. The resulting social structures, if not more complex than kin-based ones, were different from them primarily in the impediments to integration posed by external conquest and large state organization. The religions practiced in the two European states were diminished in their influence over thought by the countervailing presence of secular power and the strength of secular customs. The problem in using anthropological models was not, as some Marxists argued, the presence of class stratification and commercial economies but rather, in Romania particularly, the historical accumulation of multiple forces playing on the integrative drive for consistency in culture. It has been said that Benedict's writings on these modern cultures differed from her earlier ones in taking up multiple themes rather than constructing single types (Caffrey 1989:319; Kent 1996b:25). She continued to find a single cultural-psychological type in complex societies and nation states, but she illustrated it in more aspects of social structure and more competing ideological currents because social structure and ideology had more components than in the groups she described earlier, components that were preserved through the written documents and other symbols of the series of power-holders. For all four cultures, Benedict characterized a consistency in thought and behavior closely equivalent to the consistency of the Apollonian and the Dionysian.

In the national culture analyses, Benedict was attentive to how persons

used their culture to pursue personal objectives and to adjust to their culture. Personal objectives were not apart from those learned from culture, but greater attention was given the dimension of the person's relation to culture and to utilizing culture for a sense of personal achievement or for self-respect. She referred to an idea of "self" in Romania and Japan and to Dutch "character." For her first national culture study, Thailand, she did not write of self or character, but much insight is given into the dimension of personal behavior within the culture. For Romania and Japan, she described how the self maintained its integrity, and in these two cultures the need for maintaining a sense of self arose from the contestations that took place in the cultural environment. This dimension was not prominent in the Dutch or Thai papers. The greater part of her description of individual self-image in Japan was based on traditional stories and self-revelatory writings and on discussing these works with individuals raised in Japan. In order to describe a self in Thai, Romanian, and Dutch cultures, she had relied on proverbs and custom, since self-revelatory writing was either not part of these cultures or not availed of in the short period that wartime pressures allowed. Furthermore, the descriptive basis of self, character, and personal behavior differs from her Zuni, Plains Indians, Kwakiutl, and Dobuan accounts, among other differences, in that she had obtained data on childhood in the national cultures. This stage of life was seldom reported when she wrote her sketches of the other groups, and she had not observed it in her own fieldwork in Zuni. This data is a significant part of the analysis for Japan and contributes less for Thailand, Romania, and Holland.

Thai "characteristics" were summarized under the headings "The Enjoyment of Life," "The Cool Heart," and "Male Dominance." The Thai practiced a this-worldly form of Buddhism, for instance, in turning merit-making into pleasurable activities, as in fairs with music and tidbits to eat: "They have no cultural inventions of self-castigation and many of self-indulgence and merriment." Regarding the cool heart, "Patience in one's lot and in one's projects is a great male virtue. . . . Anger is a prime disturbance of the good life. . . . Disputes pass off without violence. . . . An informant said, 'The best way to show your opponent up for a brute is to give in to him.' " Aggression is interpreted "as being necessarily the act of a person who cannot or will not estimate consequences in a rational fashion" (u.p. 1943c:26, 40, 41, 43). Potentially harmful spirits, who are spirits of the lower soul after death, are offered choice foods and music to placate them. For the Thai, differences between male and female are so secure as to allow the genders to share tasks, workplaces, and the essentials of dress and to be considered equal in physical strength. Both men and women are unanxious about sexual identity

and unexhibitionistic in courting activity. Underlying the nonelaboration of sexuality is the proverb, "man is seed rice and woman is hulled rice," reversing the common cultural location of primary fertility symbols in females and making fertility a male attribute. Women undergo a month-long "baking" period after pregnancy that deprives them of their beauty but, more important, restores the blood lost in childbirth. Contest and acquiescence between the genders are illustrated in a popular kite game with a large male kite and a small female kite, each one accompanied by its orchestra. "The objective is for the male kite to catch a loop on the female kite with its bamboo hooks. If it gets too close it will lose balance, which is considered her triumph. If the male clamps on to the female it pulls her along and they cruise together, considered his triumph" (Personality and Culture 12/19/46). This game and the analogy of men to seed rice confirm pleasurable, secure sexuality. In public affairs, self-reliance prevailed, and one took care "not to be duped" and "can use guile against an opponent." The Thai said, "Use a thorn to draw a thorn," and "Keep your eyes crossed in a cross-eyed town" (u.p. 1943c:49; u.p. 1943d). Thai characteristics can hardly be conveyed in fewer words than these excerpts. The Thai language may have a single word for Thai cultural psychology comparable to the Japanese *amae*, which Takeo Doi employed as a key concept in Japanese culture and personality (1973). Benedict's imagery for Thai culture and selves is as unified as those she used in *Patterns of Culture*, which could be reduced to one word only because the word had the complex meanings discussed lengthily in Western philosophical and psychiatric literature.

The Romanian self did not need "accretions of property and status." It was joyfully hedonistic and was allowed "opportunism and aggression" against anyone who "frustrated the paramount pursuit of pleasure." The self demanded his and her "own place in the sun," convinced of his or her attractiveness to others. The Romanian person was familiar with impulsive violence, felt guilt for experiencing pleasures, and practiced many secular customs of atonement. Church confessional was ignored and church symbolism and rituals entirely dwarfed by peasant ones. Kinship obligations were secondary to individual enjoyment and profit. Social solidarity was slight and thus neither an aid nor a burden. In a society where kissing the hand of a superior was common practice, there was a proverb, "Kiss the hand you cannot bite." A proverb said, "Honor? Can a man eat honor?" Weddings were envisioned as events of emperors and empresses, and thousands of singing birds made music for weddings and for funerals. Death has been sung of as marriage to a proud queen, the bride of all the world; fir trees and mountains witnessed the death, and stars were the torches for the funeral procession.

Romanians' self-confidence carried to the rites of passage (u.p. 1943e; u.p. 1943f). Perhaps it occurred to Benedict that here was another contrast of Thai moderation and Romanian individualism parallel to the Pueblo and Plains Indians, moderation that was not so repressive and individualism that was not so austere. The typing of culture had once served as a heuristic device, but she no longer needed to employ "tabloid" words, as she had said with a touch of chagrin on reading Raymond Firth's review of *Patterns*. The point was still that these cultures had coherence around an integrated set of ideas. They were not made up of multiple themes. In the idea of pattern, consistency was inherent.

The Dutch character was closer to central European thought but not so familiar as to be stereotyped. Dutch social structure almost defined Dutch character: the reciprocity of local and national organization; the steady state and functionality of the multiparty political system; a bureaucracy staffed by appointments instead of a civil service such as the important French and German ones – a proverb said, "If there were a civil service, an orphan could get in"; the separate strata of the class system, an entirely commoner pattern unembellished by an aristocracy; the exclusion of women from economic authority and the idealization of women's domestic role – favorite expressions were, "Holland, the little country with Mother's eye over it," and "good national housekeeping"; the open window of the living room at street level so all can see the household property and what goes on inside the house. The bedroom was closed and private, but marriage was not expected to be pleasurable (u.p. 1944a; u.p. 1944b). Moral society had its reverse in covert, dark, secret thought and gratification. Benedict did not include the dark, covert part of character in her reports for OWI, but she included it is her Seminar on Contemporary European Cultures, and it can be read in the text for that course. She surely would have included, and expanded, this part of Dutch character in the publication she planned for the three national culture papers, as described below. But it is probable she would not have taken a possible analogy: overt Dutch behavior as ego and covert behavior as id. On the contrary, this aspect of Dutch national character may have suggested to Benedict the addition to her definition of culture pattern that she made in her course Personality and Culture, that patterns include "an area of escape" from the requirements of the culture.

Central to the Japanese self was the ethical system of devotion and obligations to parents and to emperor, and one tried to repay at least "one ten thousandth" of the obligations to parents and emperor. One became obligated also to anyone who extended a favor, and this was a compelling obligation but was resented in some circumstances. Fulfilling obligations to

others was essential to self-respect, and any lapse caused loss of self-respect and deep shame. Slights from another person were keenly felt and were taken as insults. Clearing one's name from insult was an obligation to self and to parents. Thus shame did "the heavy work of morality" (Benedict 1946a:224). It upheld the ethical system, in this way functioning like guilt in Western interpretations of moral behavior. Benedict's description of shame as the primary sanction in Japan has been criticized, all be it in oversimplified form, and this point is returned to in chapter 7, while here I continue with Benedict's analysis of the Japanese self.

There were social arrangements for lightening the strain of obligations, and after fulfilling duty one could move to a different "circle" of behavior expectations and enjoy "human feelings." Childhood was a period of light obligations, and both boys and girls enjoyed much independence, freedom of expression, and emotional exuberance in childhood. Thus fulfillment of the self came with fulfillment of duty rather than through independence from social obligations, as individualistic thought would have it. Beyond duty to parents and to reputation, the self should be developed through personal discipline: "Only through mental training (or self-discipline: *shuyo*) can a man or woman gain the power to live fully and to 'get the taste out of life.' . . . *Shuyo* polishes the rust off the body" (Benedict 1946a:233). Benedict stressed that self-discipline was cultivated by the ordinary person, and later Dorinne Kondo described ways this was accomplished by the workers in a factory (1990:76). Beyond each individual's pursuit of self-respect through duty and self-discipline, Zen Buddhism had built its practices for the cultivation of "expertness." Benedict noted that in Zen thought, strength and enlightenment are from the self, not from study of holy books or from God, and the Zen concept of self-discipline entailed austerity, efficiency, and expertness but was not thought to be self-sacrifice, a quality valued in some other religious practices of austerity. The drive to self-perfection was a basis of Benedict's conviction that Japan would reform its militarism and bring together the elements of its own particular kind of democracy based on obtaining consensus.

The Japanese self moved among sets of prescribed behaviors, acting and feeling in contrasting ways appropriate to each kind of situation. The selves in Japan, as well as in Thai, Romanian, and Dutch cultures, were to be understood as the ways of living within the culture to achieve a sense of the culture's personal rewards. The cultures differed, but the selves were governed by this similar objective. The idea of self thus had a metacultural sense, which suggested a common human aspect. Some cultural relativists may say that Benedict's emerging view of the self in culture, as seeking personal integra-

tion and personal ends, was represented in Western individualistic terms. The relation of culture to a level of common human characteristics remains an open question. As her earlier work showed, Benedict the relativist was also in some degree a universalist.

Characterizations of the self in Japanese culture were developed farther than Benedict portrayed it in later field-based and language-based studies, two resources Benedict lacked. Yet the features of self that she found through her method of study at a distance have been rediscovered and refined through these later, more extended inquiries. The field now takes basic meaning from the distinction between inside and outside (*uchi* and *soto*), terms that include inner feelings and familial feelings as "inside" and social obligations and social interactions, particularly hierarchical ones, as "outside." Both types of experience are valued, and the Japanese person learns the distinction and learns how to shift (*kejime*) between inside and outside situations (Bachnik 1992, 1994; Kondo 1990, 1994; Lebra 1992; Rosenberger 1992; Tobin 1992). This large body of work goes far beyond Benedict's work, and apparently for this reason none of the writers consider noteworthy the fact that Benedict was the first to show this basic pattern, that the Japanese differentiated situations in "circles of behavior" and portrayed a self that attempted to cultivate both inner identity and outer position through well-known methods appropriate to each circle. The recent work is an impressive achievement and was not arrived at through developing Benedict's thought but was achieved through fieldwork and language analysis. From the point of view of estimating Benedict's work, it can be said that her basic construct was corroborated and refined but was not altered by the later findings.

Benedict's method has been likened to literary criticism (Trencher 2000: 169). The patterns of selves in this work do not, however, resemble literary portraits of individuals. They range over many variations in persons' ways of living within their culture and do not bring together elements of an individual personality. Certainly they do not resemble clinical case studies. If her method is to be likened to literary criticism, it must be in the terms she specified: "The anthropologist will, of course, use these cannons [of good Shakespearian criticism] for the study of a cultural ethos, and not for the elucidation of a single character" (Benedict 1948a:591). Each national type of self was described acting in a defined social context, in a set of customary ideas and institutions, and depending fully on the support and familiar challenges in the culture.

The Romanian paper in particular stands up to a criticism of national culture made by Eric Wolf, in which he casts doubt on the idea of national culture, citing the recency of state organization in central Europe and "the

use of force and persuasion to bring differentiated populations under the aegis of unified nation-states" (1999:11). He illustrated his point by the late political unification in Germany preceded by historic antagonism among localities. In an earlier paper, he gave the example of the early Austrian Hapsburg monarchy as unifying but not so encompassing as to produce a national character. This example suggested to him more limited designations for cultural constellations, "a strategic social institution . . . , a salient context situation . . . , a scenario of sociability," which he thought more valid for the recently formed nations of central Europe than the implied uniformity of "national character" (Wolf 1986). Yet Benedict's account of Romanian national culture and national character discusses Romanians' lack of political unification, their ethnically diverse sections sharing most of their culture, and the popularity of political irredentism. Among the nations Benedict wrote on, Japan and Thailand had political and cultural unity of long duration under sacred monarchies. Holland's political unity was less contested and of longer duration than Germany's and was under a respected monarchy. Romania was the one among these nations that had weak national institutions and a short duration of indigenous state organization, yet it had long-enduring, free sheepherder institutions and vigorous symbolic culture. These traditional cultural elements were central to Benedict's portrayal of a national character. However, Wolf's suggested terms alternative to "national character" are apt and may be preferable. Character was never well defined by Benedict and defined with great complexity by Mead (1953), and the specific interactional and social meanings of Wolf's phrases recommend them and also indicate their suitability to Benedict's portrayals of "national character." Where Wolf can be faulted, however, is his exaggeration of the dependence of national character studies on child training: "The culture-and-personality mode of conceptualizing a national totality seemed utterly mistaken. It assumed that a common repertoire of child training would produce a single national character, and it abstracted personality formation from the historical process" (Wolf 1999:11). Benedict's explanations of a Romanian, a Dutch, a Thai, and a Japanese national culture minimally invoke childhood experience as explanation but use it as a vantage point, another representation of cultural theme, or a discontinuous part of culture. Surely she did not abstract personality formation from the historical process. Wolf's criticism could be sustained for the publications of Geoffrey Gorer on Great Russians, which will be discussed below, but not for Mead's *Soviet Attitudes toward Authority*, which does not mention the swaddling hypothesis and which places her account of national character in historical context (Mead 1951:26).

## Methods and Concepts for National Culture

There was much skepticism about using ideas developed in analysis of primitive societies for the study of modern societies. Features of modern societies such as industrial economies, state institutions, class stratification, and ethnically diverse populations within nation states differed too much, the argument went, from the preliterate societies in which anthropologists had refined their methods. These differences were the grounds for some anthropologists' criticism of pattern analysis in modern cultures. The criticism stressed antagonism between social classes as divisive, while Benedict saw interdependent relationships between classes binding classes together in some societies, as in the Durkheimian model. A discussion of methods for pattern analysis for general readers is found in the first chapter of *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword*. A more detailed report on problems of analysis of modern cultures is an address to the anthropology section of the New York Academy of Sciences in May 1946, "The Study of Cultural Patterns in European Nations," a paper that could well have been reviewed by critics of national character studies. The address was easily available, having been reprinted in Mead's selection of Benedict's papers in 1974.

Benedict took up the points of criticism that had been made: social classes do receive different rewards and privileges, but their relations within a social hierarchy may join them into patterned complementary obligations, which may emphasize reciprocal benefits as well as dominance and submission; the structure of authority in political organization is likely to be repeated in the father/son relationship and in the landowner/client relationship; attitudes toward property are in some cultures partly shared by the rich and the poor; the ethnic diversity within nations may mean there is no national culture and only subregional cultures. Anthropological methods for pattern construction were suitable for Western cultures because, as in other hierarchical societies, and like political and economic institutions in small societies, modern Western institutions were shaped by culture. While other disciplines had produced extensive knowledge of Western societies, the big problem for understanding their cultures was lack of study of the learning of culture and the learning of social environments. Benedict rejected with these arguments the Marxist model of dialectical opposition of classes as the fundamental explanation of stratified societies.

Her analytic device derived from the Durkheimian model of potentially stable complementary opposition of classes in organic societies contrasted to symmetrical relationships usually found in segmentary societies. Durkheim's observations of complementary behavior between owner and worker classes

in Europe, along with reciprocal responsibilities, was a pattern in some preliterate organic and hierarchical societies of Africa, Polynesia, and pre-Columbian Peru, long familiar to Benedict. Complementary relations had classic form in Poland and, as in Durkheim's original work on European societies, were practiced in German, French, Italian, and Dutch cultures, which she studied for OWI. Symmetrical relationships were part of democratic institutions and principles as well as found in many segmented societies. For example, the organizational principle of segmentary groups was to be seen in the two-party arrangement of U.S. politics, where the minority party out of power attempts to build itself up into the majority party (Benedict 1943c). The principles of segmentation and symmetrical behavior were applicable to American society in some organizational aspects, and more so in behavioral aspects, while at the same time other institutional arrangements were found in this society. Gregory Bateson's work on the symmetrical opposition of Iatmul, New Guinea, clans showed the power of this analytic device (Bateson 1936). Symmetrical relationships were not "ascendant," as Benedict expressed it, in any of the national cultures on which OWI sought information, except, as she later illustrated symmetrical relationships in a class in Social Organization, between competitive Italian villages. The Orokaiva of New Guinea had a phrase for themselves, "All men, they walk abreast," a quote she used in her class discussions, and this was a tenet of belief in the United States.[3] It described an opposite model from the complementary behavior in the strongly hierarchical societies she had to figure out for OWI.

The segmented society model was derived from the study of primitive society, and it was explanatory for the United States. No doubt Benedict enjoyed the parallel. Since the United States also employed hierarchical organization, the coexistence of segmented and hierarchical principles suggested an explanation for contradictory forces and resultant social problems. Knowledge of tribal society was clearly necessary for understanding modern America. She discussed more fully in class lectures than in print the "basic contradiction" in the United States's combination of symmetrical behavior with a significant presence of hierarchical organization. However, "democracy, with belief in equal rights for man, demands symmetrical behavior" (Social Organization 10/22 and 10/31/46).

## Observations on American Culture

Ruth Benedict's commentaries on American culture were brief and fragmentary and only partially published. She emphasized political organization, values, and behavior codes at this time, a shift from her earlier commentaries on

American society, which concerned problems such as discrimination against racial and minority groups and against deviants and broadside blame of groups such as youth. Her attention to American governing institutions and values came during and after World War II, when she shared in the heightened acceptance of governmental leadership at that time and the popular commitment to national purposes.

After the war, in "Growth of the Republic," Benedict wrote about American political ideals, their expression in early American social organization, indeed their origin in society, since in her view society was the generator of ideology more then the reverse. The ideas and data for the article were not the historical paradigm of the time. She turned away from Woodrow Wilson's widely adopted view that American political institutions were derived directly from England and from Charles Beard and Mary Beard's view that a commercial class determined American colonial social relations, and she put together a combination of ideas that have reemerged at present in American political historiography. It was written as the first chapter of a volume on the United States for an encyclopedia series to be called *Lands and Peoples*, planned by the publisher Grolier. The chapter was written in the summer of 1946 and was received enthusiastically by the Grolier editor, the anthropologist Carl Withers, who, under the pseudonym of James West, had published a study of an American community. Publication of the series was suspended the next February because of high costs of publishing at that time. Grolier's records do not show any later publication of the chapter. The chapter is about the origin of the American version of democracy and describes it as an indigenous political and cultural system that grew out of the conditions of American colonial society. It recounts the origin of egalitarian thought and habits and the conditions that made hierarchy unlikely in early America. It begins where her 1942 article, "Two Patterns of Indian Acculturation," leaves off, noting first characteristics of labor in North America, where the free tribes of Indians refused to work for colonizers and where the English settlers, having practiced yeomen culture in England, became freehold farmers in the North American colonies.

> Nowhere in all the colonies at the time of the Revolution were the people as a whole a subject class ruled by great landlords or commercial companies or unchecked representatives of the Crown. The people had acquired the habit of thinking of government, not as something beyond their sphere and the affair of lords and nobles, but as something homespun. Government was to them a committee they could appoint to carry out certain tasks. It was the people's concern and they could call to account those who overstepped their instructions. They enjoyed a greater habit of social equality and had

> a smaller gamut of extreme wealth and poverty than any civilized country in the world.
>
> Men and women of the thirteen colonies had the advantage, therefore, of a freedom from interference which they had won, not by fighting and killing their kings and masters, as European countries had repeatedly done, but in whole-hearted pursuit of their dangerous business of conquering a continent. Revolutions of the usual European type leave scars behind them, both of bitterness and of guilt, and those the colonists did not have. They had, too, great support in their religion. . . . There was seldom universal religious freedom, and still less equality for a free-thinker, but wars between the various sects were not even suggested. (u.p. 1946b:7, 8)

She described the strong role of legislative assemblies, an observation that accords with current political historiography. The source for this information could well have been Evarts Boutell Greene, *The Provincial Governor in the English Colonies of North America* ([1898] 1966), published shortly before she was a student at Vassar. Greene was on the faculty of the history department at Columbia during the 1920s, but his study was not a principal paradigm at that time, nor when Ruth Benedict wrote the essay, and it has only recently become prominent in American colonial history. Benedict also affirmed observations by Alexis de Tocqueville in *Democracy In America* (1835), a book she often cited in her writing. She described an early and broad-based formation of egalitarian institutions and habits as well as political institutions to check interference in localities from government, thus a culturally rooted egalitarian democracy. She showed it was an invention with much consistency, a political form that represented the social structure well.

An aspect of this social structure, the expectation of opportunity, was her subject in an earlier article, "Transmitting Our Democratic Heritage in Our Schools," in the *American Journal of Sociology* (1943):

> In contrast to European and South American nations, the United States from the first has had a tradition of liberty and opportunity, and despotic power has been at a minimum. It is true that there are marked divergences in current definitions of what democratic heritage we want to transmit, divergences which turn on whether the speaker is demanding liberty and opportunity for a special group to which he belongs or whether he is demanding these privileges for all Americans on the same terms. What is essential to all of them, however, is that they identify our way of life with adequate scope for personal achievement. All the definitions are drawn from experiences in our culture where initiative and independence are traits every man wants for himself. (1943b:725)

She added that although American culture expects initiative and independence in adulthood, in the structuring of childhood, children must accept parental authority and parental moral judgments. This discontinuous experience impedes learning of expected adult behaviors of independent action and ability to make moral judgments. This and other mentions of discontinuity between childhood and adulthood in the United States remained little enlarged. More developed in other writings is her commentary on American values: scope for personal achievement, liberty and opportunity, and a minimum of despotic power to thwart these privileges. Regarding American egalitarianism, however, she said in one of her courses, "Egalitarian societies have difficulties" (Personality and Culture 3/20/47). A few months after writing "Growth of the Republic," she wrote about American problems with egalitarianism:

> Our pattern of political democracy is a highly specialized and, let us admit, a highly parochial arrangement.
>
> First, and perhaps most important, our American democracy is based on an egalitarianism not derived from a statement in The Bill of Rights, but growing out of people's everyday relations with one another and finding frequent expression in such remarks as "I'm as good as he is" and "I have a right to everything he has." This attitude is inherent in our personal relationships in a way and to an extent found in no other part of the world. It is because we do truly believe in equality and because we equate it with democracy that we feel so deeply guilty about the discrepancy between the American dream and the actual organization of social life in the United States. (Benedict 1948d:1)

This article had been written in answer to a question posed to her, "Can cultural patterns be directed?" She answered that they can be directed in preliterate societies and also in totalitarian states, but to direct them in a democracy was difficult. She noted the absence from the United States of "responsible, long-continuing, local communities run by the whole community such as are found in Europe and the Far East" (Benedict 1948d:2). Thus the burden of advocacy in the United States rests on individuals and voluntary groups, and their commitments are often unstable. Schools are controlled by community boards and thus seldom contribute to change. American intolerance of cultural pluralism contributes to race prejudice, yet racial and ethnic minorities are also intolerant of pluralism and strive to be accepted as Americans. In this egalitarian democracy with a "discrepancy between the American dream and the actual organization," the main way to direct culture patterns "toward greater individual dignity, freedom, and

welfare" is "in procuring and enforcing federal and state laws designed to improve human relations" (Benedict 1948d:2). This is to be done through free elections and political lobbying. Free elections are another unique aspect of American democracy, along with egalitarianism. She cautioned elsewhere against expecting other societies to take up free elections, a practice and ideology that in American culture is historically embedded.

For an audience of foreign students at Columbia University and United Nations staff members, most of whom she probably assumed had grown up in hierarchical cultures, she explained aspects of American egalitarianism. In an address entitled "Patterns of American Culture," Benedict wrote that throughout Europe, minority communities sought to keep their own language and culture, but in the United States minorities want "to become American" or at least move closer to that goal with each generation. Established Americans expect this of minorities, and in minorities' own judgments of themselves and their children, they adhere to the characteristic American principle, being as good as the next person. Immigrants could be as good as the next person because American families moved away from parents and kin, leaving behind their models for teaching children and substituting measurement of children by school grades, physical growth, and family house and income: " 'Becoming American' has involved all this crudity of measuring individual gifts and achievements by an external standard. But we miss its meaning if we do not see it suffused with the hopes and ambitions of all the millions of people to whom this has been a way of proving, the only way they could measure it, that they 'belonged' " (u.p. 1948a:10).

She did not imply this worked smoothly. "Americans are indeed guilty of great sins against the dignity of minorities" (u.p. 1948a:10). Benedict was saying that a central idea in American culture encouraged the assimilation of large numbers of immigrants and was perceived by immigrants as a way to adjust to their new country. Her point about immigrants wanting to belong and become American was valid for most of the nationalities of the "new immigration" from Europe, that is, those arriving from the mid-nineteenth century to the 1924 imposition of national origin quotas, and these were some of the same ethnic groups who maintained closed communities when they were located among other nationalities in Europe. Thomas Archdeacon's research has shown evidence of few exceptions to permanent settlement among immigrant groups of this period, finding high rates of return only among Balkan groups, Greeks, and Chinese (1983:139). Benedict's point was less applicable to Chinese and Japanese immigrants of the same period and to many immigrant groups after the change in immigration policies in 1965,

among whom maintenance of home ties and continued practice of ethnic customs in the United States have been strong.

Her inattention, and that of her contemporaries, to the conflict-filled assimilation process – a subject in current ethnic and immigration studies – shows the specificity, and also a limitation, of her holistic framework. The conflicts in acculturation were not amenable to study in the holistic framework with which she saw most problems. However, Benedict's observation of an aspect of assimilation derived from a broader American attitude was original in immigration studies of the time, and it enlarged on her representations of egalitarian behavior.

Commenting on American social organization in the same lecture, she suggested an imprint of assimilation processes on the characteristics of voluntary associations:

> The American melting pot has had an influence upon another kind of characteristic behavior in the United States: the kind of political parties and fraternal organizations and the kind of churches we have here. . . . People with the most opposite opinions stay together in great organizations in the United States. . . . It is an odd way of organizing society. I think it can be fully understood only in terms of the great American drive toward assimilation in this country. People whose goal is to achieve membership in a nation do not stake everything on the particular way it shall be run. . . . People who are not quite sure they are accepted into membership do not split that club. They are content that it should be ideologically quite amorphous. (u.p. 1948a:6–8)

Benedict had reviewed *Secret Societies: A Cultural Study of Fraternalism in the U.S.*, by sociologist Noel P. Gist, and was much interested in its extensive data; however, Gist did not make the points that Benedict made in this speech (Gist 1940; u.p. 1940). Her observations on American society in this lecture illustrate several recurring aspects of her work: her large-scale focus and her locus of psychological interpretations not in childhood experiences but in institutional and motivational characteristics.

Benedict wrote little on American sexual mores and family life. As a young woman, she felt inspired by the lives and works of nineteenth-century feminists, and she looked upon women's disadvantages with the eyes of a feminist, but in late life she wrote that American women were privileged and failed to use their opportunities. When she was young, her journal entries often concerned women and feminism. For example, women's "goal could never be reached without . . . dress reform, . . . readjustment of conventional marriage and the abolition of the stigma on divorcees, the honest facing of

prostitution and illegitimacy, without economic compensation for women's childbearing. . . . But the ultimate objective, the high goal remains an inward affair, a matter of attitude" (in Mead 1959:146). Her illustrations of an "inward goal" were stated vaguely in various passages. After immersing herself in anthropology, she found a framework for her intellectual pursuit, a mission and professional and public recognition. At this time, she seldom wrote in her journal, having left behind her earlier preoccupation with her inner conflicts. In her later years, she turned blame for failure onto women themselves, taking the position that most American women lacked vision and determination to develop themselves and lead more constructive lives, that they did not recognize their advantages and opportunities and did not try to contribute to the public good. Benedict acknowledged American women's disadvantages but thought they had more avenues open to them than women in any other society. Feminist thought in the decades after she wrote these opinions would take a much different position, but in turn it has been critiqued by the new feminism.

Benedict gave a brief paper in a series on the topic the psychology of love before the New York Psychological Group, a study group sponsored by the National Council on Religion in Higher Education and made up of distinguished New York theologians and psychotherapists. Previous papers and discussions in their meetings had posited a realizable ideal of unity of sex and love, an ideal that Benedict proceeded to say overlooked the intervening influence of culture in shaping both sex and love: "Sex can be studied only as it has been edited in man's social life. . . . Social conditions may make sex hostile or friendly, an ego value or non-egotistical value. Sex in itself is a raw datum which can be worked up in the service of any dominant drive or attitude in the culture" (u.p. 1943a). She stressed the rarity in the world of an independent spousal family, such as found in American society, and its inherent fragility because of its dependence on spousal attachment. Its fragility was worsened in America by the lack of social reward for having children and the economic strain children put on the unit.

In addition to this address, Benedict wrote a related paper, an article on the family in America (1948b). In it she rebuked American middle-class women for taking no responsibility to do constructive work in their communities. American family customs, she wrote, provided more freedom than any society in the world. Free choice of spouse, freedom to choose place of residence, privacy in the spousal home, freedom to divorce, leisure, freedom from responsibility for the formal education of their children, unburdened by an authoritarian head of family: the privileges in the American family were extraordinary. Strains on the family were monetary ones, and severe in con-

trast to the economic support spousal families had within extended families in most of the rest of the world's societies, because Americans were unwilling to pay for public social welfare. While in most societies the consanguineal group had responsibility for the financial costs of raising children, this cost in America in most instances at that time fell on the father alone. Women had the burden of care of pre-school-age children, a burden usually resting solely on the mother because of the independence of the nuclear family from consanguineal kin. This demanding period was short, and when free of their child-rearing roles, most women did not assist in community projects or prepare themselves for useful roles after their child-rearing responsibilities eased. She acknowledged women's entry into the labor force during wartime, but she was concerned with influential public roles, not mere employment. Benedict made similar points in an article in the *Vassar Alumnae Magazine*, and there she enumerated roles women could play in bringing about more informed public opinion in their communities (1947b).

The ease and freedom of the American family did not lead to general happiness in marriage, however. Both husband and wife are likely to extend their freedom to the point of taking no responsibility for tolerance of the shortcomings of each other. This implies that tolerance is culturally structured instead of in individual disposition. Her argument extended beyond the methodology she could summon to problems of personal attachment between spouses, problems anthropology did not then engage, although such problems later came within the discipline's ken through the work of Naomi Quinn in particular. But Benedict's point is on the same order as her observation about the consequences of institutional disembedment of the spousal family. It explained fundamental cultural forces driving the dissolution of marriages. While not a herald of the feminism that would emerge in the 1950s, she directed her attention to an important cause of her period, the opening up of American minds to consciousness of cultural causes of behavior and thus to a critical view of their own culture.

To summarize Benedict's representations of U.S. culture: egalitarianism was authentic, rooted in the original social structure and in everyday habits expressed in the phrase, "I'm as good as he is." Immigrants have perceived that Americans believe in egalitarianism and have turned this attitude into their means of gaining acceptance, showing that by the way Americans measure themselves and their children, they measure up. Americans tend to overlook, and thus devalue, individual differences. Furthermore, the resistance to government, which went hand in hand with egalitarianism, promoted localism in attitudes and slowed down pressures for social betterment. Free elections and political pressure tactics were one way out of this stalemate. Participation

in organized groups by peoples from many cultural backgrounds brought about ideological amorphousness. This strange American culture was advantageous to immigrants and to bringing cultural unity to a population derived from diverse cultural origins. Seeing the readiness to assimilate among immigrants convinced Americans that other nations wanted to emulate these political institutions. Americans have to know that most of the rest of the world has entirely different political systems, and most are workable as well as deeply rooted. As for the family in America, it was so disembedded from other social groups and expected so few obligations among its members that it contributed little social cohesion. Although patterned on the individualism of America, it often gave little personal satisfaction.

## The Research in Contemporary Cultures Project

In the summer of 1946 Ruth Benedict was asked by the Office of Naval Research (ONR) to present a plan for basic research in human behavior in countries to be chosen by the research project and which would be important in postwar reconstruction. She announced at a party one summer evening the $90,000 in prospect, with another year's funding probable, startling colleagues used to decades of parsimonious research, and she asked them what they would do with this grand opportunity. Mead had dreamed during the early years of the war of a large project on national cultures. Benedict delivered the money and supported Mead in launching some of her earlier ideas, but Benedict played a major role in choosing personnel, defining the character of the large project, explaining and defending it, and, most important, keeping her own research agenda, as she had been defining it for several years, central to the choice of cultures to be studied. She alone wrote the applications and reports to ONR. She wrote the requested application and submitted it in July 1946, and it was approved in principle in October, but the process of submission through Columbia's Office of Government Funded Research delayed the beginning date to April 1, 1947. Office space was not available at Columbia and was found in the remote Yorkville office of the city Department of Health, which became interested in the proposed research among the European enclaves in the Yorkville area. The Research in Contemporary Cultures (RCC) project was housed there for a year and a half and then moved to lower cost space to a condemned, and otherwise unoccupied, midtown building owned by Columbia. A room large enough for all project researchers to gather for biweekly seminars was loaned by the Viking Fund, the precursor of the Wenner Gren Foundation, and an office for a senior researcher on France was loaned in the French embassy.

The research plan was worked out by Ruth Benedict, Margaret Mead, and Ruth Bunzel. Study of five cultures – Russia, Czechoslovakia, France, Eastern European Jews, and China – was undertaken. Benedict and Mead explained the choice of cultures in the group seminars: Russia was little known, one could not get admitted for research there, and the wartime method of study at a distance was the only one available; "As for Czechs, I [Ruth Benedict] wanted one more East European country for points of contrast"; then Mead speaking:

> They [Czechs] are a link between East and West. France was picked because we know extraordinarily little about it. . . . France is the key country in terms of international communication and relations in the world. . . . The choice of Jewish culture is obvious. We have Jewish people here from every country in the world and they make wonderful informants. They like to talk. China we know little about. . . . It is important as a non-European culture. Of the three Asiatic cultures, China, Japan, and India, the Chinese are the most accessible in this country. (General Seminar, May 26, 1948, MM G13)

In the second year, research on Czechoslovakia was much reduced because two RCC researchers had obtained other funding for fieldwork there; the research on France was scaled down, and the study of Syrian culture was added. Syria was chosen for the opportunity to study relations between Christians, Muslims, and Jews. A research group for each culture was formed, and some members participated in two area groups. All the conveners of groups were anthropologists. All except the Eastern European Jewish group included a psychologist or psychiatrist. Sociologists worked on the Chinese, Jewish, and Czech groups. Except in the French group, one or more of the researchers were also members of the culture studied. Mead observed in connection with group membership: "We have had to grapple with the question of making it meaningful to members of the culture. That has been reasonably well done. It is dangerous to have a meeting at all without having a member of the group culture in it" (General Seminar, May 26, 1948, MM G13). Several graduate students worked in each group, including myself in the Chinese group (for a description of the project, see Caffrey 1989:ch.14; Mead 1949b).

The closest model for the organization of RCC was Benedict's national culture research for OWI. Mead had not done national culture research in her work for the government (Mabee 1987). The closest her work came to this subject was her book on the United States, *And Keep Your Powder Dry* (1942). Geoffrey Gorer, who worked with the RCC project on Russia and France, had written brief studies on Japanese and Burmese national character for OWI,

and he was a valuable contributor to discussions of methodology in the RCC General Seminar, but he did not participate in the planning. The earlier Yale seminar of foreign fellows to study the impact of culture on personality in 1932–33 posed questions of personality and national culture, but unlike RCC, it stressed teaching, and no research reports or publications derived from it. It was not taken as a model for RCC, nor did the two projects resemble each other (cf. Darnell 1990:343). Copies of the planning papers for the Yale seminar had been requested in 1942 by L. K. Frank when he, Mead, and Gregory Bateson were speculating about how to design a project on national cultures, and the records remain archived in Mead's papers. A reprint of a later article by a former Yale seminar student, Bingham Dai, on Chinese personality (1941) was included in the RCC manual of source materials that was drawn up for all researchers to read, but there was no other inclusion in the manual of material related to the Yale seminar. Benedict was not the only one who had developed methodology for this field, but she alone produced substantial model studies. Benedict's OWI work was her model for her own work on RCC, but Mead, Bunzel, Gorer, and Conrad Arensberg, as leaders of different national culture groups, developed their own distinctive approaches. That Benedict's own work on RCC was a continuation and comparison to her OWI papers became clear at several points and particularly in her plan for the book she expected to write in the second year. She recommended, however, that each research group develop its own approach to the study of national character.

RCC closely focused on the interpretation of each national culture. The members of the culture who were in each study group were key informants for the group leaders and played an important part in group discussions. Group members interviewed many other informants, studied materials in other contexts, and brought their interpretations and data to group discussions. All the researchers were expected to become conversant with the participating disciplines by reading a collection of articles that used different methods of analysis of culture and of personality. Reprints of these were put together with loose-leaf rings into a massive, two-volume manual. Most of the selections for the manual were from writings of the project researchers. Many of the researchers were given guidance in administering the Thematic Apperception Test. Interviews, a principal source of materials, were typed in five copies by the interviewer and distributed to all group members for discussion in the weekly group meetings. Topical papers written by the native-born members of the culture were studied. Films made by members of the cultures studied were viewed by some of the researchers, traditional arts were studied by some

specialists, and a collection of photographs of Soviet crèches was obtained from the Soviet consulate for study.

As projector director, Benedict attended to many time-consuming administrative details. Her own research plan was specific, and she pursued it along with her participation in the Czech group, a culture she wanted to compare with Romania and Poland in particular, all straddling the culture-area boundary between Europe and Asia, which was a comparison she had set for herself. The Administrative General Correspondence file of RCC reads tragically like a countdown to her fatal heart attack in September 1948. In the preceding year of bringing the project into being and getting it under way and the year of its full momentum, she also taught a full course load for three of the four semesters, wrote "Growth of the Republic," gave her "Anthropology and the Humanities" address as the retiring president of the American Anthropological Association (AAA), gave the talk on becoming American, delivered the speech at Yale Law School quoted in chapter 1, and delivered the paper "Child Rearing in Certain European Cultures" to the American Society for Orthopsychiatry. While RCC had an administrative officer, Ruth Valentine, and an efficient secretary, Benedict attended to many details. She had much correspondence about recruiting project personnel and about helping the members in various ways. Two letters attempted unsuccessfully to get ship passage from England for Gorer, who did not like to fly. She wrote organizations involved in bringing displaced persons into this country asking permission for RCC researchers to interview persons of nationalities under study, wrote schools asking permission for a researcher to give projective tests to children of these national origins, wrote letters of introduction for researchers seeking informants, and wrote for stack privileges at Columbia University libraries for project workers. Several letters to the Immigration and Naturalization Service explained the employment on the project of persons whose immigration status was under surveillance. There were letters of recommendation of project personnel applying for other jobs or grants; letters explaining the project to organizations that wanted to publicize it; two formal letters to Claude Levi-Strauss, then cultural counselor for the French embassy, asking for office space for two members of the French group and access to the embassy library; and a letter to Paul Fejos, the director of the Viking Fund, thanking him for use of the Viking Fund auditorium and asking for one additional meeting there. Benedict typed many of these letters herself; others were typed by the anthropology department secretary, who was close at hand, and others by the RCC secretary across town in Yorkville. The RCC secretary dealt with seemingly endless details, such as incorrect time sheets submitted by consultants. By the end of the first year, peak spending necessi-

tated belt tightening, and Benedict had to write letters reducing persons' pay scale or the amount of time for which a researcher could be paid (MM G2).

The original title, "A Cultural Study of American Minorities of Foreign Origin," was used in the project proposal, in the application, and in the contract (MM G6). In all these documents, the study of minority cultures and study of foreign cultures are given equal weight, and the first progress report stated that investigations have been in "two fields: fieldwork among foreign-background communities in the U.S., and work with nationals from those same countries who have more recently come from their home countries" (RB, Status Report to ONR, September 1947, MM G6). The emphasis Benedict gave to minority issues is apparent in her brief statement about the project written for an ONR handbook, that its purpose was "to throw light on the process of adjustment and acculturation, . . . and it is hoped that national habits of thought and action may be made increasingly intelligible" (MM G6). She may have been acceding to ONR preferences for wording or for subject matter; ONR had expressed interest in research on the occupational adaptability of foreign-born persons in naval shipyard employment. A quite different reason for emphasizing American national groups was that Benedict sought to avoid public scrutiny of government-sponsored study of strategic cultures by emphasizing attention to American foreign-background groups. She wrote this opinion to Geoffrey Gorer in a letter urging him to be a participant: "Because of these strange auspices [ONR] I worded my project as a study of groups of foreign origin in the U.S. . . . It won't change what we actually do on the project, but it provides a 'security' I couldn't get in any other way" (RB to GG, October 21, 1946, MM G38). Gorer was little interested in American minority cultures and was interested in national cultures, and she again reassured him that his assignment would be what he wanted, writing that other persons were at work on "the old regime and acculturation. . . . The real problems of today will be your dish" (RB to GG, July 4, 1947, MM G38). Conrad Arensberg was brought in because of his interest in immigrant communities and his experience on the Newburyport study, which had been part of Lloyd Warner's Yankee City research and had concerned Irish Americans in an urban population. Shepard Schwartz, an advanced graduate student in sociology at New York University, was brought on the project for his experience in studying New York City's Chinatown.

The work began with ethnic censuses and drawing a map of ethnic concentrations in New York City. It was soon found that among the many Soviet groups identified as Russian in New York City censuses, few were actually Great Russian, and among persons identified as Czechoslovakian, the majority were Slovaks. Among the French, no interactive community appeared

to be present. A highly localized area of South China was the place of origin of most of the population in Chinatown. Families from that region had been sending their male members to the United States for three generations, and most chose to orient themselves to the segregated, and self-segregating, urban enclaves for protection from American hostility until they could retire to China to be succeeded by other persons from the same areas. These situations complicated the identification of informants and were recognized as influences on informants' representations of their old culture, thus adding complex dimensions to the interview data. As the project proceeded, discussions of the work and methods frequently concerned the realization that the differences between immigrant cultures and foreign cultures posed more of a problem than anticipated. Foreign cultures were probably of greater interest to Benedict, but she also thought, from her OWI experience, that immigrant groups could accurately report on their culture of origin, a point on which Gorer and a few others raised doubt. This issue, and at greater length the problems of inventing new methodology, was discussed in the general seminars throughout the first year, and the minutes of those seminars provide a rare record of a group facing challenges of an unexplored field.

The double assignment of minority cultures and foreign cultures was not the only complicating factor for RCC. The interdisciplinary composition of the group was another complex dimension, and some members observed that the cultural diversity of the group, while a great asset, reduced the common knowledge among researchers and increased uncertainty in communication. Discussions of methodology brought common ground to this diverse group. The huge training manual of reprints of articles that might be models for the project divided them by category of the method they illustrated – the culture area approach, the family relations approach, the method of the open interview, and the use of projective tests – and a seminar was devoted to discussion of each of these methods. The first method discussed was the comparison of culture areas. Many of the researchers had no anthropological training, and the points made were basic. Mead commented: "The size of the area you use is a matter of convenience. . . . The areas are not fixed. . . . One can use something very small or something very large – anything that will illuminate the problem." In the discussion of the family relations approach, psychologist Otto Klineberg raised the question of individual variation, to which Ruth Benedict responded: "It is important to state what the range is. In Holland the kind of authority the father has is either kindly or strict – either is possible in the Dutch home. The range could be described by the fact that there is great leniency in [the role of] the father – different in different classes, etc. There is an entirely different range in France." Klineberg, who attended

the early general seminars but did not participate in research in an area group, also questioned variation in pattern and Benedict replied: "Rule out the individual differences and press the dynamics of pattern. The pattern for peasants is established clearly for Bavarian peasants. Among [Bavarian] businessmen there is greater variation" (General Seminar, October 2, 1947, MM G13). Klineberg came back to the issue of sampling in the Viking Fund Conference on Personality and Culture, held a few weeks later, in his discussion of *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword*. Benedict and other RCC researchers participated in the conference's recorded discussion, but there she took up issues other than sampling (see chapter 7; Sargent and Smith 1949). Milton Singer, who did not participate in this conference or in RCC, later discussed the issue, writing that because "cultural character" attributes personality types to cultural wholes and not to individuals, statistical sampling is not called for.[4] In the seminar on the informant and the open interview, Mead advised, "Assume ignorance about the culture, like in a primitive culture. You must surrender to the material and not have preconceived notions." In this discussion, Geoffrey Gorer observed: "Except on a high level of abstraction, we do not know what to find out. . . . My technique is to ask people to help me. Spontaneous comments are very useful. . . . Opinions are least useful" (General Seminar, October 16, 1947, MM G13). Besides training the diverse group, these discussions brought much sense of common knowledge and helped clarify the common endeavor. Mead and Benedict gave simple expression for difficult ideas, unlike Mead's later, more complex discussions of national character research (1953).

The work on methodology was one of the accomplishments described when application for a second year's contract came due in December 1947. Benedict wrote the application, and she recorded the accomplishments of the first nine months. Regarding methodology:

> No standards existed for the best combination of interviewing, analysis of literature, films and other forms of communication, nor for the ways in which such methods could be supplemented by the use of projective tests. The optimum methods of training workers who had not been subjected to the normal anthropological apprenticeship in some primitive culture were also unknown. The advantages and disadvantages of using individuals who had themselves been subjected to one or more drastic culture contact shifts were unexplored. A great deal of our effort has gone into explanations along these lines. (Application for Renewal, MM G6)

Another accomplishment cited in this application authored by Benedict was "the systematic use in the development of methodology [of] the very

great differences in the ways these 5 groups are constituted in the United States." Examples followed, and a few excerpts from them show the group's awareness of the large canvas it was working with:

> In many ways the study of Chinatown approximates ethnological field conditions. At the same time the abnormality of the Chinese migration pattern is such as to present sharp and easily discriminable differences from the rest of Chinese culture. . . . They [the French] constitute no group of migrants and have no community in New York. Like the Chinese, however, they expect on the whole, to return to their native country and hence live in the United States as strangers. . . . The drastic changes which have occurred within the Soviet Union since 1917 make it necessary to develop methods of integrating present data on behavior and social practice in the USSR with pre-Soviet cultural data, e.g., . . . the way in which the shift in the attitude toward children from rather conspicuously low evaluation to socially high evaluation has been accomplished, relationship between the old attitudes toward group living and new standards of collective living. . . . The Czech group provides a case of balanced migration of a group of people who expect to become Americans and whose attitudes, willingness to cooperate and communicate, rate of assumption of American culture, etc., are all functions of their expectations of remaining in the United States. . . . In the study of the Jewish culture, an entirely new problem is presented. European Jewish groups are bi-cultural, and in many cases, tri-cultural. They form perhaps one of our richest sources of data on the various European cultures . . . where they have lived. . . . By carefully delineating those aspects of their culture which have been preserved as part of their Jewish tradition, we are not only obtaining data on this aspect of Jewish culture but also laying the groundwork for using these highly articulate informants on regional cultures in which they have participated. (Application for Renewal, MM G6)

The regional variation among Chinese, the rapid changes during the Soviet period, and the biculturalism of Eastern European Jews were features that, carefully handled, gave useful perspectives. Subregional practices of Chinese were not mistaken for national patterns, and the basic aspects of arrangements were carefully distinguished from local variants.

Benedict's application for renewal, written in December 1947, has a section entitled "National Character," a term not featured in previous documents prepared for ONR. The section warns several times that the themes being constructed are "exceedingly basic," and then she goes on to anticipate project findings:

> Within each of the 5 priority cultures a groundwork has been laid for the development of central hypotheses about national character; these can then be refined and corrected by region, occupation, class, sex, and age groups and by period. . . . While each of the cultures involved is highly complex, and full understanding would involve many years of detailed regional and subregional studies, experience shows that all subsequent work on particular phases is made much easier and more fruitful by this preliminary delineation of basic themes.
>
> Examples of specific problems on which the Project will be able to present material after such basic analyses have been carried through are: what is the optimum form of intercommunication between the given nationality group and another specified nationality group; granted a given age, class, and regional distribution, what order of adjustment will a given nationality group be expected to make under specific circumstances within a given occupation in the United States, what difficulties in learning new skills or facing specified types of situations of challenge, danger or strain. (Application for Renewal, MM G6)

Benedict reported "the preliminary isolation [of several] exceedingly basic themes such as those associated with ideas of personal freedom, the nature of authority, and concepts of duty and obligation." The first two themes had been briefly touched on in the second status report written a few days before this application for renewal: "In Russia it is necessary to document the extent to which violence is seen as a way of bringing order out of disorder. Even in personal life it figures as a move toward equilibrium rather than a move which disturbs a steady state. In Czechoslovakia it is necessary to document the way in which an individual guards his privacy as a way of dealing with authoritarian demands; this reliance on privacy is in great contrast to Russia" (Status Report, December 12, 1947, MM G6). These points arose from research materials and were discussed in the area group meetings, and transcripts of these materials are in the RCC files. In this application, she used the investigations of the relationship between the parent and adult child to enlarge on duty and obligation:

> Within our priority cultures the obligation of the grown child to his parents is either phrased as a necessary duty, reciprocal to the earlier care of the child by his parents, or it is rejected – as in Jewish culture – and any such support if it becomes necessary is humiliating to the parents. Such patterning of obligations can be investigated in the most contrasting institutional arrangements, whether in details of ancestor worship or in the in-take policies of Old Peoples Homes, or in child-placing agencies. It is expressed

in traditional threats of nurses, grandparents and child nurses, and in the sanctions used in contemporary schools. (Application for Renewal, MM G6)

These observations are indeed preliminary and basic, fragments of political relations along with familial and pseudofamilial relations. The research was minimally guided by the sponsor's specifications or by preconceived outcomes.

Many other concerns came up again at the last seminar of the year, a meeting Mead introduced as a "summary overhauling of the year." The cultural diversity of the RCC researchers posed a problem for some of them who thought the American culture to which their informants were adjusting was too vaguely defined in discussions because of the paucity of persons who could speak of it from their own upbringing. Add to this the problem of understanding informants who vacillated between speaking from their culture of birth and from American culture. Regarding the diversity of disciplines of the project personnel and coordinating them, Mead said: "We had the problem of combining people with therapeutic skills and people with research skills. . . . the anthropologist's duty is to observe, not alter. The clinicians have had to submit to discipline that has, at times, been odious" (General Seminar, May 26, 1948, MM G6). Mead wanted clinicians to take a didactic role only, but Benedict in wartime had thought to employ clinicians' therapeutic insights. She had written a memo while in OWI addressed to psychiatrists, saying that although Japanese extreme sensitivity to insults and to humiliation was normal in their culture, though sometimes pathological in American culture, "proved psychiatric techniques" should be suggested to help alter these personality characteristics through propaganda messages. In this way the Japanese could more readily accept surrender and defeat, seeing these events as results of their government's militarism and not brought about by their behavioral codes. Her purpose could have been to correct the OWI consulting psychiatrists' damaging pronouncements that Japanese culture itself was psychotic. But it is a striking idea, that if therapy could alter personality, information might be able to alter national character at points of international friction. The record does not show whether therapists supplied the advice on transformative insight or whether she did, but a propaganda message attempting this persuasion was employed. The messages that Japanese militarists had altered the old Samurai code, that suicide was a matter of an individual's deliberate choice instead of an obligation, was an attempt to ease troop surrenders (u.p. 1944c). However, Mead in peacetime quite judiciously restricted the clinician's role on RCC to an explanatory one.

The "summary overhauling of the year" continued with Mead's remarks

on the broad canvas chosen: "The first time we planned this project in 1943, we tried to estimate what would be the increased speed in working with several cultures.[5] It is interesting that it speeds up work. The more cultures that we had that could be controlled by any members of the group, the faster the material would go. . . . A great many people know the material on two or three groups, but nobody knows it all, so we are not actually getting the speed we could." Mead spoke of the problem of objectivity: "The clinical anthropologist is a moving instrument. You change and change and gradually you build up your knowledge. I have tried photography to overcome this. I didn't succeed entirely. I still seem to come out with things that illustrate my conceptual frame." Another query on method: the six weeks spent on the father-son relationship, Mead said, "dragged because we knew little about father-son" (General Seminar, May 26, 1948, MM G6). What probably disappointed Mead was that few fathers and sons could be found to be observed in these oddly composed immigrant groups, and the reports had concerned the cultural ideas of the son or daughter relationship to parents and informants' comments on them. This material was up Benedict's alley, if not Mead's, and the previous December Benedict had used the comparisons of adult son and daughter relations to parents to good advantage in the application for renewal of funds. If the results on fathers and sons were disappointing to Mead, she liked a seminar on the concept and behavior codes of strangers in the various cultures and one session comparing different modes and causes of quarreling. Many other RCC researchers were enthusiastic about the comparison of the concept of the stranger, and when publication plans were discussed in the same seminar, an article on strangers was among them, although none was published. "We still, as a project, haven't got a frame of reference. I don't know if there's a single abstraction that everybody in this room could use. . . . I doubt if we could include so many people, if we had one set of abstractions and classificatory methods," Mead said (General Seminar, May 26, 1948, MM G6). Including so many people was the implied priority. These self-criticisms tell a lot about the innovativeness and experimental nature of the project.

A close look at the development of focus and method in one of the research groups will give insight into the project. I draw on the experiences of the Chinese group, which are well described in Ruth Bunzel's final paper on the main findings and which I observed as a member of the group (see also Gacs et al. 1988; Bunzel and Wagley 1983). The original problems of the Chinese group, Bunzel wrote, were:

> 1) to investigate the Chinese background of Chinese immigrants in this country with a view to gaining a deeper understanding of their behavior

> patterns, and their special mode of adaptation to American culture; 2) to use the insights so gained for formulating hypotheses about Chinese culture in general; 3) to train anthropologists in research methods and develop adequate background for fieldwork in China; 4) to provide clinical psychologists and psychiatrists with the opportunity to try out their techniques in a non-European culture. (1950:1)

As the research proceeded, the political situation in China – the last stages of the civil war and the Communist seizure of power – precluded fieldwork as a next endeavor for any group member. The group had to shift its emphasis to "the development and testing of hypotheses about China, and the use of a different type of informant" (Bunzel 1950:5), because the rural Kwangtung population in New York included few China-born women and few families in which the parents had been born and educated in China, thus precluding field study of families. Child-rearing methods and family life could be studied only by interviews with students who were here, most of whom came from central and northern China, and through interviewing professional persons here who had had contact with Chinese peasant women. Three Chinese women in the group, Hu Hsien-Chin, Liu Ching-Ho, and Elsie Lee, proved to be the principal informants, interviewed by Ruth Bunzel, particularly, and consulted in the weekly group meetings. Bunzel found that the Chinese men she tried to engage in extensive interviewing lost interest after a few weeks and thought the work "frivolous," while interviewing the three Chinese women was her main source of insights. Since the experience of these informants and most other female informants was in central and northern China and the Chinatown fieldwork and interviewing were also significant, the group was concerned about working with geographically scattered representations of Chinese culture yet found that while informants invariably cautioned that their family was not typical and that they could not generalize about Chinese customs, they would eventually "feel impelled to defend the Chinese way of life, to declare identification with Chinese culture, and to express the resentment of the Chinese against attempts to impose alien patterns on China" (Bunzel 1950:5). The group was attentive to the vast differences in the way of life in regions of China and the frequent Chinese stereotyping of characteristics of persons from different regions; however:

> None of these individual or regional deviations has anything to do with what the Chinese regard as "Chinese culture." Nor do Chinese regard "Chinese culture" as the Confucian classics, the Sung poets, and the Shang bronzes. It is an integrated way of life, a coherent system for ordering of the inner and outer person, which is reflected to a greater or less degree in

> the lives of individuals, but which is independent of the world of phenomena. . . . It is with the "ways of feeling" that make a person "very Chinese" that the body of this report will deal. (Bunzel 1950:7–8)

That topic remains scarcely touched upon in later anthropological studies of China. The report was never published, perhaps because Bunzel thought she had not fully achieved her goal and also because of the climate of criticism of national culture studies at that time, yet it remains a far-reaching and insightful paper. Bunzel's phrasing of her objective in this introduction to the paper is a good definition of RCC objectives, to describe the ways of feeling that make a person identified with his or her culture. This definition uses the observations of clinical psychologists without postulating or attempting to define basic personality. It is an anthropological phrasing about an aspect of person and culture.

The attempt to work with the two fields of cross-cultural comparison and acculturation brought about innovative findings on an aspect of Chinese culture. In none of Benedict's wartime studies was the situation of culture members who lived in the United States of interest to OWI or was it investigated. With sights set on the culture of Japan, she did not give attention to Japanese Americans' problems from racial discrimination and from legal obstacles to their communities. She had, however, spoken up as a citizen to protest the announcement of the plan to intern Japanese Americans when they were removed from the West Coast (letter to the editor of the *New York Times*, March 6, 1942).[6] Benedict later interviewed Japanese Americans who had been interned in relocation camps and had been released for government intelligence jobs in Washington, D.C., but she did no interviewing in the camps themselves, which were located throughout the mountain states and in Arkansas (Suzuki 1980). Although her comments in the acknowledgments in *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword* on working with Japanese American informants show her sympathy with their situation, neither that research nor any of the RCC groups were concerned with problems of acculturation. However, the acculturation process did give insight into Chinese gender relations and helped confirm a culture pattern seen in other materials.

The data on gender came from many traditional and acculturational materials, from Chinese novels and folk tales, from interviewing on family life in China and on adjustments of men and women abroad, from comparison of Thematic Apperception Tests and Rorschach tests on China-born and American-born subjects, and from conversations with psychiatric social workers who had worked in New York City's Chinatown. In the configuration that the Chinese group formulated, women in some fantasized guises

were thought to be dangerous to men in sexual relations. Cultural emphasis on a son's responsibility for continuation of the patrilineal family provided safe arranged marriages, but attraction to other erotic experience exposed men to fantasies of weakness and death. Women's cultural obligations were lighter, in the sense that they did not continue their own kinship line, and sexual relations were not thought to be dangerous to them. There was no thematic material indicating anxiety in women on this score. Girls usually experienced a less demanding and more emotionally secure late childhood and adolescence than boys, except when extreme poverty prevailed. It was found also that women dealt with acculturation difficulties more actively and with less trauma than men. This configuration was worked out in the interchange among those from several disciplines in group discussions as well as in numerous specialized papers. Bunzel presented the ideas in her final paper for the project (1950).

Methodologically, this work on gender in Chinese culture showed, in addition to the cross-fertilization of disciplines, the perspective that could be gained from acculturated persons on a central issue in the culture of origin and thus the feasibility of the project design. The Chinese area group confronted a more complex immigration history and acculturation process than the other area groups did, and with the immense assignment of discerning the basic home cultural patterns, the group did little work on the culture contact situation. In hindsight, the holism of Benedict's and Mead's concepts probably was a deterrent to formulating the problems in acculturation. The RCC specialist in American immigrant groups, Conrad Arensberg, also was interested in holistic problems, as became clear in his article "American Communities" (1955), which developed a typology of European-derived communities in America. The aspect of culture contact situations that holism did not illuminate was the conflict of cultures. Furthermore, a culture-learning approach also was problematic in many acculturation issues, among them the study of generational differences and generational conflict in immigrant families. While Benedict herself had used the term "bicultural" in the report to ONR quoted above, which may have been the first use of that term, problems of bicultural learning were not a subject of inquiry at that time. Bicultural learning is more complex than learning in uncontested cultures (Young 1974). Nor did holism have a framework for the growth of consciousness of American Chinese identity. This sense of identity, which was definable through the literary work of American Chinese, drew strength from resentment against American discrimination and was widely shared in many sectors of the American Chinese population; however, it was not broad enough to be a basis for social cohesion and could not be called a subculture

but had shared form and meaning. These problems were beyond the scope of RCC. My own dissertation took the assumption of the project, that the home culture is maintained in many respects by the community abroad, and I saw Chinatown organizational concepts and procedures principally as forms of Chinese culture. The conflict of American and Chinese societies was discussed merely as background for the Chinatown community proceeding according to Chinese rules in enclaves insulated from effective American assimilationist influence. This was part of the story, but it lacked a basis for showing the effects of culture conflict on Chinese practices. It appears that holism, so basic to the patterns approach and to much of anthropology, may be a hindrance to study of culture conflict and assimilation to a new culture. But that the RCC Chinese group could draw insight into gender factors in national character from acculturation was a methodological achievement.

The interdisciplinary composition of RCC was not what students in Benedict's courses would have expected, because there she criticized the fields of psychoanalysis and genetic psychology. The design of RCC showed that Benedict was open to seeing what these fields could offer, however skeptical she was. The psychoanalysts and psychologists on RCC had experience in cross-cultural work. Benedict brought several of these persons on the project herself, for instance, Warner Muensterberger, a psychiatrist and anthropologist, and Elizabeth Hellersberger, a clinical psychologist who worked from visual and design materials. Other suggestions of personnel may have been Mead's and Bunzel's, but information is scant. Geoffrey Gorer, who made much use of psychoanalytic explanation, appears to have been brought on the project by Mead, and he and Mead worked closely together, being co-conveners of the Russian and French groups. Benedict had differed with Gorer on Japan – he attributed to the Japanese a compulsive character structure, a view Benedict criticized – and although Mead seems to have thought light of this difference when she later wrote that Benedict should nevertheless have acknowledged his influence on her own analysis of Japan, there is no indication in the administrative and correspondence files that Benedict disagreed about bringing Gorer on RCC. Benedict also encouraged a loose working relationship that was expected to allow members of different disciplines on RCC to publish separately; for example, she wrote Nathan Leites, a political scientist, and Martha Wolfenstein, a clinical psychologist, "One of the objectives of the Project is to make it possible for good people to get books written, which can then be published under their own names and if desirable without particular reference to the Project" (RB to NL and MW, May 30, 1947, MM G2).

Of the many articles and several books published from RCC research, an article and book by Gorer, in which a genetic psychological determinism

was employed, were attacked, and justifiably so, much to the discredit of the project. Gorer's writings on Russian culture (1949; Gorer and Rickman 1949) stressed infant swaddling as a conditioner of Russian infant and adult motor habits and emotional reactions to authority. Criticism came from anthropologists and from the New York Trotskyite press. Data gathered by the RCC Russian group on swaddling was carefully considered and was specific as to places and groups where swaddling was practiced, methods of swaddling, and other child-care practices, but Gorer's suppositions about the effects of swaddling are overly rigid and considered causal of behavior to which other experiences and attitudes would have contributed. He saw parallels to the emotions of swaddling in other experiences in Russian culture, but these are vaguely described, barely related, and few in number. He gave no attention to a tenet of RCC, one that Mead particularly stressed, that culture should be explained in ways acceptable to members of the culture.

Mead defended Gorer's article and book, referring to the political basis of some of the criticism and spelling out in her own terms of explanation the way child training communicated culture (1953, 1954). Her explanation was far superior to Gorer's, but she wrote as though enlarging on his point and did not criticize his presentation. In her book *Soviet Attitudes toward Authority* (1951), Mead did not mention swaddling, but she described the characteristics Gorer derived from the swaddling experience and identified them as part of traditional Russian character structure, and she described that character structure in images most Russians would be unlikely to find offensive. Moreover her description, although brief, foreshadows the discerning field based explanations of Caroline Humphrey (2001). While Humphrey appears to be unaware of the earlier work, the similarity suggests the potential value in RCC papers for problems of national culture that have again come to the forefront.

The single paper Benedict wrote based on RCC group research, "Child Rearing in Certain European Cultures" (1949), showed her different use of the research materials on swaddling from Gorer's. She compared swaddling in Russia, Poland, Italy, Eastern European Jewish culture, and American Indian groups and showed that swaddling in each culture was carried out with some of the attitudes and behavior assumptions of the culture and communicated the culture to the child. This paper was written after Gorer's interpretation of swaddling was presented in RCC discussions and was clearly intended as an alternative interpretation. The good work on this issue by both Mead and Benedict should have confined criticism to Gorer's publications alone, but criticism continued that national character was explained entirely by child-training practices, for example, the criticism by Eric Wolf cited earlier.

Persons more knowledgeable about the field of culture and personality recognized that child-training practices were not taken to be causal but were parts of a configuration, and that the configuration was principally sets of values and behavior and not a national personality type (Singer 1961:45–49; Du Bois 1960:xviii).

Benedict's own research plans on RCC did not include any projected use of psychoanalytic or psychological materials. Of course, such materials were yet to be accomplished, and she might have borrowed from them. However, she began RCC looking for other kinds of materials, those she needed for enlarging a comparison she had already constructed. There is much continuity between her RCC researches and her description of the book she planned to write that year and her OWI writings and earlier articles. In fact, the book she planned was to be a culmination of all this work. In RCC, Benedict began with comparative social organization, looking into topics similar to those she discussed in her 1943 article "Recognition of Cultural Diversities in the Post-War World" and topics that had proved to be key points in her OWI reports. During the first months of RCC, she corresponded with consultants trying to locate accounts of certain aspects of social organization and giving guidance on the kinds of material she wanted from them. Benedict wanted information on European labor unions, including the dispute settlement methods and their place in the social structure, and she wanted "a literary work in Yiddish which contains good descriptions of a Jewish community in a small village" (RB to A. Sturmthal, July 17, 1947; M. Zborowski to RB, September 2, 1947; both in MM G6). From a student of the French novel, she wanted portrayals of "the character, position, and intersections of the village priest. Or it might be the notary, or the school teacher. . . . Different pictures by region may appear, or perhaps a French pattern of portrayal of these characters. Quotes would be valuable" (RB to H. Garrett, July 23, 1947, MM G6). She corresponded with a staff member of the Hoover Institution Library seeking an account of the village *mir* in Russia, but she wrote that the data sent "is too meager and too out of context"; after several descriptions of what she hoped for, "It is always possible that something may be a gold mine, but so far that hasn't happened" (RB to D. Tomasic, September 16, December 22, 1947, MM G6). These topics had all been keys to Benedict's European culture analyses: Dutch labor unions, although touted, were little more than benevolent societies since only one-third of them had collective bargaining rights and they were dominated by the Catholic or Protestant churches. They were not manifestations of local organizational patterns. The local priest, notary, and schoolteachers in Romania, as well as the police, innkeeper, and army recruiter, were offices of

the state and did not have the allegiance of villagers or relate the village to larger society. She was interested in a contrast of local-level political organizations.

That same summer Benedict received a request from Grayson Kirk, chairman of the Columbia University Department of Public Law and Government, to write a book on, as her letter phrased it, "what anthropology contributes to the study of international relations," to be addressed to the regional institutes that were then training grounds for international relations; "and I can see no particular conflict in the case of the book I am considering between what could be written for the regional schools and for the general reader." She explained to Kirk the work she had done for OWI and not yet published and her plan to meet his proposal:

> I was able to give considerable time to each area of Europe and Asia on which I worked, in order to arrive at a systematic, however preliminary, statement of the unformulated ideas basic in their view of the world and of themselves and of their relations to their fellows. My conviction is that these cultural formulations are basic to any understanding of behavior in any field – sex or economics or politics.
>
> [With RCC under way] I could write the book with the assistance of a staff and of carefully chosen consultants. I should not plan to make it a programmatic book or professional discussion of anthropological methodology but a volume on men, women and children whose different habits and values, insofar as they are the outcome of their cultural experiences, can teach us an understanding of ourselves as well as of them, since their customs, however strange to us, are only variant solutions of the same human problems which face us.
>
> I should plan to have two or three chapters on selected countries to bring out their cultural regularities. As examples, in Western Europe I already have adequate material on Holland, in Eastern Europe on Romania, and in Asia on Siam. If I used these I should rewrite my notes and mimeographed material for this purpose, but if research on other countries progresses rapidly enough, I shall use other examples. In any case, I shall compare these examples liberally with other nations. Then I should plan to have topical chapters on various problems in human relations which constantly arise between persons reared in different parts of the world and cause much of the difficulty in international relations: attitudes toward property; toward recognized superiors (when "showing respect" does or does not involve a sense of humiliation on the part of the inferior); toward the State (where majority-minority decisions are recognized as a technique of self-government and what other techniques are depended upon east of

> the Polish Corridor and throughout Asia); toward the national past and future (the contrast between "watch us grow" and the various forms of irredentism which invoke the past); toward minorities, etc. . . .
>
> I should also include plans for teaching – a class or one's self – how to learn in face-to-face contacts with people of other cultures what their cherished and unspoken convictions are, and on what cultural experiences they are founded. . . .
>
> . . . The manuscript could be in your hands in about twelve months. This could be arranged at a salary expense of about $5000, and it would be most convenient if the money were given to the Institute for Intercultural Studies. (RB to GK, July 17, 1947, MM G2)

Benedict's status report on RCC to ONR, dated December 12, 1947, listed, as problems investigated, almost the same topical chapter subjects as in this letter. The letter and report represent her thinking at that time. In the last General Seminar of the year, Benedict described in a few phrases identical to those she had written to Kirk "the first book to come out of the project," which she would write and would be funded by the Carnegie Corporation, and she added, "It will be based on materials we have in this project and otherwise" (General Seminar, May 26, 1948, MM G6). The major parts of this planned volume were to be her completed and unpublished OWI reports on Thailand, Romania, and the Netherlands. Her contrast of majority-minority political systems with other patterns used east of the Polish corridor and throughout Asia was a reference to her article "Recognition of Cultural Diversities in the Post-War World," in which the Asian patterns shared the method of seeking local consensus, as discussed in chapter 4. RCC findings that augmented the points in that article were cited in the status report the previous December and in the Yale Law School address the following March, as noted in chapter 1, namely the contrast of Russian and Czech and Russian and American attitudes about privacy and community. Other materials she sought through RCC research had not progressed far, but she hoped for more findings on these topics the next year when she expected to be assembling the parts of the book and expanding her points.

The second conveners' meeting of the year took place June 1, 1948, and plans for the next year were one topic. Discussing publishing prospects, Arensberg thought the *Journal for Applied Anthropology* would take an article on the stranger, and Benedict would attempt to arrange guest editorship in some journal for a group of papers on each culture. Gorer's article on Great Russia was under consideration by *Scientific Monthly*. It later was published in the *American Slavic and East European Review* with a long introductory

footnote by Mead. Discussions were under way with the Rand Corporation to carry on the Russian research. Funding from ONR beyond the two years that had been allotted was thought available, and both Rand funding and ONR continuation came through. The Jewish and Chinese groups expected to have completed their work before the second-year contract ended in April 1949, and the Czech and French groups would wind up much earlier. Final reports, however, were not finished until a year or more later. The Syrian group had been organized and staffed (Conveners' Group, MM G6).

Benedict delivered a paper to the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Conference on Childhood Education on July 21, 1948, a paper titled "The Study of Cultural Continuities in the Civilized World" (Benedict 1949b). She commended UNESCO for its program for respecting each nation's ideals and went on speaking about the ideas of culture, patterning, and the learning of culture. In a section of this paper titled "The Genetic Study of National Character," Benedict recommended including in methodology "knowledge that has been acquired in several sister sciences." This knowledge was

> (a) the study of the physical maturation of the child. Maturation has its own law and order, and it is necessary to relate the age of the child upon whom local custom imposes particular disciplines to the laws of growth of that child; (b) the ground plan of the male and female body . . . [her description suggests reference is to Erik Erikson's model of zones and modes, and within this model aggression was her focus]; (c) medical studies of the field of psychosomatics . . . ; (d) psychiatry. Modern psychiatry has shown many of the fundamental dynamics of personality . . . its use in genetic cultural study is . . . not therapy, but a tool to be used to promote understanding of cultural dynamics. (Benedict 1949b)

This speech defined and enlarged on the meaning of "national character" and "character structure" with far more specificity than any of Benedict's previous writings. She had discussed the term "character structure" in the Shaw lectures and had used it in the 1943 article "Recognition of Cultural Diversity in the Postwar World," but in other writings she seldom used the term until the application for renewal of the RCC contract the previous December. She kept the term to the periphery in the course lectures, where her sections on methodology discussed anthropological methods and criticized both genetic psychology and psychoanalysis for their concepts and methods, and she did not enlarge on or define character structure. She used the term as though it were simply the cultural configuration expressed in the individual, and the process of character formation was phrased simply as the learning

of culture in infancy, childhood, youth, and later learning. Mead went far beyond Benedict in detailed study of processes of learning and emotional relationships in learning, and she included genetic growth as a factor in learning (Mead 1956; Mead and Macgregor 1951). Benedict moved closer to Mead's interests in opening RCC to the concepts of learning and emotion held in genetic psychology and psychoanalysis. In her course on theory in the fall of 1947, she spoke about the direction in which anthropology should move, and among the points was this: "There are some things beyond relativity in the family, childhood, and adolescence" (Theory 1/6/48). She had previously demonstrated the idea of an area beyond relativity principally in defining conditions for free society. That aspects of the family and growth were beyond relativity acknowledged the common ground in the fields of anthropology, psychology, and psychoanalysis. She concluded with a section on responses to infant crying and methods of swaddling as illustrations of varying cultural communication to children, briefer but similar to the paper she had given that spring for the American Association of Orthopsychiatry and published in their journal (Benedict 1949a). The UNESCO paper, the last one she wrote in her lifetime, called for inclusion of methods Mead had advocated and Benedict had introduced in RCC. She also included what she considered the appropriate interpretation of swaddling in contrast to Gorer's interpretation.

Benedict, and also Mead at this period, did not seek an integration of the behavioral sciences but rather an openness in anthropology to what the other behavioral sciences had to offer. A principal purpose of the RCC project was the demonstration of methods of interviewing and the construction of interpretation. The emphasis on new methodology reflects Mead's interests. Benedict had developed methods for studying culture without fieldwork in wartime, which she described in *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword*, and she also wanted to develop and explain them more fully. She was perhaps more interested than Mead in the end product, the depiction of the selected culture patterns, since she had in mind a scheme for comparing Western democracy with societies based on the principle of seeking consensus. Benedict and Mead were well aware of problems in RCC, as the seminar discussions show. Nonetheless, the project produced much insightful work, and the RCC files, extensive and readily accessible, could be a source for ideas and data for anthropologists now once again freely exploring the concept of national character.

But the discipline of anthropology too often writes off its past. Richard G. Fox, for example, has brought focus to the field of national culture in his review of its concepts but also stereotypes and dismisses the earlier work. He

has brought order to terminologies, using "national ideologies" to subsume various terms in use such as "national cultures," "nationalism," "subnational identities," "ethnic nationalisms," and others (Fox 1990). "National character," reserved by Fox for the earlier work, is used by Katherine Verdery, as well as a concept of "national essences" (1991, 1995). Fox imputes to Benedict's *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword* and to RCC work a view of culture, that it "coerces and compels individuals," and his authority for a supposedly new view of culture, as enabling human activity, comes from a recent discussion by Anthony Giddens (Fox 1990:2; Giddens 1984:173). Fox has forgotten that Benedict wrote in *Patterns of Culture* that culture enables an individual to fulfill himself or herself. Fox goes on to contrast his view of national culture, as highly changeable, to Mead's "iron strength of cultural walls," a quote taken from her 1930 *Growing Up in New Guinea*. If he had referred to her book *Soviet Attitudes toward Authority* (1951), which was written more than two decades later and is about national culture, he would have discovered her discussion of generational changes in Soviet national character and found her view of the concept much closer to his own (Fox 1990:11). In this new era of writing on national culture and national character, Richard Shweder also restates old prejudices, that the idea of national character caused a stigma on the field of culture and personality (1999:63). The very positive evaluations by Milton Singer and Cora Du Bois cited earlier are based on more detailed and better informed observations than the recent ones (Singer 1961; Du Bois 1960).

Benedict's trip to Europe to address the UNESCO conference that summer was her first since 1926. She had been refused medical clearance by the army for its invitation to her to visit Germany in 1945. After the UNESCO conference in Czechoslovakia, she visited RCC researchers David Rodnick and Elizabeth Rodnick, who were engaged in fieldwork there, then stayed a week with RCC member Sula Benet, who was conducting fieldwork in Poland, and then went on to the Netherlands, in each country checking the ideas of the culture she and RCC had formulated at a distance. She returned to New York about September 10, spent her first day back in her office, among other jobs searching for some books on a ladder reaching the top of her bookcases, and that evening suffered a heart attack. She died September 17, 1948.

The General Seminar scheduled for September 23 met as planned, and it was the only group where there could be some sense of reaffirmation. Mead presided. She said Benedict had come back feeling well and eager to get to work, saying she had had a lazy summer. "She was going to give her full time to the project this year, and that's a gap no one's work and no one's good will can fill. . . . One of the things we can't possibly replace is the insight she would have contributed" (General Seminar, September 23, 1948, MM G6). A similar

sense of loss had been expressed by Ruth Bunzel the day after Benedict's death to the few gathered in the RCC office, the condemned building now more cavernous than ever, that Boas had finished his work when he died but that Benedict had not finished hers. Probably few if any of the RCC leaders or researchers knew the actual plan for the book she had outlined in her letter to Grayson Kirk. Her article "Recognition of Cultural Diversities" had not been included in the manual, and only brief excerpts from her OWI studies had been included, and they had been taken out of context to illustrate specific methods. They were not referred to in any General Seminar discussion and were not studied as models for national culture analysis as Benedict doubtless intended them. With the general self-absorption of each researcher in his or her own group problems, the comparative perspective Benedict brought was not attempted by anyone, and this was more critical than just insights. She who had set herself a culminating project and who was so devoted to work may not have experienced the calm acceptance of death that her writings about death from an earlier time led her friends to attribute to her. Why the book she planned was not assembled, even without the additions she would have written, testifies to each one's absorption in his or her own work. This work was indeed a just claim and of real importance, but what was abandoned would have spoken most positively and with the greatest communicability for the field of national culture.

The seminar that evening proceeded with the scheduled papers on the topic of friendship. The work continued as intensely and with as much dedication as before. Extensions of the contract were granted, and the final report was written in 1951. Mead combined the RCC analysis of Great Russians with the research supported by the Rand Corporation and published *Soviet Attitudes toward Authority* in 1951. The Eastern European Jewish materials were published in *Life Is with People: The Jewish Little Town in Eastern Europe*, by Mark Zborowski and Elizabeth Herzog (1952). *Themes in French Culture* (1954) was written by Margaret Mead and Rhoda Métraux. *The Study of Culture at a Distance*, edited by Mead and Métraux (1953), is a selection of papers, interviews, and transcriptions of group discussions from the project. The numerous articles written from project materials are listed there. This volume has recently been reissued with an introduction evaluating aspects of the original publication. The first review of the reissue was enthusiastic: "Plenitude of perspective and the lack of a central narrative give this book a contemporary feel . . . this is a text looking forward to the establishment of rigorous methods. It is the rich detailing that make this a valuable book. . . . Anyone who is interested in reinvigorating anthropology may wish to look at the exciting, sometimes eccentric, experimentations" (Wardle 2002:126).

## CHAPTER 6
# Teachers and Students

After Franz Boas's illness in 1931, he gave up many of his responsibilities, and Ruth Benedict carried on the main work of administration and teaching. She thus was a principal arbiter of a student's fate, and their opinions of her reflected this. Student accounts of Benedict reflected also her intellectual and personal impact and students' agreements and disagreements with her. She and Boas together decided on the award of funds for Project #35; indeed, much of the correspondence between them discussed funding, along with their many observations of their own travels and fieldwork, particularly Boas's reflective thoughts in his frequent letters from his summer home, from the Northwest Coast, and from his trips to Europe. Not only students were funded but also junior faculty and anthropologists from other universities, and frequently field projects were recommended to other funding sources. Grants of fieldwork funds appear to have gone even-handedly to students, although some had personal resources to finance their fieldwork, but funds for writing and publication appear to have been awarded more selectively. Jobs also depended on faculty recommendations; jobs were scarce, and most were part-time and temporary. Benedict frequently mentioned her worry about the difficulty of placing students in jobs. Anti-Semitism was an acknowledged factor in several university hirings, and with a large number of Jewish students at Columbia, Benedict complained severely in much of her correspondence about this prejudice. Several students experienced tragedy in their fieldwork, and Benedict had the main responsibility for dealing with the personal relations and university liability in the aftermath of these incidents.[1] Several memoirs of the department and of Benedict have been written, interviews have been conducted with a number of the 1930s students, and reflections about Benedict from the students of the 1940s have been sought in personal communications. She was much admired by some students and had her share of detractors among others, yet their accounts depict with much agreement a personality that was consistent from the early 1930s to the postwar years.

An early figure in the department, Esther Goldfrank, has written a memoir

of Columbia anthropology, and she includes acerbic portrayals of Benedict. Goldfrank was a recent graduate of Barnard whom Boas had hired as his secretary when Benedict entered the department. Although not a graduate student, Goldfrank apprenticed with Boas in fieldwork in the eastern pueblos, working there many years and publishing professional articles. She did not seek a degree, although she did take courses with Benedict and Ralph Linton, but because of her extensive field reports on the pueblos, she had a role as a colleague. A key factor in Goldfrank's relation with Benedict was her disagreement with Benedict's interpretation of the pueblo cultures as Apollonian, as noted in chapter 1, and Goldfrank wrote in her memoir that Benedict rebuffed her by pointing out that she had never been in the Zuni or Hopi pueblos. Goldfrank's memoir, written many years after Benedict's death, portrays Benedict as morose, masked, and aloof, through quotes taken from Margaret Mead's publication of selections from Benedict's journals and from Benedict's personal relations as Goldfrank observed them (Mead 1959; Goldfrank 1978:35–40, 114–24). She wrote that she had seen Benedict "turn off an unwelcome request with a lift of her brow, a curl of her lips or reliance on her long time and well known hearing difficulty" (Goldfrank 1978:142). Goldfrank was antagonized by Benedict's leftist political leanings, and on this score she also criticized Boas, to whom she was nevertheless devoted. She reports numerous anecdotes to convey the personal style that she disliked, but in these incidents Benedict's underlying role is actually supportive or kind to Goldfrank. One occasion was in bringing Goldfrank into the inner circle by inviting her in 1938 to join a small group being trained by Bruno Klopfer, the Rorschach test specialist recently arrived from Europe, introducing American intellectuals to the recondite powers of this ink-blot test. Joining when the training was already under way, Goldfrank found that she, too, was expected to give her responses to the test cards orally in the group and have them interpreted aloud to demonstrate the method of analysis of responses. On their way home from the meeting, Benedict comforted the embarrassed Goldfrank by telling her Klopfer's analysis of her own test in a previous meeting. He had found in her both a schizophrenic tendency and high intellect. Thus Benedict both revealed her own psyche and bragged about her ability, but Goldfrank published the confidence given to comfort her in order to bolster her derogative portrayal. Goldfrank used another occasion of Benedict's kindness to her, an invitation to join the Blackfeet summer field school, to reveal Benedict's private weaknesses – migraine headaches that prevented her from participating in the field, detached temperament, and suppressed hostilities. She also published many warmly phrased letters she received from Benedict about her arrangements to publish Goldfrank's

report on the summer's fieldwork. The memoir continues in this vein, and it is a selective portrait by an antagonist of a benefactor.

Robert MacMillan's study of the department in the 1930s includes interviews conducted in 1974 with students of that earlier period in which they were asked to describe the department and their recollections of the principal faculty. The interviews show, as MacMillan writes, strongly independent students, and their diverse directions are part of his argument that there was no Columbia "school." Some of them were critical of Boas and Benedict, and some disliked *Patterns of Culture*. One of the students, Burt W. Aginsky, wrote an attack on the book in the journal *Character and Personality* (1939), and Benedict made an exception to her usual silence on well-reasoned disagreements to the book and wrote a response in which she pointed out the many distortions he had made of her book.[2] Several of the student critics, E. Adamson Hoebel, Bernard Mishkin, and Henry Elkin, wanted to apply sociological concepts to primitive societies, and all considered Boas and Benedict short-sighted in failing to do so. Mishkin's dissertation on warfare among the Plains Indians interpreted it contrarily to Benedict's writings on the subject. Hoebel declared to MacMillan the improbable view that Boas and Benedict failed to take an interest in law in primitive societies and that only he had introduced the topic. There was much antagonism to both faculty and particularly to Benedict. The antagonism between Linton and Benedict in the late 1930s was reflected in a division between his adherents and hers, according to the student descriptions of this period that appeared in chapter 2; and the archaeology program introduced by Duncan Strong at the same time brought a group of skeptics of Benedict's portrayal of the pueblos, many of whom worked in that area and to whom psychological factors counted for little.

Along with the hostile or disinterested students, many others were admirers of Benedict and maintained cordial friendships, among them Cora Du Bois. Du Bois studied with Boas and Benedict as an undergraduate at Barnard in 1927. After completing a master's degree in medieval history at Columbia, Du Bois wanted to take up anthropology but did not want to do the project Boas suggested on early European contacts with Africa, and so she went to the University of California for Ph.D. work (Gacs et al. 1988). She corresponded with Benedict during her fieldwork with the California Maidu and Wintu tribes, describing her findings. Benedict published her manuscript on the Wintu in the *Journal of American Folklore*, of which she was editor, and she was instrumental in obtaining Abraham Kardiner's support for Du Bois for training in psychological testing in preparation for fieldwork in Alor, Indonesia. Benedict recommended the manuscript of *People of Alor* (1944)

to its publisher, a letter that Du Bois credited for the press's acceptance of the book. Benedict's and Du Bois's exchange of letters about Kardiner has been quoted in chapter 1. They showed Du Bois's ingrained skepticism and eye for exceptions. She often wrote her thanks and admiration in a humorous style, for example, thanking Benedict for "the consistent and unaccountable interest you have always shown in my gyrations" (CDB to RB, May 24, 1934, RFB 28.6). When *Patterns of Culture* came out, she wrote Benedict: "I found those aspects not already familiar to me through your professional articles, the same suggestive and stimulating thinking which gave me so much pleasure in your courses at Columbia. The last three chapters in particular were fairly bursting with implications which made me want to dash out into the field and explore. I can't wait to try myself out on an unintegrated culture with your view point as a guide" (CDB to RB, November 24, 1934, RFB 28.6). Du Bois was invited by Margaret Mead to speak at the memorial service after Benedict's death, and her tribute there has been discussed in chapter 1.

Ruth Landes entered Columbia graduate study in 1931, a few months before Boas's debilitating heart attack and Benedict's consequent assumption of major training responsibility for students. The previous year Benedict and Boas had received a grant for student research and began Project #35. A biography of Landes gives insight into her work with Benedict (Cole 2003). After Landes had completed one year of graduate study, Benedict arranged a promising field situation for her on a Canadian Ojibwa reservation by enlisting the advice of colleagues with field experience among the Ojibwa, A. I. Hallowell, Diamond Jenness, and Father John Cooper. They recommended that Landes work with Maggie Wilson, who was respected for her visions and for her social role. Landes established a good relationship with Wilson and gathered materials for her dissertation, "Ojibwa Sociology" (1935), and for *The Ojibwa Woman* (1938). Benedict continued to fund Landes's fieldwork among Plains tribes and in periods of writing. When funds were secured for a new phase of fieldwork in South America, Landes was preparing for a study of African-American societies, working with sociologist Robert E. Parks, who was then at Fisk University, and Benedict funded her in fieldwork among African Brazilians (Gacs et al. 1988). The Brazil cohort included three men, William Lipkind, Buell Quain, and recent Columbia college graduate Charles Wagley. Landes studied African-derived religious cults in the city of Bahia, the *condomblé*, and concluded that the cults had been significantly shaped by lower-class blacks' adaptation to Brazilian social conditions, and the fact that they employed elements of African religious belief and ritual was of less functional significance. Colleagues in Brazil heard her interpretation of the cults. A Brazilian anthropologist, Arthur Ramos, and Melville Herskovits, the

premier U.S. authority on Africanisms in the New World, strongly disagreed with her. Both explained the *condomblé* by the retention of African traits and minimized the causal effects of Brazilian racism. Their antagonism had been inflamed by the romantic relationship that flowered between Landes and a mulatto Brazilian sociologist who helped her establish rapport with the cult groups, and Ramos took measures to have Landes driven out of Bahia by police.

Benedict had earlier reviewed favorably Herskovits's books on Africanisms in Sarramaccan culture in Dutch Guiana and in Haitian culture, but in reviewing his book *Myth of the Negro Past* (1941), she challenged his thesis of the greater effect of African culture retention on U.S. blacks' adaptation than the social position to which they had been consigned in this country, a view similar to Landes's interpretation of the Bahia religious groups but derived independently from her own understanding of the American racial situation. Upon Landes's return from Brazil, Benedict secured a job for her on Gunnar Myrdal's large research project on American blacks, and again Herskovits discredited Landes's memorandum for that project, both for her personal relationship with her coinvestigator in Brazil and for her interpretations of the *condomblé* (Cole 2003:188; Gacs et al. 1988).

Placing students in teaching jobs was more difficult than finding funds for them for research. Benedict could recommend her students for the temporary teaching jobs available, but the national depression and the rarity of anthropology as a subject in university curricula meant there was seldom a tenured job to be had. In this stringent job market, Benedict followed Boas's policy of trying first to place men with wives and families to support. Alexander Lesser was often mentioned in her letters as a responsibility, since the Columbia administration wanted to discontinue his position, and her list of men and women needing jobs was long. Benedict particularly resented the anti-Semitism that denied many of her students consideration in filling the few positions that came along. Landes was one who for many years had no academic job, and Herskovits's attacks probably assured she would be passed over. Although Landes's biographer implicates Benedict in gender discrimination practiced at that time, she goes on to say that "Landes's faith in Benedict's mentoring was unshakable for years to come" (Cole 2003:58).

Landes, along with other students who entered the anthropology department from 1932 to 1937, was interviewed in 1974 about recollections of the department by historian Robert MacMillan. Landes said of Benedict, "She had a reputation for being a miserable lecturer. . . . It was like being in a furnace when you were working the bellows because she would . . . stammer and stutter and repeat herself and go back and forth. . . . If you were ab-

sorbed in her, as I was, this mind at work . . . I was absolutely mesmerized" (in MacMillan 1986:198). This is a manner of representation, since Benedict did not stutter or stammer but did often search for words. Landes makes this clear in an undated manuscript of her memories of Benedict. Of Benedict's speaking style, she wrote: "Her voice small, soft, hesitant, she sounded as if she was thinking in sound. The sentences came slowly, incompletely; words were begun and abandoned; corrections moved back and forth; there were pauses in the parts of speech to inculcate a thought. I found it wonderful, wonderful, because the style prompted myriad ideas in me." Landes continued: "She expected students to produce serious written works, inducing in all of us a grim sense of responsibility. She conveyed the *attitude* that made scholars of the survivors, receiving us when we wanted to talk, reading every scrap of our manuscripts for eventual appearance in print, finding stipends to support us during the writing, editing the final drafts, and forgetting to congratulate us when the article or book appeared. . . . She paid the inspiring compliment of taking our little achievements for granted" (in Cole 2003:57, 58 ). The grim sense of responsibility is not too exaggerated, since Benedict's pressure on students to get their work into publication was well known, and some who had hesitated many years were known by this reputation. Landes was indeed a survivor and a scholar. Benedict defended her work against Mead's criticism in several letters during Mead's Balinese fieldwork (Cole 2003:201).

Among other students of this period interviewed by MacMillan was Viola Garfield, who entered Columbia in 1932 for Ph.D. work after several years of study of the Tsimshan Indians of Alaska, whom she had encountered as a grade school teacher for the Bureau of Indian Affairs. She had worked under the guidance of Franz Boas and had taught at the University of Washington before her studies at Columbia. Of Benedict's classes, she said: "She was not a good lecturer. . . . I did learn a lot about field methods and theories from reading over my rather full notes later. You had to keep busy writing notes to keep from falling asleep" (MacMillan 1986:202). She told her biographer that she began a smoking habit in Benedict's class, and this eventually led to her death (Gacs et al. 1988).

Irving Goldman entered the department in 1933 and is known for his work in the Amazonian area and the Northwest Coast. He was effusive about the department: "When I arrived at Columbia in that anthropology department I felt at home almost overnight. . . . I never dreamed . . . that this was education. . . . One felt that one was at the center of something of tremendous importance. . . . We were just exhilarated. . . . We were arrogant (in MacMillan 1986:181). MacMillan paraphrased and quoted Goldman:

> Boas's lectures, he recalls, were based on library research. Boas would say for example, "I am giving you what I have read about Africa." But Benedict . . . offered her own point of view: "We need to *penetrate* these societies, discover patterns." Her lectures were, he grants, "repetitious, ruminative. . . . I happen to like that. . . . I particularly enjoyed in her a certain hesitancy, . . . uncertainty. . . . She was an honest woman." (MacMillan 1986:203)

Richard Slobodin entered the Columbia department in 1937 and did his fieldwork primarily among eastern Canadian Indians. He taught at MacMaster University and later had a role in steering a new professorship to Ruth Landes, her first tenured job (Gacs et al. 1988). Asked for his recollections of Benedict, he wrote:

> For several weeks I couldn't make out what this eminent scholar, and obviously intriguing woman, was talking about. I thought I was a reasonably bright guy, but this was beyond me, or so it seemed. . . . One thing I could see was that Benedict was a good scholar and had done a great deal of reading on the subject in several languages. I much appreciated this. Then gradually I felt I was beginning to latch on to her style and message. The more I listened, the more fascinating it became. (letter to author, August 9, 1997)

Leona Steinberg Bond entered the anthropology department in 1937 and studied there for several years. In a letter she wrote:

> My acquaintance with Ruth Benedict began with the course she gave on Australia. The complicated kinship of the aborigines . . . was fascinating. I think I know now why that was, although I didn't know it then. To Ruth Benedict these people – naked and technologically deprived – were not "inferior." No people were lower than others to her. Her respect for their life style made learning about them illuminating. (letter to author, September 18, 1997)

Gordon Willey, who began his archaeological training at Columbia in 1939, noted that he was influenced by Benedict's questioning an economic explanation of culture:

> I am convinced that an archeologist benefits from being raised up in the "house of anthropology." . . . It provides a safeguard against "having all the answers." I remember my PhD oral examinations. I had been going along in a pretty cocksure way about the technology of irrigation and how it had served as "the driving engine" for political complexity and the advance of civilization in many parts of the world. Not surprisingly Ruth

> Benedict took exception to this thesis. I defended these views (the late Karl Wittfogel's and mine) as best I could at the time, but her objections sowed seeds of doubt. Later as I pursued such questions in the field, in Peru and Mesoamerica, I became less convinced of this strictly materialist thesis. There are no easy answers to such great questions in human culture and history. I think the spirit of doubt which has pervaded anthropology is a good thing. (1994:9)

Victor Barnouw's recollections of Benedict were written as an obituary. His course work preceded Benedict's war leave, beginning in the fall of 1941.

> Like most of Ruth Benedict's students, I looked up to her with a mixture of veneration and bewilderment. With her silvery aura of prestige, dignity, and charm, she seemed to be like a symbolic representative of the humanistic values of the Renaissance. Yet Ruth Benedict often seemed to have a kind of private language and way of thinking which made communication uncertain. . . . Ruth Benedict sometimes had a way of talking about "primitive" peoples as if she could see an x-ray of their souls projected upon an invisible screen before her. "The Blackfoot always dance on a knife-edge," she would announce, as if seeing them there, balancing precariously along the blade. Then she would turn to her visitor with a charming smile. "You know," she would add with a nod of the head, implying that her consultant could also see the vision. This implicit confidence ushered the dazzled neophyte into the company of Boas and the immortals. "The Pima like *slow* intoxication. That fits perfectly with all the rest about them, doesn't it? You know." One nodded, smiled, and tried hard to remember the information. . . . Her sense of dedication to a difficult and serious task marked everything she did. Her students immediately felt this and respected her essential dignity of spirit. (1949:241, 253)

Barnouw later described Benedict's stimulation to him to rethink his dissertation, to find a problem to address with his materials, and he wrote of his satisfaction in greatly improving it to meet her expectations (1980:507).

For her part, Benedict referred to the students as "the children in the department" in her letters to Mead. Her comments were sometimes hopeful and sometimes not: "A lot of new students have come in, two or three of whom I'm really interested in"; and then again, "The children I've trained here can improve the old fieldwork, . . . but are not able to go ahead with leading ideas" (RB to MM, September 21, 1937, January 30, 1939. MM B1). In fact, some of these students were beginning to work out new perspectives, which they would formulate years later – for example, Irving Goldman in symbolism and Ruth Landes in gender regularities – but Benedict's interests

at this time were not in these directions, and she and Mead shared an already mature agenda. Again she wrote: "You and I are going to have to go ahead and write the books" (RB to MM, January 30, 1939, MM B1). And she told Dean Howard McBain that the "incomparably best" junior person to bring into the department was Mead (RB to MM, February 10, 1936, MM S5). Mead was indeed far senior to the students of the 1930s, had a secure job that allowed much research, was dedicated to her intellectual objectives, and had brilliance of mind beyond most anyone. Mead's forays into correlations of aspects of cultures, such as she attempted in *Sex and Temperament* and *Cooperation and Competition*, and her engagement with problems of education and personality development were the direction that Benedict thought the field should take.

The investigations in Project #35 became past history with the imminence of war, the rapid victories of fascism, and the eventual mobilization of scholars to think out policy for war, diplomacy, and military government. Benedict's projected conclusions for Project #35 were outlined in her last application for funds, but the book demonstrating them was never to be written. The Bryn Mawr lectures soon followed and were her statement of theory that might have accompanied the Project #35 conclusions. They were abstract and generalizing and formulated a theoretical framework for the data she had sought, and to a great extent found, through her student's numerous strategically planned field studies. Right after the Bryn Mawr lectures she began thinking about postwar treaty issues, as illustrated in "Recognition of Cultural Diversities in the Post-War World," and working with committees of social scientists on wartime problems. Then from mid 1943 to the summer of 1946 she was continuously engaged in the Office of War Information (OWI) projects and the writing of *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword*. That summer she was asked to conduct a national cultures research project, and by the following spring it was under way, with $90,000 for the first year. By that time the anthropological problems she had phrased in Project #35 were no longer her research agenda, but they were the framework of her teaching.

When Benedict returned to Columbia University after her work in Washington, D.C., and a semester sabbatical for writing, Ralph Linton had left for Yale. Julian Steward replaced him in September 1946 at the rank of professor, brought by his former Berkeley colleague, W. Duncan Strong, and with the recommendation of Linton (Kerns 2003:236). Strong was promoted to full professor and became departmental chairman when Linton left. Benedict remained associate professor until May 1948, when she became the second woman ever to achieve the rank of professor at Columbia. Harry Shapiro continued as adjunct professor in physical anthropology, and George Her-

zog continued for the year in linguistics, to be replaced in the fall of 1948 by Joseph Greenberg. Carrying on the Boasian tradition were Gene Weltfish and Marian W. Smith. The two women had taught from 1935 and 1938, respectively, and still held the rank of instructor. Weltfish had never published her long-completed dissertation, and this was the grounds for denying her promotion. Charles Wagley began teaching undergraduate courses with the rank of assistant professor after award of his degree in 1942. Ruth Bunzel, who had taught as an instructor since 1935 and taught full-time when Benedict was on leave, was not enlisted again until Wagley, who had been one of her students, became chairman of the department in July 1953.

With her return to teaching, Benedict appeared rested and strong. She walked rapidly, her posture was erect, and her carriage was lithe. David McAllester recalls, "That elegant figure and white hair that reminded me, somewhat, of a heron" (letter to author, October 27, 1997). I recall her bending in a long, forward curve to read the lips of a student walking abreast. Her hearing had been impaired since a childhood illness. Her long hours of work spent building her research project along with a full course load showed in fatigue, as recollections by Mead and Barnouw have noted, but her self-confidence was evident; certainty and outspokenness characterized her lectures.

She taught three courses each semester in 1946–47: the year-long courses Personality and Culture and Seminar on Contemporary European Cultures; a winter session, Social Organization of Primitive Peoples; and a spring session, Religions of Primitive Peoples. Notes for all these courses were obtained. In 1947–48 she taught Theory, Culture in the winter session, for which there are notes; she also taught a seminar on contemporary European cultures, for which no notes were found. Benedict was granted a sabbatical for three semesters beginning with the spring 1948 semester to work full-time on the Research in Contemporary Cultures (RCC) project. The courses she had chosen for spring 1948 before the sabbatical was approved were a single-semester Personality and Culture and Peoples of Australia and Melanesia.

In the three semesters of teaching, she met every class except one day's absence, when she arranged for Marian Smith and Charles Wagley to meet her classes, and once when she addressed the annual anthropology meeting. Class enrollments were large. In the traditional subjects, class size was augmented by advanced students catching up after her three years of absence. Personality and Culture attracted students from many parts of the university and, with an enrollment of perhaps sixty to eighty students, had to be moved to the largest lecture room in Schermerhorn Hall. Although classes were large, questions frequently ended a class, and she responded carefully to them.

The low evaluations given her lecture style in the prewar years do not fit these last years. Benedict's style of speaking was direct and clear, sometimes colloquial, and she used humorous figures of speech: the realm of "the sacred" for Durkheim, whom she admired, was dubbed "mob-psychology." "Religious racketeers" hold sway in some religions. "When a sorcerer is hired the feelings of revenge for a death are not directed at him but at the person who hired him. He is like the hired lawyer" (Religions 3/25, 4/8, 5/15/47). These usages invited students to de-exoticize preliterate societies. Although she did not use a dramatic speaking style, her speech was powerful owing to her elimination of complex terms and jargon. She used plain expressions and colloquial ones: "religion has social teeth in it" (Theory 11/20/47; Personality and Culture 3/25/47). Sidney Mintz, a student entering in 1946, noted her humor, and he described the first class of hers that he attended: "Benedict stood before us, tall, spare, seeming rather distant, her voice startlingly low and slightly hoarse, plainly dressed, her silver hair short and severe, what I judged her shyness heightened by the contrast between the penetration of her ideas and the somewhat absent gaze with which she regarded us. I was astonished by her and by her lecture" (1981:156). In the classroom, she received full attention just because the intellectual content was original. There were no repeats, no summations, and no wheel spinning. For those who wanted to work with her, she set up a sense of confidentiality and personalness that spurred students on. Her devotion to work and her regular presence in her office urged students to match her drive. I was a mere beginner, but her attention and help were forthcoming.

A student of the time quoted by Hilary Lapsley has said students did not know Benedict was reputed to be lesbian (1999:259). I think this reputation was generally known but was not talked about by students, at least not by those who respected her. Benedict had become a public intellectual, as influential as any man who wrote on public issues, and reputations of persons of this status were above being much affected by matters of sexual preference, probably because this aspect of sexuality was seldom openly mentioned.[3] Marriage and divorce were public issues at the time, and divorced women, even divorced men, were thought to have a reputational liability. Mead correctly perceived that her own divorces affected her public influence. Male student admirers of Benedict who touched on their personal feelings about her in their recollections used the words "intriguing" and "fascinating." Some of us linked the extra ability and knowledge she described for many of the berdache, the men-women among American Indians, to her own spanning of gender roles.

Her respect for other cultures and for individuals in other cultures, such as observed by Leona Steinberg Bond, the student quoted earlier, was one way students perceived her empathy and felt that they also were respected for their uniqueness. Although easily approachable, Benedict was an impressive figure both by reputation and by personal presence. She had the self-effacement of a true relativist. These qualities together brought about a self-projection that could not easily be typed. Sidney Mintz's description of her first lecture he heard describes these qualities and their combination with empathy. Victor Barnouw wrote about a sense of mystery, and a postwar student, Marion Roiphe, described a similar impression in saying that Benedict always spoke as though you would understand her point. Benedict had superior powers of seeing pattern in inchoate masses of ethnographic materials. Some students were annoyed by these ways of thinking and some infuriated by them, and some called it witchcraft. A student of the period, who will remain unidentified, recalled the reactions to Benedict among male students – for the genders segregated themselves and knew well only their own group. One fancied he was as good as propositioned by her tale to him of European informants' accounts of the pleasures of sleeping in goose down quilts. Another, who was arrogant in manner, hated her. He drew a cartoon of her as a witch holding a distinguished female student in her hand. Recall that Ralph Linton spoke of her as a sorcerer and said he killed her with his own sorcery kit (Mintz 1981:161).

Depersonalizing the hated other was a thought process Benedict understood well in the magic of animatistic cursing. Following R. R. Marett's *The Threshold of Religion* in her commentaries on this point, she illustrated it by the depersonalization of blacks by American racism. Benedict was one of the few anthropologists who went beyond describing sorcery and evaluated it, citing the terror it instilled and the difficulty in exercising social control over a sorcerer (Religions 3/20/47; Theory 1/15/48). She pointed out an analogy to the practice of sorcery in American mainstream culture through the technique of depersonalization of despised persons and said, "A religion which expressed our society would have much magic in it" (Religions 4/15/47).

## New Battle Lines

When Duncan Strong became department chairman in 1946, he wanted to turn the department away from Benedict's interest in personality and culture and toward ecology, and he enlisted his friend and colleague from Berkeley, Julian Steward, in this objective, "his right hand man," a designation the

very independent Steward resented (Kerns 2003:243). Robert Murphy, who studied with Steward, wrote a brief analysis of Steward's thought:

> The appeal of Steward's anthropology to his Columbia students derived in good part from his approach to culture. He was not greatly concerned with the concept as such. . . . Rather it was his basic fieldwork method and the kinds of data he collected that distinguished his research. . . . He found a principal source of . . . determinism of behavior to be the patterns of work called for in the pursuit of subsistence. . . . The key determinant in Steward's anthropology, thus, is not economic or environmental determinism, but a view of social life that sees social behavior as situationally shaped and constrained, and that then goes on to derive cultural norms from regularities in that concrete behavior. (1981:192–93)

A study of Steward's Puerto Rico project describes his broad objective, "to address simultaneously the development of early civilizations, and the transformative trends at work in the contemporary world . . . developing a theory of emergent levels of sociocultural organization" (Lauria-Perricelli 1989:175). The potential for grand theory in Steward's concepts was of great interest to a broad range of students, many of whom were attracted to this large agenda even though they remained eclectic.

Steward's paper on the patrilineal band as the earliest stage of social organization, based on his study in the Great Basin and Plateau areas of the West, was on the new list of basic works for first-year students to read, and his theory building in multilineal evolution was of interest throughout the department. He had just completed editing the three-volume *Handbook of South American Indians* for the Bureau of American Ethnology, with an extraordinary wealth of data and an evolutionary culture area scheme, and he taught the comprehensive scheme his first year at Columbia, before illness set in, with high student interest. Steward had a relaxed manner with students and a wry lecture style, but the course on South America was little more than a recitation, area by area, of the presence or absence of distinctive traits. Students from the sociology department walked out of his seminar, Community Study in Complex Societies, but one anthropology student has written that he found it a good conceptual basis for his projected fieldwork in Mexico, and the students who were to make up the team for community study in Puerto Rico later said they were well prepared on a conceptual level, even though they had inadequate preparation for fieldwork (Carrasco 1994; Kerns 2003:251). Eric Wolf defended Steward's teaching style:

> It was certainly less "realistic" and more abstract [than Benedict's lecture

> style], perhaps more pedantic, as part of an effort to develop a theoretical framework for his approach, but it had its own kind of appeal. I found his lectures interesting, though they always came to an end too quickly when he got ill and sought refuge in Alpine, N. J. I think that he was genuinely scared of students. (letter to author, October 24, 1998)

In Steward's second year, severe illness forced the enlistment of advanced students to teach his fall courses. A recent biography of Steward describes his discomfort in the New York intellectual environment throughout his stay and his ill ease with its students who challenged professors in class and were politically leftist (Kerns 2003).

Steward and Benedict both offered students dissertation research projects. Steward began planning for a project on Puerto Rican communities, and Benedict was assembling personnel for her RCC project, which would be based on fieldwork in ethnic communities in New York City. Both projects were on modern societies, a new field at that time, one that appealed to a generation who matured during World War II. To study societies that war had proved were interlocked in an interdependent world was to realize anthropology's true potential. Both teachers laid out the lessons of preliterate societies, as each saw them, and both offered methodologies and theory to study complex societies. Steward and Benedict presented large visionary objectives. From the viewpoint of current anthropological projects, both Steward's and Benedict's very different programs are startling in their enormous canvases and unproblematized assumptions of causality, whether causes were to be found in the organization of work as Steward believed or a causality of cultural attitudes and intentions acting circularly with learning and individual development. But Steward's and Benedict's viewpoints were poles apart. Linton's interests had been similar to Benedict's, and the problems between them had not been intellectual ones but were in Linton's insecurity and suspicions. Steward and Benedict maintained cordial relations, yet they were known to scorn each other's views, and they were in a position of rivalry for students. During the year, students came to be aligned with one or the other star professor, and the alignment turned out to be one of gender as well.

The entering students that year were diverse, among them male war veterans ready to make up for years lost to career preparation and with the GI Bill of Rights supporting them and, for many, their wives and families; and the women entering a year younger than usual after the accelerated college programs of wartime. Into this imbalance in age and experience came two entering women with distinguished publications, Rhoda Métraux and Jane Belo, already aligned with Benedict's interests. A few of the entering men, and

some of the advanced ones, formed a study group about which some have written reminiscences, the Mundial Upheaval Society, in which "Mundial" referred to "world" (Mintz 1994:19). Eric Wolf wrote that "the aim was to teach each other some anthropology" in lieu of the course offerings, which were "a very incoherent stew." He made two exceptions: "Ruth Benedict presented her consistent and often suggestive views on the history of theory and on culture-and-personality," and Harry Shapiro gave a well-organized course (Wolf 1994:12). Mintz wrote about the Mundial Upheaval Society: "Most of us were veterans and, as it happened, we were all males. Having to readjust to civilian life caused strain, and I think that there were feelings of dissatisfaction with the kind of anthropology we were learning. Isn't there always?" (1994:19). In this group, students gave lectures on areas they knew about and were instructed by several advanced students whom they thought more relevant than most of the department faculty. Elman Service was an advanced student who had studied with Leslie White as an undergraduate, and he taught White's ideas on evolution in the Mundial Society. Service had fought with the Lincoln Brigade against the fascist insurrection in Spain, and he had recommended naming the study group Peasants Are Revolting. Morton Fried returned from fieldwork in China during the year and was a member of the discussion group also promoting the new evolutionism. Some male students remained outside the Mundial Society. Among them were the two black students, one a high-born Ibo from Nigeria, Julius Okala, who supported himself with long hours of work in a sugar refinery; the other black student, William Willis, whose class notes have contributed to the course "texts" in this volume, was the son of Texas high school teachers. Both came to Columbia because of their admiration for Benedict's *Race: Science and Politics*. The Armed Forces edition of *Patterns of Culture* brought at least one other of the non-Mundial veterans, Ben Zimmerman, to anthropology.

In this diverse student body, full of rivalries and impatient drive, there was still a holdover of the spirit of equality that Boas had established in recognition of the need for ethnographic knowledge to be gathered by both women and men. Benedict's major responsibilities in training graduate students also had promoted an open field for both women and men. The Columbia Ph.D. in anthropology had been awarded to nineteen women and twenty men between 1921 and 1940 (Briscoe 1979). The women who entered after the war benefited from the strong showing women had made for many years in the department. Many advanced female graduate students were frequently around the department, their visibility probably due to their greater difficulty getting jobs than the men in their cohort but also a reminder of the important presence of women in the department. Ernestine Friedl and Gitel

Posnanski gave papers in the Wednesday afternoon seminar that had held forth since the 1920s or earlier. Eleanor Leacock was writing her dissertation, which contested the view that private ownership of Algonquian hunting territories prevailed. Helen Codere and Ruth Landes were frequently found conferring with Benedict. Two older foreign-educated women, Zekiye Eglar from Turkey and Hu Hsien Chin from China, worked on Benedict's project. Hu had published in the *American Anthropologist* an article that is cited currently as "classic," "The Chinese Concept of Face" (Hu 1944; Anagnost 1997:190). Eglar later wrote an important book based on fieldwork among Pakistani Muslim women (1960). All of these women except Friedl and Leacock had been trained principally by Benedict. The common assumption that marriage and childbearing would interfere with pursuit of a career actually bore little truth at Columbia, for few had children and the two who did have them, Leacock and Hu, managed them with little disruption to writing. Many of the women, especially the postwar students, did value and want families, and they attributed this value to their admiration for other societies where women could be influential both in families and in public life rather than to the period's consignment of American women to the home. At this time, the spirit of equality in the department was upheld principally by Benedict's prestige among most of the male and female students. Mintz observed of Benedict:

> One of the sturdiest memories I have of those times is her complete evenhandedness with her male and female students, even though we returning male veterans were quite thoughtlessly shouldering out of the way our female contemporaries. While there was – as I remember it – an anti-female bias among many of my male classmates that extended itself to Benedict, it was not reciprocated. Throughout, I recall Benedict as serene, generous and courteous – more so, certainly, than she needed to be. (1981:156–57)

By the end of the second semester, the staffing of research projects and the preferences of students had aligned most of the students with a faculty member. The selection divided students on a gender basis, except for Duncan Strong's Viru Valley expedition, in which he was accompanied by Rose Soleki and Robert Stigler. Julian Steward picked the Puerto Rican team the second semester, two advanced male students, Robert Manners and Raymond Scheele, and three entering men, Sidney Mintz, Eric Wolf, and Stanley Diamond. The research group was briefed on the background of Puerto Rico in a seminar in the fall of 1947, which, because of Steward's illness, was conducted by Scheele, who had compiled a bibliography for the project. They were in the field in January 1948, accompanied by a field director, John Murra, a

Latin Americanist who had been on the faculty at the University of Chicago. When one of the team, Stanley Diamond, decided to leave soon after they all arrived in the field, Murra replaced him with Elena Padilla, who was a student in the Chicago anthropology department and had a research assignment in Puerto Rico at that time for the Columbia University Bureau of Applied Social Research. She transferred to Columbia when the group returned from the field. Benedict's project engaged all female students, two Ph.Ds, Hu Hsien Chin and Natalie Joffe; two ABDs, Gitel Posnanski and Zekiye Eglar; and two entering students, Marion Roiphe and myself; several other entering students participated for short periods. Many persons outside of anthropology were employed on the project, persons who had relevant knowledge or the national backgrounds to be studied, both senior and student level. Among the Columbia students, a clear division of men and women had emerged.

The high regard for Benedict among both male and female students had given a sense of equality in the department, and after her death the women became aware that she had been the bulwark for this attitude among students and faculty in department affairs. In the spring of 1949 Steward brought two members of the Mundial Upheaval Society on the faculty, Elman Service and Morton Fried, and the three ushered in a new phase in the department, emphasizing evolutionism and materialism and critical of the Boasian view of culture. The newcomers set out to reform the department. Alfred Kroeber had begun teaching the fall Benedict died, after he retired from Berkeley. He was an admirer of Benedict's contributions, but he did not effectively oppose Strong's and Steward's program for the department. Marian Smith moved to England in 1949, depleting the Boasian tradition; however, Margaret Mead taught a semester course most years as adjunct professor from 1948 until her death in 1978. Steward himself left Columbia for the University of Illinois in 1952, Service left for the University of Michigan in 1953, and the department went through new phases.

Mead was not influential in the training of graduate students at this time in the way Benedict had been. She focused solely on personality and culture and did not support student interests in the broader perspectives in which Benedict had taught. Furthermore, as adjunct professor and with her office located at the American Museum of Natural History, and by her own choice, she was not an influence in the department. Steward and Kroeber took on roles as dissertation advisers for Benedict's students, but neither one concerned himself with this work or tried to mediate in the assault on Benedict's ideas and methods waged by the new reformers in the department. At this period, Jane Belo was denied a pass on her qualifying examination. She had published four journal articles on Bali, all later reprinted twice each, and

the articles have been highly regarded (Belo 1970; Boon 1990:193, 1999). She did not qualify in the new materialism. A woman who entered in 1950 was restricted in her course enrollments because her college degree was in physics and math, not the background the reformers sought. She and another woman received the two highest grades on the qualifying exams in January and in June and then became aware of "the ways both direct and indirect in which we were made to feel as if we were irrelevant. We experienced none of the mentoring that we saw going on with the better male students, and basically no one showed much interest in what we were thinking about for our research" (Mencher 1997). About this time a Chinese-educated female student was terminated at Morton Fried's request. She then transferred to New York University and, inspired by its anthropology faculty, wrote a dissertation that became the most important book on Chinese American community organization yet published (Kuo 1977).

Ruth Benedict was in a contested position intellectually for most of her career, and this held true in her final two years. The study of national culture was a bold undertaking, an attempt to bring methodological order to the ad hoc ventures of anthropologists in wartime, and it was much criticized within her profession. In the Columbia department, she faced competition for students far beyond her previous rivalry with Ralph Linton and faced the competition of a new wave of materialism and economic fundamentalism. In teaching, she attempted to train a new cohort of students in the broad cultural anthropology she had developed, with help from the ethnographic work of many of her students, directly out of Boas's base, and in which she had provided the matrix for Mead's methods and concepts for studying individuals in culture. This complex position and undertaking are what Erik Erikson perceived when he said of Ruth Benedict in the memorial service after her death: "She lived in the thick of an intellectual battle, which put living on the defensive" (1949:16).

CHAPTER 7

# Ruth Benedict's Contribution to Anthropology

## Placing Herself among Theorists

Ruth Benedict remained interested in the big problems taken on by the nineteenth-century anthropologists and in some of their modes of thought. Although she taught and wrote mainly about the diversity of cultural behavior, she was interested in the nineteenth-century hypothesis of psychic unity of humankind. She considered Theodore Waitz "a careful student" on this question; furthermore, she considered him an early proponent of the idea of culture because he explained progress by psychocultural conditions and rejected environmental, technological, and racial explanations of progress. He recognized cumulative cultural development but did not think there had been unilineal evolution. She thought that in spite of shortcomings in their methods, theories, and assumptions, some of the nineteenth-century evolutionists' analyses of primitive societies were valid and lasting contributions, for example, E. B. Tylor's writings on animism and his work on criteria for determining the independent invention or diffusion of traits of culture and R. R. Marrett's placement early in human thought of the idea of manna, which "has not been completely superceded in Western culture but has been considerably reduced" (Theory 10/7/47). Benedict commended L. H. Morgan's invention of kinship studies. She assumed, along with Tylor, that there were "cradle traits of mankind," and they were seen in the ethnographies of remote primitive cultures, Tierra del Fuego, Australia, Melanesia. One of them was the widespread "making-of-man cult," with its myth about women's initial possession of sacred knowledge and men's ritual usurpation of this knowledge. She thought Adolf Bastian's work fell short principally because he did not try to develop a method for distinguishing between what he referred to as *volkegedanken* and *elemetargedanken*, local ideas and universal ideas, and did not say what he would include in the important latter category. In several commentaries Benedict itemized cultural universals that had been generally agreed on among anthropologists, and she began adding to them. She defined them as beyond cultural relativity, a status that did not

claim universality but meant they were necessary to beneficial and durable society, which was in fact a condition assumed for universals. Moreover, she said: "Traits beyond cultural relativity are a common denominator of ethical moral sanctions" (Social Organization 12/10/46). A. R. Radcliffe-Brown had a similar objective, and he defined a condition he called good health in society, a condition Benedict also sought to define. She respected Tylor's procedures for testing propositions, his selective use of evolution as explanation, his varied investigations and sense of problem. She noted also his explanation of the idea sometimes found in cultures that all deaths are murder – that this idea indicated an "unhappy people" – was the earliest example of "that kind of point," meaning psychological evaluation of culture as she discussed it in the last lecture of Theory, Culture. It became apparent that she herself was engaged with some of the problems and methods of nineteenth-century anthropology: "Knowledge of the range of institutions throughout the world is important. One must try to find out the meaning or importance of the presence or absence of particular institutions" (Personality and Culture 2/13/47). The book on comparative problems probably was still on her agenda. She regretted that the early theorists of comparativism had so little data available to them, and she saw the main objective of anthropology as its obligation to collect the data of the diversity of world cultures.

Boas's critique of nineteenth-century evolutionary thought had not rejected the whole idea of social evolution, and Benedict itemized "valid evolutionary principles" in the summations of two of her courses, noting mastery of the environment, increasing population density, and development of complexity of organization (Social Organization 1/16/47; Personality and Culture 4/8, 10/47). The fact of social evolution was part of her general intellectual orientation, and her references were to V. Gordon Childe's interpretations, as well as to Leonard Hobhouse, Gerald Wheeler, and Morris Ginsburg. The principle that in the evolution of society there had been increasing size of the political group of identification, a point widely inferred at that time if not in the present, was part of her idealistic internationalism; Boas had stated the same principle (Social Organization 1/16/47; Boas 1908, in Stocking ed. 1974:281; see also Cole 1999:263). She took over Boas's old role of critiquing evolutionary stages in reviewing volume two of Wilhelm Schmidt's *Der Ursprung der Gottesidee* on American Indian cultures, noting that in categorizing the earliest evolutionary stage only by the presence of belief in a high god, he anomalously placed the resource-rich and socially complex Haida, Tlingit, Maidu, and Wintu tribes as *urvolker*, while leaving out the socially and economically less developed Dené and Great Basin tribes (Benedict 1930b). What Benedict criticized in the new evolutionary theory that was

pursued in the 1940s was its exclusion of human agency from affecting social change. She made the same criticism of materialism, that it took factors of ecology, labor, and property ownership as primary determinants of social relations and culture over and above ideological and attitudinal causes of change: "One should not assume property relations to be determining ones. Property forms merely constitute one point of crystallization of the cultural attitudes, just one set of interpersonal relations" (Personality and Culture 10/15/46). Lack of recognition of human agency was also her criticism of Alfred Kroeber's (1917) concept of culture as "superorganic" and operating by its own internal dynamic. While she thought his criticism of the "great man theory of history," implicit in his view of culture as superorganic, was a corrective when he wrote it in 1919, the human mind and psyche should not be eliminated from culture, as Kroeber continued to do in his *Configurations of Culture Growth* (1944).

Although Benedict's early writing on pattern takes a synchronic framework in the three cultures she described, Zuni, Kwakiutl, and Dobu, cultures with little known about their histories at that time, when she later designed Project #35 on acculturation and Project #126 on South American ethnology, each was set in a framework of historical contacts and diffusion. When she studied national cultures, she engaged history and historical symbols in culture. In addition to histories, Benedict had worked on processes of culture change since her 1926 project on acculturation. The categories of culture change that she set up in her courses included internal change over and above the valid evolutionary principles, for example, she spoke of the supererogates of culture increasing their commitment to certain attitudes and carrying them beyond utility in an intensification of the cultural ideas (Personality and Culture 1/9/47, 4/8/47). Her models for studying acculturation covered long time-spans, as in North and South American Indian cultures' aboriginal and colonial periods (Benedict 1943a). In order to present the topic of acculturation under colonization, she drew up a typology of colonization procedures that opened up the subject to an extent ahead of her time. Her typology included colonization with or without conquest of territory, with or without corvée labor, with professional administrators or with untrained ones, with co-optation of a native elite or with its destruction, with settlement by a yeomanry or by feudal estates, with colonization in varying ecological conditions, and with racial prejudice on the part of the colonizers or relative absence of it. She discussed these factors with examples from European colonization of North and South America, Muslim expansion in Africa, Inca organization of empire, and Dutch colonization of Java and with reference to different British colonization methods. Examples were briefly

referenced, but the structure for analysis was substantial (Personality and Culture 4/15–22/47). This interest appeared in her review of *Frontier Folkways* by sociologist James G. Leyburn (Benedict 1935g), a book that described four different forms of frontier society – the homesteading community, the settlement plantation, the exploited plantation, and the mining camp – a typology based on fewer factors than Benedict's but probably a stimulus to her later one. She employed history also in describing variations of Jewish adaptations to dominant ethnic groups in Europe. She was interested in studying changes over time and space in Christianity. She stressed the importance in culture of a people's myths of history (Personality and Culture 4/15–22/47; Religions 5/13/47; u.p. 1943e).

Benedict's retention of a historical dimension along with her primary synchronic focus is important to note, although she was certainly an exemplar of what Stocking called a redefinition by the 1920s of American and British anthropology in synchronic terms (2001:316; 1976). She discussed the two approaches, diachronic and synchronic, in a class lecture and summed up: "In synchronic studies the primary focus is the interaction of institutions. . . . Diachronic studies concern changes in habits of individuals. . . . All changes in responses of individuals become crystallized into changed institutions. . . . In synchronic studies culture is primary. In diachronic studies the individual is primary. This is theoretically true, but it is not a strictly either/or proposition" (Personality and Culture 3/6/47). The individual is the agent of change. Benedict's culture and personality work was both synchronic and diachronic.

Boas was interested in the diffusion of traits both as a time chart for history and migration and as a process of selection and rejection of traits and their reinterpretation to fit the adopting culture. Of these two processes, Benedict found fault with later reconstructions of North American Indian history made by some of her colleagues and doubted that histories of these groups could be reconstructed by the charts of diffusion over time and space that they worked out; instead of this approach, she took up Boas's second interest, the process of choice and reinterpretation of diffused traits. She critiqued the method of historical reconstruction through plotting the routes and surmising the travel time for diffusion of traits known as trait distribution or age and area studies and dubbed by Benedict "time equals space theories," projects of Alfred Kroeber, Robert Lowie, and Clark Wissler and others for North American areas and of Daniel S. Davidson for Australia. Although she commended the detailed ethnographic data they and their students assembled in pursuit of historical reconstruction, Benedict critiqued their reconstructions, finding they employed dubious assumptions and that their

conclusions differed according to each one's assumptions (Theory 10/9/47). Some have suggested that professional rivalry with these colleagues, two of whom had been considered for Boas's chair at Columbia, motivated Benedict's critique of them, but this disregards the validity of her critique of their method and the method's early demise. Regna Darnell sees these two viewpoints as a methodological sequence: "The distribution studies were a stage in the development of Boasian anthropology which had to precede the pattern/integration concerns of the more recent era. Those who studied trait distribution were themselves eager to move on to the next stage; their concerns were theoretical, but this methodological step had to come first" (1977:21). Eagerness to move on describes Irving Hallowell, Edward Sapir, and Ruth Benedict herself, and less Alfred Kroeber and least Robert Lowie.

Instead of historical reconstruction, Benedict initially took up the subject of the reinterpretation of culture traits as they diffused and were incorporated into the receiving culture. Her first work on the vision and guardian spirit complexes and the alterations of these practices in different cultural contexts, that is, on certain culture traits that had prominent psychic aspects, foreshadows the ideas that next concerned her. Benedict thought that selection and reinterpretation of traits arose from group preferences and shared attitudes, and she came to see these as a shared psychological bent within a society, a tendency strengthened by a preference for integration in culture. It brought about and maintained a configuration. This was the position she expounded from 1928 through 1934 and which remained fundamental to her thinking.

It was not only in her writings and in teaching that she defined her positions but also in reviews of other anthropologists' historical works and ethnographies. These reviews show also her engagement with collegial debate and her promotion of anthropology before an audience of general readers of the *New York Herald Tribune Review of Books*, the weekly where may of her reviews appeared. She reviewed positively Lowie's *Are We Civilized? Human Nature in Perspective* (Benedict 1929b), a history of human society that gave a dismal view of culture progress through emphasizing periods and societies that lacked rational solutions to human problems. She was critical of another type of history, Paul Radin's historical conjectures of American Indian culture history and his conjectural evolutionary stages of religion, which she considered ungrounded constructions, presented in *The Story of the American Indian* (1928), *Indians of South America* (1942), and *Primitive Religion* (1937), as well as his history of racial explanation of cultural achievements, *The Racial Myth* (1934). Radin's large-scale historical conjectures were far

afield from the local and carefully plotted historical reconstructions of Boas, Kroeber, Lowie, and Wissler. Radin had been trained in academic history and did not derive his ideas of history from Boas, and only his ethnographic writings are within the Boasian tradition. Benedict reviewed Radin's historical books, charging he ignored contemporary findings and methods and invented histories; Radin had postulated the spread and decline of a great Maya-Toltec culture throughout Central and North America, then its loss, leaving the Indian cultures found at the time of European contact to be explained by their vague memory of this past greatness. Benedict explained to the general readers whom Radin addressed that these speculations did not accord with most anthropologists' model of diverse ecologically simple cultures out of which local peaks of complex development were built. Radin's history of South American Indians "crosses swords with all previous students and is by no means convincing." He ignored the general findings that tribes of the various South American linguistic stocks had spread and intermingled and "taken to themselves habits of life that are distinctive for the region where they live," habits that were not distinctive to a linguistic stock (Benedict 1928b). He had constructed a route of spread of the supposed South American civilizers, Arawak Indians, with little evidence. She criticized particularly his use of a broad title, *Indians of South America*, yet his ignoring the major social and political problems posed to South American nations by the large Indian populations, where "in Peru he [the Indian] is the ubiquitous laborer on whom production primarily depends and in Brazil he is the wild primitive escaping ever further into the jungle away from servitude to the whites" (Benedict 1942h).

If Benedict is thought to have concerned herself only with psychological interests, these reviews show her engagement with questions of history, labor, and state policy on native populations. Radin's brief book *The Racial Myth* did not introduce the general reader to "the heavy artillery of the known facts of physical anthropology" but reviewed history's sequence of myths of cultural supremacy and the latest one, the claims of Aryan racial and cultural superiority. But Radin criticized Nazi racism by means of a prejudicial portrayal of medieval German culture, derogating the Teutonic legends as "glorification of intemperance." Benedict cautioned: "The past the Germans idealized was probably not worse nor better than the stuff that has served other peoples for a Golden Age" (1934c). Radin's *Primitive Religion* argued that the shamans of simple societies, "the priests-thinkers," brought the layperson's envisioned demons, and people's hope for the demons' help, into a system that the shamans manipulated for payments for themselves.

After society evolved to an agricultural stage, shamanism evolved into priesthoods through which the priests-thinkers assured themselves richer rewards. Benedict gave Radin no special credit for his centering of the individual as the innovator in culture. This was not a new idea, she wrote, and was an "anthropological commonplace." She challenged "first the author's return to a theory of primitive peoples' conscious purposive adaptation of means to known and foreseen ends, and second his return to very thorough going belief in evolutionary stages" (Benedict 1937a). In her religion course, Benedict observed that Radin's interpretation of religious practice, as created by the shamans or priests for their own gain, applies in some cultures, but there are cultures where the shaman receives little reward and practices entirely outside the system of wealth, and she cited the Chukchi of Siberia (Religions 3/27/47).

Benedict was much interested in the thought of Emile Durkheim and discussed his work in several courses. He had taken a position similar to Kroeber's in saying that society was explained only by social facts, not psychological ones, but this theoretical point, she said, was belied by the large place in his work of emotions and the individual actor. His inclusion of mind and emotion in social phenomena showed that his intention was to reject the utilitarian psychology of his time, and its "postulated pre-cultural individual," and not psychology in a fundamental sense. Durkheim's collective representations "are the discovery of culture. . . . His unit is the individual along with his collective representations" (Theory 11/20/47). Although critical of his polemicism, her admiration for Durkheim was long-standing and predated her fieldwork in Pima and Zuni (Theory 12/11/47).[1] Valid as Durkheim's conceptual scheme was, he had done no fieldwork, and the ethnography available in his time did not show the great variation in societies that anthropologists had since then described. For instance, Chukchi society showed anomie in a different light from his observations about it: "Where Durkheim ascribed anomie to disorganized society vs. organized society, here [in Chukchi] we have an example of a society that institutionalizes anomie" (Personality and Culture 2/18/47). Concerning his view that intensification itself is the sacred, "this is easier to explain in Australia than in sorcery societies" (Religions 11/16/47). She commended his intensive study of the available ethnographies on Australia and contrasted his work with the more superficial comparativist work of his contemporary, Lucien Lévy-Bruhl. Her argument against Lévy-Bruhl was, of course, more fundamental and was made in her review of *L'Ame Primitive*. She criticized the main point of this book, that the primitive mind made no distinction between an object and the symbol of it, and she considered this an antiquated psychology (Benedict 1928c). Durkheim's typology

of segmented, organic, and hierarchical societies was basic in her course on social organization; she modified and critiqued it for four lectures.

Benedict's sense of affinity for Durkheim is a point of difference between her and Boas. George Stocking has noted how different Boas's and Durkheim's positions were: Durkheim emphasizing cause, classification, system, analogies derived from biology, all of which had little place in Boas's thought; and Durkheim finding the basis of religion in society, while Boas found it in "the relation of man to the outer world" and in imagination and emotion (Boas 1910, in Stocking ed. 1974:256; Stocking 1974:16). Benedict considered social organization more fundamental in culture than religion (Religions 3/4/47). For her, "the relation of man to the outer world" may not be an inspiration for religion, for example, in ancestor worship, salvation religions, and sorcery religions.

Benedict credited the American anthropologists more than the British with making fieldwork primary and credited Americans' attention to "detailed study of particular things . . . in actual local behavior" as the first functionalist work. However, she praised Malinowski's *The Sexual Life of Savages in Northwestern Melanesia* (1929):

> The Trobriands are one of the few places in the world where we know primitive life. . . . Professor Malinowski has the knack of portraying living beings. . . . Historically the component strands of this fantastic web are diverse and are found in several different and not very congruous cultures. The credible whole which the Trobrianders have made out of these materials, with the very special interpretations they have given them, is a curious study in civilization. (Benedict 1929a)

The importance of area context was frequently mentioned in her book reviews, as it is here. In spite of the British functionalists' valuable fieldwork, they did not add "a new conceptual scheme." She commended Radcliffe-Brown's objective of finding laws of the functioning of society, particularly his view that the function of social institutions is to maintain euphoria and to carry the group through dysphoric periods. "Euphoria," as Radcliffe-Brown used it, is not unlike Benedict's "sense of being free." She commended his discussion of "good order, social health" and "disorder, social ill-health," which accompanied his criticism of Boasians, including Benedict herself (Radcliffe-Brown 1935b). Indeed, she criticized her own early article on religion in ways close to Radcliffe-Brown's criticism of the Boasians (Religions 5/13/47). Radcliffe-Brown erred, however, in the law he put forth, that the form of punishment was correlated with the form of social solidarity, whether segmentary, organic, or hierarchical (1934a, b; 1935a). Benedict held that the laws

of punishment in many segmentary societies did not follow the principle Radcliffe-Browne thought typified this stage, as it did in Australia, that is, the *lex talionis* as the regulator of blood feuds, and Benedict cited the Kaingang of Brazil and the Eskimo for lacking regulation of the blood feud and the tribal-level punishment of murder among the segmentary Cheyennes (Social Organization 10/15/46).

Her summary criticism of the British functionalists was that they did not ask, "Why do some peoples preserve the group in one way and some in another? Why do some peoples reassert their unity by sharing hostile and destructive ceremonies? . . . This question, about why a certain type of thought, is implied in the categories of the functionalists and it should be asked" (Theory 12/4/47). That the functionalists fell short in failing to explain causation implies that causes can and should be explained. The way she posed the question that they should have answered suggests she thought there were psychological explanations. Although Radcliffe-Brown had not raised this question, he had proposed causal explanations of penal codes, however faulty Benedict found them, and he had given an explanation of religion, which she endorsed: in her course on religion she recommended two valid guiding concepts, one of which was "that it is a system of social control and social satisfaction, a system that reaffirms the attitudes of the group, as Radcliffe-Brown and Durkheim treat religion" (Religions 5/13/47). Her review in the *New York Herald Tribune Book Review* of Malinowski's posthumously published book, *A Scientific Theory of Culture* (1944), noted that he drew up a useful framework for the characteristics of institutions, although in her theory course she said it was merely a list and that it is more constructive to pose a problem and answer it; but the review continued that his functionalism did not include the causal meaning of the word "function," that is, he did not observe the causal relationships among parts of a culture: "Much work has been done on these problems [citing types of causal relationships she would have disagreed with, namely class structure, form of production, sex customs, population density, and race] and there is pressing need for scientific study of them in a large range of societies" (Benedict 1944). This criticism was more explicit than any statements of her own objectives in advocating that causes be determined. Her positive evaluations of Radcliffe-Brown contrasted to antagonism to him on the part of some Boasians, antagonism citing more his disdain for their field research and his English mannerisms than his work, and Benedict had criticized Radcliffe-Brown on the same grounds in a 1932 letter, which Margaret Mead included in her portrait of Benedict (Darnell 1990:236, 1998b:9; Mead 1959:326). When Benedict gave a studied evaluation

of Radcliffe-Brown in these course lectures, she was enthusiastic about much of his work.

Several of Benedict's reviews made methodology the main point of criticism. In functioning cultures, unlike those that can only be reconstructed, the ethnographer should not rely mainly on informants but should include participant observation. Robert Redfield's *Tepoztlan, a Mexican Village* (1930), about a village with a rich functioning folk life, disappointed in this regard: "This [transcribing from informants] has been of necessity the desperate resource of anthropologists working among the North American Indians. They had usually no alternative working in a culture that was no longer functioning or the functioning of which had been driven underground till it was treason for a native to betray it. . . . The Lynds in *Middletown* [1929] were wise indeed to combine with the necessary groundwork a great amount of actual participation in the life of the community. They saw their program as that of knowing how these people felt and schemed" (Benedict 1930a). When Redfield later wrote on an acculturated village, *Chan Kom: A Mayan Village* (1937), Benedict criticized his failure to reconstruct the recent past. The village was "founded by émigrés with touching secular enthusiasm" and had achieved many improvements in housing, schools, and roads, and present conditions and aims were well described, but there was no data on any points of the cultural background. "It does not seem advisable to put a tabu on knowledge of background easily obtainable, in favor of exclusive presentation of happenings under observation" (Benedict 1937c). In both reviews, Benedict asked for a more holistic view and thus more explanation. The same methodological limitations left many points unexplained in Hortense Powdermaker's *Life in Lesu* (1933). In this account of a radically changed Melanesian culture, where people grimly did the heavy corvée labor assigned by the colonial owners, the recently lost culture was not reconstructed. The culture monetized every aspect of interpersonal relations, but nothing was reported about the source of monetization, whether precontact or a colonial introduction, a subject that could only be found out through native informants (Benedict 1933).

Together these reviews conveyed Benedict's appreciation of ethnography, her attention to methods, and her commitment to explanation. She cared a great deal about what problems were taken to the field since she saw anthropology's mission as the accurate understanding of the diverse cultures created by humankind. This was Boas's mission for fieldwork, and it was essentially the purpose of British anthropology. Benedict expressed despair when trivial psychological problems detracted from holistic study, when fanciful historical hypotheses distorted baseline histories, and when a study of an

unknown culture reported only parts of it. Her trust in the fieldwork-based monograph was very great. She agreed with Boas that the obligation and the contribution of anthropology were initially the collection of field data before the oncoming spread of Western cultures obscured the diversity of thought in the world's cultures. Fieldwork accomplished much more than reconstruction when it took place in functioning cultures. Fieldwork could correct misinterpretations introduced by theoretical assumptions, including those of cultural relativity. Cultural relativity "is a comparison of form and does not include the question of function. Fieldwork does not separate form and function, although cultural relativity does" (Social Organization 12/10/46). A principal criticism of Leslie White was his view of the "superiority of theory and premise. Fieldwork is not tied to theory" (Theory 1/13/48).

Although Benedict is known much more for her general writings than for her field reports, and her time in the field was relatively short, she asked rhetorically and proudly in a class, "Why did I spend five whole summers of my life in Zuni?" She answered, because fieldwork is the essential in anthropology.[2] She spent six summers in the field, two of them in Zuni, during which she also worked in the pueblos of Cochiti and Acoma, as well as one summer among the Serano and one among the Pima. She also spent two summers supervising field schools for students, one among the Mescalero Apache and one among the Blackfeet. Her hearing impairment made learning languages and fieldwork difficult, and consequently she worked through an interpreter. This method lent itself more to recording folk tales and ritual texts than to participant observation (Mead 1974:30). Her most admired field monograph is the two-volume *Zuni Mythology* (1935a), a collection of myths and ritual texts and an interpretation of their themes. Her claim in class that she was a field-seasoned anthropologist was valid.

More of her work was in reading and interpreting the field notes of her students. Many who knew her have written that she did this with great care and advised on presentation, on defining problems, and on interpretation. In doing so, she took their illustrations to support points in her own writing, but many of her ethnographic illustrations were drawn from ethnographies done earlier and in other contexts. She trained students to get beyond form to find the function of institutions. Her main interest at the time was in maintenance of community: How large was it? How did it integrate itself. What mechanisms supported cooperative projects? Could in-group aggression be regulated? The symbolism of the contents of the medicine bundle had preoccupied early field workers. Benedict wanted to focus on the bundle itself: Did it symbolize the tribe in reintegration ceremonies, or was it private property? If individually owned, was it used to kill or to protect?

## When Comparativism Flourished

Ruth Benedict was an ambitious comparativist. She expected to be able to compare the twenty or more societies where her Project #35 had funded her students' dissertation fieldwork, at least to compare them on several complex dimensions of functioning. Her writings used comparisons of two or several cultures, usually on strongly contrasting cultural arrangements. Her teaching technique employed detailed comparisons between the Cheyenne and the Chukchi, between the Zuni and Arunta of Australia, between Thailand and Burma, as well as briefer comparisons, for example, between trade in Melanesia and trade in Polynesia, and aspects of the Eurasian community design compared to the American political design. She had described her objective in comparative study: "We need desperately to know the positive conditions under which, for instance, social conflict and disintegration occur. . . . We need to know what conditions are necessary for social cohesion and stability" (u.p. 1941a). Years later, after "thick description" and the self-reflexive field-worker introduced new perspectives to anthropological thinking, comparativism has been more difficult to pursue than in the prewar period, when there was confidence in the accuracy and objectivity of ethnography.

Benedict's comparative work principally concerned the social and cultural basis of the welfare of members of the group, their security in subsistence and safety in the in-group, and the allowance for "a sense of being free" among all members. The former two were conditions readily discoverable, and the latter was a condition of mind that she thought could be identified. Benedict assumed that the cultural settings that allowed a sense of freedom were varied. She described its strong presence among the Dakota Indians and the Blackfeet of Montana in "Primitive Freedom" (Benedict 1942d). Social freedom was a widely discussed condition in that period of the rise of totalitarian nations, and there was much agreement that democracy allowed greater freedom than totalitarianism. Surely psychiatry gave no support for a human motivation for seeking freedom, yet the individualism of the period heightened freedom's value. Writers gave different meanings to the word "freedom." Benedict illustrated freedom as a psychological and social state of being: a sense that one could take initiative; that one could make personal amends for ones' misdeeds, thus maintaining social respect; that one could have a sense of self-fulfillment within the strictures of one's culture; and that such conditions invigorated social life and were desirable conditions and thus were close to a universal need. In the three manuscripts that were precursors of "Primitive Freedom," she wrote: "In many primitive societies the individual follows with ease and without arbitrary interference from

others the goals which he sets for himself. . . . His own goals are clear to him and he is not conscious of outside interference in reaching them. He regards himself as free" (u.p. ca. 1941a:2; u.p. ca. 1941b:4; u.p. 1941e:4) The social and psychological conditions she described advanced the inquiry as far as any of her contemporaries did.

In connection with her comparative work on social cohesion, Benedict changed her way of thinking about religion from interest in the religious experience to the contribution of religion to social cohesion and to tribal security. Her framework differentiated religions that accomplished social purposes and religions that accomplished individual purposes. Among the former were religions aimed at renewal of natural resources and those that aimed to protect the health of the group. Among religions oriented mainly to furthering individual ends were those that allowed individuals to seek supernatural power or protection or salvation. Ancestor worship benefited the group of descendants but was not tribally inclusive and sometimes was manipulated to benefit single descendants. She had earlier focused on the religious experience as the core aspect of religions, "a religious thrill," an experience more intense in some individuals than in others. Those who experienced the thrill were the religious practitioners, employing the supernatural power accessible to them, and their experiences defined religion in their culture. Benedict developed this initial approach to religion in a project that followed her early work on the concepts of the vision and the guardian spirit, a book to be titled *The Religion of the North American Indians* (u.p. ca. 1925), but she abandoned the project after completion of several long chapters when she became interested in the psychological patterning of whole cultures.[3] Her changeover to the analysis of the social functioning of religion was indicated in the 1942 address "The Psychology of Faith" and was fully outlined in the course Religions of Primitive Peoples in 1947, as can be seen in the "text" of that course.

A significant book of this period was Erich Fromm's *Escape from Freedom* (1941), describing Germans' increasing sense of personal isolation and self-doubt under Nazism and their finding security in sadomasochistic social programs, psychological conditions that Fromm analyzed as a maladaptation to the social freedom and sense of individuation fostered by the Enlightenment. Benedict had met Fromm, a psychoanalyst, on several occasions and admired his thinking, commenting on his comparison of German and American individuals' insight into themselves, the former with little detachment from their culture and little self-insight and the latter with great detachment and ready to pursue self-insight (RB to MM, May 26, 1936, MM S5). In her review of Fromm's book, Benedict granted the validity of his observation

about modern persons' difficulty in responding to the opportunity for freedom and for a sense of individuation, but she criticized his perception that liberty came to be understood only during the Enlightenment period and that preliterate people were de-individualized by "primal ties." She replied: "Many, many primitive tribes recognize private and individual motivation in an extreme fashion and accept it, far more than does civilized man, as something not to be interfered with or criticized. . . . By every standard Dr. Fromm gives they seem to me to have 'positive freedom.'" She agreed with Fromm on the importance of studying what he called "negative freedom," that is, the freedom to exploit others, saying it could be studied in some primitive societies, as well as its opposite: how other societies "allowed man to develop a self which embraces freedom as the best of life" (Benedict 1942g). Fromm and Benedict were members of the New York Psychology Group, a seminar of approximately twenty-five persons, most of them psychiatrists and theologians, sponsored by the National Committee on Religion in Higher Education. In the spring of 1942 Benedict gave a paper on the semester's topic, the psychology of faith. The meaning of faith, which she took as her topic, was "a psychological attitude of self confidence and firmness," the same meaning Fromm gave to his term "rational faith." They both described this attitude as a social condition and not as faith in a religion. Her observations about religious faith, a meaning of faith that the group was accustomed to using, concerned the commonness of faith in primitive societies and of doubt in modern society, but her central points were about social conditions that underlay faith as an attitude of self-confidence and firmness. Primitive religions that assumed hostile gods gave no such self-confidence and firmness, but

> some culture have it to an extent that we can hardly realize . . . many primitive religions are great imaginative statements of tribal solidarity and of warm human relations. Their ceremonies are directed toward attaining goals which benefit all members of the group – promoting fertility for all, cleansing the whole tribe of sickness, thanksgiving for livelihood all have shared. . . . But to have such a religion, the social order, in rules of economic distributions, in legal matters, in family life, must be set up so that individuals have experiences of cooperation and of mutual benefit. In the study of rational faith from comparative material, the essential point is to discover what laws govern its appearance as a social phenomenon. . . . I think I can summarize them [laws] most briefly by saying that such societies make certain privileges and liberties common and inalienable to all members. . . . Every society has a different list, but in so far as they are made the inalienable right of all members of a community, you have a basis

> in the social order for the presence of rational faith as a community-wide experience. (u.p. 1942a)

Her article "Primitive Freedom" was published that same spring; a year later she began her national cultures work, and she did not publish further on the social conditions for these positive attitudes.

In a review of Fromm's next book, *Man for Himself: An Inquiry into the Psychology of Ethics* (1948), Benedict expressed regret that "great modern thinkers . . . have generally been uninterested in universal values or have explicitly repudiated them . . . they have expounded cultural relativism or Freudian unconscious motivations, and have not traditionally concerned themselves with the Good Man and the Good Society." Fromm's explanation of morality, as a man's courage "to be himself and to be for himself," offered insight for "those who are seeking to re-examine morality in light of all that modern students have learned about man's mind and emotions" (Benedict 1948c). She ended her course on religion with a brief cultural point that complemented Fromm's psychoanalytic point about modern individuals – although she did not refer to Fromm in any class – that "man seldom gets adult enough to approve of himself so he has invented gods and angels who will approve of him. It is understandable that man does not want to take the burden of self-criticism and self punishment on himself" (Religions 5/15/47). Yet some religions reversed roles. She had begun the course with Australian aborigine culture where human beings themselves were supernaturals, where each clan, not gods, was responsible for reproduction of its totemic species for the good of all, where morals were not stipulated by a god but by the old men who in their civic roles made the moral judgments and punishments.

Benedict's phrasings of "the sense of freedom" in lectures supplied some parameters and some leads to what this idea meant. "Each society has a different list of civil liberties, but any society is free in that it values those liberties which are made common to all men or can be made common to all men. This rules out certain liberties, like sorcery power and the liberty to exploit" (Theory 1/15/48). "The free society, as distinguished from the idea of civil liberties alone, is that which has freedoms that do not imply an underdog, such as our civil liberties, hospitality or the right of being fed by the community, and recognition that status has been attained by work and ability and is available to anyone who wants to go through the process of attaining it" (Social Organization 12/10/46). "The real definition of freedom, that of 'loyalty freely given,' means that individuals and institutions are acting in the same direction. Discipline is necessary to any social life and exists in any society. Freedom is the condition of outer and inner ordinances being

the same" (Personality and Culture 3/4/47). This project on an area beyond relativity was her assignment to anthropology and to herself, one that she probably intended to return to after her researches in applying the idea of patterns to contemporary cultures.

One of Benedict's statements in this regard has been labeled "overweening and reductionist" by Michela di Leonardo. She quoted Benedict: "The study of culture and personality . . . can tell us under what conditions democracies have worked and under what conditions they have proved socially disastrous. It can tell us under what conditions men have regarded themselves as free men and under what conditions they have regarded themselves as not free" (1998:189). Benedict's statement was made in the first Shaw lecture at Bryn Mawr in 1941, a lecture also published in the *American Scholar* (1942a:248). In the subsequent lectures in this series, she described some of her findings on these questions, including the near dissolution of small democratic societies that had no institutions for control of sorcerers practicing in the in-group, as among the Pomo and Yurok of California; she introduced a contrast, a Hindu multicaste community that was well governed by a council of elders and where a man said "how good it is to be *his* man," thus showing that hierarchical societies may fulfill the expected obligations to subordinates and that it was possible for hierarchy to work and for democracy not to work. Di Leonardo appears to trust only declarations that Western domination of others has been the fundamental cause of all modern social phenomena, and actually this factor was not overlooked at Benedict's time. Benedict's criticisms of others' work often reminded that indigenous elements and the historically intrusive elements both produced the observed culture. This was a basic assumption in acculturation studies. The eclipse of comparativism as a scientific tool in anthropology has led this same critic of the discipline to write that the "natural laboratory" metaphor used by Benedict and others, meaning that the study of primitive cultures showed the range of variation in human cultures, "forward[s] the notion that Others exist not for themselves, and in the long, power-laden interaction with 'us' inside the stream of history, but fundamentally for our intellectual delectation" (Di Leonardo 1998:187). Benedict explained the primitive laboratory: the anthropologist "can study the strategy by which societies have realized one or another set of values, whether these values have to do with freedom or social cohesion or submission to authority. . . . The anthropological laboratory is not one the investigator sets up himself; it was set up for him by generations of natives working out their own way of life in all its details over many thousands of years" (u.p. ca. 1941a). She was confident that the crises brought on by the self-interested leadership of nations could be diagnosed and treated

through better knowledge of society. Comparativism has maintained its place in investigation, having survived both the declaration quoted above and the postmodern critique of the subjectivity of ethnography. The case for comparativism has been argued recently in the work of Victor de Munck and colleagues (2002).

## Culture and Personality

At the time Benedict was opening up her investigation into an area beyond cultural relativity, she had a second objective, to bring the concept of culture into the thinking of psychotherapists. She saw this as the mission for the culture and personality field, while others in this field had different objectives and interests. Benedict's objective of teaching psychotherapists about the effects of culture on individuals formed her contribution to the field up to the time of her national culture work, when she began using historical perspectives of national character and began various lines of thought that led to her idea of the self. The contrast between the early work of Benedict and some of her contemporaries illustrates the diversity in the field.

In the last chapter of *Patterns of Culture* and in "Anthropology and the Abnormal" (1934b), Benedict had addressed psychiatrists, saying that symptoms considered indications of mental illness are to a great extent those behaviors American culture defines as abnormal, and in other cultures symptoms such as visions and hallucinations have been signs of ability to communicate with supernatural power and have been valued. Mental illness itself was a culturally defined state. Some societies considered the mentally ill person the one who denied hospitality to travelers. Such a person put himself or herself outside the group of mutual obligation. Furthermore, personality traits that differ from the dominant ones may not be considered abnormal in some cultures and, on the contrary, have been a means to high achievement or have not threatened social acceptance for the person who manifested differences from the norm. The abnormal is not a consistent category cross-culturally but is variable and is culturally defined, just as the normal is culturally variable.

"Continuities and Discontinuities in Cultural Conditioning" (1938b) gave a perspective on growth entirely different from genetic psychology, from Freudian theory, and from the idea of culture as conditioner of behavior. Recall that Mead thought Benedict's article had not added anything to her own account of continuity in Samoa and discontinuity in Manus and that Clifford Geertz did not recognize that, for Japan, the discontinuity between childhood and adulthood showed Benedict was not arguing for infantile causation of culture but was expounding a dynamic element in Japanese culture. Benedict's demonstration of discontinuity in the 1938 article brought

together quite impressive examples. In the Arunta tribe of Australia, boys' initial identification with the women's world was transformed through a series of stages and a final rebirth through men's "baby pouch" into adult male prerogatives and responsibilities. As the adolescent boys stoned the women's camp at the close of one of the stages, the ending of childhood and the joining of a new stage of behavioral expectations and responsibilities were acted out. In a tribe of the Trans-Fly River area of New Guinea described by F. E. Williams (1936), men had to take trophy heads in one stage of adulthood and in the next stage cease this aggression and learn nonaggressive ritual procedures. In the neighboring Keraki tribe, boys had to be the passive homosexual partner until age ten; then, to protect them from pregnancy, lye was poured down their throats, and after this ritual they became the active sexual partner to the younger boys. In the next stage, they were expected to begin heterosexual behavior and to beget children. Male homosexuality was not interdicted in later life, nor was its practice prominent. Age grades among the Masai and the Arapaho were also well-known parts of the anthropological literature. The examples of these societies successfully bridging discontinuous cultural expectations in behavior through marking stages and ceremonially conducting the growing boy and the mature man from one stage to the next with clear enactment of the meaning of the transitions were useful lessons for American educators and therapists. Symbolically powerful procedures could bring about fundamental changes in an individual's orientation and self-image.

Discontinuities in the arrangements of the American life cycle were itemized in the 1938 article. American children make no labor contribution to their society and are far distant from industrial operations, while in many primitive societies the young child observes much of the production process and is given tasks appropriate to individual strength, which adults recognize as a contribution of work. American culture forbids sex play in childhood yet expects assertive sexuality in adult men. American culture requires children's submission to parents' authority and moral teaching, yet the submissive child must learn to assert dominance in adulthood if success is to be achieved. In a later article, Benedict rephrased this discontinuity of submission followed by dominance in America as an expectation of passivity in childhood and of active initiative in adulthood (1943b). American society, however, had few bridging mechanisms to conduct individuals through reversals in expectations. In course lectures, she cited other American contradictory forms of social organization, some egalitarian and some hierarchical.

Benedict's point in this article was also the more general one that a pattern could be more than a uniformly shared set and could structure radically

different forms of behavior into a whole and explain them as integral parts of the whole. The article was included in the edited volume *Personality in Nature, Culture and Society* in 1949, and Margaret Mead and Martha Wolfenstein reprinted it in their edited volume, *Childhood in Contemporary Cultures* (1955).

A forerunner of the debate about shame and guilt was the topic of humiliation used as a social sanction, a topic Benedict discussed in "Some Comparative Data on Culture and Personality with Reference to the Promotion of Mental Health" (1939a). Again addressing psychotherapists, she wrote that in some cultures, the novice in adolescent initiation ceremonies was subjected to humiliating treatment, sometimes as an assertion of authority of the men. However, a ceremony of closure of childhood and the initiate's assuming a higher status or entry into adult prerogatives appeared to wipe out the humiliation. It was appropriate only to a previous stage. Humiliation was widely used in American society, she noted, where it was humiliating to be poor and for adults to be dependent. To be poor and dependent was managed without humiliation in some societies by honored giveaways, by an ethic of hospitality, or by attributing positive characteristics to dependency. In America, it is humiliating to be unemployed, she wrote in a paper the same year. "It is in our society the denial of the universal human demand that you shall have some place in the group . . . it is only in our recent industrial civilization that a worker has no assurance of a place; nothing is guaranteed him" (u.p. 1939:9). She described the humiliating social position of young men in Chukchi culture who were allowed no means to own property and thereby overcome humiliation until late adulthood. Chukchi society experienced much psychic instability, murder, and suicide. Interpersonal hostility was projected onto the image of the spirit world, in which evil and implacable spirits controlled human events. Yet humiliation was managed differently in some societies. Kwakiutl culture also elaborated humiliation, interpreting every mishap, small or large, as a humiliating insult. However, the Kwakiutl had a means to overcome humiliation: they distributed manufactures – blankets or canoes, or if the man was a great chief, he distributed hammered sheets of copper shaped in a symbolic form – and the humiliation was wiped out, their dignity restored. The "psychic vigor" of the Kwakiutl, a general condition she attributed to them and one seen in their effective management of their vulnerability to shame, was a lesson for therapists. Later, when Benedict studied Romanian culture, she found a cultural elaboration of the polar opposite of humiliation: pride. The Romanians structured marriage and death as proud occasions, and it was not a culture that employed the sanction of shame. For the Manus in New Guinea, marriage was the point of acceptance of shameful

subordination by the bride to her husband's family and acceptance of heavy debt by the groom.

When Benedict later described Japanese culture, she observed that the Japanese were vulnerable to insult to an unusual degree. The shame inflicted by insult was extreme and had to be avenged. Clearing one's name from insult was an adult preoccupation. She went on to discuss variations in cultural uses of shame. The necessity in Japan to clear one's name "is not, as the phrase goes, Oriental. The Chinese regard all such sensitivity to insults and aspersions as a trait of 'small' people – morally small. . . . The Siamese have no place at all for this kind of sensitivity to insult. Like the Chinese they set store by making their detractor ridiculous but they do not imagine their honor has been impugned" (Benedict 1946a:147). Benedict continued that studies of American working men showed they performed better under competition. In some New Guinea tribes, insult was a goad to reciprocity; indeed, all intervillage hospitality in these tribes was initiated by the rival village shouting insults about the inability of the debtor village to stage a feast. Shame could be extremely disruptive; it could be managed successfully if the culture had also devised a procedure to show insults were undeserved; insults could be goads to heightened personal and social activity. In Japanese culture, shame, although fraught with difficulty, was the principal enforcer of the ethical code and was the main motivation for achievement. Shame was the emotion felt with loss of self-respect. Looking back on Zuni, she explained Zuni men's compulsive preoccupation with ritual as a consequence of anxiety caused by the prohibition of pride and the use of shame as a sanction of behavior (Religions 4/29/47). The cultural sanctions of humiliation and shame were dangerous instruments, but they had been used with safeguards in the vigorous, the extreme, and the admirable cultures of Kwakiutl and Japan.

Benedict's analysis of shame in Japan has been oversimplified in glossing it as "Japan as a shame culture" (Rosenberger 1992:6; Lebra 1983:193, 1992:112). A more considered review of the issue is by Millie R. Creighton (1990). In *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword*, Benedict reported the usual psychological meaning of the terms "shame" and "guilt," that shame was a less compelling emotion than guilt because it was felt only when others knew of one's fault, but guilt was an internalized emotion, felt whether the social group knew about the transgression or not. She noted that a distinction could be drawn in societies sanctioning behavior largely by shame and those employing mainly guilt; this distinction, however, obscured Japanese emotions. Writing of self-respect:

The strong identification of circumspection with self-respect includes,

> therefore, watchfulness of all the cues one observes in other people's acts, and a strong sense that other people are sitting in judgment. "One cultivates self-respect (one must *jicho*)" they say, "because of society." "If there were no society one would not need to respect oneself (cultivate *jicho*)." These are extreme statements of an external sanction for self-respect. They are statements that take no account of internal sanctions for proper behavior. Like the popular sayings of many nations, they exaggerate the case, for Japanese sometimes react as strongly as any Puritan to a private accumulation of guilt. But these extreme statements nevertheless point out correctly where the emphasis falls in Japan. It falls on the importance of shame rather than on the importance of guilt. (Benedict 1946a:222)

Although there was an emphasis in Japanese culture on the social sanction of shame, Benedict observed that in Japan, shame was not merely an external sanction but was often a very deep emotion. She noted how different the Japanese meaning was from the American understandings of shame: "We do not expect shame to do the heavy work of morality. We do not harness the acute personal chagrin which accompanies shame to our fundamental system of morality. The Japanese do" (Benedict 1946a:222, 224). She went on with examples of both shame and guilt sanctioning behavior in a single society and either shame or guilt emphasized in different historical periods of Western societies, making the point that these emotions are not found to be mutually exclusive, nor are the social uses of them, and only the concepts are a polarity. The definitive cross-cultural study of shame and guilt as social sanctions concluded some years later that both shame and guilt are usually employed as sanctions in most societies (Piers and Singer [1953] 1971). Benedict did use the phrases "true shame culture" and "true guilt culture," and she did use the phrase "the primacy of shame in Japanese life" (1946a:223, 224), but it is a misrepresentation to write that she typed Japan as a shame culture and that she "maintained the Japanese as the 'other', lacking control from within" (Rosenberger 1992:6).[4]

## Variations in Culture and Personality Studies

Some of the early contributors to the personality and culture field had quite different approaches from Benedict's. Some wrote life histories; some tested the concepts of psychiatry, genetic psychology, and learning theory with data from preliterate societies. Others used psychoanalytic concepts to deepen their interpretations of these societies, for example, Irving Hallowell, who wrote with great insight on anxiety and aggression in Ojibwa society, employ-

ing Freudian interpretations of those behaviors (1938, 1940, 1941). Hallowell and Benedict were contemporaries. Hallowell began publishing a year ahead of Benedict; both wrote dissertations on the distributions of traits, Benedict "The Concept of the Guardian Spirit in North America" in 1923 and Hallowell "Bear Ceremonialism in the Northern Hemisphere" in 1926, and both dissertations show interest in psychological aspects of culture traits (Darnell 1977). Benedict published first on psychological patterning in culture in 1928, and Hallowell followed with an article, "Culture and Mental Disorder," in 1934. Yet their objectives and methods were very different. Hallowell sought universal characteristics of mind and psyche. Looking back over thirty years of work, he wrote that his overall objective was

> to formulate more explicitly the necessary and sufficient conditions that make a human existence possible and which account for the distinctive quality of human experience. . . . For a human level of existence not only necessitates a unique biological structure and a sociocultural mode of existence, it necessitates a peculiar and distinctive kind of psychological structuralization, characterized by a level of personal adjustment and experience in which a unique and complex integration occurs between responses to an "outer" world of objects and events and responses to an "inner" world of impulse, fantasy, and creative imagination. (Hallowell 1955:vii)

Questions of conditions for the development of human culture, and processes of the human mind, such as Hallowell probed, minimally engaged Benedict. She had said the nineteenth-century anthropologists' similar interest in origins was futile, as Boas had also thought (Cole 1999:265). However, her search for the conditions that would allow a sense of freedom, thus making culture satisfying and durable, is closely related to Hallowell's search for conditions that made human culture possible. Yet their inquiries on this subject differ in that Hallowell studied anxiety and aggression, mental factors that figured prominently in Freudian theory, while Benedict posited an emotion that was seldom recognized in psychiatry and was far removed from instinctual emotions studied by Freud. In addition to Hallowell's testing of Freudian theory in a primitive society, he was interested in theories of perception, particularly how preliterate peoples' perceptions of time and space differed from Western culture–based theoretical formulations. This interest in perception led him to pioneer in the use of the Rorschach test in non-Western societies. In another striking difference, Hallowell speculated, "personality constellations may transcend local ethnic units and be characteristic of the people in considerably wider regions . . . and the Ojibwa in most respects exhibit psychological characteristics shared by other Indians

of the Eastern Woodlands Culture Area," thus extending psychological type more broadly than Benedict and most others in this field. Hallowell described a culturally constructed self-image in Ojibwa thought and stressed its importance in understanding the individual Ojibwa, who "constantly identifies himself as a person" (1955:x, 172). He described a self-image shared within the culture, not a self selectively utilizing his or her culture and managing within it, as Benedict had described selves in her national cultures series. His concept of a culturally shared sense of self was the one that was developed later in this field, but recent work has also returned to the line of thought Benedict worked with in showing that individuals may see themselves differently in different circumstances and may manage and manipulate the various self-images available in their cultures (Desjarlais 1999; Ewing 1990). Hallowell achieved depth in his portrayal of behavior and thought in Ojibwa culture, and he became close to his subjects through numerous field trips. He was not the comparativist that Benedict was, nor was Benedict the thorough field-worker Hallowell was. Benedict's very broad reading in ethnology backed up the many comparative points prominent in her writings. She borrowed from the field notes of her students; she undertook study of a number of nations and a number of types of large-scale political organization. Hallowell's problems were not comparative, and he tested them mainly in the one culture he had studied in the field.

Hallowell had studied with Boas at Columbia during his degree work at the University of Pennsylvania. Boas's students all went their own ways in their viewpoints and maintained independence of each other. Benedict and Hallowell, following this pattern, did not develop professional ties. The surviving correspondence between them in Benedict's papers, just a few letters, contains no comments on either's publications, and most of Hallowell's letters to Benedict were requests for funds for publications series that he edited, for funds for his students, and for a letter of support for a Social Science Research Council application of his own. Benedict and Hallowell worked independently and followed different paths.

Some of the contentions and diversity in the field of culture and personality are seen in Benedict's reviews of colleagues' books. Regarding the testing of concepts of psychiatry and genetic psychology in fieldwork in preliterate societies, Benedict thought that this objective led field-workers to ignore the variety in human behavior that was evident in these societies, that it failed to make use of the full range of the culture data, and that it ignored the objective of a holistic interpretation. For example, John Whiting wrote in his first publication that his objective in his field study for *Becoming a Kwoma: Teaching and Learning in a New Guinea Tribe* (1941) was to test a theory that learning

took place primarily through imitation and by means of reward and punishment. Benedict's review expressed admiration for Whiting's descriptive materials on Kwoma culture but exasperation at using fieldwork in a group never before studied, a group differing in social organization from several related surrounding cultures, to test a theory of learning that derived from Western assumptions. She noted the Kwoma system for "preventing schism along the lines of two permanent rival organizations" (Benedict 1942f). Such schism was a well-described problem common among neighboring tribes, but it was nowhere managed effectively, as Whiting's data indicated it was managed among the Kwoma. Benedict, the comparativist, often emphasized comparison within culture areas and among tribes differing in only a few significant variations, as in her review of Bronislaw Malinowski's *The Sexual Life of Savages in Northwestern Melanesia*, as noted earlier. She often employed comparison to pose questions of causation, as she did here: why was this well-ordered social system, accompanied by another set of Whiting's data, the projection of aggressive intentions onto many persons in the society? Whiting had not posed the question. She speculated by using Whiting's field data that one explanation may be in the discontinuity between an indulgent infancy and abrupt cessation of indulgence after infancy.

Benedict was accustomed to the role of dissertation adviser and suggesting how to rework a student's data, and in book reviews she sometimes reinterpreted the data of an anthropologist who, like Whiting, was not her student. In advising Victor Barnouw on the first draft of his dissertation, she said it lacked comparison of Chippewa data to other cultures (Barnouw 1980:507). Explanation by means of comparison was very often her advice. *Becoming a Kwoma* was John Whiting's first book, and Benedict never knew of his important later contributions to the field of culture and personality.

Benedict reinterpreted data in Morris Opler's *An Apache Lifeway* (1941). Opler began his fieldwork among the Mescalero Apache as a student in the Columbia University Field School under Benedict's direction in 1931, although his course work was done at the University of Chicago and his Ph.D. was from there the following year. He went on to fieldwork among the Chiricahua Apache and among several other Apache groups and corresponded frequently with Benedict about his work. They kept up an exchange of letters throughout Benedict's life. "Mrs. Benedict" and "Morris" had a cordial teacher-student friendship. Opler contributed to the culture and personality field and wrote an article for *Psychiatry* (1938) on method in this field; however, his proposal was not incisive, merely the "method" of gaining acquaintance with as may individuals as possible. Correspondence with other persons suggests that Benedict did not regard his work as among

the best, but she funded his research, advised on publication, read numerous manuscripts, and helped his students get Columbia fellowships. She accepted his invitation to speak at Claremont University, where he taught, when she was on a sabbatical in California. He thanked her profusely for her reading of the manuscript of *An Apache Lifeway* and for "the tough suggestions [for which he would] patch things up to accommodate them" (MO to RB, March 5, 1940, RFB 32). Her review when this book was published criticized it on grounds she had cited in reviews of other works, namely, the failure to include research on attitudinal aspects of ceremonials. Opler's objective in this book was to reconstruct the meaning of Chiricahua Apache culture of the previous generation. Benedict noted that he did so by informants' accounts of ceremonials and their meaning but without their accounts of associated behavior or reporting contemporary observational data and without life histories from the generation depicted. Ceremonial text did not tell enough, and observational data or life history accounts of behavior were a necessary supplement. She observed: "Large collections of life stories of individuals, such as Dr. [Ruth] Landes made use of in *The Ojibwa Woman*, may give excellent material from which to build up a picture of cultural behavior" (Benedict 1942e). Benedict's reinterpretation of Opler's data suggested that some of the dysfunction in Chiricahua culture was due to the discontinuity between teaching independence and nonreliance on anyone but oneself in childhood and a social organization that worked by cooperative arrangements. Benedict had an eye for discrepant data and in some cases suggested discontinuity in stages of the life cycle as explanation. Her role in advising on field-based dissertations is apparent here.

Paul Radin stressed the role of the individual in culture as philosopher, imaginer, and religious entrepreneur, but he did not work in a psychological paradigm. Benedict found fault with Radin's *The Road of Life and Death: A Ritual Drama of the American Indians* (1945), similar to her criticisms of Whiting and Opler, that he was not attentive to discrepant data, data that to Benedict suggested explanation in a comparative context. Radin's book was a text of the Winnebago rite of initiation to the Medicine Society. He emphasized that society members adhered to a high moral code of behavior, and the text contained lofty vows. Benedict, however, referred to Radin's publication at the time he had gathered the data in 1911. He had written that Winnebago nonmembers of the Medicine Society regarded members as powerful shamans practicing sorcery (Radin 1911:193). The Medicine Society was cognate to Ojibwa and Omaha Midewiwin societies, whose members were feared in their tribes and reputed to use sorcery and were known to have killed and disobeyed taboos. Noting the problem these discrepant facts

presented in interpreting Winnebago culture, she stressed the importance of supplementing texts of rituals with accounts of behavior and attitudes to be obtained through informants (Benedict 1947a).

Benedict's view of the life history method in ethnology was stated briefly in a review of a junior colleague's work, Leo W. Simmons's *Sun Chief: The Autobiography of a Hopi Indian* (u.p. 1942b). Benedict noted the book gave no explanation of the personality problems of the man, Don Talayesva, whose life story Simmons had collected through interviews with him. Benedict reported other biographical facts from her own acquaintance with Talayesva and cultural factors that helped to explain his unhappiness. Her point was that this life history did not adequately explain this individual. She thought there was uncertain gain in the study of life histories. In her address "Anthropology and the Humanities" (1948a), Benedict singled out the collecting of life histories for criticism. She observed that the greater part of the numerous American Indian life histories, published or in manuscript form, was "straight ethnographic reporting" and that this was a time-consuming way of getting such information. She cited the methods of the literary scholar of Shakespeare's characters, A. C. Bradley. Working by his example, the anthropologist could get at "that fraction of the material which shows what repercussions the experiences of a man's life – either shared or idiosyncratic – have upon him as a human being molded in that environment." And she wrote, "None of the social sciences, not even psychology, has adequate models for such studies. The humanities have" (Benedict 1948a:591). Although she had cited Landes's collection of a large number of life histories as a means of getting personal behavioral data from a previous generation, a kind of data Opler had overlooked, she thought life histories had not adequately explained individuals. Their Indian characters were not explained in their circumstances, as the literary scholar had explained King Lear, Othello, Macbeth, and Hamlet. Boas had written shortly before his death that "autobiographies . . . are of limited value for the particular purpose for which they are being collected" and that "they are valuable rather as useful material for a study of the perversion of truth brought about by the play of memory with the past" (Boas 1943:335, in Krupat 1985:110). Clyde Kluckhohn was an enthusiastic advocate for life histories and set up criteria for their use in ethnography (1945), yet his proposal was to use more rigorous methods and theories of psychology and psychiatry, a direction quite opposite to what Benedict recommended three years later, and thus her silence on Kluckhohn's view. He had become an important figure in the personality and culture field, but his major books, *The Navaho* (1946) and *Children of the People* (1947), written with Dorothea Leighton, were published close to the end of Benedict's life and were not re-

viewed by her. Her correspondence with Kluckhohn contains no discussions of their work or ideas and is confined to arrangement making.

Benedict's reviews of books on culture and personality are few, only these by John Whiting, Morris Opler, and Leo W. Simmons. The field was still small during her lifetime, and these three were the first of the younger anthropologists to have published at that time. Anthropologists often remembered as early figures began publishing after her death, for example, John Honigman in 1949, Melford Spiro and Alex Inkles in 1950, Anthony Wallace and George De Vos in 1952, Milton Singer in 1953, and Louise Spindler and George Spindler, Lucian Hanks, and Bert Kaplan in the early 1950s. Among those who published earlier, Geza Roheim, George Devereaux, and Weston LaBarre employed classic psychoanalytic concepts, and Benedict shied away from these views, neither thinking in these terms nor critiquing them. Benedict's participation in debate, which is represented in book reviews, ended before the field burgeoned.

## Culture and Psychiatry

Benedict's concentration on culture as explanation of behavior led to her virtual disregard for what Freud considered instincts. She stressed, on the contrary, how culture shapes emotional experience. Indeed, she wanted psychiatrists to question their assumption that the human mind and emotions operated in universal ways. Benedict particularly challenged Freud's theory of infantile sexuality, saying culture interpreted the sexual emotions. She wrote that culture conditioned behavior and thought, employing the out-of-fashion word "conditioned," even in one article citing Ivan Pavlov's work as a model (Benedict 1939). Cultural constructions molded individuals, and individuals thus conditioned could achieve their potential and fulfillment only through their culture. Beyond the conditioning of the individual, a culture may interrupt a continuous and cumulative line of learning and impose abrupt reversals in learning and its own periodicity of development, and this went against the grain of developmental psychology, which saw the child unfolding in a relatively inherent developmental scheme based on physiology and on emotions. Psychiatry also worked with a developmental progression closely related to the body's growth. Benedict described developmental tempos imposed by cultural ideas. In some of her last work, she included physiological developmental progressions, but the significance of discontinuity, introduced in 1938, questioned the strength of developmental progressions. Benedict pursued mainly her own alternative.

Freud's concept of the mind as made up of an ego, id, and superego was

not employed by Benedict, although Hallowell and others in the field did use Freud's terms and his meaning of them. Nor did she borrow Freud's postulates of internal processes of personality. Dynamics of guilt was not a subject she expounded, but she saw cultural processes in both the inner and the social emotions of shame. Benedict described her skepticism of using other psychiatric concepts in a 1947 transcribed discussion of a paper by Otto Klineberg in which he critiqued *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword* in mainly positive terms. In the discussion that followed, Benedict's observations did not concern Klineberg's comments but were on another point: "I have not used the word 'super-ego' and I have not used the words 'inferiority complex' because a Japanese inferiority complex is so different from ours that I think I can describe it better by not using the words. So I have omitted a great many words used in our language because they have all the connotations of western culture." She pointed out that the problem was broader than psychiatric terminology and was posed in commonly accepted translations from Japanese to the English words, "responsibility" and "conscience," translations that did not accord with the Japanese meanings (Sargent and Smith 1949:139).

Regarding the process of regression formulated by Freud, Benedict said in her Personality and Culture course that she thought regression had to be understood in relation to the culturally defined peak of life: was adulthood, as designed in that culture, attractive to the growing child or not? She defined deviancy as persons having attributes or being in circumstances devalued by the culture. She went so far as to say: "The Oedipus complex does not exist if nothing in behavior indicates it. . . . The psychoanalyst believes there is a large sphere of an unconscious. The anthropologist believes the whole personality is evident in behavior" (Personality and Culture 5/8/47). She probably did not mean to deny the validity of the psychoanalytic concepts but to maintain that the anthropologist finds all the data relevant to analyzing culture in observed behavior. She spoke and wrote of projective thought – religious thought was a projective screen – and projection was of course an idea much developed by Freud. Her statements, directed to the training of students, were meant to emphasize the difference in concepts and methods of psychoanalysis and anthropology. One must conclude that she thought the concepts of psychoanalysis were not important in the analysis of culture. This is a divergent position in the field of culture and personality, both then and in subsequent decades.

Along with her diverting of anthropology away from psychoanalysis, Benedict wanted to dispense with the idea of "basic needs" such as employed by Malinowski and many psychologists. Again, she did not deny "needs," and referred to a sexual need, but culture was only minimally affected by needs. She

disagreed, moreover, with a division of activities or institutions into primary ones serving needs of hunger and sex as distinguished from secondary ones in which symbolic thought and psychological projection of thought could have play, such as Abraham Kardiner employed. She likened Kardiner's division of institutions into primary and secondary ones to Immanuel Kant's division of practical and pure reason. Kardiner erred in not recognizing people's symbolic expressions in all their institutional activities (Religions 4/29/47).

Benedict stressed that each culture arrives at a prevailing concept of sexuality: "Man has made so many things out of one universal 'instinct' that the anthropologist does not study these as instinctive but as conditioned behavior . . . social conditions may make sex hostile or friendly, an ego value or a non-egotistical value" (u.p. 1943a). Childhood sexuality in various examples was interpreted by cultures as nonexistent or as a troublesome impulse that had to be controlled; or it was interpreted as harmless; or it was denied but still monitored. She advocated observation of learning processes in infancy and childhood, but her own fieldwork had predated her stress on this subject. She had no experience in observing children, but she interviewed informants on the teaching of children and on child-adult relationships in the national cultures she studied. Her points derived from these interviews were based on extensions of pattern and whether the stages of life were continuous or discontinuous in behavior taught. Childhood study yields good knowledge about culture, but its purpose is not to find causes of personality or culture (Theory 12/18/47). Parent and child relations repeat and reveal the culture's pattern, and they communicate the culture to the child and confirm the correct views of the culture to the adult. The size and makeup of the group in which the child was raised should be noted, as should whether the home was "the boundary on intimate contacts," as in the United States, or whether the household was integrated with other groups. Socialization is affected by the structuring of social relationships, for instance, between siblings in childhood and adulthood and between each parent's kin group (Personality and Culture 3/27/47). Regarding the common conclusion in psychological research that childhood indulgence was a source of security and self-confidence, she countered with the point that care could be a means of dominating the child and that care was used in this way commonly in Western cultures. Adults, and also a dominant social class, may maximize discontinuity between childhood and adulthood, or between social classes, to claim their exclusive knowledge of morality. While the teaching of submission and the assertion of dominance were carried far in the West, order is always part of social life, and absence of dominance and submission classification in kinship systems "may be correlated with dissolution of authority in the larger group, for example,

a single term may stand for 'father-son' and be used by father to his son and by son to his father" (Personality and Culture 10/24/46). These topics all concern the culture pattern as seen in parent-child relations.

The images in which Benedict spoke of her key concept of culture are revealing. Culture was a core of attitudes and typical behaviors. "Individual differences are the reactions of each individual to essential, pivotal assumptions and experiences of that culture. Such reactions can be pro or con. The cultural core is like a centrifugal force throwing off sparks that are its application in economics, sex, religion, or death" (Personality and Culture 12/10/46). "Variations of attitude in one culture are reactions to one core, not a whole range of attitudes" (Personality and Culture 5/6/47). She is not saying the culture core produces a basic personality. Similarities and differences in individuals stem from the ways they take up, by-pass, reinterpret, or scheme by means of the core of their culture. This imagery is not the same as the idea of a basic personality or the idea of a basic personality of limited incidence and with variations, such as later became popular with Anthony Wallace's work on the limited incidence of a basic personality among the Seneca and Tuscarora (1961). Benedict did not describe a basic personality but a core culture to which individuals react. The image of reacting individuals is the image of the active self in her national character work. Her imagery is of action and attitude rather than type. There is commonality and variation: "The character structure acts as the integrative mechanism within a culture, leaving, however, certain areas of escape. . . . The course is . . . about the number and variety of alternatives the culture offers individuals" (Personality and Culture 10/15/46, 10/17/46). The image, "areas of escape," suggests that a culture may allow deviancy or may have patterned deviant behaviors in addition to maintaining core behavior. When she asked in a paper on the subject of freedom and again in a course, "What does a society do about letting an individual pursue his own goals?" (u.p. ca. 1941a:2; Theory 1/15/48), we should recall that individual goals are a reaction to core goals. She has not slipped in an Enlightenment idea of an individual independent of culture. Nor did she set up a basic personality in a culture. While she thought Abram Kardiner's way of defining a basic personality had merit, it was very different from her own model of individuals reacting to a cultural core.

## The Concept of Self

Benedict's national culture studies employed a concept of self that was different from the one developed later in the field of culture and personality. Her discussions of self are not about a cultural concept of a self, as much of

the later work in this field was, but instead she described ways of acting to realize the promises of the culture and to fulfill a place or ambitions in it. The actors are in different social positions and act reciprocally to each other and also share in a cultural frame of attitudes and assumptions. The selves work within the culture to evoke its inspiring and gratifying possibilities and make use of its design of personal attachments. The concept of self portrayed the part of the culture pattern that was the person's own thought and behavior guides. It varied according to personal experience and to differing positions in society. To the behavior, institutions, and attitudes in a culture, which her earlier work presented, Benedict added more attention to actions in the personal interest and personal ideals, objectives, and self-explanations. While the thought patterns of the person enacting culture had certainly been present in her analyses of patterns of the Zuni, Kwakiutl, and Dobuans in *Patterns of Culture*, this dimension became more detailed in all the national culture studies.

The sources for this material were principally proverbs and literary works. This kind of self-reflective material had not been found in North American Indian and Melanesian groups, and its absence was not reflected upon at the time of the earlier work. Proverbs were a genre Kroeber had early noted appeared in Old World cultures and seldom in the New World ([1923] 1948:243). Kroeber's early division may reflect a perception of what Arnold Krupat later called the dialogistic character of North American Indian self-commentary and narrative, where circumstance and "cross-talk" are voiced in autobiographies, both those written by American Indians and those taken in transcription, and the self "is constituted . . . by the achievement of a particular placement in relation to the many voices without which it could not exist" (1989:141, 133). The monologic style of the West, which Krupat writes reflects an individualist self and a textual authority, is expressed in the proverb form, while the proliferation of the proverb throughout Asia recalls that Kroeber considered it a form of the Old World. Proverbs tell how the self should act and perceive. Proverbs were an important source for the Thai and Romanian accounts and also served the Dutch analysis. Literary works from traditional and modern Japan were a rich source for Benedict's study of that nation, and proverbs also were cited to explain actions.

Each of Benedict's reports on national cultures began with accounts of the sociopolitical system and its history. Each then presented what she could construct, by study without fieldwork, of other parts of the culture pattern, interpersonal relations, and aspects of the patterning of the psyche, introducing the word "self" with the second, and quintessentially Western, the Romanian, study. Her representations of an explicit sense of selfhood are full

for the Japanese; less full for the Romanians, where folk poetry but few literary sources were examined; and least for the Dutch and the Thai. The Thai, whom she studied first, are described with much insight into acting within the culture. Romanians' stress on individualism and self-interest accounts for the numerous examples of prescriptions for a self. Her representations of the personal dimension of these cultures have been described in chapter 5, and here they are recalled briefly. The Japanese self managed the carefully coded social obligations, managed the defense of individual and group name, maintained a place for self-indulgence, and chose among the religious and secular rituals of self-improvement. The Japanese person shifted among the circles of behavior, each one with different proper attitudes and behavior. Benedict's account of Romanian independence of social obligation and social restraint describes a particular version of a strongly individualist self. Romanian persons had available much conventionalized cultural material to say in words and rituals what was a person. They asserted in ballads, proverbs, folk rituals, rites of passage, and interviews their thoughts and enactments. Benedict commented on a riddle that asks:

> "Where is the center of the earth?" "Here where I am. If you don't believe it, measure." This self which is the object of so much enthusiasm is singularly without accretions; . . . many observers who write and talk about Rumania's upper class speak of their ease in poverty and dependence; they are not acquisitive in the Western sense. In a folk poem a woman who was accursed cried: "It was not me he cursed, but only all I see and touch . . . my bed, . . . my food, . . . the paths I wander, . . . my chain, . . . my girdle and my spindle. It was not me he cursed." (u.p. 1943e:53–54)

For the Dutch person, social custom itself stated much of the concept of the individual. In a further description Benedict gave in class, the Dutch man who had no suit jacket may obtain the sleeve and shoulder of a suit, and with these he might sit in his window with his elbow on the sill and greet passersby with dignity, while they looked in at the neat living room with its cabinet of display items. The Dutch thought of a covert area paired with the overt social enactments. The Dutch man who went to Brussels to patronize its brothels kept his dark side hidden where it did not disrupt his social self-image. This area was spoken of in interviews, but Benedict did not study it in Dutch fiction, maybe constrained by the time she could allot to this briefest report.

In Thailand, the traditional presence of the Buddhist monarchy and state law at the kin-group level and in local administration partially defined aspects of personhood and social relationships, and definitions were also found in proverbs, festivals, competitive games, customs of dress, naming, and con-

cepts of control of danger and aggression. The Thai persons who, as a proverb instructed, keep their eyes crossed in a cross-eyed town were shown to have many other ways as well by which they navigate in their culture.

Benedict's concept of self is definable as the customary thought and behavior for individuals to utilize their cultures to achieve the particular rewards of their culture that are accessible to their circumstances or the rewards to which they aspire. Psychological anthropology later developed a concept of self that referred to the concept of the person defined and taught in cultural experience, that is, how persons have learned to think of themselves. This latter usage of self defines a conceptual part of the culture, while Benedict wrote about how persons manage, defend themselves, prosper, and "scheme" within their culture. A description of scheming was one of the points that won Benedict's attention in her recommendation of Helen Lynd and Robert Lynd's *Middletown* (1930a). Benedict portrays the individual acting more than many others who have been interested in the idea of the self in culture. Others stress what the culture teaches individuals about themselves and what they can do. The selves Benedict describes are conditioned by their culture and are also manipulating it. Many of the later works in this field describe cultural selves that are more conditioned than they are manipulators.

Although generalizations are made here about Benedict's type of representation of a cultural self, she did not talk or write about an objective of describing a self in culture or single out the acting and intentional individual as a subject for generalization. The glimpses of selves that she gives are items among many others that clarify the culture pattern. She did not theorize this subject. Lacking fieldwork in the national cultures, Benedict lacked observational data and, besides fictional accounts of motives and self-concepts, had only interview data from individuals viewing their culture from a distance or individuals' explanations of their behavior in different circumstances, a more limited perspective than obtainable in the field. Later work in psychological anthropology showed what Benedict with her limited data was suggesting, that persons may have different self-images in different social contexts and bring one or another to the fore in dealing with different situations (Desjarlais 1999; Ewing 1990). Benedict published only one of her national culture analyses, *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword* (1946). The broad significance of that book and the general admiration of its many aspects may have overshadowed perception of the innovation it brought to personality and culture studies in its introduction of a concept of self inherent in a culture. However, among those who later brought the concept of self to this field, Michelle Rosaldo (1980) drew on Benedict's discussions of a self in Japan.

## Inclinations and Ideals

Alfred Kroeber said of Ruth Benedict in his eulogy of her, "she was civilized utterly and without abatement." His eulogy, given six weeks after her death at the Viking Fund memorial service in her memory, was finely perceptive of her work and laudatory of her as a person, and it was appropriate both to Benedict's description and to the sense of bereavement shared at that gathering. Yet the description seemed not quite right when I heard it. Victor Barnouw characterized her similarly in his obituary of her: "With her silvery aura of prestige, dignity and charm, she seemed to be like a symbolic representation of the humanistic values of the Renaissance" (1949:241). Tributes on the occasion of death are allowed embellishment, and these were sincere admirers. But I recalled her slight grimace one day in her office when a former student dropped in and passed on a compliment recently heard from Clyde Kluckhohn, that Benedict was the most civilized person he knew. These characterizations were ironic in view of her attraction to small societies that had in their early days invented some ideas she admired. Benedict not only was fascinated by the diversity of cultural inventions, she had a particular admiration for Plains Indian cultures. She began anthropology with the Plains tribes, with their vision and guardian spirit quests, and compared these quests to concepts in neighboring areas. She knew the early literature of the North American Indians thoroughly. They were "free tribes" who never conquered or knew the subjugation of conquest aboriginally. She granted that Plains war-party raids on enemy encampments acted out extreme aggression, but their daring and stylization usually limited the murders to a few. They were far different from the "lethal" wars of civilized societies and perhaps an acceptable outlet compared to other peoples' aggressiveness. The Cheyenne had devised a tribal procedure that punished and controlled aggression within their bands, an accomplishment that was rare at a segmentary level of organization. The Blackfeet retained much of the old attitudes and behavior, which she had long admired, and she saw their culture during the field school she conducted there in 1939. She included a brief sketch of Blackfeet practice of individual freedom and leadership in "Primitive Freedom": Eagle In The Sky was a storied leader, rich and powerful. "His followers' personal ambitions were Eagle's greatest assets and it was against his interests to balk them. . . . Mutual advantage flowed between the chief and his adherents" (Benedict 1942d:758). In "The Psychology of Faith" (u.p. 1942a), she characterized cultures that set up the social conditions for "self-confidence and firmness, . . . tribal solidarity and warm human relations," and in the recorded discussion that followed her paper she took several examples from Blackfeet culture;

during her stay at the reservation, she wrote observations about the Blackfeet in two letters to Mead, details that are not found in her more general passages for nonspecialists:

> These Blackfoot are deadly serious, violent fighters. We're living here in a frame house rented from a Blackfoot family of good standing who are living in a tent about a stone's throw away, and last night the two brothers and their families had a knock-down fight that rent to night. We pretended we slept through it! The brothers' father is divorcing his wife – with all the attendant property settlements – and the two brothers side with different parents. Cutting off your wife's nose [a retributive act for adultery traditionally sanctioned in some Plains cultures] is no little incidental embroidery on Blackfoot patterns – it's changed a little now, but the ferocity is all there. (RB to MM, n.d., MM R7)

> These Blackfoot have institutionalized free choice in human relations beyond anything I've ever seen. In the lower generation it's the favorite child, who is here not an only or a youngest or an oldest child, but the child you like the best and favor in everything. It's going strong at the present moment especially in Cardston [nearby town], where everybody knows the father's "favorite," the mother's "favorite," and each grandparent's. Adoption too is rampant on this basis. In your own age group it's the *taka*, a man you chose for life out of a very narrow age-group which is also your own, and as one man said, "It's like the girl you fell in love with first and who died right away." When they came back from raids and hunting, the wife went to another bed and the *takas* spent the first night together. And they don't know what homosexuality means; they've heard of it with whites but are scornful. A *taka* would try to get his girl of the moment – this means married women – to agree to accept his *taka* too, and they'd go together, but one waited for the other. On rare occasions they might share her lying on both sides of her, but that was reckoned bravado. These *taka* relations last a life time, and are the only unassailable loyalties of the Blackfoot. Women are fair game and no better than they should be, though in old days the chief wife took a different role – she stayed by and vowed the Sundance and vowed the Tongues. And a man needed at least one more wife – one to join the Horns with him. He had to take a wife into that to get the power through her intercourse with the seller – though it was always possible that a man would not take full advantage of his prerogative as seller. They were insanely jealous about their wives, but the male lover hardly ever suffered. It's good material, but the psychoanalysts wont believe there's no homosexuality between these *taka*. (RB to MM, August 12, 1939, MM R7)

These practices may be what she had in mind when she said to Victor Barnouw, who had known the Blackfeet when he was in an art school near the reservation, "The Blackfoot dance on a knife-edge." In the "Psychology of Faith" address to the New York Psychology Group, where she had spoken about faith as self-confidence and firmness, one of the psychiatrists asked her for "illustrations of spontaneity and confidence achieved in societies where there is a high degree of individualization." Benedict replied:

> In many primitive cultures the interest in individual motivation (what we call individuality) is greater than in our society – it is regarded as impossible to speculate upon another person's motives. The answer is "he himself," meaning, "How could I enter into him?" Spontaneity is often recognized and approved and allowed to function. Among the Blackfoot, an American Indian tribe, the amount of spontaneity – what we would even call lawless behavior – that is allowed and culturally absorbed in the community is amazing. They have great difficulty in adjusting to our civilization. The children are brought up from infancy in the idea of spontaneity and initiative, that there is no virtue in docility. Individuality is highly developed. It is a culture which is quite secure and which has adjusted the self-interest of individuals so that they do not hamstring each other.
>
> [Psychiatrist speaking:] Might not the belief that one could not know the other person's motives lead to an extreme estrangement, to hostility? [Benedict speaking:] Where a society is quite secure, they can believe that there are many different personalities differently motivated. They are not afraid of this notion. It takes a certain security to believe that.
>
> [A psychiatrist said that self-confidence "had a static connotation whereas Fromm's idea of affirmative mind indicates more a conscious search." After discussion, Benedict added:] Some cultures frame this affirmative mind frankly and easily. All child training is in terms of "Don't you wish to be this even though there are hardships involved?" There is stress upon the things you want to do even if they are hard. Other cultures base the structure on duty. (u.p. 1942a)

She had described in a class a Blackfeet child defiant of his father, and the father said admiringly, "Ah, he will be a man" (Personality and Culture 10/24/46). Clearly she admired Blackfeet culture. Blackfeet self-confidence, passion, affirmative mind, warm human relations, and the group's ability to socially absorb high emotionality were closer to her ideals than a quality identified as being civilized. And Blackfeet culture was not the only place where there could be latitude for individuality:

> My social analysis of faith [as self-confidence and firmness] on a commun-

ity-wide basis does not mean my doubt of the possibility of the individual's attaining it in defiance of the social order. And especially in our literate society, where our past is still present in today and where one can read Plutarch's *Lives* and the lives of Jesus and Spinoza, one can steep one's self in knowledge of lives that have been lived nobly. One can also meet living people who live the spiritual life. Then too it is relevant that there are certain aspects of our cultural life where the conditions which inhibit faith and self-confidence are less than in some others. It is easier in the life of the artist, of the genuinely religious person and of the scientist than in the business world. (u.p. 1942a)

On a paper dated June 9, 1934, inserted in an envelop with other page fragments and placed in the back cover of her bound journal, Benedict wrote about work, her temperament, and a spiritual life. She had recently finished writing *Patterns of Culture*. She reflected on her limited satisfaction with work and on needing more in her life.

Work even when I'm satisfied with it is never my child I love nor my servant I've brought to heel. It's always busy work I do with my left hand, and part of me watches grudging the waste of lifetime. It's always distraction – and from what? It's hard to say. . . . I wish I had lived in a generation that cultivated the spiritual life. . . . [However, to have] life traditionally channeled. . . . seems intolerable to me, for the great reward that my temperament has given me is detachment and unconcern. That can't by definition come in the course of traditional participation, even in a cult of spiritual life. As it seems to me now there is no way to achieve these rewards if one has signed on the dotted line. And if one has not, the way is painful and erratic. Perhaps one day the right environment will be hit upon and a culture will arise that by its very nature fosters spiritual life that is nevertheless detached and adventurous – something of the sort that Spinoza and Christ achieved in certain flashes. . . . Those to whom the spiritual life was a reality could pass in and out of the temple at will. (in Mead 1959:154–55)

Benedict's deep relativism allowed her to project herself into other cultures. In an undated manuscript in her papers entitled "If I Were a Negro," she itemized many everyday occasions when she would "meet that steely or insolvent rebuff" and went on, "If I were a Negro . . . thousands of whites would have conspired to teach me a passionate demand for human decency. . . . I should know something that they do not know, . . . in its simple eternal essentials, what it is that makes human life decent: that men respect each other" (u.p. n.d.). The habit of mind of identifying with persons of

other cultural backgrounds opened up to her the cultures she studied. She named mutual respect as what makes life decent. The social concept she most commended was civil rights; civil rights were each particular culture's version of human rights.

Benedict played a leading role in American anthropology. She took over Boas's role as critic of many of her contemporaries' arguments: Radin's erroneous historical schemes, the limited canvases of much field work, the formulaic explanatory constructs such as age-area studies. She found her core idea – configuration – starting with Boas's inquiries into local interpretation of diffused traits. She made configuration a key concept by including the human psyche fully in cultural processes. Her work may have been done "with her left hand," but that work included continuing the Columbia department's leading role in American anthropology. Denied a membership in the gentleman's club at Columbia, she accomplished much because of her prestige among the faculty, however much she worked behind the scenes. She trained students in method and problem, she obtained funding for them, she sent them into the field, and she worked over their data, searching for examples for her own pursuits, among them the characteristics of a free, as opposed to oppressive, society. In her search for causes she rejected the narrow causality of psychoanalytic theory that had dazzled many anthropologists, and found causes across all culture – from habits of technology and daily social intercourse to ways to "domestic the universe" through the construct of religion.

She taught that anthropology had to penetrate cultures. She did this by keeping her sights on culture wholes yet finding clues in the minutiae of life. Configuration requires holistic study. Holism, Benedict's byword, is one of anthropology's principal contributions to social science. She promoted cultural relativism but pointed out its limitations; she furthered the concept opposite of relativism, human universals.

She sought methods to extend the concept of culture from traditional societies to the wider canvas of nations. She wrote the most distinguished and most influential analysis of a national culture. Taking a wider canvas yet, she drew a divide in political cultures between the North Atlantic form of democratic states and the Eurasian local democratic form, which American analysts seldom perceived underlying state and colonial superstructures. Benedict warned that failure to protect these consensus-based local political cultures could undermine any order that would be negotiated after World War II, pointing to political problems that came to dominate the Near and Middle East. She cautioned that large-scale blocking out of pattern was only a preliminary step in finding pattern in details. Her perceptions were acute at both levels.

# Appendixes

## INTRODUCTION

# Writing the Course "Texts"

From the beginning of her teaching career, Ruth Benedict's responsibilities had been to take over much of the teaching of cultural anthropology from Franz Boas, who often alone, or with visiting faculty, had taught all four fields and all culture areas. She taught religion, mythology, social organization, methods, theory of culture, and native peoples of Australia, Melanesia, North and South America. In 1942–44 she taught Anthropology and Contemporary Problems, the basic graduate work in cultural anthropology, and she had no undergraduate responsibilities except when she replaced Gladys Reichard when Reichard was on leave from Barnard in 1926–27. Each year Benedict gave an advanced seminar, with the topic usually unlisted in the catalog. A student account describes a seminar on personality and culture in 1936–37 in which each student was expected to assess cultural factors related to personality in the ethnographic literature on a particular culture in a report to the group. That seminar was attended by the psychoanalyst Karen Horney (Harris 1997:8). Personality and Culture was given for the first time as a lecture course in 1946–47. The traditional courses Benedict gave that year, Social Organization of Primitive Peoples and Religions of Primitive Peoples, probably followed her earlier course plans but contained theoretical points and examples from her most recent work. The same is true of Theory, Culture taught the following fall.

Each course was constructed as an inclusive statement of its field. Together, they defined her position in anthropology. Several courses culminated in the same points: the last lecture in the course in theory enlarged on the last lecture of Personality and Culture. The courses included discussion of numerous anthropologists' work and commentary on subjects outside the purview of her publications. The notes used in the course reconstructions in the appendixes are full and indicate high student attention, as the earlier students had said was needed. What differs from the earlier reports is that the notes show courses that were carefully planned and well organized, with progression and culmination. The courses had a semester structure, but her plan and her points were often not easily apparent. An introductory sentence

usually identified the day's lecture topic, but her meaning of the topic might not be clear until the lecture had proceeded or might be returned to after several preliminary subpoints or in a subsequent lecture. All sets of notes become dense and have continuity in the classes when she gave summaries of a whole ethnographic literature on a culture extemporaneously for days in a row. The notes are thinner, and continuity more obscure, when points were made briefly and with undeveloped illustrations. Some observations were left hanging, but it is interesting to see the contexts in which they were broached and the implicit inferences.

Notes for a few classes show only bare bones of a lecture. For instance, notes for the first lecture in the fall in Personality and Culture are sketchy, suggesting that the newness of the subject to the students may have lowered our comprehension. Most of the sparsely recorded classes occurred at the end of the winter session, which, according to academic calendars of the time, continued for two weeks of classes after Christmas vacation. Student attendance was erratic in those two weeks; for some classes, there are only one student's notes. Although there were low points, the contribution these classes make to the whole course structure cannot be overlooked; for example, in Social Organization of Primitive Peoples Benedict attributed invalidity to several claims of evolutionary sequences, criticisms undeveloped but specific and inviting follow-ups. Concluding the first semester of Personality and Culture were three points she seemed to want to explore: one on the possibilities in Bateson's idea of end-linkage, one on the validity or invalidity of typologies, and a last speculation on rigidity and flexibility in cultural specifications for personality. Ending the second semester of Personality and Culture were two correlations of child rearing with culture, which appear newly thought out and incomplete. She had taught the things she was sure of, and as she ended each course she spoke of ideas she had not broached and ideas she was working out. Stocking observed that "she left unanswered numerous questions as to the factors determining its [culture's] development, its influence on human behavior, and the variability of individual behavior within any particular cultural context" (1976:16). She dealt with some of these subjects in her course lectures, and she raised them in these speculative end-of-semester classes.

Study of the course notes shows that the mission of teaching her updated version of a very broad cultural anthropology must have been of much importance to her. Mead's comment, "And so in 1946 she returned to Columbia to inaugurate the study of European cultures and to struggle for recognition of the new methods," exaggerates Benedict's concentration on the Research in Contemporary Cultures (RCC) project and disregards the work she devoted to

teaching (1959:432). Teaching and the RCC project were two different forums and showed different sides of her thought and her purposes at this high point in her career. Mead's perception of the importance of teaching to Benedict was filtered through her own minor responsibilities in teaching and her own experience of teaching only in her specialized interests. Benedict's teaching role as Boas's assistant and then successor meant she was responsible for student training and had to define her place in anthropology and make her evaluations of other anthropologists' work. In the courses Mead occasionally taught at Columbia as a part-time extension faculty and after 1948 regularly as adjunct professor, she could concentrate on developing new methods. The division of labor suited the talents of both, but Mead may have forgotten the importance Benedict placed on basic teaching. "National culture" was a term never used in a course lecture, a subject never brought up except in the exploratory seminar on European cultures. Benedict and the other RCC researchers were working out how to study national cultures, while she was teaching a general cultural anthropology that was fundamental to pursuing national culture.

I sought course notes through requests to forty-five persons who had been in her classes, seeking notes from any and all courses and years. I obtained notes for the three semesters of the fall of 1946 to January 1948: four sets from Personality and Culture; three sets from Social Organization of Primitive Peoples, Religions of Primitive Peoples, and Theory, Culture, and one set from the Seminar in Contemporary European Cultures. The notes are those of Eric R. Wolf, William S. Willis, Marion M. Roiphe, and my own. It is surprising that no course outlines or lecture notes were found in Ruth Benedict's papers in the Vassar Library Special Collections, except one, a single-page typed outline for Mythology dated 1925–26. The folders labeled with titles of her regularly presented courses contain her reading notes, most of them literally scribbled on odd bits of paper and pocket-size notebooks, with no summaries that might have been used in lectures. Given the orderliness of her courses, the well-organized topics and subpoints, and the progression of ideas, the absence of course outlines from her files is puzzling. The students who were asked do not recall her carrying notes to class or consulting notes during lectures.

The sets of notes were combined to make the course "texts" presented here.[1] I use quotation marks for texts because the way they have been constructed makes them approximate and not verbatim texts, as in tape-recording. I devised various methods for constructing these "texts." Almost all lectures of each course are reconstructed as fully as possible. Several lectures are condensed as narratives about them, and this is indicated in the

"texts." The narrative form is used for one class in Personality and Culture on economic distribution in Zuni, Kwakiutl, and Plains Indians tribes, materials that the students recorded sketchily probably because all of them were familiar with these descriptions in *Patterns of Culture*. The conclusions she drew in this class are recorded verbatim. The narrative form is also used for her presentations of kinship systems in five classes of Social Organization because of the probability of inaccuracies in neophyte note takers on a complex subject. Most kinship nomenclature in these five classes is left out for the same probability of errors. Details of kinship relations are reproduced only when Benedict's meaning seems clear. In passages where details are left out for these reasons, her commentaries and emphasis are retained in the narratives.

Student class notes condense the flow of speech, and awkward passages result from this more than from Benedict's speech patterns. She often used colloquial phrases, and these stand out from and relieve the academic discourse. William Willis's notes are extraordinarily full and read as though he may have used shorthand. He typed all his notes, so there is no record of shorthand, but comparison shows that the notes are not fully verbatim or complete. Marion Roiphe used shorthand in several passages and translated it for me, as I have noted. Students' special interests clearly introduced selectivity. Each note taker had a different style of attention and selection. One student would try to catch Benedict's full sentences and let the next point slip by while getting down a whole idea and expression. Another note taker often caught the next idea, and the two styles complemented each other. But undoubtedly much was lost, particularly on those days when not all the note takers attended class; fortunately, this was true of few classes. Where there are four, and even three, sets of notes, the different styles produce a very full record.

The Seminar on Contemporary European Cultures is the only course that was sparsely recorded. The one note taker missed several classes, and one class was apparently of insufficient interest to the note taker to record anything but the subject title. Fortunately, Benedict discussed the same subject the same day in Personality and Culture, the only repetition that occurred, and the reader is directed to the very full notes there on this subject. Many seminar classes were given over to reports by advanced students, and notes were recorded by the student note taker, but they are not reproduced here. In one class, Margaret Mead and Gregory Bateson spoke, and both the student and Benedict took notes. Benedict's notes were taken from her papers and filed with Mead's papers. These notes do not make clear what was said and are not recorded in the seminar "text."

Benedict's lectures in the seminar are of considerable interest, and a valuable part of the record are her lectures on Dutch culture. They contain much

subject matter on the Netherlands that she did not include in her papers written for the Office of War Information (OWI) or in any other writings. The seminar was designed to train students for the RCC project and to introduce some basics of anthropology to those who had never studied it. The general lectures were directed at students trained in other disciplines, who had been invited on the project because of their training and because their national background was in one of the cultures to be studied.

The courses Benedict gave on religion and theory, as classic subjects, seemed to gain the note takers closer attention than the novel Personality and Culture. In the latter course, one student's disagreement with Benedict was recorded in the notes. Social Organization, given the first semester when note takers had just entered graduate school without much anthropology behind them, was less fully recorded than later-semester courses. Although notes condense, there was not much filler to begin with. Benedict did not restate points or summarize within a lecture or within a course but did repeat points in a different course. Where she has done so, the illustrations of the point are often different. Some statements of an action in a society lack the mechanism used to carry it out, such as "in Germany honor is extracted from a person of lower rank or job status," a most interesting point, leaving one with the impression she had in mind how this was done (Personality and Culture 12/3/46). Some generalizations are exceedingly broad, and whether she qualified them is not known. Careful reading of the notes indicates she was very precise in her language. Her language was plain, her sentences direct, and her choice of words discriminating, not hyperbolic, not ambiguous, and not general.

Readers may suspect intrusive vocabulary when they find Benedict using the currently popular verb "to construct" and the phrase "pattern construction." These were her usages, as well as frequent use of "structure" and "structuralize." The latter may signify influence on her from Radcliffe-Brown, much of whose work she discussed favorably, or they may represent her independent use. The words were not yet synonymous with Levi-Strauss's thought, as they soon became. I guessed that versions of a passage details contained student errors and therefore omitted the few that there were. Readers may find other misrepresentations of fact, and if so, they should assume they are student errors undetected by me and not Benedict's errors.

Both narrative and fully transcribed passages use her statements of lecture titles and subtopics and the exact wording and sequences in the notes. In many places, the sets of notes record identical phrases. The narrative passages use the lecturer's words and introduce no substantive extraneous wording. I have been careful to allow no interpretation of my own into the few lectures

written as narratives; there was little danger of this where the lectures were fully transcribed. In some places, words have been inserted for smooth reading, and these are in parentheses. In a few places, I have added information, which is also in parentheses. The dates of each lecture are recorded. Where a narrative report is used, I have noted the number of lectures on the topic, thus marking her allotment of time.

APPENDIX 1

# Social Organization of Primitive Peoples

## Anthropology 141, Winter Session, 1946–1947

### OCTOBER 1, 1946

The nature of individuals cannot be determined without knowledge of their social field, and knowing who are the we's and they's.

In his *Division of Labor*, Durkheim discussed the problem of social solidarity in different types of society, the segmented, the organic and the hierarchical. The modes of interrelation of parts in each type of society differ. In segmented societies each group is a replica of the others, and the problem of interlocking the segments is accomplished through language and through mutual nonhostile relations such as ceremonials, as in the Australian caressing each other's churingas, and through cross-cutting relationships. In organic societies the different groups produce things necessary to the rest of the society and depend on exchange for cohesion, such as in trade relationships. No complicated process can be carried to completion without the participation of the several groups, and rewards are adequate to the expenditures of each. India's occupational groups are never self-sufficient, and East African tribes are also organically related internally. Hierarchical societies always have a personal ruler, a political ruler, or a council of old men.

Segmented societies capitalize on kinship ties or other common bonds. Organic societies capitalize on the idea that in all human life there is specialization and interdependence of need. Hierarchical societies capitalize on the need for leadership.

### OCTOBER 3, 1946

(For this lecture, Benedict was out of town and Charles Wagley lectured on the Tenetehara of Brazil and diagrammed their kinship system.)

### OCTOBER 8, 1946

(Benedict discussed some aspects of unilateral kinship organization. She drew a diagram of clan/gens systems on the blackboard and drew a diagonal line through it to show the exclusion of daughters' children from the

patrilineal gens and the exclusion of sons' children from the matrilineal clan. This arrangement was contrasted to American family structure, where she said the categories of interest were generation, direct versus collateral relationship, and sex.)

OCTOBER 10, 1946

The Durkheimian categories of social organization do not fit a contrast between Melanesia and Polynesia. Melanesian societies are composed of segmentary social groups, but they also practice extensive trade and exchange, even silent trade with enemy groups. Trade in the Kula ring, although not planned, is a systematic organization of exchange between islands and is an organic system. In Polynesian societies groups are self-sufficient and have specialists within groups. They exchange services but have no exchange of goods. Economically they have segmentary organization. Their political systems, however, are hierarchical. Another example contrary to the Durkheimian categories would be the markets found in segmentary societies south of the Rio Grande.

Important in considering Melanesian economics is the general belief that my loss is your gain and your loss is my gain. See *Sorcerers of Dobu* and *Sex and Temperament.*

OCTOBER 15, 1946

*Civil and Criminal Law*

According to Radcliffe-Brown's article, "Law, Primitive," in the *Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences*, there is an a priori correlation of form of punishment of offenders and form of social solidarity, be it segmented, organic, or hierarchical. He discussed the blood feud, and the halting of it through Lex Talionis, as the form of punitive law in the segmented societies of Australia. However, the blood feud and Lex Talionis are not a universal primitive pattern. The Kaingang of Brazil have no way of halting blood feuds. The a priori correlation of form of punishment with organic society would be by restitution of loss, as in many African tribes that require the restitution of manpower to the group which suffers murder. The payment may be bearing a child to that tribe, or it may be payment of valuables. The a priori correlation of form of punishment with hierarchical society would be punishments according to the status of the offender, and the use of fines.

But this is not true according to facts. The ways of handling offenders, whether by retaliation or restitution, are not in terms of social solidarity. There is a lack of correspondence between social form and criminal law. The Eskimo are a segmented, even an atomistic, society yet they have restitution. The Cheyenne, a segmented society, have no blood feud or Lex Talionis.

Although the Cheyenne were intrepid warriors, murder within the society is a sin, and a murderer cannot participate in the society. An aura of sin surrounds the murderer, and a ceremony is conducted to cleanse the sacred tribal arrows after a murder. See Llewellyn and Hoebel, *The Cheyenne Way*; Howard Fast, *The Last Frontier*.

The Cheyenne handle civil and criminal problems on a communal basis without a state to handle them. Among Australian tribes punitive law takes the form of the debtor group selecting individuals who will be sacrificed for the group punishment. They accomplish the punishment of local offenders at the time of a quarrel between tribes. The offense is thus a plus for the group.

The a priori correlation of form of punishment with form of social solidarity does not hold. It depends more on the attitude about social relations, and the way in which people are willing to handle the social form they have. Any form can be handled in very different ways. Forms of society set up certain bases of communication. It is important to define values. People have certain expectations which must be taken into account at least as much as social forms.

OCTOBER 17, 1946

What institutions have been established to stabilize the structure of primitive societies, particularly those with low population density?

In primitive societies, the emotional attachment between the parents, as a stabilizing factor, is minimized. This is true even where clans do not exist. Primitive peoples would not trust to such an unstable group as the conjugal family, education, rearing, inheritance, etc. In the primitive world the support of the offspring is not the responsibility of the father alone. The vast majority of the more elaborate societies are organized on clan/gens lines. Theories that bilateral society is a simpler and earlier form, and unilateral society is a later stage, do not hold true. In simple bilateral societies the blood line may still be strong, reflected, for instance, in inheritance, in marital property, and in the leverate. The leverate may vary by whether the wife is taken as an obligation, as a liability, or as a valuable inheritance, but it and the sororate are examples of the fact that the blood line is emphasized in all primitive societies, whether bilateral or unilateral. Practically all societies in the world revolve around the blood line.

Unilateral societies have segmented forms, and the problem is how to crosscut the sharp divisions into blood lines. One way is the recurrent idea that blood comes from the father and the soul from the mother, or vice versa. So ceremonial life united individuals with people from many other gens. Another way is affinal exchange such as bride price. Exchange of gifts

is made on the birth of the child; in Africa it may occur when the woman first feels her pregnancy. The bride's relations with her own family are still preserved and she may be buried with her own blood, and affinal exchange may continue after the death of the conjugal pair.

The cement in segmented society may be the brother-in-law relationship. The value of the brother-in-law may be given as the reason for incest regulations. This has much to do with exogamy, although it is not alone enough to explain it. The Kaingang, however, have extended exogamous obligations so far that a man thinks more is demanded of him by his in-laws than he can give, and so he feels endangered by them. There is much murder among in-laws there.

OCTOBER 22, 1946

Sociologically speaking, the kind of behavior that goes with nations, tribes, or clans is symmetrical. Symmetrical behavior goes with symmetrical, repeated social units. In organic and hierarchical type society complementary behavior is necessary. Either symmetrical or complementary behavior is ascendant. In strongly segmented peasant villages in south Italy symmetrical behavior is practiced.

Exogamy is important in building cross-cutting relationships, and exogamy is the dominant way among primitive peoples, to link segmented units. The Kaingang in the Amazon practice band exogamy. The husband fears his in-laws will kill him because he cannot fulfill demands. There are other South American tribes with a murderous use of exogamy. In the goldfields of New Guinea warring groups have exogamous relations, and there is continual war between brothers-in-law. Women are used as messengers between gens and must celebrate the killing of a brother when in their husband's household and the killing of her husband when in her own household. Another mechanism for bringing segmented groups together is men's societies. They are not age-graded among the Cheyenne and Dakota and are segmented vis-à-vis each other, but they crosscut within the tribe. In other Plains Indian tribes men's societies draw from all segmented groups within them by using age-grading. This introduces organic-hierarchical features. In such tribes complementary behavior obtains between the age societies. The Cheyenne are segmented into matrilocal villages. The people come together for the Sun Dance and for the summer hunting. They are cross-cut by the warrior societies, but most important is a symbol of the whole tribe, the sacred medicine bundle. If there is a murder within the tribe the sacred medicine bundle is made unclean and it must be cleansed by a tribal group ceremony and expulsion of the murderer.

Alexis de Tocqueville, in *Democracy in America*, written in 1835, described

how democracy, with belief in equal rights for man, demands symmetrical behavior. De Tocqueville describes complementary behavior: true dignity consists in everyone doing best by his own status, and that is possible for both peasant and prince. America expects complementary behavior in its relations with other countries. Symmetrical behavior cannot be oriented toward power seeking.

(Benedict assigned a paper, due in three weeks, on mechanisms of crosscutting segments in Dakota and Kwakiutl society, to be based on the ethnographic sketches in *Cooperation and Competition in Primitive Societies*, edited by Margaret Mead.)

### OCTOBER 24, 1946

### *Arapaho Crosscutting Mechanisms, with Organic and Hierarchical Features*

The Arapaho are divided into four bands which live apart during the winter, fall and part of the spring. They come together in the summer for the festivities. Tipis are set up in a circle. The position of the tipis is in order of status. This contrasts with the Cheyenne where the bands pitch together. There is no Arapaho tribal symbol. Each band has a chief, and the chief of the most important band at the time is the tribal chief. The Arapaho have the concept of giving sanctuary to an offender. The sanctuary is a designated tipi where the offender is safe if he can get there.

The men's societies are age graded. Every male over thirteen belongs to one society, and each one goes through the series of societies step by step. The first age grade, from ages 13–17, has two societies, neither of which has dances. The members have begun collecting coup of certain kinds. They have no voice in tribal affairs. On their own initiative, the boys get a ceremonial grandfather as a sponsor who helps them. Up to about age 20 relations between a boy and his ceremonial grandfather are most important. The ideal is to have the ages of the boy and his sponsor as far apart as possible. Each one also has a ceremonial older brother who comes from the next higher age grade, but at this time he is less important to the boy than the ceremonial grandfather.

The second age grade, ages 20–35, has three societies. The ceremonial brother now becomes most important. This group is concerned with war, counting coup, and scalp dances. Each member has an elder-younger brother relationship in the preceding and succeeding age classes. These are hostile partnerships, with joking and ridiculing the partner's society. These three societies have many duties, such as policing the camp while on the move, using punitive powers on tribal hunts, and they police the Sun Dance.

The camp moves as a whole during the summer but in parts during the winter. During the summer months when the buffalo herd together, individual hunting is prohibited. One of the societies is in power according to which one gave the last public dance. Officers of these societies take certain vows of not retreating and of taking coups.

The sixth age grade consists of the Dog Lodges, the greatest age class, men aged 35–40. They no longer take much part in warfare. The chiefs are usually members of this group. They have a dominant voice in everything concerning the tribe. They own the ceremony of the Sacred Pipe, which is used in all cases of civil law and is essential to any public action. Passing out of this group into the next is not by age, and most men die in this society. A few top individuals move into the seventh and eighth grades, about six in each. These old men act as consultants in affairs.

In passing from one age grade to the next there is stress on change in behavior. Complementary behavior obtains here. There is a hierarchy based on age. Status is obtained by coup counting and not by wealth.

In their civil legal behavior, the Arapaho regard a murderer of a tribal member as having an odor which clings to him. His family members go to the elders in the seventh and eighth grades and ask for the herbs and clay to rub on the murderer to cleanse him. A group hunt is organized in which the murderer, covered with clay and herbs, walks apart in humiliation. The odor clinging to him prevents him from killing an animal. Later, when he is able to kill his first animal, it is evidence that he has been cleansed, and he can return to the tribe. This contrasts to the Cheyenne belief that the tribe, not the murderer, must be cleaned. In case of adultery, the husband is usually too ashamed to keep an adulterous wife. The man she went with pays the husband so many horses. This is not punitive behavior, but restitutive.

## OCTOBER 29, 1946

### *Organic and Hierarchical Organization*

In primitive societies successful dominance depends on adherence rather than on despotic power. The Mohammedan conquest of North Africa retained the economic structures of the conquered peoples in order to skim the cream. The African symbiosis of cattle people and agriculturalists is an organic system. The cattle people served also as warriors, and the specialized ironworker trade made a pariah symbiotic group.

The Inca illustrate the extreme of a force-held society with their large area of control and very high pre-Inca culture. The local organized gens, the ayllu, adopted other people and villages, building allegiances and fighting for

dominance. The Inca came in as a fighting ayllu, and reinstated native chiefs and rewarded them for services under the Inca. The administrative practices included tribute, responsibility for local economy and civic order, army service supported by the recruit's family, accumulation of Inca wealth, resettlement of refractory groups, and prevention of local alliances. See Joseph Bram's work. The Inca position was like the pre-Tokugawa Japanese Shogun, on whom all ladders converged. Organic relationships are in ascending direction. There may be a link to the house pattern, for example, the ancestors of all of Japan were the Emperor's own ancestral Gods; however, hierarchical organization demands abolition of natural ties of contiguity to maintain allegiance to the center. The Bathonga, summarized in Mead, *Cooperation and Competition*, is an example, as well as the importance of the chief in American Indian tribes. Adherence is often without force as in the American Indian free tribes.

OCTOBER 31, 1946

Hierarchies have the same arrangements up and down the scale with symmetrical units. In American society counties have been bypassed in the hierarchical line. The pattern remains though the personnel changes. As people move up the hierarchy they think so much in terms of the hierarchy that they assume "proper" attitudes toward lower groups. Complementary behavior is necessary, which arranges everyone in an order. Either the complementary behavior in organic and hierarchical societies or the symmetrical behavior in segmented societies can be aggressive, hostile, or loving; however, in segmented societies all men walk abreast and no man commands another. In organic and hierarchical society no man can walk abreast, and likewise no man can have a wider footpath.

The organization of labor in the United States involves changes in status of groups of people. The foreman used to be associated with management and now moves in the direction of symmetrical behavior in his relations to management. This is an example of a basic contradiction in the United States, a mixture of hierarchical/complementary and segmented/symmetrical organizations. Labor, working within United States values, is trying to move up in the hierarchy to an equal position, with an eclectic desire, an expression of competition, which is apart from hierarchical organization.

NOVEMBER 7–21, 1946

(The topic of kinship was introduced with brief reference to the contrast between achieved and ascribed status. In five lectures, Benedict diagramed and discussed the Hawaiian system, the Ojibwa system, the Hopi clan and the Omaha gens, the system of mother's brother's daughter marriage and fa-

ther's sister's daughter marriage linking three gens, and the Australian system presented in much detail and based on A. R. Radcliffe-Brown, Lloyd Warner, and William Ewart Lawrence. Subsidiary comments concerned problems of sons' noninheritance from fathers in Hopi and Zuni; designation or lack of designation of generation; California's lack of clan/gens but its emphasis on one descent line; native explanations on basis of elevated or depressed lines, as among the Vandou; dominance of mother's brother nonindicative of survival of matriliny; and Malaysian and Indonesian systems of visiting husbands.

These five lectures on kinship revealed a great mastery of system and wide knowledge and fluency in this whole array of societies. To the neophyte student, they were a dazzling depiction of primitive thought and interpersonal relations. It was for me the real entry into perception of cultural diversity and relativity. It did what reading ethnologies in college had not done. Benedict did not give our class the assignment Victor Barnouw described struggling with when he took Social Organization in 1941, when "the students were given lists of kinship terms from particular societies and were required to figure out the system from the terms" [1980:504].)

NOVEMBER 26, 1946

No form of society makes for the good society, and no form guarantees inherently those things hoped for ideologically. It is possible to arrange group activities toward cooperation or competition under any form. We must look at the functioning of institutions, not the forms. The question is how is cohesion brought about in different societies in other ways than through kinship? The give-away may be a cohesive force, but does it go to those above in status to assure favor, or to those below, those on a level who will benefit from it? Among the Pawnee the gifts go up. Among the Dakota the gifts go downward to those who have not, and there it effects a real distribution of wealth through giving for the sake of giving. Is there a coincidence of public and private interest so that a man can advance his own interest and the public interest at the same time and in the same way. D. W. Brogan discusses this in *The American Character*. In the West there is an unwillingness to identify private and public interests, and this is not true of the East. Ernest Beaglehole's book, *Property*, shows that the organization of economics and property can be cohesive. This occurs when there are many different ways for an individual to rise in prestige. If there is only one means of rising an individual is in opposition to every other person in society as his rival. The giving of hospitality is another cohesive force.

DECEMBER 5, 1946

When societies are set up so individuals can climb up independent ladders without knocking the other down, usually things fare better. The Ifugao are a hostile people stressing financial success and offering only one way to the top. In Manus a man cannot rise unless he is engaged by a rival who is about to flatten him. When a person can be a great landowner, a chief, a priest, a good husband, or honored storyteller, it is helpful in the functioning of that society. The feeling of the people that they are getting enough out of the society is important. It need not be material advantage. In Dobu a couple change residence from the man's village where his ancestors are buried to the village where his wife's ancestors are buried, causing great insecurity, an arrangement called alternate residence. The Dakota love alternate residence. Under what kinds of form does the individual function best? The kind where the activity of an individual benefits the individual and society at the same time. The serfs of feudal Europe valued protection more than liberty. Using dependency as a technique for the play for adherents is very widespread. In India it is said, How good it is to be *his* man!

The rules about property are very different in different societies. The theory of primitive communism is not accepted today, and the theory only pointed out the pervasiveness of property rights in the West. There may be communal property among some primitive societies to make life as pleasant as possible. Ifugao irrigated rice land is very high in cost, but sweet potato land is for the asking. In Chukchee, one of the most hostile tribes described, to receive food from another person is very humiliating. It is best to look at property arrangements among primitive societies as complicated situational arrangements about human necessity without much deliberate thought about it. There are different floors, such as subsistence, above subsistence, hospitality, giveaways, and others. Few primitive peoples can store enough food to last through a real famine. Their storage methods were not good, and there was also the damage from rats and insects. American Indians were very good at food storage, but with the exception of the Pueblos none could survive a real famine for a year. Reactions to famine may be great hostility in the group or drawing closer together. The Trobriands react with great hostility to famine; however, it rarely occurred. In famine the people could not manage, and this is seen in the folklore. The Eskimo faced famine often. Although there was plenty of hostility in Eskimo society, when a famine occurred there was no increase in hostility, but rather the people drew closer together. They pooled food during famine despite having individual ownership. People can stand inordinate privation if they can handle it together.

DECEMBER 10, 1946

Cultural relativity is a comparison of form and does not include the question of function. Fieldwork does not separate form and function, although cultural relativity does. Function is accomplished by cultural wholes in different forms. There is an area beyond cultural relativity, and that is the requirements of social functioning and the particular type of social functioning possible to the society. One asks the way in which the forms of culture function, for example, does democracy function for good or for bad? Does hierarchy function for good or for bad?

Forms function very differently. Holland got along with no civil service. France and Germany would be unintelligible omitting the civil service. The complex social organization of middle America provided a pattern for conscription of labor by European colonists, but nowhere in the United States territory were the Indians available for labor. They were free tribes. However, the free tribes in Argentina were forced into labor and were wiped out. The contrast in form between the free tribes and the more extensively organized ones brought about the difference.

Henry Murray makes a useful contrast between adient and abient forms.[1] Civil liberties mean different things in different cultures. Among the free tribes civil liberties can be made accessible to all without creating an underdog. The free society, as distinguished from the idea of civil liberties alone, is that society which has freedoms that do not imply an underdog, such as our civil liberties, hospitality, and the right of being fed by the community, and recognition that status has been attained by work and ability and is available to anyone who wants to go through the process of attaining it. But (in contrast to the idea of the free society) the definition of liberty is culturally determined.

DECEMBER 12, 1946

Some culture traits are beyond relativity and may be considered universals in human societies. Incest tabus are beyond relativity, that is, the existence of them but not the explanations of them. Mother-son tabus are more universal than father-daughter or brother-sister tabus. There is condemnation in every kind of society for some type of killing. There are also universally bans on some types of stealing. The types differ, and the Kai of New Guinea kill and eat anyone who steals food but do not punish any other kind of stealing or even kleptomania. Traits beyond cultural relativity are a common denominator of ethical moral sanctions. Furthermore, the breakup of marriage after the second child is quite unusual.

DECEMBER 17, 1946

There is often very great social ambivalence. One can speak of green light societies and of conflict societies. Democracies train citizens for peace but on the other hand have the draft for military service. There is no green light regarding peace or aggression. Primitive cultures are less likely to have conflicting signals than modern cultures which, after the invention of printing, began pickling culture. It is the source of contradiction in American culture. Samoa sets up no barriers or contradictions. Ojibwa is a green light culture on a socially hostile level. In Omaha society the vision, which in theory is free to everyone, has to be bought from the clan by a prerogative. There are myths of killing a father or uncle to gain a prerogative for a vision. People do not give in on either of these traits, and it is extremely dangerous to be a skeptic on either issue.

In Tchambuli there is female dominance of households and the economy, and women are a secure, integrated group although not in matrilineal clans. Men stand alone, not integrated with relatives, and are dominated by women, but they consider the society patrilineal and male dominated. Thus there is a contradiction because men refuse to face the fact of female dominance. Men are supposed to be ceremonially important, but there is no social mechanism for it. This is different from the Siamese definition of men as perpetrators of life, thus giving a green light to male dominance.

Acculturation causes problems of ambivalence. In Fiji there is a great sanction for impersonal leadership in villages. Even in conflict societies, behavior can be generalized; the conflict does not lead to a standstill. In Holland labor unions are ruled by Catholic or Presbyterian churches. America has mixed lights.

(Christmas vacation intervened, and of the four classes that ended the semester, notes for the middle two classes are sparse. The topics that filled out the course are of interest, however, as are the few commentaries by Benedict that were recorded.)

JANUARY 7, 1947

In the study of the relationship of form and function, it is found that accounts of form might consider the specification of the machinery without telling you how it will run. Knowledge of structure is essential to understanding life processes, but it is not the life processes. Diffusion studies have shown how a form has been adopted with an entirely different function given to it. The fact of adoption of the Sun Dance does not tell the way in which it operates in the tribes that took it. Malinowski felt that forms were never really borrowed and that each form had to be understood in terms of its function. The borrowing

of material in mythology and folklore can illustrate this. In Grimm's fairy tales the incidents that in one place tell the theme of a weak person becoming great are used in another place to carry out a different theme. Understanding the social scene must be in terms of seeing that allegiance to forms is not social salvation.

(A question from a student, whether form can stimulate function, was answered with cultural variations among democracies.) Free election is a form that serves America well. Checks and balances in the American system is of no meaning in English operations. We are organized to be, and forced to be, pressure groups. We do not understand "going underground" when another party is in power. Local need rules pressure politics. French Canadians have no concept of frontier and its psychological consequences. The separation of form and function is illustrated by the different effect of bombing according to different attitudes toward material property.

### JANUARY 9, 1947

It is necessary to place social organization within its culture area. Melanesia organizes trade very carefully, beyond need. In a silent trade, one group brings seawater and the other spring water. The fact of having to trade is universal in Melanesia. Polynesia uses the principle of borrowing people to make a product needed. In placing social organization in its culture area, you pay attention, on the one hand, to the fact that no area could escape diffusion, and, on the other, the local variations of response to diffusion.

In late medieval times, according to Tawney's *Religion and the Rise of Capitalism*, a contract was valued only if both parties had risked something and where there was mutual advantage. The industrial revolution in Japan occurred after 1870 under laws of a highly bureaucratic state. You had to pay attention to the other partner, so that the trade was shared for the common good. It was a very large area which was extremely sensitive in responding to local needs.

### JANUARY 14, 1947

The importance of the organization of the local group: Intersegmental group relations are like international relations. The emissary relationship must be warm. Where there is a matrilineal clan and patrilocal residence, as in Fiji, a sister's son is the emissary between villages. Or a wife goes as emissary from her husband's village to her brother's village.

## JANUARY 16, 1947

### *Valid Evolutionary Principles*

Density of population has been correlated with the state, developed ceremonialism, human sacrifice, and slavery. There has been an enlargement of the in-group and a growth of communication which nothing, not even nationalism can stop.

In general, the evolutionists posited a scheme of four stages: promiscuity, matriliny, patriliny, and compulsive monogamy. Promiscuity has never been found. Morgan believed that where the terms for the father and mother's brother were the same, this meant that the mother once slept with both her husband and her own brother. All insisted that matriliny preceded patriliny because a child could always tell who his mother was. Robert Briffault in *The Mothers* associated the good society with matriliny. Matriliny has often been associated with the matriarchate, but it does not mean the rule of women but rather the rule of the mothers' brother. Patriliny was generally believed to be better than matriliny. Finally there came compulsive monogamy, which was believed the best. This is the hardest scheme to validate. No promiscuity has ever been found. In the same culture area some tribes are matrilineal while others are patrilineal. Modern anthropology sees them as merely alternatives.

Some differences do occur when there is matrilocality. The man is then a stranger. The man always runs the great concerns of the culture. Prestige goes with the men. Matriliny seems to have the germs of discord, but there are still matrilineal societies which have good functioning. Over time there would probably be more patrilineal societies than matrilineal ones. Some societies probably began as matrilineal ones. All primitive tribes are studied under culture contact, and this causes a shift to patriliny.

Another conceptual scheme is Eduard Hahn's separation of hoe horticulture from plow agriculture. Hoe tillage need not necessarily follow herding, while agriculture would of necessity follow herding. There is the distinction between Gemeinschaft and Gesellschaft, the warm personal relations of familial economics, and impersonal relations as in contract societies. There is something to this but it is not a valid distinction for whole societies. Gemeinschaft is said to occur in subsistence relations primarily, but there are many food gatherers and incipient farmers who are very hostile.

In general, can social factors depend on certain ecological and technological conditions? Evolution in social factors is not absolutely in terms of evolution in technological factors alone. No generalization is accepted in cross-cultural studies when one exception is known.

APPENDIX 2

# Personality and Culture

## Anthropology 121/122, Winter Session, 1946–1947

### OCTOBER 1, 1946

Anthropology shares problems with all the social sciences, but more than others, it distinguishes viewpoints in our culture from those in other cultures. We should be aware of what is strictly in our culture.

Culture is learned and acquired behavior practiced in social groups. Important knowledge for anthropologists, beyond the phenomenon of cultural causation, is, What kind of character structure and attitudes are present in a culture? Primitive cultures, that is, preliterate ones, are possible to view as a whole because they are simpler pedagogically, and only pedagogically. A major reason for this is that the invention of printing has created a problem in understanding culture.[1]

Man's culture is learned behavior. Animal learning is instinctual, biological. Under human observation, animals are not found to socially transmit learning. Man transmits learning through child rearing and through man-made institutions. The influence of teaching and of institutions becomes a study. Man equals nurture plus nature.

Texts: Margaret Mead, *Cooperation and Competition among Primitive Peoples*. Abram Kardiner, *The Psychological Frontiers of Society*. Ruth Benedict, *Patterns of Culture*.

### OCTOBER 3, 1946

(Benedict was out of town. Lecture by Marian W. Smith comparing concepts of property in the United States and among Plains Indian tribes. The topic was preannounced, and it introduced the following three lectures on economic attitudes and arrangements. All lectures after this one were by Benedict.)

OCTOBER 8, 1946

*Attitudes toward Property, Contrasting the Plains Indians with the Kwakiutls*

Whenever property is concentrated within any one point, the patterns of Plains life require that it should be distributed. The Western pattern of investment does not belong to many other cultures. In the great giveaway the concentrated property goes to people who have nothing. The Dakota say, "He had nothing. He gave everything away." There is no rise in prestige through accumulation.

The Kwakiutl are a rich people, warlike, and very aggressive. Giving always has a measurable return. They have a permissive environment. They eat fish and they have good technology. This is the only area of head-hunting in North America. The purpose of economic exchanges is to flatten your rival. There is a difference between competition and rivalry: in competition, two people compete for the same object with attention on the object; in rivalry, interests shift almost immediately to the rivalry situation with the other person. It is a quarrel situation. When you kill a man, you acquire all his property. (The potlatch is described.) All rivalry is in goods above the subsistence level.

OCTOBER 10, 1946

The contrast between Kwakiutl society, on the one hand, and Plains Indians, on the other, shows up the components which are valued in each. The Plains Indians do not gage self-esteem in terms of property, and you honor yourself and the recipient by stripping yourself of property. The goal in Kwakiutl is to flatten your rival by giving away or destroying property. There is no accumulation of goods in Kwakiutl, and the very poor and very rich people use practically the same things.

The Plains system is a siphon system. It insures the distribution of the available goods throughout the social structure through the melodramatic act of giving. Zuni is another siphon system, though not at all melodramatic. Zunis would never strip themselves of everything, and they are more dependable through this restraint. For example, for preparation of the winter ceremonial, Shalako, houses must be built, and the people who build new houses must show that they have much. Building takes six to eight months during which anyone who works is fed and paid by the "contractors." This is the siphon in operation. Furthermore, people attending the Shalako must be fed. The details of working of this economic system are not available in the literature since the Zuni never talk about it and are not in the least interested in it.

In this economic typology, siphon systems are those in which people honor themselves by giving.[2] The usual obligatory hospitality is a small model of what in some places happens on a large scale. Funnel systems are those where economic goods flow towards an individual as through rent, interest, obligations to work, as in the case of young men in Manus who must work off a debt to their sponsor in marriage. Hourglass systems are those in which economic goods are funneled to the chief who is the manager or owner of the tribal estate and in turn has the obligation to feed and provide for his subjects. For example, the Kwakiutl chief who claims the fish catch as his own and then gives the fisherman who caught it the necessities of life and uses the remainder in potlatching. White colonial administrators, have usually choked off the hourglass at the narrowest point, drawing off what they have needed, and left the remainder to the population.

### OCTOBER 15, 1946

One should not assume property relations to be determining ones. Property forms merely constitute one point of crystallization of the cultural attitudes, just one set of interpersonal relations.

We must distinguish between the arrangement sets of a culture and its character structure. For example, you find certain herding methods among all herding peoples. These would constitute the arrangement sets. Whether you have cooperative ways of handling these methods, or competitive, hostile ways, as among the Chukchi, depends on the character structure of the particular people, that is, in such factors as hostility, repression, frustration, and so on. The character structure acts as the integrative mechanism within a culture, leaving, however, certain areas of escape.

Literacy adds to cultural disintegration because it introduces other cultures; for example, it introduces Bible culture to our culture.

### OCTOBER 17, 1946

#### *The Growth of the Individual in His Culture*

The course is not about a particular individual's play, or choice, in his own culture. It is not concerned with which ladder to success an individual selects but rather about the number and variety of alternatives the culture offers to individuals and how many subcultures there are. Individuals vary in the amount of cultural data they carry, but this factor is of secondary concern. The course is not about a problem of the individual versus society, the American idea that powers of society come from, and are taken away from, the individual.

Society demands the individual be socialized. This is a universal frustration to the individual. The child is different from adults in quality and must be changed, made social. The frustrations of socialization may be tied to aspects of culture which are humiliating or rewarding. Or, as in the American view, the measure of social adjustment may be sociability. De Tocqueville's study, *Democracy in America*, shows the identification of the good life with joining.

The anthropological view of the growth of the individual in his culture sees him developing in a cultural climate, not as in genetic psychology's lineal studies which see the outside world impinging on the child at definite points and exclude the influence of the child's mind and concepts and the total impressions of the culture.

Certain things may be eliminated from the cultural climate without any denial, for instance, the Arapesh successful omission of childhood sexuality.

What causes deviancy is a cultural problem, that is, the effect of deviancy, and the description of it. What factors in a culture make a child behave as a deviant? For example, children without grandparents in a society where grandparents give security may be deviants. In America, children from broken homes may be deviants. The treatment of the "middle" child in America may make a deviant.

### OCTOBER 22, 1946

### *Examples of Total Culture Impinging on Child, as Contrasted with Lineal Studies in Genetic Psychology*

What a culture thinks of as its peak of life for men and women in it is a determining influence on attitudes and expectancy of growing up, for example, German children's unwillingness to go on into adulthood. Adulthood was signified there by becoming a civil servant; Manus children are independent and regard adult life as troubled, ghost-ridden; when asked, "Is that your father's sister?" child replies, "Ask someone older; I don't have to know that yet." Another example, American men drop in status when they retire from business, while Plains old men gain prestige as members of the tribal council. Grandparents may play important role, as in the Zuni grandmother's rearing of the knee baby.

Qualitative difference between children and adults may be stressed, as in America where a different type of thinking is thought to be required to feel yourself into the mind of a child.

Other cultures do not stress, as we do, schedules of three meals, of regular bowel movements. Things set by nature may be selected or omitted. We have a tendency to separate work and play, as in "going off to work." In contrast, Melanesian taro cultures assign children a small piece of the parents' garden,

and the child works alongside the parents. Melanesians have a nostalgia about "the days we worked our gardens." To what extent is there continuity and consistency so that child training will not have to be relearned later, but will continue through life? Americans are consistent in stress on modesty and clothing for children. However, our idea that children want to play, not present among primitive cultures, is a discontinuous element; for example, in American farm life in upstate New York family sharing in rural communities is not present, as it was in colonial days. The 4H clubs try to reinstate what the parents have shut out. To what extent can the child realize that parents play too? How much does he see his parents' life patterned similarly to his? In our culture the child sees himself over against adult standards. Some other cultures do not apply adult standards of performance to children, and they do not measure his conduct against that of others but reward the child as he learns to do more and more. The child is measured against his own performance, as in the Plains, cooking the child's first sparrow along with the buffalo meat of his father.

Recommended: George A. Pettitt, *Primitive Education in North America.*

### October 24, 1946

How much fostering care is there? And is responsibility for knowing right and wrong put on the child or assumed by the adult? These are part of the problem of dominance and submission in child rearing. There is a Western emphasis on not letting the child escape dependency, for example, the German mother may wash her child up to the age of 10, considering this as one of her responsibilities. Responsibility for the child's safety is continuously emphasized. There is the question of when responsibility for safety and moral conduct is left to the child. Responsibility for punishment lies with the parents, coupled with guilt feelings about having done right by your child. There is heavy emphasis on early introjection of right and wrong. The shyness of the European child from 7–14 is a function of this dependence. The Western pattern of right to command obedience: the saying, "I have lived long enough to know what is right." In contrast, the Plains Indians are happy when their child shows hostility against them in public and will say, "Ah, he will be a man."

Child rearing is always consistent with patterns of adult life, whether continuous or discontinuous. Our culture cannot import the patterns of other cultures without changing the rest of society at the same time. Many primitive cultures that reared their children softly have collapsed under the impact of foreign competitive societies.

American stress on what you ought to do vs. what you want to do is foreign to most primitive societies.

Regarding dominance and submission, Americans classify kinsmen into those above and below you, for example, uncle and nephew. In primitive cultures there may be a class of uncles including the 80-year-olds to the unborn. This may be correlated with dissolution of authority in the larger group, for example, a single term may stand for "father-son" and be used by father to his son and by son to his father; or you may find reciprocal relations of joking, gift-giving, and so on between mother's brother and sister's son, or grandfather and grandson.

Regarding patterns of punishment, the question of whether they involve the parental group or not: where punishment occurs in the parental group, you find experimentation on part of the child to see how far he can go.

### OCTOBER 29, 1946

*Preparation for Adult Sex Roles May Be Discontinuous or Continuous*

The American child is regarded as asexual; however, parents are charged with responsibility of keeping the child from sex play, with the tacit implication that if the child is left alone it will engage in sex play. Two continuous arrangements, one where there is complete reliance on the physiological fact that the child is not capable of sex acts and so sex play can be unrestricted because it is not dangerous. This is the more common attitude and is found, for instance, in Trobriand Islands and in Africa. Where the whole emphasis for adults is on the capacity to reproduce, the child may be allowed to indulge in sex play because it cannot have reproductive consequences. The child may be regarded as completely asexual, as in Zuni and Arapesh.

### OCTOBER 31, 1946

Crisis ceremonials, or *rites de passage*, mark the great way stations of life: puberty, marriage, aging, advance in status, and death. They can be understood only in terms of the degree of continuity of the life span. They are institutionalizations of discontinuity. Changes are marked in the transition from not-possibly-a-warrior to warrior status, from sexual ineffectiveness to effective sex role, from a frequently striking discontinuity of self-effacement in childhood to self-confidence in adult life.

The making-of-man cults found in Australia, New Guinea, Central Africa, and South America are an example of astonishing parallelism with diffusion hard to prove. Wilhelm Koppers has classified them as a cradle trait. There is a universal character of the ceremony. The child is thought of as pertaining to

woman and must be separated from womanish things to become a man, to be given second birth by men. Initiated men rush into the women's camp where the women are sheltering their boys and are wailing over their prospective loss. Then, for example, among the Australians, the boys are taken from the women and go through increasingly larger and more important ceremonies at intermittent stages of gradual separation from women until the final ceremony of second birth by men is symbolically performed, and the boys are given back to the women as husbands. Women are increasingly barred from the ceremonies. The men learn in the ceremony that there are no supernaturals, that men themselves made the sound of the bull-roarer. Very common in these societies is the myth that the supernatural was first known by the women and men took it away from them, making the secret their own. Envy of men for women is apparent. Men attempt to take over the prerogatives of women of birth and sometimes menstruation. After making the secret their own the men have a psychology of putting the secret over on the women, with full consciousness of deceit, for example, when a priest may pound the grave of a dead woman and say, "We lied to you! We lied to you!" The ceremonies are the social prerequisite for marriage.

Age-grade societies are another arrangement of institutionalization of discontinuity. There are multiple men's societies, as among Plains Indians and the Masai, a great war-like herding peoples of East Africa. There they do not contain any ambivalence toward women and are arranged like college classes in our society, that is, like them if college classes determined all affairs of social import within an age grade. They have intervals of 4 years among the Masai. Among them, hospitality rights to a man's wife are granted to age grade fellows rather than to a brother which is usually the pattern.

### NOVEMBER 5, 1946

(Election Day and class did not meet.)

### NOVEMBER 7, 1946

*Pride or Humiliation Can Be the Response to Any Experience*

It is important to identify the areas in a culture pertaining to each. That is, in America humiliation is coupled with dependence on others and with failure, especially failure to measure up to age-grade expectations because success is believed open to everyone. Humiliation is sometimes associated with pregnancy, causing withdrawal from the community. Humiliation is attached to racial and national origins. It is also attached to appearance, especially for women, and to economic possessions. In Europe humiliation

often attached to measuring up to expectations of parents. In many primitive cultures being an orphan brings humiliation, implying that you have no family to fall back on. In Manus marriage carries with it extreme humiliation for the boy and the girl. It ends the independent life of childhood. The boy is in heavy debt to his financial sponsors, and the girl is in the hands of the marriage arrangers. In contrast, Romanian marriage is a prideful ceremony phrased in terms of the Emperor going across the sea to bring back a beautiful queen, as in the Song of Solomon. The dowry made by the girl is pridefully displayed. Marriage by capture also symbolized as prideful, for example, in the Balkans.

Death may have an element of will and of pride among Japanese. For Americans, death is very passive. Romanians treat life crises generally as prideful, describing "thousands of little birds, and for torches, the stars."

## NOVEMBER 12, 1946

### *Continuing the Topic of Pride and Humiliation*

In Zuni there is little opportunity to feel pride. Men with "personality" are disliked and liable to be called witches. Rewards go to the little boys, who are never heard from, in the fostering of a dull average. There is a minor allowance in permitting pride in belonging to the line of hereditary priesthood of the North, but no other. The highest compliment to leaders is, "No one says anything about him." There is a lack of warmth between people. People bear grudges and do not greet anyone not of their own household when they meet in the street, although they know everyone and their histories. The economy is very cooperative. The Plains Indians exalt pride. Good works, distributions of property, and acts of bravery are tokens upon which the individual builds a reputation. They allow open shows of pride in ways that would be discouraged in our own society.

Zuni does not employ humiliation as a sanction, except in the case of initiation of boys where they are given a mild whipping, but after it the boys turn on the men who whipped them. To employ humiliation is more violent than to feel shame. Both shame and guilt result from humiliation. Shame is not associated with guilt in many cultures, although in America the two are interpenetrated. Shame is an external sanction depending on whether other people know. Cultures relying exclusively on shame are Australian ones. Shame cultures do not understand confession, as in Christianity, as the whole point is not to let other people know. Guilt is an internal sanction, a matter between a person and a god, and can be alleviated by confession or in invention of a private ritual to expiate it, as in neurosis. Manus is an example

of a complete guilt society. See Reo Fortune, *Manus Religion*. Manus religion is not concerned with social ceremonies but solely with atonement of guilt and expiation through confession. Catholicism was easily accepted by them.

Aggression is not primarily dependent on the existence of guilt or shame but is tied to whether the organization permits conflict of institutions or attitudes.

### NOVEMBER 14, 1946

*Moral Valuations Have Different Referents*

In America telling the truth is a moral value and furthermore it is an absolute value, as American moral values tend to be, that is, the value holds in all situations. Some societies have situational values, for example, Japan, where the law is constructed on the right in one situation differing from the right in another. The Zuni also see morals as situational, for example, in telling the story "The Heart of Midlothian," in which a loved one could be saved by telling a lie which could not morally be told, a Zuni said, "The sister did not love her," and lacked appreciation of why the lie could not be told. An Inca punishment of a man who stole out of need was directed not against the thief but against the feudal lord who did not provide for his subject.

Moral valuation may refer to any number of things, for example, criticism for acting above one's age is the worst shaming in Samoa. The American criticism "Be your age" implies stress on growing up and doing what grown-ups do. German children wish to remain young. In American psychiatry a person who does not want to grow up is neurotic. Intentional and nonintentional acts are treated in the same way in some societies. In American law they are distinguished.

Working hard is a virtue in America and also in Holland. In Italy working too hard is shameful, where success without hard work is a sign God loves you. Charm has moral virtue in America. Some European societies and primitive societies regard charm as suspect.

### NOVEMBER 19, 1946

Our antithesis between love of self and love of others, the idea that each one is exclusive, is not borne out in cross-cultural material. We put our own welfare against social welfare and vice versa.

Attitudes toward the self may be reflected in attitudes toward the universe. That is, among American Indians, except Zuni, a strong man can break all the laws of the universe and thereby shows his strength. A strong shaman breaks all the tabus ceremonially. This is especially strong among the Eskimo. Man challenges the universe. In contrast, in Polynesia and Melanesia the universe

is knowable but absolute and must be lived up to. The strongest man lives up best. It is an impersonal code pertaining to every detail of life. They discuss the application of the code to every detail and specific situation.

Attitudes toward the self and others may organize actions by group allegiance rather than by principles or interpretation of the universe, as in Melanesia where opposing sides will challenge each other to carry out rites. It is a prescribed opposition in terms of which group one belongs to. See Gregory Bateson, *Naven*.

The American Indian attitude of defiance of laws of the universe includes defiance of laws of society, for example, in the Kwakiutl cannibal dance which values and condones asocial power. Among the Puyallup Nisqually a club to murder people acquires value when passed down in a family and is a sign of having had brave men.

### NOVEMBER 21, 1946

*Return to Prescribed Opposition of Groups*

American democracy on the local level is a question of ins and outs fighting for retention or possession of power on the basis of gladiatorial phrasings of problems, whether they exist or not. The minority has a right to build itself up to become a majority if it can.

In Europe, east of the Rhine, or certainly east of the Polish corridor as far as Japan, our cultural idea of democracy is lacking, and there is no concept of minority and majority and no understanding of elections. The European and Asian pattern is of highly organized local units and highly organized state, and both separated. The state has much control of what we consider the local sphere, for example, in Holland and Belgium the mayor is appointed by the crown. Generally the police are the representatives of the state, as well as teachers. Differences are in how far the state reaches down into local units. The will of the ruler is considered the will of the people, and the opposing groups are ostracized or go underground. On the local level democracy is a problem of consensus. See Penderel Moon, *Strangers in India*; F. S. C. Northrup, *The Meeting of East and West*.

Returning to the attitudes toward the self, Americans give up the idea of mutual dependency and hold the individual will come out on top. American society holds both views, that the individual is the architect of his own destiny and its opposite, that the individual may be a victim of society. A contrasting belief, that the universe does not grant the individual an important role, the will of Allah, or "It's just too bad, man is a victim anyway." A Bulgarian proverb: "Even God has his sin; he created the world."

Is the universe on the side of human impulses or is it not? Is human expression easy or hard? The American attitude that it is on the side of human impulses is correlated with optimism as expressed in religion and philosophy. The idea that the universe requires control of impulse and body, and the inhibition of physical needs, is well evidenced in Islamic art; it is tied to pessimistic views of the universe.

## DECEMBER 3, 1946

### *Methods in Personality and Culture*

How far can experience and training of the anthropologist go in explaining personal development in culture? Proverbs can give good introductory leads to cultural attitudes. They must be observed as they function and are used in context. They should be compared to those similar to them across the border or in other countries to bring out distinctive meanings. Contradictory proverbs in the same culture may be a function of cultural ambivalence. The actual use of proverbs may not be indicative of attitude but rather shows the blocking out of those areas of proverbs which are distinctive of the culture and those areas of proverbs which it rejects entirely.

Proverbs are important in Europe, Africa, and Polynesia.

Proverbs about love: Hawaii, "Love is a cloud (man). It will form on any mountain (woman)." Romania, "Kiss the hand you cannot bite." "Am I made of glass that you do not beat me." Beating is a preliminary to love making: "Beating is a thing, of paradise."

Proverbs about honor: Romania, "Can a man eat honor?" and also "Pinch your face to make it rosy." In Poland honor is important as face and pretense. In Greece honor is internalized, just as it is in Russia; honor is goodness, and goodness is the supreme virtue. In Germany honor is extracted from a person of lower rank or job status; in Poland honor is characteristic of nobles.

Proverbs about jealousy: Poland has no proverb about jealousy or envy. In the Ukraine, "Jealousy is like rust; it eats up the heart." In Tyrol, "Better to envy than to sympathize."

Proverbs about anger: Tyrol, "Anger is without honor." In Russia, anger is a virtue, there are no negative connotations.

Proverb about psychic maladjustment: Holland, "To go around with your soul under your arm." In Poland goodness is not concealing anything from other people.

A contrast in interpretation is seen in the Polish proverb "Mountains and valley do not meet but people do"; and in the Ukrainian, "Mountains and valley do not meet but people agree."

A proverb about reconciliation: Holland, "To have little sweet rolls." The Dutch eating symbolism is quite different from the French. In Holland, "To scare a cat out of a tree" refers to virtuous tenacity and patience. "Til Eugenspiegel," the Flemish story, is read in Belgium but not in Holland.

### DECEMBER 5, 1946

*Documentation of Personality and Culture Points in Fieldwork in Primitive Societies*

Begin with preliminary specific leads: get material from people who have contacted the tribe, for example, recruiters, and discover whether it is easy or hard to recruit labor. Easy recruiting is an index of considerable cultural hostility and friction; difficult recruiting in an index of cultural integration. Preliminary visual leads in the material culture, for example, in the handling of irrigation, gardens, productivity.

Early anthropological research devoted itself to formal, psychologically overt material, for example, describing puberty ceremonials as an old man would tell it, not inquiring into the function of puberty ceremonials in the life of the individual. Later anthropologists went after psychologically covert material, for example, how does the individual feel about his culture?

Communications should be in the native language. Jargons are usually not adequate for anthropological communication. Identification of individuals is important; must get to know faces and names not only for purposes of genealogies but to know relative positions of people involved in any given action. Detailed continuous observation as participant observer, to get material that will cross-check statements. Important to document opinions of informants, regardless of truth of the material, to know the point of view of individuals.

The form of any institution is not positively correlated with any specific function. That there are no revolutions in primitive societies, that is, no rebellions against the rulers within the societies, is an index of human capacity to adapt to any range of conditions.

### DECEMBER 10, 1946

*Theoretical Premises Arising from Fieldwork*

Cultures are wholes. This is due to the facts that field-workers, thinking they were the only individuals who would ever study the tribe, felt responsible to set down all the material they could find without departmentalization. Furthermore, the groups were small enough to take in all aspects without

departmentalization. This led to the premise that behavior was a whole: the focus on day-to-day behavior showed that such behavior could not be torn to shreds for purposes of isolation.

The individual vs. culture is a misstatement of the anthropological point of view. It is not true that anthropology is not interested in individual differences but only in cultural uniformities and sameness. Anthropologists phrase this differently: individual differences are the reactions of each individual to essential, pivotal assumptions and experiences of that culture. Such reactions can be pro or con.

The cultural core is like a centrifugal force throwing off sparks that are its application in economics, sex, religion, or death. The centrifugal force is organized around a central emphasis, for example, everything is a fight. Then engaging in agriculture is a fight as for old New Englanders, in contrast to Italian peasants for whom agriculture was conducted as loving the soil. If everything is a fight, then it is thought one fights women, fights buffalo, and so on. If emphasis is on gracious relations, then, for example, hunting magic will center around the hunter offering hospitality to deer. In explaining our own culture, the massive grounds on which it is based cannot be overlooked.

Contrary to Lucien Lévy-Bruhl's theory of a prelogic stage of primitive society, cultural relativity holds that all people are both logical and prelogical when the premises are stated on the basis on which a statement is made. Departmentalization in the social sciences gives rise to division into prelogic and logic. Departmentalization is also seen in taking sex as an explanation of culture in psychoanalysis.

### DECEMBER 12, 1946

Fieldwork differs depending on whether the culture investigated has an emphasis on formality or on informality. A culture may be organized on a cycle of calendrical recurrences, with priests and ascribed leaders. Zuni life is geared to a calendar. A culture may hold noncyclical rituals as occasions demand them. If a field-worker is there for two years and no death occurs, he is liable to get no record of how death is treated. If rituals are noncyclical or unformalized, and a death occurs, the ceremony is liable to be considerably improvised on the spur of the moment. Such cultures would rely on individual visions, instead of priestly institutionalization, and show informal leadership. Story-telling and prayers indicate degree of formalization, whether they should be repeated verbatim or nonverbatim. The amount of change is limited by man's imagination, which is harnessed to the tradition of his culture. It does not matter whether his culture urges him to innovate or not: a vision culture is no more diversified or imaginative than a

priest culture. There is no situation in human life where, if you consider leadership broadly and intelligently enough, it does not exist. However, it need not be institutionalized, as it is not in Zuni. The emphasis in American culture regarding formality and informality in childhood learning is striking. In America children are brought up by their age groups rather than by what their parents expect of them. In that respect there is less closeness between American children and parents than in primitive tribes. On the other hand, the identity of the mother is more pronounced in our culture than in primitive cultures. Without kin in America, parent-child relations cut to the bone. Learning by definition is vis-à-vis an adult, while in Europe an older sibling or child will teach things to a younger one. The American mother and father surrogate is always supposed to be an adult. However culture learning after childhood in America is through age-mates. The age group is the actual surrogate for parents. It is deplored that the American child is out of the home. There is conflict in standards between parents and children, and gangs are looked down on by adults. Projection of this is seen in the tendency in American life to blame lack of achievement or some failure as the fault of some other person or group, for instance, in not getting a job and in blaming parents for some thing in childhood. This is a situation out of which scapegoating grows. In contrast, the Japanese speak of rust on my sword.

### DECEMBER 17, 1946

*How Does Anthropology Organize Its Heterogeneous Materials?*

Pattern construction using Burma and Siam. Most diffusion traits are held in common. In Burma there is a record of high criminality not found in Siam. There was military occupation and consequent nationalistic movements, none of which happened in Siam, but Burmese high criminality is traceable to pre-British times. Burmese say the impulse to criminality can overwhelm anyone. Acts are apparently unmotivated. They do not expect repetition of a criminal pattern, saying there is no criminal type, and there is no attempt to apprehend criminals. There are individual acts of violence and fiesta fights. Theatricals express the peak of violence, for example, a father killing, boiling, and eating his baby. Informants use theatrical motor behavior. Gambling continues until complete loss of patrimony. Drinking continues until complete heightening of unpredictability. In Siam there is a low rate of criminality, no record of fiestas culminating in violent brawls, and no concern with criminality. In Burma there was raiding, not in Siam. Drinking in Burma made people violent, in Siam friendly. Gambling in

Burma was violent and heavy, in Siam it was confined to wages just received and determined if you could lay off work for one day or five.

How to construct the Burmese pattern? Burma is the most woman-dominated culture in the world, and women are the stable element. This is somewhat similar to Tchambuli. Women run the household, run the markets, hold money, are sought after by men, determine the number of children they will have and have few compared with the rest of the area. Men are playboys. They are given money by their mother or wife and spend it on fiestas and vanity. They look up to women as the stable element. The love term of women for men is "little flower, little bangle I wear in my hair." Men engage in oratory and politics and refused to take on large-scale production and trade in the period of contact with Europeans, so Indians took over these activities in Burma and the Chinese took them over in Thailand. There was much intermarriage with Indian men, with the children always brought up as Burmese at their mother's brother's house. This was regarded as more stable than marriage with a Burmese man. Nativistic movements tried to drive out foreign elements, although there was not much exploitation or drainage of wealth by the Chinese or Indians.

The Burmese baby is carried on the hip, not shawl-carried, which would leave the mother's hands free. The Burmese mother is very affectionate with the child when she is not busy, but she will suddenly frustrate the child in unpredictable ways when busy. Baby sees the busyness and importance of mother. The baby can have the breast at any time when not interrupting work, and then is frustrated. By nine months the baby courts the unpredictable mother and before one year acts theatrically toward her. The boy learns to get the best from dominant women. The patterned adult role is of men dependent and geared to action of women, who act at their own sweet will. The men are theatrical, irresponsible, unpredictable, and insecure. They regard occupations as the will of the moment. Women are permitted to take political positions and high civil service posts.

Insecurity and lack of responsibility in Burmese men did not exist in Siamese men. In Siam men and women dress in the same sartorial likeness, wear their hair in the same way, and their strength is regarded as even. The man is thought more patient at work but not stronger, but a division of labor prevails. Women are not overcharged with household duties. From early infancy all people are able to make their own rice, wash their own utensils. Refuse is thrown through the floors of the house on piles and usually over water.

A Siamese proverb: "Man is *pali* and woman is rice." *Pali* is seed rice. Another word is used for rice which is to be eaten and which has lost its

fertility. The man is regarded as responsible for the growth of children. Rice is restricted in its ownership; *pali* is common (property) to the world.

### DECEMBER 19, 1946

The Burmese Emphasize Impotence in Men. An accusation of a husband's impotence may be used to open a quarrel with another woman, or women accuse their own husband of it openly. Siamese do not believe impotence is possible.

The Burmese adolescent ceremony for girls consists of ear-piercing and is thought to be very painful. It is the beginning of erotic activities, and every man is considered a potential husband. These courtships never determine marriage although carried on for some years, then terminated by marriage which has been arranged by families. Upon marriage a woman becomes an owner of property and manager of household. Siamese have no ear-piercing and no puberty ceremony. The husband and wife are under the tutelage of the mother until the first child is born.

The Burmese conduct a birth ceremony of "baking the woman" which takes place in a hot room. The Burmese say that women do not want many children because many bakings will destroy their attractiveness. The Siamese have the same baking ceremony but say that after the first one the woman loses attractiveness and is no longer alluring.

The Siamese kite game takes place between a large male kite and a small female kite, each with its own orchestra accompanying it. The female kite dances. The objective is for the male kite to catch a loop on the female kite with its bamboo hooks. If it gets too close it will lose balance, which is considered her triumph. If the male clamps on to the female it pulls her along and they cruise together, considered his triumph.

Burmese and Siamese Buddhism require every man to be initiated into monkhood and spend some time in a monastery. The monk's liege is greatly relaxed by Western standards. The initiation ceremonies do not contain requirements of self-torture or of humiliation. Monks are required to not look at women and not eat after noon. Sex deprivation is not a source of complaint, as is the eating deprivation. The period of living in the monastery seems to act as group assurance to men. There is pride that Buddhism requires a man to be a monk. A great number of boys have been monastery attendants. The watts are homes of the monks, recreation grounds, and important centers of life under the protection of Gods. In Siam 1 in 20 men are in monasteries, in Burma 1 in 125 men are in monasteries. Every man is initiated at 20–21, and entering a monastery involves a complete rejection of sex. For Burmese,

this is opposed to women's erotic behavior. Burmese monks are leaders in political movements and instigate riots in the marketplace. In Siam ease of mind is desirable. Anger hurts the heart.

### JANUARY 7, 1947

### *Culture Change, Aspects Related to Individuals*

Culture change may be rapid in modern cultures, but this is a difference in quantity from change in primitive cultures, not difference by definition.

Genuine understanding of the Soviet state is to be gained from study of culture rather than interpretation of Marxian philosophy; for example, Kulaks in Ukrainian thought were people who had two cows, an attitude toward property quite different from Great Russia. (Events) are to be understood not in Marxian terms of class differences but in terms of two areas of culture.

Internal changes may occur from changes in the environment. The Arapesh may not have kept their low assertion of leadership and their maternal fostering of the young if in less scant surroundings. There is evidence that Eskimos used to leave behind old men and women who could no longer make the trail; this was felt to be inevitable and an occasion for grief. When contact with whites brought more wealth the institution was given up with some, but little, lag. The real gage of culture change is seen in the basic similarities in the Plains and through the breadth of Polynesia despite local changes.

Looking from the present backwards, the line of change appears as one inevitable road; looked at from the point of view of the past marching forward to the present, many possible paths occur at crucial turns. These paths are determined by culture, but not rigidly in one direction. It is at such turns that leadership plays its great role. The importance of leadership is not ruled out by the fact that culture change is inevitable. If changes are internal, leadership is at its maximum. It takes the forms of motivations which people have.

### JANUARY 9, 1947

### *Internal Culture Change (continued)*

Cultural changes allowing different modes of life set up conflict situations between the old and the new which usually result in an overvociferous defense and practice of the old. Culture change often comes as a means of exaggerating points which are already part of the culture, an elaboration of an old idea. A quality can become so entrenched in a culture that it goes beyond cultural utility and cannot be estimated by the culture which pursues it. Some nations are more neurotically scared of change than others.

Aberrance in culture, both by supererogates and negativists: the supererogates are those who take very seriously, and are very involved in, ideas of the culture. They bring change by elaboration, or running into the ground, the original commitments of society. Change comes then from collapse of the overelaborated system, rather than from the negativists. Both the supererogates and negativists react to the central cultural core that already operates.

## JANUARY 14, 1947

### *Spotting Different Connections of Attitudes within Cultures and between Cultures*

The scapegoating pattern in American culture vacillates between blaming a minority group and blaming one's self.

The idea of differences in end-linkage, discussed by Gregory Bateson: The pattern of spectator/exhibitionist is reversed in American and British parent-child syndromes, where other patterns such as dominance/submission, and dependence/ succoring, are the same in the two countries. The difference is tied up with the American idea of boasting. End linkage shows how a trait, like generosity, is linked with the cultural attitude toward it. The Comanche link generosity, as in the giveaway of war prizes, with admission of being done for. Americans link generosity with unselfishness. Attitudes are tied up with one syndrome or another.

## JANUARY 16, 1947

### *Typologies*

We have said the anthropologist should listen to what people say and observe what they do. But ours is an extremely typologically-, scientifically-minded training.

Sheldon proposed constitutional types of picnic, athletic, and asthenic. The psychoanalytic view is that early experience structuralizes later experience. Psychoanalysts set up a psychotic range where there is physical defect, and the neurotic range where there is no organic defect. Jacob Moreno adds the sociotic, a person who cannot function in a particular situation but can function in different or most situations. One can add the culturotic, represented by Nick in Zuni, the cultural misfit. These are not exclusive categories, but they are useful for emphasis. Some cultures are more relaxed about a range of different personality types. But there is rigidity in every culture.

## Personality and Culture, Spring Session, 1946–47

### FEBRUARY 4, 1947

The objective last semester was the growth of individuals in culture with emphasis on individuals. The individual has a marginal capacity for change, not only in mind but also in body. He learns cultural behavior. The study of relativity in cultures shows cultures have gone (along) well with different kinds of achievement. This semester will be about social institutions as patterns of interaction, about the stability of patterns and the specificity of patterns. Alternate phrasings are (1) institutions are the way in which the individual learns the patterns of the culture; (2) (what is) the pattern of institutions, and the way in which the individual learns and grows in relation to the experiences shared in the culture.

### FEBRUARY 6, 1947

Readings: Ralph Linton, *The Study of Man*; Margaret Mead, *Cooperation and Competition*; Ruth Benedict, *Patterns of Culture*; Abram Kardiner, *Psychological Frontiers of Society*; Abram Kardiner, *The Individual and Society*.

Institutions have a formal aspect and a functional aspect. The formal aspect is the organized activities of several or many people, who have roles and materials particular to the institution and have norms distinct from other institutions. Institutions in their functional aspects are shared, geared-in habits of individuals in group participation, shared interactive and reactive habits. They are organized systems of activity governed by formal rules. Formal frameworks may be the same while the way in which habits are geared together may differ among frameworks. Attitudes within the group are important. As in family attitudes of loyalty, habits of interpersonal relations are separate from the main organization, because the family includes reproduction, rearing, the food quest, relations of kin and in-laws; for example, polygynous frameworks may contain sets of continuous interaction between parents and children, or periodic interaction. They may contain different ways of tying in relatives with correspondingly different sets of obligations. Thus the formal framework is not to be discussed apart from the functional context.

The difficulty in discussion of classes in Western civilization comes from the attitudes within the formal institutions. The classes are in a seesaw relationship, and the line that connects them is important. In both complementary and symmetric institutions behavior and attitudes may differ. There was similarity of complementary organization in feudal Poland and

in the United States in the early 1900s. Capital and labor were linked with completely different attitudes: in Poland "God bless us in our relations and keep us in our proper places"; and in America dominance and submission prevailed in class relations. Later in the United States labor and capital were structured by egalitarian ideology. How accepted and functional is the relationship that exists formally? There is a lack of realistic basis for many studies of peoples. For example, the position of women differs. In Holland it is based on domesticity, being a household chatelaine. In France women handle the purse. French women value economic rather than political rights. For example, women's suffrage is recent.

(Although institutions have a functional aspect) the geared-in habit systems are removed from basic needs. Habit systems are elaborated apart from strict usefulness.

### February 11, 1947

*Cultural Institutions Are Geared-in Patterns of Reactive Behavior*

According to W. Lippmann they are "pictures in people's heads," stereotypes, in the sense of institutionalized norms of action. They are accepted social patterns of shared habits.

Culture is a series of stereotypes. The institution of marriage among Australian tribes is anything but a reality system.

I see cultures as screens passed over reality points, giving a second reality to that culture. Screens do not coincide in different cultures. Some reality points are left out of the screen. Screens are different ways of phrasing reality systems. There are two ways of checking, by reality and by cultural stereotype. In explaining the past or predicting the future, one is more apt to come out right in dealing with cultural stereotypes. It is possible to write the history of the world in terms of when prosperity is in reach. (People at such times) tend to destroy the possibility by man-made arrangements. Granted that we want to have all kinds of checks from reality situations, but you cannot expect that institutions will operate in terms of reality. (They operate) in terms of geared-in behavior. (The four sentences above, beginning with, "It is possible to write," were recorded in shorthand.) (Benedict then gave a quotation, but the source was not recorded:) "Capitalism is not identical with wealth and property, with lending and spending, but business in itself assumes power over men." Studies of bilingualism omit the social conditions in which individuals use two languages. Scientific ethics of this work require the inclusion of all materials relative to situations studied.

FEBRUARY 13, 1947

An example of a cultural screen changing a reality point is the Dobuan concept of gardening in which every yam is a stolen one. This is an unrealistic outlook.

Institutions are the ways in which interpersonal relationships are carried out. Knowledge of the range of institutions throughout the world is important. One must try to find out the meaning or importance of the presence or absence of particular institutions.

(Instructions are given for an assigned paper, due in one month.) Take one culture in *Cooperation and Competition* edited by M. Mead. Go through it listing the nature of institutions, for example, production is carried out by dependents who have no recourse from the command of the master. State the ways in which institutions are carried out in individual behavior. Pick up all contrary points from the last chapter discussion of other cultures to indicate the range that is possible. State the consequences for personality of certain strong institutional themes.

### *Comparison of Chukchi and Cheyenne Cultures*

The Chukchi, a people of the Tundra of Eastern Siberia, reindeer herdsmen, are the richest people of the area and also the most violent. They live in small encampments of large skin tents housing patrilineal families. The encampment is a small sib. The only larger unit is the blood feud group, that is, relatives who act in case of murder, but it is not permanent or organized. There are no symbols of loyalty for tribe. The symbol of the patrilineal family is the fire-board of the hearth, but at Waldemar Bogoras's time sibs had broken up because of hostility. Marriage ceremony strips a woman of relation to her own fire-boards and relates her to her husband's fire-boards, which she then cares for.

They have no way of curbing a violent and murderous owner of a herd. A man's children from 13–14 do the herding for him and are in complete subservience to him. Most marriages of a son are possible only by the son leaving the house to become a servant for the herd of his father-in-law. Ownership of a herd means power. There is no provision for a young man to inherit a herd during the lifetime of his father.

Herds can never be combined, however small, even though they are branded. Herds are half wild and very difficult to keep. Pasturage is limited and herds are close together for most people who have small herds, and there are many fights about mingling of animals. The owner is dominant over younger men and over women. "Being a woman, picking up crumbs."

Women do all the heaviest labor and every morning beat the frost out of the huge skin tents. These tents are a survival of the nomadic Tungus tent.

The system of distribution of goods is that wealth goes to the herd owner. The owner distributes it at will, with no obligation to the family or the tribe. There are hired laborers who have no secure position any place and move from encampment to encampment. If a man loses his herd through intermingling of animals and quarrels, he must take on a servile position and becomes a homeless wanderer. Wealth is used by the owner for gaining adherents. He gives large ceremonies related to herding for this purpose but gives no rewards or inducements for loyalty after the ceremonies.

The blood feud is one way in which social sanctions can be enforced. The relations of man to animals is pictured as a continuous blood feud. When murder occurs within the family, fratricide or patricide, nothing is done. Murder outside the family is phrased, “as one of his own he was treated,” meaning he was killed.

FEBRUARY 18, 1947

The Chukchi can easily be described in terms of their lacks, but they can also be described in positive terms. They lack social cohesion, are characterized by anomie, as used by Durkheim. They have an extraordinary lack of self-discipline and lack of responsible self-control. Bogoras wrote, “Anger leaves and come of its own free will”; “Ungovernable rage”; “For no reason at all people kill each other.”

The encampment was not a particular kin group because there was too much friction in kin groups. It was under the autocratic dominance of the herd owner and included his servants, that is, his children, daughters-in-law, prospective sons-in-law, wives, hired laborers. The husband may give wife-privileges to any visiting man. Some men have reciprocal rights to their wives. Bogoras called this group marriage, but it is different from other group marriage in that the Chukchi had strong sexual control of wives.

The status of owner is achieved, not ascribed. They were intensely individualistic, and everyone thinks he can be a herd owner. Not achieving the status results in great frustration, without any court of appeal to which one can go when frustrated. In the history of mankind one of the most effective ways of achieving cohesion is by creating legitimate arrangements for ascribed status. The Chukchi are very egalitarian people.

There are reliable mutual services in some societies without humiliation and with honoring the recipient. In some societies giving services is neutral. In Chukchi any services are rendered with humiliating connotations. There is no taken-for-granted right of services from the owner. There is no noblesse oblige with high status. Usually in primitive societies kin groups depend on

reliable arrangements for service. New Guineans will marry outside of the village to extend the groups in good relations. This stabilizes marriage rather than threatens it. In Africa bride-price is a stabilizing force in marriage; "Only old cats don't cost anything." Marriage is unstable among Chukchi. Brothers of the wife often break up marriage if there is trouble between in-laws even after children are born. This is very rare in primitive societies. The brother may bind and carry off the wife.

The blood group is operative only in blood feud. There is no requirement for such help but only voluntary pooling. The blood feud is governed by the *lex talionis* which stops the feud after an eye for an eye. This is the one positive institutional arrangement in Chukchi. Beyond this there is no social control.

Religion is a projection of ways of life on to gods. There is a virulent case of hostile gods among the Chukchi. *Kelets* populate the universe. They materialize and overshadow human purposes. They pull out souls of people sleeping in their tents. They never give a general blessing to the tribe, but they can be invoked for all kinds of personal ends. Charms and spells all involve stress on how people will respond to my power. There is the Walrus story in my article on religion. In the love charm of a man who wants to join a woman, he prays to the morning dawn and asks for ice crackers. He stamps and punctures her and says, "You will love me and your heart will hurt for it."

Shamans are the most unstable individuals of the tribe. They run the séances, call the *kelets*, objects move. It is quite a scene. This is a trained form of abnormal extrasensory behavior. They can go in and out of trance at will. The call to shamanism is usually received in young manhood. Signs are epilepsy and blood sweat. They do not have power over people. They are hard to kill but vulnerable to death. They do divination and prophesy but do not run the show. They are the least hostile and tyrannous of the group.

There is a lack of coordination of privilege with responsibility. There is no appeal by the weak to the strong. Regarding personality development, they value power over people and things with few qualifications and no legal restrictions. The frustration of poor people, of some who do not get set up in life, is extreme. It is an egalitarian culture, but here it means the opposite of free.

There is a constant use of the term "doomed," "doomed to shamanism," "doomed to anger," "doomed to a blood feud." This means the opposite of free. The refusal to be doomed brings bloody sweat and epilepsy, as when a shaman refuses a call. The shaman's call is phrased as the ancestor leaps upon you to strangle you.

Mourning consists of cutting up the body to divine who is responsible for the death. The throat is cut, the eye broken, and the legs broken to prevent the evil spirit from getting at them. They put symbolic barriers between themselves and the body on the way home. They believe there is a blood feud among animals. Hunting is a feud with animals. Trade is a vendetta, a blood feud for objects. They feel uncontrollable rages coming over them. The Chukchi are a good example of the way in which impulsive and ungovernable behavior of individuals is set up in the social order. Society can set itself up to foster anomie. Where Durkheim ascribed anomie to disorganized vs. organized society, here we have an example of a society that institutionalizes anomie. Criminality is something against the social order. In the comparative sense, it may be socially sanctioned. Theft is almost socially approved, and it passes unnoticed. The Chukchi want security but have nothing to give it to them.

FEBRUARY 20, 1947

*The Cheyenne Literature* is by George B. Grinnell; and by Karl Llewelyn and Adamson Hoebel, *The Cheyenne Way*. Grinnell worked in 1890 and heard the old culture from the old men.

The Cheyenne are individualists, brave and violent. They did not achieve social cohesion by minimizing aggressiveness as the Dobu did, where maliciousness underlies excessive politeness, as in the phrasing of "thank you": "And now if this food is poison, how will the return be made?" Like the Chukchi, the Cheyenne are violent and individualistic and not meek in any way. The Cheyenne hunting grounds were not invaded by whites before 100 years ago. The population was 3000 in 1890. Their small size does not support the point that small societies are easier to organize than large ones. It is often the exact reverse, the smaller the society the greater internal hostility. There is also no correlation between social change and social cohesion. The Cheyenne had moved out of the eastern woodlands shortly before contact, where they were agriculturalists, and on the Plains became nomadic hunters and horsemen. In the annual cycle winter finds families scattered in small groups; in summer the small groups unify. These are possible points of reference in building social cohesion, either the scatter of winter, with which the Ojibwa explain their lack of larger units, or the unity of summer which the Cheyenne draw on.

Plains Indians delighted in individual warfare. The warpath was a means of honor to the individual throughout the plains, and tribal honor was minimal. There were leaders of war, but they led only during warfare. It was guerilla warfare. However, the Cheyenne had formal treaties with surrounding tribes disallowing raiding, and the treaties were kept. There was more organization

in their war parties than in some other tribes, and they had a war chief separate from other leaders. They had high elaboration of symbolic and institutional arrangements. The Dakota have no medicine bundle that stands for the tribe. The Cheyenne have two bundles with arrows which had to be clean for the honor of the tribe. A tribal council was made up of 44 men who had to resign from warrior societies as a prerequisite to serving. There were four or five head priests who were responsible for keeping the tribal medicine bundles. The priests and members of the tribal council must show no anger, while the warrior societies required strong aggressive action. The idea of war and peace chiefs was present in most of the Plains tribes, but it was elaborated among the Cheyenne. A myth said that the council was set up by a woman. There was an emphasis on group responsibility among all people. Generosity was a virtue and especially important for the priests. Although adultery was strongly opposed, a woman could leave her husband for another man and an agreement would be made between the two men. If a tribal chief's wife wanted to leave him, he must not protest because he must be generous. This was very well lived up to. See Llewelyn and Hoebel, *The Cheyenne Way*; Howard Fast, *The Last Frontier*, which describes that march from Oklahoma in 1879 back to Montana with all the American army out to prevent them.

Alcohol incited all Indians to aggressiveness. Among the Cheyenne, all taking of life constituted a crime, even an abortion. Crime constitutes an odor on the malefactor and on the whole tribe. The game would leave the country and guests would not be invited because of the odor. Only the Cheyenne could smell it, not other people. The whole tribe, except for the murderer and his family, had to finance a ceremony for purification to cleanse the stink and cleanse the sacred medicine bundle. The use of the symbol, stink, was constant in relation to any crime. Stink adhered to the murderer so he could never touch anything that others used, such as a pipe or drinking vessel. He was banished for about ten years and went to live with another tribe. He then returned with gifts for the tribe. The family of the man killed was called in to receive the gifts. He was accepted on condition that he would never raise his arm in anger again. He had, due to the fact of his ability, won his way back, but he could never again use the same pipe or drinking vessel as others. He could fulfill a citizen's role and even could become a chief.

The military societies are not age-graded and are open to anyone, and most men belonged to one of the five at some part of their lives. There was a clear way in which the warrior societies and the tribal council were interrelated. The societies were the executive arm of the council, the ones out front, performing duties by order of the tribal council. In winter buffalo hunting

was on an individual basis, but in summer the situation was different, and there was communal hunting only to avoid the danger of scattering the herd. The council appointed one warrior society to police the hunt. The members shouted around the village, “No one may go alone, no one may go ahead of the group. This is for your own good.” If a man went out ahead of the group, the society members inspected his tent for fresh meat and whipped a culprit, even a chief and a poor man, but he was not humiliated by demotion or in any other way.

The warrior societies supervised and protected the moving of camp, even in winter when the tribe was broken up into small groups. When the warrior societies cried directions in camp they said, “This is the order of the tribal council.” This kind of total integrated responsibility, with institutions for carrying it out, is exceptional in American Indian cultures.

## JANUARY 25, 1947

### *The Cheyenne Contrasted to the Chukchi*

The Cheyenne are able to act as a unit toward supernaturals, toward outsiders, and toward tribal members. The Cheyenne are familiar with the North American Indian concept that supernatural power can be used for sorcery, but there is no account of sorcery accusations. They do not handle adversity in terms of sorcery. Both the Chukchi and Cheyenne are highly individualistic and violent people and allow intense ego maximization. In Cheyenne this is obtained by those who become tribal chiefs, whose duty it is to preserve order in the group and to suppress their own anger. One out of every ten men is a tribal chief. Ego maximization is much safer in Cheyenne, and it is not through acquisition of property. The Cheyenne have gone far to institutionalize tribal symbols, whereas the Chukchi do not have any ruling authority and are in extreme lack of social regulation. Several times in the fifty years before warfare became impossible they went on the warpath as a tribe. Among the Dakota blood revenge was never permitted within the tribe, and they were able to outlaw murder without any overall symbols of the tribe, but the Cheyenne warrior societies acted before trouble broke out as an executive force for law and order, whereas elsewhere on the Plains these societies are very disruptive. The societies state their objectives as keeping good human relations rather than primarily as insurance of rights. Borrowing was fully permitted by leaving a symbol of credit.

Ego maximization is for social ends among the Cheyenne, where as it is for asocial ends among the Chukchi. Among the Comanche ego enhancement was through a cult of the horse, which could be treated as a wife or child

rather than as property. Among the Cheyenne there is emphasis on reinstated human relations as well as restoration of property, as when a horse is borrowed, and the warrior societies carry this out. A man who has proved recalcitrant is sometimes by agreement killed; they usually trusted to law and order. The objective of the tribal chief is to right recalcitrance. They have a story of a Pawnee who they saved from recalcitrance, and he became a teacher of moral lessons to children. The warrior society at first beat him up, then the tribal chiefs rehabilitated him. He gained equal prestige and responsibility. Property was private, but there was prestige in passing it from hand to hand. The chiefs had no trusteeship of property, as where a granary is supervised by the chief in other primitive cultures. The Cheyenne did not build up long-time property obligations, with the exception of sororate marriage where the initial bride-price covered all sisters. A younger sister has sometimes committed suicide to avoid marriage to her older sister's husband. There is a discussion of flaws in culture in *Cooperation and Competition*. The greatest flaw in Cheyenne is the brother's control over his sisters in arranging marriages. Women's status was relatively high, however. Women owned property. In women's societies they could boast of achievements. Women wore a chastity belt and thus had control over their sex life. A man was supposed to court from one to five years before arrangement of marriage.

## February 27, 1947

### *Generalizations of Important Kinds of Institutions in Cheyenne and Chukchi*

Generalizations can be made in one society, but only those comparing cultures can be carried over into social theory.

Good functioning of institutions, or social cohesion, insofar as this is dependent on the nature of geared-in habits and institutions, is dependent on not achieving purposes at the expense of some other person. The presentation of gifts by the groom in marriage ceremonies is humiliating in Chukchi, and it brings honor in Cheyenne.

It is important to determine which institutions affect character structure for good and for bad. The phrasing of property is most important, whether resources are limited, as the Chukchi think pasturage is, causing conflict in utilization of resources, or as unlimited and yielding to skill, as among the Cheyenne. Actually the Chukchi have a great deal of pasture land. Many herders with less land regard the number of herders as limited but not the land. In France everything is regarded as limited, cut up into little pieces but never seen expanding. Romania, the United States, and Italy have ideas of a

nonlimited economy. These are only ideas but they make the whole economy different. In Holland a penny must be saved and not spent. Analysis based on production statistics does not tell the whole story. In Zuni there is a farming economy but they do not consider the land limited, and only manpower is limited. Other things being equal, it is much easier to manage without the expense of others when the economy is considered not limited. Among the Cheyenne individually owned property is evaluated in terms of its mobility and the prestige in giving it away. The Chukchi give property away only to gain control over others.

There are many ways of organizing poverty so that the poor can stand their poverty, but it is doubtful if any people are so meek as to like being controlled by others. Bertrand Russell says the economic world operates at the expense of other people, as over against the creative intellectual life which operates with the opposite consequences. But this explanation is valid only in our culture, and it is not a valid theoretical concept applicable to the whole world. The economic system can be set up without being at the expense of others. The Cheyenne have private property but gain prestige by distributing it and using it to rehabilitate others. Being stripped of goods does not mean being cast out into a hostile world in Cheyenne as it does in Chukchi. Even a criminal may be rehabilitated, and reinstated. Rehabilitation of a criminal is uncommon in primitive societies, but support of poverty-stricken people is common. The Cheyenne giveaway is downward and honor is in its not being returned. It is important to observe the giveaway, which may also be upward with the gift not to be returned, or downward with an idea of reciprocity. Pawnee gifts go upward. It is a hierarchical society in contrast to Cheyenne. Cheyenne religious ceremonies are occasions for giveaways. Chukchi religious ceremonies are to attract followers in a blood feud and in herding.

In Chukchi the vision quest is a monopoly of the shaman. In Cheyenne it is an inexhaustible power anyone can seek if he wants to cash in on it. This is not found all over the Plains; for instance, among the Omaha power is organized through payment and heredity. The Cheyenne man can be successful on the basis of his skill even if he has no vision. In some other parts of the Plains a vision is necessary.

The Cheyenne have gone very far to give themselves a state. The Dakotas do not have a state but have geared-in habits which make different demands.

## MARCH 4, 1947

### *The Interaction of the Individual and Society*

The question, which came first the individual or the institution, that is, the contraposition of the individual vs. society, is unreal. The individual is born into the institutional pattern, but there is no institution, even the modern state, that is not a formalized statement of cultural habits and behavior. Institutions cannot be reified apart from individuals. The Cheyenne have a story that the children's play encampment was the only surviving group after a Crow raid on the main camp. No adults remained. The children went back to the play encampment and grew up with society identical to, and as complete as, former Cheyenne society. The opposition of the individual to society is a matter of our own cultural context. The real definition of freedom, that of "loyalty freely given," means that individuals and institutions are acting in the same direction. Discipline is necessary to any social life and exists in any society. Freedom is the condition of outer and inner ordinances being the same.

(Question posed from the class: Is the problem related to internal or external sanctions, that is, do internal or external sanctions correspond respectively to systems in which loyalty is freely or grudgingly given?) The problem is not related. In the West African example institutions and individuals act in the same direction, yet external sanctions prevail almost to the exclusion of internal ones. Persons and institutions are not set up in opposition, even in Chukchi, and even where sanctions are external.

(Question posed from the class: Is the problem related to size of community?) Loyalty to the in-group is possible no matter what the size of the in-group. It is a process of evolution that larger and larger wholes are formed, with loyalty to larger and larger wholes.

## MARCH 6, 1947

### *Diachronic vs. Synchronic Studies*

Diachronic studies include the history of languages, diffusion, and historic reconstruction, of a language, for example, Indo Germanic. Synchronic studies, of simultaneity, functional studies, for example, semantics of vocabulary terms in an American language in 1946, the function of a word in a culture. For example, in Romania it is said, "Honor? Can a man eat honor?"; and in Poland it is said, "Strip yourself to the bone, but never lose your honor." Synchronic studies of language and culture are important to international understanding. If you are interested in how people are going to behave you

must use synchronic study. In synchronic study the true picture of history is far less important than the myth of history which the people have accumulated, the residue of history. Thus Germany feels hemmed in and Romania claims irredentism and interprets history in terms of what it achieved. Talcott Parsons, in *The Structure of Social Action*, writes of value judgments, while V. Pareto uses "residues" for value judgments, or "unconscious canons of choice." Others use "survivals." I use "configurations."

Anthropology uses largely synchronic studies, studies of behavior. Behavior is the concrete data for studies. When the anthropologist says that the Chukchi favor a strong, lawless individual, this is not a value judgment expressed abstractly but is seen in behavior, analyzed from behavior. Value judgment is unstated but is documented only in behavior and not in stated ideals. There is frequently a conflict of behavior and value judgments, to ethical standards, that is, ideals. In synchronic studies the primary focus is the interaction of institutions. Each person is born into a full set of institutions, therefore we posit institutions. All institutions change. Change comes from the accumulated behavior of individuals. Diachronic studies concern changes of habits of individuals. Habits do change in response to outside changes in the environment or to internal changes. Eventually, in diachronic studies all changes in responses of individuals become crystallized into changed institutions, for example, changes in behavior due to growth of the middle class after feudalism, or growth of those factors that crystallized into institutions of a middle class. In synchronic studies culture is primary. In diachronic studies the individual is primary. This is theoretically true, but it is not a strictly either/or proposition.

## MARCH 11, 1947

### *The Most Important Aspects of Institutions Affecting Their Functioning*

Not all factors of institutions have important consequences for cultures, for example, hateful relations are possible with polygamy and with monogamy. Will be concerned with what are the points to be studied, for example, in Cheyenne study must focus on tribal factors, while in Chukchi interactions between individuals are to be the focus. We ask, what is the group of common interest in surveying overall organization, for example, among the Chukchi it is the encampment and the blood feud group.

Descent groups are set up to organize numbers of people for continuity: the Chukchi family must dissolve and re-form, but unilateral descent groups, clans or gens, have structure and continuity over generations. They allow for enlarging the in-group by giving structural firmness to large groups.

They stabilize property and status, for example, the leverate provides for the support of a widow in patrilineal societies where she inherits no property at her husband's death. Moieties, groupings of clans or gens into two halves having reciprocal functions. This is an extension of the invention of clans and gens. There is also an American tendency to work in antitheses, that is, in opposed groups. Real outbreaks of killings come as frequently within a group as between moieties. Africa has well-organized patrilineal gens. Africa tends to organize many different kinds of groups. Local groups organize for warm relations and large groups for contacts outside. Nonlocalized clan or gens gives a stranger security in many places where his relatives live. Localized and nonlocalized groups may coexist, as in Africa with localized patrilineal groups, your "soul," and nonlocalized matrilineal group, your "body."

Without clans or gens in the formal institutional organization, there are various ways to extend responsibility to kin members, and these have great functional differences, as in comparison of Kwakiutl and Ifugao. In Kwakiutl every group of siblings has one person who has claim to high rank, but the minor relatives share in production and in wealth of the family, though they are despised and are not powerful, but remain members of the family. There are no unsupported families. Ifugao has small families with the wealthy man not responsible for minor relatives. The poor relatives can have any amount of land of the rich relative to plant yams and for shellfish gathering, but no field for rice, which is the only valued food source.

How do groups, extended families, moieties interact? Either with a hierarchical structure, that is, with over-spanning tribal authority or symbols, or with a segmented structure where the direction of interaction is with the nearest village or local group. Tribal authority and symbols are not necessarily a late or complex development. Australians have an important council of old men. In segmented structures the dominant patterns of behavior come out in the methods of interaction between groups, for example, among Arapesh groups there is continual minor helpfulness, among Kwakiutl groups there is continual rivalry of the potlatch. This rivalry among the Kwakiutl is to flatten the rival, while among the Manus the rival must be equally good: there is mutual building up rather than flattening rival in formal economic exchanges between them, that is, symmetrical competition. Where segmented societies build up larger structure they model each level on the original segmented level, for example, Ifugao, Bathonga. Even in Samoa emphasis is on the constituent villages. The institution of the go-between is used for interaction of segments. Among the Bachiga the go-between has no honor, and the segmented groups have no recourse to arbitration and only public opinion mitigates feuds. Among the Ifugao the institution of the go-between

is honored. He is a big man of the tribe. His prestige rests on successive settling of quarrels. In America a go-between is merely an employee.

### MARCH 13, 1947

### *Status: Ascribed or Achieved*

American exaggeration of achieved status. Sex always bears some relevance to status. Ascription of status is not only by wealth or inheritance, that is, in regard to property. In any culture the greater part of status roles are ascribed, whether or not the society recognizes it. Europeans have a formula that ascribed status is right. When mobility increases, achieved status increases and wants likewise increase as well as accompanying frustrations. I am not suggesting that either limitation of desires or goals for self-maximization is desirable. This is a problem which the United States, with its dream of success, must solve with engineering. Satisfaction can be achieved by either fulfilling wants or limiting wants. We can pose the question, are there cultures having principally ascribed status that still experience enormous dissatisfaction?

In the problem of the individual organizing of livelihood, the Chukchi man who owns a herd must hire people to help him. The Eskimo have an extraordinary prevalence of belief that they can meet situations individually, as compared to the Chukchi who are much richer in resources yet have greater anxiety about survival. The Eskimo are individually charged with economic quests; the Chukchi depend on power over other people. Their lack of self-confidence is constant. They lack helpfulness in a large group, lack a group food quest. The crucial factor is self-confidence.

Most economies in primitive cultures have all kinds of pawning, loans, giveaways. There is no one-to-one relationship between production and distribution. Rules are interposed between production and distribution. There are two polar forms of economic arrangements: (1) funneling to people who already have wealth, where there is a break between production and distribution by elaborate mechanisms such as pawning, loans, giveaways, working for another person who takes the products. In Manus the young man goes into debt to an older man at marriage, a man who is not his father. There is some kind of rent or interest in symbols of wealth. Rules of purchase can refer to cowrie shells and dog teeth just as well as items that bear interest like cattle and their calves. In Micronesia stone money may be used for pawning. Security depends on how floors are built under people outside the benefits of the funnel. By what floors are different groups of people satisfied? The Chukchi are extreme in disowning. (2) A siphon system is a redistribution of wealth from any point of concentration through, for example, feasts and

giveaways. In Zuni this is done by offerings from the houses of eight families each year who sponsor the winter ceremonial. The giveaway is a siphon when it is downward to people who cannot repay, but not necessarily when it is upward to the wealthy. This varies in the Plains. Tied up with siphoning are obligations of feeding large groups of people by heads of families. The Indian Bureau in Washington cannot make Indians interested in economic independence because of the siphoning patterns. Often noblesse oblige must be observed in arrangements. Is the person fed humiliatingly or can he claim honor? It is not a true siphoning arrangement when you feed and humiliate simultaneously, as is done in some South American tribes. A variant of the siphon system is where production goes to a chief as trustee and then is distributed equally, a system called an hourglass. This can go with big chieftainship, with heads of clans, heads of moieties. It can be cut at the narrow point and become funneling.

## MARCH 18, 1947

### *Economics (continued)*

There is no capital investment in primitive societies, rather there is much destruction of wealth because produce cannot be preserved over long periods of time. Food may be wealth when not used, as cattle in Africa. In modern economies labor is handled as a commodity, but this is not so in feudal society or in primitive societies, even in societies where there is great wealth, as in Inca, where the wealthy got adherents to do labor.

Regarding the family, it is universal. It is a particular pattern placed on relatives. In our culture there is the conjugal family, with the nearly irrelevant fringe of relatives, recognizing duality of parenthood. It must be re-formed in every generation. In primitive groups the family may be consanguine, that is, the tie is with blood relatives in one line. It usually has ascribed social functions and overrides generation. The consanguineal family furnishes economic support for new unions, as in France the dowry arranges for support of young couples and makes for continuity of easy child rearing. Spouses are marginal to the unilateral kin group of the mate. An example is the visiting husband. In southern India and some southwest Pacific tribes there are matrilineal consanguine families and it is considered immodest to advertise marriage or constant sexual relations, so the man comes to the woman's house after dark and leaves before light, even where there are several children by the couple. Sometimes a specialized function is assigned to a particular consanguineal family, as in India where the function is economic and arranged in a hierarchy. East African families have occupational monopolies.

The family may be a self-sufficient economic unit or a religious unit, as in ancestor worship in Africa and China. The presence or absence of ancestor worship is more important in cultural configurations than monotheism or polytheism. In Africa and China marriage is a contract relation as an arrangement between groups. It is more important to see this than whether marriage is monogamous or polygynous. There is a possible range of economic self-sufficiency from the individual family unit to the whole tribe.

The necessity of exogamous arrangements connects the segmented consanguineal groups. Where does the use of extended kinship terminology end, that is, how are marriageables classified? The Dakota extend precise kinship terms to everybody. They married into the cross relatives group and could not marry in the parallel group. Another way is not to extend kinship terms to the marriageable group. Incest applies only to unauthorized marriage. There have been examples of father-daughter marriage in primitive groups but not of mother-son marriage.

## MARCH 20, 1947

### *The Local Group*

It exercises many functions previously ascribed to families and therefore was overlooked by early investigators. It is important that it lacks limits, in contrast to kinship groups. Local groups are set up according to ideas of space. In some concepts, space is very limited. Ideas of the local group are closely tied with subsistence type. Gardeners tend to emphasize kinship group more than hunters. Primitive peoples value far and near relationships in such different ways. Far relations may be feared or valued. Australians marry into distant groups and tend to value far marriage. The Maori have ceremonials between villages, and it is important which village is interrelating with which other village. The real study of the Chukchi takes on validity in terms of local groups rather than the family, which really functions in their minds more than in actuality.

Voluntary associations are nonbiological, not arranged by kin. There is often an emphasis on men's secret societies, but they can be for men, women, or both. They were generally overlooked by early investigators. Since they do not have biological functions, as the family does, they can devote all their energy to the main idea, the obsession, of the culture, for instance, men's secret societies, warrior societies, and initiation societies are often a barometer of the chief interests of the community. Initiation societies divide males into nonmembers and members of society, making a generation point, emphasizing the difference between adult and child roles and structuralizing

noncontinuity of the life cycle. See the Masai for a classic combination of warrior an initiation societies. The Masai have arranged life in four periods and retirement: incumbent warrior, freshman warrior, graduated warrior waging war, those eligible for marriage. When a man's child is ready for initiation the adult is laid on the shelf through a ceremony of retirement. Age grades are more important in Masai than kinship organizations. Age grades are not common among North American Indians, but Blackfeet do classify by age. Age-grade societies are so easily adapted to the particular interests of a group. Sometimes it is primarily priestly, for example, the warrior society in Zuni is a society of those who have taken a scalp and must undergo a ritual cleansing. It is not for becoming a warrior. Zuni also have curing societies, each for a different disease. People join the society which has cured them or has caught them in breaking a tabu which might cause illness. Zuni also has societies for keeping the sun going, the rain coming, and the corn growing.

Initiation techniques are also diagnostic of tribal interest, for example, the same culture area may show two cultures, one of which honors new initiates at having achieved adulthood, the other intimidates and humiliates the initiate, scapegoating the young. Cultures which are concerned with relations between the two generations do not do much with the societies after initiation but merely have a series of initiations. Formal descriptions of structure are inadequate to expressing the functioning of a society in terms of gratifying needs. This is not dependent on the set up, whether matriliny, kingship, authoritarian fathers, or other. People have been habituated to act according to the arrangements.

There are not judgments of good and bad, but there is social engineering. Institutionalizing unstoppable feud and sorcery are examples of bad social engineering, "A snake eating its own head." What institutions are possible within the total orientation of the people? Good arrangements are possible in very hierarchical societies. Egalitarian and hierarchical societies can be arranged to make the parties either secure or insecure. Egalitarian societies have difficulties. It is impossible to obtain an election in Pueblo society. We know how well our institutions work in our society.

### MARCH 25, 1947

Religion is a projective screen, a formulation of how the culture sees another world, the supernatural, the screen on which man throws his experiences and defines the supernatural. Philosophy and folklore do not organize themselves in ways that give teeth to social order, as religion does. However, in folklore experience is expressed in terms of the supernatural.

Lowie said the basic religious emotion is awe, but this is inadequate. There

are types of religion with a great deal of self-assurance in personal relations with the supernatural and will say, "I order you." Awe is inapplicable here. The emphasis in magic is in controlling things, as set against animism, which includes thinking so hard that God will accept me or help me. Animism emphasizes interpersonal relations. Goldenweiser spoke of the religious thrill. A religion is a barometer of the kind of persons who can grow up in a society, the kinds of potentialities in the rest of life, and therefore used again in the religion. American Indians used the vision, as among the Dakota, except the Pueblos, who get power by learning, paying attention, managing things mechanically.

Religion has social teeth in it, like the state and like criminal law. It has a vested interest, as in a church, which philosophy and folklore have not. Religion also has tradition, like folklore. Theoretical discussion usually centers on one or the other, not both. Religion is a striking barometer of culture. Religion is an autobiography of the life of the tribe.

Some Indian communities of Guatemala center religion around ridding people of sin, sin in the special sense that it is something the gods have noticed, something of which you must expiate yourself. Sin is something requiring a mode of expiation, for example, Christian's "pack upon your back." Confession may be the mode. North American Indians cannot get a definite idea of sin at all. If you establish that the crux of life is sin, then one must spend a lifetime getting rid of it. Some primitive tribes think guilt feelings are handicaps to functioning.

Religion may be structuralized upon rites of passage. A society with rites of passage has to have the idea of stages of growth. Societies that have the idea of the child as a little adult, growing more able and more intelligent slowly, have not developed rites of passage.

Religion may be organized around validation of a person's status and role. Society always has in its other institutions the idea which it expresses in religion. Religion helps make life intelligible. It sets up a philosophy with teeth in it.

With printing, we maximize continuity of the Bible and the Roman church. But Catholics in different countries in Europe talk about the Catholic religion in ways where one version is not recognizable as the same religion as another country's account, that is, in the functioning in the culture and life of the individual. However, we do go back to a Bible and history, as primitive people do not. See Bruce Barton, *Man Nobody Knows*, typically American. The important thing about religions is what testimony they give about life experiences.

MARCH 27, 1947

### *Education as an Institution*

Linton observed that there is a point in professional specialization in a field, whether pottery or education, when there begins a critical consciousness of the work and thus conscious direction and change. The nonprofessional occupation tends to be more stable. The law, religion, folklore get codified, but child training is not usually made explicit.

Education is the most unverbalized, nonexplicit part of culture. Fieldwork therefore focuses on observation and analysis of, for instance, inappropriate comments of parents which do not at all describe what they do. American parents believe that children only learn vis-à-vis an adult. Other societies think the child who has just learned something will be the most excited and interested instructor for the child who has not yet learned it. Such cultures may combine odd and even age groups. The child is reared for a particular social role. There is a contrast in beliefs that a child naturally will, and wants to, grow up to be a participant in the culture, or that the child must be changed so he can participate, that he must be broken or made active. In the first category there is no need of, or risk of, punishment. The first can be termed an adient attitude and the second an abient attitude.[3] American Indians illustrate the adient way. The need to change the child may be found in some sorcery societies where the child cannot be touched by sorcery until age ten, for example, Manus. This culture aims at building self-confidence in the child and avoids ridicule of the child, even where ridicule is the main cultural social control weapon. The child is raised in a warm atmosphere and cannot stand up under the sorcerer's threat in adult life (without being changed).

Some cultures compare a child to its own record rather than to absolute standards of performance. Still they may have formal phrasings of a ladder of achievements. The child is reared in a whole situation, not just in a home. Primitive societies allow more influence from the whole group than America, where the household group is the restricted boundary on intimate contacts. In other cultures children associate extensively with other children; there is a delegation of adult responsibilities to another child, as in sibling training. Where the adult is supposed to retain these responsibilities, as in America, it is possible that the American child never handles a baby until its own comes into the world. The child's life is structured according to the social groupings. Where the household is integrated with outside groups, the facts of life are learned, making the life cycle from birth to death continuous. Being restricted within the household restricts knowledge of the facts of life,

and this makes for discontinuity in the life cycle. The Dakota have kinship terms for everyone; they think, and children learn, that everyone must be incorporated in the group. Cultures differ in how the relationship to each sibling or each parent's group is structured, for example, the father's line may be charged with strictness and the mother's line with indulgence and permissiveness. They differ also in where the line is drawn between the in-group and the out-group.

APRIL 8, 1947

## *Culture Change*

Can be approached as change through changes in environment, including culture contact, or as internal development through elaboration or evolution. Although there are a number of solutions for all levels of society, a wide number of choices for solving human problems, some cultures mainly duplicate one solution in all fields of the culture beyond minimum utility. This internal development of culture is one form of change, but it is like spinning a cocoon, and its method is elaborating the same thread. The pattern of how people should behave is fixed early and continuously reapplied. There is an increase of commitments to certain attitudes as in the Sepik River cultures described by Richard Thurnwald, where affinal exchange is an elaborate arrangement for marriage rendered impossible by small numbers. This is not maintaining the status quo but is an intensification.

In the study of culture change we would not avoid variation, as is done in some psychologies that are concerned with controls and restrictions and have a great concern with avoidance of variables. What we did in *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword* is to find what is comprehensible behavior in Japan. Points are set up against which people can react in culture.

Evolutionary change comes from mastery of the environment and also from development of complexity of organization and increased social density, and also from development of complexity of organization from which certain other developments follow or are required. Social forms are not graded on a ladder, but certain social complexity brings about certain items of culture. This is true of human sacrifice of war captives which is dependent on certain ceremonialism and certain political organization. True also of corvée labor and the collection of taxes. See Leonard T. Hobhouse, Wheeler, and Ginsberg, *The Material Culture and Social Institutions of the Simpler Peoples*, for statistical measures of traits showing a high correlation of traits with density of population.

APRIL 10, 1947

The control of nature is permissive to political developments, which in turn support centralization of power, but control of nature is not enough basis to postulate the other elements. Development of tribal worship into temple religions correlates with development of centralization of the state. The state is correlated also with agriculture or other forms of easily produced food supply. Below certain levels of ecological organization political institutions such as these are absent because they cannot be supported. There is a correlation of war with higher ecological levels, that is, war to be defined in terms of the drain on human resources. War is not synonymous with insult contests but with expenditure of human resources to gain desired ends. Noncorporate societies do not have warfare for conquest, destruction, and winning. Proselytizing religions were a very late invention, correlating with an all-embracing administrative apparatus. Early Judaism and Zoroastrianism were tribal religions, but late Judaism and Christianity proselytized. These elements are not essential to higher development.

The Kula ring in Melanesia organizes a huge territory of tribes which were not highly developed politically. The Kula ring ruled out war. High development also does not necessarily come with high density of population. Aboriginal California had the highest density of population in North America, nevertheless had no political invention with which to subsume a number of people into higher political unit. Periodic famine stabilized the population, and there were no daughter villages from population surplus. They did not develop inter-valley cooperation in contrast to Africa. They were like modern Italian villages which have no mechanism for inter-village relations. Social density, however, meaning the interaction of large numbers of people, is a criterion of development.

Revolution as a means of change is unknown in primitive societies, probably because there are no primitive tribes that operate so exclusively on force as some periods in modern states. Inca had a very repressive state, but the state relied on the wealthy enlisting adherents and alliances among the wealthy. There was a preceding condition of wealth and poverty in the areas taken over by the Inca. In Africa kingships were deserted in preference for a better king. A strong king who overdoes his prerogative may be killed, even by his brothers, in a palace coup, killed for envy as much as for hatred.

## APRIL 15, 1947

### *Acculturation*

Conquest, the idea of occupying other peoples' land, is very rare because it must be supported by elaborate organization. Primitive tribes usually have no idea of occupying enemy country or drawing tribute. In California winners must pay for killed enemies. Conquered peoples of Mexico believed Spain would treat them the way the Aztecs did. Chinese emperors collected homage payments from Siam and Burma and other neighboring peoples, an extension of the gift complex, not conquest. Tribute has a different political character from conquest for exploitation.

Acculturation is change under circumstances of very different cultures coming together; one superordinate group disseminates traits of the dominant culture. Emphasis is on the receiving culture and its attitudes of rejection or acceptance. Mohammedan expansion in Africa was a case of acculturation, not conquest. Western colonization in Africa and Pacific islands were also cases of acculturation and not conquest, that is, the peoples were not treated as slaves. White attitudes in colonizing North America ignored any previous occupation of the land by Indians. Grants of land were blocked out by area. The North American Indians were free tribes. There was no class structure, that is, with a ruling class, an army, and producers, as among the Inca. Every man was a warrior, and there was no notion of corvée labor, but they instead had communal works and sometimes tribute to a chief. Thus it was not possible to make Indians work or fit them into the class structure. The dominant class had to import slave labor, and the colonists worked with their own hands. In Mexico Indians did work for the conquerors, and few Negroes were imported. In Brazil there was no Indian labor.

Thus acculturation was very difficult for Indians. American Indians have suffered equally from American goodwill and deliberate malignancy. In the 19th century the American government tried to play father to the broken Indians, but did not do a good job and did not understand them. Indians were paid for land, but they had no idea of buying land as a commodity, and individual ownership was not understood. The Fox Indians, however, advised by an Indian who had grown up in St. Louis, bought a new tract of land with the payment they received for their original land and settled there and preserved their culture. Thus in American Indian acculturation the diffusion of traits occurred under most difficult circumstances.

APRIL 17, 1947

In the relationships of conquered and conqueror we look at both ends like a seesaw and compare England, France, and Holland as occupying powers. In the cultural expansion of whites, the period in which it occurs is important. In the 17th century there was little idea of responsibility, and none of administration of territory by any of the European powers. In England a professional class of administrators with training and an ethic has developed, but not in France or the United States. British administration today operates by law and not by individual graft. French administrators expect a "take" from a territory. The French, however, do not have race prejudice, while the English do. The French have a class sense in any area, but the distinctions the English make are racial. For the French, the real Frenchman returns to France and does not remain in the colony. In English-dominated areas half-castes are in reality alienated from both background cultures.

Dutch colonial administration was very bad at first, and the Dutch East India Company averaged over 80 percent profit on investments. The Dutch later developed lawful and better administration. Since World War I Javanese-Dutch families in Java have tried to act as colonizer and exploiter instead of the home country exploiting and administering it. Revolts by the Javanese are now against the Dutch-Javanese.

England has done best with upstanding, warlike people. There is a kind of cultural conditioning in the English that makes them despise nonaggressive people. The Dutch did best with mild people, even failed to occupy their warlike territories. Nativistic movements have been inspired by and are bent on following European nationalism and ideas of freedom without responsibility. This is destined to lead to the same kind of blind alley that it has in Europe if their freedom is achieved.

APRIL 22, 1947

*Continuing the Topic of Consideration of Culture of Conquered, and of Occupying, Peoples in Western Expansion and Colonization*

We have discussed the line between those who served as slaves to new masters and those who would rather die than do it. There was a difference also between native peoples who understood money and market economies and those who did not. The former, like the Kwakiutl, Haida, and Tlingit, took an adient attitude toward the new contact, contrasted to the Pueblos and the Blackfeet. Even though the Blackfeet were getting rich on the Hudson Bay Company trade in pelts, they sent a member to the company to say they wanted no more trade. There was a difference also between New World

settlement by English yeomen who settled with the aid of trade corporations and those who worked for themselves and had no picture of feudal systems. Contrast also Spanish grandeur and notion of a great hacienda. This went along with Catholicism, which became of great consequence in the acculturation of people. Catholics went seeking souls and were backed up by the unity of church and state. Protestants never treated conversion of Indians as though important.

There is difference between those who have training for colonial administration and those who do not. Also very important is the ecology of the occupied area, for instance, the difference in areas exploitable in large estates and those which do not lend themselves in this fashion.

In the acculturation of Jews, up through the 17th century conflict was not over race or ancestry, but over religion. The religion was secessionist until that time. There were, however, certain periods and places where huge numbers of Jews passed from the Jewish to Christian groups through marriage and conversion. There also were periods when Jews proselytized, and many Christians and non-Jews were converted and went over to the Jewish group. Jews' choice of group to ally with was the dominant one in an area, as in the German-Polish border area where Polish Jews identified with Germans. Belgium Jews use the French language of the dominant Walloons instead of Flemish. This was a secessionist attitude, to align themselves with the socially advantaged. As a group they tended to become assimilationist, extremely so in Germany and comparatively so in the United States. By 1930 there was less confidence on the part of Jews of the possibility or desirability of assimilation. The religious basis of wars of the 16th and 17th centuries, however, is not likely to ever become the basis of conflict again.

The assimilation of Jews is not different in quality from the assimilation of other minority groups. The United States has given citizenship to 38 million immigrants in the last century. The first- and second-generation American wanted to forget old customs; they objected to American reluctance to open everything up to them. The third generation wanted to resuscitate the old culture, largely the festive life. All immigrants in America want public schools taught in English, in contrast to Europe where immigrants cluster in enclaves, keeping their native cultures. The great issue has been to have schools teaching their native languages. The moral Americans derive from witnessing this is that everyone all over the world wants to become American. This attitude must be distinguished from imperialism.

APRIL 24, 1947

For attitudes on assimilation of minorities in the United States and Europe a terminology for classification is suggested by Louis Wirth in a chapter in *The Science of Man in World Crisis*, edited by Ralph Linton.

On one hand are assimilationist minorities, those seeking assimilation, and a close modification of this attitude, pluralistic minorities. Both think it is possible to share new and old cultures. Assimilationist attitudes were possible when cheap labor was needed. Israel Zangwill, in his play *The Melting Pot*, expressed the assimilationist attitude. Depressions prevent this attitude. Assimilationists are willing to intermarry with other groups, but pluralistic minorities' identity as a group places a tabu on intermarriage. Issues in America are not religious, but are social and economic discrimination and segregation of immigrants. In contrast to these two classes of attitudes Wirth named secessionist minorities and militant minorities, groups that see no possibility of social assimilation. These groups become nationalistic and feel the necessity of autonomy or becoming politically dominant. I would not separate the secessionists and militants as much as Wirth does, and see them as one group. R. H. Tawney referred to minority nationalism as "Sour ferment in bottles of old tribalism." Optimism is fed by those groups trying to win freedom from outside dominance. Nationalist historians would not admit this; their version of freedom never has a permanent significance because it is a question of getting nationalism into their own hands. It never benefits social welfare.

The problem is the most socially advantageous way of managing social change, but it is phrased instead as "power in the hands of the people, or power in the hands of the aristocracy." Transylvania was an example of power given to the Romanian people and all the well-paying positions were taken away from the Hungarians, to no social good. Likewise in the eastern area of what was Poland between the two world wars, where the people were White Russian and Ukrainian landed farmers, the Polish aristocracy did not bestir itself to build up the welfare of Ukrainians and White Russians.

The phrasing of the question is wrong. The well-being of an area does not depend on whether the people or an aristocracy has power, but it means the allowance and furtherance of practicing the cultural commitments of the people, that is, increased respect for human rights and obligations as they are understood according to the character structure of those peoples. Legitimacy means the cultural commitments of the people. Human rights involve mutual obligations. Compare, for example, American denial of hierarchy, Japanese insistence on hierarchy, and Chinese assent to hierarchy. The different kinds of expectations peoples have in regard to human rights arises

in the gearing in of ethnic minorities and majorities. In the United States, however, the great problem is racial relations. Russia turned the usual European arrangement of minorities around to an inverted position. Contrast Russian encouraging of local national group cultures, but without national participation, with Austrian trade Unions. Russian national groups decided (local issues) as ethnic groups without discrimination from national policy, but on national issues voting was by cross-cutting groups such as factory workers and collective farm members, and it worked well.

### APRIL 29, 1947

### *Culture Change*

Robert and Helen Lynd in *Middletown in Transition* describe revisiting the town after the depression. They found that people love what they are, their habituations remain useful.

One has to separate into two different filing cabinets the things Americans want and the things they are willing to pay the price for obtaining. There are also those who believe we can get whatever we want, and others who only pay attention to what people will sacrifice to obtain, and there cultural change is not possible. Gunnar Myrdal in *An American Dilemma*, a Swedish writer, primarily an economist, says there is no sense in studying the Negro problem without considering the culture of the dominant group. Whites see miscegenation as the great problem between White and Negro; Negroes place it at the bottom of their list and place economic opportunity at the top. American culture will not get rid of racial discrimination before, or without, getting rid of other major social conflicts.

A California investigation of the status of those showing most race prejudice and least race prejudice found the greatest race prejudice in the pillars of society and their children and the least in Bohemian groups without status. There is great lack of economic opportunity in the Middle West and South, and also the same class divisions in the two areas, but the South puts an emotional investment in emphasizing class differences and the Middle West spends emotion denying their existence. In the Midwest it is possible to appeal to theoretically impartial control of police to prevent rioting, whereas in the South this is not possible at all.

The Socialist CCF (Cooperative Commonwealth Federation) is successful in Canada because capital is foreign, is British and United States, and thus it can be criticized. Not so in the United States where capital is domestic and is sought by many people. In the present nationalistic phase of the world, one can even talk against good government if it is foreign. The American

commitment to checks and balances must be considered in planning social change. In England you give a top official more power than he will ever use. Thinking in the same way, Jan Masaryk came to Roosevelt during the war. Changes can always be seen as immanent in peoples' attitudes, but the willingness to pay shows what is important. Not even the traumatic war experience changed European attitudes much, although it brought broad change in history.

### MAY 1, 1947

### *Change and Culture Pattern*

If one looks at cultural pattern, one is not so committed to accidents of events. Black markets cannot be explained in terms of wicked individuals, but of culture patterns. In V. Gordon Childe's work, signs of events were implicit in culture pattern. Culture change was very overt.

Different views are taken of culture pattern. The point of view of those who want to save what we have got, that is the status quo people and the golden age people, is often unrealistic about what we've got. For example, the divorce problem hinges on taking away the sense of tragedy of divorce and also the expense. If the status quo is to be preserved, that is romantic marriage, the necessary consequence is divorce. A dignified position must be given divorced people and children of broken homes. If romantic marriage is preserved, a situation which can be improved is knowing the backgrounds and content of the other person. This is aggravated by city living and wars. Hemingway's *Farewell to Arms* is a document on marriage of people who don't know each other. Keeping the status quo means keeping depressions. Americans are unwilling to pay the price to avoid depressions. The only solution at this time is to give dignity to the unemployed. If you don't want to change what we've got, you must pay attention to giving dignity to what we've got. Scandinavian countries have placed emphasis on all kinds of free services, which are used by all. The idea that class means hereditary class is applicable in Europe but not in America. Here keeping up with the Joneses operates in relative status, not universal status.

### MAY 6, 1947

This semester the topic has been how institutions shape individuals' emotions and how institutions express, or are shaped by, the individual's will. This topic depends on the assumption that man's behavior and institutions can be studied objectively. The points best studied are man's habits.

There is great importance in knowledge of a large range of cultural solutions in order to know the possibilities of culture. The most difficult thing is

communicating the range of culture. Is man a victim or master of his fate? This is defined in the cultural values. In our society the good man is the master of fate. Elsewhere, for instance, in Turkey and many Islamic societies, the man who submits to, even upholds, fate, is the pillar of society.

Variations of attitude in one culture are reactions to one core, not a whole range of attitudes. There is a central core, and there may be opposite attitudinal reactions to it. Individual differences are dynamic data on the central core, as in homosexuality in our society. We consider there are normal heterosexual people and everyone else is in the category of despised homosexuals. Actually there is a whole range of sexual types, and often we do not recognize (personal) development in another society which does not demand the same qualitative reaction on the part of the variant person. Americans attend charm school to learn to be charming. The range of people who are not successful there does not represent the range of people who are not charming. The charming person may be suspect or considered unreliable. The person who never smiles may be the pillar of society or the good man.

## MAY 8, 1947

### *Anthropology and the Other Sciences*

Henry Murray, in *Explorations of Personality*, distinguishes between "needs," a force built into individuals, and "press," which comes from the environment. Among "needs," for instance, is "infravoidance," avoidance of situations of humiliation. Psychoanalysts analyze from the patient's verbal presentation of the unconscious, not through observation of the individual. The anthropologist assumes that behavior will show the personality, that one can observe "needs" and "presses" and that these must come out in their behavior. If they are absent from behavior, they are not there. If it isn't there in their behavior, one can't theorize about it. The Oedipus complex does not exist if nothing in behavior indicates it.

Roheim is the only psychoanalyst who has done fieldwork in another culture. There is also Alexander Leighton. The psychoanalyst believes there is a large sphere of an unconscious. The anthropologist believes the whole personality is evident in behavior. Examples of collaboration of psychologists and anthropologists: for example, in projective tests., Rorschach tests and doll play tests. See Jules Henry, "Pilaga Doll Play" reporting his use of Dr. Levi's dolls test. The test was vitiated by the fact that the children had to be observed, so under those conditions they would not tear up the dolls, as Henry thought they would if unobserved. There have also been cross-cultural tests of competition in production. In America competition stimulated production. In

Japan and Germany people got upset over the competition and production fell off sharply.

Method, that is, distinction and clear definition of methods, is more important than theory. In synchronic study the use of history is very great, for instance, in comparison of myths of history with true history and in comparisons of generations. In medical accounts "history negative" refers to all the general facts of cultural development, which are unimportant, and only idiosyncratic things are important in medical accounts.

### MAY 15, 1947

### *Anthropology and the Other Sciences (continued)*

Skepticism is necessary with regard to sciences which try to disregard variables and operate with the concept of "other things being equal." "Other things" are never equal. Advance in science comes from skepticism about those things which are assumed to be equal, that is, situations in which one variable and one determinant of it are studied.

Very rarely in other sciences is man considered a factor in his own right. Psychiatrists place too much emphasis on the importance of conditioning in infancy. The whole life cycle shows the cultural attitudes. Arapesh babies do not kick before birth, but babies of neighboring hostile and aggressive tribes kick frequently before birth. Child training shows the cultural attitudes: are they, for example, absolutist or right thing in the right place attitudes. Where emphasis in training is on masturbation, the attitudes tend to be absolutist. Where emphasis is on toilet training, attitudes tend to be right thing in the right place. Absolutism is characteristic of Western civilization. An example of variation in Western civilization in attitudes apparent in child training is the arrangement of the sexes: girls may be tied to mother and boys tied to father, or in other Western cultures girls may be tied to father and boys to mother. The problem is present because of differentiation of temperament of men and women. (This example was recorded in one set of notes. The remark, which would seem to affirm temperamental differences, is not clear enough for certainty about Benedict's meaning. It is of interest that she took up the subject yet did not make a clear point.)

APPENDIX 3

# Seminar in Contemporary European Cultures

## Anthropology 303/304, Winter and Spring Sessions, 1946–1947

### OCTOBER 1, 1946

The anthropological approach should be differentiated from other approaches to the same problem. The historical approach is expressed in most of the available material. The anthropological approach differs from it in that it deals mainly with the living generation and is based on the fact that each generation has to be reared to carry on learned cultural behavior. In this sense we study history not for the facts but as to what role it plays in the life of the people. False history from this point of view is as important as true history. Attitudes expressed in people's view of history are so constant that it is possible to predict attitudes which it will take towards defeat or victory.

The economic approach, that is, the Marxist: study was begun in expectation to encounter marked class differences, expecting that class differences might be more important than national differences and might cut across nations. This view has not been borne out. In this sense not the fact of poverty is important, but how this poverty is handled with reference to the ego structure of the individual; and similarly with attitudes towards authority, property, ideal persons, and so forth. The psychoanalytic approach: this is too one-sided in terms of sex only. There are many frustrations in life. The role of experience in the growth of values should be stressed. The political approach: It does not matter which party is in power. A party might stress one or another component of the pattern, but the pattern is still dominant. In the anthropological view culture must integrate. There is need for a common core, a dominant motive to make life more than bits and pieces. It may not be possible to integrate a lot of it, but even miscellaneous material is absorbed to the established habit patterns. One can be blind to entire areas of life, that is, common blind spots which are not going to be used in the ideal picture of man in that society.

Notes on procedure (for students doing research on European enclave communities in New York): a scattering of observations is necessary to gain

an overall view of the subject. The best subjects are friends with children. They can compare the way they were treated by their parents with the way they treat their own children. Seek out villagers. Questions to pose: relations of people to landlords; who were the big people; did they come and participate in the harvest dance; did they bury their dead in their own graveyard or in the village graveyard; the relation of people to overseers; who are "we" and who are "they"; who goes to cafés, who eats together. Do peasants who come to town step into the cafés easily or do they never step in. What are the points of differentiation between men and women. Is there segregation in the city.

### OCTOBER 8, 1946

(No notes.)

### OCTOBER 15, 1946

(Margaret Mead spoke on participant observer techniques, and the following notes were taken from her lecture.)

In the selection of a meaningful spot, that is, where to begin, do work in the community in such a way that the community can share to some extent in the purposes and ideals of what you are doing. The best beginning point is where you are now. For example, if you are a student phrase your problem in terms of a student. If you are married, phrase your approach in terms that are familiar to you. Give an account of what you are doing. Show that the project is acceptable to the community. Partial cover is bound to fail. Informants must be told what the thing is about so they will feel free to talk to you. Do this on the level of sophistication of the informant. Make sure to protect the informant. There is anthropological transfer. People who are perfectly adjusted will not talk. Maladjusted people will talk out of a need to talk, and you are an ear. Do not make them dependent on you. Your position as an observer must be kept throughout; in this regard it is important to give your personal account of the informants to gage your reactions to them.

### OCTOBER 22, 1946

(Benedict speaking.) Relevant materials: the function of history in the culture; the terminology of the ethical code; symmetrical versus complementary patterns of behavior.

In symmetrical behavior, for example, democratic behavior, person A responds to person B with the same act that B used in response to A. In complementary behavior, for example, that of a feudal lord to a serf, person B responds to A with prescribed behavior B, where person A used prescribed behavior A. Boasting is one of the most typical symmetrical behavior patterns wherever symmetrical patterns are found in a culture. Symmetrical patterns

so conceived include such symmetrical activity as the reaching of compulsory consensus, as in pueblo culture.

### OCTOBER 29, 1946

(No notes.)

### NOVEMBER 5, 1946

(No notes.)

### NOVEMBER 12, 1946

As a basis for reading, see Margaret Mead, *From the South Seas*, as an example of the focus of anthropology. Each culture exhibits regularities, each child must become conditioned to these regularities in the process of cultural learning. These regularities have their own tendency of development and frustrations consequent on development. The emphasis is on cultural continuity and is on continuing social experience.

De Tocqueville, in *Democracy in America*, gives light on aristocratic European society and democratic American society. It is an introduction to European cultures. it shows the dignity of aristocratic society. *And Keep Your Powder Dry*, by Margaret Mead, presents the American mobile, ever changing and constantly ill understood social environment.

### NOVEMBER 19, 1946

Guidelines for study, from the example of interpreting Dutch material:[1] In interpreting Dutch sociological data, one discovers, for example, that the figures on income tax and wealth are contradictory. Privately held bonds, held by banks for individuals, are not taxable. The bonds are not in the individual's name. Regarding the trade union movement which is thought to be very strong and has a large membership, one discovers that only one-third of the unions are under collective bargaining agreements, and the rest are really beneficial societies. There is a heavy class system, and it is unlike those of other countries, and the criteria are easy to establish. There is no civil service. It is said, "If there were a civil service an orphan could get in." 95 percent of the population votes. There is compulsory voting. The Diet is a debating society, and the crown's ministry initiates laws. Women have the vote, yet they have no money in their own name and no pocket money. They do not manage their husband's money. If a husband dies leaving money to his widow, her oldest son usually administers it. Yet women may run their husband's business while he is away. In the bulb business there is a joke, "We can't hold a director's meeting while a woman is in charge."

In child training it is said, do not expect a child to know right from wrong until age seven. Teachers in kindergarten tied bells around children's necks,

and if there was no sound from the bells the children were playing with their sex organs. This was in 1939.

There is a commitment to work, an equation of virtue with work.

There are the overt light and the inner dark worlds. The house and living room are open to the overt world, everyone may know what you are doing. A man would never tell his wife of faithlessness. Men go to drink in solitary fashion in bars with curtained-off tables or in definite places, "where no one will talk to anyone else." The French drink so much more innocently than the Dutch.

NOVEMBER 26, 1946

There is a comment by a contemporary Dutch historian: "The world no longer knows the difference between work and play; this is the cause of tragedy." There is a division of the world into overt, meaning good and by morality, and covert, meaning within your thoughts. The overt world is illustrated by the saying, "Holland, the little country with mother's eye over it." Mothers read children's diaries; this is an acceptable technique in child rearing. The Dutch speak of "good national housekeeping." The covert world includes diaries at first, then thoughts are kept to yourself. "The dark world that makes you proud" includes flings in Brussels; conjugal "privacy" between marriage partners; lower-class nursemaids who masturbate their charges; and includes sexual intercourse with lower-class women. The neurotic symptomatology is predominantly somatic and is diagnosed as conversion hysteria.[2]

DECEMBER 3, 1946

*Discussion of Proverbs*

Proverbs regarding honor give a picture of cultures. Some add honor stripe by stripe in terms of rivalry situations, and others look at honor as integrity as a whole. Proverbs show the relations of internal and external sanctions. (The student took no other notes in this class. See the same date in appendix 2 for extensive notes on proverbs. The proverbs Benedict cited there were used in her national character papers.)

DECEMBER 17, 1946

(Margaret Mead and Gregory Bateson lectured on symmetrical and complementary behavior, as developed by Bateson for Iatmul culture and applied in this class to a comparison of English and American cultures in several aspects. They pointed out that they were presenting tentative hypotheses, formulated during war to facilitate international communication.)

### JANUARY 7 AND 14, 1947

(William O. Lipkind, a Columbia Ph.D., reported on Bavarian culture, based on his fieldwork done during the military occupation of Germany.)

### FEBRUARY 18, 1947

(Benedict showed the form for a file card to be kept for each informant the student worked with. She then spoke on interpreting Romanian materials and continued with this subject in the next class. The notes are sketchy. Since her Romanian report is available, a reproduction of these notes is not of interest.)

### MARCH 11, 1947

(Aspects of culture of a Norwegian immigrant community in Brooklyn were described by a Mr. Josephson, who was not further identified.)

### MARCH 18, 1947

*Commentary on Methods*

Verbal agreement is not necessary. Two observers coming from different cultures may express entirely different points of view; such opinions are to be taken as much on the culture observed as on the observer. It is impossible to be objective. See, for example, Li An Chi's different, and valid, comments on Zuni (1936).

Regarding culture change, the first description of culture always sees the culture in stasis. You must see both continuities and discontinuities. You can use foreign offshoots of cultures as controls, for example, French Canadians as perspective on France.

In anthropological method, first make trait lists. These are not available for Europe. Second, employ the culture area concept by getting comparative data from neighboring groups. Third, investigate child rearing as comparable units. Fourth, find out the leitmotifs of the culture: the phrasing of attitudes towards the self, others, and the universe, Is what is taken from one added on to another? What makes up the culture's reciprocals, for instance, in dominance and submission and in ridicule and humiliation? Always determine the entire reciprocal. Dominance and submission are part of the same complex. Societies which emphasize complementary behavior will try to throw out individual differences. Societies which emphasize symmetrical behavior are generally egalitarian; is leadership then expressed in symmetrical terms?

MARCH 25, 1947

*Anthropological Method (continued)*

Anthropology tries to see wholes, in contrast to sciences that deal with partial phenomena, for example, ethics, jurisprudence, sociology. Situations are to be studied as wholes. Ask questions in situational terms. Get at personal data and see them as consequences of life situation of the individual. Define the phrasing of questions in terms of the life situation, for example, adolescence in Germany versus in America; illegitimacy in America and other countries; marriage and its connotations of "any man can learn to love any woman" in Europe versus American romance.

APRIL 15 AND 22, 1947

(Report on fieldwork in a community in the Ionian Islands by an unidentified person.)

APRIL 29 AND MAY 6, 1947

(Report on Turkey by Zekiye Eglar, an advanced graduate student who grew up in Turkey.)

APPENDIX 4

# Religions of Primitive Peoples

## Anthropology 144, Spring Session, 1947

### FEBRUARY 4, 1947

*Definitions of Religions*

Religion is typically defined as belief in the West, where loss of religion is identified with loss of belief. But is belief, that is, dogma, emphasized in a religion or is experience emphasized? Eastern religions of Buddhism and Confucianism are nondogmatic. Some people define religion as belief in a supernatural, but this is not necessary in religion, for example, Buddha and Confucius are essentially secular figures.

There is the definition of religion as a technique of control. Primitive religions are easy to define in this way as religions define conduct rather than set goals for a better life. However, this definition does not distinguish religion from other forms of control.

Religions may be defined by a particular relation to the supernatural. A demonstrated need in culture is phrased in terms congenial to the culture. We cannot necessarily take fear of the supernatural or a sense of man's smallness as a definition, for this is countered by the hospitality religions and by religions which worship man himself, for example, Australia. There is a definition of religion as control of unknown, but it is false to think that because unknowns are recognized there will be a theory of it. What is considered unknown is selected.

Religion has been defined as an aesthetic expression, but art and an aesthetic component may exist entirely apart from religion or as an expression of religion. As far as a definition of religion as a basic need goes, the problem is to discover how far religion rises above basic needs. No culture is limited to basic needs. The fruition of religion is an index of the point furthest removed from basic need.

I consider that religion concerns itself with the holy and the dangerous, as they are stated or inferred, but not demonstrated.

## FEBRUARY 6, 1947

### *Various Conceptions of the Idea of Soul*

It may be expressed as the power of acting, as in Siberia. Persons may have many souls, as in joints of fingers. The soul is the power of living, and loss of it is death. The same concept is the lost soul causing sickness. The Shaman retrieves part of the soul or the souls that have gone, usually through spiritualistic phenomena. Often the soul is not anthropomorphic, and some places in the Old World the soul is associated with blood or breath or throat, or with the voice. Some American Indians also tie the soul to part of the body, for example, the blood. "My blood rises," means "I live fully"; "my blood stagnates" means "I am dying on my feet." In India soul is identified with breath, and soul-control is equated to breath control.

The soul may be moral. In the Philippines everyone has both a dangerous, hostile soul and a good, cooperative soul. This is a situational view, the person acting as he does as one or other soul predominates. The point of religion is to destroy and isolate the hostile soul. The American view is of an integrated soul, and man is either good or bad.

The soul may be a projection of imaginative life. The soul may leave the body in dreams or trance and move about freely. Religious training may consist in enabling the soul to do this at will. The soul may be in some object in the external world, as in a box or a thread. This overcomes the danger to the soul of loss of life. The soul may be identified with the person's name, and when the Eskimo give a dead man's name to a child his soul enters the child.

The soul may be the memory image of the deceased in the minds of survivors. In Missouri River tribes the soul is gradually lost through four successive and diminishing stages as people forget. Religion is often the worship of the recent dead; however, North and South American Indians do not worship ancestors, and in China the most important ancestor is the one who died longest ago. The soul memory image of the deceased fades with remembrance of the deceased, and ancestor cults often worship the recent dead. The power of the ancestor is thought to be equivalent to the power of the individual when alive so there is an effort to remember powerful individuals after death to keep that power in use.

The soul may exist in a prebirth spirit world and not reenter a spirit world after death, as among the Ewe-speaking people of North Africa. The spirit husband of a spirit woman whose soul enters a new-born girl may in the future be jealous of the girl's future husband and visit misfortune on him, or if he had not loved his spirit wife he may bring harm to her in her carnate

form. Thus relationships in the prebirth world explain worldly happenings. Souls do not return to the spirit world after death. The Asian attitude to the soul, however, is that it has many possibilities and many incarnations, with the next incarnation determined by its course in the previous life. In contrast, the American idea is that the soul has only one chance.

Belief in some form of afterlife is nearly universal. Our idea of eternal life is unusual. It is based on our dichotomy between temporary and eternal. Some Pacific island people believe a soul lives after death only until, in his funeral, his arm and leg bones are broken to assure he cannot return. This near universal belief in an after life is a convergence of belief from different origins.

### FEBRUARY 11, 1947

### *Literacy and Religion; Integration of Religion into Culture*

Among people where there is no printing, religion is a very close expression of the cultural attitudes. As attitudes change so does religion because it is passed on by word of mouth. So there is an indirect relation of the degree of integration of religion into a culture with literacy. There is also a direct correlation of the decline of culture and decline of religion with a rise of hostility in primitive cultures. For example, in Zuni a system of sorcery detection was worked out within a five-year period. In Navaho there was a similar correlation.

With literacy the creeds of religion are preserved beyond the duration of a particular culture. This fossilizes the cultural norms of the time when it was written. Theology's answer to this is a continuous reinterpretation of the creed to adapt to new culture; thus today, "I believe because it is impossible," and there is a continuous reinterpretation of the life of Christ, for example, Bruce Barton's *The Man Nobody Knows*. Vicarious atonement would have been dropped if religion had not been written. In American Protestant religion there is a tendency to go back to the Old Testament for texts of sermons in spite of anti-Semitism. Religion is no longer an expression of total personality.

Regarding the search for origins, the origins of religion are not traceable. What is thought to be evidence of religion in prehistoric relics is an a priori interpretation, for example, that ocher painting on the body at burial, and burial itself, would be evidence of religion. More practical than a search for origins is a search for a core of religion. When Tylor said religion arose from intellectualization of dreams, he meant the core of religion was intellectual conviction. Spencer saying the origin of religion was ancestor worship, really

was saying the core was respect of the aged. Students have proposed the most varied cores of religion, perhaps because of lack of a known biological basis.

FEBRUARY 13, 1947

There is a great range of ideas on which religions have been based. Contrast religions which affirm and secure group ends with those for individual ends. Religions for group ends may be associated with fertility ceremonies directed at multiplication of symbols which the group values, such as corn, cowries, or dog teeth. They may be phrased as ceremonies for group happiness. Religions for group ends also are associated with group curing and with insurance ceremonies, such as ones to take off bad happenings, and to prolong life, as in the Zuni fire ceremony with tossing fire around.

Religions for individual ends would be, for example, ceremonies for increase in personal wealth. Sorcery and black magic are an extreme case of religion for personal ends at the expense of others. This may refer also to individual salvation as an individual end.

Zuni is a pueblo of about 2,000 people in the Southwest. They have adobe houses. There has been a recent intrusion of sorcery. Ceremonial life plays a great role in the tribe. They have matriliny and matrilocality, and the husband is never fully incorporated into the ceremonies of the matrilocal household because he was not born to the sacred objects in this household. But he does contribute fully to the economics of the household and is called a welcome worker. The cornfields are held in the matrilineal line. There is a certain pull toward patriliny because of ownership of sheep by men, shared among brothers and passed on to their sons.

There is great interest in ceremonial life. Ritual material that must be learned letter perfect is known to a very large number of men. In Hopi letter perfect ritual is secret. There is a great number of rites. Zuni religion is oriented to group ends. Men cooperate with the universe and offer hospitality. The gods are happiest when dancing in the village. Men impersonate the Kachina gods. If a man dances with a bad heart his mask will stick to his face, and when he tries to take it off it will take all the skin off. For all the religious activity there are no pecuniary rewards. He gets prestige but it is without pride. Zuni is peculiar in its unwillingness to cultivate and admire pride. Even the simplest rite must be performed by trained individuals. Anyone could hold up a rite indefinitely by sulking, but they never do.

Hospitality is extended to corn and it is danced. Hospitality also to animals killed so they will come in numbers to the pueblo. Hospitality also for the twigs that make the altar. The origin myth of the ceremonies says that people were bored when they first were on earth, so the kachinas came to entertain

them and make them happy. There is no religious sanctioning of things beyond and above what the ordinary man would want to do. The supernaturals are fed with cornmeal and clothed with prayer sticks. Praying when there is no scheduled ceremony is interpreted as sorcery. Even for sickness prayer has to be the recognized ceremony for the illness and done by the right medicine man. Power is put on and taken off. Ceremonial life becomes separated from the minutiae of life. It would be dangerous for an individual, and everyone, if a man acted in ordinary life while having supernatural power. The separation of ceremonial and ordinary life roles makes possible hostility and grudges in everyday life.

FEBRUARY 18, 1947

In Zuni there is no shamanism, that is no individual breakthrough to the supernatural, rather they have priests, five men with a known body of knowledge, trained in that knowledge. No sharp distinction between professional and layman. Nearly everybody is a priest at one time or another and all prepare for it. You cannot become a priest without initiation, which proves trustworthiness and submissiveness. The boy is initiated into the Kiva of the woman who first touched him, usually a midwife. It is a making-of-man cult. The boy is whipped and the Kachina is unmasked in the Kiva, then the boy whips the unmasked Kachina, which is the point at which the boy becomes a kachina dancer, and it symbolizes his future role as a kachina dancer. He gets a mask only when he is a married man and can give proper entertainment. Getting a mask in not an individual reward or his property; masks are borrowed and loaned. The reward is the increasing number of masks in the community, and the group of dancers in a ceremony is limited by the number of available masks. Ornaments for the dance are the wealth of the tribe, are borrowed freely whether poor or rich.

There is a set of cults within which the individual rises. The Sun Cult is very important. The priest watches the sunrise in order to date the ceremonies. This is phrased in Zuni as offering hospitality to the sun, in contrast to Hopi where the Sun priest must turn the sun at the solstice. The Zuni Sun priest has to be happy to make the sun happy.

1. The Kachina Cult is organized into six kivas. There is an air of mystery around it. They dance three times a year and at harvest for four days and practice a month before the performances. Wives frequently complain that the men are rehearsing at the kivas when they should be home at night. Kachina masks and medicine bundles are passed down in family lines and are brought out at each dance time. In other pueblos the year is divided in half, when the kachinas are present and the other half they are absent. In

Zuni the kachinas are "sent home" for four days with the same ceremony as in Hopi, but are brought right back again.

2. There are twelve priesthoods. They keep medicine bundles in their own homes. They are usually related in the matrilineal line but there is no objection to a priest's son succeeding him, but the line is not open to everybody. They retreat to pray for rain. This is the most aristocratic cult.

3. The curing societies have the bear as sponsor who has power to "bend away evil." People are promised to each cult when cured by it. Others get in without being sick by having a tabu put on them which must be sung over by the society, so many people are included and women as well. In folk tales curing societies met every night, and in Cushing's time they met very often, but now less frequently. They have as elaborate a body of myths and rituals as the Kiva societies. People learn songs and rituals of societies they do not participate in. Not true of Hopi; Zuni permits more mass participation.

4. The War Cult has two priests who impersonate the war twins, two unprepossessing twins who were bad to their grandmother. Their own ceremony takes place in the winter, but they must stand guard at every ceremony. The two impersonators have two assistants. All who took a scalp must join. This relieves them of the danger of the scalp and makes the scalp a guardian of the tribe.

There is a show of denying individual roles in all the cults. People are trapped into being heads. In myths men are kept in the Kiva until one breaks down and accepts chieftainship. There are great grudges under the surface, maliciousness; not a warm outgoing people.

### FEBRUARY 20, 1947

The great sanction is shame lest they fail. This keeps them participating. Abram Kardiner in his book *The Individual in His Society* makes these points: (1) the individual is not burdened with authority drives; (2) there is no placation of the dead, but a feeling of security in relation to the dead; (3) there is a broad diffusion of status; (4) there is free floating anxiety along with strong projective mechanisms. This was evident formerly in maliciousness. Now it is visible in sorcery, which in Zuni is a fantasy construction. People do not buy sorcery or practice it as a profession as in some societies. Kardiner's interpretation of the Zuni matrilineal set-up misses the point. It is not as strong as elsewhere. All Zuni is one village so that a man moving to his wife's family is still in contact with his own relatives. Women are not barred from cults as they often are in other matrilineal societies where men have strong fertility envy. Zuni women are bored by the compulsive religious

activity. They can join any religious society they want but they usually do not. Men are preoccupied with ritual. The compulsive religious behavior should be interpreted as a consequence of anxiety caused by the prohibition on pride and the use of shame as the sanction. The training is in shame and submissiveness; they speak of choosing the most submissive.

### FEBRUARY 25, 1947

### *Some General Points*

Belief is the core of our religion but not of others. This is part of the change toward individualism in the West, away from groups among primitive peoples. Individualism is seen in our literature and our religious views, but not in marriage and economics. But where is the individual most free? Where is he most constrained? Disbelief in our religion is doubt of dogma; doubt in Zuni is about form, doubt that the priests whipped up the yucca suds well. In both, doubt is about the focal point of the religion. Modern disbelief in intellectual formulations is rare. Doubt does not come about in Zuni through learning that kachina dancers are men. This is not a big disillusionment in Zuni as it is among some Rio Grande Pueblos. The women and children are not supposed to know this, but the women do know. In Zuni gossip is largely about ceremonial lapses. In Hopi gossip is largely about marriage. The usual pattern is that to believe in a particular cult is not to deny other cult beliefs. The exception to this is the higher ethical religions.

Just as believing is not a distinguishing aspect of religion, symbolism is not exclusive to religion. Zuni does have a great amount of religious symbolism, but in the Northwest coastal tribes symbolism attaches to the potlatch especially. Nor is an emotional character as against a rational character exclusive to religion. The potlatch and Plains Indian warfare are highly emotional and not so rational. There is a great emotional defense of religion in the West because of the inability to give proof of religious dogma and the demand for proof, which is a Western specialization. Again, religion has been said to be techniques for preventing waste of crude energy. This is also not exclusive to religion. It is true of marriage and other things.

The aim of religion is to domesticate the universe; it is not for man to make himself dependent on greater powers. Ethical religions oppose the will of god to the will of the individual, and religion is supposed to keep you from doing things you want to do. Primitive religions are generally ways in which the individual can carry out his will.

FEBRUARY 27, 1947

*Arunta Religion*

The theme is that there is no god greater then man, and men themselves are supernatural. All the souls of mankind are kept in a secret cave, and these souls were made in a previous world. Each man has a pair of souls, one of which remains in the cave after the other is born. The soul to be incarnated goes to the mother's womb; both the souls are permanent. Every man was created at the beginning of time and there are no accidents of birth. Thus the Arunta deny paternity although they undoubtedly know about it. The tribe has use of a constant germ plasma supply. Each man has a churinga which represents his soul, and after it is brought out in ceremonies it is returned to the secret cave where it always remains. The churinga is identified with the personality of the owner. There is no dependency relationship between gods and man.

The focus of the making-of-man cult is to make men independent of women. There are four successive stages, each one a ceremonial kidnapping of the boy. In the first two stages the women intrude and in the last two they do not, thus the separation from women is gradual. At age nine or ten in a small local ceremony of a few people, three or four boys are seized and the women follow at first and then no longer. The boys are thrown in the air, and after this ceremony they may throw a boomerang and a spear. At age twelve to fourteen circumcision is performed in a local gathering. The women as a group attempt to entice the boys, and the boys must choose between life with men or women. The men chase off the women and then circumcise the boys. The boys are told about the souls in the cave, about the alcheringa time, and are given a shield to cover their wound. They are acquainted with the so-called god of the making-of-man cult, who is presented without elaboration. They are then shown their own churinga.

The third stage of initiation is the sub-incision ceremony which takes place for two or three boys and is also a local gathering. The ritual term for sub-incision is "making a vagina." It makes men self-sufficient. For the first time the novices themselves are actors in the ritual. There is a period of recovery, and then the boys are shown to the women. A boy's sister embraces him to show that he is one of them (meaning unclear). She then hits him, symbolizing rivalry of men and women. The sub-incised boy throws his boomerang in the direction of his mother's totemic place to show separation from his mother. The fourth and last stage, at age twenty-one, introduces the boys to the voice of the god of the making-of-man cult, the bull-roarer, which they have never heard before. This is the occasion for an inter-tribal

gathering bringing together a great number of people and lasting two to four months in desert country, a ceremony of integration. All bring their churingas and embrace and rub other peoples' churingas and other people. They paint totemic symbols on one another. Blood is drawn and is regarded as love and warmth of affection. It is drawn from arms, legs, and penis and symbolizes the essence of life and ties the group together. Totemic groups put on their totem ceremonies and all others observe them and imitate them. The culminating ceremony is the roaring of the bull-roarer, and for this the women have had to go away. The boys are taught to use the bull-roarer, thus they become the voice of the god. The boys then lie still for several nights while the old men dance the medicine bundle called a baby pouch, singing songs. After four nights the initiates leap up, born again. They are then taken to their wives' camps where they live as married men. The boy has become a man with the fourth ceremony, but all future ceremonies and ceremonial blood-letting add to his wisdom.

### MARCH 4, 1947

In the Arunta religion the absence of a dependence relationship between man and the supernatural is seen also in reproduction rituals. These are carried on by totemic groups who have the obligation of reproducing their totem for the benefit of all others. The totemic relation has nothing to do with marriage classes. The soul has a totem but may jump into any woman's womb and be born through her and thus some families may have a number of totems. Impregnation is associated with certain parts of the territory where totems hover. Pregnancy is not recognized before the child moves in the womb. Totems replenish everything in life – plants, animals, laughter, kindness. The totemic group reproduces emus by going through everything they know about emus. The life-giving totem ceremonies are called Intichiuma. At the sacred places where the totem is said to live the symbol of the totem is rubbed on the bodies of the totemic group. This symbolizes renewing life and group attachments. The entire tribe waits in silence while a particular totem group works. There is no calling on gods or spirits. Men are the spirits and they themselves produce and renew life.

Medicine man is an achieved profession. A man goes to a totemic cave and sleeps in front of it. In the cave live many primordial ancestors, not incarnated; the alcheringa ancestors are capricious. While he sleeps one shoots an arrow through the back of his neck, and it comes out through his tongue. The hole in his neck heals, but the hole in his tongue is the symbol of a medicine man. The alcheringas take all the organs out of his body, and he is said to die, and they put new organs in him. Thus the man becomes an

incarnation of the footloose ancestors, but he also retains the totem he was born into. Stones put in his body are sacred, and he uses them in curing. He throws them from his body into a sick man and takes them back again, an invisible process. If the hole in his tongue stays open a month he can begin to practice, but if not he is not a real medicine man. There must be shamanistic training, but covered in secrecy, not much known.

Durkheim's analysis of Australian religion was as a performance of ceremony, as visual representation of ancestors. But other points he made, the heightening of emotion by public rites, and religion as group behavior, cannot be generalized for other religions. Expiation is not found in Australia. Durkheim did not believe it could be absent from any religion.[1]

### MARCH 6, 1947

Arunta religion has very little to do with morals or social control. Assuring social behavior is largely the sphere of old men. For instance, in case of elopement with another man's wife, social sanctions are imposed. The couple goes to an allotted place of sanctuary, and after they have a baby they return. The husband and eloper have a passive sham battle, the husband saying, "You take her; I throw her away." If they get too aroused relatives pull them apart. There is no idea of a sin or a religious sanction.

A very severe kind of sorcery called Vada is thought of not as a function of a religiously endowed sorcerer but could be performed by anyone. A Vada sorcerer goes through an act of death agony of various deaths. He is hired to kill a victim. He knocks the victim unconscious and cuts out some part of the body without the victim knowing. The victim then goes back home unaware except by a mark on his body, and he dies in a stated number of days. Vada sorcery could be hired to kill even within a family or household. Vada has died out, but the Arunta still know about it and explain it. The cut is usually made in the tongue of the victim. Even women could do Vada sorcery, although they were banned from all religious practices.

Other examples of religion being separated from ethics are found in Dobu and Ojibwa. In Dobu a bad man was deformed, wounded, disfigured, unsuccessful, while a good man is one who succeeds in drawing enough yams into his own garden or one who succeeds in killing by black magic. Bad men do not go to spirit land. In a myth of the Ojibwa a bad man is a man who has not gone through the Midewiwin society, even though he has acted well all his life, and he will therefore not get to heaven. A good man is one who has gone through Midewiwin even though he has killed and stolen in his lifetime.

Food tabus may be sanctioned religiously or secularly. Whatever the kind of sanction, people may vomit if the tabu is broken. Among the Omaha

religiously sanctioned tabu on food for menstruating women was thrown over in two or three years when religion began to break down, along with all feeling of disgust and repulsion.

Thus the process of change is greatly affected by what is sanctioned by what. Socially sanctioned tabus may be preserved more strongly than religious ones in the degree that social organization is more basic than religion.

## MARCH 11, 1947

### *Individualist Religions*

In the New World there is an identification of religion and extrasensory experience; a personal breakthrough to the supernatural is sought. The induction of the experience, such as a vision, may be by artificial means such as stimulants, torture, fasting, isolation, or dangerous exposure. Religions which seek an individualistic experience of the supernatural contradict Durkheim's thesis. There are varying associations of the vision quest, for example, it may be a shaman's monopoly in some tribes; it may be hereditary as among the Kwakiutl, and also dramatized as they do; acquiring a guardian spirit through a vision may be associated with adolescence, as among the Plateau Salish. The boy or girl stays out long periods of time engaging in the kinds of activity required of them in later life. The activity, as training, is more important than having a vision. In the Plains, after the guardian spirit has been obtained the emphasis is on getting supernatural power with its help for particular occasions. The idea of a guardian spirit is not necessarily connected with supernatural experience, as in the prebirth spirit concept in Australia. Self-torture may have various meanings: as valuable in itself, as in Eastern tribes, as facilitating but not necessary. If the vision comes without self-torture among the Crow, it shows special favor of the Gods to the individual. It may be unfair as a means of obtaining a vision, as among California and Northwest Coast peoples, where the person who happens to get a vision becomes a shaman. In most of Canada and among the Eskimo, the vision is considered a specialty of shamans. There the power is hostile and is used against a rival shaman and used to drive people off hunting territories. The power for evil is often regarded as higher than power for good, and supernatural power is amoral in that sense. In Omaha there is a conflict between inherited vested interest in supernatural power and the egalitarian idea that every man can get power through a vision. See R. W. Dixon, *The Shasta*; R. H. Lowie, *Crow Religion*; Reo Fortune, *Omaha Secret Societies*.

Guardian spirits are rarely the dead, but the Plateau Region is an exception to this. The guardian spirit is not a spirit of a sacred place. They are

thoroughly mobile. Guardian spirits will punish the man who falsely claims a vision. The self-confident man will more readily claim, and have, visions than a timid man.

MARCH 13, 1947

In Siberia only a few people have supernatural experiences, only persons predisposed to it. They think that a person is "doomed" to supernatural experience, and people ought to suffer in the experience. This is quite different from the American Indian idea that one is especially favored if a vision comes without much suffering. The call to shamanism is the supernatural spirit coming to strangle the person and his having a seizure. For the way the call comes to a Zulu, see *Patterns of Culture*, p. 248. The first students of culture stressed the rational side of belief: Tylor, belief in spirits; Spencer, belief in ancestors. English theorists have not stressed emotion. For Durkheim religion was a reflection of man's social ties. The Germans have based their theories on emotional experience. Individual breakthrough to the supernatural is the basis of Hauer's definition of religion (J. W. Hauer, *Die Religionnen*, vol. 1, Berlin 1923). Hauer emphasizes the authority of the experience over the person. It is during the religious experience that the will of the individual is absolute. This German meaning of will, what you do not want to do, is different from the English meaning of will, that is, what you do want to do.

MARCH 18, 1947

Write a paper on one of the following religions, including the personnel, the objectives, ideas of gods, ways of dealing with gods, and what the religious area is.

Bruno Guttman, *Das Recht der Dschagga*
E. E. Evans-Pritchard, *Witchcraft and Magic among the Azande*
W. H. R. Rivers, *The Todas*
M. Mead, *Growing Up in New Guinea*
R. Fortune, *Manus Religion*
Ruth Underhill, *Papago Religion* and *Papago Social Organization*
R. H. Lowie, *Crow Religion* and *The Crow Indians*
Knud Rasmussen, *Intellectual Culture of the Iglulick*
F. Boas, *The Central Eskimo*

Religions of ancestor worship are found in China and Africa but are absent from North and South America. The Chinese worship remote ancestors, and genealogies are kept for centuries back. In the primitive world the most recent ancestors are the ones worshiped. Among preliterate people, Polynesians keep genealogies for about a century but do not worship ancestors.

In Africa ancestor worship is the focus of religion; however, pantheons, gods, spirit beliefs, and so forth, are also present. The focus here is on the memory of the recent dead and on the dead who were most powerful in life. An important man may be worshiped over several generations. Among the Ovimbundu both the patrilineal and matrilineal lines are worshiped and have ancestral shrines. The matrilineal line is nonlocalized but provides safety and friendship for travel among stranger groups and ties together the segmented patrilineal groups. The priests of the shrines are the heads of the families, ascribed office, not derived from supernatural experience. Group loyalty is to the consanguineal group, and religion is the center of this organization. Emphasis on the continuity of the family line is even stronger than in some clan/gens societies, such as the Crow where there is minimal continuity of the clan. The Ovimbundu priest in the matrilineal line acts on life crisis occasions. There are other gods besides the ancestors, but the fetishes which people worship are usually derived from ancestors. People talk to these fetishes, rub them and think they will get tired if used too much. This is typical of considering amulets as people. When amulets are considered things, they do not get tired but may increase in power the more used or the more exchanged. Shamanism is outside the ancestor religion. They get their power from supernatural experiences, but this is relegated to illicit and unimportant functions. Shamans are diviners and look for lost objects and do curing, but most curing is connected with ancestors. For Africa religion must be set up by family lines and is always related to the continuity of the consanguine family with the oldest living male as priest connecting the living with the dead. Ancestor worship is not possible where the conjugal family is present. Even with clans, American Indians do not stress continuity over time, and the clan is not connected with religion, as among the Blackfeet and the Crow. There is a strong potentiality for ancestor worship from West Africa to Melanesia. The problem to consider is not monotheism vs. polytheism, but ancestor worship vs. nonancestor worship cultures.

## MARCH 20, 1947

### *Sorcery Religions*

Magic is the mechanical manipulation of things or people for personal objectives. It is an "as if" technique, achieving results by analogy. Two types of magic are sympathetic magic and contagious magic. All religions have some magic. The area of religion by magic is India and Melanesia. Magic superceded interpersonal relations with gods, but magic religions are not a degeneration of god religions, as Rivers says of Toda magic use of gods' names

in sacred dairying. F. E. Williams described Orokaiva magic as analogies and specifics. J. G. Frazer's theory of magic: man became lord of the universe because he can control it by magic. He did not have to make himself congenial to any gods. Magic is often word perfect. Extemporaneous words are more often associated with animism.

Sorcery may be a learned technique with ownership of tools and be bought and paid for, or it may be a suspicion that it may be practiced by anyone. An example of the first kind is Vada sorcery, which is diffused over New Guinea and northern Australia, although it is not always bought and paid for. Vada practitioners are the most conspicuous but not the only sorcerers. They can be employed like lawyers, or they can carry out their own work, like a class of racketeers. Four sorcerers meet to initiate a new sorcerer. They take an image of the victim, then cut it and enact a death agony lasting for hours. One sorcerer goes out, accompanied by an assistant, and accosts the victim and magically takes out an internal organ. The victim regains consciousness and goes home and dies within the allotted number of days; and people do die.

Where sorcery is thought to be practiced by anyone there are continued accusations of sorcery in the society.

## MARCH 25, 1947

### *Methods of Social Control of Sorcery*

Sorcery may be defined as an institutionalized way of handling grudges. In Africa sorcery tends to be controlled by courts. Courts get confessions out of many people, fantastic confessions which remind you of the Russian trials. In North America the sorcerer is so feared he is not attacked and goes on without social control. Another method is a ban on sorcery in the in-group. This would be where sorcerers have to be hired, where everyone cannot do it and the sorcerer has to be brought in from the outside. It is phrased as, the sorcerer has the power to kill only when he comes from distant place. There may be arrangements whereby societies prevent sorcery power as a means of accumulating wealth, for example, the Algonquins west of the Great Lakes permit its use only for killing contests between sorcerers from different settlements and to protect hunting grounds, where sorcerers are called on to punish trespass by death. Where sorcerers' effectiveness is thought to be restricted to the in-group, there is a lack of social control; the sorcerer may be killed by the group. This practice was extended beyond the area where there actually are professional sorcerers. Some tribes are too afraid of him to kill him, though they may kill him when he is dead drunk. It is often said that the sorcerer's own power will kill his children, and families who suspect a

sorcerer in their number are very upset. Pomo and Yurok, who have bought-and-paid-for sorcery, say that the only time a sorcerer can be killed is when he is alone in the woods renewing the power of his equipment, that he is vulnerable then. This is an indication of how hard it is, in public opinion, to kill a really powerful sorcerer. It is hard to tell whether people actually kill a sorcerer when one dies, or whether they took advantage of a lucky accident, claiming they united against him. The personality complex of the sorcerer is one of continuous insecurity.

Black magic is commonly considered more powerful than white magic, possibly because white magic is used for what will happen anyway. In sorcery tribes every death is considered a murder and there is no thought of natural cause. Even deaths in battle are considered to be by magic, as among the Jivaro in South America, a head-hunting tribe. Death in battle for the Cheyenne is because men did not obey all their tabus and rules associated with the feather that would have otherwise protected them.

Where there is not technology, materials, or obvious evidence of actual practice of sorcery, there may be imputed sorcery, but it is often only a suspicion, a fear, and is never practiced. In Zuni it is only fear and suspicion. In the Rio Grande pueblos it is possibly real technological sorcery, really practiced. The Mojave have openly practiced sorcery. But when sorcery is a fear and a suspicion the atmosphere is different from professional sorcery. Everyone may be accused of it; often there is the notion that "you yourself know how many you have killed."

When a sorcerer is hired the feelings of revenge for a death are not directed at him, but at the person who hired him. He is like the hired lawyer.

### MARCH 27, 1947

There is usually a division of labor between religion and other aspects of cultures. For instance, religion may not be charged with ethical functions, as in Australia where social control is decided and carried out by the old men while the idea of rebirth is the religion. Religion is sometimes a mirror image understood only by the whole gamut of cultural experience, as it is in Kwakiutl, but it is not always so. For example, crimes of passion are strikingly low in sorcery tribes. But religion is a culturally determined fantasy.

Religion may be associated with wealth, or it may not benefit at all. In Chukchi, religion is quite outside the main objective of the culture. The shaman does not accumulate wealth in an otherwise acquisitive society. The shaman is selected by his "soft headedness" as the Chukchi say, and he has all the attributes which exclude him from the great objective of the tribe. The payments made to him are minimal; he gains security by being a welcome

guest. Religion is often a way by which younger sons, or under-privileged persons ruled out by primogeniture and other rules, may gain a place in the sun. Among the Kwakiutl shamanism is a way by which a man not otherwise equipped with wealth may gain it to participate in economic contests. Shamans have helpers who go about to find who has money and quarrels on which they may capitalize. The shaman's techniques are sometimes considered tricks, but if exposed the shaman's power is lost and he may commit suicide. All watch for tricks.

Paul Radin's thesis, that the religious practitioner invents religion to profit from it, is one-sided as it only takes into account tribes where religion is a way of accumulating wealth, and even there the formulation of dogma is not so clearly purposeful. In all his work he stresses the individual contribution of the philosopher or the conscious intellectual. Professionalism is always present, and the shaman plays up his role, but this is not the same as Radin's point.

The religious screen is not always a transcript of the whole culture, nor is folklore. The Pueblo tribes are the only American Indians whose folklore mentions polygamy, and there it is a consistent theme. But in the Plains where polygamy is allowed and practiced there is no concern with it in the folklore.

APRIL 8, 1947

By mid-19th century the serious study of comparative religion had become possible. Thought in France and England was dominated by rationalism. Edward Tylor attempted to find a minimum definition of religion and to give a rationalist explanation. He thought the core of religion was belief, and belief in spirits came from dream experiences, trances, and visions. From these experiences there came a sense of a separable self which was projected onto supernatural beings. However, he disregarded affect. Primitive religions are less belief than they are speculative thought and the spinning of thoughts.

Herbert Spencer arranged all types of supernatural beings in evolutionary sequence, with ancestor gods earliest and ancestor worship as the origin of religion. His arrangement was due to the availability of materials from Africa and the Old World. Individual salvation was the final stage.

For Emile Durkheim, religion is always an emotional heightening of routine life. Religion is the sacred, and routine life is the profane. To explain what gives religion this intensification, he introduced affect. Intensification comes in group activity, and intensification itself is the sacred. Thus the origin of religion is in mob-psychology. This is easier to explain in Australia than in sorcery societies or among American Indians.

APRIL 10, 1947

Continuing with Durkheim's theory of religion, he said religion was to be derived from society; it was not an illusion, but based on society. There was a conflict at that time in theories of origins, about whether origins were in the society or in the psyche. Durkheim said all psychological explanations are wrong: grief and joy originate in religion, not the other way around. Durkheim makes himself annoyingly vulnerable.

Irving King, in *The Development of Religion*, 1910, took the position that the social group is the matrix for social attitudes; these attitudes find a heightening of expression in religion. Religion is a support to already established cultural loyalties. These loyalties are given an extra supernatural push to make the loyalties more acceptable. The loyalties are not invented in religion but are swept up into it. These values transcend the individual and are social. He also made inquiry into what kinds of situations have become the referent situations for society, and found that societies emphasize subsistence and defense situations. His term "social body" is like cultural arrangements. He emphasizes "genuine values" which are cultural values transcending the individual. There is a great deal in his point of view.

King was writing during a period when religion was located in the psyche; for instance, Frazer placed the origin of religion in the human psyche which he thought was universal and would produce parallels everywhere regardless of the society. L. Lévy-Bruhl wrote, in *Primitive Mentality*, that if you knew what was in man's mind you would know his institutions. There are set ways in which man has structuralized the universe. He separated primitive and civilized mind, comparing primitive folk culture with French intellectuals. Primitive mind was prelogical and made affective relationships of phenomena. He called this "collective representations." Today it seems erroneous to separate collective representations from the actual social institutions. Lévy-Bruhl is a rationalist but documents at length the emotional aspect and its symbolism. This either/or conflict went farther than religion, and W. H. R. Rivers posed it in his argument with Frazer. Frazer derived the blood feud from the emotion of revenge, and Rivers said you learn about revenge from studying the blood feud. Rivers is nearer correct, but this is a false division.

APRIL 15, 1947

R. R. Marett, in *The Threshold of Religion*, draws a contrast between animism and animatism. Tylor had defined religion as only animism. Animatism is a quality of the thing. Marett at first regarded animatism as prior to animism but later said the two concepts did not represent stages, but were a minimal definition of religion. Marett based his work largely on R. H. Codrington's

*The Melanesians*. The magical animatistic power may rest primarily in the word, as in the Trobriands, or in the specific, the object bought, as in Orokiava; or in a person's name if misused. In magic cultures there is little concern with interpersonal relations. A religion which expressed our society would have much magic in it. For instance, we treat labor-capital disputes as between things. But because of diffusion a whole area may be blanketed with magic where there are cultures which concern themselves with interpersonal relations. Dobuans and Trobrianders use magic to make themselves attractive to the opposite sex or to a trade partner, being a combination of ideas of impersonal and personal power. Magic is not a draining off of hostility, but an institutionalization of it and thus an intensification of it. Montague Summers writes of magic practiced in our culture today.

### APRIL 17, 1947

### *Historical Schemes of Religion in Pater Wilhelm Schmidt, Martin Gusinde, and Wilhelm Koppers*

Schmidt's *Ursprung der Gottesidee* is in summary form by Oxford press as *High Gods in North America*. Religions placed in stages of development: the pristine form was worship of a high god, with no magic or ancestor worship. He observed the absence of pantheons or ancestor worship in Tierra del Fuego, Ceylon, Andaman Islands, Tasmania, Australia, and the Kalahari. This was evidence of man's higher moral potential at the earliest stage. The earliest cultures were guiltless, he thought. The second stage came with a mother god, identified with the moon, along with animism and ancestor worship. The third stage had totemic patriarchal gods with magic. Pastoral nomads show remnants of the high god concept.

Schmidt discussed the high god concept in Haida, Tlingit, and Winnebago, which are not really simple areas. Valid urkultures would have been the Dené or the southern Californians. He gave no criteria for selecting early cultures. Schmidt used Australia as an example, but there is no reason for emphasis on any dynamic effect of monotheism in Australia, if it is present at all. As more mythology is discovered, more gods are mentioned. The high god of the Ona in Tierra del Fuego identified by Gusinde is the god of the making-of-man cult. They have a myth that originally women carried on religion, then men stole the cult from them, and after their daughters had grown they made the making-of-man cult from which they excluded women ever since. The high god of the cult changed from the moon, when practiced by women, to the sun, when taken over by men. By Gusinde's own showing, lots of subsidiary gods participate in the making-of-man cult. Gusinde knew the culture very well.

Monotheism is a false issue; all monotheisms have subsidiary gods in one form or another. Schmidt's material does away with the origin of religion in multiple spirit worship. Before Schmidt, Andrew Lang pointed out that Herbert Spencer's evolutionary scheme beginning in multiple spirit worship is not borne out in Australia.

J. Unwin's *Sex and Society* is an anthropological oddity. He finds a 100 percent correlation between high religions with temple worship and women's premarital chastity. A 100 percent correlation is nonsense; the Cheyenne have chastity belts and no temple worship. Robert Briffault, in *The Mothers*, has valuable materials on social organization. The original good society was built on maternal impulse, had female gods and an absence of property. Men took it over and property predominated. There is no real matriarchy known. In Zuni women do not run the religion. (Benedict did not have time to discuss the work of Wilhelm Koppers, whom she included in her announcement of topic. Her only reference to him is in another course in regard to his view that the making-of-man cults were a "cradle trait of mankind," a view with which she concurred [Personality and Culture 10/31/46]).

## APRIL 24, 1947

### *Functional Theories of Religion*

Malinowski in *Myth in Primitive Society* says religion begins where knowledge ends. Man has considerable knowledge of nature and techniques for dealing with it. Where man has no matter-of-fact techniques of control he uses magic. This is not adequate for Pueblo religion, nor for Toda religion. In Toda the techniques of dairying are magical. He and Radcliffe-Brown stress religious validation of the status quo and its reinstatement by religion. Malinowski showed how historical myth validates hierarchy.

Radcliffe-Brown's interest is in ritual rather than cosmology. He uses the concept of euphoria, meaning social well-being, and contrasts it with dysphoria, feelings of being ill-at-ease. Society is threatened by the environment no matter how euphoric. Ritual takes man by the hand through dysphoric events, for instance, a death. The rituals act out feelings and lead up to a ceremony of reintegration and then reestablish the euphoria of the society. Arnold Van Gennep makes the same point about *rites de passage*. Rites of separation recognize the event; there is a period of trial expressing difficulty, then rites of reincorporation.

APRIL 29, 1947

Paul Radin sees religious practitioners as exploiters. This is often true, and there are societies where religion can be used to get power. It is probably the pattern of phases of a society, when a practitioner can get a vested interest in the growth of myths. But it is contrary to cultures where there is no prestige or gain for practitioners of religion. It is also no explanation of religion. Abram Kardiner's view of religion rests on his distinction between primary and secondary institutions. Primary institutions affect the body, sex, hunger, growth, the family, economics. Secondary institutions, such as religion and art, are projections of what man has learned in primary institutions. They should be studied in the manner of projective tests. He uses religion to see what the culture is. This is the same kind of point as Immanuel Kant's division of practical reason and pure reason. Neo-Kantians criticized Kant, saying man makes symbols in all his activities. This is his free creative expression. But Kardiner went back to Kant's division. There is no use dividing primary and secondary institutions. Sex life and economics are just as much projections of man's thought as religion and art. Kardiner's approach leaves out the institutionalization of religion. In its vested interests it comes into the area of primary institutions. There it is not a screen on which impressions are thrown freely.

MAY 1, 1947

There are books which type the religions of the world, for instance, Charles Morris, *Paths of Life*; Spengler, *Decline of the West*; Pitrim Sorokin. Religion is often considered like an art form, and the noblest work of man. Julian Huxley in *The Perennial Philosophy*, says all great religions of the world have arrived at similar expressions of the spiritual life. George Santayana, *Platonism and the Spiritual Life*.

MAY 6 AND 8, 1947

(Class apparently did not meet, although her afternoon class, Personality and Culture, met those days.)

MAY 13, 1947

There are two points of view to be taken in the study of a cultural institution, (1) that it is a projective system, as Kardiner treats religion, and (2) that it is a system of social control and social satisfaction, a system that reaffirms the attitudes of the group, as Radcliffe-Brown and Durkheim treat religion. These two points of view are complementary and cannot be separated. A rich study must include both. The word "integration" in defining the function of religion is not sufficient, as everything else in culture can be defined in the same way.

There are two methods of study of religion, (1) religion as an isolate, as my

article in *General Anthropology* does, that is, the study of the universal and variable elements of religion, the techniques, and so forth. But one cannot study in that way problems of behavior and function; (2) to study religion as a functional part of the behavior system. The dynamic themes of religion are relevant only in relation to culture, for example, in the contrast between sorcery and adient religions (using Henry Murray's term).

It is important to study the growth of a value system. We need an understanding of epochal and regional variations in Christianity and Judaism. One has to begin with a sense of knowing what kind of questions are answerable in terms of methods (1) or (2).

MAY 15, 1947

Religion both causes religious racketeers and is acted upon by them, as Radin thought; and it may be, as Freud thought, caused by the aggressions of the world and acted on by those aggressions. But these problems are not realistic. Religion has its own self, man's desire to domesticate the universe and regularize it in terms of patterns that are familiar to the culture. For example, there are such varying patternings of the holy family and of the Virgin Mary in different cultures in Europe. These are closely tied up with evaluations of women in society. God is seen in different guises. In the Eastern European folk tale of two men and wheat, God is arbitrary. God may be a father, a judge, a bored god, as in South Africa where he must be awakened and then placated. He may be an impersonal power dealt with by mechanical means. He may be bribed, and if so either he must carry out wishes, or he may or may not carry out wishes. In the absolute religions there is the idea of salvation, proselytizing, and absolutist ethics. The Polynesian religion is based on the idea that law and order exist in the universe.

All over the world people are unable to carry the load of self-approval on their own shoulders. Man seldom gets adult enough to approve of himself, so he has invented gods and angels who will approve of him. It is understandable that man does not want to take the burden of self-criticism and self-punishment on himself.

APPENDIX 5

# Theory, Culture

## Anthropology 103, Winter Session, 1946–1947

SEPTEMBER 25, 1947

Bibliography of general works (supplementing mimeographed bibliography, which was handed out and is reproduced at the end of course text).

F. Boas, *Race, Language and Culture*
B. Malinowski, *Dynamics of Culture Change*
M. Mead, *Cooperation and Competition Among Primitive Peoples*
C. Wissler, *Relation of Man to Nature in Aboriginal North America*
E. Durkheim, *Les Regles de la Methode Sociologique*
F. Boas, "Anthropology" in *Encyclopedia of Social Sciences*
R. Benedict, *Patterns of Culture*

(Books added in the third class:)

W. Schmidt, *High Gods in North America*
E. Westermarck, *History of Human Marriage*
V. F. Calverton, *The Making of Man*
L. Lévy-Bruhl, *Primitive Mentality*

The problems to be taken up in this course are these:

1. Evolutionary schemes, for example, L. H. Morgan
2. The repetitiousness of human behavior studies, for example, J. Frazer and E. Westermarck
3. Diffusion of traits: a. the extreme diffusionists, for example, F. Graebner, G. Elliot Smith; b. the time equals space people
4. Functionalism
5. Personality and culture
6. Culture vs. culture; idealists vs. materialists; free will vs. planning.

The unifying factor in anthropology has always been the comparative material.

SEPTEMBER 30, 1947

*Science in General*

On the dynamics of inquiry, see, J. B. Conant, *On Understanding, Science*, especially chapter 1 and footnotes. His discussion of Pearson's definition of science as the gathering and ordering of relevant materials, he asks why the process takes so long. It is because there are numerous discoveries from observation. For example, Darwin, through the mechanism of natural selection, a new conceptual scheme stands firm, in contrast to controversies about fossil man. Conant said that it is the misleading conceptual schemes which create the big problem, because they prevent scientists from arriving at newer and more fruitful conceptual schemes. The different schools in anthropology emphasize different conceptual schemes, and they do not see the conceptual schemes implicit in their materials. There is no neat dividing line between the various schools. Much of the data stressed by the later schools was included in the earlier schools. All the great men of anthropology refuse to be classified.

Prescientific anthropology: Interest in other peoples long predates anthropology. Herodotus discussed the ways of life of the eastern Mediterraneans. Like all Greeks working with cross-cultural materials he was asking, what is the best, giving opinions on the characteristic of a good society. For example the Egyptian calendar is best. Aristotle in *The Politics* examined some 150 constitutions to find the best. This shows just how small the states were then. He defined the state as composed of people in face-to-face contact.

After the Greeks there was a long period of little work. Marco Polo wrote a book of marvels, in no way similar to the serious approach of Aristotle. He had no interest in the development of customs nor in comparison. By the Middle Ages, the serious consideration of cross-cultural material was absent. In the 18th century in France Montaigne did several serious cross-cultural essays. He did not consider Tupinamba cannibalism extraordinary.

The fall of Constantinople in 1453 and the discovery of America in 1492 were great stimuli to the development of anthropology. Was the white man a brother to the darker man? This opened discussion of polygenesis or monogenesis of man. In the 16th century a Papal Bull was monogenetic. Later Bulls were polygenetic. During this time and the succeeding two centuries the nature of the good society was the great problem, especially for Rousseau and Hobbes: Rousseau's social contract and simple savage, and Hobbes, with man's war against man and the need for strong rulers of men. No fieldwork was done in this period. Really there was only a very little actual investigation, but still the savage was brought in as illustrative material. This was the first use of comparative material. Still there were a very few doing good fieldwork in

this period, Bernadino de Sahagun in Mexico and Richard Haklyut's voyages. Often this good material was not used by the professional anthropologists.

OCTOBER 2, 1947

The beginnings of professional anthropology took place in Germany in the 1840s and 1850s and later in England, and also Switzerland and Scotland. It is usual to divide the early students as pre- and post-Darwinian. Darwinism was a strong conceptual scheme, but such a division is impractical. The great problem was the psychic unity of mankind, and the great concern was with monogenesis and polygenesis. All of the early colonists were quite likely to believe that there was a great gap between natives and westerners. This was a little less true of the early missionaries, but it was certainly true of the early administrators. As more data began to come in, the early students were struck with the repetitiousness of human behavior and this geared toward the establishment of psychic unity. The real problem was the correlation of data on the repetitiousness of human behavior with the question why some people practicing similar kinds of behavior to Europeans, had nevertheless not progressed. This was the dilemma, and stages of evolution was the solution.

GUSTAV KLEMM (1802–1867), *Kulturgeschichte* (1843):
Klemm illustrates the first way of solving the dilemma. His scheme was of "wild" people, "tame" people, and "civilized" or "free" people. The wild people were predatory and nomadic. The tame people were under the domination of priests. The free people had freed themselves from this domination by priests. The whites were the free people and they had the right to exploit others. He divided the world's people into "active" and "passive" people. The passive peoples included not only the savages and the tame, but also the lower classes of Europe. The active people were the inventors, the initiators, and they had civilization. This is not a very fruitful scheme.

THEODOR WAITZ, *Anthropology der Naturvolker* (1858):
Waitz was a careful student. I think highly of him. He proposed no unilinear scheme of evolution. He was greatly interested in the psychic unity of mankind. He posed the question, what are the conditions of progress in Europe vs. among natives? Nature was not an answer because it is always in how man uses nature that makes the difference. Technology is necessary but it does not arise merely when opportunity for it exists. Racial factors did not figure as causative. The positive conditions of progress lie in psycho-cultural conditions. Demands for progress and technological control of environment may be built up by small stages. There is cumulative cultural development.

The contact factor is also important. He does not say this as we would say this today, but this is his theoretical position.

Adolf Bastian (1826–1905):
Bastian was a great traveler and utterly unsystematic. He went all over the world. He sometimes wrote well. He never settled down to study one community. He regarded social ideas as divided into the universal ideas, (Elementargedanke) and the local ideas, (Volkergedanke). The local ideas were the overt content of any culture, that which could be observed. He stressed that one could infer from all the local ideas the universal ideas, and thus arrive at the content of psychic unity of mankind. He gave no method of inferring the universal ideas, nor said whether they were on a different level of analysis. It may be possible to do this. He was merely stating his faith in the existence of universal ideas, but he never even gave a list of universal ideas. Since his focus was on psychic unity, diffusion was minor for his phrasing of the problem. He ignored diffusion, but he knew of instances of diffusion. He thought the discussion of origins was fruitless. It was not pertinent to his problem of arriving at the psychic unity of mankind.

The question of origins of things can either be attacked through archaeology or through constructs. There is no way of knowing how customs developed from archaeology. There is a great sameness in the way origins have been attacked through the years.

J. F. McLennon, *Primitive Marriage* (1865):
McLennon proposed that the absolute condition for the origin of marriage was war. There were war-like groups and brides were captured. In war-like groups female infanticide was practiced because women were not useful as warriors, and the shortage of women required bride capture. He said these postulates best explained the origin of exogamy. The origin of a social trait is a very difficult question.

## OCTOBER 7, 1947

### *The Evolutionists*

Their great problem was the resolution of psychic unity with cultural disparity. Their explanations were in term of an evolution which, in Herbert Spencer's words, was "uniform, gradual and progressive." Their data was extremely sporadic but they wanted their work to be systematic. Spencer was a convinced evolutionist, both physical and social. He thought that what held culture together was the mind, and that the proper approach to the

understanding of culture is psychological. Lots of traits were used to build evolutionary schemes and to assign different tribes to different stages as they possess or do not possess traits. For instance Spencer decided that the origin of religion was in ancestor worship and those people who had it were at a low stage. Other religious forms seem more opposed to Western religion than ancestor worship. There was no agreement among evolutionists. The method of proceeding is clearest in work on the evolution of art, where much work has been done, and A. C. Haddon, Henry Balfour, and others agreed that evolution proceeds from representative to geometric art. See, for example, George G. MacCurdy's study of the armadillo motif in Chiriquian (Costa Rico) art. There was no emphasis on stratigraphy, but arranging things along an a priori scheme. See also Haddon's study of the crocodile arrows of New Guinea. Scouts collected arrows haphazardly and Haddon arranged them from pictorial designs to abstract designs. This arrangement had no basis except an unfounded assumption. Boas' study of Eskimo needle cases showed the opposite development. The designs tended toward more and more pictorial representation.

In filling out a scheme, if a trait is not found it is assumed that it is there. For instance Lewis H. Morgan thought the west had a nonclassificatory system, while other peoples were thought to have classificatory systems, as the Hawaiians do, so he placed the Hawaiians and all Polynesians in Lower Savagery. The Polynesians actually had a very high culture and quite a few things were missed, for example, the Hawaiian elaborate genealogies. Among the Maori these genealogies go back several hundred years and have remarkable veracity. What Morgan did not take into account was if genealogies are used to establish status, as in Polynesia, then the kinship system need not be so elaborate.

There are some points made by the evolutionists which are justified. There was an early importance of family and kinship in social organization which has been superceded by locality. Morgan pointed toward this fact in his distinction between *societas* and *civitas*. E. B. Tylor pointed out man's widespread personification of certain things which increasingly in modern secular society are not personified and are not considered animate. R. R. Marett follows evolutionary thought in his theory of manna, that certain things have power as a quality and these things are not considered as persons. This formulation of the supernatural has not been completely superceded in Western culture but has been considerably reduced. There definitely has been growth in culture. Trends do exist. It is much easier to point these trends out in material culture and technology. What should be stressed is the highly doubtful methods and assumptions of the 19th century evolutionists.

OCTOBER 9, 1947

The evolutionists and the comparative school argue from the same premises, the psychic unity of mankind. They usually are divided and they do differ basically in methodology. The evolutionists usually gave a more rounded picture of a culture, while the comparativists gave no rounded picture but took a piece from here and a piece from there. Both however assumed the psychic unity of mankind.

Like everybody then, Lewis Henry Morgan was interested in stages of evolution and origins but his criteria for stages were extremely arbitrary. Savagery had three stages, with Lower Savagery dependent on gathering fruit and nuts. Middle Savagery using fire and fish, and Upper Savagery began with the invention of the bow and arrow and lasted until the invention of pottery. The stages were derived from Polynesia after he had first determined that the Hawaiian kinship system was very primitive and should place that culture in Middle Savagery. The Polynesian traits of fire and fish and lack of the bow and arrow then became the other criteria of that stage, and the presence of the bow and arrow was made the determinant of the third stage. Barbarism followed and had three stages, the first with pottery but without domestic animals, the second stage, with domestic animals or with irrigation or stone buildings, and the third stage of Barbarism began with the invention of iron. Because precontact Mexico did not have any domestic animals except the dog and the turkey it had to be placed in the lower stage of Barbarism.

Morgan believed that the consanguine family, such as the Hawaiian one required the marriage of brothers and sisters. He postulated that there existed before this a stage in which promiscuity obtained, similar to that which is observable among animals. As a reform movement of the consanguine family the clan system was invented with a maternal or a paternal line requiring exogamy. This was a reform movement necessary because of biological degeneration inherent in the practices of the consanguine family. Fieldwork has shown that there have been very few cases where reforms in family life have actually caught on. An exception had been the catching on of the Napoleonic Code involving inheritance which broke down the feudal law of inheritance. Before this event the state was never strong enough, and not enough objectivity existed toward society, for instance by a council of old men, to execute such a program. The work stimulated by these schemes is often the most interesting part. A survey of Figian children of cross-cousin marriage showed that they had three times the chance of living that children of other unions had, that is the same chance that legitimate children had in the United States at the same time over illegitimate children.

Morgan's only contribution which arrests us today is his distinction and

description of *societas* and *civitas*. However Morgan was most interested in kinship, and no one had been interested in this before him. His *Systems of Consanguinity,* Smithsonian Contributions to Kinship, vol. 16, 1871, is an excellent and detailed study of the Iroquois and other kinship systems. He followed through whole systems, not just recording relationship terms, and gave contextual frameworks for each culture. Unfortunately he missed some of the cross-relatives. Adding these missed cross-relatives changes the interpretation of the Iroquois-Dakota system. Morgan got the whole skeleton of the Iroquois system.

The essential approach of the Comparativist School was the picking out of a very small trait and tracing it through the world. Edward Westermarck, like all the others was interested in the origin of things. He believed that the origin of things was the mind: if you know what is in the mind of a group you can deduce the institutions. He had an ax to grind: the law of human society has always been monogamy. A more realistic view of western society casts doubt on some of his statements about this subject. He stressed the importance of exogamy and the need of defending society from marriage of near kin. He studied dress as a question of its origin, and without reference to prestige, thinking that dress had only sexual meaning in the human mind.

Male jealousy functions in the maintenance of culture and for progress, another ax he was grinding. Morgan stressed competitive schemes and the profit motive in the progress of culture.

The evolutionists had a conceptual scheme and they forced their material to fit it. The comparative school did not have such a preexisting scheme.

### OCTOBER 14, 1947

In Catholic evolutionism early cultures had a high god. See the work of Pater Wilhelm Schmidt. Lucien Lévy-Bruhl was an evolutionist in that he studied the evolution of intellectual processes from the prelogical to the logical. In *How Natives Think* (1910) he tried to show the irrationality of primitive thinking. Modern man alone had arrived at logic and rationality, he said. He explained primitive irrationality by collective representations which are "passionately held cultural premises" and are ascribed only to primitive cultures. His Law of Participation held that in these primitive cultures the influence of the total arrangement, of the total illogicality, swept men along and they did not question.

In summary, the Comparativist School is criticized for misplaced concreteness, a quality A. N. Whitehead discusses in philosophy. When these anthropologists saw a custom, they saw it over and over again as though it were the same. They lumped dissimilar traits. Boas also erred through mis-

placed concreteness in his discussion of primitive ideas of souls. He discussed two most important sources for the ideas of souls, the memory image and the life image. The memory image usually involved a succession of funerals and there was no idea of immortality involved. Instead the decay of the human body was often the focus with digging up the body, cleaning the bones and finally throwing them away. This is connected with the worship of the recent dead. Where the life image is the source of the idea of soul a difference is made between the body and the life image, and the life image is often tied up with the idea of immortality. There are other conceptions of the soul, such as a soul in each part of the body, good and bad souls, and others. Alexander Goldenweiser's study of totemism is another case of misplaced concreteness.

In summary of both the evolutionists and the comparative school, their premises led to the questions they saw and the methods they used. At the time the burning issue was science vs. religion, and those who broke with divine law substituted human law, that there was uniform, gradual and progressive evolution. That it was uniform showed it to be inevitable. Gradualness was tied up with the fact that no major revolutions occurred during this period. Progress was simply not questioned, and it was also patterned on Darwin's phylogenetic tree. Cultural phylogenesis is dying out and the study of processes is becoming more important, changing from the question of why to how. Modern biology is focusing on generic processes of growth, not on a phylogenetic tree. Anthropology is now the study of cultural processes, of description of processes. These two schools stressed questions of why as the fruitful question. Today how is seen as the more fruitful question.

### OCTOBER 16 AND 21, 1947

The realization that diffusion occurs made a very great difference in the way that culture was seen. Neither the evolutionists nor the comparativists were field-workers. Adolf Bastian was the closest to being a field-worker but he never sat down with any one people. Morgan had a slight contact with American Indians. He wanted to get data to establish a fraternal lodge among whites in Rochester so went to the Iroquois. James Frazer when asked by Will James how many primitive people he had seen said, "Heaven Forbid."

When people actually began to do fieldwork, the importance of diffusion forced itself upon the anthropologists. The evolutionists and the comparativists stressed independent invention. So with the greater gathering of data there came the realization that these similarities must be looked upon as evidence of diffusion and not as evidence of psychic unity of mankind. The comparativists thought culture was derived from the mind of man. Westermarck said, "If you knew the minds of men you would know all his actions."

What came about was the study of social institutions to understand the mind, rather than postulations of institutions from so called knowledge of the mind. W. H. R. Rivers contested Westermarck about the blood feud, saying that it was more profitable to derive vengeance from the blood feud than the other way around. This puts the difference between the two conceptual schemes most vividly.

Edward B. Tylor (1832–1917) was one of the earliest anthropologists. He wrote mostly in the 1890s. He was an Englishman of the upper class, was urbane, was never employed for any length of time, and never really trained students. He had great intelligence with the ability to surrender himself to his material without forcing it into any conceptual scheme. He was remarkable in this. He examined almost all the problems discernable in the material that he had. He never belonged entirely to any one school. He forecasted many problems important in later anthropology. He also made some brilliant studies which have not been bettered.

He did not consider evolution to mean a stage comes spontaneously into existence as a result of a previous stage. He was critical of prevailing evolutionary schemes. He never put tribes into stages. He was never interested in schemes as Morgan and Eduard Hahn were. He was interested in showing that accumulation of customs leads to something else based on this accumulation. Change is not always progressive. In his *Researches into the Early History of Mankind* he said that in studying the development of any trait three possibilities must be examined: (1) independent invention, probable, for Mexican floating gardens and Swiss lake dwellings; (2) diffusion, probable for outriggers of the east coast of Australia as far as the islands off the west coast of Burma; (3) cradle traits of mankind, that is very early traits such as magic and the incest concept. He carried this further saying some ideas are much more difficult to think of than others and these must be genetically related, that is diffused. Traits of independent invention are easy to think of or obvious, such as killing a personified fire by pointing a sharp stick at it, and the incest concept, both very widespread. Traits difficult to think of, yet widespread, are sucking out a foreign object to cure, and the concept of mother-in-law avoidance, both of which are to be explained by diffusion. Anthropologists today would generally not agree with this classification. Tylor thought that the easy traits spring up from the human psyche. He thought that the couvade is "at home," an easy possibility, in South America because of other social forms, so it could easily be invented independently by groups and I agree with this. The occurrence of the couvade from China to Corsica does not allow explanation in the same way, and there it must have diffused.

Tylor was raising good difficult problems and saying that the way to answer them was not in dogma but by their specific merits.

He discusses mythology as the autobiography of the tribe. He discusses marriage by capture and shows it is a rite with a certain amount of aggression, but it is at the same time playful. It is not necessarily a survival from an earlier stage. He discusses the in-group and the out-group and attitudes within and without. The concept that all death is murder is an example of a maladjusted, conflict ridden, and unhappy people. This is the earliest observation of that type.

He is often described as an evolutionist but I would not describe him as such. His study of lot games is a diffusionist study. Tylor was an eclectic and he surrendered himself to his material. The early game he said was not played with dice but with lots, The Spaniards having dice could not understand the probability of lots. The board was present among the Aztecs, but absent among the Apache and the Pueblos, yet the game was played there. Tylor concerned himself with the criteria of diffusion, mainly in terms of the complexity of a trait and in how many fortuitous traits were present, as in a long myth with many episodes which is present in South America and its complexity makes diffusion probable. The tale of the Magic Flight is another example. At Tylor's time the study of diffusion was very crude. His splendid paper did not state conclusions but gave the criteria for determining diffusion.

In *Methods of Investigating Cultural Traits* he brought together all the material he could control from primitive tribes on traits correlated with matrilocal and patrilocal residence. The probability correlation of distribution was compared with the actual distribution in in-law avoidance. Where a man lives with his wife's family and avoids them should occur only four times. Actually it occurs fourteen times, greater than the laws of chance would allow. He explained that avoidance under these circumstances is a way of solving the foreignness of the husband in matrilocal residence. It is true so often in the primitive world the marrying-in spouse is a stranger. Teknonymy is also a social distance point. He says that there is a much higher use of certain mechanisms in certain situations than probable, but he does not try to state a cause.

He also considered the occurrence of the couvade and found it absent in matrilineal societies and a few cases reported without certainty in patrilineal societies, and the great majority located in transitional societies which are societies where unilateral descent is not clearly institutionalized. In such societies there is more need for ways of establishing paternity. The couvade is not congenial to patrilineal societies and when it is found there it is a

survival from a previous matrilineal society In this respect Tylor was an evolutionist.

*Primitive Culture* was a study of animism. It is less important theoretically than some of his other works, but still a fascinating book. He is not clear however in his treatment of magic and does not clearly distinguish between animism and magic, two of the worldwide traits. Tylor never did fieldwork, He never paid much attention to the integration of one culture, and he never paid attention to conditioning.

### OCTOBER 23, 1947

Franz Boas, in *The Growth of Indian Mythologies* (1896), presents different theories from Tylor and uses a different methodology. In the 1880s he studied the Northwest Coast in great detail. He took vast amounts of folklore in phonetic recording. He took an almost complete recording of Kwakiutl mythology. He makes the point that in order to understand the growth of human society as a whole, it is first best to make a detailed study of a limited section of human society. Generalizations are then possible about growth. This depends on selecting a culture area. There all groups have had the same possibilities to choose from. Difference is then a significant indication of choices and growth. He discusses psychic reasons for borrowing and for selection of incidents of myths in different groups. The Kwakiutl have privately owned myths and thus have great psychical motivation for borrowing. He discusses the reinterpretation of elements by the adopting group to fit its scheme of motivation.

Fritz Graebner is an important figure in the German Historical School. In counteracting the over stress on psychic unity Graebner went to great lengths on the side of diffusion, for example, the long houses of the Papuans were diffused to the Iroquois. Diffusion must take place by migration, and there is no independent invention according to his interpretive work. He was not as extreme in his theoretical statements. The sympathetic review of his work, and Pater Wilhelm Schmidt's, by Clyde Kluckhohn in the *American Anthropologist*, 1938, deals mainly with their theoretical statements rather than their applications of theory.

Graebner was a museum man. He arranged artifacts from the Southwest Pacific in six complexes, Kulturekreise, which were ideal groupings that had once been complete and perfect and are found now overlaid by diffusion:

1. Tasmanian Kreise, once widespread in Northwest Australia, New Caledonia.
2. Old Australian Boomerang Kreise, beehive and cone-shaped houses,

wooden vessels, sickle shaped clubs, shields, patriliny, adolescent initiation with knocking out of the teeth.

3. Totemic Kreise, this is the later Australian culture with throwing stick, spear thrower, astral myths.

4. Two Class Kreise, actually moiety culture, with matriliny, secret societies, drum, panpipes, originally located in east Papua.

5. Melanesian Bow Kreise, with beetle nut, tobacco, much larger families, skull cult, headhunting, bow and arrow, and farming. This is found in New Guinea, Solomons, New Hebrides and New Ireland.

6. Polynesian Kreise, a water culture with outrigger, bows used for sport, spear and club used for fighting, no shield, farming different from Melanesia.

These six cultures traveled as wholes throughout the world. In Oceania they mixed. Polynesian Kreise is found in the Sudan, the moiety culture found in West Africa and parts of South America, the totemic culture found in Africa. One of his great assumptions is that if one trait traveled others traveled with it. He also believed greatly in the uninventiveness of man. His criteria for establishing likeness were qualitative and quantitative. He believed in single origins. Establishing genetic relationships between elements with great spatial distribution, separated by great distances, he called *Ferninterpretation*. This raised the critical problem: is the student to stop at the point at which his data stops or is he to go farther than his data allows him to go? This is a big question. Graebner was too easily satisfied.

The evolutionists and the diffusionists were the great enemies, yet each created a fixed series of stages. This was the spirit of the times. We see this in Pater Wilhelm Schmidt. Although he was a great diffusionist, he was so much concerned with the development of religion from the earliest and lowliest peoples that he too may be placed with the evolutionists. Although one can prove diffusion one cannot prove independent invention except in cases of known circumstances, for instance the Maya had the zero concept at the time of Christ, and it was later invented by Arabs about 600 AD. To the extreme diffusionist all things are so complicated that they cannot be invented twice. They think of the uninventiveness of man. This framework includes a number of people.

## October 28 and 30, 1947

### *G. Elliot-Smith and W. J. Perry, Extreme British Diffusionists*

Elliot-Smith was a great anatomist. Because of his work in Egypt he became interested in diffusion. His scheme is extremely simple theoretically. Originally there was an urkulture which contained all the desirable things. There is a good deal of nostalgia in Elliot-Smith and W. J. Perry (for a period) characterized by primal innocence. This was overlaid by civilization which began in Egypt and traveled all over the word. Great, nostalgia is characteristic of Pater Schmidt also, for whom this early period held belief in a high god, an idea which changed in succeeding periods. The things Elliot-Smith thought were spread by Egyptian civilization included sun worship, mummification, swastika, megalithic structures, and so forth. Single Origin schools are few. There is one other, a school of mythology which hold that all myths originated in India. Of course if one is dealing only with written myths, this is true.

The American school of Time Equals Space: Clark Wissler's diagram shows the spread of elements at any one time; A. L. Kroeber's diagram of the growth of California religions shows history, with older forms widespread. Kroeber believes that torture is older than the sun dance in the Plains. This is at variance with what Wissler's diagram shows. The fundamental weakness of these diagrams is that they limit themselves to an artificially delimited area. California is not separated from the Pueblos, the Great Basin and the Northwest Coast. The study of the making of man cult in California must consider the Pueblo area, where contrary to Kroeber's chart, I think the making of man cult is very old.

Wissler's distribution of swing-torture is a good statement of culture area, but not of time equals space. If space is taken seriously he should have included swing-torture in East India. The diagrams are important for a culture area but do not apply to true time equals space. Time equals space does not hold for cradle traits.

These diagrams go all awry when confronted with the problems of lines of communication and geographical barriers. In Wissler's diagram there is an assumption that the direction of diffusion can be established. I do not think that the center of greatest intensification is necessarily the place of origin of the trait. Genetic relationship can be established fairly easily in historical reconstructions, but not the direction of diffusion. Furthermore quite often very simple peoples have contributed traits, for instance foodstuffs developed by lowly people.

Time equals space is a code to enable extending beyond the data. It has

been a failure as far as a conceptual scheme, but has been successful as culture area study. Reconstruction by code, although desirable, is unattainable.

Wissler makes the point that the center of the culture area is more favorable ecologically for the development of the culture, that it is rooted there and decreases towards the peripheries, and uses this in the distribution of the horse. More recent studies of the distribution of the horse have not squared so much with ecology as with history, and have introduced the factor of invention of horse breeding. However the prestige value of the horse was greater among the tribes that stole them, for instance, the Dakota. Wissler diagrams this point about center and line of diffusion for the guardian spirit and vision, and I do not see the point. He also applies it to men's societies. Kroeber does not discuss ecology. D. S. Davidson in "Chronological Aspects of Certain Australian Social Institutions," with a round space physically perfect for time equals space studies, says that the traits on the coast are old and those in the center are recent. However Davidson maps patriliny and matriliny separately, but actually everywhere in Australia both are considered when determining ego's status. Clements et al., *American Anthropologist* 28:585, give a tabulation of traits in Polynesian groups.

Statistical studies have attempted to measure similarity between cultures, trying to get coefficients. Everything depends on the trait list and on weighting. In the 1880s Boas attempted a counting list to count the incidents in Northwest Coast myths, a paper published in a German volume. Boas concluded that this method did not give results, did not show relationship. In the 1930s the University of California attempted a counting method for trait distribution in California. Money was obtained on the assumption that there were regularities in trait distribution. It was early found that some traits on the lists could not be found and the lists had to be modified for each culture area. Actually no statistical results were obtained from this study. They did get a good deal of cultural material however, but there were no valid theoretical results. The counting method is good for getting material from a broken tribe, giving quick results, but it does not give statistical results.

No matter how objective one tries to be in historical reconstructions. theoretical assumptions are involved. Ronald L. Olson, in *University of California Publications in Anthropology* vol. 33, no. 4, does not believe that sibs were invented many times in North America as R. H. Lowie thought, and had used this assumption in his historical reconstructions. Olson thinks bilaterality is based in nature and therefore unilaterality is a tremendous invention and could not have been invented more than once in North America. Lowie assumes the unilateral sib is not unnatural and gets entirely different interpretation of clan distribution. Olson is reflecting his own culture, but

the U.S. is exceptional in recognizing dual parenthood to the extent it does. Even where bilateral families exist in rude cultures there is an incipient sib seen in inheritance. Property among these peoples is not inherited from husband to wife and vice versa. These two studies are an example of theoretical assumptions influencing the most objective studies.

## NOVEMBER 6, 1947

### *Historical Reconstruction and Culture Area Study*

All of the studies in historical reconstruction, worldwide, were made with an idea as code, however, this work gave better data on culture areas. The specific studies of culture areas have been most valuable. A great deal of understanding is attained when the specific culture areas are determined and then the differences among the constituent culture are determined.

Lowie, *Age Grade Societies in the Plains*, was one of the earliest and most ambitious culture area studies. Culture area work grew out of the necessity of organizing museum collections of American materials by area. There is a great sharing of traits in the Plains. This is true of all culture areas but the Plains tribes shared to a greater extent and in a manner that would be impossible, say in Melanesia.

The age societies of the Plains protected the herds for the communal hunt. These societies had elaborate ceremonies and they were widely shared except among tribes such as the Comanche. Each age grade had a comparable women's age society, however the women's age societies did not have police functions. The age societies are a specialization of the much wider spread military societies. There were five tribes which had age-graded men's societies, the Blackfeet, Gros Ventre, Arapaho, Mandan, and Hidatsa. They had their greatest intensification among the village tribes, the Mandan and the Hidatsa. The Blackfeet had been in contact with the village tribes and had borrowed from them. The Gros Ventre and Arapaho, speaking the same language, had borrowed from the village tribes but these two had not been in subsequent contact with one another. Lowie used linguistic material, regalia, and so forth, to establish these points. His whipping boy was Heinrich Schurtz who had stated that it was a human nature point to have age-graded societies. Lowie wanted to show that they were historical and limited.

Lowie makes a great point that the place of greatest elaboration of a trait was its place of origin. Therefore the village tribes were the center and diffusion flows out from it. This is the use of a code for interpretation, and a code does not substitute for actual investigation. Other explanations are possible, that the settled life of the village tribes, with earth lodges, could accommodate

the regalia of the societies. Lowie presumes also that the point of origin of a complex is where it has greatest integration with the rest of the culture, more organic unity and functional relationship. Later studies by others have shown rapid integration of a new complex into culture. Furthermore there is nothing sacred about where the lines of a culture area will be drawn. Material culture is fairly clear, but areas by other criteria such as language and religion do not coincide. Religious material demands larger maps. Just as in the primitive world it is most common to get matri-clans and patri-clans together, it is also possible to get bilaterality. This is most true of the Plains. This does not jibe at all with the evolutionists.

Melville Herskovits drew a culture area map for Africa.

In my "Concept of the Vision in North America" (1921), the problem was how much differentiation has taken place in the vision trait in North America and with what other traits has it been combined? Was it an organic growth or a diffusion? The basic religious traits of North America are the vision, a need for supernatural experience rather than reliance on a priesthood, and the guardian spirit with which a live-long mutual relationship is established. In the interior Northwest Coast, the Salish area, the vision is associated with puberty ceremonies. In the southern Plains, Omaha, it is associated with totemism and the clan. In some other areas where the vision remains the guardian spirit is absent. Diffusion has occurred in opposition to an organic requirement of culture, resulting in a fortuitous association of traits and complexes. Where the vision and guardian spirit complex has been associated with inheritance there is trouble, as in the problem of freely given visions and vested interests of clans as occurs in Omaha and Kwakiutl.

## NOVEMBER 13, 1947

### *Cultura ex Cultura*

This school represents a great swing away from the psychological and genotypical explanations. Lowie said there is no law in nature which explains why a people exposed to a trait will accept it. There is no going back to the origin of a trait. Rather there is consideration of a more immediate cultural past. Kroeber's "Eighteen Professions" can be understood only by remembering what it was a reaction to. The superorganic is a statement of culture ex cultura.

Lowie's *Culture and Ethnology* must be read in terms of a particular period of anthropology and psychology. The great book of psychology at this time was William James, *Principles of Psychology*. Psychology was the study of consciousness. Lowie's condemnation of psychology was correct for the

psychology of that period. Comparative material and their implications did not have a place in psychology until about the mid 1930s. Lowie wrote that psychology is not concerned with the influence of culture on the individual and that psychology does not explain the actual sequences of historical events and is also inadequate to explain subjective aspects of cultural phenomena such as age societies and the tendency of people of the same age and sex to group themselves together regardless of the specific history. Lowie's suggestions of how psychology can be used in anthropology seem very slight today, and one must remember the situation in which he was writing. He makes a suggestion about Arctic Hysteria, that the compulsive imitativeness of Arctic Hysteria nullifies one as a shaman, and there is another supranormal complex which is necessary for becoming a shaman. Lowie said that psychology can aid anthropology on the tendency to "rationalize what reason never gave rise to." However culture appears to him as a closed system and explanation must remain on a cultural plane.

Kroeber's "Eighteen Professions" is a good theoretical statement of the state of things in 1918. He tries to make a strong dichotomy between science and history. Anthropology is concerned with history and not with science. This is a dated point of view. He separates psychology from anthropology because psychology is part of biology and science. To bring in anything other than culture to explain culture is using science which has mechanical causation. History must be used in explanation. The negative aspects of this view, that culture is superorganic, are first that his separation of man from civilization is very drastic, as in his proposition 4, man does have a mind but any explanation using mind is out because it is organic. He throws out all study of the psychic unity of mankind, seeing it as tedious and barren. Selection, as an organic process, cannot explain anything in culture. A positive aspect is that he denies cause and effect and substitutes conditions sine qua non. Also positive are his statements that the aim of history is to know the relation of social facts to the whole of civilization, and that the materials studied by history are not man but his works. However you cannot study man's mind. Kroeber's *Configurations of Culture Growth* sets up cycles of culture independent of man.

The controversy between Kroeber and W. H. R. Rivers was about kinship terminology: Kroeber's 1909 article held that kinship terminology is understandable only in terms of linguistic categories, and he minimized the, impact of social arrangements reflected in kinship terms. He was challenged by W. H. R. Rivers in *Kinship and Social Organization* showing how clan terminologies fit the clan and bilateral systems demand other kinship terminologies. Actually both of them are right.

NOVEMBER 18, 1947

Emile Durkheim belongs to the cultura ex cultura school. He is very incisive, but very polemical, the most polemical of all anthropologists. As a result of his extreme polemics he attempts to eliminate psychology from sociology saying that recourse to psychology renders sociology meaningless and impotent. At the time Durkheim was writing the psychology which prevailed was utilitarian psychology, with the concept that societies are all organized on a utilitarian basis. He was a French sociologist and had students, and was interested in man as a social being. The psychology of the time posited that men were endowed with emotions and instincts and had organized society to satisfy these impulses. To Durkheim this utilitarian psychology separates individuals atomisticly. His basic point was that every social fact comes from another social fact. His great contributions are to be studied in relation to the problems he took which illuminate his positions. For example he gathered statistics on suicides from different countries and periods and he realized that statistics are only a good starting point and he analyzed them very intelligently. He found there were more suicides among Protestants than among Catholics, and he stressed the greater social interaction among the Catholics. Durkheim hated lonely living. He also found more suicides among the military than among the civilian population. The military have an over-rate of social interaction, and thus the two groups show there is an optimum of social interaction which is quite high, but it is possible to get above the optimum. He found more suicides in summer than in winter, but explains this in terms of social facts, not the greater heat. He is interested in how summer living creates conditions which cause more suicides and says the greater length of the day prolongs man's agony. More suicides in urban life than in rural life, stemming from the greater loneliness in urban centers with the breakdown of familial cohesion. He considers the means of suicide but does not do much with it. He includes sacrificial suicides, yet Hobhouse would exclude these and consider only suicides of depression.

Durkheim's greatest contribution was in including purposes and values as axiological premises in his social discussions. This, although he excluded psychology. He was a syndicalist and was for a society with more euphoria and less anomie. He posed segmented versus organic societies. Segmented societies are diagrammed as slices of a pie and each segment replicates the other. They live by ties of similarity. In organic societies each occupational group, chiefs, nobles, priestly groups, traders, and so forth, is dependent upon each other one. The ties of similarity in segmented societies are not cohesive enough, and they give rise to organic ties and organic society. He thought that punitive law would be found in segmented societies and restitutive law

would be found in organic societies. (Notes do not indicate that she took exception to this part of his work in this course, but she did so at length in Social Organization of Primitive Peoples.)

NOVEMBER 20, 1947

Durkheim has often been criticized for ignoring and eliminating the individual but this criticism must be compared to his meaning of collective representations. These are constructs of values and ideas that arise in any group. They are man's great creation. They are a reflection of man's participation in a social group.

Reading Durkheim, one senses his great excitement, especially in the last pages of his *Elementary Forms of the Religious Life*. His collective representations would be called culture today; they are the discovery of culture. By no means was he throwing out the individual. Individuals are the only active element in society. But this is not a postulated precultural individual such as psychology was taking it at the time. His unit is the individual along with his collective representations. American psychology has condemned Durkheim as mystical because it stresses the laboratory. Durkheim in contrast was interested in the cultured individual and not in the precultural individual.

He illustrated collective representation in Australia and he did it with intensive study rather than by comparative study as Lévy-Bruhl did. Lévy-Bruhl took the idea of collective representation from Durkheim but with a different method illustrated it with examples from many cultures. Durkheim did no fieldwork but he had great empathy in his reading and he studied this one area, Australia, intensively. This is the most rewarding book on Australia, although there are both stimulating and boring pages. He is trying to show how the collective representations work out in action in one culture area. Many of the first pages are devoted to polemics. He says that the origin of religion could not be in an illusion but in fact. This fact is society, Religion is not merely a way of interpreting society but it is society. The sacred is invented by man when he has intensive social interaction. This is mob psychology, in lowering the threshold of religious experience. Ordinary secular life exists because of isolation. Australia is a wonderful place to prove this thesis. He made a most acute observation, that the culture had no piacular rites, that is, no expiatory rites. He thought they would be found with more fieldwork. They have not been found and the whole complex of expiation and confession of sin is lacking in Australia. Australian religion does not worship a god above man to which man must bow down. It worships man.

The collective representations are statements of value. In this way he gets

to his axiological principles. He stressed, in *Les Regles de la Vie Sociale*, that the only way to do cultural analysis is never to assume that you know anything. Get rid of all preconceptions.

### DECEMBER 2, 1947

### *Functionalism*

There was a great intellectual ferment after World War I. For a long time Boas had been stressing the necessity for detailed studies of particular things. He stressed the process of alteration of culture when borrowed, secondary explanations, and actual behavior rather then ideal culture, T. T. Waterman's study of the spread of folk tales showed each tribe forming its own explanation of tale elements. Goldenweiser, writing on totemism, as well as Boas and Lowie, were interested in actual local behavior and the problem of what a tribe would do to a borrowed trait. Bronislaw Malinowski and A. R. Radcliffe-Brown also gave great emphasis to the detailed study of particular cultures. In his early years Malinowski was very polemical. Reciprocity was the great social fact. It is actually far from being a universal fact. He also said parenthood is the core of social structure. He discussed novel subjects, trading expeditions, sexual life in the Trobriands, agriculture. He was concerned with the interrelationships of all parts of culture, so that no matter where you touch on a culture you can go all the way through it. His theoretical work was in making categories into which you can fit your material. The categories are alright, but any student can make his own filing system. (Benedict drew a diagram from *A Scientific Study of Culture* on the blackboard.) The integral process of the organization of activities of the personnel following the norms, using the material apparatus, carrying out the activities motivated by the charter, that is the premise, on which the culture operates. He sets up lots of basic needs and cultural responses. In the chapter, "The Dynamics of Culture Change," he arranges his data in three columns. Malinowski does not state problems. Instead he sets up categories. I think the formulation of problems is more fruitful.

In the diffusion controversy, Malinowski is fighting for the study of culture at one time rather than historically. He said there is no diffusion, but he overstates his point and he actually means that borrowed traits are altered.

Radcliffe-Brown is deeply indebted to Durkheim. He lived in the English colonies and is familiar with the British empire and he did fieldwork in the Andaman Islands. He wanted to go further than Durkheim in establishing laws and his laws were more complicated than Malinowski's. He is interested primarily in euphoria versus dysphoria, in cultural health versus

anomie. Dysphoria is more specific than Durkheim's anomie. Every death is a dysphoria, especially the death of a father is dysphoric to the society. Ritual enables the culture to handle the situation. The function of social institutions is to maintain euphoria, this is how they perpetuate the human species in that community. He did not believe cultures could live on dread, and said that Dobu could not exist. He had worked with nonhostile people. Radcliffe-Brown should have written more. He is different from Malinowski in that he at least asks questions. Malinowski became less polemical with time.

Functionalism's real contribution was in carrying on the conviction for more detailed fieldwork. I do not think it added a new conceptual scheme, but some students think so. Alexander Lesser held that one cannot understand a situation unless one knows its history. Radcliffe-Brown held that the study of function of an institution stood in its own right. Both were right, for instance both approaches are needed in the study of language.

### DECEMBER 4, 1947

Radcliffe-Brown's new terminology is in the *American Anthropologist* vol. 37 (1935), eunomia, meaning order under good laws and dysnomia, meaning disorder and ill-health. He is now stressing the formal structure rather than the feeling. This is better terminology. He distinguishes activity and function, as the activity of the stomach is to produce gastric juices, but the function of the activity if to change protein. The function of activities is not to meet certain human needs, but rather to promote certain necessary conditions of human existence.

Radcliffe-Brown's problem was the reaffirmation of social feeling that takes place no matter how hostile or warm the feelings. But how does this come about? How does the funeral of the Chukchi promote the life of the Chukchi? Why do some people reintegrate so hostilely at funerals and some so warmly? Radcliffe-Brown would say regardless of the amount of hostility all funerals are reintegrations. Malinowski and Radcliffe-Brown were important in reacting to the stress on diachronics and stressing the synchronic relationships. In "The Social Organization of Australian Tribes," Radcliffe-Brown asked what were the social facts in kinship that integrated Australian societies? He answers, reciprocity in marriage, the fact that the family is important and not submerged in the clans, and that brothers are equivalent to one another. But these are such minimal factors that they do not explain much about integration in Australia in particular. His study of the mother's brother In South Africa is one of the finest studies, and is based on excellent fieldwork. In all previous studies the mother's brother was thought important

because of a survival from matriliny. Radcliffe-Brown said that if you study it synchronically the mother's brother's function as a male mother becomes understandable, and he stresses that the functioning of a trait preserves its form.

Malinowski was always making lists to file his material. This is not a theory. The important thing is what questions are asked. A question is not answered with a list. Neither he nor Radcliffe-Brown did anything on the growth of the individual in his society. This should be stressed when discussing Malinowski's *Sex and Repression in a Primitive Tribe*. The data is doubtful. One cannot study sex and repression by studying the formal structure and without studying the growth of the individual in his society. Malinowski had to stay in the Trobriands during the first world war and therefore he learned more about it. His previous study in New Guinea had been very routine. In *Myth in Primitive Society* Malinowski said that the Trobriands have short myths which validate what has happened. All shared behavior reasserts national unity. This is true. But why not ask why some people beat heads in the reintegration ceremonies? Malinowski never asked the question, what kind of people does things in this way? What does it tell about the people? Why do some people preserve the group in one way and some in another? Why do some people reassert their unity by sharing hostile and destructive ceremonies?

Compare Radcliffe-Brown's "Law – Primitive" in the *Encyclopedia of Social Sciences* with "Islamic Law in Germanic Tribes," in the encyclopedia to illustrate different ways of studying the same subject. This question about why a certain type of thought, is implied in the categories of the functionalists and it should be asked.

DECEMBER 9, 1947

(Class did not meet. American Anthropological Association (AAA) annual meeting.)

DECEMBER 11, 1947

*Personality and Culture Studies*

I really do not like this phrase and I prefer: the growth of the individual in his culture. Personality and culture are not counterposed. Personality is never defined irrespective of the culture. It follows from the definition of the social group, and the social group is not just an unorganized mob. It is rather a group of people with rules and interpersonal relations. Complementary and symmetrical systems of behavior are involved. Gregory Bateson uses the term, schizmogenic behavior. In complementary behavior, *A* behavior is responded to with *B* behavior, as in dominance and submission. Symmetrical

behavior can be illustrated with boasting. This is done differently where it is used with rivalry or with competition. In rivalry cultures the way individuals will use rivalry will vary, and some will reject it and some will go overboard with it, but you can say that most people in a rivalry culture will go in for rivalry. There is also a facility for certain personality types in certain cultures.

Boas in 1923 said that the fight for the theoretical acceptance of diffusion had been won and instances of diffusion need no longer be proved or demonstrated. The problem was then one of studying the individual in his society. My problem in *The Concept of the Guardian Spirit In North America* was: does the guardian spirit concept have organic constant complexes that derive from its character as a cultural invention? The answer was that there is nothing inherent in the concept that is constant, that determined its function, its role in society, or its different forms through time in one society. It had different functions and meanings in different groups.

The problem had become: coherence in culture and how to study it. The theoretical positions held in the 1920s: Culture is based in nature and human nature. Culture is the consequence of man's learning and inventions. It is something man initiates to structuralize his own human potentialities. Human nature and culture were polar concepts, but were not either/or. Nature included ecology, and culture is tied up with ecology and can never separate itself entirely from ecology. It was not assumed that man was the effective cause in culture. Culture was as distant from man as the Himalayas, imposing and uncontrolled by man. There is the incredible propensity of man to feel that nothing he has done is important unless it heightens his control. In the 1920s man's imagination in creating culture was seen in the same way as he creates drama and folk dances. The problem was to count man in. Culture does not operate by efficient causes of its own.

To count man in was not recognized when I did my fieldwork in Zuni and Pima. At that time I thought Durkheim was one who showed certain guideposts, but he had done no fieldwork. The Southwest had peculiar traits. No ecological barriers existed between the Plains, California, Mexico and the Southwest; however the culture of the Southwest was so different from the Plains. Stevenson's monograph on Zuni had appeared but I did not believe it. The impression from Stevenson is a great de-emphasis on close interpersonal relationships. This is true. So the problem was, what kind of cohesion would you study. In "Psychological Types in the Cultures of the Southwest," the point was that certain psychological sets in the Southwest had eliminated many surrounding traits and had seized upon certain other traits, giving them an elaborate development which could only be understood in terms

of these psychological sets. I was stressing the selectivity of man in changing his whole culture. Cohesion was a psychological problem, not a historical problem, but one arising from a living culture.

### DECEMBER 16, 1947

*Humanism versus Science in Anthropology*

(Benedict introduced some parts of the speech she had given the previous week as president of the AAA at the annual meeting, commenting on nineteenth-century anthropology and carrying her point over to the period in the course sequence.) When scientific anthropology was born, it was very definitely inspired by the spirit of the times which was scientific. There had been a break with the prescientific humanistic goals and methods. To see this difference very clearly compare Sahagun with Spencer. There was no longer working with loving care over details, but rather arranging items from various tribes by category with the aim of getting generalizations. Another example of prescientific humanism is Montaigne's essay on Tupinamba cannibalism. The early scientists excluded such recording; man was not taken into account and culture was treated as an abstraction. This was a very useful achievement; it helps to organize material. But it left out behavior. For a very long time scientific anthropology counted man out. This is most clear in Morgan. To him man could not stop diffusion as traits were transmitted as though in the blood stream. Westermarck also counted man out because he held that the innate qualities accounted for culture. The most striking attempts in early anthropology to count man in came from the culture area studies. They did the spadework. Another great move in this direction was functionalism with the problem of how function affects form. Malinowski went further than others in saying function determined form. He also tied it to the basic needs of man, but it is not possible to reduce the whole variety of cultures in the world to basic needs. The important thing to study is how far man has gone beyond the basic needs. When I said this in the 20s I was speaking as a humanist. The scientific attitude has worked to remove any guilt man has about the universe. If man is subject to determinism he cannot do anything about the universe. The humanists tie in a particular value with its consequences. The scientific phrasing of abstraction and the work of the humanists have come close in anthropology. The natural sciences with determinate laws are not applicable to culture. As the study of comparative culture went on with fieldwork, determinate laws were found not to hold in concrete instances, and people got sick of it. But the two traditions are not at all incompatible.

At the present time only four anthropologists do not include man's behav-

ior in their definition of culture: Carlton Coon, Leslie White and sometimes Lowie and Kroeber. Counting man out says that man the human did not do this. It was due to evolutionary stages and innate qualities. This has been paralleled by development in biology where there was an early stress on the phylogenetic tree. Biologists are now working on genetic processes and not on the phylogenetic tree.

In counting man in, you have to be very careful about basic assumptions. Since man learns and invents it is assumed that he also explains the universe. The thinking of man is difficult to find in this way. There are deficiencies one has to take care of in anthropology that do not apply to the study of inanimate things and to animals, as studied in biology. Man's value system must be studied and man's extreme plasticity. We need to study how man learns. Man learns to solve problems and how to get used to the type of problems that are posed. Gregory Bateson says, for example, the Zuni woman not only learns to walk, but learns how to get used to being a Zuni woman. This second type of learning is different in different cultures. This is called deutero learning. This is one way of phrasing the problem.

DECEMBER 18, 1947

The early scientific anthropology was necessary for the later study of man's behavior. It contributed systematic ways of arranging materials and showing regularities which the humanists did not do. There was a stress on institutional arrangements, while the humanists studied individuals. Even in those studies which let in culture there was a great deal of ignoring of the way in which culture operates. Scientific anthropology stressed laws of systematic understanding by which culture operates. The humanists stressed personal blame and praise.

By 1930 most anthropologists considered it necessary to include man's behavior and assumptions in the study of culture. It became a different conceptual scheme. What contribution to the earlier definition of institutional culture did the inclusion of behavior and assumptions make? Culture area studies, functional studies and integration studies, such as *Patterns of Culture*, made up the definition of culture. In integration of culture study, which is equivalent to pattern, the different aspects of culture are not fortuitously related. *Patterns of Culture* made this integration point and made no attempt to study the dynamics of different cultures, that is, the growth of the individual in his culture, and only pointed to the fact that human beings living under different integrations show different behaviors. This is the only culture and personality point in *Patterns of Culture*.

At this point anthropology had a definite contribution to make to the

humanities, where the great man theory of history, such as in the work of Carlisle, had disappeared. The points of study were: what kind of consequences derive from cultural assumptions? What you study is what people think are their virtues. What real mechanism do they trust for arranging real life?

Humanism and science are complementary. After these two conceptual schemes came together, the problem was how culture has a locus in habits? How does culture get into people? The early view was somewhat mystical, that every child is born into an over-riding culture. The tribe is bigger than the one little baby born into the world, every child is added singly to one great functioning world. However in an operational sense culture is located in the individual and his habits. Culture has to make its imprint into the mind. How are people habituated to become carriers of culture? Childhood, study is important. The family is not the only great thing that gets to the baby, but the family is the best unit for cross-cultural comparison. It is rooted in biology. However it is necessary to study more than just the family to understand the adult, and must study the complete sequence. For instance it makes a great deal of difference the way society handles the period of change from adolescence to maturity. Culture operates on continuities.

Anthropology has remained a holistic science because of fieldwork. Sociology in the U.S. started holistically but then became a study of parts. Anthropology works closer to actual behavior than the other social sciences. Anthropology uses trivial and individual aspects of a culture, the individual as an organization of the whole and thus an indicator of the whole. Likewise the trivia is a part of the whole. The field-worker had to do all of the culture or it would not be done, and as a result he saw functionalism and integration. Holistic studies of culture put every feature in its proper place. This does not mean that you must control every fact, but it means that you must ask the same questions.

JANUARY 6, 1948

The theoretical basis of culture and personality has two points: (1) Human institutions and localized human nature are a two-way street. It is not possible to study institutions as if man had no hand in them. Man shapes his institutions. This idea came in with the intensive study of folklore which shows individual differentiation of main themes. The choice of men at any given time depends on the value system. It was later understood that similar alterations in culture borrowing could be seen in marriage and political systems. Therefore man had a hand. (2) The study of the concept of cohesion, which is different in different cultures. What is "bad" or "good"? Cohesion relates to some value in each culture. You study the regularities, not unifor-

mities. There is a cultural gestalt. There is great importance in the gestalt. The whole is more than its parts. This has been greatly stressed in science and it is only lately getting into anthropology. This resulted in a critical attitude toward the comparativist school. Culture and personality is more based on the gestalt than on what is known specifically as functionalism. The general trend toward gestalt has more relevance. Malinowski and Radcliffe-Brown said everything had some function, but gestalt says that every part of life can have any number of functions in the different gestalts. Connected with the anthropological acceptance of the gestalt idea was the growing feeling that taking a piece of cultural data and applying it elsewhere was a sin.

How to actually do this work. First the culture area. I always begin with this to bring out the general characteristics. Compare any tribe or nation within the culture area. Second is the study of the abnormal, as an extreme indicator of the normal. Discover instances of where in culture aberrancy falls. What are the attitudes of others toward the aberrant person? Third is the study of the growth of the individual in his culture. This is the study of different pressures put upon the individual in his life experiences. There are certain important facts about the family as it appears cross-culturally which make it desirable to work in this way. There are some things beyond relativity in the family, childhood, adolescence and so forth. There is the point of view that over and above the fact that there are great reasons for the specific ways of life, there is the fact that every generation of children has to be brought up to be carriers of their specific culture. This has been a great contribution of anthropology, to show the great differences found cross-culturally and their different consequences. There is harsh treatment of the baby in Poland and permissive treatment of the baby in Romania. There is a bad situation for the first baby when the second baby is born in Romania. There are different American and German versions of adolescent rebellion. There are different assumptions and different sanctions for making the child be good. In the United States, be good for mother; in Czechoslovakia, the child is told “that is evil.” The United States parent is the moral authority. In many other cultures, for instance Bali and Zuni, the parents themselves do not punish but some others will be called in. The child is afraid with his parents rather than afraid of them. Great reactions to success and failure begin to be taught in childhood in U.S. Compare U.S. approach to tests to the Czech and Japanese approaches. Interpersonal relations must be learned by each generation.

JANUARY 13, 1948

*Culture versus Culture*

(Citation to four articles by L. A. White.) Spencer's division is: inorganic, organic, superorganic; White's division is physical, biological, cultural. For White evolution involves forces independent of man and will produce its results without human participation. In his definition of culture, it depends on symbols, is symbolic behavior. But what does the symbol represent if not the mind of man? All students agree there has been a transformative, cumulative and progressive development in history of culture. There has been increase in population, increase in range of communication, and others. The question is, is evolution a force independent of man and will produce its historical results. In his evaluation of the Russian Revolution he said that the class struggle is always upward. There is no possibility of Nazism being successful. His faith in evolutionism made him believe in the Russian-German pact. Evolutionism has a high degree of fatalism. Man is acted upon by outside forces. White happens to be optimistic. But there is a great need to make men feel, not at the mercy of evolution, but to realize that they create their own cultures. It is perfectly possible to ask questions which leave man out. But are they the most fruitful questions? In *Touchstone for Ethics* Julian Huxley counts man in completely in an evolutionary study. Man's moral sense is counted in. This is a definition of forward-looking anthropology.

In all of these discussions of the superorganic and evolution which attribute a dynamic quality to them there is the bringing in of regulatory power in the definitions. This power belongs specifically to organisms. In White there is a superiority of theory and premise. Fieldwork is not tied to theory.

JANUARY 15, 1948

*The Evaluation of Cultures*

The former question was, what kinds of social forms are good and what are bad? However, I ask a different question: under what conditions are different ends achieved? Most discussions of the evaluation of cultures have holdovers from old theological problems of moral law. They have an absolute aspect. One does not start from such a revealed definition. Also in the social sciences the problems of extremes are due to ethnocentrism. Cultural relativism breaks through ethnocentrism, but the study of cultural relativism is not final.

Whenever the discussion begins on evaluation studies, immediately in American intellectual life you get into the question of the objectivity of

the student. There is the feeling that the only way a study can be made is to wipe away all cultural commitments. The observer must be neutral and then will be objective. Anthropology shows that this is not true. The best cross-cultural studies are made by people who are most secure in their cultural commitments. Do not try to become one of the people you are studying. Good work is the thing. The good monographs of the future will have to include the explicit cultural commitments of the author. The crucial point is not the commitments but how well the investigator looks through the commitments. In all good monographs the cultural commitments are included.

Pure versus applied science is a false issue. But a crucial question is, will the desire for action shorten the investigation too much. But if scientific it does not matter if the focus is on pure or applied.

Most important is the phrasing of the problem. Formerly it was phrased in terms of ethnocentrism or moral law. The Greeks asked, what is the good society and answered, the class society. Recent phrasing is: under what conditions do designated outcomes eventuate.

William Graham Sumner's *Folkways* is a great book of cultural relativity. Some things are here and some things are there. The need to stress cultural relativity does not apply as much to anthropology now as to sociology. There is a cultural relativity fallacy, and a need for going beyond relativity study. What are the practical applications of beyond relativity study? For example, under what conditions do the people feel they are free? The anthropologist doubts the necessary connection of values with institutions. He knows kingship, private property and so forth do not function the same way in all societies. The stress on forms is another instance of misplaced concreteness.

Under what conditions do you get certain designated outcomes? This is a question of beyond cultural relativity. Also, what does a society do about letting an individual pursue his own goals? People in different cultures know whether they are free or not. The sense of freedom depends on whether society has made liberties common to all men, like our concept of civil liberties. Each society has a different list of civil liberties, but any society is free in that it values those liberties which are made common to all men or can be made common to all men. This rules out certain liberties, like sorcery power and the liberty to exploit. Quite often liberties are introduced which cannot be made common to all men without killing many men.

How to phrase the question is more important than anything else in evaluational studies. You cannot phrase it in terms of special local points. Gestalt and relativity are very important preliminaries to evaluation. There is a cer-

tain uneasiness in the United States about asking these questions. The value of freedom is an American one, like level of aspiration, equal position of men and women.

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# NOTES

## 1. RUTH BENEDICT'S LIFE AND WORK

1. For humor and imagination in the marriage, see Stassinos (1997).

2. The phrases quoted here and in the first section of this chapter are Benedict's definitions of her image of an arc. She did not write "arc of personality," as attributed to her by Banner (2003:309). That phrase carries a different meaning from Benedict's. See below for Benedict's nonconcern with personality.

3. The spelling, Kwakiutl, was used by Boas, from whose work Benedict drew her materials. I use this spelling because it is familiar, even though the Indians themselves consider it inaccurate. The problems with the spelling and other ways of rendering the tribal name are discussed by Harry F. Wollcott (2004). He recommends using Boas's name for the tribe.

4. Lois Banner (2003) suggests that *Patterns of Culture* employs the literary device of a journey passing from earth through hell. In this scheme, Kwakiutl and Dobu represent hells, Kwakiutl for its excesses in the Cannibal Society and Dobu for the prevalence of magic. This interpretation plays light with the fundamental message of cultural relativism, the central point of the book. Benedict was hardly expounding the Western dualism of good and evil. She referred to vigor in Kwakiutl life; while Dobuans had much cause for anxiety, life there was far from the evil of Dante's hell or the Greek underworld.

5. Varenne and McDermott characterize both *Patterns of Culture* and *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword* by the phrase "the individual writ large." They write of Benedict: "Posterity remembers her mostly in terms of a culture-as-individual-personality-writ-large theory of socialization," and they follow this interpretation (1998:164, 166). See Boon (1999:28) on misremembering *Patterns of Culture*.

6. Benedict participated in Kardiner's seminar supported by the New York Psychoanalytic Institute in 1936–37, following Ruth Bunzel, who had joined it the previous year, and that spring Benedict chaired three sessions on competition and cooperation in primitive societies, the subject of Mead's edited book based on Benedict's students' work and on a seminar conducted by Mead with these students and published that year. Mead was doing fieldwork in Bali at the time. In that session, Benedict, along with Ruth Bunzel, also presented Zuni ethnographic data. But relations between Kardiner and Benedict were uneasy, and Benedict wrote Mead concerning a session in which John Dollard had presented an analysis of an African American schoolteacher, which she thought neglected cultural factors: "I'd carefully avoided speaking during the seminar because it was at that time when anything I did in Kardiner's presence might scare him to death; he was being 'rejected' all over the place" (RB to MM, August 22, 1937, MM B1). During the following year, Ralph Linton joined Kardiner's seminar and gave the

main presentations of ethnography, and Benedict participated less. After reading Kardiner's book, *The Individual in his Society* (1939), Benedict wrote Mead: "The first 100 pages bored me stiff but by the end of Ch IV he'd worked up some profitable phrasings" (RB to MM, October 25, 1939, MM B1). She recommended the book to Frederica DeLaguna for assignment to her class at Bryn Mawr: "Have you seen Kardiner's book *The Individual in his Society*? It's good, and might be used too. He has learned a lot from anthropology" (RB to FDL, February 28, 1940, RFB 28.2). Benedict critiqued Kardiner's analysis of Zuni personality structure based on Bunzel's and her own data in her course Religions of Primitive Peoples in 1947. She agreed with most of his points and challenged only one of them (Religions 4/29/47). On Kardiner and this seminar, see also Manson (1986).

7. The meaning of the title of this book and the process through which it was chosen are discussed in Fukui (1999).

8. Only three pages of the manuscript for this speech have been located in RFB. The Yale University Library Manuscripts and Archives has no copy, but the archivist located the Yale *Daily News* article on the forum. The forum title was "Conditions of Peace – 1948," and Benedict's panel subject was "individual and group psychology in world insecurity." The other participants on this panel were listed as Congressman John M. Vorys (with no further identification), Professor John Dollard of Yale, and Dr. Franz Alexander, director of the Chicago Institute for Psychoanalysis.

9. For criticism of the RCC work, see Fox (1990) and Shweder (1999), both of which are also discussed below in chapter 5. For recent work on national culture, see Banac and Verdery 1995, a collection of papers presented at a conference held in 1989. See also Verdery's introduction to the same volume for a review of the literature leading up to the revival of anthropological interest in the topic.

10. Herbert Bix's (2000) study of Japanese leadership in World War II shows that General Douglas MacArthur was the main proponent and facilitator of the policy of retention of Emperor Hirohito. The surrender terms specified only that the emperor would be under the authority of the Allied Supreme Command. MacArthur appointed a former Office of Strategic Services (OSS) officer, Bonner F. Fellers, who earlier had advocated retaining the emperor, to protect the image and office of Hirohito from the opposition to him among some of the Japanese leaders.

### 3. FRIENDSHIP WITH MARGARET MEAD

1. Douglas Lummis, "Ruth Benedict's Obituary for Japan: A New Look at *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword*," *Kyoto Review* 12 (1980): 34–69. This article has been referenced by several anthropologists, e.g., Varenne (1984), as though it were a considered work, and therefore I note that it was published in a non-peer-review journal, and it falls far short of defending its title and its charges. Lummis declares that Benedict's main point in *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword* is that "Japanese

should feel grateful because a U.S. victory was virtually the only way they could ever hope to liberate themselves from their fearful oppression" (1980:36). He gives no further critique of the book but goes on to demonstrate that Benedict was obsessed with death. He quotes from her "Story of My Life" and from several poems and journal entries, excerpted from Mead's *An Anthropologist at Work*, to show this. He then notes that Mead wrote that anthropology's mission was to salvage the record of dying American Indian cultures. Lummis reasoned that Benedict's purpose in being an anthropologist was to write obituaries for dead cultures. All her descriptions are of unreal societies, and they were constructed for political arguments similar to her political argument about Japan. He does not extend his critique of *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword* and ends at this point with a parenthesis: "to be continued." He wrote two later articles in Japanese, which have been critiqued by Pauline Kent (1996a), but to my knowledge, no further writing on this subject in English has appeared. In the articles written in Japanese, his argument, as summarized by Kent, was the same as I have represented it to be in this journal article in English.

## 4. BEYOND CULTURAL RELATIVITY

1. The persons funded for fieldwork, write-up, or publishing, in some cases in conjunction with other funding sources, are listed in sequence from the beginning of the project, along with their field site: Franz Boas, Kwakiutl; Julia Averkieva, Kwakiutl; Reo Fortune, Omaha; Alexander Lesser, Pawnee; A. Irving Hallowell, Salteaux; Leslie Spier, Puget Sound area; Paul Radin, Winnebago; Francis LaFlesche, Osage and Ponca; Bernard Stern, Lummi; Ella Deloria, Eastern and Western Dakota; Ruth Underhill, Papago; Thelma Adamson, Chehalis of Oregon; Otto Klineberg, Cora and Huichol of Mexico; Ruth Bunzel, Zuni; Melville Jacobs, Sahaptin and Coos in Oregon; Edward Kennard, Hopi; Ruth Landes, Ojibwa and Potawatomi; Morris Opler, Jicarilla Apache; Burt Aginsky, Pomo; Paul Kirshoff, a Venezuelan tribe; Gene Weltfish, Pawnee; Irving Goldman, Carrier; Marian Smith, Puyallup; Jules Henry, Kaingang of Brazil.

2. This manuscript is among the Benedict papers that were given to the Research Institute for the Study of Man from the files of Sula Benet. It was not in the papers given to Vassar. There is no doubt of its authenticity since Benedict made numerous handwritten changes on the typescript.

3. The spelling, Blackfoot, was used for the name of this Indian group in Benedict's generation, but recently the group has chosen Blackfeet for their ethnonym. I will use their spelling in this book.

4. See discussion of Herskovits and this issue in Jackson (1986).

5. Fieldwork forty years later showed the same freedom for children in their family context (Kondo 1990:148). Field study of schools showed, however, the introduction of earlier learning of restrictions because children's attendance at preschools had become common by the 1980s. While the preschool curriculum

was designed to introduce the child to the circle of social obligations, these schools purposefully allowed the impulsive behavior and recognition of inner feelings that were learned at home and combined them with their introduction of teaching about an outside circle of social obligations (Tobin 1992). The period of complete freedom thus is less than the six years Benedict had found for the earlier decades and lasts only about three years. The preschool appears to act as a carefully planned transitional period to ease the discontinuity between early and late childhood.

6. In her letter of transmittal of Benedict's papers to the Vassar Library in 1959, Margaret Mead wrote: "The principal gap in the collection are the Shaw lectures. A number of people had borrowed and returned them, and there was correspondence relating to these loans, but no copy of any sort anywhere in her files. I have assumed that she not only gave up the idea of publishing them, but actively disliked the idea to the extent of destroying or losing all the copies." In 1995 Vassar librarian for Special Collections, Nancy McKechnie, located among the papers the program listing the titles of the Shaw lectures and found four of the six lectures, all clearly identified. One additional lecture has been found in the collection of Benedict's papers from the files of Sula Benet in the Research Institute for the Study of Man. Lecture four, entitled "Socializing the Child," has not been located. Abraham Maslow and John Honigman collected and published (1970) excerpts from the lectures, which Honigman, as a student at Columbia University in 1941, had typed verbatim from copies loaned to him. These excerpts can now be compared with the typescripts. They were taken from lectures one, two, and three. The sectioning they used in their publication does not correspond to the lecture numbers. Except for the omissions they indicated, the excerpts are textually identical to the typescripts. Moreover, they contain sentences in several places where the typescript skipped a few lines, apparently to be supplied later. Many of their omissions are brief and do not alter the meaning, but some are long. By selecting the sections that are concerned with synergy and leaving out topics that do not refer to that idea, and by excerpting only three of the six lectures, they give the impression that synergy was more prominent than it was in the whole series.

Mead wrote a brief introduction to Maslow's and Honigman's excerpts from the Shaw lectures:

> In 1941 Ruth Benedict held the Anna Howard Shaw Memorial Lectureship at Bryn Mawr College and built her lectures about the concept of synergy. She had hoped to use materials gathered during the 1930's under grants to the Department of Anthropology, Columbia University, as detailed documentation of the theme that is only sketched in these few brief excerpts. However, complications of World War II led her to shift her interest to wartime problems (Mead 1959). She relinquished the editorship of the field studies on which she had intended to draw to Professor Ralph Linton, then chairman of the

> department, and the field studies were published in *Acculturation in Seven American Indian Tribes* (Linton 1940), rather inadequately documented as to date of fieldwork or intent. Although she talked with me frequently about her plans for the book, which would grow out of the lectures, I never saw the manuscript. . . . After the war her interest was absorbed in finishing *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword* (Benedict 1946) and in directing Research in Contemporary Cultures (Mead and Métraux 1953). She did not mention the Bryn Mawr lectures, and after her death in 1948 no copies were found. In authorizing the publication of these excerpts, I assume that she did not destroy the manuscripts but simply lost interest in them. (in Maslow and Honigman 1970:320)

I describe in chapter 2 the circumstances of Linton's editorship of the Project #35 dissertations differently from Mead's account. Mead was in the field at the time and, although in correspondence with Benedict, may not have been fully knowledgeable of the situation. In view of Benedict's publication of many sections of the Shaw lectures, which Mead seemed not to have known about, I think Mead's view in 1970 that Benedict lost interest in the lectures is not probable.

### 5. Beyond Psychological Types

1. The spelling in use at that time, and used by Benedict, was "Rumania," but when quoting from her research and reports on this nation, I use the now-standard spelling.

2. Pauline Kent (1996b) has written a brief history of Benedict's work for OWI, and she includes many of Benedict's OWI reports in an appendix to this article. A copy of this article is included in the Vassar Library Special Collections. Benedict's reports are all available from the National Archives. The Thai report and the Romanian report were reissued as indicated in the References and can be found in some libraries. A. L. Kroeber summarized Benedict's paper on Thai culture in the revision of his textbook, *Anthropology* ([1923] 1948:589–90).

3. The phrase "All men walk abreast," a phrase she used often, was Benedict's rendition of a New Guinea Pidgin phrase, "No want one man he go ahead, one man he come behind. Better all man he go together." The phrase is quoted in Landtman (1927:167).

4. The full text of Milton Singer's comment on the problem of sampling reads:

> Because "cultural character" derives from configurational theory, which attributes "personality types" to cultures as wholes and which derives these 'types' from cultural data predominantly, it does not appear to call for statistical studies of individuals. (See Benedict, 1946, p. 16, "The ideal authority for any statement in this book would be the proverbial man in the street. It would be anybody.") Only when additional assumptions are introduced about the relation of configurational types to individual members of a culture, does

> it become necessary to introduce psychological data on individuals, and concepts to deal with statistical distributions, such as "modal personality type." (1961:49)

5. Mead apparently referred to conversations among L. K. Frank, Gregory Bateson, and herself about possibilities for research on national character, conversations that probably suggested asking for the records of the Yale seminar in 1942. The RCC project was not planned until Benedict was approached about it by ONR in the summer of 1946.

6. Her letter, which appeared with the first announcement of the plan to intern Japanese Americans in isolated and highly restrictive camps, accepted the army's plan for removal of Japanese from the West Coast but advised observing the proposal made in the Japanese American press, that they be resituated on farmlands where they could continue to supply the nation's agricultural needs.

## 6. TEACHERS AND STUDENTS

1. On the student field trip that Benedict directed to the Apache reservation in 1931, Henrietta Schmerler was murdered by an Indian man who misinterpreted her actions as seductive. Benedict was relieved of appearing at the trial by an advanced graduate student, Ruth Underhill, who was more familiar with the situation than she, but the incident was tragic and of prolonged consequences. In 1939 a student, Buell Quain, committed suicide during fieldwork in a remote area of Brazil (see Modell 1983:181–82). During Benedict's student field school on the Blackfeet reservation in 1939, the husband of one of the students caused the death in an auto accident of an Indian man riding with him (Goldfrank 1978:134). Another student whom Benedict funded in New Guinea, Bernard Mishkin, claimed that he was wounded by a native and left the field, but circumstances suggested that the wound was self-inflicted (correspondence of RB and MM).

2. Aginsky's fellow students reported to MacMillan that Aginsky had written an inferior dissertation on fieldwork among the Poma Indians of California, where Project #35 had funded him, and Benedict said he would have to make revisions. He is said by the students to have begged her to accept the dissertation. Other students worked on the revisions, which apparently he could not do himself, and finally the dissertation was accepted. His attack on *Patterns of Culture* came after he had been awarded the degree.

3. MacMillan presents a different view, one that may be true of the mid-1970s but I think not true of the war years. He says that because she was lesbian, she was socially marginal and thus reluctant to embrace any public cause. He writes of her "social and intellectual alienation" because of her marginality (MacMillan 1986:45). The prestige she gained after the enthusiastic reception of *Patterns of Culture* and her participation in public intellectual commentary on the issues of the time suggest otherwise.

7. RUTH BENEDICT'S CONTRIBUTION TO ANTHROPOLOGY

1. In an attack on Benedict's and Sapir's early personality and culture work, David Aberle wrote: "Benedict's lectures on anthropological theory as I heard them in 1940–41, indicate that French sociology as represented by Durkheim and Lévy-Bruhl was also rejected or was accepted only in the form of piecemeal propositions" (1960:2). A different view of what Benedict taught, one that concurs with the 1946 course, is found in Victor Barnouw's account of her course in social organization in the spring of 1941, the same year Aberle took it.

> Part of the course was based on Emile Durkheim's *Division of Labor in Society*. . . . Ruth Benedict admired Durkheim's work but criticized him for over-emphasizing law and ignoring other forms of social control. She was more aware than Durkheim had been of the great variation in primitive societies. She provided a rough typology and spoke of atomistic societies, corporate societies, and hierarchical societies. . . . Most primitive societies, according to Benedict, are corporate societies which have more social cohesion than atomistic ones do. Corporate societies are often organized on a segmentary basis. (1980:504–5)

Aberle continued: "Functionalism in the manner of Radcliffe-Brown or of Malinowski was similarly unacceptable" (1960:2). Aberle appears to misrepresent Benedict's views on both Durkheim and functionalism. He is said to have joked to a colleague about this article, "Matricide, eh?" another example of antipathy some students felt for Benedict (Richard Slobodin, letter to author, August 9, 1997).

2. Mead, a champion field-worker, sometimes cast slurs on anthropologists who had done less fieldwork. Conrad Arensberg told this story in one of his classes: Mead said to him, "You're not a field anthropologist, are you Connie?" He replied, "Well, no. I'm a meadow anthropologist."

3. The difference between Benedict's early views on the subject of religion and her late views might have been recorded in a chapter on religion that she agreed to write shortly before her death for a book to be edited by psychiatrist Franz Alexander (Mead 1974:36n5), but there is no manuscript of the chapter in her papers. The course on religion that she taught in 1947 represents her thought on the subject at that time. In the course, she said that her early view that religion derived from "the religious thrill" was the view of Alexander Goldenweiser, her first teacher of anthropology. The early view of religion that shaped her projected book on North American Indian religions was essentially superceded in her chapter on religion written in 1926 for Boas's *General Anthropology* but not published until 1938, a chapter that categorizes and describes the varieties of religious practice and thought, but it is not a treatise about the function of religion. Her interest in the functioning of religion appeared in manuscripts in 1941 and 1942 and was elaborated in her 1947 course lectures, and there she discussed broadly her new views of religion. For brief examples: "The aim of [primitive] religion is to domes-

ticate the universe"; that is, it aims to bring supernatural power into the pattern of interpersonal relations and attitudes of the culture, to shape the supernatural like the forms of thought represented in the community life. She considered the supernatural a projection of the culture. Primitive religions differed from ethical religions: "Ethical religions oppose the will of god to the will of the individual, and religion is supposed to keep you from doing things you want to do. Primitive religions are generally ways in which the individual can carry out his will" (Religions 2/25/47).

4. Modell notes also Benedict's view that there was a positive effect of shame in Japan: for Benedict, "shame *as a concept* demonstrates the synergy of the Japanese nation" (1983:198).

### APPENDIXES INTRODUCTION

1. A similar problem was confronted by Judith T. Irvine in reconstructing a course given by Edward Sapir called The Psychology of Culture. See her account of problems of reconstruction from student course notes in her editor's preface (Irvine 1994).

### APPENDIX 1

1. In Henry A. Murray's terminology of adience and abience, the adient vector furthers the positive needs of the subject and the abient vector favors the negative needs, such as harm avoidance and blame avoidance. "Press" refers to what an alter does to the subject.

### APPENDIX 2

1. This point is explained in the notes for 10/10/46 and also in Religions 12/11/47. She probably explained it more fully here, but the students did not record it, probably not understanding it with its first appearance.

2. This typology was originated by Ruth Bunzel. It is not part of her chapter "Economics" in *General Anthropology*, edited by Boas, where Mead wrote that it was published, and I have not found it in her other publications. It was probably presented in a paper read at the meeting of the AAA in December 1938 entitled "Types of Economic Mechanisms and the Structure of Society." In a letter to Mead, Benedict commended highly Bunzel's paper at that meeting.

3. See note 1 of Appendix 1.

### APPENDIX 3

1. For her full analysis of Dutch culture, see her "Background Material for a Pamphlet for the Dutch on U.S. Troops" (memo to Samuel Williamson, January 25, 1944. RFB 101.9) and "The Social Framework" (n.d. RFB 101.11). Her papers also include some of her interview notes on Dutch culture. This text is based on only one student's notes, and in this class only selected points appear to be recorded. The points about sexual attitudes, drinking behavior, and privacy recorded here are important because they were not included in her reports for OWI and appear

in no other manuscripts. She was probably expanding her analysis of the Dutch culture and intended to include it is the book described in chapter 5.

2. There is no psychoanalytic reference in her interview notes and memoranda on the Dutch, and this symptomatology was probably suggested by Warner Muensterberger, a Dutch psychoanalyst and anthropologist whom she met in the summer of 1946 and asked to join the RCC project. She rarely referred to psychoanalytic diagnostics, but she included several psychoanalysts on that project and was testing the relevance of their analyses to hers.

### APPENDIX 4

1. This point appears again in Theory 11/8/47.

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CUA-CL, CUCRSS: Columbia University Archives and Columbiana Library, Columbia University Council for Research in Social Sciences, New York.

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